

A Parent's Guide

Why send your child to an all-age school?



Canllaw i Rieni

Pam danfon eich plentyn i ysgol pob-oed?



General Cyffredinol

All-age schools are a relatively new phenomenon in Wales, however they are common place in countries which are leading the way in education such as Finland, Canada, Germany and Sweden. Also, the fee paying public schools which we've all heard of Eton, Harrow and Christ College Brecon are all based on an all-age model. Our parents here at Ebbw Fawr thought it would be a good idea if we produced this booklet explaining the background to, and the benefits of all-age schooling.

What is an all-age school? Beth mae ysgol pob oed yn ei olygu?

All-age means that the school caters for pupils between the ages of 3 to 16 or in some cases 3 to 18. There is one headteacher for the school, one body of staff, and one governing body. Traditionally pupils would have gone to a primary at 3 years of age and then to secondary school at 11 years of age. These schools would have had different headteachers, staff and governing bodies.



How many of these schools are there in Wales? Faint o'r ysgolion yma sydd yng Nghymru?

Ebbw Fawr opened in 2012 and was the first all-age school in Wales: there are now approaching 30 all-age schools in Wales. There are nearly 200 secondary schools in Wales and over 10% are also all-age schools. These schools are now in every part of Wales.

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Are they all the same? Ydy'r ysgolion yr un peth?

They are all configured differently. Some all-age schools have primary and secondary phases on different sites. Some house everybody in the same building. Some schools have all of their primary children as part of the all-age school, but many have around 25% of their primary cluster children as part of their school.



What are the advantages? Beth yw'r manteision?

There are many advantages which are detailed below. The important factors are continuity of education and specialist teaching in key areas.

Continuity – Parhad

A child's education can be systematically planned from the age of 3 through to 16 or in some cases 18 years of age. There is a large body of international research which proves that the move to secondary school is a problem for many children and that they don't perform at the same levels as they did in primary school. An all-age school can reduce the negative impact of this crucial transition point.



Specialist teaching – Dysgu arbennigol

As there is one headteacher he/she is able to use specialist teachers who would normally be confined to a secondary school, within the primary phase of education. Primary teachers are trained as excellent generalist teachers with skills across a wide range of subjects. However, human nature dictates that we cannot be experts in everything. Research shows that if children get specialist teaching in Maths, Science, English, Languages, ICT and Performing Arts at a young age then their rate of progress is accelerated.



Are there disadvantages? – Oes anfanteision?

There are no educational disadvantages, although there have been difficulties in some all-age schools during the initial setting up period when the schools were first established.



Ebbw Fawr 3-16 Learning Community – Cymuned Ddysgu Ebwy Fawr 3-16

Ebbw Fawr is a new build split site all-age school serving children between the ages of 3-16. There are two sites known as the primary phase and the secondary phase: these sites are one mile apart. There is also a crèche facility in the primary phase.

The school is led by one headteacher, although there is also a head of school in the primary phase and similarly a head of school in the secondary phase. Having one overall headteacher means that we are able to plan a child's education from 3-16 and utilise specialist teaching provision and facilities to enhance their learning experience.

The Learning Zone – – Y Parth Dysgu

The whole tract of land which formerly comprised the Steel Works is known as 'The Works' this site includes Ebbw Fawr Learning Community and Coleg Gwent, known as The Learning Zone. The Learning Zone is adjacent to the Secondary Phase and is in effect our sixth form. With regular links and visits to and from the college, we can say the whole area is a 'Learning Zone' providing education from nursery through to post-16.

Staffing and Ethos – Ethos a Staffio

All staff have signed up to the same statement of values and are committed to the same goals. This means that your child will be taught for 11 years by staff who exhibit the same values and who are striving for the same things. This cannot be underestimated in terms of continuity of experience. Primary phase pupils will also be in regular contact with secondary phase staff. This is of significant value as children thrive when they have strong relationships with staff.



Facilities – Cyfleusterau

Both our primary and secondary phases are housed in world class educational facilities. There are fantastic outdoor play areas, sports facilities, Science laboratories, Performing Arts studios, Technology studios and first class ICT suites. In the primary phase there is a fee-paid crèche which offers wrap-around care. There is also a term-time playgroup run by staff from the primary phase for children and parents to familiarise themselves with staff and the environment prior to formal schooling in the nursery phase.



Sports Facilities – Cyfleusterau Chwaraeon

Both the primary and secondary phase have full use of the Leisure Centre and 3G surfaces during the school day. We are one of only a few schools in Wales with such facilities, this enables us to offer swimming lessons at primary and secondary level. Whilst accessing the Leisure Centre facilities pupils have use of dance studios, weights rooms and indoor playing areas. There are only a few other schools in Wales who can offer these first class facilities.



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ICT – Technoleg Gwybodaeth

At Ebbw Fawr we are very fortunate to have first class ICT facilities and be able to utilise state of the art ICT facilities in various curriculum areas. Art benefits from a suite of Mac computers which pupils use for enhanced Photoshop. Performing Arts has facilities that are likened to a professional theatre. There is a main auditorium with raked seating with a capacity of 200 seats, a cans system, PA auditory system, 5 bar lighting rigs and a discreet sound and lighting box to operate when performing a whole school production. The music suite provides separate peripatetic rooms for music lesson rehearsals and recordings to take place.



Design Technology boasts cutting edge facilities such as CAD CAM computers and laser cutters; Textiles has computerised sewing machines, computerised specialist embroidery machines and a sublimation printer for fabric design and printing.

In addition to the ICT facilities outlined above the school has recently invested a substantial amount of money in ICT provision; with all pupils having daily access to Google Chrome Books and Year 7 having their own Google Chrome Books for use across the curriculum during the school day.



Cross-Phase Specialist Teaching – Addysgu Arbenigol ar Draws Cyfnodau



Subject specialist staff from the secondary phase teach pupils in our primary phase. Throughout their time in the primary phase our pupils are given the opportunity to experience specialist teaching in the following subjects:

- Languages (Spanish, French or Japanese)
- English including bespoke oracy workshops
- Cymraeg (Welsh)
- Performing Arts (Drama and Music)
- Technology
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Education



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Curriculum – Cwricwlwm

Your child's curriculum is mapped out between the ages of 3-16, this is an enormous advantage and cannot be done where there are separate schools and separate headteachers. We have provided an overview of what your child will be taught throughout their academic life in Ebbw Fawr from Reception to Y11. The topic areas pupils are taught are mapped across the year groups with age-appropriate specific literacy, numeracy and digital competency skills. These skills are interwoven with content and knowledge to ensure pupils do not repeat skills and content throughout their time in primary and secondary school.



***Visit our website at www.ebbwfawr.co.uk to view the curriculum map outlining your child's academic journey throughout Ebbw Fawr from reception to Y11**



Reading – Darllen

Accelerated Reader operates in Years 4-9; this is a scheme for all children designed to promote and improve reading. All books are graded and children take interactive quizzes after completing their books. The system then suggests other books to read at appropriate levels depending on how they answered the quiz. On average pupils will accelerate their reading skills by 6 months per year if they fully engage with the program. This scheme is hugely beneficial in nurturing pupils' enthusiasm for reading.



Dysgu l gyflawni gyda'n gilydd

Information, Data and Intervention – Gwybodaeth, Data ac Ymyrraeth

Being in one school for eleven years has enormous benefits in terms of how well the school knows the child. Sometimes the information fails to get through to secondary schools and children and parents are left feeling frustrated in that the whole “getting to know you” process has to start again. This is not the case in an all - age school. Information and data travels naturally with the child, and the school is able to respond to the specific needs of the child at any point in their education. It is essentially education without gaps.

School Productions – Cynhyrchiadau Ysgol

Our school productions involve primary and secondary phase pupils. These are special experiences for all children but particularly for our younger pupils who are able to perform with older pupils and experience our first class Performing Arts theatre. Recently our younger pupils loved taking part in productions of Under Milk Wood, The Jungle Book and Grease.



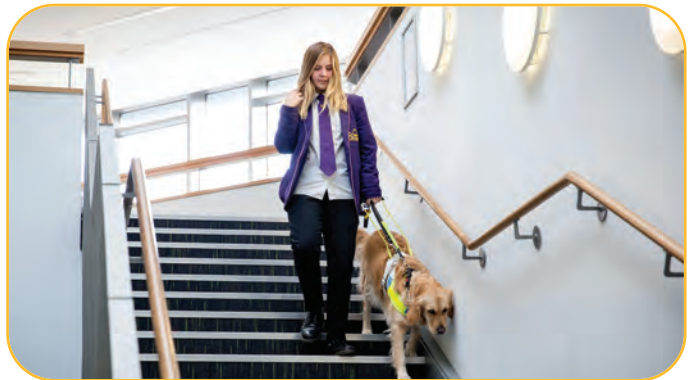
"I loved being part of the Jungle Book, I can't explain how much I loved it, it was just so much fun to be a part of a real production and get to use the special microphones and equipment they have in the secondary phase studio"

Beth Y3

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Additional Learning Needs – Anghenion Addysgu Ychwanegol

Children needing additional support are overseen by one ALN Coordinator across the school. This is where an all-age school has particular advantages in that there is no break in the support at 11 years of age. It's a continuous process that ensures there is a smooth transition at the crucial stage when a child moves from primary to secondary school. One pupil with ALN who has benefited particularly from this continued support is Milly Elliott. Milly is currently in Year 11 and has been in the school since we opened in 2012, Milly has complex visual impairment needs, with her condition deteriorating in recent years. Consequently, Milly now has a long cane and requires the assistance of a guide dog. Milly is a remarkable child and a testament to how continued ALN support can ensure a pupil fulfils their potential and can participate fully in school life. Through the support of the ALN department Milly has become the first child in Wales to have a guide dog and Milly uses the dog to assist her in her day-to-day life in school.



"Throughout Milly's time in both the primary and secondary phase at Ebbw Fawr, the school has gone above and beyond to meet Milly's complex visual impairment needs. During recent years Milly's condition has deteriorated resulting in her now having to use a long cane and guide dog. As a result of this deterioration Milly's needs have been addressed by the school with new teaching methods being introduced. Milly has had constant educational and emotional support from the staff, the continuity of staff working with Milly has meant the transition from primary to secondary has been seamless. We cannot praise highly enough the teachers and teaching assistants who have continually adapted their teaching formats to accommodate Milly. Without this continued support network Milly's education would have suffered and she would not be in the strong positive position she currently is."

Mr and Mrs Elliott

More Able and Talented – Disgyblion Mwy Abl a Thalentog

The all-age school system enables us to target our most able learners in all curriculum areas, providing opportunities for pupils to be challenged and taught by subject specialist teachers from the secondary phase. Pupils designated as MAT attend a series of 'master-classes' across the curriculum during Year 6.



If you are interested in being part of our all-age school, or if you'd just like to find out more about us, please contact via our website or Twitter and we'd be delighted to welcome you for a tour to see us in action!



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General information – Gwybodaeth gyffredinol

Headteacher: Mr Huw Lloyd BA, MSc, NPQH

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