



December 15th, 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the Christmas holiday after a long and busy term, I would like to thank staff, students, parents and governors for their continued support for Bryntirion. We are, as always, very grateful for your generous support and appreciate the partnership we have with you.

This Autumn Term finishes for pupils on **Friday 22nd December at 3.00 p.m.**

The Spring Term begins for all pupils on **Tuesday 9th January.**

In the final week of term, there are a number of festive events and celebratory events taking place at various times:

- The Carol Service will take place on **Monday 18th December**, in St Mary's Church, Nolton (opposite Riversdale Surgery), commencing at 7.00pm.
- Carols and Cake for grandparents/neighbours – **Tuesday 19th December 2.15 – 3.30pm** at Bryntirion Comprehensive School.
- The Big Bocs open on Wednesday 20th December, Thursday 21st December and Friday 22nd December from 3pm – 4pm.

A - INSET Days

We have three further INSET days planned for 2023:

- **Monday 8th January**
- **Friday 24th May**
- **Monday 22nd July**

B - January & Spring Term Mock Exams

GCSE examinations will take place for many (68) pupils in Year 11 after Christmas. All pupils are aware of these and have been given their individual timetables. The examination is as follows:

- **Wednesday 10th January – GCSE English Literature**
- **W/C January 22nd 2024 – GCSE Science practical examinations**

The mock exams for pupils in Year 11 have been moved to **March 18th, 2024**, to **April 12th, 2024**. These are the weeks before and after the Easter holiday. Timetables for these examinations will be issued in January 2024.



C - Parents' Evenings

I would like to thank Year 12 & 13 parents for their attendance at parents' evening on Thursday 14th December. All other parents' evenings take place in 2024 as follows:

Year 7 – Thursday 14th March

Year 8 – Thursday 21st March

Year 9 – Thursday 9th May

Year 10 – Thursday 18th January

We will host a further meeting in the week commencing **January 22nd, 2024**, for parents of pupils in Year 11. Members of the Senior Leadership Team will meet with parents and pupils discuss progress towards targets, and progression routes following Year 11.

Our 6th Form options evening will be held on **Thursday 8th February**. All meetings will be held in person at the school.

D – Curriculum for Wales

In my letter to parents before the October half term break, I made reference to the publication of 'Curriculum for Wales Learning Intentions' in subjects and Areas of Learning and Experience. This is for Years 7 and 8 only. These can be found in the 'Letters to Parents' section on the school website. The Learning Intentions for the Spring Term in each of these areas will be published next term as we aim to signpost expected progress in skills and knowledge through the year.

Bryntirion has operated a 3-year GCSE programme for options subjects since 2019. This has meant that pupils have been given the opportunity to choose GCSE options in Year 8. The qualifications system is changing from September 2025 in order to reflect the vision and principles in the new Curriculum for Wales. This will include new approaches, options choices and syllabuses. The intention is for these courses to be studied over a two-year period. The full syllabuses and preparatory resources will not be finalised or published this academic year. Schools are therefore unable to plan properly their teaching and learning programmes or prepare fully enough their study resources until they have sight of these.

We are therefore planning for first teaching of GCSE options subjects in September 2025 rather than in September 2024. We are, however, preparing a transition model for Year 9 which builds on the work undertaken in Years 7 and 8, in readiness for the introduction of new GCSEs in September 2025. This transition model will enable pupils to continue to follow a wide curriculum but will also prepare them for the options process where they choose to study these new GCSEs.

E – Parents' Survey

We would like to thank all parents who took the time to respond to the recent online survey. Your comments and suggestions are very important to us; we read and



consider all of them, and look particularly at common concerns or queries arising. We understand from the survey that methods of communication, and sometimes the regularity of communication, is a contention for some parents. We use numerous platforms to communicate with you, and this can cause confusion at times. We will work to streamline this, so that it becomes more manageable.

In the Spring Term parents will receive a Parents' Bulletin, containing important information. This will be published monthly and hope you will find it of use.

F - Winter weather

As you are aware, all schools have been advised to prepare contingency plans should there be weather related issues. We will always try to remain open whenever possible, but this will be dependent on the availability of staff, site conditions and whether it is safe to do so.

Any decision to close is taken following a carefully considered risk assessment. This is generally based on the availability of staff, the safety of the school site and the weather forecast. We will inform you of any closure by text/email and updates will be posted on the School and Council websites with as much notice as possible. Please ensure that you provide up to date contact details so that you are able receive important information.

Should we need to close during the school day as a consequence of adverse weather or for other unforeseen reasons, we will inform you by text and/or email. Please discuss with your children your instructions on where they should go in the event of a school closure during the school day (e, g. to go home to a neighbour or friend or relative).

G – Attendance and Punctuality

I would like to thank parents for working with the school to ensure your child has excellent attendance. Parents will be aware that a high priority for all schools is to improve attendance. Whilst there has been a notable improvement, we are still some ways below pre-pandemic levels. Parents will receive a letter in January with information about your child's attendance. We want to work in partnership with you to ensure that it is as good as possible.

Please be aware that the school will only authorise absence for holidays during term time in exceptional circumstances. Please complete a **holiday form** well in advance of any planned holiday, setting out any such individually unique circumstances. Holiday forms are available from Mrs Yeoman our Attendance Officer
admin@bryntirioncs.bridgend.cymru

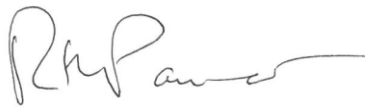
Thank you to parents who have been using the Class Charts app to inform school of any pending absences. This is now a very useful way of communicating to the attendance team who can immediately note and record absences.



We have been focusing on improving punctuality to school and between lessons, so that learning can begin promptly. After Christmas, the 're-set' assemblies we hold with pupils will focus on standards of uniform and the permitted use of mobile phones. We will also be considering 'Setting Goals' to encourage a positive and optimistic start to 2024.

Finally, I hope you all enjoy a peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year, and look forward to seeing all our students return refreshed and ready for a new school term on **Tuesday 9th January 2024**.

Yours sincerely



R K Pawar - Headteacher

Nadolig Llawen a Blyddyn Newydd da

