

Queen Elizabeth High School



Dear Parent/Carer,

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda/Happy New Year! We enjoyed welcoming pupils and students back to the start of our Spring Term this morning. We hope that everyone had a positive Christmas break and an opportunity to catch up with friends and family. This looks likely to be yet another busy term with options decisions to be made in Year 9 and external exams in January for some pupils and students. Alongside this, we will be ensuring that we provide the effective learning and support to help all our learners achieve their potential.

Teaching staff commenced their term a day earlier with some very insightful and inspiring professional development provided by Ross McGill/Teacher Toolkit (<https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/ross-morrison-mcgill/>). There was a lovely piece about our school on his Teacher Toolkit Twitter account, feel free to look it up! The training provided part of our goal to ensure quality learning for all and that our approach to teaching and learning is both reflective and forward-thinking.

KEY DATES

- **Tuesday 10th January – Pupils and Students return – Week 2**
- **Tuesday 10th January – Year 11 GCSE Science Practicals commence (Run until 10th February)**
- **Monday 16th January – Year 12/13 Internal Exams commence (Assessment Week 3)**
- **Tuesday 17th January – Year 9 Options Evening Presentation 6pm Main Hall**
- **Tuesday 24th January – Year 9 Full Reports Issued**
- **Thursday 26th January – Year 9 Online Parents/Carers Evening**

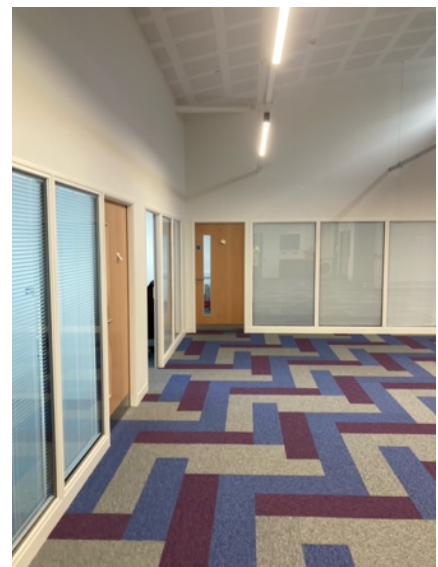
Care, Support & Guidance

Y Hafan/The Haven

Our emphasis at QEH is on providing the best learning experience for our community while providing the best possible care, support and guidance for all. To these ends, the school has made some significant strides forward at the start of this term. Our new Wellbeing Support Centre (Y Hafan/The Haven) opened its doors at the start of this term.

This new development replaces S01 as a hub for all our wellbeing support. We are still awaiting some final deliveries of furniture but this discrete facility offers first-rate facilities and an opportunity for pupils to access a range of support in one centralised area for the first time. It is a quality provision and an investment that makes very clear the high value we place on young peoples' wellbeing.

Y Hafan is managed by our Lead Wellbeing Support Officer, Mr Peter Robinson. Pupils are able to gain access to Youth Services, Family Engagement Officer, School Nurse, ELSA support and our Wellbeing Support Team.



Sixth Form Wellbeing, Tutorial and Additional Study Area

Replacing the area in S01 will be a new facility for the Sixth form. This is part of our ongoing plans to centralise provision for our Sixth Form into the QEH Sixth Form Centre. This development will be an addition to the new sixth form study suite and the investment made in new furniture for the sixth form lounge.

Work will commence this term on developing a discrete facility for sixth form to access their own tutorial and wellbeing provision as well as providing an additional study area where students can study quietly or work on assignments.



Promoting Positive Behaviour; “Our behaviour affects everyone and everything”

In September the Carmarthenshire Association of Secondary Headteachers (CASH) and the local authority launched a campaign to highlight the challenges facing schools and aimed at improving behaviour across all secondary schools. The campaign is called “Our behaviour affects everyone and everything”

The behaviour of the majority of our pupils and students is a source of pride for everyone, and the situation in Carmarthenshire is not unique. Across Wales, many teachers report that they’ve witnessed a decline in some pupils’ behaviour since returning to formal education after the pandemic. This behaviour includes using offensive language with classmates and teachers, being unruly in lessons and vaping in toilets during lessons. Such behaviour by a minority can disrupt everyone’s school experience.

In July, pupils and teachers from all the County’s schools attended an experience sharing session at County Hall. A link to the campaign and the video produces, together with some useful links and resources can be found here:

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/education-schools/our-behaviour-impacts-everything-and-everyone/#:~:text=The%20campaign%20is%20a%20joint,formal%20education%20after%20COVID%20lockdowns.>

“As teachers, we understand that there are sometimes complex reasons at the root of pupils’ misbehaviour and, without a doubt, we want to support those pupils. But a teacher cannot teach, and a pupil cannot learn in a class where a minority behaves without respect. The behaviour of our pupils today influences their tomorrow.” CASH

“Our aim in Carmarthenshire is to create young people who, after being educated here, create a life here and contribute to our community. It is our duty to offer them the best possible guidance on how to behave in a way that gives them the best chance to succeed in life.” Councillor Glynog Davies, Cabinet Member for Education and the Welsh language.

What this means in QEH this term;

- **Vapes** - Last term there were several concerns raised about vaping. Following a series of assemblies we have implemented spot checks and bag searches on any individuals identified as using or providing vapes in schools. We intend to maintain this policy of spot check and bag searches this term. Pupils and students found in possession of vapes will receive appropriate sanctions.
- **Relate Room** – Relate is the base for our Behaviour Support Team. The team is led by our Lead Behaviour Support Officer, Mr Tom Joyce. Pupils referred to Relate

receive the therapeutic support and strategies to help support them with their behaviour. This will provide them with the strategies that will help them make appropriate decisions and help them better engage with their learning.

- **Inclusion Room** – when pupils behave inappropriately and disrupt the learning of others they should expect consequences. Fixed external exclusion will be the schools last resort and to help prevent this internal exclusion will be the school's initial significant sanction. Pupils can only be booked into Inclusion by HOL and SLT. Once a pupil is booked into inclusion a call home will be made to inform parents that this sanction is being put in place. On the day of inclusion the pupil must meet the inclusion room supervisor on reception at 9am. The pupil will be escorted to the inclusion room. Once there they will be given all resources, support and materials to be able to follow all of the timetabled lessons. During the day there will be an opportunity to reflect on behaviour and if appropriate restorative practice will take place. Lunchtimes will be spent in Inclusion; pupils will need to either bring a packed lunch or have a packed lunch ordered for them from the canteen. A significant concern over behaviour in a lesson during the day can lead to a pupil being removed from a lesson and placed in Inclusion for a lesson or part of the day. Parents will be informed.
- **Mobile Phones** – during this term we will be consulting with pupils, students and parents/carers over the use of mobile phones in school and whether our rules around their use in school ought to change. Whilst we are aware of some of the benefits that mobile phones bring we are increasingly concerned about their misuse and the detrimental impact they can have on health and wellbeing. We will be canvassing the opinions of all our stakeholders before any final decision or changes to the existing policy are made, but we would appreciate your input. A questionnaire will be circulated later this term, please find the time to record your views.

Scarlet Fever & Streptococcal Disease

A reminder that this infection mostly affects children aged under 10 years. Older children are also susceptible to streptococcal sore throats but may not have the rash of scarlet fever. Complications in the early stages of the disease can include ear infection, throat abscess, sinusitis, pneumonia and meningitis.

Recommended actions

- Parents of unwell children should seek medical advice for diagnosis and treatment
- A person with scarlet fever should withdraw from schools / settings for 24 hours after the commencement of appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Good hand hygiene and avoidance of spread of respiratory secretions (as per influenza- "catch it, bin it, kill it") can help to prevent the spread of infection

COVID Update

A reminder of some of the changes from last term:

- **Isolation** - there will no longer be a requirement for pupils to remain absent from school if they show COVID symptoms. Pupils can attend school unless they are unfit to work as with any other sickness reason.
- **Testing** - this will end, pupils will no longer need to test if they show COVID symptoms. Testing kits will no longer be given out in school.

These mitigations apply to mainstream pupils. Canolfan Elfed is still operating under previous mitigations of testing and isolation.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in our community a prosperous and healthy 2023.

Kind regards,

Dave Williams
Headteacher