



Ysgol Gymraeg Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

Ffôn / Tel: 01792 894210

E-bost / E-Mail: yggpontybrenin@pontybrenin.swansea.sch.uk

Gwefan / Website: www.yggpontybrenin.com

Trydar / Twitter: @PontybreninYGG

Parent Focus Groups 2024/25

Summary of issues raised by Parent Focus Group members – Autumn term 2024

Lower School meeting date - 5/11/24

Parents Present: Miss Danielle Clayfield & Miss Ceri Metcalfe

Staff Present: Mrs Griffiths, Miss Williams & Mr Scourfield

1. A number of parents have expressed their unhappiness at the venues for this year's Christmas concerts. They are located too far from the school, with parents having to travel outside the school's catchment area to attend.

Response: Organising venues for our Christmas concerts is an annual headache and despite literally a dozen or more e-mails and phone calls to numerous venues, there are no obvious solutions. Whilst I agree that some of the venues are far from ideal, we really don't have many options.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of availability of local venues suitable for hosting concerts, particularly for large schools such as Ysgol Gymraeg Pontybrenin. The local venues that have been used in the past, or are fit for purpose, are all problematic to some extent, e.g Loughor Welfare Hall (only two nights available in December, both of which we've taken), Penyrheol Comprehensive (no daytime availability so we're unable to rehearse), Canolfan Gorseinon (no stage) etc. Venues must have an adequate number of seats, a stage, a light and sound system, daytime access to practice and a car park relatively close by if possible. The school contacts local venues annually in an attempt to organise concerts closer to home but without success. It's a problem that's more challenging to resolve than it appears. Of course, we will continue to search again next year in the hope of solving the problem. However, if anyone knows of a suitable venue that meets the criteria, please contact the school.

2. The response to this year's individual portraits with Roz & Kirsty photography has been overwhelmingly positive.

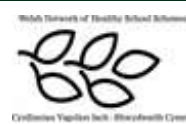
Response: Roz and Kirsty did a great job in photographing so many pupils in such a short space of time and it's great to hear that parents are happy with the end product.

3. Many parents continue to have concerns about the large class sizes, particularly the reception classes which were far smaller last year.

Response: The current financial climate has resulted in the school having to

Pennaeth / Headteacher: Mr Ceri Scourfield

Dirprwy / Deputy headteacher: Mr Gethin Horan





Ysgol Gymraeg Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

Ffôn / Tel: 01792 894210

E-bost / E-Mail: ygppontybrenin@pontybrenin.swansea.sch.uk

Gwefan / Website: www.ygppontybrenin.com

Trydar / Twitter: @PontybreninYGG

make a number of cost savings in order to set a balanced budget and as part of these measures, class sizes have inevitably increased. With the financial forecast expected to remain grim for the foreseeable future, this is unlikely to change any time soon. However, the school will continue to do all we can to ensure that every pupil at Ysgol Gymraeg Pontybrenin is safe and happy and has access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

4. Despite the large number of pupils attending the school, there is a wonderful community feel to Ysgol Gymraeg Pontybrenin and many parents appreciate that, particularly as their children start their education journey in the Nursery and Reception.

Response: Whilst we'll have 591 pupils on roll following the final intake of Nursery pupils next term, the school has maintained its community ethos despite our growing numbers. That welcoming environment has been built up over many years thanks to the ongoing efforts of every member of the YGG Pontybrenin family and despite various challenges, continues to flourish.

5. Is there any possibility of Breakfast Club starting earlier in the morning?

Response: This is a question that is asked on an annual basis and I'm afraid the answer remains the same. Most of the staff who supervise pupils in the breakfast club are parents themselves and starting their working day earlier just isn't possible at this moment in time. However, this will be kept under review.

6. Parents of pupils in Nursery would like to express their gratitude to the Nursery staff, particularly Mrs Fewings and Mrs Roberts, who have made both the pupils and their families feel so welcome since September.

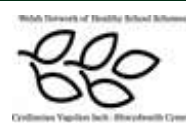
Response: It's always great to hear that our youngest pupils have settled in so well and we're very fortunate at YGG Pontybrenin to have such a fantastic team of staff in the Nursery who ensure that our pupils and their families are welcomed with open arms as they start their journey at YGG Pontybrenin.

7. A parent of a pupil with additional learning needs was eager to share her appreciation of all the school has done, and continues to do, to support her son, whilst ensuring that he is safe and happy and has full access to the curriculum.

Response: The safety and happiness of all our pupils is our foremost priority and it's pleasing to hear that this particular family feels we've met that goal. Moreover, Mrs Brinn-Philips, our Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator, has built a close and constructive relationship with many of our parents since

Pennaeth / Headteacher: Mr Ceri Scourfield

Dirprwy / Deputy headteacher: Mr Gethin Horan





Ysgol Gymraeg Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

Ffôn / Tel: 01792 894210

E-bost / E-Mail: yggpontybrenin@pontybrenin.swansea.sch.uk

Gwefan / Website: www.yggpontybrenin.com

Trydar / Twitter: @PontybreninYGG

taking up her role in April and she continues to strive to ensure that all our pupils have full access to the curriculum and progress to the best of their ability.

8. A number of parents expressed their appreciation for the great variety of extra-curricular clubs that the school offers.

Response: YGG Pontybrenin has for many years prided itself on providing an extensive menu of after-school clubs to pupils in Years 1 – 6 and this year is no different. With eight clubs on offer during the autumn term, we hopefully have something that interests most pupils and it's great to see so much enjoyment in attending these. A big thank you must go to the school's staff for giving so generously of their time in organising these clubs and for providing our pupils with these additional opportunities.

9. Many parents wanted to pass on their appreciation for the 'Friends of YGG Pontybrenin' discos that were held recently.

Response: Whilst the 'Friends' are only a handful in number, they manage to succeed in raising thousands of pounds every year for the school, at a time when finances are really challenging. By organising the discos and various other events, they enable us to buy resources that would otherwise be unavailable. The school is extremely grateful for their support and for giving so generously of their time to help us. Diolch!

Upper School meeting date - 6/11/24

Parents Present: Mrs Abi Hobson & Mrs Meryl Probert

Staff Present: Mr Scozzi, Mr Horan & Mr Scourfield

1. A number of parents of Year 6 pupils have queried why their children are always last for lunch?

Response: Accommodating 300+ pupils for lunch within a limited time is a daily challenge and with our younger pupils taking longer to eat their lunch than their older peers, it invariably means that Years 5&6 have to eat last. However, we have initiated a timetable whereby Year 5&6 pupils take turns for lunch meaning that they are not always last.

2. Can the dates of INSET days be shared with parents earlier?

Response: The school does share the dates of all Inset days with parents as

Pennaeth / Headteacher: Mr Ceri Scourfield

Dirprwy / Deputy headteacher: Mr Gethin Horan





Ysgol Gymraeg Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

Ffôn / Tel: 01792 894210

E-bost / E-Mail: yggpontybrenin@pontybrenin.swansea.sch.uk

Gwefan / Website: www.yggpontybrenin.com

Trydar / Twitter: @PontybreninYGG

soon as they're agreed. However, a small number of Inset days are kept back, with dates set later in the year as the school responds to training needs as and when they arise. Again, as soon as these dates are agreed, they will be shared with parents immediately.

3. Some parents have expressed concern that their children aren't being challenged adequately by the 'chillis' differentiation system that's used by pupils in the Upper School when choosing tasks.

Response: In ensuring that pupils have a voice in their learning and continue to develop their independence skills, they are given a choice in the level of challenge they take on in many of their tasks. However, this is done in conjunction with the classteacher and all pupil are encouraged to challenge themselves in order to progress in their learning. If the classteacher feels that a pupil is taking the easy option, they will have an open and honest conversation to discuss this. However, since implementing this system last year, we've found that pupils are eager to tackle work at the higher end of their abilities, building their self-confidence in the process.

4. Would it be possible to have more notice for Christmas concerts?

Response: This year, the dates of the Christmas concerts were shared with parents on October 18th, almost 2 months in advance of the concerts. Whilst finding appropriate venues was the main reason for the delay this year, we will make every effort to share these dates with parents earlier next year if possible.

5. A parent shared her child's unhappiness that his/her peers get to leave class 20 minutes early on a Tuesday afternoon in order to attend the extra-curricular football club.

Response: Whilst the members of the extra-curricular football club do leave class early, it's done in order to walk up to Cae Duke, where the club is held. Without this early start, pupils would barely have 30 minutes playing time on the pitch. I would add that this club is open to all Year 5&6 pupils, therefore nobody has to feel left out.

6. There are too many footballs on the yard during break times and lunch and as a result, children are constantly being hit with balls.

Response: The Upper School play on two yards, one of which is a ball free area and the other being for pupils who choose to play either football or basketball (these are timetabled via year groups). Individuals choosing to play on the yard where balls games are played will run the risk of being hit with

Pennaeth / Headteacher: Mr Ceri Scourfield

Dirprwy / Deputy headteacher: Mr Gethin Horan





Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

Ffôn / Tel: 01792 894210

E-bost / E-Mail: yggpontybrenin@pontybrenin.swansea.sch.uk

Gwefan / Website: www.yggpontybrenin.com

Trydar / Twitter: @PontybreninYGG

balls. Those who wish to avoid this risk are encouraged to play on the ball free yard. I would also add that many of our Upper School pupils need the physical exertion of organised ball games as an outlet to their pent-up energy.

7. Some parents have asked for more opportunities for face to face meetings with teachers.

Response: Whilst all schools state that they have an open door policy, Ysgol Gymraeg Pontybrenin really does embody this concept, with staff regularly meeting with parents before, during and after school hours to discuss various issues.

If parents who don't drop off or collect their children from school would like to meet with their child's teacher, they can arrange a meeting at any time by contacting the school office.

In addition to these opportunities, our parents' evenings, which have been held via a hybrid model for the past three years, have allowed parents to meet with teachers virtually or face to face. Whilst the face to face meetings have been limited of late to one particular day, from March, all three parents evening dates will be hybrid, allowing both virtual and face to face meetings to take place on each occasion.

Thank you to everyone who contributed comments to these Parent Forums. We will try our best to address the concerns you've raised and hope that you'll notice improvements in these areas soon. If however, you continue to have concerns or have any further comments or suggestions to make, then please do contact me at the school to discuss these.

The next round of Parent Focus Group meetings will be held in the second half of the spring term.

Thank you as always for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Ceri Scourfield
Headteacher

Pennaeth / Headteacher: Mr Ceri Scourfield

Dirprwy / Deputy headteacher: Mr Gethin Horan

