



YSGOL UWCHRADD BODEDERN

Cylchlythyr y Pennaeth, Gorffennaf 2024
Newsletter from the Head, July 2024



DIOLCH BAWB / THANKYOU ALL

I'd like to start by expressing our gratitude and thanks to you all for all your support during the year.

It has been another busy final term and to confirm the school will be closing to pupils on Friday July 19th and will re-open to pupils on Wednesday 4th September.

Staff Training Days (School closed to pupils)

Monday 2nd September 2024

Tuesday 3rd September 2024

Monday 4th November 2024

Friday 14th March 2025

Monday 23rd June 2025

Monday July 21st 2025

GCSE, AS and A Level results

This year's A Level and AS results will be released on Thursday 15th August, and GCSEs on Thursday August 22nd.

Contacting us from September 2024 – Heads of Year

Head of Year 7 - Mr John Arwel Jones John.Jones@yubodedern.cymru

Head of Year 8 – Mr Paul Magee Paul.Magee@yubodedern.cymru

Head of Year 9 – Mr Brandon Rickards Thomas.Rickards@yubodedern.cymru

Head of Year 10 – Mr Sam Ellis Sam.Ellis@yubodedern.cymru

Head of Year 11 – Mr Carwyn Owen Carwyn.Owen@yubodedern.cymru

You can also contact the school's Senior leadership team

Headteacher-Paul Matthews-Jones Paul.Matthews-Jones@yubodedern.cymru

Deputy Headteacher- Rowena Saunderson Rowena.Saunderson@yubodedern.cymru

Deputy Headteacher- Sion Lloyd Sion.Lloyd@yubodedern.cymru

Assistant Headteacher: Bryan Griffiths Bryan.Griffiths@yubodedern.cymru

Assistant Headteacher: Arwyn Roberts Arwyn.Roberts@yubodedern.cymru

Other Developments from September 2024

Our numbers continue to rise, and our year 7 intake is the highest in the school's history with 183 pupils joining us. As such we are delighted to welcome the following staff who will be joining us in September.

Starting in September:

Rachel Hanney: English Teacher

Cara Mills – Science

Daniel Cooil – English / Science

Elin Jones – Head of Health & Wellbeing

Emma Parry – Modern Foreign Languages & English

Naomi Lloyd – Humanities

Lois Rowlands will also be returning to her post of Head of English following her secondment at GwE

Thank you and farewell!

Best wishes and thank you to the following members of staff who are leaving at the end of the term- Some of whom have worked here for many years and have been here since the 1990's.

Thank you for all the service to the school:

Carol Gruffydd, Brian Williams, Karen Thomas, Lynne Jones, Alaw Jones, Osian Jones, Dawn Williams, Gemma Bennett, Matt Evans and Ffion Walford.

Best wishes to Elena Hughes, who will be on maternity leave this summer. And welcome back to Lora Owen following her maternity leave.

Continuing to invest to improve the experiences of our pupils

Many areas of the school have transformed during the academic year following significant investment to improve the experiences of our learners. Among the most significant developments were new outdoor areas, a new floor for the small gym, new changing rooms in the physical education department, a new 2G pitch for Hockey, football, Tennis and Netball and a new 3G Field for Football and Rugby. We have named the 3G pitch the 'Elgan Jones' pitch, in his memory and for his love of Liverpool and football.

The 2024/2025 educational year is also seeing more exciting developments, focusing on teaching and learning resources and adaptations to our Key Stage 4 options and curriculum.

From September 2024 and for the first time. Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern will offer 14-16 courses in Construction and Engineering, with a significant investment in new equipment and resources, there will also be an upgrade of room 26 as a specialist construction and engineering workshop.

The old caretaker's house has been converted and will officially open in September, here we will be able to offer an alternative curriculum and specialist support for learners.

With the significant increase in numbers, over the summer the builders will be returning to the school and transforming the old sixth form common room into three classrooms.

As a result, we will further invest in the Teleganolfan to enhance our sixth form pupils' experiences

Following an official visit and opening, we have renamed our Sports Centre the 'George North Sports Centre'. This is in recognition of the achievements of one of the world's best Rugby players having represented Wales and the Lions, he was an Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern pupil between 2003 and 2008.

Our Expectations from September 2024 – School uniforms and mobile phones

Mobile Phones

Since the pandemic we have implemented a policy where mobile phones and school life co-exist, however we have reached a position where this has become impossible. And is having a negative effect on learning.

Research shows that phone use in school has a negative impact on a child's education.

Therefore, from September there will be no permission to use a phone anywhere in the school.

In the interest of fairness this is how we intend to operate: We will also update our policies.

| Possible situation | How the school will respond |
|---|--|
| Pupil is using their mobile, or seen with their mobile phone in school. | There will be no warning, this newsletter is the official warning, and so we will politely ask for the phone, if a pupil refuses we will call parents / guardians and ask you to assist us and come to the school to get the phone. For the first time the phone will be returned at 3 o'clock, if this happens often we will contact you again to discuss our actions which will be in accordance with the school's behavioural policy. |
| Student is carrying their phone in their bag | We respect that the phone can be an important safety resource, on trips home for example, we obviously won't check bags, what's important is that we don't see mobile phones at school |
| I would like to contact my child in an emergency | We have our usual phone lines, and of course 'schoolcomms', but to assist we will be ordering a phone that will be able to receive messages from you directly so that we can respond immediately to your requests |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>My child is sick or wants to get in touch with you urgently</p> | <p>As mentioned above there will be a member of staff at reception, who will be able to contact you immediately. We cannot continue with the current practice where children contact parents and ask them to come to the school to pick them up without the office staff having any prior knowledge.</p> |
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What benefit will the mobile phone ban have on the education of my child?

Here is part of a research article by Professor Jonathan Haidt, in his foreword to the Policy Exchange:

Imagine that you are a 12-year-old sitting in a history class in 1993, just before the internet entered our lives. You are trying to listen to your teacher, but sometimes you get bored, you daydream, you occasionally pass notes to friends. You take in about 60% of what your teacher says. Next imagine being that same child except one day your school announces a new policy: students may bring in their television sets from home, along with their video cassette recorders, record players, walkie-talkies, and any other communication or entertainment device they choose. (The school buys extra-large desks for all students so that they may install their many devices and plug them in to high amperage power strips, mounted on the side of each desk.) All students take advantage of the new policy, which they quite enjoy because it allows them to talk with their friends, listen to music, watch videos whatever they want! Now how much do you think you'll take in from your teacher's lesson? Probably a lot less than 60% – and quite possibly zero. Imagine how dispiriting it is to be a teacher in such a school. This is essentially what we did to students, to teachers, and to education all over the world when we allowed students to bring their new smartphones into class in the early 2010s. We didn't notice that we were now allowing thousands of companies to call out to our children with push notifications in their desperate competition to attract and hold our children's attention, even during class time. But when students pay far less attention to teachers, there will be far less learning.

If you asked any pupil in school, they would admit in a school day they could receive tens if not hundreds of notifications - most on snapchat, and that the phone is a tool that can be used to be cruel to others.

But to implement fully we need your help. - There are companies that sell equipment to enable a school to keep and lock phones, but there are significant costs associated with these. I am confident that we can work together for the best interests of your child to implement our policy without spending any additional funding.

School Uniform

In terms of uniform for the academic year 2025, there were 256 responses to the questionnaire. There were 15% wishing to keep the current uniform in line with option 1, and therefore 85%

wishing to change in accordance with option 2. Pupils are also currently voting through Google classroom with the results so far being very similar. You have therefore voted unanimously to change the uniform, and our task shortly in September will be to confirm the details of the uniform for September 2025.

This year has been difficult for us in terms of implementing the uniform policy, and I will accept the criticism that we have been to relaxed and inconsistent in implementing the uniform policy. This will change from September 2024 where all pupils are expected to wear the full uniform in line with school policies. Please also remember that we are here to help you with the uniform at any time, whether it's through the clothing bank or ordering assistance.

Every pupil in years 7 -11 should wear:

- School tie - red and navy stripes (available at the school or shops)
- A knitted navy blue v-neck jumper with official logo. The school promotes Look Around Sport, [Brodwaith](#) and [Orchid Fashion](#), and Little Treasures as our main suppliers
- Blouse / Shirt - plain red with collar and long sleeves (short sleeve in summer - not a 'polo' shirt)

The uniform for year 12 and 13 is slightly different: v neck navy blue jumper with the 6th form logo and white shirt.



You can read more on our uniform at: [School Uniform — Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern \(EN\)](#)

How we will implement the policy fairly for all from September 2024:

If your child arrives at school without the correct school uniform then they will be offered to borrow and wear the uniform from our school stock, that may be a jumper, shirt or tie. If any pupil is not ready or willing to do so then we will contact you with a request for you to come straight to school with the correct items from the school uniform. It is totally unfair if there is a situation where some are allowed to wear clothes of their own choosing while others continue to wear the full uniform. I would also like to remind all that there will be no permission to wear hoodies and coats around school.

I trust you will agree with these important adjustments that will ensure fairness, a sense of belonging and assist in the smooth running of the school that will enable us to improve your child's experiences.

Vaping

In collaboration with national agencies, Ynys Môn education department and the school's Health and Wellbeing programme we will be focusing on the dangers of 'vaping' and educating

young people to make better choices. Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern is a completely smoke-free site and this includes every type of e – cigarette.

Attendance

We need your help - Pupil attendance has fallen across the whole of Wales over the past two years. As such increasing attendance will be one of the school's top priorities. Research shows that a 90% or lower attendance level has a negative impact on a child's attainment and education. Currently, many children are in direct contact with parents with requests to be collected from school. I kindly request that all such contacts go through the school's main office. We have specific strategies to improve attendance, particularly improving attendance in years 10 and 11.

School Strategic Priorities 2024 / 2025

Following our successful inspection, we continued to make progress against our recommendations in this academic year, and indeed in a position where we consider the progress to be significant. The number of pupils who are now enrolling at Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern to follow their education through the medium of Welsh, or to improve their Welsh language is a source of great pride, and of course a National Priority. Supporting our learners in Welsh will continue to be a prominent feature of our strategic planning next year.

Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern's strategic priorities 2024 / 2025

1. Ensuring the continued development of Welsh language skills

- ✓ updating our language policy to reflect the significant increase in numbers from September 2024, 5 of the 8 classes are Welsh-medium with one language transition class.
- ✓ Increasing Welsh language skills standards across the school including outcomes in external qualification

2. Continue to improve teaching and ensure whole-school consistency

- ✓ Update YUB position regarding quality and consistency of teaching, and quantify progress since Estyn recommendation

3. Ensure that our quality assurance processes have a positive impact on provision and standards in classrooms

4. Increase attendance across the school with a particular focus on examination years

Activities and clubs

It's been fantastic to see Boded Clubs go from strength to strength again this year, and the final activity is an educational visit to France. This will be our first overseas visit since the pandemic. Next year there is an opportunity for years 7-9 pupils to visit Naples and Sorrento and Years 10 upwards to New York, USA.

And finally, a message to our new parents; It was great to welcome 183 year 6 pupils for their taster and transition days, everyone really enjoyed it and we are all looking forward to September. Thank you to all primary schools for their support and to all parents for placing your trust in us. It was a pleasure to meet them all – WELCOME TO THE BODED FAMILY

Diolch am eich Cefnogaeth, gyda'n gilydd rydym yn mynd o nerth i nerth / *Thank You for your support, Together we go from strength to strength*

**Cofion / Regards,
Paul G S Matthews-Jones
Pennaeth / Headteacher**