Secondary Phase Prospectus

KING HENRY VIII 3-19 SCHOOL





VISION

Our vision is to provide an excellent education for all pupils in this wonderful community, in this fabulous town.

Our goal is for all our pupils to make rapid progress and achieve academic excellence, in an environment of love and care.

Our school is a strong family where expectations are high, values are positive, and children are treasured.
We equip our pupils with the knowledge, character, and learning power to achieve top grades in their qualifications and lead successful lives.

We believe that every lesson counts, every pupil matters, and that every pupil should feel valued as an individual.

MINDSET



Our school is built with the growth mindset at its heart. We believe that anyone can learn anything. We fully embrace this mindset. No one is allowed to say they can't do something, it's that you cannot do it YET.

'Intelligence' and 'ability' are not part of our language. This is because they are too often misunderstood as meaning fixed intelligence and fixed ability. At our school we all believe that everyone can become more intelligent and improve their abilities. Someone's current intelligence is just their current knowledge and understanding - their starting points. With the right time, teaching, support, and effort, all can learn anything. It is effort that is the important component. That is what makes a difference.

We believe in the limitless capacity for everyone to achieve great things.

REWARDS



All pupils receive merits for embracing the growth mindset, and for their effort. Pupils gain these merits to work towards their bronze, silver, gold, and platinum awards. Pupils receive certificates for these awards, and they are recognised in assemblies. We place a big emphasis on pupils who receive these awards, so that it is a very memorable experience for them.

A merit system is not just for Year 7, it is for their whole school career.

TRANSITION



We have a first-class transition system for pupils that join in Year 7. It has been honed over many years and receives excellent feedback. It includes transition lessons in your child's current primary school, online lessons beamed into your child's current classroom, and high-quality transition days in our school in June.

We work with Year 6 teachers across the cluster regarding pupils with additional learning needs, and pupils who are identified as needing extra transition support. This leads to bespoke transition activities for these pupils.

There is an induction evening for new parents and carers in July and continued transition activities are provided for families to use during the summer holidays. Once pupils start Year 7 there are check in events for parents and carers.

CURRICULUM



We provide a curriculum of the highest quality. It is a broad, balanced, and diverse curriculum where representation is key.

We have mapped out what skills and content pupils should be learning in each year group, so that it leads them to being above track in Year 11 and Year 13. The curriculum systematically and sequentially develops skills and content across year groups.

In Year 7 pupils learn Maths, English, Science, History, Geography, Religion, Art, Design Technology, Food, Music. Computing, French, PE, Drama, Welsh, and PSE.

There is an emphasis on actually doing. Pupils make in Design Technology, cook in their Food lessons, produce in Art, and play instruments in Music. It is an active curriculum.

Our home learning system is well organised. We have home learning grids for each half term that are published in advance, which pupils choose tasks from to consolidate their learning. This removes the administrative barriers to great progress, and allows families to fully support their children. In addition, they have online Maths, English, and Science tasks. The online Maths questions are fully differentiated, the next question asked depends on how you answered the previous question.



TEACHING AND LEARNING

Our approach to teaching and learning is rooted in the science of how children learn. It is based on educational research. It includes:

- Very high expectations.
- Lots of questions about what was learnt last lesson, last week, last month, and last year, to reduce forgetting time.
- Explanations in small steps, due to the limitations of working memory.
- Concise explanations, to overcome competing stimuli.
- Extensive modelling, to allow pupils to observe expert thinking.
- Guiding of first practice, to eradicate misconceptions immediately.
- Deep thinking, because memory is the residue of thought.
- We continually esteem our pupils to motivate them to go over and above, so we can continually raise the expectation bar.





ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Our GCSE results continue to be incredibly strong, and they improve further each year.

Our Capped 9 Score, the main measure for schools in Wales, is now 400.3. This is an impressive increase of 32.8 points since our new school opened in 2023. For context, the national average score in 2025 was 354.3. On average, this means that every pupil now achieves 2A, 3Bs and 4Cs.

All measures, including for English and Maths, are above national averages, many considerably so.



READING

We place a large emphasis on reading due to the significant positive impacts it has on all our lives. Children that read the most, achieve the most. The impact of reading on educational outcomes is huge.

We regularly turn Year 7 into giant book clubs. This includes form tutors reading to form groups. It is lovely to be read to and to be engaged into a story. It is lovely when adults read to the pupils. It helps build our sense of belonging and community.

The first book in Year 7 is 'Worst. Holiday. Ever.' by Charlie Higson. This is a story about facing fears, dealing with worries, and how it's perfectly fine to be anxious, scared, and sometimes a little bit brave. We have an amazing library in our new buildings which is developing our focus and love of reading further. Our pupils bring reading books with them every day to school. We regularly drop everything and read, all our pupils and all our staff. Reading is everywhere.



PERFORMING ARTS

We value and place a lot of emphasis on the Performing Arts. It is important to us that the sounds of music fill the corridor. Music can change the world. It is great for our brains. Research shows how it can help in all other areas. We have thriving choirs and bands.



Every year there is an annual production inclusive for all. This year it was Fame. It was brilliant. Our next production has been planned and will be announced soon. Every year there is a wonderful Christmas concert. These are the key highlights of the year which really help bind our school community together.





VALUES

We have high expectations of behaviour to ensure a calm, safe, lovely, and sparkly learning environment. We support this with our belief in the unlimited power of warm relationships between staff and pupils. We are relentlessly positive. We really care about our children.

We are a values-based school and we explicitly teach our pupils to live by our values, embrace them, and hold them deep in our hearts. Values are the driving force of our school. It is so that pupils leave as good citizens who can live successfully in their communities, and in the world. We have a fantastic values curriculum which helps your child grow as an individual. Our value of the month for September is Harmony. One of our phrases is: 'Work hard – Be Kind'.



CLUBS



Pupils must feel that they belong to their school, schools cannot be successful without this. This is why we do so much beyond the curriculum. There are so many extra-curricular clubs so that pupils can become interested in new things.

This half term, Year 7 and 8 pupils are enjoying Orchestra, Photography, Mental Health First Aid, Choir, Dance, Lego, Chess, Rugby, Drama, Basketball, Netball, Cross-country, Hockey, and Badminton (to name a few).

Our pupils also complete their Duke of Edinburgh awards at bronze, silver, and gold levels, this is so important for their development



We do not use mobile phones in school. This is because the long-term happiness and wellbeing of our pupils is our most important priority. Smart phones are addictive, controlling, and children can easily be disturbed and monopolised by them.

We know that children might need a phone for use before and after school in Year 7. If this is the case, we kindly ask you to buy a simple phone and not a smart phone for your child.

HOUSE SYSTEM

We have a hugely successful house system where form groups take part in friendly competition in a range of activities.

Inter house competitions include: House Rugby, Football, Netball, and Hockey.

There is also:

House Baking competition

House Christmas Card competition

House Karaoke

House Dance-off

House Pumpkin competition

House Chess

House Maths Challenge

House Poetry

This provides a real sense of belonging.



TRIPS



Fantastic trips enhance pupil learning.

Recent trips have included:

Drayton Manor.
Natural History Museum.
Climate Change Conference at Cardiff University.
Hay Festival.
Harry Potter Studios.
End of Year 7 Residential in North Wales.
York.
Oxford.
Hereford.
Paris.
Toronto.
London.
Battlefields trip to Belgium and France.







NEW BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES



In April 2025, we moved into our brand new state-of-the-art facilities.

These wonderful facilities are providing our children with even more opportunities to learn and grow is an inspiring new environment. There are:

Large and bright classrooms which are IT rich.

Specialist areas for art, music, drama, science, design technology, textiles, food technology, and computer science, which are all ultra-modern.

Modern dining and outdoor spaces.

Spacious grounds with views across the town of Abergavenny, towards the magnificent Monmouthshire countryside.

Huge opportunities for learning outside the classroom with learning courtyards and forest schools.

PE teaching suite, dance and activity studios, large sports hall, grass pitches, 3G pitch for football/Rugby, carpet for hockey/tennis, and floodlit multi games areas.

This is the first Net Zero carbon all-age school in Wales which all our current pupils and staff are very proud of.





King Henry VIII 3-19 School
Ysgol 3-19 Brenin Harri'r VIII