

Year 11

The Year Ahead

Information Pack

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Headteacher's Welcome

As Year 11 pupils embark upon their new GCSE courses, we thought it might be useful to provide you with some important information to help you and your child prepare for the year ahead. As you will be aware, Year 11 pupils will be studying a brand-new set of GCSEs that are aligned with the Curriculum for Wales that your child has been following since Year 7. Whilst the content of many of the new qualifications remains the same, there is a greater emphasis on non-examined assessment (NEA) and so pupils will need to organise their time effectively to ensure that key deadlines are met.

This information pack contains key information on NEAs, dates for examinations and other importance deadlines. It also provides some useful information on the importance of attendance, support for parents and some study tips for pupils to help them prepare for external examinations.

We wish our Year 11 pupils every success this year and we will continue to support them to achieve the highest standards. We look forward to working with you over the year to achieve this key aim.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Mead'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'D' being large and prominent.

Mr D Mead

Headteacher

2. Key Assessment Dates

Subject	NEA Requirements and Dates (If applicable)	Summer Examination Dates (if applicable)
Art	GCSE Mock Exam – (5hours) VM D9 11A – 17/11/26 RS D8 11B – 18/11/26 Unit 1 – Submission – 07/12/26	Unit 2 Exams – 10hours & Submission deadline: VM 11A G1 – 12/04/26 VM 11A G1 – 13/04/26 VM 11B G2 – 15/04/26 VM 11B G2 – 16/04/26 RS 11B G1 – 12/04/26 RS 11B G1 – 13/04/26 RS 11B G2 – 15/04/26 RS 11B G2 – 16/04/26
Biology		Unit 1 10 th June Unit 2 11 th May (Practical exam unit 3 Jan/Feb)
Business Studies	Task 4: W/C 19 th Oct. Task 3: W/C 14 th Dec. Task 5: W/C 4 th Jan.	21 st May
Chemistry		Unit 1 - 11 th June (re-sit) Unit 2 – 17 th May (Practical exam unit 3 Jan/Feb)
Construction	Continual NEA Tasks.	
Computing	N/A	Unit 2 (on-screen programming exam): Wednesday 19 th May 2027 (PM)
Drama	Unit 1 – Monday 30 th November 2026 Unit 2 – February (set by WJEC in November/December - external examiner)	Unit 3 – Friday the 14 th of May 2027
Digital Technology	Unit 3 NEA completed. Unit 2 NEA started, to be completed February 2027	Unit 1 (on-screen exam): Monday 7 th June 2027 (PM)
English	Unit 5 ('Macbeth'): w/c 25 th January Unit 5 (Discussion): w/c 8 th March	<i>Unit 1 Resit: 2nd November</i> <i>Unit 4b ('An Inspector Calls'): 5th November</i> Unit 4b Resit: 19 th May Unit 6: 8 th June
Engineering	Work to be completed by Friday 7 th May, 2027	
French	Unit 1 Nea (Oral exam): 6 th April Unit 2 Nea (writing on film) w/c 8 th March	Unit 3 Listening : 26 th May am Unit 4 (Reading and writing): 8 th June pm
Food and Nutrition		
Geography	Unit 2 Fieldwork NEA: Sept-Oct	Unit 3: 26 th May

	Unit 4 Sustainable Solutions DME: Nov-Dec	No unit 1 resits
Health and Social Care	NEA 1 – 23 rd October 2026 NEA 2 – 6 th February 2027	28 th May 2027 pm
History	Unit 4: NEA – 9 th October 2026	Unit 1 (legacy) – 20 th May 2027 Unit 2 (legacy) – 28 th May 2027 Unit 3 (legacy) - 11 th June 2027* resit only
ICT	Unit 2 NEA: to be completed February 2027	Unit 1 On-screen exam: Thursday 20 th May 2027 (PM)
Mathematics		Unit 3 Nov 11 th (anyone who missed Unit 1/Unit2 in Summer 2026 will be entered in November for these exams) Unit 1 May 14 th Unit 2 May 27 th Unit 3 June 14 th
Music	Unit 1 Performance exam – Tuesday 1 st of December Unit 2 composition portfolio due – Monday 11 th of January	Unit 3 - Thursday 27 th of May 2027
Physical Education	Practical marks submitted by 5 th February 2027	20 th May 2027 pm
Physics		Unit 1 Triple resit 16 th June (AM) Unit 2 Triple 25 th May (AM) Unit 3 Triple (practical exam) Jan/Feb 2027
Religious Studies ('Full Course')	Unit 4 – November 2026 – March 2027	Unit 3 exam – Monday 7 th June
Science		Biol Unit 4 – 11 th May Chem Unit 5 – 17 th May Phys Unit 6 – 25 th May <u>Re-sits</u> Biol Unit 1 – 10 th June Chem Unit 2 – 15 th June Phys Unit 3 – 18 th June <u>Prac exam</u> Jan/Feb
Skills Challenge	Global Community Challenge: Friday 13 th November 2026 Individual Project: Friday 12 th March 2027	All work to be submitted by: Friday 12 th March 2027
Textiles	Unit 1 Mock Exam – (5hours)	Unit 2 Exams – 10hours

	GG C3 11Tex1 – 16/11/26 GG C3 11Tex2 - 17/11/26 Unit 1 – Submission – 07/12/26	& Submission deadline: GG 11Tex G1 – 08/04/26 GG 11Tex G1 – 09/04/26 GG 11Tex G2 – 12/04/26 GG 11Tex G2 – 13/04/26
Welsh	2026 :Unit 1 (oral exam) Nov 30 th – Dec 4 th 2027: Unit 2 (oral exam) Feb 22 nd – 26 th	2027:Unit 3 (reading and writing exam)- May 13 th 2027: Unit 4 (reading and writing exam)- May 24 th

3. Understanding Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)

What is NEA?

NEA stands for non-exam assessment. It is a form of coursework that contributes to your child's final grade in most subjects. Unlike traditional exams, NEAs are completed over a period of time and often involve research, practical work, extended writing, or project-based tasks. NEAs allow students to demonstrate their understanding, creativity, and ability to work independently. They are an essential part of many qualifications and can significantly impact final outcomes.

Why is NEA important?

NEAs give students the opportunity to:

- Apply their knowledge in real-world or practical contexts
- Develop independent learning and time management skills
- Showcase strengths that may not be fully reflected in written exams

The work is marked either by teachers or exam boards, depending on the subject, and forms a percentage of the final GCSE grade

How You Can Support Your Child

- Encourage Good Time Management – Help your child plan their work and avoid last-minute stress.
- Create a Quiet Study Space – A calm, distraction-free environment at home can help your child focus.
- Show Interest – Ask your child about their NEA topic and progress.
- Avoid Doing the Work for Them – NEAs must be the student's own work.
- Keep in Touch with School – Encourage your child to speak to their teacher if they need help.
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Tips for Managing NEA Stress

- Break Tasks into Steps – Divide the NEA into smaller, achievable goals.
- Use a Planner or Calendar – Visualising deadlines can reduce anxiety.
- Encourage Regular Breaks – Short breaks help maintain focus.
- Promote Healthy Habits – Good sleep, meals, and exercise support wellbeing.
- Celebrate Progress – Recognising effort boosts morale.
- Stay Positive and Reassuring – Remind your child that asking for help is okay.

We understand that NEAs can be a source of pressure, but with the right support and strategies, your child can approach them with confidence and resilience. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

4. Attendance and Punctuality

✦ Attendance: Every Day Counts

Your child's education builds day by day. Missing school—even occasionally—can have a big impact.

Attendance %	Days Missed	Lessons Missed
100%	0	0
95%	9.5 days	47 lessons
90%	19 days	95 lessons
85%	28.5 days	142 lessons

Each school day = 5 lessons. That's a lot of missed learning!

🕒 Punctuality Matters Too

Being late by just 10 minutes a day = 6 full school days lost per year.

Minutes Late Daily	Days Lost Annually
5 mins	3 days
10 mins	6 days
15 mins	10 days
30 mins	19 days

Late arrivals often miss:

- Key instructions
- Starter activities
- Whole lessons

🎓 Impact on GCSE Grades (A–G)

- Pupils with 95%+ attendance are twice as likely to achieve Grades A–C.
- Pupils with below 90% attendance are more likely to not reach their full potential or achieve no GCSEs.
- Missing just 10 extra days can reduce the chance of achieving Grade C or above by up to 50%.

👜 Why It Matters Long-Term

- Poor attendance affects college, apprenticeships, and job prospects.
- Employers value reliability—being present and on time is a life skill.

✅ What Is Good Attendance?

- 95% or higher is considered good - this allows for occasional illness but ensures consistent learning.

💡 How You Can Help

- Encourage daily attendance unless your child is genuinely unwell.
- Ensure they arrive on time every day.
- Contact school if you need support—help is available.

5. Support For Parents

- Maths for Parents: New **Foundation** GCSE Curriculum (Group 1) - Wednesday 6.30pm to 9pm - Live Online
- Maths for Parents: New **Foundation** GCSE Curriculum (Group 2) - Thursday 12.15pm to 2.45pm - Face-to-Face at Bridgend College (Bridgend Campus) or Live Online
- Maths for Parents: New **Higher** GCSE Curriculum - Tuesday 6.30pm to 9pm - Live Online
- For more information contact crroberts@bridgend.ac.uk

6. 🧠 GCSE Revision Tips for Students in Wales

Smash your exams with confidence!

A. 📅 Plan Like a Pro - Structure is your secret weapon!

- **Create a revision timetable:** Break subjects into manageable chunks. Prioritise topics you find hardest.
- **Use the WJEC exam calendar:** Know your exam dates and work backwards. [WJEC Exam Timetable](#)
- **Balance is key:** Include breaks, hobbies, and sleep in your schedule.

B. 📝 Active Revision Techniques - Don't just read—engage!

- **Flashcards:** Great for definitions, formulas, and key facts.
- **Mind maps:** Visualise connections between ideas.
- **Teach it:** Explain topics to a friend or family member.
- **Past papers:** Use WJEC papers to practise under timed conditions.

C. 🎨 Subject-Specific Tips - Tailor your approach!

Subject	Tip
English	Learn key quotes, practise essay structures, and analyse themes.
Maths	Drill past paper questions and memorise formulas.
Science	Use diagrams, flashcards, and practice applying concepts.
Welsh	Revise grammar rules and practise writing in different formats.
History/Geog	Create timelines and case study summaries.

D. 🧘 Stay Well, Stay Sharp - Your brain needs care too!

- **Sleep 7–9 hours:** Memory and focus depend on it.
- **Eat brain-friendly foods:** Think nuts, berries, and whole grains.
- **Take breaks:** Use the Pomodoro technique—25 mins work, 5 mins rest.
- **Stay active:** A walk or workout boosts concentration

E. 📱 Smart Use of Tech - Let your phone help, not hinder!

- **Apps to try:** Seneca, Quizlet, BBC Bitesize, WJEC resources.
- **Limit distractions:** Use “Focus Mode” or app blockers during study time.
- **Record yourself:** Listening to your notes can reinforce learning.

F. 💬 Final Words of Wisdom!

- **Start early:** Cramming = stress.
- **Ask for help:** Teachers, friends, and family are there for you.
- **Believe in yourself:** You've got this. Pob lwc! 🍀
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7. Post 16 Destination

As you approach the end of Year 11, it is important to start considering the opportunities available after GCSEs. In Wales, there are a range of pathways designed to suit different interests, strengths and career ambitions. These include studying A Levels in sixth form, vocational qualifications such as BTECs or equivalent courses, apprenticeships, and employment with training.

Choosing the right pathway is a personal decision and should be based on your skills, interests, future goals and preferred style of learning. Whether you are aiming for university, a higher apprenticeship, a skilled trade or direct employment, there are excellent opportunities available to help you achieve your ambitions.

Throughout Year 11, you will receive information, guidance and support from school staff, careers advisers and post-16 providers to help you make informed choices about your future. We encourage you to explore all available options carefully and take advantage of open evenings, careers events and guidance interviews before making your final decisions.

Your post-16 journey is the first step towards achieving your long-term goals, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

In the coming weeks as a first step you will complete an online survey. This will indicate your preferred destination at this point and allow for more targeted support from school staff.

8. Bryntirion Sixth Form

We are very proud of our thriving Sixth Form and we currently have 230 students studying in year 12 and 13. The Sixth Form Open Evening is on the 18th February and we warmly welcome all potential students and parents/guardians to this event. There will be more information sent out closer to the time. Below is a copy of the current sixth form options which reflects the breadth and balance of our inclusive curriculum.



NAME: _____ FORM: _____ 2026 (Level 3 Courses)

OPTION A		OPTION B		OPTION C (Y Mon+Wednes)		OPTION D (X Tues+Thurs)		OPTION E	
Biology		BTEC ICT		English Language and Literature		Mathematics		Biology	
Computing		Physics		Chemistry		Psychology		Media Studies	
Religious Studies		English Literature		Music		Sport		Economics	
Performing Arts		Physical Education		Business Studies		Art / Textiles		Geography	
Art		Health and Social Care		History				Criminology	
French				Welsh				Mathematics	

Twilight (Online sessions after school)			
Law		Further Maths	