



Dear Parents and Carers

Return to School – September 2024

I hope you and your families have enjoyed the summer break, and that your children are looking forward to the start of a new school year at Bryntirion. We are very much looking forward to welcoming back everyone on **Wednesday 4th September**. I wrote to you in July to provide you with some details about arrangements for the start of term. My intention now is to provide you with updated information on these plans.

A – Start of Term Arrangements

As INSET for staff takes place on Monday 2nd and Tuesday 3rd September, the first day of term for all pupils in Years 7 to 13 is **Wednesday 4th September**. Pupils in Years 8 to 13 will go directly to their form classrooms for registration at 8.40 a.m. All pupils in Year 7 will assemble in the Sports Hall for registration at 8.40 a.m.

Registration/Wellbeing/Assembly	8.40 - 9.00
Lesson 1	9.00 - 10.00
Lesson 2	10.00 - 11.00
Break	11.00 - 11.20
Lesson 3	11.20 - 12.20
Lesson 4	12.20 - 1.20
Lunch	1.20 - 2.00
Lesson 5	2.00 - 3.00
Extra – Curricular programme	3.00

The school day will be slightly different for Year 7 pupils. This is due to the need for a staggered lunch period to accommodate all pupils accessing school canteens.

Year 7

Registration/Wellbeing/Assembly	8.40 – 9.00
Lesson 1	9.00 – 10.00
Lesson 2	10.00 – 11.00
Break	11.00 – 11.20
Lesson 3	11.20 – 12.20
Lesson 4 – part 1	12.20 - 1.00
Lunch	1.00 – 1.40
Lesson 4 – part 2	1.40 – 2.00
Lesson 5	2.00 – 3.00
Extra – Curricular programme	3.00

B What about catering facilities in school?

Catering provision is unchanged in 2024.25. We have asked the Catering Service at BCBC actively promote and provide healthy options for eating and drinking, and to monitor uptake of these options. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals will receive £2.80 via the cashless catering system each day they attend. Other pupils will still be expected to pay for their meals. Children will be permitted to bring a packed lunch to school.



Pupils in Years 8 and 9 will use the canteen in D Block; those in 10 and 11 will use the Senior Hall canteen in E Block. Year 7 pupils will be informed of the canteen allocated to their form class. Students in Years 12 and 13 are permitted to use either canteen, or can leave the school site should they wish to do so, but have to use the sign-out facility in reception or via the app before leaving.

Cashless payment systems will be in operation as usual from September. Parents/carers will need to ensure there is a sufficient balance on their child's account. Pupils whose parents have provided permission, will be able to use the catering service's fingerprint recognition system; alternatively, they can continue to use PIN numbers. Parents/carers are advised of the need to credit school meal accounts via the '[Pay it](#)' function on the Bridgend County Borough Council website. This is the usual method for adding credits to accounts for school meals.

At the start of term, the queues in the canteen always cause delays and it takes a little time for pupils (and staff) to get into the routine following the summer holiday. For that reason, we operate extended lunch and break for Years 7 during the first week. The queues settle down pretty quickly after any initial complications, so please be patient at the start of term.

Please advise your child that they need to inform either their head of year or school reception if they have not been served or do not have the means to pay on any day. Form tutors will also reinforce this message.

C - Will visitors be allowed onto the school site?

In the interest of security, please note that parents will only be able to come onto the school site for a pre-arranged appointment. We will not permit any other visitors onto the school site without a pre-booked appointment. All visitors must report to reception (ground floor E Block) to sign in.

D - What are the expectations on school uniform for the autumn term?

Uniform, Jewellery and Mobile Devices

We would be grateful for the support of parents in ensuring that children are correctly attired, including appropriate footwear and hair colour as outlined in our school policy, when we return after the summer holiday. Hoodies and leggings are not permitted. Please note that the official badged item for Bryntirion will be on the school jumper. Plain white polo shirts can now be worn as part of the summer uniform. Pupils are expected to wear the Autumn/Winter uniform upon restarting in September.

Second-hand school uniforms are available for parents and carers to acquire through the uniform recycling and exchange scheme. Please contact either Mrs Alison Markey or Mrs Eloise Lowry if you would like to acquire any uniform items through this scheme.

Eloise.LOWRY@bryntirioncs.bridgend.cymru.

Alison.MARKEY@bryntirioncs.bridgend.cymru

The only jewellery permitted is one small plain stud in the lobe of each ear. Pupils are not allowed to wear any other form of body jewellery or piercings, including rings, in the interests of their own health and safety. <https://www.bryntirioncs.bridgend.sch.uk/content/school-uniform>

Please note that:

- Mobile devices/phones must not be seen or heard in any lesson at any time (They must be switched to silent and stored in school bags).
- Mobile devices/phones are permitted to be used appropriately at break and lunchtimes to access school-based electronic platforms (e.g. TEAMS, Classcharts etc.)



- Personal headphones are not to be seen at any time during the school day.

We have established strict measures to address the misuse of mobile devices in school. This will include confiscation (until the end of the school day) where devices are seen or heard in classrooms, and sanctions where pupils either misuse a device or refuse confiscation on request.

D – Be Ready for School

It is important to begin the school year properly equipped for learning. With that in mind, please ensure that your child is ready for school. The required equipment includes:

- black ballpoint pen
- ruler
- pencils
- coloured pencils
- pencil sharpener
- eraser
- maths set – compass, protractor etc
- scientific calculator

E - INSET days & Term dates

I can inform you that there will now be 6 INSET days in the next academic year 2024.25:

INSET 1 – Monday 2nd September

INSET 2 - Tuesday 3rd September

INSET 3 - Monday 2nd December

INSET 4 – Monday 6th January

INSET 5 – Monday 17th February

INSET 6 – Monday 21st July*

*Taken as Twilight.

The term dates for 2024.25 are:

Autumn Term - 2024

Start: Monday 2nd September 2024

Half-term: Monday 28th October 2024 - Friday 1st November 2024

End: Friday 20th December 2024

Spring Term - 2025

Start: Monday 6th January 2025

Half-term: Monday 24th February - Friday 28th February 2025

End: Friday 11th April 2025



Summer Term - 2025

Start: Monday 28th April 2025

Half-term: Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May 2025

End: Monday 21st July 2025

F – Parents’ Evenings

Year 7 – 10th April 2025

Year 8 – 13th March 2025

Year 9 – 27th March 2025

Year 10 – 14th November 2024

Year 11 – 24th October 2024

Year 12/13 – 28th November 2024

All parents’ evenings will take place in person at the school. Details and invitations will be shared prior to the evening. We also ask parents to contribute following these parents’ evening to an annual online consultation and encourage all parents to take part.

Parents of Year 7 pupils

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the parents of pupils who are new to the school; it was a pleasure to meet many of you at the welcome evening held last term. Moving from primary to secondary school is always an important moment in a child’s life and we have made every effort to make this transition as smooth as possible. We want to ensure that your child is happy in school and has settled in well.

We will be conducting a full induction for Year 7 on the first two days of term, focusing on skills, the language of learning used at Bryntirion, and IT induction (use of Class charts, Teams etc.).

With that in mind, there will be a meeting for new parents at **5.00 p.m. in the Senior Hall on Thursday 5th September** at which we will discuss matters such as teaching, learning and assessment, communications and extra-curricular opportunities. Senior and year group staff will be available to respond to any early queries you may have.

G - KS4 and KS5 examination results

We are extremely proud of the results obtained by our students this year. The past years have been such a challenge for every student, and these achievements are so well deserved. At A level there have been some outstanding individual results, and nearly all our students secured the grades necessary to allow them to continue to study in the further higher education institution of their choice, or to enter the world of work. Nearly 30% of all ‘A’ levels were graded at either A* or A, and students of abilities in a wide range of subjects excelled in their studies.

Congratulations to everyone on achieving so well at GCSE also. In such a wide range of qualifications, with pupils of all abilities and interests excelling this year. As always, success in school is as a result of the partnership between pupils, teachers and parents, so our congratulations and thanks extend to everyone.

We wish all those who have now left Bryntirion the very best of luck for the future.



H - Year 11 2024

Pupils in this year's Year 11 will have already taken examinations and other assessments which lead to GCSE qualifications, and we have a good, informed idea of how each pupil is proceeding in each subject. You will note that we have set this year's parents' evening earlier in the school year on Thursday 24th October 2024, in the first part of the Autumn Term. **Parents of all pupils in Year 11 will also be invited to a personal interview with senior staff in January to consider progress being made**, and also identify any essential actions or interventions required to ensure success. You will receive a separate individual invitation to this meeting.

I - Year 9

Pupils in Years 7 & 8 will be the first cohorts at Bryntirion to follow the new Curriculum for Wales. This will continue into Year 9 in 2024, in readiness for the introduction of newly reformed GCSEs from September 2025. The syllabuses for the new GCSEs will not be published in full until the academic year 2024.25. This will help the school to prepare the options process in readiness for the start of GCSEs for September 2025.

J - Our Bryntirion Curriculum

Four Purposes

The national Curriculum for Wales outlines its Four Purposes of Education, enabling learners to become: ambitious and capable learners; enterprising and creative contributors; ethical and informed citizens and healthy and confident individuals. These Purposes inform the design of our own, bespoke curriculum, marrying them with the individual ambitions, interests and potential of every student at Bryntirion. We believe that our responsibility under the Four Purposes is to ensure that students acquire powerful knowledge, understanding and skills to become confident members of society. The curriculum supports our young people to become kind, hardworking individuals, who embody our school values.

Curriculum

At Bryntirion, pupils are taught in subjects. This is because subjects matter. They have an important body of knowledge and specific skills and belong to a rich tradition that is unique to them. (Please see below for curriculum allocation) For students to think critically and to form their own opinions, it is necessary to have something to think about. We therefore value a knowledge-rich approach, delivered by expert teaching staff. Our curriculum is broad and balanced, providing a wealth of learning across disciplinary subjects, and embraces all the mandatory elements: study of English and Welsh; the three Cross-Curricular Skills (numeracy, literacy, digital competency); Relationships & Sexuality Education; Religion, Values & Ethics; Careers and Work-Related Experiences and this is underpinned by a clear emphasis on the central importance of developing pupils' integral skills. Integration of skills is a key feature of our curriculum and is realised through a range of 'challenges' within and across subject disciplines. Cross curricular challenges include: 'My Health', 'My Future', 'Dysgu Byw', 'First Give' and 'My World'.

Progression and Assessment

Our curriculum is structured to ensure that all pupils make progress in their learning as they move through the school, informed by the national Principles of Progression. To support pupils' progress and monitor the effectiveness of our curriculum, we adopt a number of assessment practices. Ongoing '**formative**' assessment activities are those that arise as part of the learning experience in lessons. Teachers assess pupils' understanding and recall during lessons and adapt their teaching or future teaching plans to ensure progress for all. In addition, to identify progress over



time and to enable us to evaluate our practice and curriculum, we conduct more infrequent, substantial ‘**summative**’ style assessments through rich tasks.

Implementation & Review

Our curriculum is not fixed: it is subject to constant review and reiteration. Robust self-evaluation of our curriculum and requires participation from not only our teaching staff, but also from parents/carers, governors and pupils. The curriculum will grow, as we endeavour to meet the needs of our pupils and the challenges that lie ahead of them.

Our aim is:

“To have high expectations and aspirations for everyone, and in everything we do.”

We will do this through:

- High quality teaching and assessment, and a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.
- A culture of strong and secure wellbeing, and positive attitudes to life and learning.
- Effective leading and improving.

K- Celebration of achievements

We are always keen to celebrate the many achievements of pupils, inside and outside school and this may, on occasion, involve **using photographs**. If you do **not** wish your child’s photograph to be part of any publication at school, please inform Mr Pawar in writing. The school has traditionally endeavoured to praise and reward pupils for their effort as well as their attainment, and we will be focusing on ensuring these achievements are celebrated and communicated as widely as possible.

Information regarding pupils’ achievement is often published on the school’s website and twitter account, along with other key information. This information is updated on a regular basis and includes reference to current and forthcoming events and activities.

L - Attendance and Holiday Leave

It is a significant school priority to improve attendance in 2024.25. Overall, on average, every pupil missed a day’s school every two weeks. In 2023.24 attendance was approximately 90.3%. This meant that, on average, **4 weeks of school were missed by each pupil last year, and this is well below levels of attendance in 2019**. This means that 4 weeks of school were missed on average by each pupil, with attendance in school weaker in the essential exam years.

Regular school attendance is essential and vital to a good education. It is a high priority for the school and its teaching staff, governors, parents and pupils. Whilst attendance at Bryntirion compares favourably with other schools, it is well below our own expectations and before the pandemic in 2019.

The link between attendance and attainment is so clear. If pupils are in school they will usually do well academically, so we encourage all parents to ensure that pupils’ attendance is as good as possible. Parents will recognise that both the school and parents have legal responsibilities to try to maintain the highest possible attendance – we therefore need to work together with this aim in mind.

If your child is unable to attend school, please contact the school by 9.00 a.m. If your child is absent without an explanation, you will be contacted and asked to provide a reason for your child’s absence.



We continue to need your support in ensuring all pupils have good attendance and want to work in partnership with you to achieve this.

Please be aware that **holiday leave during term time is not encouraged as any absence will affect your child's educational progress and attainment.** Please contact the school if any such absences are planned. **Only in exceptional circumstances, and only if your child has good attendance, will a request for holiday leave be granted. You will be asked to complete a request form outlining the unique reason for your request; please ensure it is submitted at least 4 weeks in advance of any planned absence.**

In conclusion, I am very grateful for your support in ensuring your child is fully prepared for a return to school in September. Please use the information above to speak with them and settle any queries that they may have and impress upon them the need for cooperation and good behaviour. We want them all to be **Ready, Respectful and Safe! This will help them to Be Successful at Bryntirion.**

Kind regards and best wishes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R K Pawar', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

R K Pawar (Headteacher)

