



Dear parent,

Your child, in Year 9, will soon be selecting their GCSE option subjects to study over the course of Year 10 and 11. You will soon receive an online copy of the options booklet alongside the options website containing details of the courses that are on offer. Following this, you will be sent a link to select the option subjects with your child.

### Key dates:

Option form released: 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Option form deadline: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025

In 2025 a number of subjects are changing following on from the exam reform set out by Qualifications Wales that is taking place over the next few years. Staff in school will all receive training on new qualification specifications in order to prepare pupils fully for their examinations and assessments.

In wave 1 of the exam reform a number of subject specifications have changed and these will have an impact on the schools curriculum provision. A full list of the subjects that are due to change in 2025 can be found in the link below:

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/articles/first-wave-of-made-for-wales-qualifications-approved/>

Within the first wave of new GCSEs there are notable changes to GCSE Maths and Numeracy (double award), GCSE English language and literature (single and double award) and GCSE Core Cymraeg and Additional Core Cymraeg.

These changes have resulted in an increase in Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for these qualifications and as a result our curriculum provision must reflect these requirements in order to give our learners the best opportunity for success whilst ensuring each individual receives a breadth of learning experiences including a suitable balanced suite of GCSE or Vocational qualifications.

### The curriculum offer (per fortnight):

Core curriculum
Maths & Numeracy double award (7 hrs); English Language & Literature double award (7 hrs); Science (9 hrs); Welsh (5 hrs + additional for Welsh first language students); Skills challenge certificate (3 hrs)
Tailored curriculum (Option choices)
Each student will have three option choices from an extensive range of subjects. Each option has 5 hrs per fortnight.
Statutory curriculum & support
Students will have opportunities/experiences to continue their learning in relation to: Health & wellbeing; Relationships & Sex Education ; Religion, Values & Ethics; Careers & Work-related Learning. In addition, the curriculum will provide bespoke time to support pupils in developing their study skills to prepare for GCSE examinations.

This curriculum offer will provide a broad, balanced and varied curriculum for each learner with the opportunity to personalise their learning as they embark on an important time in their education. In addition, it ensures that each learner is given appropriate support and experiences to enable them to succeed.

We look forward to supporting your child in selecting their courses.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Jones', followed by a period.

Rob Jones

Headteacher

**Bryngwyn & Glan-Y-Môr Federation**

## **Key points and frequently asked questions:**

### **1. How many GCSEs will my child study?**

All learners will have the opportunity to study for a minimum of 11 GCSEs within the set curriculum time. Opportunities to gain experience in other areas or study further qualifications will be communicated at a later date.

### **2. How have the option blocks been decided?**

All learners were invited to provide a 'free choice' of option subjects in the Autumn term. These choices were analysed and option blocks were created to ensure there were minimal clashes.

### **3. What support will my child receive to support their study?**

During registration time as well as a bespoke hour, pupils will receive support in further developing their organisation, study skills and revision techniques.

### **4. What is the skills challenge certificate and is it a GCSE?**

The skills challenge certificate is a full GCSE equivalent qualification that aims to develop each pupil's essential employability skills through a range of individual and group tasks. The school has a strong track record in securing excellent results in this area.

### **5. Why are there subjects on my child's curriculum that they did not choose?**

The 14-16 curriculum offer in Wales requires a number of statutory elements to be delivered to ensure learners have a broad and balanced curriculum offer that fully prepares them for more specialised post-16 learning, training or employment. These can be seen in the Core and Statutory curriculum in the table above.

### **6. Are there any extra qualifications that my child can study?**

As a school our aim is to offer extension opportunities to our learners, wherever possible. Opportunities for additional qualifications will be communicated by departments at a later date.

### **7. When will my child start their GCSEs**

Year 9 pupils will begin their GCSE courses after the Whitsun break. This will give pupils the last half term to settle into their option courses.

### **8. Where can I find out about the GCSE reforms?**

Full information on the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of GCSE reforms can be found on the following link:

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/qualifications-in-development/made-for-wales-wjec-is-ready-to-deliver/>

### **9. What if my child is struggling with an option?**

If your child finds an option subject difficult, they should raise this with their subject teacher or registration teacher as soon as possible to gain support. Switching options after September can make it very difficult to catch up on a new course.

