

## YSGOL UWCHRADD TYWYN

Ffordd yr Orsaf/Station Road, Tywyn,

Gwynedd, LL36 9EU

**☎ 01654 710256**



*Pennaeth/Head Teacher: Mrs Helen Lewis*

Dear Parent/Guardian

It is a sad situation when we have to report that some pupils at the school do not respect their environment, other pupils or their teachers.

Since the return at the beginning of September, there has been regular abuse of resources, facilities and safety measures by some pupils, mostly in years 10 and 11. The boys' toilets in particular has been a target and we have reached a point where we cannot continue to provide the blue tissue because it is put down the toilet or in the sink. There is a hand dryer in the toilets and pupils will use this. In one case, water was poured in through the top of the dispenser. Pupils then throw chunks of wet paper onto the ceiling and the walls. Soap and sanitiser has been poured across the floors and then used as a slide. A soap dispenser has been pulled off the wall. A light has been broken as well as a toilet seat and locks on doors, which we have to replace in both the girls and the boys toilets. Most recently, most of the taps in the boys' toilets were deliberately twisted right around and broken so that they were leaking. We have had to shut off the water until they have been repaired by a plumber. This type of malicious damage is disgraceful.

Pupils are reminded daily about bringing their own mask to school and about wearing them in the corridors and in the canteen until they are seated to eat their food. However, there are still pupils who choose to ignore this. Parents expect the school to keep their children safe, a reasonable expectation. However, when pupils are regularly and deliberately uncooperative and disrespectful of others this becomes an unreasonable expectation.

All staff are going the extra mile in extremely difficult circumstances to try to ensure that provision is as good as it can be, but there are pupils who do not appreciate any of this and behave in a selfish disrespectful way, which causes others to suffer as a result.

Each year has its own zone within the school and outside. Older pupils have tried to access other zones or have not followed the designated one-way system, which is clearly marked and has been explained to each class upon their return. This is an unnecessary inconvenience for others and they could also put themselves and/or others at risk. We have a responsibility to do our best to protect pupils at school but it seems that many have no regard for the safety measures in place at school. Pupils must be reminded that they also need to wear masks in other enclosed public areas from Monday, 14 September.

School transport has been a nightmare for all of us, staff and pupils. However, lack of co-operation from some pupils has not helped the situation. A maximum of 20 pupils can travel on the train after school and therefore, the majority have to travel on a bus provided by TFW. We know that this is not ideal but it is beyond our control and I would suggest that you contact TFW directly if you would like to have any influence over this. There can be no more than 2 carriages on the train due to the length of the platforms, which is insufficient for members of the public and all pupils who travel to and from school on the train, hence the bus.

The school mobile phone policy is in operation. Pupils who choose to bring their phones to school, accept the policy. They must hand them in to the form tutor each morning, they are kept in the safe, and they are returned before the end of lesson 6 each day.

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If a phone is seen or heard by a member of staff it will be confiscated and kept in the safe. Parents will be contacted to inform them that the phone will be kept for 24 hours in the first instance. If there is a second offence, it will be kept for 48 hours and so on. If a phone is confiscated on a Friday then the parent may collect the phone that day or else the phone will be retained until the following Monday.

Whilst many pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 are handing in their phones (not all), on average only 2 pupils in year 11 hand in phones and a similar number in year 10. We have seen evidence that pupils in both of these years bring their phones to school from Tik Tok videos that they have made during the school day, which are available for anyone to see. I want to emphasise that by not handing them in, they are agreeing to have them confiscated if they are seen by staff. This is a choice that pupils make by bringing their phone to school. Our policy is not unreasonable. If pupils need to contact parents or vice versa during the school day this can be done via the school reception office.

We are concerned about the extent of phone use in the first 4 weeks by years 7 and 8 in particular. Some of the Tik Tok videos that pupils make are inappropriate and some seize the opportunity to abuse other children verbally about their videos. Please check your child's phone.

It is essential that pupils and parents realise and accept that there will be consequences if they wilfully and knowingly breach safety regulations or school rules. These are difficult times and making life more difficult will only result in further sanctions. As is suggested in the pupil behaviour guidelines first issued in June, if necessary, parents will be asked to collect their child from school.

We are required to fulfil an ever-evolving role for young people and we will always endeavour to do our utmost for them but tolerating abuse and disrespect is not part of that role and we will not be subjected to it, neither pupils nor staff. I sincerely hope that we can rely on your support and co-operation as we continue to communicate with you and with your children.

Yours faithfully

Helen Lewis

Head Teacher