

Darland High School Prospectus 2016-17.

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Welcome to Darland High School!

This prospectus is designed to give information about our school and convey something of its spirit and culture. Of course the best way to find out about our school is to pay us a visit, which you are welcome to do. The purpose of this prospectus is to provide you with information about the way we educate and care for our learners.

External organisations have been ready to recognise the progress being made at Darland. Over the past few years, the school has achieved the following prestigious awards:

- **Healthy Schools Award.** (Awarded in recognition of the work done in promoting and serving healthy food and providing opportunities for exercise.)
- **Active Schools Award.** (Awarded for the work done in providing a model PE curriculum together with a wide range of extra-curricular activities.)
- **Inclusion Quality Mark.** (We are only the second secondary school in the area to receive this prestigious award, recognising the work we do to provide opportunities for all)
- **Eco Schools Green Flag.** (Darland is one of the very few secondary schools in the region to have achieved this award twice. Our dedicated team of eco – enthusiasts have created two ‘eco gardens’ and have introduced a number of high profile energy saving initiatives in the school.

Past students have expressed amazement at the extent to which the campus has changed since they were students here. Undoubtedly, the most noticeable improvement has been the building of the Griffin Centre, a modern two story building, housing our ‘state of the art’ science laboratories and ICT suites. Recently we have seen the creation of a new library, complete with a full ICT suite, a remodelled foyer, new cookery facilities for students, refurbished tennis courts and the completion of wireless internet access for students throughout the school. The impact of these environmental improvements on the performance and attitude of our students is tangible and is something we have been keen to share with primary schools during our transition activity days. The school has enjoyed year on year growth since 2010 and we are now the largest school in Wrexham. This success, mirrored by an enviable improvement in examination results, places the school in an excellent position to meet the challenges of the years ahead.

B School Organisation

• Aims of the School

The aims of Darland High School are summed up in our school motto “Aspire, Apply, Achieve”. At Darland we know that for pupils to succeed they must have aspirations. We encourage all our pupils to aim high and foster in them a belief that they can fulfil their dreams. We ensure that all the pupils in our care understand their potential in all aspects of the curriculum. However we are realistic enough to appreciate that success does not come without effort and that is why we see application as the means of achieving potential. We send home Progress Reviews at the end of every half term, setting out assessment grades on pupils’ application and their progress towards their targets in individual subjects, so that pupils, parents and teachers can work together to deliver achievement. We have a Darland culture that celebrates and enjoys success in all aspects of school life. Most importantly, the school motto was chosen by all those who work in the school: pupils, teachers and all staff - it represents our belief that together we can achieve success for all our pupils.

• School designation and numbers on roll.

For pictures, policies, news and lots more, visit our website www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk

Classification of School: Local Authority Community Co-educational Comprehensive School.

Age Range: 11 - 16

Number on roll: 850 **Capacity:** 840

Number of places available in each of the five year groups: 168 (excluding pupils in our Additional Needs Resources).

Language of the School: English

Admission arrangements:

The Local Authority is the admissions body for the school.

Students starting in Year 7 in September 2017. In common with the other six community schools, the LA asks that all parents looking for places for their children for the following year should make submissions by 4/11/16. Applications can be made on-line or by using a paper form. Please see www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/education/admissions_secondary.htm. for more details. Parents will be notified of the place allocated to their child by 1/3/17.

- **Timings of the school day**

There are five one hour lessons every day. The timetable is structured over a 50 period cycle, encompassing two weeks. This means that over the year, each week is named either Week 1 or Week 2. There are 190 days in the school year.

08:50	Doors open (warning bell)
08:55	Registration
09:20	Start of Lesson 1
10:20	Start of Break
	BREAK
10:35	Start of Lesson 2
11:35	Start of Lesson 3
12:35	Start of Lunch
	LUNCH
13:15	Doors open (warning bell)
13:20	Start of Lesson 4
14:20	Start of Lesson 5
15:20	End of Lesson 5
15:25	Departure of school buses

- **Term dates**

AUTUMN TERM 2017

Tuesday 5th September – Friday 27th October 2017

Monday 6th November – Friday 22nd December 2017

SPRING TERM 2018

Monday 8th January – Friday 9th February 2018

Monday 19th February – Friday 23rd March 2018

SUMMER TERM 2018

Monday 9th April – Friday 25th May 2018

Monday 4th June – Friday 20th July 2018

(NB – There will be five training days to be allocated across the year, when the school will close to students. These are not confirmed at time of going to press, apart from training days on Friday 1st and Monday 4th September 2017)

• Pastoral and Academic organisation

Each student is a member of a form and is looked after by a Form Tutor. The Form Tutor may not necessarily teach the student, but is responsible for monitoring the welfare and academic progress of all students in his / her form, as well as taking the register every morning. Form Tutors usually stay with the form as the students progress through the years, ensuring continuity. Each year group consists of between 7 forms. Each form takes the initial letter of the local estate; TREFALYN. Students have Year Assemblies once a week and these are led by the Progress Coordinator (Head of Year). These assemblies are used to celebrate student successes and to award Achievement Points badges. There is a spirit of healthy competition between the forms, who compete termly for attendance and achievement awards.

Each year group is led by a Progress Coordinator, who leads the team of Form Tutors and monitors academic progress and behaviour. It is to the Progress Coordinator, that parents should make contact should they want to discuss pastoral concerns.

Assisting the Progress Coordinators are four Behaviour for Learning Mentors. As non-teachers they have the availability during the day, to induct new students, organize the peer mentoring programme, supervise our internal seclusion room and investigate behavioural issues.

The senior member of staff responsible for pastoral leadership and pupil progress, is Mrs L Easton, Assistant Headteacher.

Subject teachers in the school all belong to one of 7 Faculties, each headed by a Faculty Coordinator. Each Faculty has a suite of classrooms grouped around a faculty office.

• Staff Structure

Headteacher	Mr P Agnew
Deputy Head	Mr S Corner
Assistant Head Curriculum	Mr S Roberts
Assistant Head Pupil Progress and Wellbeing	Mrs L Easton
Additional Needs Coordinator	Ms D Hughes
Assistant Additional Needs Coordinator	Ms S Abel

Faculty Coordinator English / Literacy Coordinator Assistant Faculty Coordinator English	Mrs C Wasiuk Mrs J Davies
Faculty Coordinator Maths / Numeracy Coordinator Assistant Faculty Coordinator Maths	Dr M Edwards Mrs J Hawke
Faculty Coordinator Science Assistant Faculty Coordinator Science	Mrs K Green (acting) Mr D Roberts
Faculty Coordinator Modern Languages Assistant Faculty Coordinator Languages	Miss F Jones Mrs F Wood
Faculty Coordinator Technology & the Creative Arts	Mr M Sedgwick (acting)
Faculty Coordinator Humanities Assistant Faculty Coordinator Humanities	Mrs V Gray Mrs L Garratt
Head of PE	Miss G Gardner
Faculty Coordinator Performing Arts Assistant Faculty Coordinator Performing Arts	Mrs T Lee Mr E Winterbottom
Progress Coordinator Year 7 Progress Coordinator Year 8 Progress Coordinator Year 9 Progress Coordinator Year 10 Progress Coordinator Year 11	Mr D Owen-Jones (acting) Mrs J Symes Mr S Coyne Mr G Hamm Mrs C Booth
Behaviour for Learning Assistants	Mr M Jarvis Mrs C Evans Mrs J Hayes Mrs M McClean

● Student Safety

We take the safety of students very seriously at Darland High School. With 850 students and more than 120 staff on site, the following measures are in place.

- The site is patrolled by duty staff before school, at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of school. It is important to appreciate however, that our morning duty staff start at 08.45am, so students should not arrive before this time. Similarly, no pupils should remain on site after 3.25pm, unless they are attending a school club or other approved activity supervised by a member of staff.
- All students are to remain on site during the morning break and at lunchtime. If a parent wishes for their child to walk home for lunch, they must write to the Headteacher and a pass will be produced providing an undertaking is made that the child will travel home by the quickest route.
- All staff wear name badges to identify them. All visitors to the school, including parents, are required to sign in at the Headteacher's Office, whereupon they will be issued with a badge.
- Parents are informed of all planned visits (curricular and extra-curricular) off site and must complete the consent forms which are attached to the letter informing them of the visit or activity.
- The school keeps a list of all medical conditions of our students and the staff are regularly updated with these needs and trained in responding to specific ailments (e.g Anaphylaxis, Asthma). However, this information is only useful if it is up to date, so the school depends very much on parents providing up-to-date medical information, together with emergency telephone contact details.
- The school has approximately four trained First Aiders and one is always on duty during the school day.
- The school organises Fire Drills once a term.
- Parents must only drive onto the campus by the main (Chester road) entrance. This is the main entrance to the school site and although there are two other pedestrian entrances (one leading to Darland Lane and the other to Cotswold Crescent), these are locked during the day. We ask that parents collect their children at the end of the

day from the Darland Lane exit, at the rear of the school. This is to avoid congestion around the main entrance, which is used by our school buses.

- **School Rules, Rewards and Sanctions**

We know where we are going as a school and we want everyone to be successful. In order to raise the levels of children's achievements certain things need to be in place:

- **Setting the Ethos: our key words.**

Rather than post lists of rules on walls around the school, we constantly communicate the expectations we have chosen for the school community to keep us focused. These words are:

Ready – i.e. punctual, receptive to advice and ideas and ready to develop and change.

Respectful – i.e. polite to one another, friendly and courteous, conscious of the need of everyone for personal space and the right of others to hold their opinions.

Safe – i.e. walking on the left around school, playing safely and using equipment correctly in science and technology.

- **Behaviour in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds.**

We expect courtesy, respect and consideration from all members of the school community. Our school rules are simple and the consequences for infringement clearly signposted for pupils. There is a clear hierarchy of sanctions for infringements of discipline ranging from being kept behind for a few minutes after a lesson, to Faculty and School Detentions and Internal and External Exclusion. As with all aspects of school life, we believe that keeping parents informed is crucial and make no apologies for telephoning parents to discuss the behaviour of their children. All infringements of discipline are recorded electronically on the school database and a summary of any 'Behaviour Points' is sent to parents three times a year, but a print-out can be requested at any time by telephoning the school office.

- **Sanctions.**

Each Faculty follows the same Behaviour Policy, which is displayed in all classrooms and is printed in the Student Planner. We have a stepped response to dealing with instances of poor behaviour, with short break detentions used for minor incidents leading to lunchtime and after-school detentions for more serious behaviour. For the most serious incidents, pupils are spend a day in the Internal Exclusion Room or are given a fixed term external exclusion. Parents are always informed in advance when it has become necessary to give the student a detention or be placed in the Seclusion Room.

- **Mobile Phones.**

It is a fact of life these days, that most youngsters have phones. At Darland, they are not banned, but they must be out of sight and switched off in lessons, so that learning is not disrupted. The vast majority of our students respect this sensible line, but those who break the rules have their phones confiscated until the end of the day.

- **Rewards**

Just as students receive 'Behaviour Points' when they fail to meet our behaviour expectations, they receive 'Achievement Points' when they impress the staff with their effort, attitude and actions. These Achievement Points (called House points) lead to the award of a bronze badge when the student reaches 30 points, a silver at 50 and a gold at 100 . These are presented by the Progress Coordinator in Assemblies. There is a reward at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms for students in each year group who have consistently high effort grades.

- **Attendance**

Students learn best when they are in school! Darland regularly returns attendance figures which exceed Welsh Assembly targets, but we are concerned that some students have reduced attendance. Holidays during term time for students in Years 7 and 8 are therefore discouraged because of the impact on learning. For students in Years 9, 10 and 11, no holidays in term-time will be sanctioned by the school, due to the continuous nature of much of the assessment for examination courses. Applications for holidays for students in Years 7 and 8 will only be granted if the student's attendance over the last two terms has been over 96%.

- **Uniform**

At Darland we believe that a smart uniform is very important; it demonstrates the pride that students take in our school and themselves.

No extremes of appearance are acceptable - this includes hairstyles as well as dress and the school asks for the support of parents in ensuring their children dress and present themselves correctly. Any student not in full uniform or whose appearance does not meet our standards may be sent home. In case of unforeseen problems with uniform, parents should contact the appropriate Progress Coordinator.

In accepting a place at Darland High School, parents agree to these rules.

Girls

Bottle green blazer with school crest – available from our suppliers, RAM Leisure.

White school shirt with long or short sleeves

School tie with crest – available from our suppliers, RAM Leisure

Official school skirt (green tartan kilt) or black school trousers. Please note that 'skinny' trousers or black jeans are not permitted.

Plain black or white short socks or black tights (opaque)

Plain black shoes sensible heel and no large logos

Boys

Bottle green blazer with school crest – available from our suppliers, RAM Leisure.

White school shirt with long or short sleeves

School tie with crest – available from our suppliers, Sportswear International

Black school trousers

Plain black short socks

Plain black shoes sensible heel and no large logos

Optional Uniform Item*

Bottle green V neck pullover (available sleeveless or with sleeves), available from RAM, our school suppliers.

PE Kit

Boys

Outdoor Kit

Green rugby shirt – ordered through school

Black shorts

Green knee length socks

Studded football boots

Gum shield – optional

Indoor Kit

Plain white T shirt – no large logos

Black shorts

Girls

Plain white T shirt – no large logos

Black shorts

White socks

Trainers

Trousers must not be too tight and the style of the trouser must allow a shirt to be tucked in properly. Ski pants, combat trousers, leggings or low-rise (hipster) trousers are not allowed, nor are any adornments to the trousers like big buttons, large belts, buckles etc.

Skirts must not be too tight or have splits.

Shirts must be traditional school shirt design so that they can be tucked into skirts and trousers properly. They must not be fitted, short or fashion shirts without a proper collar.

Shoes must be completely black and low heeled, any visible logos must be small. Trainers, boots and sandals may not be worn.

Socks/tights must not be coloured or patterned.

Outdoor coats should fit over the blazer so that they can be worn to and from school in bad weather. Clothes that are **not part** of the official school uniform e.g. baseball caps, neck-warmers, denim jackets, hooded tops, trainers or anything that we consider to be "street culture", are not allowed either on the way to school or in school.

Jewellery - students may only wear an inexpensive watch and one pair of **plain studs** in the lower lobes. Hooped earrings including sleepers are not allowed. No body jewellery is allowed (nose, tongue, lip, eyebrow, belly button etc). The school will not be responsible for any injury caused by or to a body piercing. All jewellery brought into school is at students' own risk.

Hair should be a natural colour. Hair styles must not be extreme; the minimum length is grade 2. The school will decide what is extreme and if you are in any doubt about your child's hair style, please check with a senior member of staff. Head bands and hair bobbles should be of a dark colour and not excessive. Hair flowers are not permitted. Tramlines, shaved designs in hair or shaved eyebrows are not permitted.

Make-up is only allowed if it is very subtle and is applied minimally. The school reserves the right to make that judgement and we will ask students to remove excess. **Nail varnish** is not allowed.

Equality and Diversity

The school is respectful of all faiths and where specific faiths require alterations to the uniform and appearance code, we will do our best to accommodate those needs. Students with a disability, who may need amendments to the uniform, will be accommodated. Parents are advised to contact the Headteacher.

Financial assistance

The LEA operates a clothing scheme to help some families with the purchase of uniform. Application forms for a grant to help with the cost are available from Wrexham County Borough Council.

- **Attendance**

As a school, we take the matter of attendance and punctuality very seriously. Last year our overall attendance improved from 93.6% to 94.5%, but despite this latter figure being above both local and national averages, it still means that the average child at Darland was absent for one half day every fortnight! We employ two people in the school to monitor attendances and chase up on absences on the day. Students are registered electronically in every lesson and should your child be absent, we ask that you telephone the school after 8.30 on the morning of absence. The headteacher has the discretion to authorize absence for holidays of up to ten days in any school year, but as a school, we strongly discourage parents from taking their children out during term time, when valuable learning is lost.

When a child accumulates more than five unauthorised absences in any one term, the school in conjunction with the Local Authority may impose a Fixed Penalty Notice on the parents of the child.

- **Transport**

There are subsidised dedicated 'School buses' which serve the traditional 'catchment area of the school: the villages of Marford, Gresford, Holt, transporting children who qualify for free transport to school. In addition, the school has the following arrangements with local private hire firms who operate the following routes for a half termly or daily fee

Oares A Bus – Sept 2016

- 8:20am - Bus Station
- 8:22am - Grove Road
- 8:23am - Prices Lane
- 8:24am - Four Dogs
- 8:25am - Garden Village Shops
- 8:27am - Smithy Lane
- 8:30am - Texaco Garage
- 8:33am - Narrow Lane
- 8:45am - Darland High School

Oares B Bus – Sept 2016

- 8:16am - Rhosddu Road / Park Street, Rhosddu
- 8:18am - New Road / Bryn Y Glyn, Rhosddu
- 8:19am - VW Garage
- 8:21am - High Street, Gwersyllt
- 8:25am - Glan Llyn Road / Toyota Garage, Bradley
- 8:28am - Llay New Road / Pentre Street, Llay
- 8:30am - Hunters Way, Llay
- 8:32am - Gresford Road / Fairoaks Crescent, Llay
- 8:40am - Junction of Croeshowell Hill / Llay Road, Burton
- 8:45am - Darland High School

Straffords Bus – Sept 2016

- 8:27am - Dean Road (Outside No 25-27)
- 8:29am - Jeffreys Road (Near Bryn Gryffydd)
- 8:30am - Box Lane (Near Windermere Road)
- 8:31am - Smithy Lane (Opposite Smithy Close)
- 8:34am - Blue Bell Lane (Pandy–Near Westbury Drive & opposite narrow no through rd)
- 8:37am - Texaco Garage (Gresford)
- 8:38am - Red Lion (Marforfd)
- 8:45am - Darland High School

In addition, Arriva operates buses along the Chester rd, picking up from stops outside the school at approximately 12 minute intervals. Although many students like the convenience afforded to them from buying a weekly Arriva Pass, there are often long waits for buses at the end of the day and we urge parents, particularly those of younger children, to buy a half termly ticket for one of our private hire buses.

- **Governance**

Darland is fortunate to have a very active and supportive governing body. As well as the full governing body, which meets six times a year, there are also governor working parties for Finance, Curriculum, Environment and Community. Parents with expertise and interest in one of the latter areas are invited to apply to the Chair of Governors to join that Working Party. We find that this is a good way of preparing parents for the role of governors should they wish to stand for election.

The current governors are listed below.

Local Authority Governors

Cllr Robert Walsh (Chair)
Cllr Andrew Bailey
Cllr Hugh Jones
Mr Mark Perry
Vacancy

Community Governors

Mrs Kay Andrew
Mrs Elaine Lacey (Vice Chair)
Mrs Carol Williams
Mr Ifor Jones
Mr Mike Jones

Parent Governors

Mrs Gill Nicholls
Mrs Vicky Roberts
Mr Bob Chowdhury
Mr Huw Roblin
Mr Phil Daniel
Mrs Yvonne Davies

Teacher Governors

Mrs Tracey Lee
Mrs Jayne Davies

Staff Governor

Mrs Donna Adcock

The Headteacher is also a member of the governing body.

C Curriculum and Assessment

• The Curriculum at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

During the first three years at school all children will follow a broad based course in English, Mathematics, Science, Welsh, ICT, History, Geography, Religious Education, French, Drama, Physical Education and Games, Design and Technology, Art and Personal and Social Education.

The Literacy and Numeracy Framework has underpinned your child's learning in primary school enabling them to unlock their learning potential. At Darland, we continue the process of development of these crucial skills in order that our pupils are able to work independently and confidently in a variety of work settings. All subject areas undertake to develop aspects of literacy and numeracy skills and students are regularly monitored to ensure that they are making sufficient progress. The school employs specialist Learning Support Assistants who extract students from mainstream lessons for between one and two hours a week, when their Basic Skills fall below expected levels.

In Year 7 pupils are taught in form groups for most subjects, with the exception of Maths, which is set according to ability and PE which is taught in gender groups. In Years 8, pupils are placed in ability sets for English, Maths and Science and in one of three ability bands for the remainder of their subjects. We find that this approach allows us to stretch our learners and provide the correct level of challenge and support.

Children who experience particular learning difficulties have the opportunity to benefit from the specialist help available in the Additional Needs Department. This is usually provided by withdrawing pupils from particular lessons (normally French and/or Welsh) or extra support in the classrooms to give more individual help in smaller groups.

Timetable allocation for KS3 2015-2016 (Five 1 hour periods a day: two week cycle of 50 periods)														
Year	PE	Geog	RE	Technology	History	Music	French	Welsh	Art	English	Maths	ICT	Science	Total
7	4	3	3	4	3	2	3	3	2	8	7	2	6	50
8	4	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	2	7	7	2	6	50
9	4	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	2	7	7	2	6	50

In Years 10 and 11, the curriculum consists of two parts, the Learning Core and the Options. In the Learning Core, all pupils take:

English and English Literature, Mathematics, Science (separate sciences available), Religious Education, Welsh, ICT, Physical Education, and Personal and Social Education (PSE) including Careers Education. All students study for the Skills Challenge certificate, a new qualification worth one GCSE and a vital component of the Welsh Baccalaureate.

In addition, pupils choose at least 3 option subjects from a wide ranging menu of over 30 different courses. At Darland, we currently offer: Art, Photography, ICT, Drama, Home Economics, French, Geography, History, Child Care, Media Studies, Music, PE, Resistant Materials and Textiles. These options are continually reviewed and revised in line with the needs and interests of the year group.

Our pupils also have the advantage of being able to choose from subjects (including many vocational courses) offered by the Wrexham 14-19 Network option menu and studied off site. Currently our Year 10 students are able to choose from the following subjects taught at Coleg Cambria: Construction, Customer Service, Engineering, Horse Care, Horticulture, Hospitality and Catering, Performing Arts, Public Service. More Able and Talented students are offered GCSEs in Spanish, Computer Science, Law, Psychology and Economics.

- **Accelerated Reader**

All students in Year 7 are enrolled onto the Accelerated Reading Scheme, run under the auspices of Renaissance Education. This is a highly successful national scheme, currently being used in thousands of schools across the UK. Students choose books suitable to their reading level from a vast array in the library, taking an on-line test when they have finished which points them to a slightly more challenging book. Year 7s spend two hours a week on Accelerated Reading in the library, with one hour coming from their English lessons and one hour taken on rotation from their other subjects.

- **Equal Opportunities**

The school is committed to meeting the requirements of the 2010 Equalities Act. We believe that no-one should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: disability, age, income, religion/belief, race including colour, ethnicity or nationality, marital or civil partnership status, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, or trade union membership. Teaching programmes actively celebrate diversity and counter discrimination. There are a number of policies designed to ensure that there is equality of opportunity at Darland, including our Charging Policy, Equalities Policy, Disability Access Policy and Looked After Children Policy.

- **Careers Education**

All students receive Careers Education throughout their time at Darland High School. This is mostly achieved through PSE lessons (particularly in Key Stage 3), but increasingly at Key Stage 4, there are suspended timetable sessions when employers come into school to deliver talks to students on employment in different sectors. Once a year, students also attend mock interviews with a group of local employers. A Careers Officer is based in the school for two days a week.

- **Music Tuition**

Music lessons are taught in a purpose built suite of rooms, connected to our School Hall, where our young musicians regularly perform. Music is a real strength of the school, with our students performing in local and national ensembles and orchestras. Our peripatetic music teachers offer weekly tuition for a small termly fee, to a large number of students playing the following: Woodwind, Brass, Strings, Drums, Vocals. The school also organizes Grade exams on a regular basis. There are several musical groups, including a String Group, Wind band, Choir and Brass Ensemble.

- **Use of Welsh Language in the School**

We take pride in our position as a school in Wales and celebrate the importance of the Welsh language with in the context of a bilingual country with its unique culture and traditions. Through our curriculum, we develop an appreciation of the geography and rich cultural traditions in Wales. Although English is the main language used in the school, we are committed to encouraging the use of Welsh by both staff and students. We are currently engaged in a programme of making signage throughout the school bilingual and in lessons incidental Welsh is used to consolidate the learning that takes place in Welsh lessons. Welsh is a core curriculum subject for every year group. Some students with SEN

statements however, may be disapplied from Welsh lessons in order to receive specialist help during timetabled Welsh lessons.

- **Collective Worship**

Darland High School believes that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our worship. We value this special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character” for the majority of the time. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”. We combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. Each year group has two assemblies a week: one led by the Progress Coordinator and the other by a senior member of staff. In addition form tutors lead tutor groups through readings and reflections during tutor time on the remaining mornings per week. The school year has been divided into weekly themes, which encompass religious festivals, known national or international events, and aspects taken from the school calendar.

- **Religious Education.**

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject but the 1988 Education Act states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils’. Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which ‘promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life’. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in RE within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Furthermore, we believe that RE plays a crucial role in encouraging students to explore their own beliefs and develop respect for others whilst discussing challenging questions. Darland High School delivers RE in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus, which is non-denominational in character. Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from RE on application to the Headteacher, but since the emphasis of our lessons is ‘learning about religion’ rather than ‘learning to be religious’, we find that this is rarely taken up.

- **Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)**

The School has a responsibility to deliver sex and relationships education in line with the guidelines as set out in the 2002 National Assembly for Wales circular 11/02 on Sex and Relationships Education, the PSE framework for 7-19 year olds. SRE is taught through both science and in suspended timetable half day sessions. Our school considers its SRE Programme supports pupils through their physical, emotional, moral and spiritual development and helps them to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.

- **Homework**

Homework is a vital part of school work. Working at home on tasks set by teachers allows pupils to gain confidence will need in working independently; skills they will need more and more as they progress through school. Homework is not about ‘giving the pupils something to do’. Each piece of homework should either be testing a particular skill being

developed by the class teacher, consolidating the learning taking place in lessons or allowing students to demonstrate their new-found learning and understanding. It is difficult to be precise as to how much homework you should expect your child to do, but a Year 7 pupil should expect at least 40 minutes on every weekday evening. This rises to around 70 minutes a night for every Year 9 pupil. In order to manage the amount of homework set on any particular day, the school operates a set schedule, which is written into the Pupil Planners by the pupils at the beginning of each term. Each form group will have a unique homework timetable as different classes have different lessons on different days. Parents are asked to sign these on a weekly basis. Homework setting is routinely monitored by form tutors and other staff at Darland.

- **Show My Homework.**

Darland has invested in a system whereby all homework tasks are logged on a special internet site. This means that all homework can be accessed on-line, together with any documents and worksheets needed by the student. All students have their own log-in and as a Year 7 parent, you will be provided with a log in yourself. Show My Homework operates with a mobile phone App, which gives you reminders each time a piece of homework has been set for your child.

- **Assessment and Reporting**

Every child receives challenging targets for the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9 Levels) and Key Stage 4 (GCSE Grades) which are discussed with them by both their subject teacher and their form teacher. In addition, all children in Years 7, 8 and 9 receive an end of year target, which helps them to focus on the work they need to do over a shorter time span. This discussion of targets, together with the on-going record of progress kept by the pupils in their planners, helps individuals and their parents keep track of progress. Parents are critical in the process of progress monitoring and as well as receiving reports on the progress their children are making in their different subjects at the end of each half term, there is an annual cycle of parents' evenings for all year groups including guidance evenings for parents of students in Years 10 and 11. At one point in the year, parents receive written reports from each subject area together with a report from the form teacher.

D Support for Students

- **Transition arrangements**

The following Schools are designated Cluster Schools for Darland: St Peters CP, Rossett, All Saints CP Gresford, The Rofft Marford, Holt CP and Park CP Llay. We have a long tradition of organising activities for pupils from these schools from Year 4 onwards and our staff meet regularly with primary teachers from these schools to plan and moderate work. Well over half of our annual intake however, are from primary schools outside these cluster schools and we see it as a priority to work to integrate these students as effectively as possible. Any child can be worried about moving to a new school and we work to make this transition as smooth as possible. Prior to your child joining Darland High School, the Progress Coordinator (Head of Year) for Year 7 visits their primary school to collect information about your child. We then have a day in the summer term, (the Common Transfer Day) when pupils joining in September, attend lessons and learn about life in Darland. In the evening of this day, there is a guidance meeting for parents, where they can meet their children's form tutor. Throughout the transition process, we work with your child's primary teacher, who helps us ensure that our forms are based on existing friendship groups and that there is a continuum of learning from Year 6 to Year 7.

On starting school in September, all Year 7 forms will be assigned two Year 10 'Peer Mentors' to help them find their way to lessons and to organise themselves. Your child will stay in their form group for most of their lessons and so a

'team spirit' is quickly built up under the guidance of the form teacher, who is the first point of call for any pupil when concerns come to light.

- **Additional Learning Needs**

According to the revised Code of Practice a child has additional learning needs if he or she has a learning difficulty, which calls for special provision to be made for them at some time during their schooling.

The school has resourced provisions for Social / Communication needs, Dyslexia and provides support for pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties, sensory and physical impairment and speech and language difficulties. Our Additional Needs Department has expanded in the last two years and the suite of rooms it occupies have undergone complete refurbishment. There are now 7 small classrooms in the department, where children who have been identified with Additional Needs as well as those with a formal Statement receive lessons from a team of specialists. Our ALN department is a busy, but happy place, with the emphasis on integration with the mainstream school. Extensive transition takes place before students with ALN arrive at the school and our ALN Coordinator, Mrs Daniela Hughes, is always on hand to speak to parents about any concerns.

The Department adopts a flexible approach to meeting the needs of all pupils with ALN and provides advice and support to all staff. Students with Statements of ALN and those with Extended School Action Plus, are entitled to varying amounts of support time in lessons. In addition, dependent on need, students are withdrawn from certain subjects (namely Welsh and / or French) for specialist support in the provision centres.

(Further information available in the School ALN Policy)

- **Peer Mentoring**

We have some 20 older students who have been trained as Peer Mentors. These students undertake valuable mentoring work with students in Years 7 and 8 who may feel vulnerable and /or be struggling with social relationships on transfer to secondary school. Organised by one of our Behaviour for Learning staff, Peer Mentors are attached to junior forms and help students organise themselves during registration. At lunchtime they are available for younger students to make an appointment to see. Often this is just for a chat and a snack, but it has been found that this help from older students has been very beneficial in raising the confidence of our new students.

- **Learning Coaches**

As well as having four Behaviour for Learning Mentors, working to resolve pastoral issues, the school also staffs a Learning Coach room for each morning of the week. The Learning Coach is a trained Teaching Assistant, who provides support on a one-to-one basis for students who may have arrived at school upset / worried, or who may be finding school life difficult.

- **Agencies active at Darland**

The following people visit Darland on a weekly basis and through the Behaviour for Learning team, students can make appointments or be referred by form teachers:

School Nurse, School Counsellor, Youth Worker, Educational Social Worker, Police Liaison Officer.

We also have a successful 'Student Assistance Programme' running, whereby pupils can volunteer to meet in small groups under the guidance of trained members of staff to discuss life issues in a safe and confidential environment. Issues may range from feelings of low self esteem to anger management and personal growth.

- **Anti-Bullying policy**

The school has a detailed anti-bullying policy and takes all instances of bullying seriously. We deliver regular assemblies and PSE lessons on bullying and encourage students to confide in an adult whenever they experience unpleasant behaviour that could be described as bullying. No two instances of bullying are the same, but we have found that the following strategies are highly effective:

- Partnering vulnerable students with a 'Peer Mentor'. These are prefects in Year 11 who have received special training to help them coach younger students in self assertion techniques. They are available at form and lunchtimes for younger students to meet and chat to.
- Talking through the consequences of bullying with the person accused of bullying and if possible, bringing him / her face to face with the victim in a highly controlled environment.
- Involving parents at the earliest practicable opportunity.
- Asking those who feel they are being bullied to keep a log of incidents.
- Using the support agencies we have on site to best effect. (e.g. School Nurse, Counsellor, Educational Social Worker)
- Moving pupils away from one another in class and in some cases, moving pupils to a different form.

The Sharp System

All students and parents have access to the Sharp system. This is an on-line system for reporting incidents of bullying. It is totally anonymous, thereby taking away any stigma or fear children may have in coming forward to report incidents. This is checked daily by dedicated pastoral staff.

E Opportunities for Students

• School Council and Prefects

We value our pupils and try to involve them as fully as possible in the life of the school. Our pupils are regularly consulted about school improvements. We have a very active School Council, which is made up of representatives from the Year Councils, which in turn are made up from representatives from each form. They manage a budget and are a vital asset in helping us improve our environment and are involved in school development planning and in staff appointments. Each year, a group of Year 11 pupils are appointed prefects (identified by their gold ties), helping us to run the school by acting as role models, running clubs and assisting in school events. The Head Boy and Head Girl also attend Governors meetings to bring our governing body up to date with the views of the pupils. We also have around 20 students who are trained as Peer Mentors (identified by their silver ties). These students ensure that Year 7 students are accompanied to their lessons in the first two weeks of term and staff a drop in centre throughout the year for younger students who are feeling lonely and 'out of sorts'.

• Sporting Opportunities

Football is played with a passion at Darland and in the last ten years, our teams have been finalists five times in the Welsh Cup, winning trophy three times.

The P.E. Department offers a wide variety of extra-curricular activities both at lunchtime and after school. These include: netball, soccer, rugby, basketball, athletics, tennis, rounders, dance and kick boxing. Pupils play regular inter-school matches and compete very successfully in local leagues and county tournaments. The 5x60 scheme runs very successfully at Darland allowing pupils to try out different sports and to discuss what activities they would enjoy. Of course examinations are important. We want our pupils to leave school with the highest academic qualifications possible. However, we also want our pupils to leave with a passion for learning and a passion for life. Our extra-curricular programme complements the taught curriculum and brings an added dimension to school life.

• Duke of Edinburgh's Award

For pictures, policies, news and lots more, visit our website www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk

For many years the Staff and Governors of Darland have recognised the important role that Outdoor Education can play in a young person's development. Mr Coyne organises the Schools Duke Of Edinburgh scheme which involves groups of Year 9 students following the Bronze scheme. In order to achieve the award, students have to take part in community volunteering, follow a sport, learn a new skill and plan and take part in an overnight expedition. We hope to extend this to a Silver Award scheme in Year 10.

- **The School Library**

Our newly decorated library is staffed by a full time librarian, assisted at lunchtime by a small army of pupil librarians. Pupils use the library in lesson time and it is also available as a drop in centre, when students can access the computer suite housed there.

The library is a hive of activity at lunchtime with pupils researching, studying, producing The Griffin, preparing presentations for assembly, working on ESDGC projects and promoting healthy eating in addition to taking out books. Unusually for a high school, a high percentage of our boys are regular library users. The library is also the hub for quizzes and competitions which promote reading. Darland pupils are fortunate that the extended opening hours allow pupils access to the range of library facilities until 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

- **Other Opportunities to enhance Learning**

Every year, the school organizes a ski trip to either America or Europe, which is always well subscribed. In addition there are Modern Languages trips to France, Humanities visits to the Battlefields of Belgium and Welsh visits to Cardiff. The Geography department augments the GCSE syllabus with fieldtrips to Llandudno and Snowdonia.

Every two years, all students take part in a challenging walk in the hills around Wrexham as part of a fund raising day for the charity chosen by the school. This provides a great opportunity for the students to gel as a form group and to get to know their form teachers who walk with them.

The English and Drama departments arrange theatre visits to the Liverpool and Manchester theatres, to Theatr Clwyd and to the Globe Theatre, London to bring literature to life. Touring companies are booked to enable all pupils to benefit from live performance and from workshops.

Every year in the summer term, the school timetable is suspended for two days and students take part in a wide range of different activities to develop their Key Skills. The programme of the 'Active Skills Days' changes from year to year, but has involved rapping in Welsh, competing in a 'Come Dine With Me' competition, solving a forensics based CSI Darland problem and trying wheelchair basketball.

We take the development of entrepreneurial skills seriously and each year students from Year 10 form a Young Enterprise company, working through all the stages involved in bring a product to the market. The company members also mentor link companies in our primary schools, an involvement which culminates in an Enterprise Fayre held in April.

F Working with parents

- **Contacting the school**

An efficient two way communication is vital between parents and the school is vital for the learning of your child. Teachers are always prepared to discuss any problems affecting your child and if you are concerned about anything, we urge you to telephone the school at the earliest opportunity to arrange to speak to your child's Progress Coordinator (Head of Year). You may email the Headteacher using the following address headteacher@darland.wrexham.sch.uk. This is the email address to use should you wish to send a message to any of your child's teachers, since the School

Office will forward your message to the person concerned. If the issue is very urgent, please come to the school in person, although we will be best placed to help you if you telephone first. For non-urgent communication, we recommend that you write notes in your child's Planner, which is an excellent means of communication, since it is seen by both subject and form teachers.

The school makes every effort to keep parents in touch with what is happening. Parents are sent a calendar at the beginning of the school year. The school newspaper, The Griffin, is published at the end of every half term and there is a wealth of information from key dates to success stories on our comprehensive website, www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk. All parents are encouraged to download the **Darland App** on their mobile devices. This is linked to our web-site and is used to give parents urgent notices of events and deadlines at the school as well as sharing with parents, news of our successes. There are many additional letters which are sent by the 'pupil post', but whenever these are sent home, a reminder is placed on the App, to help parents retrieve letters which students may have forgotten to pass on! Every pupil at Darland High School is issued with a Student Planner, which acts both as a diary to record homework tasks and as a resource for literacy and numeracy. The Planner also contains maps of the school, policies on uniform and behaviour, together with tracking pages, where the pupil records their progress in different subjects. We ask all parents to help their child by checking the Planner on a weekly basis.

- **Parents Evenings**

It is very important that parents make every effort to attend the annual Parents Evening for their child. These are held at different times throughout the year depending on the year you child is in. The evening starts at 4.15pm and consists of five minute interview slots with your child's teachers.

For parents of children who have just started in Year 7, there is an evening set aside in October, when parents are asked to make an appointment to come and see their child's form tutor. The purpose of this meeting is to check on how your child has settled in and to discuss the targets that have been set for him / her.

There are also other guidance evenings throughout the year, such as the Year 9 Option Pathways Evening in March, the Year 10 guidance evening in October and the Year 11 Revision evening in November.

- **Parent Teacher Association.**

The PTA is a group of parents and staff who organise events to raise money for the extra-curricular needs of Darland High School. Examples of successful events recently have been quiz and bingo nights, table top sales and Year 7 discos. The PTA always welcomes ideas from parents as to how we can serve the needs of the community better.

G School Policies Available On Request

The following Policies are to be found on the School Website or may be obtained in printed form by application to the School Office.

1. Anti – Bullying Policy
2. Assessment and Reporting Policy
3. Asthma Policy
4. Attendance Policy
5. Charging Policy

6. Child Protection Policy
7. Complaints Policy
8. Controlled Assessments Policy
9. Curriculum Policy
10. Eating Disorder Policy
11. Equalities Policy
12. Examination Appeals Policy
13. Freedom of Information Policy
14. Health and Safety Policy
15. Learning and Teaching Entitlement Policy
16. Literacy Policy
17. Looked After Children Policy
18. Numeracy Policy
19. Personal and Social Education Policy
20. Pupil Restraint Policy
21. Sex and Relationships Education Policy
22. Special Educational Needs Policy
23. Substance Misuse Policy
24. Target Setting Policy