

Ysgol Penglais School
Year 7 Curriculum
2020 - 2021



Vision and Values of Penglais School

Ysgol Penglais is a happy, ambitious and high achieving school where everyone is respected and valued. We are a strong community where everyone cares for each other, knowing that only through collaboration and respect will we achieve and become our very best. The school is vibrant with student and staff co-operating, learning, thinking and working hard. We recognise that overcoming challenges is key to success and by developing bravery, confidence and resilience our students will become successful citizens of their communities, Wales and the world.

We will achieve this vision together through our school values:

**BE RESPECTFUL AND
KIND**

**BE AMBITIOUS AND
RESILIENT**

**DEVELOP
INDEPENDENCE AND
CONFIDENCE**

**TAKE PRIDE IN
BELONGING TO OUR
COMMUNITY**

**CELEBRATE DIVERSITY
AND SUCCESS**



Please contact your Year Leader, Mr O Daniel or the Form tutor should you need further information.

Important Contacts

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Key Dates for Year 7

Progress Report 1	November 2020
Tutor contact	10 th December 2020
Progress Report 2	March 2021
Tutor contact	25 th March 2021
Exams	7 th June 2021
Progress Report 3 + Full Report	June 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Year 7. The first year in secondary school for your child! They are going to have brand new experiences, make new friends and establish themselves in extra-curricular activities that we offer here at Penglais.

For all students the challenges of starting a new school are varied, sometimes exciting and sometimes a bit daunting. The need to be self-motivated; the confidence to ask when unsure; developing coping strategies; getting organised; completing work both in school and at home will all be essential throughout the year.

Year 7 can be a time where students sometimes become a little bit overwhelmed with everything. We, at Penglais, are committed to ensuring that our students continue to work hard and strive for their best. We will continue to set high expectations for our year 7 students, encouraging them to make an excellent first impression, maintaining the highest standard of behaviour and continue to produce excellent work throughout this academic year. We will track their progress closely through key piece tasks and will celebrate achievement while also being quick to intervene if anyone is not meeting their target grades.

It can be a very stressful time for you as parents/guardians too. Nevertheless, the evidence shows that the greater the parent/guardian support the greater the results. You are the expert on your own child and have always been their most important teacher. Your support, encouragement and interest can make a spectacular difference to your child's motivation and ability to cope with the demands of school.

Please remember that whatever your individual child's needs, your chief role will always be that of the person who cares most, champion of their needs and admirer of every achievement. The most important role you will play is to support and encourage them to be the best version of themselves throughout the year.

As a school we will do our utmost to ensure the success of your child. Strong links between school and home will be vital and it is encouraging to have spoken to many parents/guardians already. This guide is designed to give you the key information you will need to support your child through the coming year. When new information arises, we will be quick to communicate that to you via the school's Parent Mail service. We also use Classchart to share information about homework and your child's behaviour. There is also a wealth of information on the school's website, www.penglais.org.uk. When there are concerns about your child's progress, we will contact you, however, we also welcome contact from home if you have concerns. By working together both the school and parents/guardians can ensure the best possible outcomes for your child.

Yours sincerely,

Mr O Daniel

Year 7 Leader

Homework for Year 7 students

- Each homework session should take students around 20-30 minutes.
- Some homework tasks may take longer than 30 minutes and these will be allocated two or more homework sessions.
- Students should write down their homework sessions each day in their planner.

Supporting your child with their homework

General Advice:

- All students are different and have different needs. Some will require a lot of support from you, others will require the minimum. It is most important that you have an honest discussion with your child – “How can I support you?” Many children will be put off if you become over-involved or controlling. Ensure you establish that you are there to support.
- Consider using a reward structure to motivate your child. Rewards don't have to be financial or very big; talk to your child about what they would value: an extra night out, an extension to the time they can come in, a trip with friends, being let off household chores etc. Don't make rewards dependent on results, this can lead to added disappointment if they don't do as well as expected; rewards should be based on effort.
- Clear boundaries are vital. Whilst you do not want to be seen to 'nag' you also have a duty to check that your child is doing their homework properly. Explain this to them from the outset. This will help avoid unnecessary accusations of 'nagging'.
- All students will fall behind, feel unmotivated or overwhelmed, or struggle with the balance of social and school demands at times. When your child feels like this, getting cross can have a negative effect. Talk to them about the issues, acknowledge their feelings, help them to find a solution, help them prioritise.
- Be flexible. Use the 80/20 rule (if your child is sticking to what they are supposed to be doing 80% of the time, they are probably doing alright!)
- Hours can quite happily be eaten up by online communications, and it is important that you set boundaries for the use of Snapchat, Instagram and other social media, just as you would for going out or watching TV.

Setting your child up for homework:

- Talk to your child about how you can support them and what they would find helpful.
- Help your child to plan a realistic homework timetable. It will take an investment of your time (probably an hour or so), but it will make a big difference to their work. Plan in favourite TV shows, dinner time, time with friends and family, chores, etc. It must be realistic if you want it to work.
- If possible try to create a clutter free area in which your child can do their homework or agree a dedicated time when they can use the dinner/kitchen table to work. Try to keep this time and area quiet.

- All students have a school planner that you can look at to check homework assignments and deadlines.

Supporting your child while they do their homework:

- Provide snacks and drinks during extended homework periods.
- Be flexible – if they want to go out to out during an agreed homework time, discuss when they will make the time up.
- Be sensitive to the pressure your child may be feeling, let them know that if they are really not up to it on odd days, it isn't the end of the world. Let it go when it really matters to them, and remind them of all the good work they have done and will continue to do.
- Keep up with regular 'check-ins' and don't nag in between times. Show an interest on how their homework is going, talk through any difficulties and be prepared to help them if necessary.

Keep things in perspective. Your child may not be doing things the way you would do them, or as often as you would like, but they are doing the best they can.

English

In English, you will develop your **reading**, **writing**, and **oracy skills**. You will start by exploring narrative writing, and then you will study a wide range of **fiction** and **non-fiction** over the year, including a novel called *The Candle Man* and a play called *Paper Tigers*. You will also complete **speaking and listening** tasks such as presentations and group discussions. It's important to check and edit your work regularly to make improvements; this should be done in class and as part of your homework.

Half Term	Name of Unit	Key Task Type	Key Task
Autumn 1	247 Tales	Writing	Narrative writing
Autumn 2	<i>The Candleman</i> by Catherine Fisher	Reading	Character study or comparison essay
Spring 1	Mystery at Sea	Oracy	Discussion of the theories surrounding the Mary Celeste
Spring 2	Persuasive Leaflets	Writing	Creation of a leaflet using persuasive features
Summer 1	Exam Preparation and Exam	Reading	Comprehension and other skills completed in first half of the Year 7 exam
		Writing	Narrative writing completed in the second half of the Year 7 exam
Summer 2	A Person I Admire	Oracy	Presentation to the class on a person admired by the student

The smaller tasks that build up to each key piece are also an indicator of how your child is doing in lessons. All tasks help to build the skills required for either GCSE English Language or English Literature and we treat the GCSE course as a five-year framework to fully prepare our students.

Please note that the order of the programmes of learning may change for your child according to the needs of the teaching group.

Mathematics

Students will practise and extend the skills that you learnt in Year 6. You will also learn new ideas in the six strands of Number, Measure, Geometry, Algebra, Data and Probability. A mixture of procedural and reasoning tasks will be used to help you prepare for the national numeracy tests in April/May.

Setting

Students are set in maths, on the basis of their primary school results and our own assessments. There are 3 sets on each side of the year. There are opportunities to move set at the end of each half term. This year, we are starting by teaching in mixed ability tutor groups due to Covid. This may change later in the year.

Topics covered

Top, middle and bottom sets have separate topic list. Higher sets go into topics in more depth. Bottom sets on aspects of maths which reinforce number skills and/or are likely to be required outside the classroom.

Helping your child in maths

The best way to help students is by practising topics that they studied 2-3 weeks ago as this is when many students start to forget the work. You can use the online resources below. This will help secure the ideas in their long-term memory and is more useful than pre-teaching work that they will later be taught in class.

Online resources

1. <https://corbettmaths.com>

Revision videos on all aspects of the mathematics curriculum, with practice questions and solutions.

2. <https://www.mymaths.co.uk/>

Penglais School subscribes to the mymaths website where you can search for lessons, games and exercises on all maths topics.

Password: penglais login: median

Calculators

Although we often expect students to work without a calculator, there will be times when a calculator is required. The recommended calculator is CASIO fx-83GT PLUS. Calculators can be bought from Mr Bentley in B10 for £9.00.

Times tables: TT Rockstars

One of the most significant factors affecting students' progress in mathematics is their capability with times tables. The best way to give your child a good start is by regularly practising times tables with them.

In Penglais, every Year 7 maths lesson starts with 60 times tables questions – students answer as many questions as they can in 3 minutes.

We also set a 10-minute times tables homework every week using the TT Rockstars website (<https://trockstars.com>). Each student has their own login.

Lesson starters

In order to improve students' recall of knowledge, every lesson will start with a quick low-stake quiz focussing on the most important skills and techniques that are required to secure the best grade possible for each student.

Science

Students will begin by studying a module called "Introduction to practical work". This will include: safety instructions as well as collecting, recording and analysing data. This module will be completed by all students in their first few weeks at Penglais. It will teach them Laboratory safety and skills.

The following modules will be covered during the year:

- **Living Things and Human Reproduction:** Characteristics of living things and reproduction.
- **Human impact on the Environment:** Classification, adaption and extinction.
- **Circuits and Electromagnetism:** Uses of circuits and electromagnets.
- **Forces:** Application of Newton's First Law.
- **Solids Liquids and Gases:** Using particle theory to explain the properties of solids liquids and gases.
- **Separating solutions:** Distillation, Chromatography, filtering and using the pH scale

There will be a formal assessment at the end of each module.

Students will be examined on all topics and skills in the summer.

Welsh / Cymraeg

Welsh First Language:

Bydd disgyblion yn astudio gwahanol agweddau ar themau gan ddechrau wrth drafod yr ardal ac yna'n edrych ar Gymru yn ehangach gan gynnwys gwahanol elfennau ar hanes, diwylliant a bywyd cyfoes. Wrth weithio drwy'r testunau yma, bydd y disgyblion hefyd yn datblygu a gwella sgiliau iaith a gramadeg yn y Gymraeg.

Tymor	Teitl	Sgil a asesir
Hydref	Dyddiadur diwrnod cyntaf	Ysgrifennu
	Mynegi barn mewn grwp am yr ardal	Llafar
Gwanwyn	Tasgau darllen Dewi Sant	Darllen
	Disgrifiad o berson	Ysgrifennu
Haf	Cymharu cerddi <i>Ar lan y môr</i>	Darllen
	Cyflwyniad byr am yr ardal	Llafar

Welsh Second Language:

Students will develop their oral, reading and writing skills to build on and extend their knowledge of Welsh acquired in their primary school. You will study grammar including learning vocabulary, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions and mutations relevant to each theme. You will also practise proof-reading and translation skills.

Module	Key Task	Assessment
Fi a Fy Myd / Me and My World	Reading comprehension and responding to the text about friends	Individual Oral Presentation about yourselves
Fy Ysgol / My School	Oral Task – Discussing aspects of school life	Written Task - Letter voicing opinion about aspects of school life
Fy Ardal / My Area	Writing Task – Leaflet about the area	Reading comprehension and responding to reading

Art

Students will learn and practice a range of drawing techniques, working from observation and imagination. Students will have the opportunity to experiment with a range of processes and mediums to create some exciting outcomes.

Term	Module/Project title	Key assessment piece
Autumn	Mark Making	A large-scale drawing demonstrating a variety of mark making techniques.
Spring	Colour	A Mixed media piece using texture and tone in colour.
Summer	Architecture	Produce a final outcome connected to styles of architecture using colour, shape and line.

Drama

***Projects are subject to change due to the ever-changing situation surrounding Covid-19.**

Students learn the basics of Drama and Theatre by studying solo performance in the Autumn term with a focus on film monologues and a naturalistic style of acting. This aims to give students a grounding in acting technique and a knowledge of key vocabulary that will last them throughout their time in Ysgol Penglais. Later in the year, students will continue to work on their acting skills by studying improvisation – further developing their subject knowledge and technique by learning the art of being spontaneous. Finally, the summer term sees Year 7 study a complete play text, learning how to respond to live theatre and evaluate their own and others’ performances. This year may look slightly different due to Covid19 regulations around performing and practical work, but the department aims to keep lessons as practical and engaging as possible!

	Module/Project title	Key assessment piece	Homework regularity
Autumn	Solo Performance Project	1 prepared solo performance of a monologue from a film.	Homework is given at the discretion of the class teacher and usually coincides with assessment pieces.
Spring	Improvisation*	1 rehearsed improvisation based on a given title/stimulus.	Homework is given at the discretion of the class teacher and usually coincides with assessment pieces.
Summer	Text Study*	1 scripted performance of an extract from the play studied during the term.	Homework is given at the discretion of the class teacher and usually coincides with assessment pieces.

Design and Technology

Students will start the year working on a common project. They will undertake a design task where they will develop research, design and creativity skills. Following the common project, they will undertake four modules in specialist areas with specialist teachers. In these modules they will develop design and make skills.

Module/Project title	Key assessment piece	Homework title	Homework regularity
CAD/CAM: Keyring	Research	1. Design a pet product (research) 2. DT Numeracy 3. Design a pet product (Design)	Once per fortnight
Textiles: Pencil Case	Designing	1. Risk assessment 2. Mood board 3. Product Analysis	Once per fortnight
Resistant Materials: Desk Tidy	Planning	1. Good design 2. DT Numeracy 3. MDF	Once per fortnight
Food	Evaluating	1. Kitchen safety poster 2. Analysis of sandwich 3. Evaluation of fruit salad	Once per fortnight

There may be changes this year due to Covid and the limitations on practical work.

Geography

Geography is all about understanding the world around us. In Year 7 we will identify the different landforms that develop along our coastline and investigate the processes that are responsible for them. Later on in the year we will be researching the physical and human geography of Japan and making comparisons to Wales. Finally, we will be developing and improving our Ordnance Survey and atlas map skills.

Term	Module	Key Task
Autumn	What are the features of my local area?	Written presentation: “What are the main geographical features of your study area?” Sketch map of local area
Spring	How are landscapes interpreted and understood?	Test: Mapskills End of year exam: Mapskills Class debate [and write-up]: “Should a windfarm be built at Nant Y Moch?”
Summer	Should Japan continue to generate Nuclear energy?	Data presentation and analysis: “How do the climates of Japan and the UK compare?” Infographic poster: “What were the effects of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan?” Persuasive letter: “Should Japan continue to generate nuclear energy?”

History

All students will be studying the Medieval Period in History. This begins with the invasion of the Normans in 1066 and ends with the start of the Tudor dynasty in 1485. Students will be given the opportunity to explore: The Battle of Hastings of 1066, the development of castles, an understanding of the importance of religion, with a focus on crusades and monasteries and a study of the Black Death. Students will also look at aspects of Welsh History, including interpretations of Owain Glyndwr, the History of Llywelyn the Great, and how Aberystwyth has changed over time.

Period Covered	Module	Key Task / Tests
Autumn Term	Why did William win the Battle of Hastings in 1066?	Key Task 1: Who should be King? Key Task 2: How did Harold die?
	How did the Normans control Wales and England?	Key Task 3: What was the importance of William the Conqueror? Key Task 4: The Norman Conquest (test)
	How was Wales governed by the Welsh Princes?	Key Task 5: Was Owain Glyndwr a terrorist or freedom fighter?
Spring Term	What was it like to live and work in the Middle Ages?	
	How religious were people at the time of Gerald of Wales?	Key Task 6: Life of a Monk Key Task 7: Monks and Crusades (test)
	Was King John really a bad king?	Key Task 8: Was King John really a bad King?
Summer Term	How dramatic was the impact of the Black Death?	Key Task 9: How dramatic was the impact of the Black Death?
	What changes took place between 1066 and 1485?	Key Task 10: What changes took place between 1066 and 1485? Key Task 11: End of Year 7 test

Note: Teachers will pick either Key Task 5 or Key Task 8.

Modern Foreign Languages

Bonjour! In Year 7 all students study French. By the end of the year you will be able to talk about yourself and give basic information about your family, school and hobbies. You will be able to give your opinion and state what you like and dislike. During the year you will meet a range of grammatical concepts including present tense verbs and adjectival agreement. You will take part in speaking, reading, listening and writing activities and learn about French culture.

Help: test students on vocabulary regularly (10 new words a week).

Go to WOW Film Festival nights at Aberystwyth Arts Centre.

Drill tenses using: <http://www.conjugation.org/>

Music

In music lessons you will learn basic skills that you need as a musician - that will serve you throughout Key Stage 3 and beyond. Our lessons will be 'hands-on' and practical - discovering the basics of reading and writing musical notation, as well as the correct technique on keyboard instruments. We also look at vocal studies (particularly focusing on music of the present day), as well as taster sessions on other instruments - notably djembes, guitars, ukuleles and more. We learn about the importance of chords, as well as learning to read basic notation on a 5-line staff (as well as tab).

	Module/Project title	Key assessment piece
Autumn 1	Introduction to Music – basic theory/technique. Learning the notes of the treble clef/introduction to keyboard studies.	N/A
Autumn 2	“Raise Your Voice” – Vocal Studies (part singing).	Christmas Performance (in parts)
Spring 1	Key Skills 1 – chords (ukuleles/pianos/guitars)	n/a
Spring 2	Key Skills 2 - a closer look at notation	“The Sight Reading Challenge”
Summer 1	Scales & Chords – the Circle of Fifths	
Summer 2	Classroom Ensemble – putting it all together!	Classroom Ensemble performance.

There may be changes this year due to Covid and the limitations on practical work and singing.

Physical Education

The PE curriculum encourages learners to build a platform of skills on which future activity choices can be made. Through creative, competitive and health and fitness activities, students can enjoy participating and gain confidence in their abilities and take greater responsibility for their own well-being.

Term	Module/Project title	Key assessment piece
Autumn	Badminton, Football, Hockey Gymnastics and Fitness.	End of module routine on travel.
Spring	Fitness, Gymnastics and Basketball	Applying skills under pressure in a conditioned environment.
Summer	Athletics and striking games	Applying skills and techniques to improve times and distances in athletics.

There may be changes this year due to Covid and the limitations on practical work.

Religious Education

RE will help you develop important skills for life and learning. In RE this year you'll get the chance to follow in the footsteps of some of the greatest thinkers who have ever lived and to explore some of the most important questions that have ever been asked. Where did we come from? Why are we here? What do different religions believe? You'll discover how answers to these questions have affected the lives of people across the world from thousands of years ago to the present day.

Term	Topic	Key Task
Autumn	Ultimate Questions	Task 1: Does God exist debate and extended writing.
Spring	Christianity	Task 2: How have humans shaped landscape around us?
Summer	Islam	Task 3: How do our consequences have actions?

Welsh Baccalaureate

You will study a number of topics under the theme of **Safety** including health and hygiene, road safety, staying safe in the sun and responsibilities in school and in transport. You may have the opportunity to take part in events with external agencies and there will be a number of activities to develop your discussion and writing skills.

There is 1 lesson of WBQ per cycle in year 7 where students cover a number of PSE, WRE topics.

Term	Key Tasks:
Autumn	Writing a formal, persuasive letter on Risky Behaviour
Spring	Preparing for and taking part in a class discussion on the Rights of the Child
Summer	Reflective writing about your achievements in year 7.