



Year 11

**Parents' Information Booklet
2021-2022**

Headteacher - Miss Rebecca Collins



It is my pleasure to introduce our Year 11 Information Booklet 2021/2022. The purpose is to answer questions you may have about this final year of GCSE here at St Cenydd - questions about courses, how we can support you and your child, and what our expectations are. We have been delighted with the start that Year 11 have made to their studies. No doubt they have gained huge confidence from their work and effort over the past half term.

All students should be clear about the actions they now need to take to achieve the best grade they are capable of. We all are very aware of the importance of these next 9 months for Year 11. Your child will have been told a number of times that GCSEs 'are the most important years of their life so far'. In terms of education, there is, of course, much truth to that statement. By the time they start in sixth form, they will each have completed 11 years of compulsory state education. We know that qualifications are the gateway to so many opportunities – whether that be university, college or employment – and all here at St Cenydd are fully committed to ensure that each and every student achieves the qualifications that they are capable of.

Your child may be worried about the challenges of the months ahead. This is a time for resilience, a time for self-belief and confidence, a time for hard work and determination. We are ambitious for your child, we are here to support you and your child as they consider which qualification and career path they would like to pursue, and we will do all that we can to ensure that they achieve those dreams and aspirations. All things that can be summed up by the school statement of 'Aspire and Achieve'.

My key piece of advice for Year 11 students is not to simply aim to keep up with their studies – it is to 'stay ahead' as much as they can. The volume of work in Year 11 can seem overwhelming at times. By planning ahead and making the most of their time at school, the extra help they will have, and by using their work time at home purposefully, they can stay ahead.

You will have opportunities during the year to have direct communications with their subject teachers, and we will report to you on their effort and progress. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Corke or one of our Pupil Support Officers.

I hope that you find this information booklet useful and we very much hope to be able to welcome you to the school later in this academic year.

Assistant Headteacher (KS4/5) - Mr Andy Harrison



Welcome to the KS4 Information Booklet. I am the Assistant Headteacher who oversees Key Stage 4 and Key St age 5 and I am also the safeguarding lead for the school, supported by the deputy safeguarding lead, Mr Lee Dickinson.

My role is to ensure that your child has the best opportunity to thrive academically, whilst supporting their social and emotional wellbeing. This involves leading and working alongside their Head of Year, Heads of Department and subject teachers to enable all pupils to aspire and achieve their potential.

Academic performance will be monitored closely, with early intervention and support being provided where necessary to ensure that your child has the opportunity to thrive in their subject areas.

We at St Cenydd pride ourselves on the support network that is available to the pupils, whether that be through targeted intervention through our Learning Coach, Cath Allaway, or some of our external providers, such as the school nurse, external school counselor, or our targeted mentoring programme.

We will ensure that your child is well supported and cared for. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Mrs Barton.

This has been a challenging time for everyone and I am happy that pupils have been able to return to school to continue their studies with some sense of normality. The school has spent a significant amount of time and effort to ensure that we can operate as safely as possible, following closely government guidelines. I have attached a link for your perusal of the Headteacher's recent letter highlighting the current [Covid protocols](#) to ensure our continued safe operation at this time. Please look out for further updates in future communications from the Headteacher.

In summary we will do our utmost to ensure that your child is safe, happy and has everything in place to allow them to aspire to achieve their potential.

Head of Year 11 - Mr Nathan Corke



Welcome to the Year 11 information booklet. The cohort have made a truly impressive start to the year! Much of the information will be familiar to you but please take the time to read the information and click on any relevant links in order to support your child.

My role as Head of Year

- Create an environment where all Year 11 students can achieve or exceed their potential
- Monitoring and supporting attendance
- Monitoring progress and behaviour
- Monitoring and supporting student wellbeing
- Home - school communication

Learning environment

Despite the upheaval and disruption of the last 18 months, Year 11 have displayed great maturity and responsibility on their return to 'normal' schooling and are already looking forward to their formal assessments from mid-October, the outcomes of which may be used should a similar cente grading approach to 2021 be required in 2022.

Whilst we hope to return to normal exam assessments this year, we will also be conducting formal in-class assessments and mock exams. In the unlikely event of exams being cancelled these assessments will contribute to any Centre Determined Grade process. In class assessments will be held at the end of the first autumn half term, and mock exams in the first spring half term. We will provide pupils with advice and revision in advance of these.

Attendance

We all know the impact good attendance has on achievement. The Department for Education in England found that a 1% improvement in attendance equates to a 5-6% improvement in attainment!

We expect all pupils to achieve at least 95% attendance. An attendance of 90% is equivalent to missing half a day of school each week! The ongoing Covid situation, how it may affect

attendance and the guidance around this has been well documented but I also want to highlight the impact of 'occasional' days of absence. Of course absence isn't always avoidable in these current times. Please phone the school on the first morning of the absence, stating the reason and an expected return date, if known. If absent but able to work at home, students should access the Google Classroom each of their teachers will have invited them to join, via their school Gmail account.

Individual departments will suggest useful links for students, but here is the link to the WJEC support and advice page for students.

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/student-support/>

Monitoring progress and behaviour

Academic performance is regularly tested by individual subject teachers and your child's overall progress is closely monitored by myself. While we hope and expect that schools will remain open throughout the academic year, we have emphasised that they should treat each task / assignment / test as something that may potentially be used as evidence to determine a grade that they will receive at the end of Year 11. This is especially true of the upcoming October assessment period.

Behaviour

I am extremely pleased to say that the maturity, attitude and behaviour of Y11 since our return has, in nearly all cases, been fantastic. However, it's useful to check how well your child is doing at school, so here is the classcharts link

<https://www.classcharts.com/parent/login>

If you have not created an account, or have forgotten your login code, please contact me.

Monitoring and supporting student wellbeing

The final year of GCSEs is stressful enough for students at the best of times. In the current circumstances we are very mindful of the extra stress that Covid uncertainty brings. There is a wealth of support both in and beyond the school that students are able to access for a variety of different reasons should they need it, from a reassuring chat with a trusted member of staff, to professional help. While we are vigilant, it is not always easy to identify if a child could do with some support, so, if you have any concerns, please let me know. If I am unable to help, I will

certainly know who can. It is worth noting the WJEC has a whole section dedicated to student wellbeing and coping with GCSEs

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/student-support/your-wellbeing/>

Home - school communication

I can be contacted through both telephone and e-mail and I usually contact you to address your concern the same day, although this is not always possible. My school Gmail address is corken@stcenydd.co.uk (Please keep email contact between 8am & 6pm).

Please be aware that individual teachers can also be contacted in terms of subject queries.

Due to timetable commitments teaching staff and myself may not be able to respond immediately but will endeavour to reply as soon as possible. Our careers advisor, Kirsty Downey, can be reached by students or parents at downek@stcenydd.co.uk

Our exams officer, Samantha Lippiett, can be reached at lippis1@stcenydd.co.uk

I have emphasised to Year 11 that they should avoid worrying about what they can't control, but control the most important things - their attitude and effort. If they do this, with support as needed, I am sure they will have a highly successful Year 11, whatever it may bring!

All exam dates will be confirmed in an individual exam timetable for each pupil closer to the exam season.

Subject information

Subject	Subject Specific Information
Art	PDF Link
Asdan	PDF Link
BTEC Home Cooking skills	PDF Link
Computer Science	PDF Link
Cymraeg	PDF Link
Design & Technology	PDF Link
English	PDF Link
Food and Nutrition	PDF Link
French	PDF Link
Geography	PDF Link
Health and Social Care	PDF Link
History	PDF Link
ICT	PDF Link
Mathematics	PDF Link
Media Studies	PDF Link
Performing Arts	PDF Link
Physical Education (BTEC)	PDF Link
Physical Education (GCSE)	PDF Link
Religious Education	PDF Link
Science (GCSE Double Award)	PDF Link
Science (GCSE Double Award Applied)	PDF Link
Science (Single Applied/Entry Level)	PDF Link
Science (GCSE Triple)	PDF Link
Spanish	PDF Link
Welsh Bacc/Skills	PDF Link

Exam Information

The expectations we have of all students sitting examinations and controlled / non-examination assessments are set by the Joint Council for Qualifications and cover all qualifications.

Mrs Lippiett is the school's examinations officer and is responsible for the administration of all qualifications. If you have a query which your child's teacher cannot answer then please ask to speak to her.

Preparing properly for exams is important. There are many sources of support for pupils within the school. Pupils should approach their teacher, form tutor, head of year or learning coach if they have any questions or concerns about the way your course is assessed, or how to prepare for exams. There is also lots of good advice on coping with exams in the Childline booklet on the school website.

Other useful advice is available from:

<http://www.wjec.co.uk/students/exam-preparation-and-revision/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-stress/>

If a pupil is ill or late on the day of an exam please telephone the school at the earliest opportunity. In the event of snow or severe weather which closes the school we will always do our best to open for exams. We will post any instructions on the school website and on the Caerphilly Council website at:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Schools-and-learning/Schools,-term-dates-and-closures/Check-if-your-school-is-closed.aspx>

Updated information is available on the school's website under Curriculum - Exam timetables.

All exam dates will be confirmed in an individual exam timetable for each pupil closer to the exam season.

How can I help my child with revision?

You can't do the revision, but there is plenty you can do to help your child to get organised, stay motivated and keep calm!

Getting organised

Help your child to draw up a revision timetable. This should list dates, details of the subject and topics to revise and what they'd like to finish by when. The timeline can have a checklist, so tasks can be ticked off as your child goes along.

Make sure that their social life/job is not interfering with their studying. They need rest and sleep to make sure that their brains are active and open to learning.

Work with your child. Set goals you both think are realistic by a particular time. Ticks on the timetable will show success. Do try to keep up to date with how they are getting on.

If certain goals are not met, don't be negative with your child - try to figure out together what went wrong and help them to get back on track.

Getting motivated

Getting started on revision is tough for many people, but you can help your child get motivated. Praise and rewards work well. Use the revision timetable to plan out small rewards when a certain number of targets have been met. These might include watching a favourite TV programme, calling a friend or having an afternoon off.

Help your child to see beyond the revision. Remind them how rewarding it will be to know that they did their best. A bigger final reward, such as a pair of trainers, a holiday or a local visit somewhere exciting will give them something to look forward to when it's all over.

Staying calm

Staying calm as far as possible, try to make sure that revision time is a quiet time in the house. A healthy diet and regular exercise are also especially important when your child is under pressure.

If your child is highly motivated, it's important to make sure that they don't overwork. Breaks are essential. Remind your child that even a short 15-20 minute break every 90 minutes will refresh their minds. Making a drink, playing some sport, listening to some music or watching a

TV programme are all good ways to help relax before the next revision.

Communication/Talking

Talk to your child about what the subjects and exams are about, what they will have to expect, what they feel confident/less confident about... Talking to you about their learning will help them to think about their learning needs. If they have any worries, encourage them to see their teacher, or you can contact the teacher concerned. Studying in a group can be helpful, too, although sometimes more chatting gets done than work! Children can pick up new ideas, talk about exam stress and help each other with areas they're finding difficult.

If your child is completely stuck on a topic, remember you can always contact the school. It is usually possible for your child to arrange a meeting with their teacher, who can offer a little extra help and advice.

Websites

All students are given a personal log in to various websites. These include:

- BBC Bitesize GCSE All subjects
- PiXL app Mathematics and English
- Mymaths Mathematics
- Mathswatch Mathematics

Your child should know their login details for these sites and can get them from their subject teacher, if you would like them, please let us know. These websites provide them with materials to support their learning.

Help your child to reduce stress

Stress - what is it?

Stress is the body's normal response to a challenge, threat or excitement. During revision and exams, anxiety and stress are common problems for pupils, even for those who appear confident and calm. While small stress levels can make pupils alert and focused, too much can reduce concentration and confidence.

Just being present is a great start to help your child reduce stress during revisions and exams. Here are some tips for managing stress:

1. Encourage your son or daughter to get enough sleep. Tiredness promotes anxiety.
2. Remind them to avoid large doses of caffeine, especially from energy drinks - it can cause tension and anxiety.
3. Help them not to dwell on previous exams. This can also increase anxiety about later papers.
4. Encourage them to try relaxation exercises. They can reduce anxiety levels and cope with feelings of panic.

Useful websites for pupil wellbeing are available on the school website:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/collections/exams-and-revision/1>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>