



# Ysgol Maesydderwen

School & Sixth Form Centre | Ysgol a Chanolfan Chweched Dosbarth

Working Together, Achieving More | Cydweithio a Chyflawni

21 July 2023

Dear parent/carer

As the end of the year draws closer I feel a sense of immense pride with the high **Aspirations** our learners have set themselves which has led their outstanding progress. Many have faced challenges head on and through determination and with strengthening **Resilience** they have been successful. Earlier this week the achievements and progress made by our learners in the classroom were recognised in our leavers and celebrations assemblies.

This year we have once again increased the number of additional experiences that are available for our learners. I am pleased to report that many of our learners have taken advantage of these opportunities and have produced excellent outcomes. You can read all about these events and more in the Newsletter that is attached to this letter.

## School Uniform – thank you

I would like to thank you for your continued support of our school uniform. By wearing the same shirt, jumper, trousers and tie (new uniform) learners can feel secure in a learning environment where their clothing will not be judged or scorned. We are proud of how our school uniform promotes equality, **Respect** for each other and our identity while also encouraging a sense of community within the school.

Additionally, wearing a school uniform helps prepare learners for life after school where many will have to dress smartly for their chosen career. As everyone is dressed the same, it is easier to find a sense of belonging among learners, often making it easier to find and make friends.

## School Uniform – changes

A reminder that next academic year will be the final one of the old school uniform. From September 2024, all learners will need to wear the new school uniform. If you are a parent that needs to purchase a new uniform this summer and if your child is in Year 9 or 10 then my advice would be to buy the new uniform.

In addition, from September 2023, we have modified the PE uniform to change the colour of t-shirt. We will be moving from a white to black. Hence the new PE t-shirt will be:

- Black t-shirt with badge or plain black t-shirt

However, I must stress that the white t-shirts will still be acceptable for 2023-24. All I would ask is when you need to purchase a new PE t-shirt then you buy a black one.

## School Uniform – School Essentials Grant

A reminder for those learners whose families are on lower incomes and qualify for certain benefits, you can apply for a grant of £125 per learner and £200 for learners entering year 7 (to help with increased costs associated with secondary school).

Families with children in reception to Year 11 are eligible to apply. Previously known as the PDG Access Grant, it provides funding for costs associated with going to school, such as buying uniform, sports kit and equipment.

If you qualify for this grant I strongly suggest you apply for it. If you require support from the school please let us know and we will help in any way we can.

We have previously shared the links via our social media pages or alternatively click here - <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/11907/School-Essentials-Grant-formerly-known-as-Pupil-Development-Grant---Access>.

### **Attendance**

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers and learners not only of our **Responsibility** for but also of the importance of good attendance throughout the school year. Our school attendance for 2022-2023 was 85.9%, which is significantly below our target of 95%.

It is important to note that a learner with 85% attendance, over the period of Years 7-11, would miss almost 9 months of school. Socially, every lost day is a lost opportunity to be with friends, create relationships with teachers, have new experiences, develop as individuals, and reach one's potential academically. Poor attendance has a direct impact on attainment, and can reduce a GCSE by up to 2 grades. This could be the difference in passing 5 GCSEs to gain access to Sixth Form or College.

If you feel that there are situations in your life or your child's life that prevent them from attending school, you can get advice and support from your child's Progress Tutor or Progress Leader. Our desire is that we work together to ensure our pupils have the best opportunity to be at school as much as possible.

### **Work Experience**

For the first time since 2019, learners from Ysgol Maesydderwen have this summer had a week of Work Experience. With support from the school and parents, learners have had to identify and secure their own work placement. This has allowed learners to experience what it is like in a working environment and through dedication and hard work the school has received positive reports from employers.

We will start this process with our new Year 10 leavers in the Autumn Term – so my advice to these learners is to start to think **Creatively** about the jobs you would like to experience next year.

### **Non-Pupil Days 2023-24**

I can confirm the Non-Pupil (INSET) Days for the school for the next academic year 2023-24 are as follows:

- Friday 1 September 2023
- Monday 25 September 2023
- Tuesday 26 September 2023
- Friday 22 December 2023
- Monday 8 January 2024
- Monday 1 July 2024

For further details and school term dates please visit <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1166/School-Term-Dates>

## Return to school September 2023

There will be a staggered start to the re-opening of the school in September. The return dates for each year group are as follows:

- Learners in Years 7, 12 and 13 – Monday 4 September 2023
- Learners in Years 8 to 11 – Tuesday 5 September 2022

Finally, I would like to thank you for your support throughout this year. The strong partnership that exists between parents and the school is an undoubted strength and a key factor in success for all. I wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable summer break and we look forward to seeing you again in September.

Yours sincerely,



Phil Grimes  
Headteacher

"Working Together. Achieving More  
Cydwethio a Chyflawni"

ASPIRATION, RESILIENCE, CREATIVITY, RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPECT  
DYHEAD, GWYTNWCH, CREADIGOL, CYFRIFOLDEB A PHARCH

