



**Monmouth** | Ysgol Gyfun  
Comprehensive School **Trefynwy**

## **Transition 2024**

### **Pontio 2024**

An introduction to Monmouth Comprehensive School for new students and their families.

Cyflwyniad i Ysgol Gyfun Trefynwy i fyfyrwyr newydd a'u teuluoedd.



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Please let us know if you require this document in another language or format (large print or electronic format).



## Student support through Year 7



**Mr A Rodda:**  
**Head of Year 7**



**Ms E Daley:**  
**Pastoral Support Officer for Year 7**



**Mrs Brown:**  
**School Healthcare**



**Mr Jenkins:**  
**Wellbeing & Support**



**Mrs Bailey:**  
**Family Support Worker**

## The Form Tutors



**Mrs A Pearce**



**Mrs C Smith**



**Mrs R Banyai**



**Mr A Williams**



**Mr J Smith**



**Mrs R Davies**



**Mrs C Evans**



**Mrs K Rosser**



**Mr W Oldale**



## Term Dates (Provisional)

TERM	BEGINS	Finish for Half-Term	Return from Half-Term	ENDS
<b>Autumn</b>	*Tuesday 03.09.24	Friday 25.10.24	Monday 04.11.24	Friday 20.12.24
<b>Spring</b>	Monday 06.01.25	Friday 21.02.25	Monday 03.03.25	Friday 11.04.25
<b>Summer</b>	Monday 28.04.25	Friday 23.05.25	Monday 02.06.24	Friday 18.07.25

INSET Day: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September

**\*Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September: Start of Term for Y7 - Induction Day**

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October: Parents and Form Tutor contact evening

INSET Day: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March: Parents and Subject teachers evening

INSET Day: Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May: May Day Bank Holiday

INSET Day: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June

INSET Day: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July: end of year reports issued

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July: last school day of the academic year

## School Day Timings

The table below gives the **start** times of the sessions through our school day:

08.45	09.05	09.55	10.45	11.15	12.05	12.55	13.25	14.15	15.00
<b>Form group:</b> <i>Registration</i>	<b>Lesson 1</b>	<b>Lesson 2</b>	<i>Morning Break</i>	<b>Lesson 3</b>	<b>Lesson 4</b>	<i>Lunch</i>	<b>Lesson 5</b>	<b>Lesson 6</b>	<i>End of day</i>

Students may be taught for double periods, e.g. maths for lesson 1 & 2.

The school operates a 'two-week' timetable. It is constructed from 60 lessons spread over a fortnight.

It will be key for students to know which 'type' of week they are following: either a Week A or Week B.

When students start on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024, that will be a **Week A**.



## Our Year 7 Curriculum

The Curriculum for Wales has four Core Purposes. To produce young people who are: **ambitious and capable; enterprising and creative; ethical and informed; healthy and confident**. These Purposes provide us with a framework to explore the individual ambitions, interests and potential of every student at MCS.

Our Year 7 curriculum ensures that students are introduced to the rich variety of subjects on offer at secondary school, some of which they will have never encountered before. For us, students will always be taught in subjects. Subjects matter as they have an important body of knowledge, specific skills and belong to a rich tradition that is unique to them. At MCS, students experience:

**Art.** We explore the topic 'Who am I?', developing fundamental art skills. Students enhance their drawing from observation, blending of paint, analytical research skills and ability to work in a range of styles.

**Computing.** Aiming to become digitally literate students who possess a variety of computing knowledge and skills. Topics: Digital Media; Logos & Branding; Computational Thinking; Programming; Spreadsheets.

**Design Technology.** Students learn subject specific skills and knowledge from three disciplines: Food, Product Design & Textiles. Topics: Food and Nutrition; Working Properties of Materials; Sustainability.

**Drama.** Students study semiotics - the ways we create meaning in theatre. We begin with Alice in Wonderland; go on to study voice and movement; then finish with Quentin Blake & Roald Dahl.

**English.** We journey through literature: from Chaucer and the development of the English language, to Shakespeare's sonnets and *Romeo and Juliet* on then on to Roald Dahl's *Boy*. Whilst undertaking this journey, we also ensure the effective coverage of vital English language and literacy skills and knowledge.

**Geography.** We study the importance of maps and the use of theme to interpret the world; look at the human and physical reasons for migration; explore global biomes and their features.

**History.** We begin our chronology of 'Who are the British?' – understanding the key turning points in our past. Topics include: who has settled in Wales; the Norman Conquest; castles; life in the Medieval period.

**International Languages.** Students learn French, German and Spanish, enabling students to explore the connections and differences between languages. We start by exploring 'Identity' as individuals.

**Mathematics.** We start the year focussing on key number skills in order to build a strong foundation. This is followed by geometry, algebra and statistics, allowing students to deepen their understanding.

**Music.** Students explore the three areas of performing, composing and listening. We begin began with The Elements of Music, developing singing skills, confidence when performing and keyboard skills.

**P.E.** students have the opportunity to explore a range of activities that include; Football, Netball, Rugby, Hockey, Swimming, Creative (Gymnastics / Dance), Athletics and Striking (Rounders, Longball, Cricket).

**RVE.** We study three topics through the year. A spotlight on key RVE themes in the first term, a systematic study of a world faith in the second; finally, an ethical investigation into human rights and responsibilities.

**Science.** We study a range of Biology, Chemistry and Physics topics: atoms, energy, waves, materials, cells and reproduction, ecosystems. Throughout these topics, students also develop core laboratory skills.

**Welsh.** We seek to develop confident use of the Present, Past and Perfect tenses in Welsh, both in oral and written work. Topics covered: Identity, Holidays/ Wales and the World, School and Studying Welsh.



## Homework: Developing Independent Learning

One change in moving to secondary school is typically in homework. It is a challenge for students' organisation – and also for parents as they look to support their child. There may be a variety of homework to manage, prioritise and complete across several subjects, each with its own requirements and deadlines.

Homework at Monmouth Comprehensive School aims to be authentic, realistic and purposeful. All students are encouraged to discuss their work at home. Working outside lesson time gives you the opportunity to develop as independent learners

Homework is often set via *Google Classroom*, but can sometimes be set on paper or other means. Access to a laptop or other device is required to use *Google Classroom*.



Parents' reflections are that homework is best done when clear work patterns are set up, and the following points have proved helpful for many families:

- Start work when students return home from school, after a break. It is better than doing it later.
- Television, phone calls, the internet and other activities are best set aside and done later.
- Where possible, complete work on the day that it is set – when the details are better remembered.
- Encourage your child to check they know what to do before leaving class.
- Congratulate completion and success often.

## Hwb & Google Classroom

Hwb is the Welsh Government IT learning platform which provides every learner and member of school staff with education materials to complement their learning. It has many free apps, virtual classrooms, and a massive bank of materials for use in the classroom or online with pupils. It can also be used to share schools' work and join up with other schools on projects. Hwb was designed and built in Wales and is world-class.

As it is a web-based system, it is accessed through a computer or tablet. Your child can visit [hwb.gov.wales](http://hwb.gov.wales) and click on resources to browse things of interest. We will provide a username and password in September to allow you to log into Hwb.

Through Hwb, teachers can set up virtual classrooms through **Google Classroom** to set questions, homework and provide materials.

A YouTube guide on how to access your Hwb account.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=48&v=N4jDiU2s-r0&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=48&v=N4jDiU2s-r0&feature=emb_title) -





## SIMS Parent App

The SIMS Parent App is an on-demand app, which can either be downloaded to an Android or Apple phone, or accessed via a website. There is no charge for accessing the Parent App. This App, produced by Capita Plc., links with our own School Information Management System (SIMS): our key school database.

- School term, Inset dates and contact details available at the click of a button
- Access to electronically update your contact details, for up-to-date emergency information
- Important push messages from school, including event reminders and newsletters
- Information about your child's attendance, assessment and school clubs

### How do I download the SIMS Parent App?

The SIMS Parent app can be downloaded for free from the Apple Store (iOS) or the Play Store (Android).

Open the Play Store or Apple Store on your device. Using the Search facility, enter **SIMS Parent**.

Select **SIMS Parent** by Capita **Plc** from the search results.

Tap **INSTALL** to download the app.

Once the app has downloaded successfully, tap **Open** to register and start using the app. Please allow any notifications, if prompted to do so.



### What do I need to register for the SIMS Parent App?

After the start of the new school year, MCS will send parents a unique registration email. This will be needed in order to register for use of the SIMS Parent App. The email will contain a registration link and an invitation code. This email will be sent from Capita SIMS (noreply@sims.co.uk). If you cannot find this email, please check your junk mail and ensure it has not been marked as spam/junk.

In order to complete the registration, you will also require:

- The date of birth of one of your children who attends the school.
- Either a Microsoft (including Office 365), Google, Facebook, Twitter or SIMS ID account. You can use an existing account (e.g. a Hotmail account) or create a new one online - they are free and easy to set up and you can use any valid email address and password.



## Ready to Learn: School Equipment and Uniform

Our school website provides information on all of the required, recommended and optional items of school equipment and uniform.

This can be found under the 'Parents' drop-down menu on our website ([Monmouth Comprehensive School - School Uniform and Equipment](#)) or via the QR code here.

***Please take the time to carefully review the Uniform Policy and its requirements so that your child's start with us can be a confident and well-prepared one.***



### Uniform Notes:

All students are required to wear MCS uniform smartly and with pride; whilst in school, when travelling to and from school and when in the local community. Ensuring students attend school dressed smartly in school uniform is the foundation for high standards in other aspects of school life, including a positive work ethic and conduct in and around school.

Summer uniform at MCS entails students not being obliged to wear their blazers. Summer uniform begins at the start of the summer public exams and the precise date is announced annually to students and families.

The school uniform at MCS was co-designed by students, families, staff, governors and others. It is an indication of belonging to our school community, and furthermore acts as an identifier for safeguarding purposes.

MCS uniform is gender neutral. Suppliers currently refer to 'boys' and 'girls' uniform, and this is noted only for clarity of reference whilst ordering. Students and families are at liberty to select the compulsory uniform from the full range of items.

All branded items and generic items are available from Monkhouse, our main suppliers. Families are also welcome to purchase generic items from other retailers as long as they are an exact style and colour match to the MCS uniform.















Equipment summary:

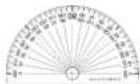





The equipment list is separated into essential and recommended items. As with clothing, please label with NAME and FORM.

**A school bag**, large enough to carry exercise books, will also be essential.

**Compulsory / Essential Items:**

Black or blue pens		Green pen	
HB Pencil		Eraser	
Pencil case		Scientific calculator *	
Highlighter		Ruler	

**Recommended Items:**

Protractor		Colouring pencils	
Pencil sharpener		Reading book	
Pair of compasses		Solid glue stick	

Ready to Learn Room:

Occasionally, students may attend school without the classroom equipment they need or without the full uniform requirements. In order to ensure students are supported to continue their learning, we operate a 'Ready to Learn' room. Students may be directed here by form tutors when equipment or uniform needs to be borrowed for the day. Students are required to leave a personal item, such as a phone, keys, etc., as a deposit. The item is locked away and exchanged at the end of the school day.



## Student Lockers: Valuables & Storage

We do not encourage the bringing of valuables to school and any items brought, are at students' risk. Lockers are available for students to use to store their materials, equipment and other kit. Lockers are available in three sizes – Small, Medium and Large.

- Larger lockers are located on the ground floor with smaller lockers located on floors 1 and 2.
- Most lockers are secured via a padlock provided by the individual.
- A number of lockers in the PE area are secured using a key and a £1 deposit. These lockers must be emptied at the end of every day and are used by the community in the evenings.
- You can select the most appropriate location and size of locker. We recommend that Year 7 choose a locker near their form room base.
- *Top Tip:* ensure you bring a padlock on the first day (Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept) so that you have the widest choice of lockers.



A padlock with a **shackle diameter of 6.3mm (1/4 ")** is required to secure a locker.

Note, a padlock of different size is unlikely to fit or secure the locker effectively.





## The Resource Centre

### WHAT DOES THE RESOURCE CENTRE CONTAIN?

Books, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, laptops, careers information and much more. You will learn how to use the Resource Centre to help you with your projects, homework and for your own enjoyment.

### WILL I BE ABLE TO FIND WHAT I WANT?

You will visit the Resource Centre during your first few weeks at Monmouth Comprehensive. You will be shown how to find the resources and information you might need. The Resource Centre Manager and the Library Prefects will always be available to help you.

### WILL I BE ABLE TO USE THE LAPTOPS?

Of course. Just ask the Resource Centre Manager to help you access the trolley and to sign out a laptop.

### CAN I TAKE OUT BOOKS?

Yes. You are allowed to take out up to 2 books at a time for 2 weeks. You can also renew books if you have not finished them by their return date.



*COME AND VISIT US!*





## Parent-Teacher Evenings & Summary Reports

For Year 7, there are three main contact points focused on student progression during the year. These are scheduled one for each of the three school terms.

Our Parent-Teacher contact evenings are run electronically via a web-based system: School Cloud.

More information can be found through the MCS website:

[Monmouth Comprehensive School - School Cloud and Parents' Evenings](#)



### **Term 1:** Parent-Tutor contact evening (October 10<sup>th</sup>)

This is a Parent-Tutor contact evening held with your child's new form tutor. This brief meeting is focused on the transition to secondary school and provides an early contact to discuss how things have gone directly with the form tutor. It is concerned with wellbeing and settling into the new routines of secondary education.

### **Term 2:** Parents' Evening (March 6<sup>th</sup>)

In the Spring Term, parents & students have the opportunity to discuss their progress with the full range of subject teachers. This longer evening provides 5-minute appointment slots with all of your child's teachers and is focused on discussing the learning and progress in each.

### **Term 3:** Annual Summary Report

Towards the end of the Summer Term, we will provide a summary report for the year. Students carry out a broad range of different assessments across their subjects and these inform the outcomes contained in this report. The assessments seek to determine how well students perform based on their learning throughout the Year 7 curriculum of that subject.

## **Assessment & Progression**

Students joining MCS will experience Wales's new curriculum framework: Curriculum for Wales. This framework has learner progression as its central focus.

Our approach values the main purpose of assessment – in order to support the progress that students make in their learning. The day-to-day, in-class assessment of students' learning, and the teacher's response to these assessments, is vast majority of assessment that occurs at MCS.

In the Curriculum for Wales Framework, students' progression in learning is defined across five principles:

- Increasing their effectiveness as an independent student
- Increasing their breadth and depth of knowledge
- Increasing their sophistication and application of skills
- Increasing their awareness of the different subject disciplines
- Increasing their connections between their learning



## Support for students

All students throughout their time at school will face challenges which may require additional support. At a comprehensive school, the level of support will vary for each individual student and their learning and wellbeing needs. Wellbeing at school is developed through high quality learning experiences, supported by clear routines and expectations. We strive to build resilience in our students so they are adaptable to change, are able to assess the impact of their actions, explore their needs and the needs of others, and find solutions.

Students are encouraged to talk with their Form Tutor if they feel unhappy or anxious, as well as using the support of their peer group. In addition, each year group has a dedicated Pastoral Support Officer available for students with any additional pastoral concerns and are led by a Head of Year who is responsible for their progress through the school. We also have other wellbeing support workers, as shown on p.3.

## Being Unwell at School

A member of our team of first aiders including the Health and Wellbeing Support Team is on site throughout the school day to provide First Aid. Staff will contact parents when a child feels particularly unwell. We are not able to diagnose and cannot be used as an alternative to a doctor's appointment.

It is useful for us to know about allergies, medical conditions and any medication taken regularly.

Following MCC guidance we are not permitted to dispense Paracetamol to students.

Please remember if you need medication to be dispensed by the Health and Wellbeing Centre, you must have:

- Medication prescribed by a doctor, in the prescribed box with the label attached and intact.
- Completed and returned to the Health and Wellbeing Centre, the Administration of Prescribed Medication Form – available from the Health and Wellbeing Centre.

When providing long-term medication, parents are responsible for noting the expiry date and replenishing supplies when necessary with the School.

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, you must contact the school as soon as possible. The Absentee Line number is 01600 775284. This is a 24-hour answerphone: a message can be left at any time.

If your child is not present in registration or session 1 you will receive a text message. Please respond to this text message with the reason for absence.

If you are aware of any future days of absence for appointments or continued illness, please inform us as soon as possible.

## Student Council

The voice of our students is very important to us. All students have the opportunity to represent themselves and others through Year Councils and the School Council. At Year and School Council meetings, students discuss a wide variety of school-based topics, support the School Development Plan, and lead on their own agenda for school improvement. Council members can also be involved with: the interview process for all new members of staff; showing visitors around our school; acting as ambassadors for the school at events; election of students to the Eco and Food council; participation in school decisions such as catering contracts.

All Year, School and Joint Schools Council representatives are elected through a democratic process.



## Attending School

Excellent attendance at school has a significantly positive impact not only on academic outcomes, but also on social and emotional wellbeing. The routine and rigour of school, and the habits developed through high levels of attendance, serve young people well for the rest of their lives.

There is a clear correlation between attendance and attainment, and therefore young people's life chances. Our target for each student's attendance is 96% or above.

### Impact of attendance over an academic year:

**90%** attendance – you will have missed 19 days from school. This is nearly four weeks and is 114 missed lessons.

**80%** attendance – you will have missed 38 days from school. This is nearly eight weeks and is 228 missed lessons.

## Contacting the School

The school office is open between 8.15am and 4.15pm Monday to Thursday and 8.15am and 3.45pm on Friday during Term Time – 01600 775177.

The Attendance telephone line is available 24 hours: 01600 775284.

When contacting the school about your son/daughter, it is often best to speak with your child's Form Tutor first as they will be able to support with finding specific information. A list of form tutor emails is available on our website.

During the teaching part of the day, 8.45am – 3.00pm, staff may not be available to take telephone calls.

Messages may be left via school reception via phone or email,

[monmouthcomprehensive@monmouth.schools.edu.org.uk](mailto:monmouthcomprehensive@monmouth.schools.edu.org.uk)

Please note that you will receive a response to general enquiries within 3 working days.

## School Website & Twitter

General Information about the day to day organisation of the school can be found on our website: [Monmouth Comprehensive School - Home](#)

Also, if for any reason the school is to close in an emergency, the website will hold all the details. This will be prominently displayed on the front page and will be updated daily. The telephone system is also updated regularly in the event of closure.



We also tweet regularly, so please follow us on: **@LearnwithMCS** where you will find lots of interesting information about the school including emergency information.



## Parent Pay and Restaurant Arrangements

All our school trips and activities are advertised on ParentPay. On line consent/ emergency contact number/medical information/dietary requirements are required from you on payment for all services allocated to your child. It is essential that the email address you use for ParentPay is current as all information and alerts for services will be communicated to the Primary Payer via ParentPay email. ParentPay at [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com)

Please direct all payment queries to the Finance Department on 01600 775143 / 775171, email [jennifer.jenkins@monmouth.schoolsedu.org.uk](mailto:jennifer.jenkins@monmouth.schoolsedu.org.uk)

To help parents budget for trips/activities/lunch money you can pay into your Parent account at any time an amount of your choice to use at a later date against a payment for items assigned to your child on ParentPay.

### **Your username and password for ParentPay at MCS will be sent via email.**

Existing users (account at Primary School) – Please login now to your Primary school account and use the information on the email to 'Add a child' on your existing account before we break for the Summer Holiday. (Both the Primary and Secondary Account will show on your Home screen). You are allowed up to 6 users on your account.

New users - Please login now and activate your account before we break for the Summer Holiday.

The **school restaurant** is open from 7.45am to 4.30pm daily. The School uses a biometric 'cashless' system for students to purchase food. The biometric system involves scanning the image of a student's finger which produces a unique I.D. stored on a secure server. Students then access their accounts by placing their finger on a scanner at the till-point. The Protection of Freedom's Act 2012 requires us to gain your consent to use biometric recognition systems in School; already provided by return of Data Collection Form (linked in the email advising of New Entrants' Evening).

Your child's finger scan will be linked to their lunch account – the School operates a 'cashless' payment system; accounts can be topped up using ParentPay, from when your child starts in the school: ParentPay at [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com).

### **School Essential Grant / Free School Meals**

If you think you are entitled to Free School Meals / School Essential Grant please access Monmouthshire County Council website <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/home/counciltaxandbenefits/fsm/> to check your eligibility and complete an online application. **If you were eligible this year 23/24, you need to re-apply for 24/25.** Applications for the academic year 24/25 open on **1<sup>st</sup> July 2024**, please do not apply before this date.







## Travel to School via Bus

Many of our students travel on buses, some setting out early in the morning to cover considerable distances.

Families should consider emergency plans in the event of unforeseen difficulties with bus transport. Students should know exactly where to go and what to do if the bus fails to arrive in the morning. If the school has to close early, it is advisable for students to know where they should go to meet parents. In the event of a bus being unable to reach the drop-off point, having a rendezvous, a shelter or home of another student prevents anxiety and promotes the safety of students. If a bus breaks down, students must stay with the bus while the driver makes appropriate arrangements.

**Students living outside the catchment area** make their own transport arrangements. Some parents in the Forest of Dean have organised their own contracts with different companies such as Willetts, etc.

Students in **some** areas of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire **may** be able to claim free travel if their closest school is Monmouth Comprehensive School. Parents need to apply to their local authorities.

**Students living within Monmouthshire.** Free home to school transport is generally restricted to pupils up to the age of 16 years who attend their catchment or nearest school and live more than 1.5 miles from the catchment school for Primary and more than 2 miles for Secondary.

An online application form is available on [My Monmouthshire](#). If you haven't already registered for My Monmouthshire you will need to do this before completing the application form.

By registering and completing the form online you can track the progress of your application and receive updates as it is processed. Once registered, the application form will be available under the **Schools and Learning** area of My Monmouthshire.

If you've already registered using the My Monmouthshire app, currently available on Apple, Android and Windows devices, then you can use the same email and password to log-in.

For enquiries from Monmouthshire residents relating to the assessment or eligibility of transport, please contact the Passenger Transport Unit on 01633 644777 or e-mail [passengertransportunit@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:passengertransportunit@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

For other enquiries, please contact the school on 01600 775177.





## School Map



2



1



0



Dyniaethau  
Humanities



Ieithoedd  
Languages



Saesneg  
English



Dylunio a Thechnoleg  
Design & Technology



Mathemateg  
Mathematics



Celfyddydau Perfformio  
Performing Arts



Addysg Gorfforol  
Physical Education



Gwyddoniaeth  
Science



Busnes a Mentwr  
Business & Enterprise



## Monmouth Comprehensive Friends Association



Hello and a very warm welcome to MCS Friends Association! The Friends are run by a small group of parents, grandparents and staff with a large number of helpers who jump in and help when they can. We support our school community through social events and fundraising. All the money raised goes towards providing extras that the school budget does not cover. In the last few years, we have raised funds for outdoor canopies, equipment for the PEA and PE Faculties, and three new fixed outdoor table tennis tables for use during break times.

However, we are not just about fundraising. We also run a second-hand uniform service in partnership with Bridges Community Shop in Monmouth, providing good quality second-hand uniform at greatly reduced prices.

We know that the transition from primary to secondary school can be huge for both children and parents. The Friends provide support to families and an opportunity to participate in school life, making a difference to all students' lives whilst recognising our children's new independence. Along the way we also aim to raise funds to support the school by running events throughout the school year.

**As a parent you automatically become a member of MCS Friends Association.**

**No experience necessary, just a willingness to support the school.**

**You will have as much support given to you as you require.**

**To find out more please email us at the address below.**

If you would like to be more involved with the school, it is a great way to support them. We are always looking for new ideas and welcome everyone to our meetings. Look out for our next meeting and please come along if you can.

For more information or to join our helper list please get in touch, using [moncompfriends@gmail.com](mailto:moncompfriends@gmail.com).

New parents are automatically added to the MCS Friends mailing list; please let the Friends know if you'd like your email address removed from the circulation list.

**Find us on the school's website in the 'Parents' section, or [by clicking here](#).**