

Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School



Prospectus 25-26



Empowered

Virtuous

Employable

Welcome/Croeso



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our latest school prospectus. For over half a century, Archbishop McGrath has existed as a Catholic High School to serve all parts of the County Borough of Bridgend.

As a school with less than 900 learners aged 11-18, we pride ourselves on our ability to get know our learners and their families.

Those who attend our school choose to do so because of our Catholic ethos and our track-record of academic excellence. In addition to this, and equally as important, learner wellbeing is at the heart of all that we do. As our mission statement states, 'we aim for all our learners to leave us as Empowered, Virtuous and Employable individuals'.

Outcomes at GCSE and 'A' level are consistently very strong and we are very proud of the fact that over 90% of our sixth form university applicants are accepted at their first choice of university.

With a school building that is less than fifteen years old, our learners benefit from being taught in excellent facilities - modern classrooms, specialist laboratories and workshops, excellent IT facilities and a wide range of sports facilities. These include a dance studio, sports hall and a floodlit 3G pitch.

Whilst we are a Catholic school, it is important for parents and carers to be aware that we accept pupils of all faiths and backgrounds - we are a fully inclusive school community.

We enjoy excellent links with our four main partner primary schools - St. Mary's Catholic Primary, Bridgend, St. Robert's Catholic Primary, Aberkenfig, St. Mary's and St. Patricks Catholic Primary, Maesteg and Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary, Brackla. In addition to these schools, we accept pupils from over fifteen other schools from across Bridgend county.

As well as our Year 6 and 6th Form Open Evenings that take place annually during the Autumn term, parents and carers are welcome to make an appointment to visit our school during the school day in order to experience first-hand our unique atmosphere and Christian ethos.

I look forward to meeting you.

D. Ashley Howells
Headteacher

About our school



We are a voluntary aided mixed 11-18 school in the Archdiocese of Cardiff. We serve the parishes of the Bridgend Deanery. We were established 50 years ago to provide a Christian medium education for students in the County Borough of Bridgend.

Our students travel from Maesteg, Bridgend, Porthcawl and the Ogmore and Garw Valleys with a small number travelling from the Vale and further afield.

Students are from predominantly English speaking homes. The school's intake is from a varied social background and represents the full range of abilities. There are just under 850 students on roll and we are oversubscribed in all year groups. The sixth form community has grown steadily over the last 5 years with approximately 130 on roll in Years 12 and 13.

We offer a full range of GCSE and A-level courses as well as a number of vocational options. Sixth form students also have access to a number of A-level courses provided as part of our strong collaborative links with neighbouring schools and Bridgend College.



'Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School offers an inclusive welcome to all, where students feel valued for who they are and what they achieve.' Section 50 Inspection 2023

Our Vision & Mission

“Christ at the Centre”

Our core purpose is to ensure that all pupils reach or exceed their potential by using their God-given talents to develop as healthy, ambitious, capable, life-long learners ready to live as valued members of our local community, Wales and the world.

We aim for all our pupils to leave our school as:
Empowered, Virtuous and Employable,
individuals.



‘Students are extremely proud of their school and speak enthusiastically about the school’s distinctive Catholic nature. They understand and fully embrace ‘EVE – Empowered, Virtuous, Employable’. Section 50 Inspection 2023

Our Curriculum

We have developed a curriculum to fully address the requirements of the Welsh Government whilst ensuring, we keep “Christ at the Centre” at all times.

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Our work in developing our curriculum has ensured learners will experience an authentic, broad and balanced curriculum covering all Areas of Learning and the cross-curricular themes. In addition to literacy, numeracy and digital skills, there will be six areas of learning and experience. Everything our children learn will be connected to these areas:

- Humanities
- Expressive Arts
- Health and Well-being
- Languages, Literacy and Communication
- Science and Technology
- Mathematics and Numeracy

The curriculum also covers:

- human rights
- diversity and respecting differences
- experiences and skills for careers and the workplace
- learning about local, national and international contexts
- developmentally appropriate relationships and sexuality education.

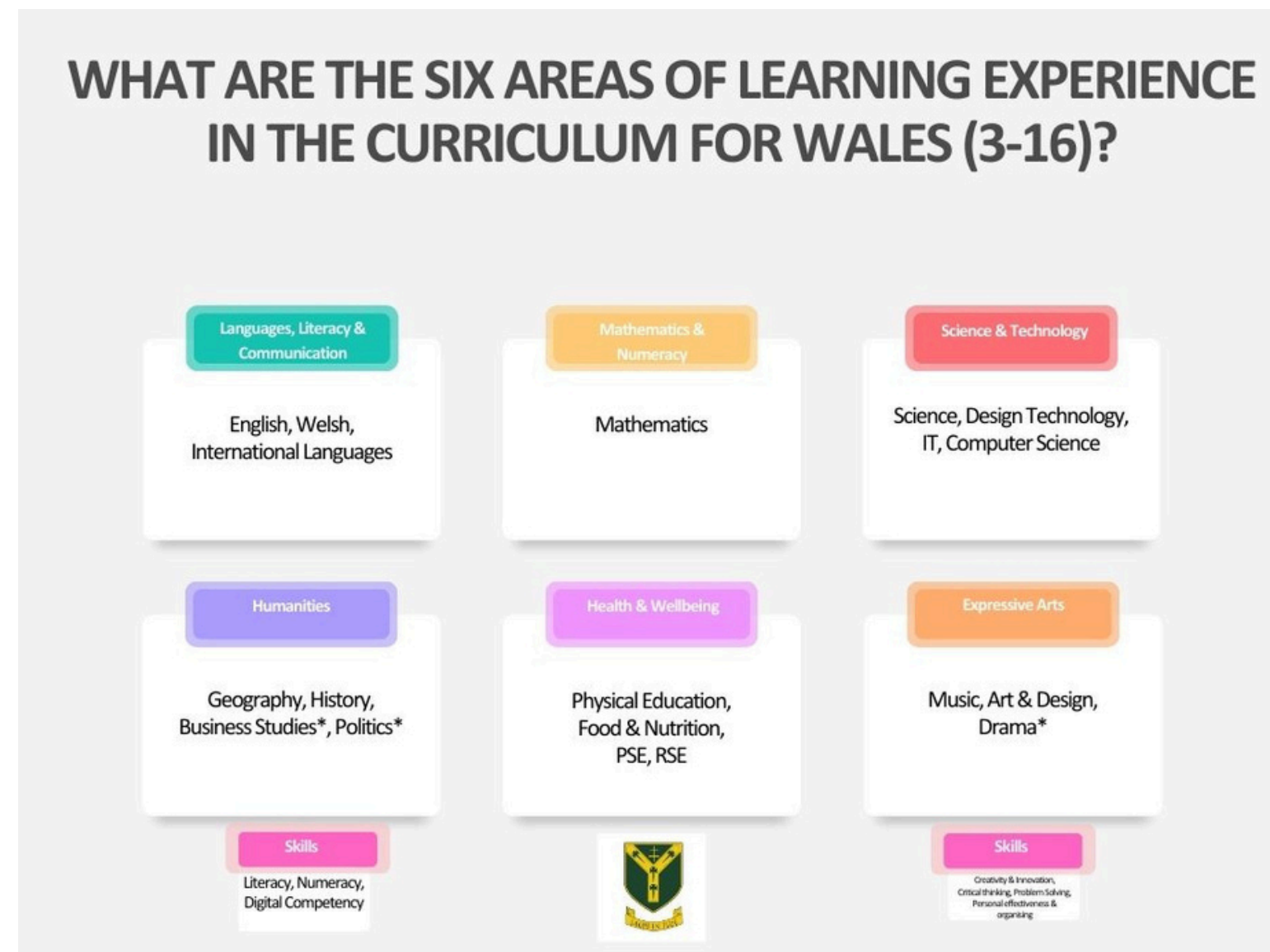


Our Curriculum

Most year groups have five teaching classes. Some specialist subjects such as Design Technology are taught in smaller groups for safety reasons.

Classes are arranged in broad ability based bands with some subjects able to set by ability.

We believe in having high expectations for all our learners and outcomes at GCSE and 'A'-Level are consistently very strong.



Wellbeing, Pastoral Care & Work Related Education



Pupils at our school are able to access a wealth of wellbeing support. All learners have a form tutor who is their first point of contact. Where possible, form tutors remain with the same class for the duration of years 7 - 11.

Each Year group has a Leader of Wellbeing who is in charge of the form tutor team and has overall responsibility for the pastoral care for their year group. A member of the senior leadership team is also linked to each year group

In addition to our five Leaders of Wellbeing, we have KS3 and KS4 Wellbeing Support Officers and these provide excellent additional support for pupils and their families.

Our Head of Sixth form provides support for Years 12 and 13. As well as pastoral care, the Head of Sixth form provides a wide range of advice for those who are applying to study at University. Our Sixth Form Engagement officer is also on hand to support students with all aspects of post-16 life including such as attendance and emotional support.

Our Lead (Youth) Work is based at the school for part of the week and provides additional support to some learners.

Learners also have access to our Careers Wales Officer who is based part-time at the school. This supplements the careers and work-related advice learners are given during lessons and from outside speakers.



Religious Education & Collective Worship

All pupils in Years 7-13 study Religious Education. All pupils in Year 11 study for the WJEC Religious Studies GCSE. Many students choose to study RS at 'A' level in the 6th form.

The school has thriving junior and youth chaplaincy teams and these are supported by our RE department staff.

All pupils have year group assemblies each week as well as class prayer during registration. All year groups celebrate Mass every Friday on a rota basis.

The school, many pupils and staff play an active roll in the local parish of St. Mary's. Fr. Tim McGrath, Fr. Dale Cutlan and Deacon Philip Manghan are also members of our school Chaplaincy team and visit the school on a weekly basis.



'Teachers have strong subject knowledge and, as a result, ask incisive questions to test and develop student understanding in lessons.' Section 50 inspection, 2023

Support for all

We have excellent opportunities for our more-able and talented pupils including access to the SEREN programme. We also enjoy strong links with the prestigious Wellington College, Berkshire and every year a small number of learners are enrolled onto their Wheeler Programme.

We realise that not all learners make progress at the same rate and some will need extra support in order for them to be able to fulfill their potential.

Some of our learners have access to a wide range of interventions including literacy and numeracy support. For others, we link in with outside agencies in order to provide them with emotional and behavioural interventions.

Our therapy dog, Ice, has been a welcome addition to the school support team and his visits are hugely popular with pupils and staff.

Our ALN department is staffed by a dedicated team of support staff and is led by our ALNCo. They are located in a designated suite of rooms which includes our pupil progress centre.



'Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School has a caring, inclusive ethos and provides valuable support and guidance for pupils. This has a positive impact on their wellbeing, learning and personal development.' Estyn



Sport, Music and Extra-Curricular provision

The school aims to instil a positive attitude towards physical activity and to encourage the participation and enjoyment of sport by all. The school recognises the importance of physical activity and its contribution to promoting the wellbeing and health of all pupils.

A wide range of sporting activities are offered through time-tabled PE lessons and through extra-curricular activities. Regular fixtures are held with local schools for Netball, Basketball, Rugby and Football. Wherever possible, pupils are encouraged to compete at school, local, regional or national levels.

Our Music department hosts three concerts per year with all those in receipt of peripatetic lessons expected to take part.

The school has a growing orchestra, wind band, choir and various other ensembles depending on the talents available each year.

There are a vast array of leadership opportunities available for pupils of all abilities. They include Prefects, Sports Leaders, Food Ambassadors, Chaplaincy team and Cyber Ambassadors.

A number of departments host clubs at lunchtimes including chess, badminton, crochet and board games. Our Code Club has won numerous local and national competitions in recent years.



Our school uniform

Black Trousers/Knee length skirt

Tailored shorts (Summer term)

White shirt

Plain black v-necked jumper or cardigan (optional)

Green school Blazer/Black Sixth form blazer

Plain black shoes/all black trainers

Black socks

KS3, KS4 or Sixth form tie

Plain black coat

No excessive make up.

Eccentric hairstyles and colourings will not be allowed.

No visible/tongue piercings are allowed with the exception of one pair of stud earrings

PE Kit

Rugby shirt – green and gold with school PE badge

Shorts – black

Socks – green with gold top; 'Archbishop' logo up back

Sports shirt – black with school PE badge


Skort – black





Standards and Expectations


Classroom Expectations





 I will arrive on time, ready to learn.


 I will have a pen, pencil and ruler and I will look after my exercise books and booklets.


 I will be kind, and treat everyone with respect.

 I will stay in class for the full lesson.

 I will not give up if I find the work difficult.

 I will not be afraid of making mistakes.

 My phone will be confiscated if it is seen.

 I will not wear my coat, hoodie or airpods.

THE ARCHBISHOP MCGRATH PRESENTATION PRIORITIES

All work must have the heading
Dysgu
Dosbarth or
Dysgu
Cartref.

All work must have the date, written in Welsh and underlined.

All classwork must be written in blue or black pen.

All diagrams must be drawn in pencil and labelled in pen.



All mistakes must be crossed out using a ruler.

Take pride in your work. All covers and booklets should be kept clean.

Pages must not be ripped out of exercise books.

All worksheets must be glued in immediately.



An excellent environment in which to thrive





General Information



Site security

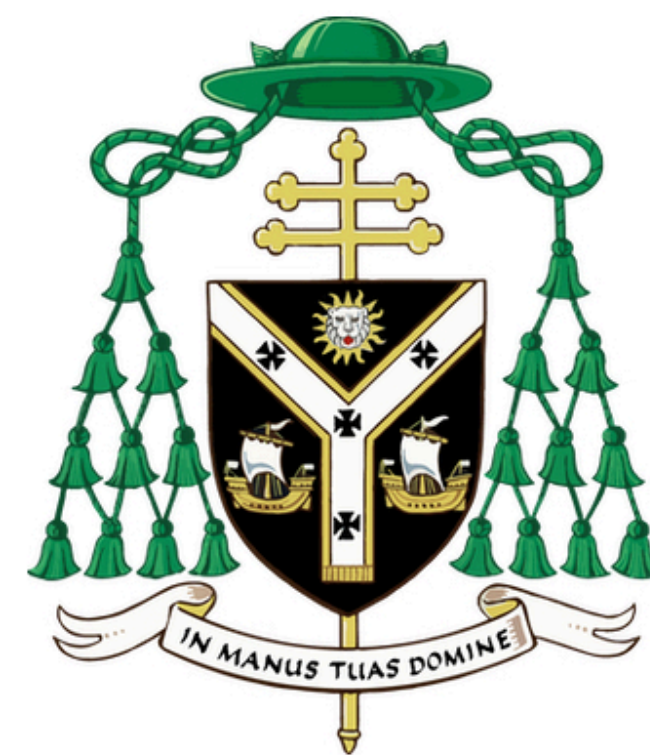
The school has automated security gates and all visitors are expected to report to reception. The school building closes at 18:30 Monday to Friday. Pupils in Years 7-11 are not allowed off site during the day. CCTV is in operation throughout the school site.



Welsh Language

The school is committed to supporting and developing the use of the Welsh language.

All pupils at the school follow the requirements for Welsh at KS3 and all pupils follow a GCSE course in Welsh at KS4. The school actively promotes the use of the Welsh language in lessons and outside of the classroom.



Relationships & Sex Education

RSE is delivered predominantly via RE lessons and takes into account WG Government statutory guidance.

The Archdiocese of Cardiff RSE Curriculum, organises content in the three overarching themes of 'Created to love by God,' 'Created to love one another' and 'Created to live in community.' A copy of our RSE policy can be found on our school website.



General Information



Equal Opportunities

All pupils who attend our school will be treated fairly regardless of religion, Archbishop McGrath is fully committed to promoting and ensuring Equal Opportunities for all members of the school community.



Charging Policy

The school does not charge for any compulsory activities. Some departments sell equipment such as calculators and specialist equipment and these are often available more cheaply than if parents were to buy them elsewhere. The school operates on a fully cashless basis using ParentPay for school transactions. A copy of the charging policy is on our website.



Any issues?

We try to resolve all complaints as quickly as possible on an informal basis. Initial concerns should be raised with the Subject Teacher or Form Tutor who will be best placed to help you. If the situation is not resolved, the relevant Leader of Wellbeing will be able to help you. For more serious matters, a copy of the school complaints policy is available on the school website.

Our school day

08.55 - 09.10 Registration/Assembly

9.10 - 10.10 Lesson 1

10.10 - 11.10 Lesson2

11.10 - 11.35 Break

11.35 - 12.35 Lesson 3

12.35 - 13.35 Lesson 4

13.35 - 14.10 Lunch

14.10 - 15.10 Lesson 5

15.10 End of school

15.20 School buses leave site



Term dates 2025-2026

(5 INSET days will be added at a later date)



Autumn Term

1st September 2025 - 19th
December 2025



Spring term

5th January 2026 - 27th March
2026



Summer Term

13th April 2026 - 20th July
2026



Half term 1 & Christmas Holidays 2025

27th October- 31st October
22nd December - 5th January




Half term 2 & Easter Holidays 2026

16th February - 20th February
30th March - 10th April



Half term 3 2026

25th May - 29th May



How to apply:

Please contact us by using the details below in order to access our online application form.

Contacts & Social Media: ☎ 01656815500 ✉ admin@archmcgrathcs.bridgend.cymru 📷 [archbishopmcgrathcsbridgend](https://www.instagram.com/archbishopmcgrathcsbridgend) ✉ [@archbishmcgrath](https://twitter.com/archbishmcgrath)

Headteacher - Mr. D. A. Howells

Oak Tree Way, Brackla, Bridgend, CF31 2DN

Chair of Governing Body - Mrs. J. Phillips