

The Pontypridd High School



A Parent Guide to PHS

Learning and achieving together

Dysgu a chyflawni gyda'n gilydd

A welcome from our Headteacher

Welcome to Pontypridd High School

The move from Primary to Secondary school is an exciting prospect but also one that brings with it many questions that need to be answered for pupils and their families.

When your child starts at Pontypridd High it will be the start of a partnership that will last at least 5 years. To make this a successful time we need to make sure that your child is able to learn in a safe environment that also provides them with the opportunities to develop new skills and allows talent to flourish. Essentially we want them to enjoy their time with us and for them to become confident and successful young adults.

Estyn reported that Pontypridd High has 'a positive and inclusive ethos and is an orderly, supportive and caring community.' Please take the opportunity to attend our Open Evening or arrange a visit at another time. All staff are here to ensure your time with us is enjoyable and purposeful. I trust our meeting will be the start of a very happy and successful partnership.

Huw Cripps

Headteacher

Academic Standards

16% of pupils achieving a
Level 5 in English at Key Stage
2 achieved an A or A* in

Year 11

17% of pupils achieving a
Level 5 in Maths at Key Stage 2
achieved an A or A* in

Year 11

17% of pupils achieving a
Level 5 in Science at Key Stage
2 achieved an A or A* in

Year 11

90% of pupils who achieved
Level 3 in English, Maths and
Science at Key Stage 2
achieved at least 5 GCSEs at
grade G or above.

94% of pupils who achieved
Level 5 in English, Maths and
Science at Key Stage 2
achieved at least 5 GCSEs at
grade C or above.

52% of pupils who achieved
Level 4 in English, Maths and
Science at Key Stage 2
achieved at least 5 GCSEs at
grade C or above.

39% of pupils who achieved Level 4
in English, Maths and Science at Key
Stage 2 achieved at least 5 GCSEs at
grade C or above including English
and Maths.

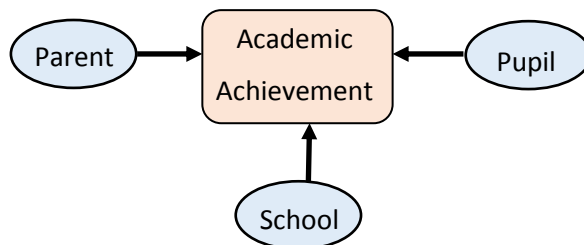
87% of pupils who achieved Level 5
in English, Maths and Science at
Key Stage 2 achieved at least 5
GCSEs at grade C or above including
English and Maths

Improving academic standards at PHS is a 3-way partnership:

When pupils join us in year 7, we use different types of information to ensure your child is placed in the right classes;

- Most important are regular discussions about progress between your Primary school teachers and Pontypridd High staff
- Staff will also discuss the national curriculum levels achieved at the end of Year 6. The National Literacy and Numeracy Test results are received late in the school year but these may also prove useful to confirm decisions made by staff

We review the progress of all children regularly and staff may make changes to the classes some pupils attend where we think progress could be improved.



School Reports

Reports are issued three times a year—December, March and June.

December and March will be progress reports, indicating your child's target grades/levels and their current performance.

June's report will be a formal report and contain more in-depth progress updates and targets for each subject.



Interventions to Support your Child

Sometimes your child may not be progressing as well as they should be. We have a number of different ways that we use to encourage and support our pupils to achieve to the best of their ability.

- Literacy Support
- Numeracy Support
- More Able and Talented Activities
- External Agency Support
- Parental Contact
- Mentoring
- Nurture Groups
- Catch up Opportunities

Analysing Reports

Pupils and staff analyse reports in school.

Pupils read through their reports during registration, noting areas where they have done well and areas which may need improvement. The targets set by staff are recorded in pupil planners. Pupils also set themselves targets.

Pupils who are underachieving in subjects will speak to their teacher and ask how to improve.

Our Standards Manager for Year 7 will look at each report individually and provide feedback to parents. All pupils should have something positive on which to be congratulated. All are given advice and guidance on how they can improve further.



Pupils who have received good reports are commended and presented with certificates. Pupils who improve in specific subjects from one term to the next are also acknowledged.

Year 7 parents' evenings are held twice a year. These are a great opportunity to discuss your child's progress with each of their subject teachers.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Year 7 Standards Manager with any queries they may have regarding their child's academic progress.



Wellbeing

Pupils with better health and wellbeing are most likely to achieve better academic outcomes. This is particularly true of those who attend school for over 95% of the time. The wellbeing of our pupils is our most important priority. We have an established non-teaching wellbeing team who ensure our pupils are happy and healthy. As non-teaching staff they have the time to make sure this happens.

Restorative Approaches

Pontypridd High is a restorative school and we promote the use of Restorative Approaches. This will lead to a focus on building, maintaining and repairing relationships. Staff, pupils and parents/carers who work restoratively report that this way of working leads to:

- A more respectful climate
- A shift away from sanction-based responses that aim to 'manage' behaviour, towards a more relational approach
- Better relationships amongst children and staff
- People being more honest and willing to accept responsibility
- People feeling more supported when things go wrong
- A calmer, quieter and more productive learning environment

Schools that work restoratively find that relationships are stronger and learning is more effective, resulting in less need to resort to sanctions and punishments.

PHS is in its second year as a restorative school. We are committed to a whole-school approach as this has been proven to be the most effective method and we are already recognising the benefits in our School.

Wellbeing Team

Our Wellbeing team includes two non-teaching Wellbeing and Attendance Managers and two non-teaching Support Officers. These members of staff are more accessible to both pupils and parents and ensure that the behaviour and attendance of our pupils is of the standard expected.

Staff in our ALN Faculty work closely with pupils who may be struggling to cope with certain aspects of their home and/or school-life.

Outside agencies who help us include 'Eye to Eye' counsellors who provide a vital service to some of our pupils.

Bullying

Pontypridd High School will not tolerate any form of Bullying. If an incident is reported then it will be dealt with promptly and thoroughly.

What Pupils should do:

- Pupils who suffer or witness bullying should report incidents to a member of staff
- Year 7 pupils may also report incidents to any pupils who are peer mediators.
- Pupils who suffer cyber bullying should save texts and print off online messages so that evidence is available if needed.
- Pupils should report incidents to their parents/carers.

What Parents/Carers should do:

- If parents/carers are concerned about any incident involving pupils, they should contact the school's Wellbeing Team by phone, in writing (letter or email) or in person.

Attendance

A key factor to your child achieving academic success at school is through regular and punctual attendance. Full attendance makes a significant difference to the academic success and results your child can expect to achieve

At Pontypridd High School we recognise the positive impact that regular attendance has on achievement. Excellent attendance at school is crucial to give your child the best chance of success.

We need your support in ensuring that absences are not planned in school time so that your child has every opportunity to succeed.

Evidence suggests a strong link between attendance and school success:

- Every child should aim for attendance of 95% or above.
- 80% attendance is the equivalent to having one day off every week.
- If you take a two week holiday in term time your child's attendance will automatically be reduced to less than 95%.
- Research suggests that 17 missed school days every year equates to a drop in GCSE grade.

What can you do as a parent ?

- Contact school as soon as possible if your child is absent (01443 494 900)
- Aim to book all medical or dental appointments outside of school time whenever possible
- Regularly ask your child their weekly and cumulative attendance

What we do as a school ?

- Pupils are given their weekly and cumulative attendance data on a weekly basis by their form tutor
- Pupils traffic light their attendance on a weekly basis during registration
- Pupils under 86% are identified and monitored by their Wellbeing and Attendance Manager and in some cases the AWO

Authorised Holidays

We realise that there will be certain exceptional circumstances when it would not be appropriate to unauthorise a holiday absence, and therefore, the following reasons have been agreed that a Headteacher may approve such a request:

- Families of serving armed forces personnel
- Parent of child experiencing a life limiting illness
- Families that have suffered an acute trauma

Every day children learn something that helps them gather all the information they need to make good progress—like a jigsaw. When they have all the pieces and days are not missing the picture is much clearer.

Fixed Penalty Notices

The criteria for issuing fixed penalty notices are:

- Where a pupil has accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absences in the current term
- Where a pupil has been persistently late on 10 or more occasions in the current term, arriving more than 30 minutes after the registration period
- Where a parent refuses to engage with a school in the interest of improving their child's school attendance levels
- Where a pupil is repeatedly caught truanting in public places during school hours
- Where a holiday in term time has been requested but has been unauthorised

Teaching and Learning

At Pontypridd High School our mission statement is 'Dysgu a Chyflawni Gyda'n Gilydd', 'Learning and Achieving Together'. Estyn have reported that the 'School has a positive and inclusive ethos that is understood well by pupils, parents and staff. The school is an orderly, supportive and caring community. The school motto of 'Learning and Achieving Together' is promoted well.

Teaching

We have thorough procedures to make sure that the quality of teaching your child is receiving is of the highest standard. In the recent Estyn inspection, teaching was judged as at least good across the school. Some of the positive things Estyn saw in the classroom at Pontypridd High School were:

- "teachers manage behaviour well"
- teachers "plan lessons carefully"
- "teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve"
- teachers "provide interesting, stimulating and challenging activities and tasks"
- "questioning is especially challenging and rigorous"

Standards at Pontypridd High School are improving year-on-year and the high quality teaching that is being delivered across the school is a large part of this continuing success. We will continue to reflect and improve on our practice so that your child receives the best possible education during his or her time with us.

Skills

The provision for the development of Literacy and Numeracy is second-to-none at Pontypridd High. We have clear policies and arrangements for literacy and numeracy skills and we promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Our 'Clubhouse' provides a safe, supporting yet challenging environment in which pupils can make progress with their essential skills and therefore make better progress in their subjects. Please take the time to come and see the Clubhouse and speak to the staff about the support we offer. Better still, speak to some of the pupils who access this provision. They will be happy to discuss their learning and the impact it has made to them and the level of confidence they now have to progress in all subject areas.

Assessment

At Pontypridd High School we understand and value the importance of assessment in the classroom. This is the tool that allows our teachers to understand your child's specific needs and plan personal learning.

We have "clear expectations for marking and assessment that are applied consistently by teachers" (Estyn.)

During lessons, "pupils are given appropriate oral and written feedback on the standard of their work and what they need to do to improve" (Estyn).

We also ensure that peer and self-assessment are well developed in subjects so that pupils are able to understand how they can help themselves and make progress in their learning.

We are confident that the quality of teaching, assessment and skills we have in the school will enable your child to learn, make progress and fulfil their potential during their time with us.

Transition

Transition from primary to secondary school is an exciting time for parents and pupils. At Pontypridd High School we realise the importance of children's wellbeing when moving from one setting to another and also when moving between Year 6 and Year 7. It is a challenging transition in a child's life and we aim to ensure that this process is as smooth and positive as possible through a series of well-planned visits, events and activities throughout Year 5 and 6.

The number of pupils normally admitted to Year 7 is between 160 and 170 and these are mainly from the following cluster of schools:

Cefn

Cilfynydd

Coedylan

Craig yr Hesg

Maesycloed

Trehopcyn

Trerobart

In addition, there are significant number of pupils who join us from other primary schools. You can be assured that all pupils will be invited to our transition events if they intend to join Pontypridd High in September 2017.

There is a well-established transition programme and pupils transferring to us visit the school frequently during the year but particularly in the summer term before they join us in the September. This enables pupils to familiarise themselves with the school and to take an active part in our school and meet subject teachers. Our staff also visit the primary schools frequently through the year in order to acquaint themselves with pupils

Transition Events

October—Open Evening

October / November

PHS staff will meet with Primary colleagues to discuss pupil wellbeing issues so that we can prepare the right support for pupils.

English and Maths staff will also discuss progress with Year 6 teachers so that we are able to place children in the right classes.

Staff from PHS will also be visiting each Primary school to teach a variety of lessons that will help pupils get to know our teachers

March / April

Similar to October and November. Staff meet to discuss English and Maths and teachers from PHS will work with Year 5 and 6 pupils through different subjects

June / July

Year 6 pupils will come to PHS to spend a week with us. This is the opportunity to meet new classmates and see the timetable they will follow when we start as Year 7 in September. Your child will get used to the different classrooms and also finding their way around the school.

June

Year 5 and 6 will experience a taste of school life at PHS by joining us for a week's long transition. This will enable them to familiarise themselves with the school and attend different lessons. This will include English, Maths, Science and also the range of other specialist subjects such as Art, Geography, History, Technology, Music, IT, French / Spanish and PE. For Year 6 pupils the week will end in a Mini Olympics led by PHS pupils.

The Year 5 and 6 transition weeks will not be held at the same time. At the end of each of these parents / cares will be invited into school to view the work that has been completed and take the opportunity to meet with staff. This will also be the chance to discuss any areas of concern or worry so that we can resolve them before the summer break.

**100% of our
current year 7
pupils enjoyed the
transition week
they spent with us
in June 2017.**

**98% of our current
year 7 pupils felt
more confident
about joining PHS
after spending the
week with us in
June 2017**

Schoolcomms

At Pontypridd High School good communication between home and school is essential.
Schoolcomms is the system we use to enable us to keep you updated on your child's progress via text message and email

Schoolcomms enables parents to:

- Receive letters more reliably and promptly
- Receive short, instant, messages via text message
- Contact the school via text message
- Not need to rely on their children for delivery of letters

Schoolcomms enables us to:

- Send more letters and information
- Save money on admin time, printing and paper

Examples of use:

- Homework reminders
- Absence messages
- Assessment reminders
- Revision sessions
- Sports fixtures
- INSET day notifications



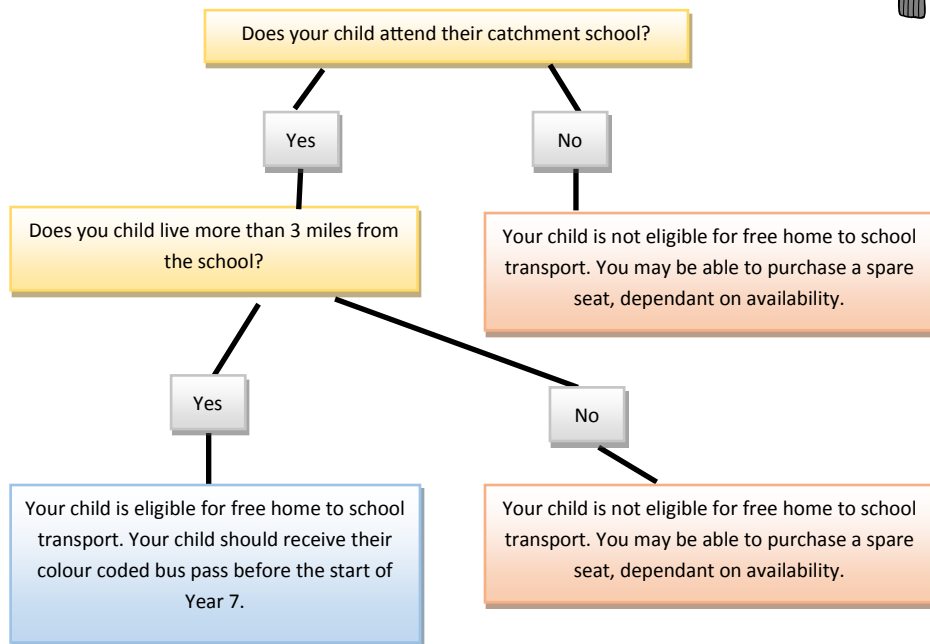
School Day



8:40am	Registration
9:00am	Lesson 1
10:00am	Lesson 2
11:00am	Morning Break
11:20am	Lesson 3
12:20pm	Lesson 4
1:20pm	Lunch
2:05pm	Lesson 5
3:05pm	End of Day

Transport

Is my child entitled to free school transport ?



For further information on free home to school transport including routes and pick-up times please visit the Rhondda Cynon Taf Website

www.rctcbc.gov.uk

and search School and college transport



Cashless System



Pupils at Pontypridd High School use our voluntary Biometric Recognition System as a means of paying for their food and drink at all times of the day

The IMPACT Software we use allows the system to recognise each individual pupil by their fingerprint. Each pupil has an individual cash balance which records cash spent and cash received, where money is spent and on what food at any specific date and time of day. Pupils simply place their finger on a scanner at a point of sale; a display will show the server the pupil's name, class and current balance held within the system. The selected food items are entered into the system from an itemised keyboard while the amount spent and the new cash balance shows on the display.

There are two ways in which money can be entered into the system:

1. By Cheque—A post box to receive payments is in the Main Reception
2. By Cash—Terminals are located in the Main Hall and Bytezone.

There is a daily limit of £5.00 per day.

The system works exactly the same for all pupils whether they pay or have a free school meal. The amount allocated for the free school meal will be entered into the system daily and will be accessible at break-time and lunchtime.

Benefits of using the Cashless System:

- Discourages the use of school dinner money through spending in shops outside of school grounds
- Alleviates many of the associated problems with the use of cash in school eg loss, theft and bullying
- Specific food allergy ingredients can be barred automatically
- Automatic free meal allocation with the pupil remaining anonymous
- Detailed reports are available to analyse all aspects of the use of the system

Free School Meals

Daily Free Meal Allowance

Pupils entitled to Free School Meals will automatically be allocated £2.50 each day on their Cashless System account. The money allocated will be accessible at breaktime and lunchtime.

However, any under spend or missed dinner will be identified by the system and will not be added to the next day's balance. The free school allowance meal must be taken on the day it is issued.

Pupils can add extra cash to their balance by using the revaluation station to enable a greater daily spend on the school dinner than allocated by their free school meal allowance.

There is no queuing to be issued with a 'free meal' ticket or 'free meal register' at the till point.

School Uniform Allowance

Distinctive Clothing and Welsh Assembly Government School Grants

Once registered for a free school meal, your child will automatically qualify for financial support towards the cost of uniform as below:

- Year 7 School Uniform Voucher—£90.00
- Year 7 Welsh Assembly Government School Uniform Cheque Payment—£105.00

Please note that values above are for academic year 2016/17.

To find out if you are eligible for free school meal allowance please phone 01443 425 002

Home-School Agreement

All parents and pupils are expected to sign the Home-School Pupil Agreement. The agreement provides clear expectations for everyone involved.

1. Parents/Guardians

I/We shall:

- See that my child leaves for school each morning dressed according to the school policy on uniform.
- See that my child attends school regularly, on time and properly equipped with all necessary equipment and PE kit required for school.
- See that reasons for all absences are reported as soon as possible.
- Let the school know about any concerns or problems that might affect my child's work or behaviour.
- Support the school's policies and guidelines for behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, and shall ensure that my child does not disrupt the education of other pupils.
- Support my child in improving essential learning skills such as literacy and numeracy and their preparation for tests and examinations.
- Support my child in completing homework and other opportunities for home learning by checking the school pupil planner regularly.
- Attend Parents' Evenings, other meetings and discussions about my child's progress.
- Get to know about my child's life at school.
- Provide consent for my child to have photographs taken. These photographs may be published on the school website or in publications relating to the School.

2. The School

We will:

- Provide a happy and caring environment which is stimulating.
- Provide an appropriate education for all its pupils, so that they can achieve everything of which they are capable.
- Create, develop and foster a school climate where achievement is recognised, celebrated and rewarded, so that pupils are encouraged to succeed.
- Monitor the development of pupils and have high expectations of them.
- Report termly on your child's progress and how standards can be improved.
- Create in all pupils a sense of belonging to, and being valued by, the school community.

3. The Pupil

I shall:

- Be self-disciplined, hardworking and take responsibility for my own actions.
- Listen to instructions given by all members of staff and act on the advice given.
- Attend school and be punctual, being prepared for all lessons.
- Act considerately towards others and respect their rights and property.
- Respect the school building and property.
- Not get involved in any form of bullying.
- Remember that cheating achieves nothing and that one is only being dishonest to oneself and others.
- Represent the School where appropriate and always try to be the best that I can.

4. We will

'LEARN AND ACHIEVE TOGETHER'.

Staff

Leadership Team:

Headteacher	Mr Huw Cripps
Deputy Headteacher	Mr Stephen Diehl
Assistant Headteachers	Miss Kayleigh Moses and Mrs Laura Dober
Resource Manager	Mrs Claire Cook

Safeguarding and Child Protection : Mrs Lauren Newman

School Day Manager : Mrs Heather Young

Wellbeing and Attendance Managers :

Year 6, 7 and 8 Miss Katie Churchill Years 9 to 11 Mr Irfan Ally

Standards Managers:

Years 6, 7 and 8	Mrs Vicky Thomas
Years 9 and 10	Mr Tom Longden
Year 11	Mrs Andrea Samuel-Jones

Head of Sixth Form: Mr Andrew Roach

ALNCo: Mrs Claire Finney

For further information please see our website:
www.pontypriddhighschool.co.uk

Contact us:

Tel: 01443 486 133

Email: Contact@pontyhigh.co.uk