



NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a long term, but another very successful one for the school. Just this week I have been privileged to watch the school Christmas show and also the Christmas assemblies, both of which showed off our pupils' great talents and their confident, positive approach to life. More than 100 pupils were involved in the show, which I think is an outstanding achievement. I am writing to wish you and your family well over the Christmas holiday and also to update you with some key information.

GCSE & BTEC Examination Results Summer 2023

Our outgoing Year 11 pupils secured another very strong set of examination results in the summer. This term we were provided with new Welsh Government national comparison data and I wanted to share this with you, as I believe it captures some of the real strengths of the school's teaching and learning and our care, support and guidance for all our pupils. As a school we are now grouped in a 'family' of ten similar schools and measured against these, as well as against the national averages. I am delighted to let you know that, against these family averages and also against national averages, the school performed very strongly. These are not just numbers – they are essential qualifications which lead all our children to their next pathway and begin to decide where they will go in life; in our school we believe strongly that every pupil should achieve at the best possible level for them, and we support and guide them every step of the way to do this. Our success here reflects the hard work of all pupils and staff, and also the strong support from families which we always value and which is a central part of what makes our school such a wonderful place to be. The school is now measured by points on: 'Capped 9' which is essentially the average of every pupil's nine best results including English, Maths and Science; Literacy (English); Numeracy (Mathematics); Science; Skills Challenge (pupil research project work); and by percentage on 5A*/A (% of pupils in the school gaining at least 5 A grades or better). You will see the breakdown below, against Family Averages and National Averages, and Newbridge School is above all averages, often significantly above. For a fuller explanation of the performance measures, please see our website and Welsh Government website.

	Newbridge School 2023	Family of Similar Schools Average	National Average
Capped 9	387.4	372.3	356.5
Literacy	41.8	41	39.7
Numeracy	39.3	38.1	37.1
Science	38.6	36.7	36.9
Skills Challenge	44.4	32.7	31.6
5 A*/A	25.8 %	20.5	20.3

Year 8 Parents – Important Changes to Key Stage 4 Options

Welsh Government have specified that from next year, they do not expect to see any schools beginning GCSE/BTEC courses in Year 9. This means that there will not be the usual Options process at the end of Year 8. Year 8 pupils will instead make their choices midway through Year 9 ready to begin the course in Year 10. Although this is a change to how the school normally operates, I can assure all parents that our planning is already taking account of this change and we will ensure that pupils' outcomes and understanding of their courses will not be adversely affected.

Pupil surveys

Every year we run a survey called PASS (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School) with all our pupils. The results of this give us lots of interesting information about their views about school and how well they learn. I am very pleased to say that for the second year running, all main areas of the survey have been recorded as 'High satisfaction with their (pupils') school experience'. We have also just run a pupil health and wellbeing survey called SHRN and will use these findings to help develop further pupil support programmes. I would like to reassure all parents that the answers given by pupils are anonymous and confidential.

Communication and Parental Surveys

We survey all parents every year at parents' evening to get their views on the school. This includes a set of questions and also the ability to add any comments. I am pleased to say that the responses are almost always overwhelmingly positive – for example, last year 95% of parents surveyed said they would recommend the school to another parent - but we are not in any way complacent and we note carefully the written comments which are often added. If you did not attend your child's parents' evening this year but would like to complete a survey, please contact your child's Progress Leader. For other key school information and communication, please make sure you have our parental app and can access our online calendar which contains all key school dates. If you are not sure how to do this please get in contact via the front office. Please also make sure we have your up-to-date email address and mobile phone number.

January - Uniform and PE kit reminder

The new term begins at 8.30am on Monday 8th January for all pupils. All pupils should ensure all uniform is worn correctly, especially appropriate skirts, with correct adherence to our jewellery and make-up requirements, particularly the removal of any false nails and/or nail varnish. For PE, trainers should be sports shoes capable of multiple sports, not the flat plain black 'Air-Force One' types which many pupils wear with their school uniform.

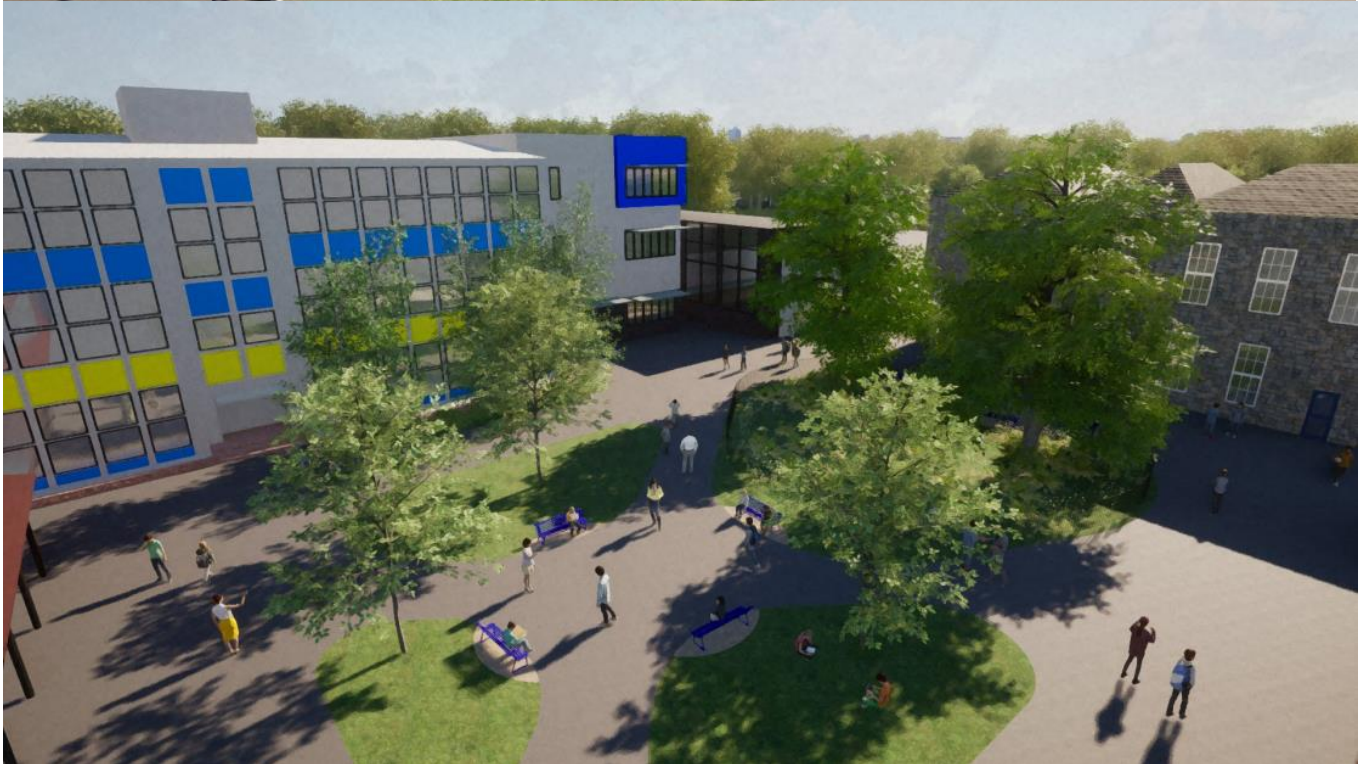
Behaviour updates

Although behaviour within lessons and around school is usually very good, like any school we have a very small number of isolated incidents and/or individual pupils who do not always behave perfectly. To continue to address this, we have been making minor updates to how staff approach the management of any poor behaviour. We will be informing all pupils of these updates in the new year, but I would ask you to check Classcharts regularly and discuss any negative entries with your child. We have high expectations of behaviour as this leads to strong learning and positive development for all young people. Sadly, we have seen an increase in pupil vaping within toilets, so I have agreed with governors that bringing a vape into school will now lead to an automatic exclusion. Again we will inform pupils of this at the start of the year but please ensure you have had this discussion with your child.

School site developments

I am delighted to let you know that Caerphilly County Borough Council has agreed to develop our main quad at the centre of the school. This should be completed in the summer and I share some pictures below so you can see how this space will be improved for all our pupils. We will also be redeveloping the old boys' toilets in the school, modernising these and opening them up to help prevent vaping and any other poor behaviour within them.

School quad:



Finally, I would like to remind you of the school vision which I shared with you last year. We are a school which is on a continuous improvement journey, always centred around all our pupils, and we are always looking for ways to improve the student experience. Our vision sets this out – if you feel that we are not living up to this in any way, please do let me know.

Newbridge School – Vision and Values

- 1. The highest standards in all we do:**
 - *Could this be better?*
 - *Could we do more?*
 - *Are we proud?*
- 2. Teaching which stretches and inspires pupils to excel**
- 3. A community school valued by all**
- 4. Pupils who are cared for and listened to**
- 5. Extensive opportunities for *all* pupils to develop as young adults**

Parents' Evenings and INSET days

A reminder of the remaining dates:

Year 7 Parents' Evening: Wednesday 24th January

Year 8 Parents' Evening: Thursday 8th February

Year 10 Parents' Evening: Thursday 11th April

INSET days:

Friday 22nd December

Friday 26th January

Monday 24th June

I wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and a peaceful, happy New Year. The school will be closed from Friday 22nd December for the whole holiday period – if you have a wellbeing issue with your child over the Christmas holiday please contact your local authority or use the links on our website ('Students – Wellbeing' section). We look forward to seeing all pupils back in school on Monday 8th January.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. A. Thompson
Headteacher