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*Ysgol Gyfun*

**PORTHCAWL**

*Comprehensive School*

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Deputy Headteacher/Dirprwy Bennaeth: D.W.A Beard BA (Hons)

Deputy Headteacher/Dirprwy Bennaeth: C-A. Painter BA (Hons)

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

At the start of the new term, I would like to provide you with an update of news from Porthcawl Comprehensive School. As per last year, please treat this letter as a start of term 'Headteacher Newsletter' as I reflect on recent achievements and outline some important information for the year ahead. I encourage you to read and refer to this letter during the weeks ahead.

Firstly, I hope you have all had an enjoyable summer with family and friends, and that your child is looking forward to the new term ahead. At this time of year, we welcome new families, and I hope that this is the start of a positive relationship together. I wrote to you in July to provide you with some details about arrangements for the start of term and the academic year ahead, my intention now is to provide you with updated information on these plans.

### Examination Results

Once again, I was delighted with this summer's GCSE and A Level examination results, and I would like to congratulate all pupils in last year's Yr11 and Yr13 on their outstanding achievements. It gives me a real sense of pride seeing the young people in our community rewarded for their hard work. Overall, our pupils have received an outstanding set of results which will ensure they move on to the next phase of their education and lives. Throughout their time at PCS, they have all shown such commitment and determination. I would like to also congratulate the dedicated staff and our families for their hard work and continued support – a sincere thank you.

### Summer 2025 A Level Results – Success!

We are very proud of the outcomes achieved by our Yr13 pupils. Nearly 90% of all grades awarded were A\*-C, almost 70% were A\*-B and around 45% were A\*-A. Approximately three-quarters of pupils achieved three or more A Levels graded at A\*-C and 25% of pupils achieved three or more A Levels graded at A\*-A grades. In addition, nearly all pupils achieved the Level 3 Threshold. Year 12 also performed well in their AS Levels. **To read the full A Level press release, please follow this link: [A Level Results 2025 - Porthcawl School](#)**

**It was a positive picture across Bridgend County Borough Council: [A Level results rise in Bridgend County Borough as class of 2025 celebrate their achievements](#)**

### Summer 2025 GCSE Results – More Success!

The school's GCSE results were once again very good - we are delighted with our pupil's achievements! Our provisional results show that a high percentage of pupils achieved five or more GCSEs graded A\*-C including English Language and Mathematics. Over 80% of all GCSE grades were awarded at A\*-C, 35% of pupils achieved five or more GCSEs graded at A\*-A and most importantly all pupils left school with a range of recognised qualifications.

In 2025, we have once again maintained strong contextual points scores in Literacy, Numeracy and Science, and our Capped 9 points score (a student's best nine GCSEs including English Language and Mathematics) continues to be

positive; demonstrating our commitment to maximising the highest grades for all pupils. Provisional figures released by the examination board suggest that in English Language and Mathematics our school's A\*-A, A\*-B and A\*-C pass rates are significantly higher than local, regional and national averages. Excellent achievements I'm sure you'll agree!

**To read the full GCSE press release, please follow this link: [GCSE Results 2025 - Porthcawl School](#)**

Everyone at PCS is incredibly proud of all Yr11 pupils!

We are also really pleased that a high number of pupils have chosen to return to the Sixth Form at PCS. In Yr12, we also welcome several new pupils from other schools, and I wish them and our new families a warm PCS welcome. Our Sixth Form numbers are now approximately 280 pupils for the 2025-2026 academic year.

### **Summer 2025 GCSE Results – Even More Success!**

Our Year 10 pupils also completed a small number of GCSEs papers, and their performance has been excellent too! There were some very strong module results in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. In addition, nearly all pupils completed the full GCSE in English Literature with 90% achieving a grade A\*-C, 76% achieving a grade A\*-B and 44% achieving A\*-A. Alongside English Literature, a large proportion of pupils also completed their GCSE Mathematics qualification with 100% achieving A\*-C and almost 70% of pupils securing an A\*-A grade. These results will provide an excellent foundation for Year 11 – my sincere congratulations to all pupils and the English, Mathematics and Science Faculties.

I look forward to more success from all pupils in summer 2026!

### **Staffing Changes / Updates**

We welcome the following new member of staff to Porthcawl Comprehensive School:

- Mr Alex Jenkins – Teacher of Science (Biology)

We offer the best of Porthcawl welcomes.

### **Parents / Carers of Year 7**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the parents/carers of Yr7 pupils who are new to the school; it was a pleasure to meet many of you at our open evening held last year and I am looking forward to welcoming your children to PCS on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Moving from primary to secondary school is always an important moment in a child's life and we have made every effort to make this transition as smooth as possible.

We want to ensure that your child is happy and settled in school, and to support them we will be running an 'induction' for Year 7 over the first few days of the new term. We will be focusing on skills, the language of learning used at Porthcawl, and completing helpful IT induction (use of Class charts, Google Classroom etc). To further support transition, Yr7 will have increased time with their Form Tutor and Head of Year.

With the above in mind, there will also be an 'information evening' for new parents/carers on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025. At this meeting we will share useful information and discuss important areas, such as the curriculum, assessment and extra-curricular opportunities. Senior and pastoral staff will be available to respond to any early queries you may have, there will be a series of short presentations delivered on this evening.

**Miss. Painter, Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) will send further details soon - we look forward to you joining us.**

### **New Families / Pupils - Welcome**

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the parents/carers of pupils who are new to the school; as well as our Yr7 pupils we also welcome several new pupils across every year group in the school. I look forward to working with you and supporting your child to achieve their very best. I am sure they will enjoy life and learning at Porthcawl Comprehensive School. For information, I share a link to our Porthcawl Post Newsletters here:

[Newsletters - Porthcawl School](#) and previous letters from myself here: [Headteacher Letters - Porthcawl School](#).

## The Curriculum for Porthcawl

The national Curriculum for Wales outlines its 'Four Purposes of Education', enabling learners to become: ambitious and capable learners; enterprising and creative contributors; ethical and informed citizens and healthy and confident individuals. These purposes inform the design of our own, bespoke curriculum, marrying them with the individual ambitions, interests and potential of every pupil at Porthcawl. We believe that our responsibility under the Four Purposes is to *"provide all pupils with the knowledge, skills, experiences and desire to thrive in the adult world"*. This is our **Curriculum Vision**. The curriculum we have designed supports our young people to develop as the 'Porthcawl Pupil'. These are the attributes and 'wants' we aim to develop with all pupils across the school community.

The '**Porthcawl Pupil**' underpins:

- What we, as a school community, believe is important.
- What we, as a school community, value as important.
- What we, as a school community, characterise us as a school.

At Porthcawl, pupils are taught in subjects. This is because we believe subject concepts and knowledge are matter. Each subject has an important body of knowledge alongside specific skills, and each belong to a rich tradition that is unique to them.

For pupils to think critically and to form their own opinions, it is necessary to have something to think about. We therefore value a knowledge rich approach, delivered by expert teaching staff.

Our curriculum is broad and balanced, providing a wealth of learning across disciplinary subjects, and embraces all the mandatory elements: study of English and Welsh; the three Cross-Curricular Skills (numeracy, literacy, digital competency); Relationships & Sexuality Education; Religion, Values & Ethics; Careers and Work-Related Experiences and this is underpinned by a clear emphasis on the central importance of developing pupils' integral skills.

For detailed information about the Curriculum for Porthcawl please follow this link to our dedicated 'Curriculum for Porthcawl' website: [Curriculum for Porthcawl - Porthcawl School](#)

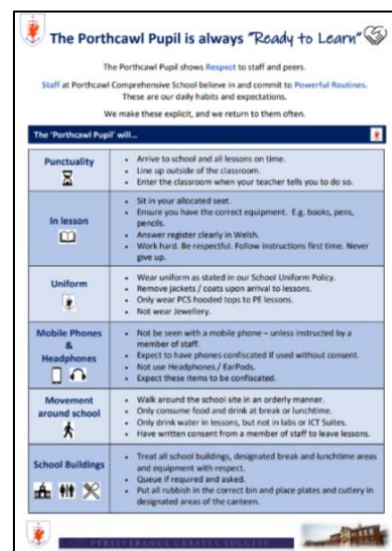
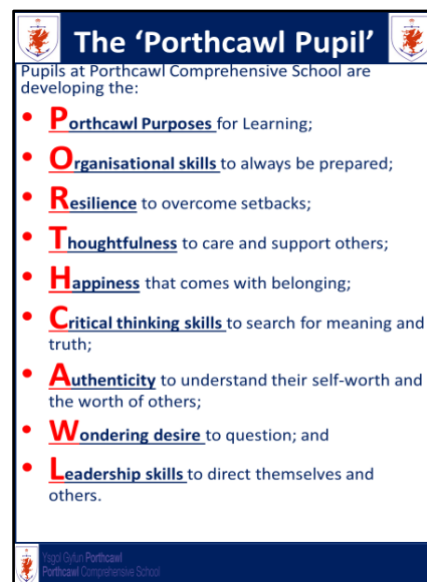
By following the above link, you will find out what we are aiming to achieve with our curriculum, what this looks like and what your child will learn. Each subject area has produced a 'Curriculum on a Page' resource which outlines the key concepts, learning and experiences your child will receive. Alongside this you will find helpful information about how we will capture the progress your child is making and how we will share this information with you. **Throughout the academic year ahead, further curriculum, learning and teaching updates will be provided by Assistant Headteacher, Mr. Aldridge, and assessment updates will be provided by Assistant Headteacher, Mrs. James.**

If you have any questions regarding the 'Curriculum for Porthcawl' you can contact the school and request to speak to Mr. Aldridge.

## Behaviour for Learning / Expectations

One of the strengths of our school is the behaviour and attitude displayed by our pupils. This is created by positive relationships between pupils and staff, and through the desire of all teachers to provide pupils with the knowledge, skills, experiences, and desire to thrive in the adult world.

To ensure a positive learning environment we have a 'Ready to Learn' approach at the school. Staff at the school acknowledge positive behaviour and implement a consistent approach to daily 'Standard Operating Procedures' so that poor behaviour can be challenged and dealt with quickly and efficiently.



Our 'Ready to Learn' system is built around respect, powerful routines, and consistent daily habits. We make behaviour expectations very clear and ensure that every pupil is ready to learn, every lesson, of every day. Our systems are built around explicit graduated responses. In assemblies this term and throughout the year we will be discussing our expectations; centred around our motto of "Perseverance Creates Success" and we will be reflecting upon the characteristics we expect in the "Porthcawl Pupil".

For more information about the 'Ready to Learn' system at PCS please follow this link: ['Ready to Learn' - Porthcawl School](#).

ClassCharts is used to record "Ready to Learn" behaviour points.

### **School Standards**

There are high standards at Porthcawl Comprehensive School – both in terms of our academic standards (in lessons and learning) and our general standards (around school site and school policies). Our 'Standards & Expectations' are an integral part of the characteristics, values and routines we believe in within 'The Porthcawl Pupil' and our 'Ready to Learn' approaches (outlined above). High standards underpin all that we do at PCS, therefore these will be revisited and reinforced with all pupils often. We have three very simple approaches for general school standards:

- Standards of Uniform – as per school policy.
- Mobile Phones – as per policy. Not seen and not heard on school site.
- School Site / Toilets – use facilities as intended.

**School uniform:** There are checks on school uniform, including gate checks at the start of the day, form tutor checks during registration, and on-going monitoring by teachers in all lessons. Pupils with incorrect uniform should expect items to be confiscated until the end of the day.

**Mobile phones:** Mobile phones should not be seen in school. Pupils seen using their mobile phone in school should expect to have them confiscated until the end of the day.

**Toilet facilities in school:** During lesson time, A-Block toilets are open to all pupils. In addition, there are separate toilet facilities open for the Sixth Form. The use of our toilet facilities is monitored by staff throughout the day to support the appropriate use of these facilities. At break and lunchtime all toilets across the school site are open, and staff supervision has been scheduled to ensure these spaces remain open and accessible for everyone.

We operate a Daily Detention / Behaviour Reflection system for those pupils who have their mobile phone or an item of uniform confiscated: Daily Detentions form part of our graduated responses to support positive behaviour and positive learning. They provide time for pupils to reflect upon their behaviour/actions. Daily Detentions last for 15 minutes at the start of lunchtime. If an item is confiscated during lesson 5, it will be lunchtime the following day. If your child is placed into Daily Detention, you will be notified through ClassCharts. Failure to attend Daily Detention will result in confiscated items not being handed back to a pupil at the end of the day and a parent or carer being required to come in and collect it.

**I thank you for your support in ensuring a positive learning environment at Porthcawl Comprehensive School and for your continued support with all school policies and procedures.**

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

A programme of extra-curricular activities will be shared with you as soon as possible. This will be shared with you via ClassCharts and our 2025-2026 "What's On" brochure. The latter will present the weekly clubs and activities that take place across the school at break time, lunch time and at the end of the school day.

### **Social Media**

Follow us on X and Facebook for regular updates on news and events using our X Handle @CompPorthcawl or via Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/porthcawlcomprehensiveschoolofficialpage>. You can also check information regarding PE fixtures, results and sporting success using @porthcawlpe. Please also note a number of departments / curriculum areas use Instagram to share success and work taking place at PCS.

### Parents/Carers Visiting the School (during the school day)

If you need to visit the school, please use the buzzer entry system at the front of the main reception building. Upon entry, all visitors must report to the main reception. Please note that teaching staff are not generally available during the school day and therefore it is preferable that you telephone or email via [info@porthcawlschool.co.uk](mailto:info@porthcawlschool.co.uk) in advance to make an appointment. Please can I also ask that parents/carers parking vehicles near the school are considerate to our neighbours. Please do not block driveways even if you stay in your car. This will ensure all local residents can access their properties / driveways.

### Drop Off / Collection (Start and End of the School Day)

As a relatively large secondary school, pupils arrive and leave the school in a variety of different ways. E.g. via a school bus, via a public service bus, via a bicycle, via a car from parent/carer/relative or on foot. The vast majority of our pupils walk to and from school. Therefore, if you are dropping-off and/or collecting you child from school I kindly ask that you follow the highway code and do not park / block the pavements surrounding the school site. With approximately 1250 pupils leaving the site at the same time, this will support a safe departure/exit for all.

### Attendance & Holiday Leave

Regular school attendance is essential and vital to a good education. Attendance at Porthcawl is comparatively good, but still below our expectations. Improving attendance is an on-going priority for the school. The link between attendance and attainment is clear. If pupils are in school, they will usually do well academically, so we encourage all parents/carers to ensure that their child's attendance is as good as possible. Parents/carers will recognise that both the school and parents/carers have legal responsibilities to try to maintain the highest possible attendance – we therefore need to work together with this aim in mind.

We encourage all students to attend school on time, every day, and aim for 100% attendance. I fully understand that children become unwell, and that there can be exceptional circumstances for absences. However, I respectfully ask that you think carefully before keeping your child off school due to the impact attendance can have on attainment levels.

Porthcawl Comprehensive School is committed to ensuring that every child reaches their full potential, and therefore requires your support in making sure your child's attendance is the highest it could be.

### **As we start the school year, please can I ask for consideration of the following:**

- Ensuring that your child arrives at school on time.
- If your child is ill, please contact the school on each day of absence and indicate the likely return date.
- Ensure that where possible, medical appointments are made outside of school time.
- Ensure that holidays are not taken during school time.
- Notify the school as soon as possible of any absence and confirm when your child returns to school.
- Respond to any letters or telephone calls received regarding your child's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact your child's Head of Year if you are experiencing difficulty in getting your child into school.

**Parents and carers are reminded that they should contact the school by 9:00am if their child is not able to attend school on that day. Parents and carers must state the full reason for the child's non-attendance (not just "feeling unwell") and indicate the likely date they will return to school.** If your child is absent without an explanation, you will be contacted and asked to provide a reason for your child's absence.

I hope I have highlighted the importance of regular school attendance and please be reassured that we wish to work closely with all families to ensure that every child is successful with their continuity of learning. We want all pupils to achieve their full potential. Any absence affects a child's progress in school and regular absence will seriously impact on your child's potential to achieve. Please see the following School Attendance Information from Bridgend County Borough Council: <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-attendance/>

Please be aware that holiday leave during term time is not encouraged as any absence will affect your child's educational progress and attainment. Please contact the school if any such absences are planned. Only in exceptional circumstances, and only if your child has good attendance, will a request for holiday leave be granted.

To reinforce the importance of attendance and punctuality we operate a 'Late on the Gate' system. Each morning, staff are on duty at the main school entrances/gates to welcome and greet pupils. At the same time, staff are monitoring standards of uniform whilst also monitoring punctuality. We acknowledge that on occasion there will be unforeseen circumstances that can cause a pupil to be late to school. However, patterns of regular 'lateness' will be challenged. If a pupil is late to school on two occasions in a given week, they are issued with a detention.

I am very grateful for your support in ensuring your child is fully prepared for a return to school in September.

### School Site / Premises Work

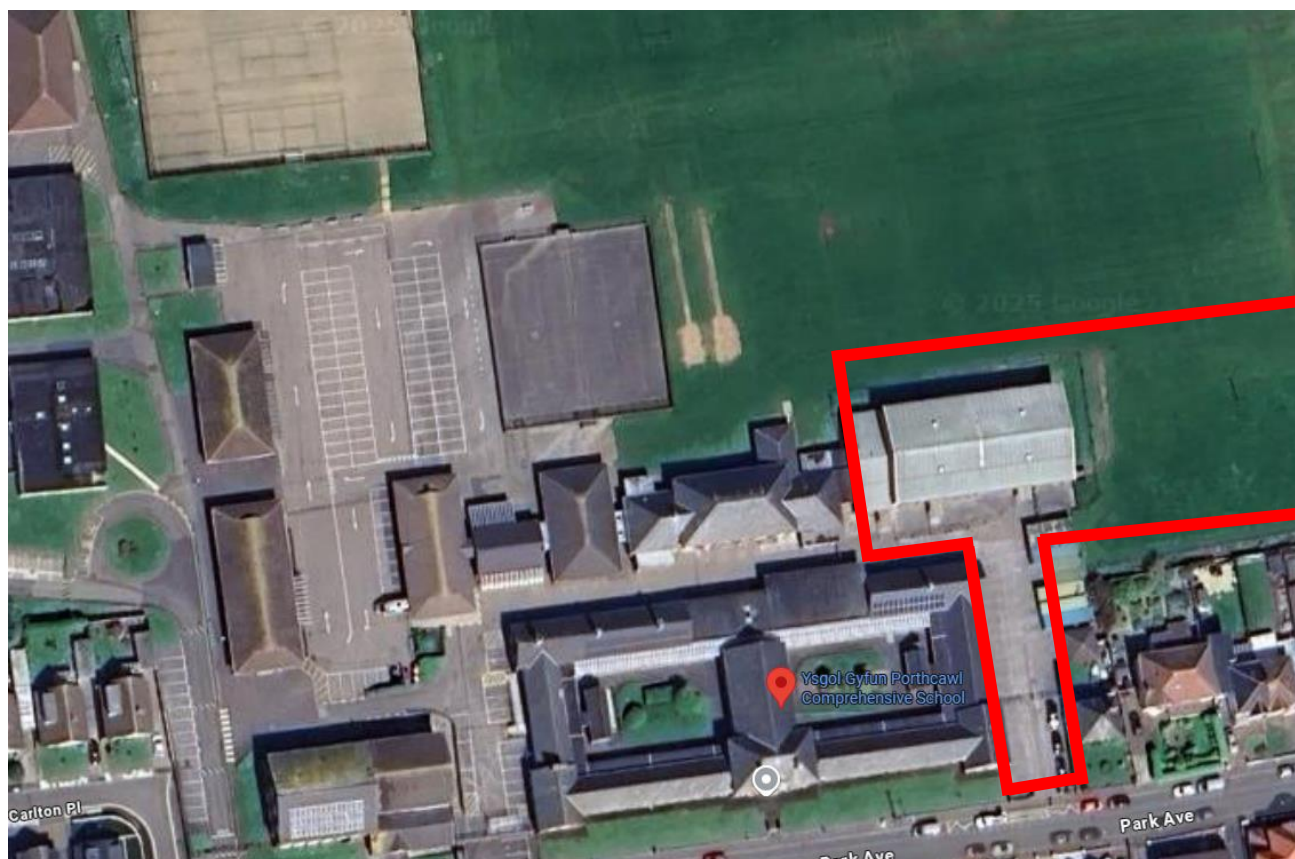
During the summer break several installation works have been completed across the school site. I would like to thank our Premises Team who have overseen the completion of this scheduled works over the summer term and/or holiday period.

#### **To provide a brief update about some of the works completed:**

- **Swimming Pool** - new changing room facilities have been installed in the swimming pool. This includes new changing cubicles, toilets, changing areas, showers – a full refurbishment. During the summer, the final works were completed. This included the installation of new external doors and glass paneling.
- **Identified classrooms** - a number of learning areas and recreational spaces have been redecorated. To include painting and new carpets.
- **ICT updates/upgrades** - several classrooms, learning spaces and designated ICT facilities have been upgraded with new computers.
- **Classrooms** - new soundbars have been installed in identified classrooms across the school.
- **Sports Hall** - during the summer holiday building work started on the Sports Hall. This facility is being refurbished, which will result in new external cladding, heating and lighting. In addition, to support energy efficiency, solar cells are being installed onto the new roof. Once complete the facility will return to school and community use.
- To provide an update:
  - There is a large scaffolding frame set up to enable contractors to complete the necessary work. This will continue to be set up in early September.
  - This building work will continue through September and October, with a projected completion date of October half term.
  - **Whilst this work is being completed, pupils/staff will not be able to enter or exit this side of the school site and there will be no access and/or use of this facility.**
  - **Therefore, for safety reasons this area of the school site is closed to pupils, staff and visitors.**
  - Staff will talk to pupils about this work in year group assemblies.
  - **Contractors have created a secure, safe area with fencing and the map / image below shows the area that is out of bounds.**
  - Weather permitting, pupils will be able to use the field spaces in school, however the area marked off will be out-of-bounds.

I am hopeful that the project will be completed as per the planning schedule and the facility will be back in use for the second half of the autumn term. The images below show where the framework / building work has been set up as per 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.





All completed work looks excellent and form part of our continued efforts to ensure the school site is continually modernised and updated to provide the best possible facilities for pupils and staff. I will provide further updates about the Sports Hall progress as we move through the term ahead.

### School Improvement Plan 2023-2026

Our School Improvement Plan (SIP) reflects the needs of all stakeholders, pupils, parents/carers and staff. The core purpose of the plan and the school is to receive the best educational outcomes for every learner. The plan is also the vehicle by which we deliver the core aims of our school.

For the three-year cycle of 2023-2026, objectives and priorities within our improvement plan have been determined following the school's self-evaluation of **1. Leadership, 2. Curriculum, Learning and Teaching and 3. Wellbeing, Equity, and Inclusion.**

Our School Improvement Plan has three main priorities and smaller development priorities. The 2025-2026 academic year marks the start of Yr3 of our three-year plan and I share below our overarching three priorities and smaller development priorities that we will focus upon this year.

**In 2025-2026, we are aiming to develop and strengthen eight areas.**

2025-2026 Academic Year		
<b><u>Priority 1: Highly Effective Leadership at all Levels (IA3)</u></b> <b>1.1</b> Refined systems & structure for <b>self-evaluation</b> <b>1.2</b> Cross-curricular skills across the curriculum <b>1.3</b> Widen the opportunities for pupils to develop their <b>Welsh language skills</b>	<b><u>Priority 2: Outstanding, Curriculum, Learning &amp; Teaching (IA1)</u></b> <b>2.1</b> Highly effective design, development, and delivery of the 'Curriculum for Porthcawl' <b>2.2</b> Consistently high standards of <b>teaching and learning</b> (Reduce variation with and improve quality of teaching)	<b><u>Priority 3: Exceptional Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion (IA2)</u></b> <b>3.1</b> Improved <b>attendance</b> <b>3.2</b> Consistently strong <b>behaviour, values, and expectations</b> <b>3.3</b> Wellbeing is not 'Invisible'

To read the Published Summary of our School Improvement Plan please follow: [Yr3-SIP-Published-Summary-2025-2026.pdf](#).

To read the Published Summary of our 2024-2025 Self-Evaluation Report please follow: [PCS-SER-2024-2025-Self-Evaluation-Summary.pdf](#)

### **Keeping you informed**

As a school we aim to keep you informed about your child and any events taking place. This is done through Class Charts and School Comms (email). It is vital that your contact information is accurate, and I ask all families to keep us informed of any changes to postal addresses, telephone numbers (including mobiles) and email addresses. **Registration details for Class Charts for Year 7 students will be provided in due course.** Please also note, accurate emails are needed for School Comms.

### **School Day**

For the 2025-2026 academic year we will operate a 50hr two-week timetable. Each pupil will receive 25 x1hour lessons per week.

The timing of the school day is as follows:

<b>Registration/Wellbeing/Assembly</b>	8:45 – 9:00
<b>Lesson 1</b>	9:00 – 10:00
<b>Lesson 2</b>	10:00 – 11:00
<b>Break</b>	11:00 – 11:20
<b>Lesson 3</b>	11:20 – 12:20
<b>Lesson 4</b>	12:20 – 1:20
<b>Lunch</b>	1:20 – 2:00
<b>Lesson 5</b>	2:00 – 3:00
<b>Extra-Curricular Programme</b>	3:00

### **INSET Days 2025-2026**

There are **six INSET days** for the Academic Year 2025-2026.

The dates are as follows:

<b><u>Autumn Term 2025</u></b> Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025 Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2025 Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	<b><u>Spring Term 2026</u></b> Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026	<b><u>Summer Term 2026</u></b> Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2026 Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2026
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The 2025-2026 term dates for schools across Bridgend can also be accessed here: [Term dates](#).

Please also note, the INSET day on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March has been issued by Welsh Government as a joint INSET day for secondary schools in Bridgend, the Vale for Glamorgan and NPT. On this day, the WJEC will provide training/workshops to all teachers within these Local Authorities with regards to the new 'Wave 2' GCSE qualifications being introduced for first teaching from September 2026.



### Progress Evenings

Progress Evenings will be taking place on the following dates. These evenings provide opportunity for parents/carers to speak with all teachers about their child's progress. During the academic year, further information about each Progress Evening will be released by the senior member of staff linked to each year group.

Year Group	Date of Progress Evening
Year 7	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2025
Year 8	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
Year 9	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
Year 10	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Year 11	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
Year 12	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
Year 13	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2025

I look forward to continuing the strong partnerships between families and the school. As you know this is especially important in enabling children to achieve success and so I ask for your full support of all school policies and for your continued proactive involvement in your child's education. I am very proud to lead Porthcawl Comprehensive School, and I look forward to working with you throughout this academic year.

I will provide further updates as we work through the new term. Here's to another year of success at Porthcawl Comprehensive School.

Kind regards,

Mike Stephens

M Stephens

Headteacher