

# **YSGOL RHIWABON**



## **PARENTS' HANDBOOK**

**2009 – 2010**

The Autumn term will begin at 8.55 am on Wednesday 2nd September.

Though students will start their timetable as soon as possible they will be supported in many ways during the first few days. They will have early admission to lunch and will be escorted to the bus queues.

The staff of the school look forward to meeting your son/daughter and trust that his/her time with us will be enjoyable and productive.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EDUCATIONAL SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

### EVERY DAY AT SCHOOL COUNTS

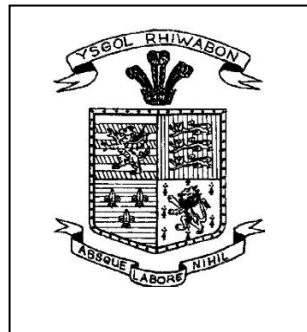
Parents are reminded that there are only 190 statutory school days in one year. There are 175 days (weekends and school holidays) available to use for holidays, which would not have a negative effect on your child's education.

Research has shown that children who have the best rates of attendance achieve the best results and that taking a holiday in term time will adversely affect students' potential.

A startling reality is that if a student has just 90% attendance in a year, it means they have missed the equivalent of four weeks of lessons. If they then have just 90% attendance for their five years of secondary education, they will have missed the equivalent of half a school year!

We would therefore ask parents to make every effort to avoid asking for permission to take their children out of school for holidays during term time. Where a student does not have an acceptable pattern of attendance, requests are likely to be refused.

### ATTENDANCE



*'Every Child Matters- Every Day Counts'*

**95%** attendance is the target  
of every pupil in Ysgol Rhiwabon

This is an average attendance over the year and includes periods of illness or other absence

Remember- 90% attendance means that you are absent for one day every fortnight. This is not an acceptable average



## **OUR SCHOOL VALUES**

At Ysgol Rhiwabon everyone has:

- the right to learn
- the right to be respected
- the right to be safe

## **RELEVANT STAFF**

### **SENIOR STAFF**

Headteacher:	Mrs A Williams
Deputy Headteacher:	Mrs J Wilson
Assistant Headteachers:	Mr J Hotchkiss Mr M Leather Mrs M Ferron-Evans Mr H Phillips
Business Manager	Mr G Evans

### **LEAD LEARNERS**

Year 7	Mr P Bingham
Year 8	Ms A Navarro
Year 9	Mrs S Cooper
Year 10	Mr D Nuttall
Year 11	Miss L Griffiths
Director of Studies 14-19	Mrs P Gooding
Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator	Mrs J Williams
Behaviour Manager	Mrs S Hughes

### **PASTORAL SUPPORT STAFF**

(who are often the most readily available on the telephone)

Mrs D Hellen  
Mrs S Phillips

## **ORGANISATION**

The pastoral structure of the school is based on a year system. Each year in the school has a member of staff designated as a Lead Learner; he/she will have overall responsibility for all aspects of students' welfare. Mr P Bingham is Lead Learner for Year 7. The Form Tutor and Lead Learner form vital links between home and school. The Form Tutor will register your child each day and will monitor attendance, punctuality, uniform and equipment.

## **THE SCHOOL DAY**

The school day is organised as follows:

### **Times of the School Day**

8.55 am – 9.10 am	Registration
9.10 am – 10.10 am	Lesson 1
10.10 am – 10.25 am	Break
10.25 am – 11.25 am	Lesson 2
11.25 am – 12.25 pm	Lesson 3
12.25 pm – 1.05 pm	Lunch
1.05 pm – 2.05 pm	Lesson 4
2.05 pm – 3.05 pm	Lesson 5

Students' attendance in registration and all lessons is recorded.

Parents should note that students will be supervised from 8.45 am until 3.15 pm only, unless they are participating in extra-curricular activities organised by the school.

## **PARENTS' EVENINGS**

There will be two occasions on which parents of Year 7 students will be invited into school to discuss their children's progress. Full details of all Parents' Evenings and other events will be provided in a Parents' Calendar which will be issued in September.

## **CURRICULUM PATTERN: YEAR 7**

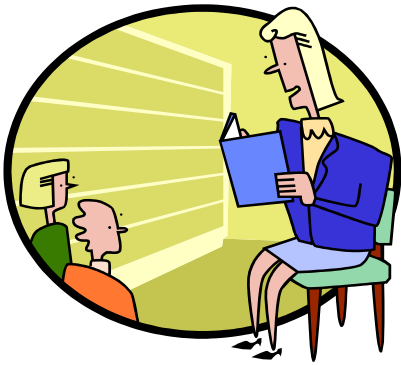
<b><u>Subject</u></b>	<b><u>Number of hours per fortnight</u></b>
English	6
Mathematics	6
Science	5
French	4
Welsh	4
History	3
Geography	3
Religious Education	2
Technology	3
Information Technology	2
Art	2
Music	2
PE/Games	4
Drama	2
SEAL	1
Tutor Period	1

## **OUR CURRICULUM**



The role of parents in encouraging and supporting their child's education is a vital one. We rely on regular support and interest from home to maintain a high level of achievement for every student in the school. We believe that children thrive on success, so we are continually looking for further ways of recognising and praising students' success in as wide a range of activities as we can, both in the classroom and beyond it.

Our working week consists of twenty-five lessons. These are organised within a ten-day, two-week timetable to enable us to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum and to ensure that the students have the appropriate number of hours for each subject.



We have very strong links with our feeder Primary schools and this means that when students come to us in Year 7 they settle quickly and their work progresses naturally from the work they have been doing in Year 6. Students now commence their Secondary school work in Mathematics, English and Science in the last term of Year 6 and their exercise books are brought up with them to commence their work in Year 7.

When students start at Ysgol Rhiwabon they are taught mainly in mixed ability groups. This allows students to settle and to prove themselves before they are organised into sets according to their needs and abilities.



## **REPORTS AND ASSESSMENT**

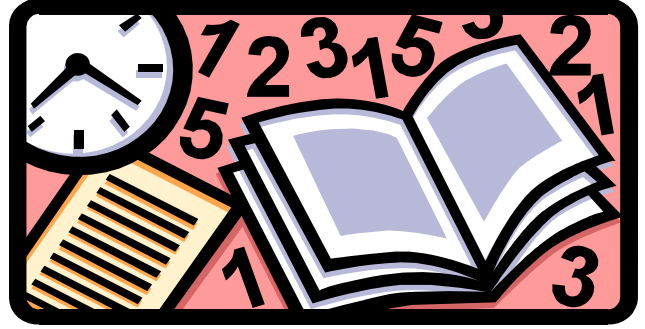
Continuous assessment and testing of each student's progress is built into all subjects. Students are set targets for improvement in all their subjects and these are reviewed regularly during the year. Students' progress is reported termly and regular assessment ensures that each student's work is continuously monitored. Parents also have the opportunity each year to come to school to discuss progress at parents' evenings. Parents are welcome to make an appointment at any time to discuss any matter of concern and the initial contact should be with the Form Tutor or Lead Learner.

## **HOMEWORK**

All good schools approach homework with high expectations and Ysgol Rhiwabon is no exception.

Successful homework policies are based on a three-way partnership: school, students, parents.

Here in our school we set regular homework for all our students from Years 7 to 11.



Our parents sign a home-school agreement with an undertaking to support children at home with all aspects of homework and coursework. Our students also sign this agreement which highlights the importance of independent study. We have outstanding facilities on this site which allow students to work independently and we offer every assistance, so that progress can be consolidated away from the classroom. All our students are issued with a student planner to record homework details and this can be looked at regularly both by form tutors and by parents to help our young people to continue to improve and develop. Parents are asked to check and sign their child's planner each week. A student who completes homework is a successful student and Ysgol Rhiwabon is the place for such students.

## **UNIFORM**

We are proud of our school and proud of our students and we like to feel that they carry their identity with them into the community. The school's current uniform and PE kit requirements are listed below. We expect parents to support the school throughout the five statutory years by ensuring that uniform is worn as a matter of course. **Our green school sweatshirt is a compulsory item of uniform and each student must have one with them in school - this ruling may be relaxed in the Summer term depending on the weather.**

- Plain white polo shirt (**no logos**)
- School sweatshirt (round-necked, bottle green **with school logo**) available from RAM Leisure & Workwear Limited, Trinity House, Whitegate Industrial Complex, Wrexham, LL13 8UG  
Telephone Number: 01978 360360.
- Black tailored trousers (no denim or combats). Optional black knee-length skirt.
- Matching plain socks.
- Plain black or dark sensible shoes. No trainers with logos or sports stripes. Boots should not be worn.

**High heels (i.e. heels higher than 2 inches), flip flops or shoes without backs are not suitable for school for health and safety reasons.**

## **Appearance**

Like any reasonable organisation we allow no extremes of appearance at Ysgol Rhiwabon. Jewellery is limited to a watch, **one** plain ring and **one** pair of plain gold or silver studs in pierced ears. **No other facial piercings are allowed.**

Similarly we do not permit extreme hairstyles (no unnatural colours, shaved heads, shaved patterns in the hair e.g. tramlines or long Mohicans) or excessive make-up. Eye shadow and eye liner are not acceptable.

## **PE KIT**

Students are expected to possess the necessary and appropriate kit for Physical Education and Games.

### **Boys**

#### **Games Kit**

Plain red football shirt  
Black shorts  
Red football socks  
Football boots  
Black tracksuit for winter  
Trainers



#### **Indoor Kit**

Plain white T-shirt  
White shorts  
White socks  
Trainers



### **Girls**

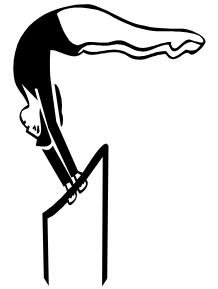
#### **Games Kit**

Plain white T-shirt  
Black shorts  
White socks  
Trainers  
Black tracksuit



#### **Gym Kit**

Plain white T-shirt  
Black shorts  
White socks  
Trainers  
Black tracksuit



### **ALL CLOTHING MUST BE CLEARLY LABELLED**

It is essential that all clothing and footwear worn for PE are different from those worn during the rest of the day.

### **NON-PARTICIPATION IN PE**

If an injury or serious illness prevents a student from taking part in PE lessons parents are asked to provide their child with a letter to hand to the PE teacher.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY AND VALUABLES**

Items like mobile phones, personal stereos and radios are inevitably prone to damage or theft; the school cannot be responsible for this as these items should not be used in school. If students are seen to be using any of these items they will be asked to take them to the school office. A receipt will be issued and the item can be collected at the end of the day. Items will not be returned to students who persistently breach this rule; in this case parents will be asked to visit the school to collect the item. These measures go a long way to preventing unnecessary accidents or loss of expensive items for the young people in our care.

## **EQUIPMENT**

- 1 All students must have a suitable bag in which to carry books etc. to and from school. Small handbags are unsuitable.
- 2 All students should have with them every day a pen, pencil, ruler, protractor, pair of compasses and their **planner**. Please note that these and other items of basic equipment are available from the Mathematics Shop in the school - prices listed below.
- 3 To protect their clothing in Technology students are supplied with aprons by the school. Parents do not therefore need to buy aprons.
- 4 Mathematics shop prices (subject to change). Further details available from Mathematics teachers.

Black/red/blue/green pens	15p
HB pencils	10p
Pencil sharpeners (plastic)	10p
Protractors	15p
Erasers: Large	15p
Small	10p
Compasses	45p
Clear rulers (30cm)	25p
Clear rulers (15cm)	15p
Angle measurers	60p

- 5 Students will require a calculator for parts of their course, though **when they are needed adequate notice will be given**. Examination syllabuses in Years 10 and 11 require specific functions available only on scientific calculators.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Good attendance is vital for success; students need to be present in lessons in order to learn. It is difficult to catch up with missed work at any stage of school. Students, more than ever, find that the pressures of examinations and coursework increase if time is lost through absence.

Whilst **it is the parents' legal responsibility to ensure regular and punctual attendance**, it is important that there is effective liaison between home and school. We ask parents to provide a letter of explanation when a child returns to school from absence, or to phone the school office. Similarly if parents want their child to leave the school premises, we ask that they explain the absence by letter or telephone. In the case of a medical appointment, the appointment card is sufficient. Letters/appointment cards must be countersigned by the appropriate Lead Learner before a student signs out. Students who leave the school premises during the day are expected to sign out at the school office.

Parents who wish to take their child on holiday with them during term time may request a holiday form. Permission will normally be given for genuine requests except in cases where students have had unexplained or significant absences during the year. Parents should note that it can be difficult for children to catch up with work which has been missed.

Where students are absent for an extended period for a genuine reason, we arrange for work to be sent home.

## **EDUCATION SOCIAL WORKER**

Mrs Jeanie Dunsmuir is the Educational Support Officer (ESO) serving Ysgol Rhiwabon and its feeder primary schools. She is available for help or discussion of issues/problems and has an office in school.

## **LUNCHTIME ARRANGEMENTS**

Students in Year 7 remain on the school site during the mid-day break unless parents have made a written request for the student to have lunch at home. In such cases parents are responsible for students' behaviour and safety outside school.

## **SCHOOL MEALS**



Ysgol Rhiwabon is fortunate in having a dining facility and provides students with a wide variety of hot food and snacks.

The school operates a cashless dining system. The system is controlled by the latest technology and avoids the need to have cash.

Each student is provided with a plastic card. When presented in the school dining room the card allows the student to purchase food without using cash.

Each student has an individual account which needs to be kept in credit by the parent/carer. At no time is the card worth any money, so if a card is lost or stolen, any value is put onto a replacement card. If a card is lost, a charge of £2 is made for a replacement.

Students on free meal entitlement are issued with an identical card. The value of their meal goes automatically onto the card each day.

Free meal cards can also have money added. If your child buys food exceeding the free meal value the extra amount is deducted from the money credited to the card. The value is currently under review by Wrexham County Borough Council. For 2008-2009 the entitlement was £1.73.

## **ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

If a student is ill in school he/she must inform the appropriate member of staff. If necessary, parents will be contacted and arrangements will be made for the child to be taken home. Parents are asked to ensure that the school always has an up-to-date telephone number to contact in the event of a child's illness, and parents may be requested to come to school to take their child home.

## **MEDICAL INFORMATION**

The school aims to make life as pleasant, productive and comfortable as possible for all students. To help us to achieve this, parents of new students are asked to supply written details of any medical problems to the Lead Learner. This will enable us to maintain records of medication used and action necessary in the event of an emergency. The Community Health Physician is in regular contact with the school and can assist in producing a Health Care Plan in appropriate cases. Parents are, of course, expected to inform the school of any new or changed medical condition which may arise after a student is admitted to the school.



Our school nurse helps with Health Education within the school as well as arranging medical visits, treatment and examinations. Appointments to see the nurse (who is not based on the school site) can be made through the school office.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE**

Form Tutors and Lead Learners form the backbone of a strong structure which provides care for students throughout the school. Form Tutors are the link between the academic, social and pastoral sides of school life, while Lead Learners co-ordinate the work of their year teams and are the first contact between home and school.

Students in Years 7 to 9 have regular lessons as a class group with their Form Tutor. During these lessons Personal and Social Education is taught and tutors have the opportunity to discuss and monitor students' progress. Parents are encouraged to contact the Lead Learner or Form Tutor at an early stage to discuss progress or share concerns. Children are most successful when they know that teachers and parents work together.

The Educational Support Officer works with the teaching staff to help students and families. She liaises closely with the Lead Learners and other staff and links with other agencies which may provide support for our students and their families. The Educational Support Officer will pursue cases of unexplained absence.

We are fortunate to have the services of a NSPCC Counsellor on one morning per week. Students may make appointments with her via the school office. Counselling sessions are confidential and have proved very useful to many students over recent years.

We believe that orderly conduct which shows consideration for others is very important. Without it, students cannot achieve their potential and teachers cannot get on with their teaching. To help us to work together to achieve our aims, we have a school behaviour policy which has been approved by staff, governors, and students via the school council. At an early stage in their career here, students are made aware of the high standards of behaviour which are expected of them.

We believe that all students have the right to be educated in an environment where there is mutual respect and co-operation. Bullying is contrary to this approach and we do everything possible to discourage it.

Bullying is when someone deliberately goes out of their way to **threaten, frighten, abuse or hurt** someone else. It is also **taunting** or **name calling** as well as **damaging a person's property, clothing or schoolwork**. It is **ganging up** on someone and **isolating** them.

If students think that they are being bullied, they should **TELL SOMEONE**. They can speak to any member of staff. If they cannot do this, then parents can contact school. Reporting bullying is not tale-telling. If it is not reported, it may get worse.

**ALL REPORTED INCIDENTS WILL BE INVESTIGATED AND ACTED UPON.**

### **REWARDS AND SANCTIONS**

Students gain merits for all positive aspects of school life such as attendance, participation in extra-curricular events and good behaviour, as well as for academic effort and achievement.

Merits gained will be recognised with awards and will also enable students to be entered in a special draw for prizes at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms. The aim of this system is to reward as many aspects of positive school performance as possible, for as many students as possible.

There is also a system of sanctions for students whose conduct or work is not of a satisfactory standard. In many instances, a few words of reprimand to a student are sufficient. If, however, further action needs to be taken it may include extra work, referral to Form Tutors, Head of Department or Lead Learners, detention at lunchtime or after school, and putting a student on report. Where a student is involved in serious misbehaviour they may be placed in the Internal Exclusion room for one or more days. Parents are given notice if a student is placed in detention after school. It is the parents' responsibility to arrange safe transport home for their child after detention. **Clearly this system must apply to all children irrespective of the home location.** In extreme cases students may be excluded from school for a fixed number of days, or permanently. We always involve parents at an early stage if their child is having serious or persistent difficulties, and hope to discuss the situation with them.

The school has a policy for the control or restraint of students by staff in circumstances when a student's behaviour appears likely to be a hazard to others or to himself or herself. The policy may be viewed on request to the school office. For students to gain most from school they must attend regularly and punctually. Our main aim is to ensure that our students are able to benefit fully from all that the school has to offer. We believe that if they are happy, they will be busy and will be able to make the most of their potential, gaining the qualifications and the social skills that they need to follow their chosen courses and careers when they leave school.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Collective worship takes place on a daily basis during tutor time. At this time students are encouraged to reflect on the social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of Christian life. Year Assemblies take place every fortnight offering the opportunity for collective worship, year and school notices and to celebrate success. School aims are promoted and students are encouraged to reflect upon moral issues and spiritual values.

Information on procedures to be followed if parents wish to request that their child be wholly or partly excused from collective worship or religious education is available from the Headteacher.

## **HOME-SCHOOL AGREEMENT**

The Home-School agreement is issued during the first week of school as part of the School Planner.

## **VISITS, ACTIVITIES, CLUBS**

It is hoped that a number of visits will be arranged during the year, both educational and social. Similarly, there will be lunchtime clubs and activities - sporting, musical etc. - which students are encouraged to join.

All these extra-curricular activities are intended to enrich students' lives at school, by giving them a range of experiences and helping them to develop their personal interests.

## **CHARGING POLICY**

Where possible, activities are free to all students. It is, however, sometimes necessary to ask parents to make contributions to enable activities to take place. Within its limited resources the school is able to support individuals who have financial difficulties to take part in activities which are particularly important for their personal development. Any such request should be made in the first instance to the member of staff responsible for that activity. Under certain circumstances the local authority may be able to help. Further details are available from the school in the first instance.

All parents will be asked to sign a form (required by the Local Education Authority) giving their permission for students to participate in normal curricular activities which take place outside the school. For other extra-curricular visits, parents will be asked to sign a separate form for each activity.

In accordance with the Governors' Charging Policy parents may be expected to pay the cost of any wilful damage to property.

## **BUSES**

Changes are likely to the present bus routes and pick-up and drop-off times. A timetable will be sent to you in the near future. **Our transport providers will refuse to carry on their vehicles any student who behaves in an anti-social manner.**

## THE SCHOOL YEAR 2009 - 2010

Provisional, subject to final decision by the LEA

### Autumn Term 2009

Term begins	Wednesday	2nd September 2009
Close for half term	Friday	23rd October 2009
Open after half term	Monday	2nd November 2009
End of term	Friday	18th December 2009

### Spring Term 2010

Term begins	Tuesday	5 <sup>th</sup> January 2010
Close for half term	Friday	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2010
Open after half term	Monday	22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2010
End of term	Thursday	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2010

### Summer Term 2010

Term begins	Tuesday	13th April 2010
May Day	Monday	3rd May 2010
Close for half term	Friday	28th May 2010
Open after half term	Monday	7th June 2010
End of term	Friday	16th July 2010

### Training Days

Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2009
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2009
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2010
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2010
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2010
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2010
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2010

We hope that you find the information in this booklet helpful. If there are any other matters you would like to have explained, please contact the school. We are always pleased to see parents so that between us we can ensure that all students have every opportunity to develop their talents and to make full use of their potential. Students, for their part, are expected to take pride in belonging to the school and to take full advantage of the opportunities offered to them.



**Ysgol Rhiwabon**  
**Ruabon**  
**Wrexham**  
**LL14 6BT**  
**Tel: Wrexham (01978) 822392**  
**Fax: (01978) 814918**



**Pennaeth - Angela Williams BA , NPQH - Headteacher**

**E-mail: [mailbox@rhiwabon-high.wrexham.sch.uk](mailto:mailbox@rhiwabon-high.wrexham.sch.uk)**  
**Website: [www.ysgolrhiwabon.co.uk](http://www.ysgolrhiwabon.co.uk)**

## **INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO YOUR CHILD**

Lead Learner for Year 7	Mr P Bingham
Form Tutor	_____
Registration Group	<u>7</u> _____
Form Room	_____

### **Items needed for the first day**

Basic Equipment	Pen
	Pencil
	Ruler
	Rubber
	Protractor
	A pair of compasses

Money or a cheque to put on the dinner card (or a packed lunch)

The correct school uniform (see pages 6 & 7 for details)

Any essential medication

The staff at Ysgol Rhiwabon wish everyone a pleasant summer and look forward to welcoming the new students in September