

YSGOL DYFFRYN OGWEN

*Bilingual County Comprehensive School
11-18*

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HEADTEACHER

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CONTENTS

Mission Statement-----	4
School Governors-----	5
Inspection comments-----	6
What is the school's admission policy?-----	7
What are the school hours?-----	7
When will my child be able to visit the school?-----	7
What equipment will my child need before starting at the school?-----	7
What is the official school uniform?-----	8
Where can I buy the school uniform?-----	9
What are the lunchtime arrangements?-----	9
What if my child is absent from school?-----	9
What should my child do if he / she is late for school? -----	9
What if my child needs to leave school during the school day?-----	9
What if my child is ill during the school day?-----	10
How are pupils grouped in year 7?-----	10
My child has certain learning difficulties; will support be available? -----	10
My child has a medical problem or a disability-----	11
Who will monitor my child's progress?-----	11
How will I obtain information about my child's progress?-----	11
Will my child receive any homework ?-----	11
What can we, as parents, do to help our child?-----	12
Is there bullying at the school?-----	12
Travelling on the school bus-----	12
What is the school's disciplinary policy?-----	12
What about sex education?-----	13
Language Policy-----	13
SEN Policy-----	13
Religious Education-----	13
Policy on Drugs and Alcohol-----	13
Policy on Information Technology and Communication-----	14
Policy on using photographs -----	14

Equal Opportunities- -----	14
What is the school's Health and Safety policy? -----	14
What is the policy for paying for things at school?-----	14
How will my child learn about the world of work and receive careers guidance?-----	15
Where did last year's school leavers go?-----	15
What is the school's provision for sport?-----	15
What else has Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen to offer my child? -----	16
Complaints Procedure-----	16
School Holidays-----	17
Attendance-----	17
Examination Results	
Home / School Agreement	

Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen Mission Statement



BYDDED GOLEUNI ('LET THERE BE LIGHT') is our school's motto.

Let us bring light into our own and other people's lives

- by ensuring that everyone in the school is given equal opportunity, and encouragement to use and develop their talents
- by showing sensitivity and sympathy in our dealings with others
- whatever their background, their ability, age or appearance
- by showing tolerance towards each other, remembering that we are all different
- by respecting other people's opinions, beliefs and property
- by treating others with love and kindness and helping them when we can

Let us be determined to do these things, so that we may all live together in a spirit of co-operation and tolerance, both in Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen and in any other community to which we may one day belong.

School Governors

Chairman of Governors

Mr Ieuan Wyn

Representatives of the Local Education Authority

Councillor Gwen Griffith

Councillor Dyfrig Jones

Mr Arwyn Oliver

Mr Paul Rowlinson

Parents' Representatives

Ms Sharon Breward

Mrs Emily Irvine

Mr Iwan Jones

Dr Dafydd Roberts

Mrs Morfudd Roberts

Teachers' Representatives

Mr Dewi Gwyn

Mr Richard Smith

Ancillary Staff Representative

Mrs Elana Gilford

Co-opted Members

Mr Nigel Beidas

Mr Godfrey Northam

Mr Walter Williams

Mr Ieuan Wyn

Headteacher

Mr Alun Llwyd

Governors may be contacted via the clerk, Mrs Nerys Williams, at the school.

Head of the Education Department, Gwynedd Council

Mr Dewi Jones, County Offices, Castle Street, Caernarfon.

Phone: 01286 672255

These are some quotations from the school's latest Estyn inspection report held in October 2006.

Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen is a good school. It is a happy and caring school community.

The quality of teaching is one of the school's main strengths.

The care, guidance and support pupils receive are good with outstanding features.

Pupils are well behaved, courteous and respectful of each other and of the staff and visitors. Pupils display a caring attitude towards others, in the school, the local community and beyond.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs are challenged appropriately and achieve good standards.

The school provides a wide variety of curricular, cultural, sporting and leisure activities.

The school promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

There has been considerable expenditure of funds on the development of very good quality Information Technology rooms and equipment.

Pupils show interest in their work and contribute to activities with enthusiasm.

What is the school's admission policy?

The school's admissions policy conforms with the Education Authority's policy. The maximum number of pupils the school can accept is 115. Parents should inform the county council of their choice of school in November when their child is in year 6.

What are the school hours?

There are 25 hours of lessons during the week, which conforms with the recommendations of the Welsh Assembly. Other activities such as registration and collective worship are held outside this time allocation.

8.50 - 9.05	Registration / Assembly
9.05 - 10.50	Teaching Period
10.50 - 11.05	Break
11.05 - 12.50	Teaching Period
12.50 - 1.35	Lunch
1.35 - 3.25	Teaching Period

When will my child be able to visit the school?

A visit to Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen is arranged on a specific date in July so that pupils meet their teachers and fellow pupils. A meeting is also held for the parents of pupils transferring on the same day. In reality, however, the pupils will have visited the school on a number of occasions for various activities in years 5 and 6.

What equipment will my child need before starting at the school?

- A strong school bag
- General equipment e.g. biros, pencils, coloured pencils, eraser, ruler, compass, protractor, calculator (simple)
- A Welsh / English dictionary

Mobile phones and iPod's or MP3 players of any kind should not be used in school. All personal property is the responsibility of the pupil concerned. All items (clothes, bags etc.) should be clearly marked so that identification is made easy should anything be lost. Lockers for safekeeping are available for pupils in years 7, 8 and 9. Parents are asked to ensure that they have personal insurance to safeguard their child's property against any losses in school.

What is the official school uniform?

Girls:

- Official school sweatshirt
- Pale blue polo shirt with school logo
- Plain black trousers or a black or navy blue skirt of suitable length
- Low heeled black or brown shoes - NO TRAINERS

Physical education - Girls.

- Training shoes
- Navy blue shorts
- White T-shirt
- Dark tracksuit - navy or black
- Navy socks and shin pads

Boys.

- Official school sweatshirt
- White polo shirt with school logo
- Plain black trousers (no Jeans or tracksuit bottoms)
- Low heeled black or brown shoes - NO TRAINERS

Physical education - Boys.

- Black shorts
- Football boots and training shoes
- White T-shirt
- Blue school rugby shirt
- Black football socks

Pupils are not allowed to wear jewellery apart from: a watch, one pair of stud earrings, and one ring. No caps are allowed and pupils must not wear make up or nail varnish. Any extreme hairstyle is unacceptable - be it of colour, length or style.

Where can I buy the school uniform?

School uniform can be purchased from "Gwisg Cymru" or "Krypton Cloth" in Bangor. The P.E. department also sell some of the clothes required for their subject.

What are the lunchtime arrangements?

Pupils are expected to remain in the school during lunchtime. Any pupil who wishes to go home at lunchtime must have written permission. The school canteen provides a choice of several meals at lunch time. Pupils are allowed to choose what they eat. Light refreshments and salads are available every lunchtime. There are also vegetarian options available every day. Toast and light refreshments are sold in the canteen during the mid-morning break.

Pupils are welcome to bring their own sandwiches and eat them in the canteen. Some pupils are entitled to receive free school meals. If you think that your child may be in this category, please contact the school to ask for the relevant forms.

Pupils do not have permission to go to the street for their lunch.

What if my child is absent from school?

We place a great emphasis on obtaining explanations for any absence. Parents are asked to contact the school if their child is to be absent between 8.30 am and 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence. Parents are expected to provide a reason for the absence and provide the school with a reasonable idea as to when the pupil will be back at school.

If the family wish to take their annual holiday during term time they must complete a specific form for this purpose obtained from the headmaster.

It must be emphasised, however, that such an agreement could have an adverse effect on a child's education and is not, therefore, recommended.

What should my child do if he /she is late for school?

Pupils who are late must report to the school office before going to their lessons. They must register at the school office first.

What if my child needs to leave school during the school day?

Pupils will not be allowed to leave school without permission from the Headmaster, the Deputies or the Head of School. All pupils leaving school during school hours must sign the temporary absence book. Parents should make a written request or phone the school if their child needs to leave school during school hours (01248 600291).

What if my child is ill during the school day?

Every effort is made to contact a parent or close relative if a child becomes ill at school. It is therefore essential that the school has a contact number for every pupil. In the event of an accident the school staff with the appropriate qualification will administer first aid. We may also contact the local surgery or the casualty department at Ysbyty Gwynedd if necessary.

If a pupil needs to take medication during school hours, it is essential that the school receives a letter from the parents explaining this. The school will not give pain killers such as "Paracetamol" or "Asprin" to pupils.

How are pupils grouped in Year 7?

There are five primary schools in the catchment area of Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen and the close relationship with these schools helps to make the transfer from primary to secondary education as smooth as possible.

The Head of Lower School and the Special Needs Co-ordinator visit the primary schools to discuss the individual needs of pupils transferring to our school.

Year 7 pupils are taught in mixed ability groups, but some pupils are taught in smaller teaching groups for Welsh, English and Mathematics.

My child has certain learning difficulties; will any support be available?

We are very aware of the fact that some pupils have special educational needs and therefore may have difficulty with certain aspects of the work. We have a department at the school which gives particular attention to these pupils.

Our Special Needs Co-ordinator visits the feeder primary schools to discuss the needs of pupils with learning difficulties.

The school ensures that Support Assistants work alongside the pupils in certain subjects.

Occasionally some pupils will receive individual tuition from outside agencies.

Pupils may follow Entry Level Qualification examinations if GCSE's are considered unsuitable.

My child has a medical problem or a disability.

The school accepts pupils with disabilities through mutual understanding and working closely with parents and the Education Authority. Two lifts and chair lifts on the stairs have been installed.

Who will be monitoring my child's progress?

All of the teachers will be keeping an eye on the progress in their particular subject. Each class has a Form Tutor who also keeps a general eye on the progress of pupils in his/her class.

If a teacher is worried about a pupil's development the matter would be referred to the Head of Lower School, Mrs Anita Owen. Likewise, the Head of School is informed if any pupil shows significant improvement. As your child progresses through the school other teachers will be responsible for him/her.

We have a Pastoral Care team in school with different responsibilities for various year groups.

How will I obtain information about my child's progress?

We keep a constant check on pupils' progress and report regularly to parents. We have several ways of keeping parents informed about what is happening and we will make sure that you have an opportunity to come in to discuss progress with us. You will receive a written report every term outlining your child's progress and there will also be an opportunity for you to visit the school for a Parents' Meeting in January.

The National Curriculum led to an emphasis on teacher assessment: the work that pupils undertake in class, and as homework, will be assessed by the teacher. It is important that you as parents take an interest in your child's work and look through their books regularly taking special note of the teacher's comments.

Will my child receive any homework?

Your child will be expected to complete homework. This could involve up to an hour's work each night in Year 7. It entails various activities including reading, written work and research. To ensure that pupils are organised about their homework we give them a homework diary to record the work. We ask you as parents to sign the homework diary weekly to verify that to the best of your knowledge the work has been completed.

An after-school Homework Club is held every Tuesday and Thursday, where computers are available. Pupils may also use the facilities in the Library to help them complete their work.

By working together we can ensure that your child makes the best progress possible.

What can we, as parents, do to help our child?

We believe that education is a partnership between the pupil, the school and parents. Each has their contribution to make.

You can take an interest in your child's work by enquiring how things are going at school and by taking an interest in their homework.

Parents are asked to sign the Home / School Agreement in the Homework Diary (there is a copy of the agreement at the end of this prospectus).

Take advantage of Parents' Meetings and contact us at once if you have a problem or feel that we should be made aware of any matter.

Is there bullying at the school?

Bullying is not a major problem at the school but we do not take this for granted. In accordance with the school's anti bullying policy, the school takes every incident of bullying very seriously. This is true regarding every type of bullying, including the increasing problem of 'cyber bullying', such as through the internet and mobile phones.

Any pupil should bring any instance of bullying to the attention of a teacher immediately so that the matter can be dealt with.

With your co-operation as parents bullying will continue to not be a problem at Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen.

Travelling on the School Bus

A high standard of behaviour is expected on the buses; serious misconduct could result in the pupils concerned having to find alternative means of transport.

What is the school's disciplinary policy?

Our aim is to foster self-discipline, respect and awareness of responsibilities amongst the pupils. By creating an environment where everyone is respected and where courtesy towards others is apparent, the school succeeds in maintaining a high level of behaviour.

Detention is the usual punishment for breaking school rules and parents will be given at least a day's notice of any impending detention if it involves keeping pupils at the school after 3.30pm. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure children's safety once they have left the school premises.

The Headteacher has the right to exclude pupils from attending school for any reason which is deemed sufficient for a period of up to 45 school days. Parents have the right to appeal against the exclusion to the Chair of the Governors and to the Education Department. The Discipline Panel of the Governing Body has to meet to consider every exclusion of 15 days or above. In very serious cases, the Headteacher has the right to exclude a pupil permanently from the school.

What about sex education?

Sex education is presented partly through individual subjects and also through specific modules as a part of the Pastoral and Social Education lessons. Care is taken to ensure that the material is suitable and relevant to the pupils' age and experts in the field of health education are invited to the school to contribute to this programme. The school nurse also runs a weekly clinic and pupils are free to visit her if they need advice or information.

Language Policy

In accordance with the county's policy, the aim of the school is to encourage the bilingual development of each pupil.

Welsh is the natural language of communication in the school. Morning assemblies and school functions are conducted mainly in Welsh.

The school will ensure that the pupils are given opportunities to use both languages to varying degrees as a medium of learning, according to their individual needs.

In accordance with the Gwynedd's Language Policy, all pupils study Welsh and English as core subjects until the end of year 11.

Special Educational Needs Policy

The SEN policy is in place to ensure that pupils with specific educational needs are given appropriate individual attention. The equal rights policy is fully implemented and all pupils are given equal access to the school curriculum. The SEN policy is reviewed regularly.

Religious Education

The school has no religious affiliation and religious education is provided in accordance with the local agreed syllabus. If a parent objects to their child receiving religious instruction or attending the morning assembly on conscientious grounds, suitable arrangements can be made.

Policy on Drugs and Alcohol

If a pupil is discovered in the possession of unlawful drugs and /or alcohol or is under the influence of the above substances he/she will be suspended from school immediately for up to 15 days. During this time the matter could be brought before the appropriate Sub-Committee of the Governing Body which could permanently exclude the pupil from Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen. All cases will be reported to the police.

Policy on Information Technology and Communication

All parents are asked to sign a contract accepting full responsibility for their child making responsible use of the internet, and for not miss-using this resource in any way. The school has specialist software which stops access to all known indecent and unsuitable internet sites.

Policy on Using Photographs

Occasionally pupils are photographed while taking part in school activities, or as groups or individuals who have achieved success in one field or another. Some of these photographs could be published in newspapers or other publications, or on the school website or other websites. If you do not wish your child to be included in such photographs please inform the Headteacher in writing.

Equal Opportunities

One of the school's basic beliefs is that everybody deserves to be treated equally; the school also believes in providing the best education for all pupils, without exception. This means a policy of equal opportunity, which takes no account of sex, disability, background, religion or race. Any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or the Chairperson of the School Governors.

What is the school's Health and Safety policy?

The school has adopted the Local Education Authority's recommended Health and Safety policy. We comply with all the recommendations when working in workshops, laboratories, undertaking Physical Education and on educational visits.

An access plan to make access to the school premises easier for people with disabilities has been created.

What is the policy for paying for things at school?

The school's policy in general is to charge pupils for:

- Some activities or educational visits outside the normal school curriculum.
- External examinations for which the school has not prepared the pupil during the year.
- Examinations when the pupil fails to complete the requirements or fails to attend the examination without a proper reason; or at the third attempt of sitting an examination.
- Damaging school property or losing school property.
- Instrumental lessons in school.

A voluntary contribution is requested from parents when it is not possible to charge for an activity but no pupil will be excluded from taking part when their parents cannot contribute. It is possible that some activities will not be held without sufficient voluntary contribution. Please contact the school in cases of hardship.

A copy of the any of the school's policies mentioned above are available on request.

How will my child learn about the world of work and receive careers guidance?

The school provides a high quality programme of careers education for every pupil. The main aim of the programme is to prepare our pupils for an ever increasingly competitive and uncertain world of work. We also support our pupils to take the next step forward- in work, training or further education.

- The careers programme is taught mainly as part of the Pastoral and Social Education programme from year 9 onwards.
- The school works closely with Careers Wales and every pupil in years 10 and 12 will go on Work Experience.
- Parents receive information regarding the career's programme at parents' meetings and in booklets provided.

Where did last year's school leavers go?

From year 11, 32 pupils have returned to the Sixth Form, 25 have gone on to Further Education and 18 to work or a modern apprenticeship. From year 13, 26 students have gone on to Higher Education or Further Education, and 3 have gone on to employment.

What is the school's provision for sport?

The Physical Education Department offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to participate in a variety of sports. They:-

- Encourage and develop skills in a range of sporting activities,
- Develop pupils physically to the best of their ability,
- Encourage pupils to participate in sport at local clubs after leaving school,
- Foster standards of behaviour acceptable to society, and a respect for others resulting in fair play within sport.

What else has Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen to offer my child?

Pupils benefit enormously from activities that happen outside the classroom and most subject departments arrange some activities to enrich the learning.

- Regular visits abroad are arranged - including a ski trip every other year.
- Theatre in Education companies are invited in to school to enrich the curriculum.
- Musical activities - musicals, concerts and eisteddfodau.
- The English and Welsh departments arrange theatre visits.
- The library is available to all pupils during lunchtimes.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely.
- E-learning / Video Conferencing facilities.

Complaints Procedure

The Governing Body, in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh National Assembly Circular 03/2004 ('School Governing Bodies Complaints Procedures'), has established a procedure to consider general complaints from anybody with an interest in the school. This procedure is outlined in a document which is available from school.

The Governing Body has based the procedures on the following principles:

- the person making the complaint will be dealt with fairly,
- every complaint is taken seriously and impartially,
- every complaint is dealt with promptly and within a specific time,
- every complaint will be dealt with in confidence at every step of the process.

School Holidays 2010 / 2011	
TERM	
Autumn 2010	1 September 2010 - 20 December 2010
Spring 2011	4 January 2011 - 15 April 2011
Summer 2011	3 May 2011 - 20 July 2011
Pupils will be returning to school on Thursday, September 2 nd , 2010.	
HOLIDAYS	
25 - 29 October 2010	Half Term
21 December 2010 - 3 January 2011	Christmas Holiday
21 - 25 February 2011	Half Term
18 - 29 April 2011	Easter Holiday
2 May 2011	May Day
30 May - 3 June 2011	Half Term
21 July - 31 August 2011	Summer Holiday

PERCENTAGE ATTENDANCE / ABSENCES 2008/2009	
Attendance Percentage	90.8%
Percentage of sessions lost because of unauthorised absences	1.2%
Percentage of sessions lost because of authorised absences	8%