



## Key Stage 5 – Half Term Update (October 2023)

We are very pleased that this academic year started smoothly and as we approach the end of our first half term, can I take this opportunity to thank you, as parents and carers, for your support so far. It has been a busy but lovely half term. With students achieving excellent results in the summer (GCSE and AS Levels), we were delighted to welcome them into Years 12 and 13 this September. KS5 students are progressing well in their chosen courses, and we are pleased with the overall conduct and attitude of our students since returning in September.

With a wide range of subjects available, our students will be committed to their studies with nine lessons allocated to each subject at KS5, though there are some variations to this. Additionally, the Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales (ASBW), will present its own “Challenges” each year.

Each student will have periods on their timetable with no lesson commitment (non-contact time), designed for self-study to enhance their understanding of the concepts covered in class by their tutors. This is a very important aspect of sixth form study, used effectively it will significantly improve A level performance.

For some students their non-contact time will include the 1 hour session after lunch. Students who have no timetabled lesson 5 can leave the premises after lesson 4. Those who would prefer to remain on-site are very welcome to do so and the Oriel is always available for quiet study. These students will need to “sign in” on the Ipad in Reception. Should a fire alarm sound, we would know who is on the premises. Similarly, if a student needs to leave the premises during the school day (eg. Medical, Driving Test etc), they are required to “sign out” on the Ipad, and if returning that day, sign back in on their return.

You will be invited to meet with teachers to discuss student progress at Parents Evening on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> December. These appointment slots provide a valuable opportunity to engage with staff and discuss academic progress and application to the subject area to date, providing an understanding of the way forward through the academic year. We look forward to seeing you.

As you might have been made aware by your son/daughter, we have had county wide internet issues in schools. Our first “Tracking Data” was due to be emailed to both parents and students this week. It is quite likely that this will now be issued after half term. Following this, all KS5 students are asked to reflect on their attitude to learning, commitment to independent learning and attendance and punctuality. In addition, students have been provided with their ALPS MEG (Minimum expected grade), an indication of what a good outcome might be for each student, based upon their own starting point and national patterns of progress.

The school continues to support local and national fundraising events. We have recently launched our Big Bocs (a community enterprise aimed at reducing food, clothing and equipment waste). Our containers will be a community hub for the redistribution of such items. Should you have any preloved uniform that you no longer need, please drop it at the school, we will launder it and add it to our uniform recycling and exchange scheme at the Bocs. We are also looking to redistribute any unwanted Christmas jumpers. Our recent food drive was a success and we are grateful to those who donated. All items were most welcome. Thank you.

We are always keen to celebrate the achievements of students and this term we have had sporting success in the field of football, boxing, karate and kickboxing. Congratulations to those involved. If we need to be made aware of any other achievements to celebrate, please do not hesitate to

contact us. We have a group of students working towards The Olympus Challenge (a qualification in Ancient History and Classics). Our Art students recently visited London to study the art work of contemporary artists and designers to enrich their studies. Physics students visited Swansea University and are partnered with a local company to solve an engineering STEM problem that will contribute to them achieving a gold crest award. All Year 12 students attended a series of workshops at USW relating to the new ASBW. Data collection and analysis has also been carried out by our Geographers. SEREN Academy students have attended an "Oxbridge" talk at Porthcawl Comprehensive as well as attending the annual SEREN launch and workshops at Bridgend College. We are always proud of the way that Bryntirion Sixth Form students conduct themselves outside of school. They are always extremely well-behaved and very well-mannered; a credit to you all. Yes, they do attend lessons too!

With our early entrants, (Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary), sent off to UCAS by the deadline, we are now busily working on Personal Statements and References for the remaining students applying to university this year. Please take a look at your son/daughter's Personal Statement – We think we know them and yet we learn something new from each personal statement that we read. The UCAS deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. As a school we set an internal deadline, to be able to smoothly process each application. We are looking to process the majority of applications before we break up for Christmas.

Not everyone will choose the University pathway. We have had several students successfully gaining Apprenticeships. We had one young man over the moon to gain an apprenticeship at Aston Martin. We are lucky to have a Careers Wales Adviser - Claire O'Brien - based here in school to support with any dilemmas and unsure students. Students can either visit Claire to make an appointment or email her at [Claire.obrien@careerswales.gov.wales](mailto:Claire.obrien@careerswales.gov.wales). Claire also posts details of any apprenticeship vacancies on our Year 12 and Year 13 Team.

School photographs are now available to view. All students have an access code to view the photographs before purchasing – Christmas gifts for anyone?

Form Class Support – every Tuesday, during registration, Year 12 students support years 7-9 form tutors in their Literacy sessions. Students have been keen to get involved and it is great to see the younger students looking up to the role models that we have in Year 12.

**Compulsory registration takes places every morning from 8.40am.** The majority of the students are adhering to this. Could we ask for your support in encouraging all students to attend. Registration is the first point of contact and any important messages are relayed here as well as time spent mentoring students.

Parents/carers still have access to ClassCharts. As well as monitoring attendance internally, we also rely on parents to monitor their child's attendance using the app. Could parents contact the school to authorise any absences. We will also get in touch if a student falls behind in their attendance so that interventions and support can be put in place. If you require your ClassCharts code, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

We have high expectations of our students when it comes to their personal appearance and are really pleased that our sixth formers are smartly dressed and wear their uniform with pride. Should you need it, our uniform policy is available on our website. Hoodies should not be worn in replacement of a coat.

Finally, we hope that all our sixth form students have a very well-deserved break following a busy half term. We look forward to seeing them on 6<sup>th</sup> November, recharged and raring to go.

Best wishes

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Head of Sixth Form

Hannah Bailey  
Assistant Head of Sixth Form