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A MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

A warm welcome back to everyone following the summer holidays - and an especially warm welcome to the 87 pupils who have started in Year 7.

We will be sending you a bulletin every term to keep you informed about day-to-day school activities including important dates

If you have any queries please contact us.

Please inform us immediately of any changes to your contact details - home phone, mobile or email.

All the best for another busy and successful year.

CONTACTING SCHOOL

If you have any concerns about your son/daughter's school life then please contact us:

☎ 01758 730220

✉ pennaeth@botwnnog.ysgoliongwynedd.cymru (headmaster)

or swyddfa@botwnnog.ysgoliongwynedd.cymru (office)

💻 www.ysgolbotwnnog.org/eng/cysylltu.php

We will try and respond to your concern within 24 hours.

Visiting School - If you would like to organise a meeting—please contact school beforehand to arrange a suitable time & to ensure that you can see the appropriate person.

For security reasons all visitors must report to the main office as they arrive in school.

CONTACTING HOME

We will send information to our pupils' homes quite frequently - information about important dates, activities, etc. Sometimes we also need to contact you in an emergency.

E-mail

We are reducing the number of paper letters that we send. It is more convenient and reliable to send an e-mail or, in the event of an emergency, a text message.

To do this as conveniently as possible we would like you to check that the office has your correct email address.

If you have an email but didn't receive this bulletin on email then please could you send a message to - swyddfa@botwnnog.ysgoliongwynedd.cymru to inform us. Please include your child's name and class.

Text Messages

We will sometimes send a text message in an emergency.

STAFF

A warm welcome to new staff:

- Mrs Manon Gwyn Morgan, who is teaching Welsh & Drama
- Mr Elgan Jones, who is teaching Science & Mathematics

Congratulations to:

- Mr Eurig Davies and Miss Bethan Priestley on their appointment as Assistant Headmasters. Both are now a part of the school's Senior Management Team and will be assisting the Headmaster and the Deputy with the day-to-day running of the school.
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CHILD SAFEGUARDING

One of our main objectives is to keep our pupils safe.

If you have any concerns regarding a child's safety or welfare in school you can contact the School's Designated Child Safeguarding Officer - Mr Aled Williams. If you have concerns regarding a child's safety outside school hours you can contact Gwynedd's Child Safeguarding Officer by calling **01758 704455** (Out of hours number: 01286 353551), or by emailing cyfeiriadauplant@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

BULLYING AND ONLINE SAFETY

When any incidents occur, staff will strive to prevent further incidents. We want our pupils to be happy and safe in school. We will not tolerate bullying. Pupils are aware that they can talk to any member of staff to report on bullying.

As parents / guardians you can contact school to discuss bullying or to report on any incidences of bullying.

You may also like to visit www.bullying.co.uk or many other similar websites for further advice—links to these and other sites can be found in the Parents section of the school website <http://www.ysgolbotwnnog.org/eng/gwefannau-defnyddiol.html>

There is a wealth of useful information about keeping your child safe online on the NSPCC's [Net-Aware](http://www.net-aware.org) website which gives specific advice about social networks, apps and games.

NUT FREE ZONE

For serious medical reasons, no nuts or products which contain nuts are allowed at school.

A nut allergy is a very dangerous condition that can lead to serious illness.

Therefore, we kindly ask you to be careful when preparing any packed lunches or snacks for your children to make sure they do not contain nuts or nut products (such as chocolate bars / energy bars / biscuits / cakes).

Thank you very much for your cooperation with this important matter.



APPEAL—SCHOOL BOOKS

Please can you take a look to see if you have any books that belong to school. Some pupils forget to return textbooks or library books. I would appreciate if you could return any such books to school please. Thank you for your help with this.

YEAR 11 - 2022/2023

RESULTS

Congratulations to this year's year 11 pupils on their results.

Ysgol Botwnnog's pupils' gained very good results once again.

As a result of their hard work during their time at school, all of Year 11 pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs with 84% achieving at least 5 A*-C grades and nearly a quarter of the pupils gaining at least 5 A*/A Grades.

The following prizes were handed out in the Prom:

Glyn Jones Memorial Shield - Most promising rugby player - **Colm Lotter**

Lewis Roberts Memorial Shield for excellence in STEM subjects– **Gwen Jones**

Sporting champions - **Ania Denham & Cara Scott**

Idris Williams Memorial Shield - Citizen of the year - **Tomos Evans**

Livery Company of Wales' shield for most promising student - **Gwen Jones & Elan Owen**

Congratulations and best wishes to all the pupils for their future.

Thanks to the teachers and parents for supporting them over the last five years.

The cards and gifts that came from pupils and parents thanking the school are very much appreciated.

YEARS 10 AND 11 2023/24

EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

Year 10 and 11 pupils will be sitting **OFFICIAL EXTERNAL** exams (which **WILL** count towards their final grade) at various times during the two years - some dates at the back of this bulletin.

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS / NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENTS (Coursework)

Controlled Assessments and Non-Examination Assessments (previously called coursework) is important in most GCSE subjects. They count between 20% and 100% of the final mark in almost every subject.

These are held throughout years 10 and 11 in various subjects - from first lesson in Year 10 until May in Year 11.

Most of these have to be completed within a specific number of hours under the supervision of a teacher - so if your son/daughter is absent from lessons then they will have to catch up, at lunchtime or after school.

SKILLS CHALLENGE CERTIFICATE AND WELSH BACCALAUREATE

The BAC course is followed by everyone in years 10 and 11. In year 10 pupils have to complete challenges which will be assessed under controlled conditions at school. In year 11 an individual research project will be completed by all, based on the pupil's future aspirations. On completion of the work a grade will be awarded - this is the Skills Challenge Certificate, which is equivalent to a GCSE and has similar grades.

To gain the BAC qualification pupils must also pass 5 GCSE or equivalent qualifications including Maths and a Language.

ATTENDANCE

Good attendance remains a priority. The majority of pupils have very good attendance (over 96%). However, some pupils attendance is a cause for concern and will have a negative effect on their progress.

Regular attendance is essential for pupils to take full advantage of all chances provided for them.

ABSENCE—INFORMING US

To ensure that everybody who should be in school is present, please contact the school on **EACH morning** of absence so that we know if your son / daughter should be here or not.

We ask you to let us know if your son / daughter is absent by **calling 01758 730220 between 8:15 and 9:15**.

If the school hasn't received a call by 9:15 telling us why your child is not in school, then we will contact your home or workplace.

If your son/daughter arrives late—they should register in the school office.

APPLICATION FOR FAMILY HOLIDAY DURING THE TERM

Directives from the Welsh Assembly via the Local Authority regarding the authorisation of school holidays during term time has changed. In order for us to authorise any holiday during term time parents need to make a **written application to school before going on holiday**.

The school's Governing Body has discretionary powers, which have been deputed to the management team, to authorise term time holidays. This will depend on the length of the absence and any previous holidays, the pupil's current attendance rate, the time of year, the effect on the pupil's educational progress and any disruption to assessments / examinations. No more than 5 days of holiday will be authorised in any school year for pupils in years 7-9.

If we are unable to authorise holidays beforehand then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised on the pupil's record.

WE WILL NOT AUTHORISE HOLIDAY ABSENCES DURING YEARS 10 AND 11 AS IT IS BOUND TO HAVE AN EFFECT ON YOUR SON/DAUGHTER'S PROGRESS, UNLESS THERE ARE VERY EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

COLLECTING YOUR CHILD DURING THE DAY

If you need to collect your son/daughter during the day then you need to let the office know. Pupils should ensure that they register out of school before leaving the site, and register back in upon their return to school during the day. You can phone the school office when you are at the school gates.

ILLNESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

If your son/daughter is ill during the day and needs to be collected then a member of the school staff will contact you. Pupils are not allowed to contact you directly to arrange their collection when they are ill. You can phone the school office when you are at the school gates.

MEDICATION POLICY

If you want your son/daughter to take any medication in school you will need to **fill a consent form 3B** (available in the school office.) Please remember that any medication is to be kept in the school office apart from an asthma pump (on occasions). The full policy and consent form can be downloaded from the school website (PARENTS - DOCUMENTS) or you can contact us to request a paper copy. It is also available on [this link](#).

ADVERSE WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSURE

If a situation arises that we have to close school for reasons beyond our control—weather, no electricity or water, etc; we will try to send a text message to every home to inform you. We can text message every home within minutes—so long as we have a valid mobile phone number.

We will also make an announcement as soon as possible on Radio Cymru and on the Council website - www.gwynedd.gov.uk

If we have to close school during the day and have to send pupils home for health and safety reasons we will follow these procedures:-

- i. inform the home by email and/or text,
 - ii. pupils should return home on the school bus (if that is how they come to school),
 - iii. pupils should then return to their home or the house of a relative or friend (according to your instructions).
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MOBILE PHONES

- **The use of mobile phones or portable communication devices of any kind during school hours (8:40 - 3:35) is not allowed.** This includes the journey to the P.E. lessons at the leisure center.
- If you need to contact your son/daughter in an emergency you can contact the school office. Similarly, if your son/daughter really needs to call you, they can do so from the office.
- If they bring a phone with them to school, they should be turned off when they arrive at school, and kept switched off and out of sight until they leave school grounds at the end of the day - if they wish they can leave their phone in the office during the day.
- If pupils break this rule, we will take the phone off them and keep it safe until the end of the day.
- If a pupil breaks the rule more than once, we will take the phone off them and keep it safe until you can discuss the situation and collect the phone from school.

We will consider allowing pupils to take a phone on trips outside of normal school hours for convenience - but to be used strictly according to the teachers' guidelines.

The school does not accept any responsibility for theft, loss or damage to mobile phones, peripherals or other portable communication devices.

TRAVELLING ON SCHOOL BUSES

Gwynedd Council is responsible for arranging school transport. Information, including timetables, how to apply for free transport and the council's transport policy is available on their [website](#).

If your child is eligible for a free bus pass then they should have received it by now. If not please contact the school office or the school transport department 01766 771000. The bus pass should be carried daily to ensure that they can travel on the school bus. If a bus pass is lost then a replacement must be ordered from the County Council from the school office at a cost of £5.

Safety on the school bus is very important. Pupils must behave responsibly and safely when travelling to school and must follow the rules in the School Bus Travel Behaviour Code. If, for their safety and that of others, they do not follow this Code, the local authority and the school may take action against them. This can mean removing the right to school transport and even excluding them from school.

The code of conduct can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

For health & safety reasons, pupils must travel on the bus for which they have a valid bus pass only

The school does not have the authority to allow any pupil to travel on a bus other than that on the bus for which they have a pass, e.g. to go to Pwllheli or to the house of a friend or other relative.

TERM / HOLIDAY DATES

AUTUMN TERM 2023 - September 5 - December 21 (for pupils)

Staff training Days (No school for pupils)	September 1 & 4
Staff training Day (No school for pupils)	October 16
Half term holidays	October 28 - November 5
Staff training Day (No school for pupils)	December 8
Christmas holidays (for pupils)	December 22 - January 7

SPRING TERM 2024 (pupils) - January 9 – March 31

Half term holidays	February 10 - 18
Easter holidays	Mawrth 23—April 7

SUMMER TERM 2024 (pupils) - April 8 - July 19

May Day	May 6
Half term holidays	May 25 - June 2
Last day of summer term	July 19

PARENTS' MEETINGS

Here is a list of dates for parents' meeting for this year.

Year	11	7	8	11	10	9 (choices)
Date	Wednesday 18/10/23	Tuesday 5/12/23	Tuesday 23/1/24	Wednesday 28/2/24	Dydd Mawrth 30/4/2024	Tuesday 14/5/24

In the meantime, if you have any queries regarding your child's progress, please contact us.

EXAM DATES - DRAFT 1

These dates are provisional only. They could change due to circumstances beyond school's control. I will inform you immediately if they change.

OFFICIAL EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

EXTERNAL EXAMS SUMMER 2024 - YR 10 & 11 7 May - 26 June*

EXTERNAL GCSE EXAMS JANUARY

GCSE English Literature Unit 1

January 10

GCSE Welsh Literature Unit 1 - Yr 11 set 1, 2 a 3

January 12

GCSE Results day 22 August

* Years 10 and 11 will receive a personal individual timetable closer to the dates. Dates to be confirmed.

INTERNAL EXAMS

Year 11 Mock exams - February 1 - 9

Year 10 internal exams

Year 10's internal mock examinations will take place in March/April.

Year 7-9 Examinations

The dates that we intend to conduct our internal exams for years 7 - 9 next summer.....**June 18 - July 5**

SUPPORT FOR YOUR SON / DAUGHTER

At Ysgol Botwnnog we strive to provide the best care to every pupil and if your son/daughter is having a difficult time or have difficulties with work or welfare problems then we have a number of people who can help them. Here are some of them:

Mr Aled Williams Deputy Headmaster
Mr Eurig Davies / Miss Bethan Priestley Assistant Headmasters
Mrs Alaw Jones Japheth Girls' Welfare
Mrs Carol Pilling / Mrs Susan Jones / Mrs Elen Hughes Learning Coaches
Ms Deneise Jones Counsellor
Mrs Carys Hughes Authority's Education Welfare Officer
Ms Bethan Jones School Nurse
Miss Ffion Jones / Mr Eurig Davies Special Education Needs Coordinators

If you would like us to refer your son/daughter to one of the above then please contact Mr Aled Williams, the deputy headmaster.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Thank you for your co-operation with the school uniform.

Can I remind you of the rule for school shoes. Any shoes or trainers must be entirely black only. Writing, logos, laces and soles that aren't black are not allowed. (NO GREY!)



JEWELLERY AND MAKE-UP REMINDER

We allow one pair of small stud earrings and one ring on a finger. (These MUST be removed for PE activities - for health and safety reasons). We will ask pupils to remove any other jewellery.

If a pupil is wearing 'obvious' make-up (including colourful or false nails), we will draw their attention to it and request them to do something about it.

RECYCLING SCHOOL UNIFORM

WORKING WITH 

Tenovus, Pwllheli has agreed to work with the school to sell pre-worn school uniform. If you have any items of school uniform in good condition that you no longer need, then Tenovus would be pleased to receive them in order to sell on.

CLOTHES BANK



Please remember the clothes bank that we run in partnership with Antur Waunfawr.

If you have any clothes or textiles that you no longer need they can be put in the clothes bank for recycling. The clothes bank is located by the entrance to the staff car park below the Technology block.