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Pennaeth - Melanie Ferron-Evans B.A.(Joint Hons) MSc. N.P.Q.H - Headteacher

22nd September 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

Following a very successful start to the Autumn Term, settling our secondary students into Ysgol Rhiwabon, it is with great pleasure that I am writing to you as Headteacher of your local secondary school.

This is an important term for all of us after the partial closure of schools on 20th March. For our Year 6 parents there are very important decisions to make about the choice of secondary school this term when you have only just adapted to sending your child back to primary school. We have already received lots of calls and emails into Ysgol Rhiwabon asking about our plans for 'Open Evening' and this letter is written to provide important information about our plans to support you in your choice.

Ysgol Rhiwabon's Open Events 22nd September – 23rd October 2020

In recent years our numbers in Year 7 have grown rapidly, proving that for the majority of families in our feeder primary cluster Ysgol Rhiwabon is the school of choice in the local community. This year's intake means we are almost full in Year 7, a testament to the hard work of the staff and Governors, who are committed to our thriving school community. We have also attracted a significant number of students from across Wrexham as our reputation has encouraged applications from over 15 primary schools outside our local area. We are keen to open the doors of our school to you so that we can showcase all Ysgol Rhiwabon has to offer your child in the future.

Currently we are unable to hold our highly popular Open Evening due to the Covid 19 restrictions and so we have planned a range of opportunities, allowing you to familiarise yourself with the school through a variety of activities listed below:

- Headteacher Welcome Presentation Video to be published on the school website, week beginning 28th September 2020.
- Year 7 Presentation Video to be published on the school website, week beginning 5th October 2020.
- An individual family tour of the school for Year 6 pupils only. **To book your tour please telephone the school office, or email your request, using the contact details at the end of this letter.** A member of the Senior Leadership Team will lead your tour between 3.30pm – 7pm, available from September 28th to October 21st. Please note family tours for Year 5 will be available in the Summer Term.
- A school information booklet available on request.
- A virtual on-line tour of the important areas of the school for Year 6, led by our famous school mascot – Maverick.
- An introduction to key members of staff on-line.
- An example of Ysgol Rhiwabon's lessons provided on our website by the Year 7 Lead Learner, Mrs Wright Davies.
- A transition section on the school website which contains lots of useful information.
- Transition booklets which your child might like to look at with you ready for next year.
- From March 2021 onwards a series of workshops for our families to support transition into Ysgol Rhiwabon.

As parents/guardians of youngsters in Ysgol Rhiwabon's local primary schools I feel it is important to tell you a little about myself and our secondary school and how much it has developed in recent years and I hope this encourages you to book a tour.

I am already committed to the Ruabon community and its surrounding villages through my strong links to the area. When I was growing up, as many of you know, I was educated in St Mary's School Ruabon and then attended Ysgol Rhiwabon as a student. It is thanks to the schools in our local community that I was able to go on to study and teach in Wales, England and abroad, returning to Ruabon to teach in 2004. This makes my task of leading the school very special, with children from our local community at the heart of all I do.

In recent times our school has improved in so many ways, modernising and responding to the many changes which face our staff every year. I believe though, that Ysgol Rhiwabon is founded on strong traditional foundations, and it is this which will lead to our continued success in the future. I look forward to developing even stronger links in the village and beyond as our young people and staff see opportunities to learn and contribute to the local community. An important part of this will be working with you and our local primary schools. The Staff and Governors have secured significant improvements in the school recently recognised by Estyn as very strong. Recent results at GCSE level have compared well across the North Wales region and the school is now often asked to share areas of good practice in assessment, teaching and learning. Some of our staff now lead on projects across the UK through their work with the Princes' Teaching Institute.

We have lots of things to celebrate in Ysgol Rhiwabon as we begin this new academic year; our older students left us this year well-prepared to take up their courses at college and 6th form or to follow new jobs and apprenticeships. Our vocational courses continue to thrive despite the challenging circumstances all schools face in the current situation. We have been working with our local primary schools to strengthen links and hosting Jumping Jacks, after school provision club on site definitely helps our youngest members of the local community to see secondary school as part of their experience. In addition, our Year 7 students have all been involved in our SWAN project which is even bigger and better than last year.

During the last year, and during the summer holiday Ysgol Rhiwabon has enjoyed major refurbishments supported by Wrexham Local Authority with a new drive into school, new student toilets and a major roofing project to enhance our Science and Technology Block. In addition, we have two new nurture rooms with the latest technology to support teaching and learning. This significant investment in the future of the school has enhanced the overall school environment.

All our students have returned to school looking smart and ready for work and we are particularly pleased to welcome our youngest members in Year 7; they have made an excellent start. We have welcomed new staff who will contribute new ideas and enthusiasm to our already caring, dedicated staff. There are exciting plans to continue to develop our learning links with our primary schools with joint projects and partnership working. As already mentioned, we continue to be one of few schools in Wales in the Prince's Teaching Institute which involves our students and staff in some exciting opportunities.

This year I want you to see, as parents/guardians in our local primary schools, that Ysgol Rhiwabon is an open, caring, family school. Selecting Ysgol Rhiwabon as the first choice for your child strengthens our school, our local community, allowing your child to thrive in an area already familiar to them and with ease of travel to and from the secondary setting.

We are committed to continuing the high standards set in your child's primary school in Year 7 and beyond. During the last four years we have improved our Year 7 induction and we are piloting new projects which are working really effectively. Year 6 and Year 7 parents have praised the work and they are really happy with the way we welcome our youngest members to our school.

"Keep on going with your fantastic ideas for making transition from primary school as smooth as possible."

"The school website and App are brilliant. They really do help me know what is going on."

"The transfer to Ysgol Rhiwabon has gone extremely well, with the support and organisation of all the staff."

"My child has enjoyed everything during the induction project SWAN. She has got to know her classmates really well, making lots of new friends. She says the teachers are very kind and helpful. She has been made to feel really welcome."

Finally, we recognise that this has been an anxious time for all our families since March and we want to ensure the opportunities to get to know Ysgol Rhiwabon are as easy and enjoyable as possible. We hope you will be able to take the opportunity to visit our website to learn about us through our many presentations. We also hope to meet you in person if you plan to tour the school this half term.

If we can help in any way please do not hesitate to contact us in school. All useful contact details are listed over the page. We look forward to meeting you in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Ferron-Evans". The signature is written in a cursive style with a decorative flourish at the end.

M Ferron-Evans
Headteacher

YSGOL RHIWABON

~ SINCE 1575 ~



How to contact us in Ysgol Rhiwabon

Telephone: **01978 822 392**

Email: mailbox@rhiwabon-high.wrexham.sch.uk

School Website: www.ysgolrhiwabon.co.uk

Twitter: @ysgolrhiwabon

On the Homepage look for the tab – **Transition** at the top of the page where you will find lots of information and video presentations, relevant to Year 5 and 6 students and families

Download the free Parent App

This provides notification of all our latest news and directs you to the website

Key Staff for Transition and induction

Mrs Ferron-Evans, Headteacher

Mr Forman, Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Year 6 and 7 Transition

Mrs Wright Davies, Lead learner for Year 7, responsible for transition and primary links

Mrs Navarro, Additional Learning Needs Coordinator

Mr Bingham, Assistant Headteacher responsible for the SWAN Project, Year 7

Mrs Harrigan, Parental Engagement Officer