



Outstanding Learning Community



Opened in 1954, the school was named after Hywel Elfed Lewis 1860-1953, the renowned bard and scholar who served as Archdruid of the National Eisteddfod of Wales from 1924 to 1928. In 1967 it became a Senior Comprehensive, serving a wide catchment area, including Buckley, Hawarden, Mynydd Isa, Saltney, Caergwrle and Hope. The school became fully comprehensive in 1973.

The school was rated Excellent by Estyn in 2015.



# **2021 Prospectus**

# Contents

5
6
7
12
13
14
15







"Welsh Quality Centre assessors discovered a progressive, encouraging and transparent atmosphere" "Elfed High School aims to support and challenge every student by instilling the values of respect, honesty, integrity, high aspirations and self-belief" "Elfed is a very inclusive school with wellbeing at the heart of all aspects of school life"

# **Welcome to Elfed High School**

# 4

# **Outstanding Learning Community**

We are pleased and proud to welcome you to Elfed High School, where the staff and students are passionate about learning.

Our purpose is to be an Outstanding Learning Community, based on the values of respect, honesty, integrity, high aspirations and self-belief. Elfed High School students take pride in their learning and strive to exceed their previous best.

Elfed High School is a 'highly effective school which is well run, has strong leadership and is clear about the priorities for improvement.' In 2015, Estyn inspectors judged the School as 'excellent' in their inspection.

- The school's current performance is 'excellent'
- The school's prospects for improvement are 'excellent'

These judgements were based on the standards of students' achievement, the provision for learning and the quality of leadership.





As a school community we have high expectations of all our students and we are quick to praise and reward their effort and achievement. We promote a love of learning and provide our students with support and guidance from excellent teachers and pastoral staff. We encourage all students to make the most of learning opportunities in lessons and in wide ranging activities outside the curriculum. They value the high quality of care and guidance they receive and they take pride in our school community.

Like you, we want your child to be happy, safe and successful. We want your child to become an adult of whom you and we are proud. We will work with you to encourage your child to become confident and resilient, with a desire to make the most of life.

Please contact us for more information or call to arrange a visit; you will be most welcome.

# **Purpose and Values**



"I can never thank this school enough for the fantastic opportunities it has given me." FORMER STUDENT



# A Message from the Chair of Governors

# In recent years, Elfed High School has consistently been one of the top performing secondary schools in Wales.

Governing body policies underpin the school's commitment to ensure that every student, regardless of any additional need, enjoys the success they work for and deserve.

In 2016, Elfed High School was presented with the Wales Quality Award. The Elfed High School is only the second school in Wales to have earned this prestigious recognition, placing the school amongst the best organisations in the United Kingdom, not just in education, but in any sector. The Award is a robust test of the commitment of the leadership team and staff to create, manage and maintain a level of excellence that goes far beyond examination success. To have won it after the first assessment is unprecedented and is indicative of the school's strong adherence to the fundamental concepts of excellence over a number of years.

The governing body is, rightly, very proud of the achievements of the staff and students of the Elfed High School, but the stark truth is that we could not get the good student results or aspire to excellence in the future without the strong support of their families and the wider community. We thank you for putting your faith in the school and helping us prepare your child to make the most of their opportunities for success later in life.

Governors welcome you to our school and invite vou to become members of 'Team Elfed' - to be a part of our continuing success story.

# Our Purpose is to be an Outstanding Learning Community

Elfed High School has a high-performance culture where students are supported to achieve a personal standard of excellence.

We are proud of our Welsh identity and celebrate our unique culture, language and traditions whilst preparing students for the world of work in a competitive national and international market.

Our values are the guiding principles and beliefs for everyone in our school community.

### They are:

- respect
- honesty and integrity
- aspiration and self belief



Elfed High School is a mixed comprehensive school maintained by Flintshire County Council. We provide excellent learning opportunities for the whole community of Buckley, including our partner schools: Mountain Lane, Westwood, Southdown and Drury Primary Schools and beyond.

Students can learn in a calm and safe learning environment where everyone is included. They benefit from excellent facilities with modern laboratories, studios and workshops. Our theatre, music suite and drama studio are very well used to develop skills in the Arts. The indoor swimming pool, full sized allweather pitch, gymnasia and sports hall are shared with the Buckley Leisure Centre, providing a wide range of sports activities outside school hours.

"Elfed is a school where everyone, every single pupil, no matter who they are, no matter what their story, is helped and challenged to succeed'.

> HUW LEWIS, FORMER MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS



# Learning

As an 'Outstanding Learning Community', learning is at the heart of everything we do at Elfed High School. We support our students to become ambitious capable learners, enterprising creative contributors, ethical informed citizens and healthy confident individuals.

### Learning in Years 7, 8 and 9

Subjects include: English, Mathematics, Science, Welsh, Art, French, Geography, History, Information Technology, Music, Drama, Religious Studies, Wellbeing, Physical Education, Technology and Personal and Social Education.

### Learning in Years 10 and 11

Individual learning pathways enable everyone to study the subjects they find interesting. Optional subjects include Geography, History, French, Music, Art, ICT, Business Studies, Travel and Tourism, Event Operations, Hospitality, Separate Sciences, Engineering, Drama, Media Studies, Sport, Physical Education, Psychology and Philosophy and Ethics.

We offer bespoke pathways where needed; for example some students will access vocational courses at local colleges.

All students study English Language and English Literature, Mathematics and Mathematics: Numeracy, Science, Welsh, Religious Studies, Skills Challenge Certificate, Wellbeing and Physical Education.



All students have a work placement that helps them to learn about the world of work, with local employers providing some excellent placements.

### **Religious Education and Collective Worship**

Religious Studies are broadly non-denominational and part of the curriculum for all students. Students are involved in daily collective worship, based on a moral or religious theme, including a prayer.

### Health and Wellbeing: Sex and Relationships Education

Learning about sex and relationships is set in the context of social responsibility and personal relationships are discussed in relation to parenthood and family.

# **Elfed Extra**

Elfed Extra is an exciting and significant programme of activities that take place before school, during lunchtime and after school. Some examples of activities include the opportunity to:

Elfed

- play musical instruments, join a band and sing in the choir;
- develop creativity and communication skills through Art and Elfed Youth Theatre;
- take part in a range of sports such as football, dodge ball and gymnastics;
- travel on school visit;
- · help organise charity events;
- learn Mindfulness teachniques.



8







# Students develop their skills using individual programmes

How we learn

in literacy, numeracy and digital competence that unlock their potential across the curriculum. Estyn inspectors were very impressed by our excellent practice developing students' literacy and numeracy skills.

opportunities for everyone to achieve personal excellence. We use Learning Plans to outline the knowledge and skills

Elfed High School is an inclusive school, with

that will be developed in each unit of work.

- We recognise that More Able and Talented (MAT) students thrive on extra challenges and provide extension activities to help them reach the highest levels.
- Students with Additional Learning Needs have the best support to meet their social and learning needs. We overcome barriers to learning by working in partnership with parents and skilled professionals.
- The school building is accessible for all students, staff and visitors. Our additional needs resource supports students who find learning difficult. Please call the school for more information about our bespoke programmes for individual students.

# How we check on progress

We support every student to make the best possible progress and update parents and carers regularly throughout the year.

Each half term, students complete a Quality Marked Assessment (QMA) in each subject. Teachers provide feedback based around the QMA and students are given time to respond to their teacher's feedback to further improve their work.

Teachers monitor attitude and progress towards challenging personal targets. There are regular updates on student wellbeing and a full annual written report on progress and achievement. Families are invited to meet with staff at Progress Evenings and at any other time to suit them.

# Learning

# Developing Students' Skills Across the Curriculum

### Literacy

The development of students' literacy skills is a key focus across Elfed High School, where the National Literacy Framework is embedded across the subjects we deliver in Years 7, 8 and 9. A love of reading is encouraged through access to our well resourced library, which is open to students during break and lunchtime. Students engage in structured time to read during Active Tutorial sessions and participate in the 'Accelerated Reader' programme, which ensures that reading is appropriately challenging for the needs of each individual reader.





Effective speaking and listening skills, and being able to write accurately and extensively, are skills that are developed across all subjects that students study. The key vocabulary that students need to learn and use is outlined in the Learning Plans for each unit of work. We encourage creativity and a love of literature through key events, such as 'Roald Dahl' day and visits from poets such as Levi Tafari and regular writing competitions. The 'Literacy Day' each year further champions the importance of literacy, and provides parents with useful strategies that support the development of literacy skills at home.



### Numeracy

The Mathematics Department at Elfed delivers a well-established Numeracy programme in Years 7, 8 and 9 in which all students are taught to be confident, resilient, ambitious and enterprising mathematicians.

Excellent classroom routines are established and maintained through starter tests, homework booklets and targeted interventions which support student progress and enable consistently above average National Numeracy Test results.

All students in Years 7, 8 and 9 participate in a weekly problem-solving lesson, through which their reasoning skills are developed to provide an excellent foundation for both the GCSE Mathematics and GCSE Numeracy courses. Students who excel at GCSE are rewarded with the further opportunity to sit Additional Mathematics, whilst all students complete a further Level 2 Personal Finance qualification.

Extensive support is offered to students outside of the classroom, including homework club and afterschool revision sessions, as well as preparation for the national UKMT maths challenges and opportunities to represent Elfed in team competitions. Further extracurricular opportunities include our annual PGL Trip, becoming one of our Maths Lead Learners, or through participating in one of our enterprising initiatives such as 'Make £5 Grow'. The annual 'Numeracy Day' provides further opportunities to develop students' numeracy skills, and provides guidance for parents on how numeracy skills can be developed at home.

Students have extensive opportunities to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum, where the National Numeracy Framework is embedded across the subjects we deliver in Years 7, 8 and 9.

# **Digital Competence**

"At Elfed High School, digital technology is used by all staff to embrace 21st century learning, and enable students to develop their own digital competence. The development of digital skills, in line with the new curriculum, and the Digital Competence Framework, is essential to enable students to take full advantage of the opportunities that come their way and for them to succeed in school and beyond."

The Successful Futures report in 2015 recommended

that all learners in Wales experience digital skills within each subject. As a result of this recommendation, the Welsh Government released the Digital Competence Framework. Digital Competence is the set of skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable the confident, creative and critical use of technologies and systems. It should not be confused with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) or Computer Science. Digital Competence is one of three cross-curricular

# "Elfed High School has dramatically improved the way that students can develop their digital skills."



responsibilities, alongside Literacy and Numeracy. It focusses on developing digital skills which can be applied to a wide range of subjects and scenarios that are transferable to the world of work.

There are three dedicated computer rooms with 30 Windows PCs in each, along with a Google Chromebook Suite with 30 Chromebooks and a 75" CleverTouch Interactive screen. These rooms can be booked out by members of staff, who take

into account technological and pedagogical principles, which ensures that they plan how the learners will improve their digital skills before booking the rooms.

Elfed Extra clubs also contribute towards the development of students' digital skills. The ICT department run improvement sessions after school, along with a Coding Club and Cyber Discovery Club during the lunchtime.

All teaching staff at Elfed High School have a Google Chromebook. These are used as teaching and learning tools, and training is given by other teachers who are certified Google Educators.







### **Physical Education**

Elfed High Schools Physical Education Department boasts a wide range of facilities giving our students a broad range of opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity.

The sports hall includes 4 badminton courts, basketball nets and 5-a-side football pitch. Add commas as shown: We have two full size gymnasiums, fully kitted out with equipment for gymnastics, as well as being a multipurpose space for fitness and dodgeball lessons. Each gymnasium has an apple TV mounted on the wall which is used for video analysis and other teaching aids.

Our 25 metre swimming pool is used regularly by Year 7 and 8 for our swimming units of work. A scheme deemed very important to develop water-based life skills. It is also used by our Year 10 and 11 GCSE PE students to complete a unit in Personal Survival as part of the practical element of our course.

Our fitness suite, with rowing machine, treadmill, exercise bike and a variety of free and machine weights, is used during our health and fitness schemes of work in Year 10 and 11, as well as for practical-theory lessons as part of our GCSE PE course. Our outdoor facilities are extensive and consist of 7 grass football pitches, a full size astro-turf with a hockey pitch and three 7-a-side football pitches. Our four recently re-surfaced netball courts and five tennis courts complete the full list of excellent facilities we have here at Elfed High School. Our ethos here in the Physical Education department is 'Effort Determines Outcome'. The notion being that at whatever level you may be in sport, if you are giving your best that is all we can ask. We have developed a culture where it is ok to make mistakes and one where everyone is engaged in learning.

All our extra-curricular sports clubs are inclusive, and students regularly attend before school, at lunch time and after school in a wide range of activities including football, rugby, hockey, netball, dodgeball, gymnastics, cheerleading, badminton, basketball, fitness, athletics, cricket, tennis and rounders. The aim is to provide an atmosphere of enjoyment in order to develop lifelong participants who are educated on the importance of sport and physical activity.

# **Music and Drama**



"At Elfed, we are creating a thriving community of confident, creative musicians. We are proud of the musical achievements of all our students who, through showcasing their talents, take a central role in the public life of the school."

HEAD OF MUSIC.

# Curriculum information:

At Elfed High School, students study both music and drama during one lesson per week in



Years 7, 8 and 9. They have the opportunity to learn a range of instruments in music, develop their confidence as a performer in drama, and attend the many extra-curricular opportunities open to them. Students will learn the skills, knowledge and understanding required to progress to a formal qualification and can also take part in our public performances which take place throughout the academic year.

In Year 10, GCSE Music and GCSE Drama are options for further study - both subjects enabling students to progress into continuing education, in addition to developing essential life skills which many employers appreciate significantly.

We have fantastic resources at Elfed High School which enable students to fully thrive in the performing arts. We have a huge array of musical instruments, composing software and a formal theatre, with lights, sound and set, offering students the experience of professional live performance.

Being part of the music and drama community at Elfed is stimulating, engaging and exciting and these opportunities create memories that last a lifetime. "The drama curriculum at Elfed High School aims to develop students into confident, selfaware individuals. Through experience, creativity and artistic communication, they explore a range of themes and ideas, to become ambitious, capable learners."

> LEARNING DIRECTOR FOR EXPRESSIVE ARTS.



# **Dining and Social Areas**

At Elfed High School, we have an ever-increasing array of social spaces that have become a vibrant heart of the school community.

The Dining area caters for our breakfast club, break and lunch provision, providing an excellent selection of healthy meals and snacks.

We have outdoor dining facilities for all year groups, as well as outdoor sheltered areas which provide protection from the elements.

Our quads provide a social area that students are able to meet with friends. In addition, we have extensive hard-surfaced spaces, playing fields, tennis courts and access to our all-weather pitch.





# **Mindfulness**.b

At Elfed High School our pupils take part in mindfulness lessons, called .b (pronounced 'dot-be'). Mindfulness involves training our attention to experience the present moment with greater curiosity and kindness. This helps us to not only appreciate what is going well but to respond more skillfully to life's inevitable challenges.

A great deal of media coverage has arisen as a result of the growing body of rigorous research evidence regarding the potential benefits of mindfulness. These include randomised control trials and neuroscientific

At its most simple .b is an awarenessraising course to give participants a taste of mindfulness and to provide them with techniques that they can use in everyday situations. studies. As Professor Katherine Weare observed in her awardwinning research summary: Evidence for the Impact of Mindfulness on Children and Young People, schools who engage in mindfulness are likely to see 'beneficial results on the emotional wellbeing, mental health, ability to learn and even the physical health of their students.'

Research conducted with a group of Elfed pupils recently revealed that 100% of participants would recommend .b; additionally the course supported 86% of pupils with dealing with exam stress and improving concentration, 81% of pupils with their relationships, coping with difficulties and being kind to others and 71% of pupils with sleep.



# .b aims to help people:

- To improve their concentration and focus, in classrooms, on the sports field, when playing games, when paying attention and listening to others.
- To fulfil their potential and pursue their own goals e.g. be more creative, more relaxed, both academically and personally.
- To experience greater well-being e.g. feel happier, calmer, more fulfilled.
- To work with difficult mental states such as anxious thoughts and low moods.
- To cope with the everyday stresses and strains of adolescent life such as exams, relationships, sleep problems, family issues.

Should you be interested in reading further about the body of research evidence around the potential benefits of mindfulness, please do have a look at the following document by Professor Katherine Weare: https://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/ uploads/2018/04/Weare-Evidence-ReviewFinal.pdf. Further research studies regarding the benefits of mindfulness for young people can be found on the Mindfulness in Schools Project Website: mindfulnessinschools.org - Research.

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We work hard at Elfed High School to ensure that all teaching and support staff are fully aware of the additional learning needs of all students. We offer a number of bespoke areas to support learning and employ highly skilled staff, able to offer support to children with a range of needs.

We offer classroom support for children with a Statement of Educational Need and

work closely with all external agencies.

Elfed High School benefits from two

full-time Forest School accredited

staff, who offer a rich and bespoke

alternative curriculum to students in all

**ALN Provision** 

**Forest School** 



# **School Youth Worker**

Students at Elfed High School benefit from the support offered by our highly experienced School Youth Worker. Working alongside key staff, the Youth Worker is qualified to offer support to any student in need of additional help. This enhanced support is invaluable to students who may require extra support at significant points in their life.



years. The Forest School programme is well established and offers students opportunities to develop their social, communication and team-work skills, in the safe setting of our own community woods.

# Care



# Elfed High School is a very friendly school with a positive ethos based on understanding, respect and co-operation.

We encourage excellent attendance and punctuality and provide the support needed for outstanding academic progress. Students benefit from the care and attention from their Tutor and Personal Mentor. Pastoral Teams remove any barriers to learning through advice, guidance and by working with parents and carers.

We welcome contact from families. If there are any concerns we want to address them efficiently and quickly. Similarly, if you have any suggestions on how we can improve what we do, we would like to hear about them.

### **Expectations and Rewards**

The Elfed Wellbeing Policy encourages all students to be the best they can be. Teachers look out for opportunities to praise and reward students when they take on new challenges.







"I feel my sons transition from primary to secondary school was handled very well, thus enabling him to settle in very quickly and well."

PARENT PERCEPTION SURVEY





Welcoming new students - 'Smooth Move'

Primary school pupils and families enjoy the Smooth Move to Elfed programme of learning opportunities in the years running up to their change of school.

We keep in touch with primary school teachers so that we really know and understand every child's strengths and any support that may be

needed. We help new students settle in quickly, so that they feel happy and confident and reach their true potential at Elfed High School.

Parents, carers and primary pupils are invited to the Open Day in October, to see the facilities and meet students and staff. New students spend two days in Elfed High School during the last term of Year 6, to get to know one another and for a taste of life in a secondary school.

We try our best to keep friends together when allocating tutor groups, whilst keeping a mix of ability in every class. All new students and parents sign up to the Home School Agreement that sets the standard for us to work together with shared values and expectations. We welcome students from schools other than our local partner schools.

'In year' transfers are made with the support of Flintshire's admissions team. You can contact them on 01352 752121. We are pleased to meet with parents of prospective students at any time to ensure a 'smooth move' for all our students.

Please contact the school on 01244 550217 to arrange an appointment.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to Elfed and found the school to be so warm and accommodating. I left the school feeling really inspired and having learnt a lot."

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS OFFICER FOR CONWY

# **Organisation**

# **Equality and Diversity**

Elfed High School is committed to equality of opportunity for all, regardless of gender, race, age, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, ability or disability.

> We promote attitudes that value diversity and ensure that all aspects of the school's activities encourage positive approaches to the principle of equal opportunities.

A full copy of the School Equality Plan is available on request.

### **Child Protection**

All staff are trained in Child Protection and have a duty to report concerns about the well-being of students.

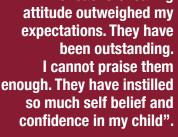
Looked After Children are supported in line with Welsh Government recommendations and the Headteacher is responsible for promoting educational achievement.

### The School Day

The school day is divided into three lessons of 1 hour 40 minutes. Students should be in school by 8.30am.

### **Health and Safety**

Students and staff co-operate to ensure the health and safety of all users of the school site. Students are expected to follow the basic rules that ensure a healthy environment for learning and teaching in school. Parents and carers are asked to support the school by encouraging their child to co-operate in this respect.



"The teachers' caring

PARENT







"Pupils' performance in qualifications including English and Mathematics is outstanding."

ESTYN 2015





### **Concerns and Complaints**

We encourage those who care for our students to raise any concerns they have as soon as possible. If the first response to a concern/complaint is felt to be unsatisfactory, the issue should be put in writing to the Headteacher who will investigate and resolve the complaint. If the complaint remains unresolved, a formal complaint can be made to the Chair of the Governing Body at the school. The school complaints procedure conforms to Welsh Government guidance.

For student concerns we follow Welsh Government and The Wales Children's Commissioner guidance. Students can raise any concerns they have with the School Council, Tutor or mentor. There is a formal process to follow where concerns/complaints are not resolved in the first instance.

### **The School Admissions Policy**

The Admissions Policy is determined by the Local Authority. Normal admission is into Year 7 (students aged 11), but older students are welcomed to the school. They will be guided and mentored to take a full part in all the activities the school offers. Parents and carers who are considering transferring their child to the Elfed should contact the school reception for advice and guidance.

The latest school performance information, attendance figures, calendar, term and holiday dates and student destinations are available from the school office and displayed on the website **www.elfedhs.co.uk** 



# **School Uniform Guide**

# WHITE SCHOOL SHIRT WITH COLLAR AND TOP BUTTON

- · Long or short sleeved shirts will be acceptable.
- The shirt should fasten up all the way to the collar including the top button.
- Rounded or revere collars will not be acceptable.

Shirts available from various retailers

# **MAROON TIE WITH THIN STRIPE**

- I tie at all times
- Pupils must wear a school tie at all times with top button of shirt fastened.

# **NAVY JUMPER WITH SCHOOL LOGO**

- · Pupils must wear a school jumper.
- Permission will be given for pupils to remove jumpers but they must wear a blazer with a shirt and tie.







# RIGHT HAND FASTENING BLAZER WITH GOLD SCHOOL LOGO

- Typically worn by boys.
- Blazers will be compulsory for all pupils.
- · Blazers may be removed with permission from class teacher.





# LEFT HAND FASTENING BLAZER WITH GOLD SCHOOL LOGO

- Typically worn by girls.
- Blazers will be compulsory for all pupils.
- · Blazers may be removed with permission from class teacher.









# TRUTEX CHECK PLEATED GREY SKIRT WITH GOLD LOGO

- Skirt hems should not be worn any higher than 2 inches above the knee.
- · Skirts should not be rolled up at the waist.
- Skirts will be worn with plain black knee high socks or plain black opaque tights.
- Trainer socks or over the knee socks will not be permitted.





# **GREY TROUSERS**

- · Grey trousers only permitted.
- Tracksuit bottoms, jeans, very wide or very narrow legged trousers (skinnies) will not be permitted.
- Low slung trousers will not be accepted.
- Any belts worn with trousers must be plain black.





# **BANNER BERMUDA GREY SHORTS**

- · Grey Banner Bermuda shorts only permitted.
- · Sport shorts etc. will not be permitted.
- · Low slung shorts will not be accepted.
- · Any belts worn with trousers must be plain black.
- · Shorts will be worn with plain short grey socks.
- Trainer socks will not be permitted.

# COATS

- Coats should not be worn in the school buildings.
- Students should remove coats on entering the school building.

# SHOES

Plain black footwear.

# The following will not be permitted;

- Boots.
- Ankle boots.
- Shoes with prominent logos.
- · Jewelled shoes.

# JEWELLERY

# For health and safety reasons:

- Only one pair of earrings will be permitted.
- Only one ring on fingers.
- No bracelets or necklaces may be worn.
- No facial piercings of any kind.
- Spacers will not be permitted.

# STRONG SCHOOL BAG

Fully equipped pencil case with scientific calculator and geometry set.

# FORRESTER SPORTS (01352 756636)

# QUEENSFERRY SPORT (01244 812040)

All clothing and personal items must be marked with the student's name. The school is not responsible for students' personal property.

SUPPLIER









# Elfed High School Mill Lane, Buckley, Flintshire CH7 3HQ

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