

# Darland High School Prospectus 2018-19.

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## A Introduction from the Headteacher.

Welcome to Darland High School!

Our purpose at Darland is to prepare our young people for the challenges and opportunities beyond school, by pushing them to achieve the very best they can. We make no apologies for our focus on academic achievement, since the qualifications gained on leaving school will open doors to successful careers. In recent years, our exam results have placed us among the leading schools in North Wales and we aim to sustain this position by a relentless focus on standards and discipline.

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, new ICT suites, a remodelled reception, 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 2011 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. Parents of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 receive Progress Reviews

five times a year, which summarise progress in every subject against challenging targets. 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.**

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

**Age Range:** 11 - 16

**Number on roll:** 850      **Capacity:** 840 (+ Resource pupils)

**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 2019. 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 10/11/18. Applications can be made on-line or by using a paper form. Please see

[www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/education/admissions\\_secondary.htm](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/education/admissions_secondary.htm) for more details. Parents will be notified of the place allocated to their child by 1/3/19.

- **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.

08:55	Start of Lesson 1
10:00	Start of Lesson 2
11:00	End of Lesson 2
	BREAK
11:20	Start of Lesson 3
12:20	Start of Lesson 4
13:20	End of Lesson 4
	LUNCH
14:00	Registration & form time
14:20	Start of Lesson 5
15:20	End of Lesson 5
15:25	Departure of school buses

- **Term dates**

## **AUTUMN TERM 2018**

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> September – Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2018

## **SPRING TERM 2019**

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## **SUMMER TERM 2019**

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April – Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019

(NB – There are four training days to be allocated across the year, when the school will close to students. These are Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> & Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November and Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June.

### **• 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 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 Head Of Year, who leads the team of Form Tutors and monitors academic progress and behaviour. It is to the Head Of Year, that parents should make contact should they want to discuss pastoral concerns. Assisting the Head Of Year are four Behaviour for Learning Mentors. As non-teachers they have the availability during the day, to induct new students, organise the peer mentoring programme, supervise our internal seclusion room and investigate behavioural issues.

The senior member of staff responsible for pastoral leadership and wellbeing, 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 Ethos and Wellbeing	Mrs L Easton
Additional Needs Coordinator	Ms D Hughes

Assistant Additional Needs Coordinator	Ms S Abel
Faculty Coordinator English	Mrs C Godwin
Assistant Faculty Coordinator English	Mrs J Davies
Faculty Coordinator Maths	Dr M Edwards
Assistant Faculty Coordinator Maths	Mr D Owen-Jones
Faculty Coordinator Science	Mrs K Green
Assistant Faculty Coordinator Science	Mr D Roberts
Faculty Coordinator Modern Languages	Miss LI Medi
Assistant Faculty Coordinator Languages	Mrs F Wood
Faculty Coordinator Technology & Art	Mr M Sedgwick
Assistant Faculty Coordinator Tech & Art	Mrs T Crompton
Faculty Coordinator Humanities	Mrs L Garratt
Assistant Faculty Coordinator Humanities	Mr D Jones
Head of PE	Miss G Gardner
Head of Computing and ICT	Mr J Hayes
Head of Music	Mr E Winterbottom
Literacy Coordinator	Mrs T Dop
Numeracy Coordinator	Miss Y Mountford
Head Of Year 7	Mrs S Owens
Head Of Year 8	Mr D Owen-Jones
Head Of Year 9	Mr S Coyne
Head Of Year 10	Mr G Hamm
Head Of Year 11	Mrs C Booth
Behaviour for Learning Assistants	Mr M Jarvis
	Mrs C Evans
	Mrs J Hayes
	Mrs M McLean

## • 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 bordered by a fence for security. There are four gates that the students can use to access the front of the school, together with one at the rear. These gates are kept locked during the school day, but are open both before and after school.
- 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 six 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. 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. On no account should parents park in the small car park owned by the businesses adjacent to the main entrance of the school.

## • **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 all 'Attitude To Learning' points is sent to parents five times a year, but a print-out can be requested at any time by telephoning the school office.

### • **Awards Evening**

Every year, the school celebrates achievement in an awards ceremony in the William Aston Hall in Wrexham. Prestigious awards are presented to around 300 pupils for criteria encompassing academic achievement, effort and community work.

### • **Attitude to Learning (ATL) grades.**

Each pupil is registered in each lesson by the teacher logging an ATL grade on the electronic register. All pupils start each lesson with an ATL 2 (the standard we expect from all learners, but this can change, depending on the way the pupils work. The following criteria explains what behaviour can trigger the award of each ATL grade

### **ATL 1 - (Achievement Points +1)**

ATL1 – Outstanding Work

ATL1 – Resilience

ATL1 – Lead Learner

ATL1 – Independent Learning

ATL1 – Book is outstanding

ATL1 – Impeccable Behaviour

ATL 1 – Positive Contributions

### **ATL 2**

**The standard expected of all learners**

### **ATL 3 – (Behaviour Point -1)**

ATL3 – Late without a note

ATL3 – Lack of equipment

ATL3 – Inappropriate language

ATL3 – Refusal to complete work

ATL3 – Failure to follow instructions

ATL3 – Disruptive behaviour

ATL3 – Gave up on classwork

### **ATL 4 – (Behaviour Point -2)**

ATL4 – Removed from Classroom

ATL4 – Seriously disrupting the learning of others.

ATL4 – Producing no work in the lesson.

- **Sanctions.**

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 Seclusion 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.**

At Darland, we encourage pupils to bring their phones to school. They are needed to access our on-line homework app and can provide parents with peace of mind on the journey to and from school. However, when in lessons or on the corridor, phones must be switched off and out of sight. The school cannot take responsibility for phones which are damaged or lost. The vast majority of our students respect our sensible line, that phones must not disrupt learning, but those who break this simple rule have their phones confiscated until the end of the day.

- **Rewards**

It is our ambition that every student at Darland should achieve at least one reward every year. 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. In addition, six pupils are selected by the staff every week for a praise phone call home and another six are selected for a special 'hot chocolate treat' every Friday.

- **Attendance and Punctuality**

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. 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. 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.

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%**. For students who maintain 100% attendance, there is a grand prize draw at the end of the autumn and summer terms where we give away an iPad and a TV respectively.

Punctuality to lessons is of prime importance if we are to prepare young people for the world of work. Students must be in school by 8.55am, for the start of the first lesson of the day. At 9 o'clock sharp, doors to classrooms are closed and students will not be admitted unless they have been entered in the 'Late Book' at the school office and provided with a slip for a break time detention later that day.

- **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. They are non-negotiable.*

#### **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. 'Trainer socks' are not allowed and trousers must reach the top of the shoes, with no exposed flesh showing.

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.

*For pictures, policies, news and lots more, visit our website [www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk](http://www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk)*

White school shirt with long or short sleeves  
School tie with crest – available from our suppliers, Sportswear International  
Black school trousers, which must reach the top of the shoes.  
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

**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. Boots are not allowed.

**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.

- **Transport**

Very few of the pupils who attend Darland are entitled to free transport by Wrexham Council. Fortunately the Arriva buses travel the route along the Chester Road every 12 minutes. However, owing to the numbers of children using this service, there are often queues and pupils be delayed on their return from school in the evening. Therefore we recommend that all pupils take advantage of the private buses we have arranged with a number of local contractors. In return for a fee (£150 a term in 2018), your child will have guaranteed seat on a bus and you will have the peace of mind that they will arrive home on time.

### Oares A Bus – £150 per term 2018/19

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	- <u>Darland High School</u>

### Straffords Bus – £150 per term 2018/19

- 8:27am - Dean Road (Opposite No 92A)
- 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

### Oares B Bus –£150 per term 2018/19

- 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 / Fair Oaks Crescent, Llay
- 8:40am - Junction of Croeshowell Hill / Llay Road, Burton
- 8:45am - Darland High School

### Price Coaches – £150 per term 2018/19

8:22am	- Grove Road
8:25am	- Prices Lane/Skate Park
8:27am	- Four Dogs
8:29am	- Garden Village Shops
8:31am	- Smithy Lane
8:36am	- The Plough
8:38am	- Narrow Lane/Alf Jones Cycles
8:40am	- The Red Lion
8:45am	- <u>Darland High School</u>

### Price Coaches – £2 pay daily – 2018/19

(this bus is organised by Price Coaches)

8:20am	- Greyhound Pub
8:22am	- Holt Road (by Birkdale Road)
8:23am	- <u>Borras Shops</u>
8:24am	- <u>Cunliffe Arms</u> , Jeffries Road
8:25am	- Smithy Lane (Barkers Lane end) -
8:45am	- <u>Darland High School</u>

#### • 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 Hugh Jones

Mr Mark Perry

Vacancy

### **Community Governors**

Mrs Kay Andrew  
Mrs Elaine Lacey  
Mr Ian Edwards  
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  
Mrs Sarah Vye

### **Teacher Governors**

Mr Edward Winterbottom  
Mrs Sara Mann

### **Staff Governor**

Mr Mike Campion

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 and 9, pupils are placed in ability groups for French, Welsh, Maths, English and Science, remaining with their forms for the rest of their lessons.

Children who experience particular learning difficulties have the opportunity to benefit from the specialist help available

*For pictures, policies, news and lots more, visit our website [www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk](http://www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk)*

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 2017-2017 (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 (Maths and Maths Numeracy), Science (separate sciences available), Welsh, ICT, Physical Education.. All students study for the Skills Challenge certificate, a 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, Sociology 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 Years 7 and 8 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. Pupils spend two hours a fortnight on Accelerated Reading in the library.

- **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 special ½ day activity sessions (particularly in Key Stage 3), but increasingly at Key Stage 4, there sessions when employers come into school to deliver talks to students on employment in different sectors. Once a year, students in Year 10 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. In common with nearly all schools in Wrexham, individual lessons are provided by the Wrexham Music Cooperative, which bills parents directly for lessons taken in school, although these charges are subsidized for pupils on Free School Meals.

- **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 within 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 one assembly a week, led by the Progress Coordinator. 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.**

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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 published at the beginning of the year and which can be found on the school website. 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 dedicated website. 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**

We start the business of preparing students for their GCSEs, from the moment they enter Darland at the start of Year 7. One of the ways we seek to maintain a 'Continuum of Learning' through the years to the end of Year 11, is by using GCSE grades throughout. In Years 7 and 8, these are scaled to our expectations of learners at that age, with all students in

these year groups being given end of year targets covering the range of GCSE grades. We use prior attainment in End of Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessments together with tests on arrival to provide pupils in these year groups with End of Year targets. From Year 9 onwards, pupils will receive a target grade based on what we consider that they should be aspiring to achieve at GCSE.

We assess all students on five Tracking Points in the year, approximately at intervals of 7 weeks. Students in Years 7 and 8 are given grades scaled to match the stage they are at in their development, but students in Years 9, 10 and 11 are given grades based on GCSE marking criteria. Parents receive Progress Reviews after each Tracking Point, which is a single sheet of paper on which the most recent assessment grade for each subject is printed, alongside the target for the pupil in each subject. The penultimate Progress Review also contains a written report from the pupil's form teacher, detailing the progress made by the pupil pastorally. The final Progress Review contains the grades of the internal examinations which all students in Years 7 to 10 take in the last few weeks of the year.

This discussion of targets helps individuals and their parents keep track of progress. Parents are critical in the process of progress monitoring we expect all parents to attend the annual parents evening. In addition, at the beginning of the year there is a Parents Guidance Evening for each year group, where the learning programme for each year is shared.

## **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 two days in the summer term, (including the Common Transfer Day) when pupils joining in September, attend lessons and learn about life in Darland. Prior to these transition days, there is an evening 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.

### **• Year 7 Residential**

Early in October, all Year 7 students are taken on a three day residential to Colymendy Activity Centre at Loggerheads in Flintshire. While there, the students engage in a range of exciting outdoor activities with their form teachers, which as well as being great fun, teach the students independence, resilience and above all, team spirit. There is a charge for this activity, but this is much reduced for students in receipt of Free School Meals.

### **• 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.

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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, called 'Future Focus' within the school, has expanded in the last three 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 meet regularly with TRAC counsellors, who organise one to one counselling sessions for vulnerable and disaffected pupils as well as organising off site provision for those on part time timetables.

- **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:

- Encouraging pupils to report any instances of other pupils making them or their friends feel uncomfortable on a regular basis.

- 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 four 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 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. Once the students have completed their Bronze award in Year 9, they progress to the more challenging Silver Award in Year 10. Around 70 students achieve awards annually through this highly worthwhile initiative.

- **The School Show**

We have an annual school show, that takes place in January and involves a wide cast, along with many staff helpers. This year, it is 'Little Shop Of Horrors'. To support this, there is a Drama club which meets every Thursday.

- **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 our newsletter 'Newyddion', preparing presentations for assembly, 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, Snowdonia and overseas (Switzerland)

Every two years, all students take part in a challenging walk in the countryside 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

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(Head of Year). You may email the Headteacher using the following address [headteacher@darland.wrexham.sch.uk](mailto: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, *Newyddion*, is published at the beginning of every month and there is a wealth of information from key dates to success stories on our comprehensive website,

[www.darland.wrexham.sch.uk](http://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!

Crucial to communication is email. We ask that all parents provide us with an email address, so can keep them abreast of forthcoming events and letters. Parents often find that email is far more reliable than relying on 'Pupil Post'!

We also operate a texting service, alerting parents to letters sent home and to urgent announcements such as inclement weather and transport issues.

- **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, where you are invited in for a short meeting with your child's form tutor to discuss any issues they may be having settling in. This is also a good opportunity to find out a little bit more about what your child will be studying throughout the year.

There are also other guidance evenings throughout the year, such as the Year 9 Option Pathways Evening in March.

## **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. Healthcare Policy
16. Learning and Teaching Entitlement Policy
17. Literacy Policy
18. Looked After Children Policy
19. Numeracy Policy
20. Personal and Social Education Policy
21. Pupil Restraint Policy
22. Sex and Relationships Education Policy
23. Special Educational Needs Policy
24. Substance Misuse Policy
25. Target Setting Policy