



Welshpool High School

Ysgol Uwchradd Y Trallwng

Raising Achievement By Raising Expectations

Codi Cyrhaeddiad Trwy Godi Disgwyliadau

Message from the Headteacher

Throughout the school year we work alongside partners to help develop practice in the school. This week it has been our pleasure to host colleagues from the local authority for two days. During the visit they spoke with school leaders, governors, members of teaching and support staff and students. They visited lessons, looked at students' work and observed lunchtimes.



I have been left with a feeling of immense pride in the school. This is a happy place to learn and a happy place to work for so many people.

Next week we are immensely proud to be able to host over 175 cyclists and helpers for an overnight stay who are raising money for the "My Name's Doddie" foundation. It is a mark of a vibrant community when the students and staff work together to take part in an event that helps raise money for such a great cause. I am so pleased that our students have the chance to enjoy the opportunity to be part of this when we have a non-uniform day to raise money for the cause on Friday 3rd February. I hope that you will be able to follow our involvement with the 555 mile bike ride from Cardiff's Principality Stadium to the Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh ahead of the six nations game between Scotland and Wales, with the same pride that I have.

Anti-Violence Against Women

PCSO's Charlotte Tannat and Hannah Pryce (former students at Welshpool High School) from Dyfed-Powys Police visited school recently to talk to the Sixth Form about the current Anti-Violence against Women campaign the Police are running in the area.



Upcoming Events

On 9th to 11th February, the "My Name's Doddie Foundation" are completing a 555-mile bike ride in 55 hours. See the message from the Headteacher for more information.

The School Eisteddfod will take place on Friday March 17th.

Reading Week

The pupils in Year 7 have recently taken part in 'Drop Everything and Read' week. For the first ten minutes of every lesson they have read a book. The pupils really enjoy this and the aim is to create a reading culture in school and increase reading confidence.



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Drama

In the Drama department, we have started our 'Actor and Director of the lesson' awards for KS3 and KS4 classes. If they win either of these, they get to hold their own Oscar and Clapperboard award (modelled here by Cerys Ashworth and Jasper Aldridge in year 10) and sometimes make a speech to the rest of the group!



This has proved a great success with pupils in lessons as well as in our Drama club (pictured below)



Reminder:

our Drama Club sessions are in the Drama Studio with Miss Fletcher.

31st January: 3:30- 4:30
14th February: 3:30- 4:30
28th February: 3:30- 4:30
(and every other week following)



Oxford University speaker

On Thursday 19th January we were visited by Daniel Powell from New College, Oxford University, who heads the Oxford Cymru outreach group. This is a programme designed to encourage more state school students from Wales to apply for Oxford University and to dispel some of the myths about going to Oxford and what it takes to get in. Daniel spoke to the whole of Year 12 for a period about University applications in general before spending a lesson with our Year 12 Seren students in a session looking at what Oxford University is really like.

The students learnt a lot from the experience, and we already have some of them interested in summer schools later this year put on by Oxford for students in Wales and the rest of the UK. In the next 3 months we have speakers from Cardiff and Bangor Universities and also Student Finance Wales coming in to speak to the 6th Form and to help get them prepared for their next steps after school.



Rewards Trip

Throughout the year, we run several initiatives to promote attendance. Our students wanted one of the incentives to be a rewards trip to McDonald's. Consequently, all students that achieved an attendance figure above 95% last term were invited to McDonald's during an extended lunch time. Year 10 recently enjoyed a walk along the towpath to McDonald's, and a tasty treat was had by all at one of the world's best restaurants (as quoted by the Michelin star chef, Gareth Ward, who runs Ynyshir Restaurant in Wales). We received lovely comments from customers and staff at McDonald's, regarding our pupils' conduct throughout, and we look forward to

organising future trips to reward our students.



Curriculum Focus: Humanities - R.V.E

With the new Curriculum for Wales, the Religious Education department is now called R.V.E (Religion, Values and Ethics). The department is run by Mrs Watts who teaches almost all the pupils in Welshpool High School once a week.

The aim of the department is to help pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and values whilst recognising the important values held by others both in Welshpool, Wales and the wider world. Below is a brief overview of recent topics covered by pupils.

In **Year 7** we have been discussing the purpose behind the gospel writers differing birth stories. This considers the text purpose of persuasion for the different audiences they were writing for. Pupils will be going on to do their own piece of creative work on the birth stories by creating a front-page newspaper reporting on the birth of the prophesized Messiah and

evaluating the evidence to show this is the 'saviour'.

In **Year 8** we have been looking at 'Rules and Responsibilities' building from the Judaeo/Christian 10 Commandments, the Humanist values (HUMANIST UK) and the UN Convention of Children's Rights (UNICEF). This culminated in pupils discussing and creating their own list of important 'Rights and Responsibilities' for Welshpool High School which produced some excellent and well thought out views.

Pupils in **Year 9** have been introduced to Hinduism this year and you will have seen the images of the wedding ceremonies we re-created in class before Christmas. They are now drawing upon their experiences and research skills to create a leaflet comparing the ceremonies from two different cultures and consider what they feel about the value of marriage.

In **Year 10 and 11** pupils have been studying different views about the beginning of the universe and matters of life and death discussing evidence of an afterlife, euthanasia and abortion. We are due to have visitors in from the local community to speak with Year 11 about their attitudes to such moral questions.

All pupils are set homework via Google classroom to help review learning through quizzes. This is useful for pupils to check their own learning and understanding of a topic as well as highlighting common areas of misconception.



Curriculum Focus: Humanities - Geography

The Geography Department forms part of the wider Humanities AoLE in the school. You'll find us over on the top floor of the F Block. Mr Pengelly is Head of Department (and also current Head of Sixth Form and in charge of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award) and is in F22 and Mrs 'Geography' Evans is in F21. You may also be taught by Mr Kinsey, Miss Davies, Miss Pointer, Mrs Aldridge, Mrs 'Music' Evans or Mr McDermott as well.

We aim to inspire students to discover things about the physical and human worlds around them and to have a sense of awe and wonder when thinking about the amazing environments of our world and how humans interact within them.

In **Year 7** we study map skills and our local area, which leads into a joint Humanities project on the history, geography and religious backgrounds of Dolforwyn and

Montgomery Castles. We then look at weather, rivers and tourism, all with a good local perspective.

In **Year 8** we study Plate Tectonics, the science of earthquakes and volcanoes before looking at the Cold Environments of Antarctica and The Arctic. We finish with a look at energy and industry and the issues facing the development of these in Mid-Wales, for example the big wind farm debate that so affects the Mid-Wales countryside.

In **Year 9** we look at World Climate Zones, World Population Growth and World Development before finishing with country studies of Australia, mate, and Brazil.

At **GCSE** we study many different aspects of physical (rivers, coasts, weather & climate, rainforests) and human (rural areas, cities, development, tourism) geography and go on two field trips during the course.

This year these will be to collect river data on the Carding Mill Valley at the Long Mynd and then to Oswestry to examine environmental quality in the town.

At **AS Level** we study Glaciation, Tectonics and Place, with field trips to Cardiff and Cwm Idwal in Snowdonia to collect data for exam projects. At **A2 Level** we study the Water and Carbon Cycles, Migration, Governance of the Oceans, Ecosystems and Energy and have field trips to collect data for individual projects. These have been to Cadair Idris, the Hafren Forest, Manchester, Aberystwyth, Newtown and the Ynyslas and Harlech Sand Dunes in recent years.



We're a friendly bunch down in Geography and are always happy to talk about the subject! Please come to the F Block to visit if you want to find out more.

Eco Committee

We are in the process of setting up an Eco Committee at the school. This will be coordinated by Ms Bridgland with help from some Year 12 pupils, providing the committee with the added maturity and experience of these older pupils. Zoe Castell, Nanaka Mori and Jacob Nisbett have planned and presented an assembly to Year 7 which introduced them to the Committee and encouraged them to get involved. Year 7 pupils have been starting to sign up to take part. If any other Year 7 pupils wish to get involved they should speak to their Form Teacher, or directly to Ms Bridgland in A10.

We also have some Student Council members from Years 8 to 11 who have joined the Eco Committee, creating a link with a key Student Voice group within the school. However, any other pupils in these years who would like to get involved are very welcome to do so. They should go and see Ms Bridgland in A10 for further information.

We would very much welcome any parents or family members who have environmental interests or links, for example business interests or voluntary organisations, to get in touch as this could well benefit both

the Committee and the school as a whole. Please contact Ms Bridgland if you think you can help.

We will be following the Welsh Eco Schools guidelines and our first job will be to do an Environmental Review of the school. Pupils will then use this to propose ideas for improvements and make an Action Plan, which will be presented to the Head. We look forward to being able to update you with our first projects.



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- Volunteer weekly in a setting where you would like to work in the future, such as:
 - Primary or secondary school PE
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PATHWAYS INTO:

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- INTERNATIONAL PLAYING SCHOLARSHIPS

Come and study a sixth form sports coaching course at Welshpool High School.

Key Contacts

Main switchboard: 01938 552014

Office email: office@welshpool-hs.powys.sch.uk

Head of Sixth Form: Mr R Pengelly Head of Year 11: Mrs V Jones Head of Year 10: Mrs M Poulton

Head of Year 9: Miss G Charles Head of Year 8: Miss J Haycock Head of Year 7: Mrs R Aldridge