



# Newsletter & Updates

*Friday 22 March 2024*

Queen Elizabeth High School / Ysgol Uwchradd Y Frenhines Elisabeth



Dear Parent/Carer,

Pasg Hapus/Happy Easter!

As we prepare to break up for the Easter break can I take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for their continued support and wish you all a very relaxing and happy Easter, let's hope we see some sunshine!

Once again this has been a very positive and busy term. There has been much to celebrate in the fields of sport, art, music and catering as well as academic success. A visit to our website <https://www.gehs.carms.sch.uk/about-us/pupil-achievement-stories/> makes me incredibly proud to be leading a community of such exceptional talent. In addition, the school has continued to play its part of being at the heart of our community. Our Eisteddfod celebrations were absolutely fantastic, both in Mainstream and Canolfan Elfed, with high levels of participation and a very positive 'vibe' around school, both in the days leading up to the competition, and on the day itself. Can I thank all staff who were involved in making it such a fantastic day. In addition, we have continued to support our most vulnerable and under privileged with a fantastic £900 raised for Comic Relief last Friday. Pupils and parents/carers have also been incredibly generous with their contributions to prizes and support for our Adrian Bown Fund. Mrs O'Kelly arranged Valentine's gifts and messages, Mrs Dunn in Science crocheted daffodils and leeks for the Eisteddfod and most recently Mrs Cornell and Mrs Veck took donations for an Easter Egg raffle. A massive thank you to them all!

Of course, there are also occasional challenges that are met in a large modern comprehensive. Some negative press tried to make much of what was, in fact, a small-scale incident that was dealt with incredibly professionally by all involved. What was most pleasing were the positive messages of support received from our community, particularly parents and carers via email and phone that highlighted the exceptional levels of care and support we provide for our young people. We should always bear in mind that the vast majority of our pupils and students are exceptionally well behaved and make a hugely positive contribution to our school and wider community. Thank you for your continued support.

Finally for all our pupils and students facing exams this summer, easter provides an opportunity to make progress with revision and preparation for exams. Please make good use of this time. There is plenty of information available to support revision, including techniques and advice on our website:

<https://www.gehs.carms.sch.uk/student-information/revision-guidance/>

Best wishes and good luck to all those involved in exams this summer.



## KEY DATES

- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March - INSET
- Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April – Return to school – all pupils
  - DofE Gold Practice Expedition (7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> April)
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April - Year 7&8 Internal Exams commence (until April 26<sup>th</sup>)
- Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April - Welsh Exams Unit 1 – GCSE Year 10 and A Level (all week)
- Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April – Year 11 Urdd Rugby 7s
- Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April – Welsh Exams Unit 2 – GCSE Year 11 and A Level (all week)
- Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April– Year 7 and 8 Maths Challenge
- Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April – Spanish GCSE Orals (to Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April)
- Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May – DofE Bronze (to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May)
- Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May – Bank Holiday Monday
- Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May – Half Term

### **\*\*IMPORTANT\*\***

- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May – Year 10 External Exams Commence
- Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May – Year 11 GCSE External Exams Commence\*
- Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May – AS/A Level External Exams Commence\*
- Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June - Year 11 Study Leave Commences

*\*Be aware that some examinations might commence before these dates.*





# Uniform

We expect all pupils to take pride in our school community and to abide by the school's uniform rules. Information on accepted uniform can be found on our school website, using the following link:

<https://www.qehs.carms.sch.uk/media/mowc4tsp/uniform-newweb.jpg>

Hoodies are not permitted and will be confiscated at the door. The exception to this rule will apply to our Year 11 Leavers, who will be permitted to wear their 'Class of '24' Leavers Hoodies in this, their final term before leaving us.

Can I also remind Parents/Carers that shorts will be permitted in the summer. Pupils can wear shorts after May Half Term (Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June) through to October Half Term. Shorts must be tailored and appropriate. Sports shorts will not be permitted. Specific information will be provided to parents/carers before we break up in May.

## Mobile Phones

As explained previously, the misuse and constant use of mobile phones present some significant wellbeing and wider mental health risks to our community, as well as presenting a distraction to learning. Following a successful pilot scheme we have moved to a ban on mobile phones in school. While pupils can bring phones to school, they should be turned off and placed in their bags. Pupils who fail to abide by these rules and do not use their phones responsibly can expect to have their phones confiscated. Phones can only be returned to parents once confiscated.

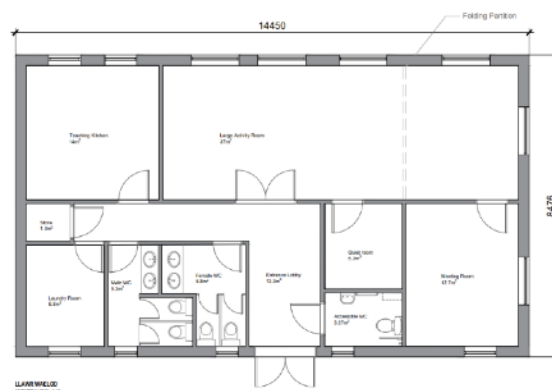




# School Community Programmes

We very much value our role as a school at the heart of our community. Our commitment to this role is reflected in some new and exciting developments that have been supported by the local council, Carmarthenshire County Council and Welsh Government. There are several exciting projects emerging:

1. **New Changing Room facilities and Community Hub.** We have received a Welsh Government grant to completely refurbish our external PE changing rooms and develop a new Community Hub building. The Community Hub will provide a base to support with family projects i.e. numeracy, literacy, food and nutrition, provide a base for after school homework clubs and forge links with our wider community partners.



2. **Garden Project** - We have designated the back area of the school for use as a community gardening project. Food produced in raised beds and poly tunnels will be used in catering lessons or used in the community. Flower beds will be tended to by pupils and volunteers and joint work will take place between ourselves and Cartref Cynnes.







## Recycling & Litter

New legislation will be in place from April 1<sup>st</sup> across Wales. There are new restrictions and rules about the disposal and recycling of litter. The new legislation is backed by fines for non-conformity. Can we urge all pupils to please take greater care in their disposal of litter into the appropriate bins for sorting. There will be assemblies and our Eco Council will be looking to take a leading role in supporting this new initiative.

## Prom

Year 11 Prom is booked for Wednesday June 26th at the Diplomat Hotel, Felinfoel, Llanelli. Pupils will receive a mocktail at reception, on arrival followed by a two course, sit down meal. Presentations will be made on the night and table decorations, DJ and disco are all included in the price.

The Prom has always been a special occasion for our pupils that are departing Queen Elizabeth High School at the end of the summer. Many will return to our sixth form, but for others it will mark a significant change and a move to further education or the world of work. The prom is an opportunity to celebrate their experiences with us, and gives us the chance to say goodbye properly, before they embark on the next exciting stage of their lives. It has always been a very positive occasion marked by exemplary behaviour that both staff and pupils enjoy immensely.

Letters detailing costs, payment methods and expectations of pupils will be sent out either side of the Easter holidays.

## Richmond Park

Recently, I have taken on responsibility as interim headteacher at Richmond Park primary school to cover the sickness absence of Mrs Helen Luff. I'm sure you will join me in wishing her a speedy recovery. It has been a very rewarding and novel experience to work with our primary partner. It will help establish even stronger links with our primary partner schools and establish even closer ties and positive partnerships in the future. It has been lovely to work with Year 6 both here at QEH and in Richmond Park and reinforce the already strong transition links. It is also pleasing to establish strong ties with parents and carers who have pupils in both settings.

## Free School Meals - Are you claiming what you're entitled to?

Free school meals are a vital support for many families, especially in these challenging times. They can help you save money, ensure your child gets a healthy and nutritious lunch, and also benefit the school through extra funding.

To qualify for free school meals, you must be receiving **one** of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

If you are not sure if you are eligible, and you do receive any of the benefits above we encourage you to take the time to [apply](#), Carmarthenshire County Council will let you know what your eligibility status is. You can also find out more information about free school meals on Carmarthenshire County Council's [website](#).

If you are eligible for free school meals, you may also be able to access additional grants and support from the government and other organisations. For example, you may be eligible for

- The Warm Home Discount Scheme, which gives a £140 rebate on your energy bills each winter
- The Cold Weather Payment, which provides £25 extra a week for colder periods
- The Food and Fun Programme, which offers free activities and meals for children during the school holidays



- Discretionary Assistance Fund (DAF) | GOV.WALES
- The Cost of Living Payment, which will give £900 to means-tested benefit claimants in three instalments over the financial year 2023-24
- Family Fund - If you have a disabled or seriously ill child under three, and would benefit from access to a car, the Family Fund Mobility Support programme could help.
- The Disabled Facilities Grant, which helps pay for adaptations to your home to make it more accessible for a disabled person

These are just some examples of the grants and support that you may be able to get if you claim free school meals. There are many more available, depending on your circumstances and needs. You can search for more grants on the [Turn2us](#) website or visit the [Claim What's Yours](#) page on Carmarthenshire County Council's website.

We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity and apply for free school meals if you are eligible. It will make a big difference to your child's wellbeing and education, as well as providing additional support through the school's budget and resources. If you have any questions or need any help with your application, please do not hesitate to contact us.





# Attendance - MISS SCHOOL, MISS OUT!

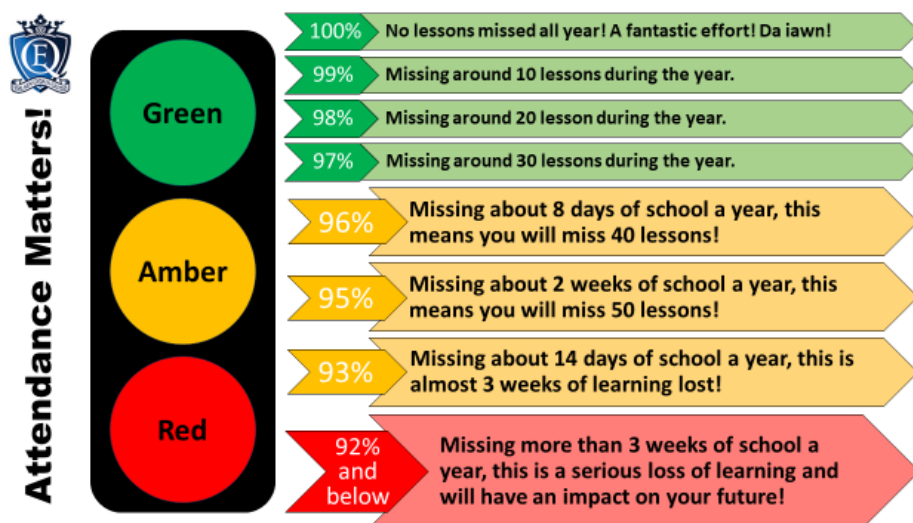
Can we still stress the need for regular attendance please.

There are lots of reasons why a child should attend school:

- To learn
- To build confidence and self-esteem
- To understand responsibility
- To develop new skills
- To grow as individuals
- To gain qualifications
- To make new friends, have fun and develop life skills
- To develop awareness of other cultures

Excellent attendance at school allows a child to have the best possible start in life.

Missing a day here or there might not seem like much, but absences add up. **Two days absence a month adds up to 4 weeks missed in a year, and that means over 100hrs of teaching lost!**



Every school day counts, each day missed makes it harder to catch up, can lead to lower achievements in reading, writing and numeracy and impacts a child's ability to make important social connections.

Finally, thank you once again for your unwavering support and partnership in creating a nurturing educational journey for our students.

Kind regards,



Dave Williams  
Headteacher