



Ysgol Maesydderwen

School & Sixth Form Centre | Ysgol a Chanolfan Chweched Dosbarth

Working Together, Achieving More | Cydweithio a Chyflawni

21 December 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to thank you for a successful first term of the academic year. Learners and staff have been busy and they have produced a number of inspiring success stories. This week we have released our school Newsletter that shares these stories with you. The success of our learners is down to their enthusiasm and dedication along with the expert support provided by our staff. I am filled with an enormous sense of pride in these achievements and I thank both learners and staff for their continued hard work and efforts.

Christmas Fayre and Concert

We are very grateful to the staff and learners involved in our Christmas Fayre and Concert, heralding as it does the start of the festive season. This year was our largest attended since the restrictions imposed in previous years. It was delightful to once again be joined by learners from our cluster primary schools. May I thank all the families and friends who joined us to support our community in the production of this event. The evening was a truly wonderful occasion and allowed our learners to demonstrate their talents.

Current uniform and equipment

We have high expectations of our students with regard to uniform and equipment.

I am pleased to report that the majority of our learners arrive to school each day, ready to learn, both smartly dressed in the correct uniform and with the correct equipment. It then means for these learners the discussions we have with them can be fully focussed on learning and ensuring they make positive progress with their studies. May I thank these learners for fully embracing our ethos of Working Together, Achieving More.

Unfortunately, there are still a small but significant number of learners who arrive at school with incorrect uniform and/or without their school bags. This means that they are not carrying equipment, their timetable for the day in their planners and water bottles should they need them during the day. These are barriers to their learning and the learning of others in the class.

We are asking if you could encourage your children to be more prepared for learning by supporting their organisation for the day ahead to ensure we continue to develop positive relationships and experiences in the classroom. Please ensure that your child has the correct uniform and equipment for school in January. Uniform and equipment rules and guidance can be found on the school website. If a family is facing financial hardship, then they should contact their child's Progress Leader in the first instance and we will see if we are able to help.

Punctuality to school and lessons

The vast majority of our students are on time for school and lessons. As such they form a positive set of learners that engage in learning and are part of a rich and harmonious community. Well done to you all!

However, a small group of children are frequently late to school and/or their lessons – as such they miss out on being a full member of this great school community. For some of our learners their lateness to school/lessons is hindered by their lack of equipment as detailed earlier and therefore their rate of poor punctuality is increasing due to poor organisation. I would urge all parents and carers to support their children to be on time to school and lessons, every day, so they do not miss teaching which cannot be repeated, and so they can engage in all the opportunities on offer.

Full transition to the new uniform

May I take this opportunity to remind everyone that we are coming to the end of the 2-year transition period from the old uniform to the new uniform.

From September 2024, all learners in Years 7 to 11 will need to wear the new uniform. If a family is facing financial hardship, then they should contact their child's Progress Leader in the first instance and we will see if we are able to help.

I would also like to remind you that learners are able to wear shorts to school at anytime provided they are grey tailored shorts.

Contacting the school

May I take this opportunity to remind parents/carers that in almost all cases if you need to contact the school regarding your child then your first port of call is the appropriate Progress Tutor. This will usually speed up any response and ensure any query is addressed efficiently.

School Playing fields update

I am saddened to report that during this term we have had 2 incidents where learners and staff have been covered in dog mess whilst using our school sports fields. This is despite the outstanding efforts of our staff in their pitch inspections to remove all mess before using the fields. I cannot begin to tell you the number of times staff have removed the dog mess before a lesson or match.

This issue in addition with a few unsavoury incidents that have recently happened on the school field are both safeguarding and health and safety concerns.

There is a misconception amongst some within the community that the school sports field is a public right of way. I can confirm that is not the case – a public footpath runs around the outside of the field. Therefore, for the safety of both our learners and staff I have commissioned a project to build two small fences either side of the field that will enclose the field and ensure it can only be accessed by the school. It is planned that work on the fence will commence in the new year.

Once the fence is completed, we will be looking to provide advertising space for companies who wish to sponsor the school and our school teams. If anyone is interested, please contact the school so we can discuss further.

Return to school

A reminder that school re-opens for all learners and staff on Tuesday 9 January 2024.

Staffing

At the end of this term, we say goodbye to Miss. Caitlin Evans who leaves the school to pursue a career outside education. We thank her for all her work at the school and wish her all the best in her new challenge.

In January, we welcome Mr. Michael John to the school who will take over the teaching of Miss Evans' classes. It's always a joy to bring new people into Ysgol Maesydderwen, where there is a warm welcome and a supportive ethos – both for staff and learners.

Important dates

To support you with all the important dates for the rest of the academic year please see the table below. All of these dates are correct at the time of this letter but can be subject to change. If there are any changes the school will inform you of these.

Date	Event
Tuesday 9 January 2024	Mock Exams start
Wednesday 17 January 2024	Year 9 Parents Evening & Options Fayre
Thursday 8 February 2024	Year 10 Parents Evening
Wednesday 20 March 2024	Year 8 Parents Evening
Thursday 11 April 2024	Celebration Assembly
Thursday 20 June 2024	Year 7 Parents Evening
Thursday 26 June 2024	Year 11 & 13 Leavers Assembly
Monday 1 July 2024	INSET Day
Thursday 4 July 2024	Year 6 Parents Evening
Wednesday 10 July 2024	School Show
Thursday 18 July 2024	Celebration Assembly

This term has been busy and focused on learning. Our learners have been fantastic as always, and our staff show their commitment and dedication every day in their hard work and diligence.

Thank you, as always, to all the parents and carers who are supportive of the school, the ethos and values, expectations and aspirations that we have for all the learners at Ysgol Maesydderwen.

I wish you all the best for a peaceful Christmas winter holiday.

Yours sincerely,



Phil Grimes
Headteacher