

Big plans for a new school



Art lessons at Whitmore High School



Andrew Thompson head teacher at Whitmore High School

This month, reporter SHARON HARRIS visits Whitmore High School

WHITMORE High School is the new mixed-sex secondary school occupying the building which was the all-boys (except for sixth form) Barry Comprehensive School which, itself before that, had been Barry Boys.

But with a new name and intake, new designs and plans are afoot for a complete new build with the aim of a September 2021 start.

Head teacher Andrew Thompson, previously the deputy head teacher, took the helm in September 2018.

Mr Thompson said: "The pupils and staff are involved in the design

SCHOOL OF THE MONTH

with the aim of delivering an outstanding 21st Century school.

"Already many departments have met with the architects for important discussions on how the new building could further support teaching and learning in their

subject.

"There have been many thrilling discussions around possibilities to develop the drama, music, art and ICT areas.

Many exciting additions planned for the new school include a large auditorium, a new canteen, new sport and multi-use games area, fully equipped science laboratories and technological areas, as well as up to date equipment for individual classrooms."

Mr Thompson said the school would deliver an outstanding education for Barry's young people, excelling in academic performance as well as the areas outside the classroom – artistic, sporting and creative development.

It would focus on developing confident and mature individuals who can go on to lead happy, fulfilling and successful lives.

"The school is in the exciting era of establishing new partnership working with many existing and other different links," he said.

"The governing body of the school, and all of its sub-committees, are newly created and keen to support and develop the school.

"Close links have been established with our Primary feeder schools with many pupils and parents being able to visit in our October and July transition days.

"Senior leaders of the school have close working relationships with the schools' advisory service to ensure high standards are maintained.

"Departmental leaders work closely together and with leaders from other schools to make certain learning is at the forefront of the subject.

"The school continues to work closely with its social and support

partners, who help pupils and their families in times of need and the school is proud to be the lead school for Wales in attaining an award for the work done with young carers."

Mr Thompson added: "I have been particularly impressed this year with both the range of extra-curricular opportunities our staff have provided for pupils and the enthusiasm and commitment with which so many pupils have engaged with these.

"Whether it is – to pick just a small selection – the drama club, Mandarin club, art academy, public speaking, or one of the many numerous musical groups and sporting activities, the school seems a hive of activity at all hours of the day.

"It is this richness of pupil development that we are striving for here at Whitmore – to offer opportunities the children cannot access outside of school and which help to shape them into responsible, mature and successful young adults.

"I have also been impressed with the maturity and dedication all the students have shown in opening the new school as a co-ed (mixed) school; the girls who transferred from Bryn Hafren have settled in superbly well, and the boys should be equally congratulated for their mature start to the new school.

"We have many successes to celebrate: great performances and a winning team in the regional English Speaking Union's Public Speaking Competition; Cardiff and Vale Schools Five-a-side Football Champions for both Year 7 boys and Year 9/10 girls; multiple victories in rugby, including two resounding wins away at Millfield School in Somerset (u15s and u16s) and a hard-fought victory



Pupils at Whitmore High School who went to the futures workshop at Bath University

Factfile

School motto:

As a new school, we will be developing this during the year with our new students. It is important to us that our vision for the school is one which all the students share.

Chairwoman of governors:

Mrs Antonia Forte

Head teacher:

Mr Andrew Thompson

Number of pupils:

Around 950 pupils with new applications on a weekly basis.

Age of pupils: 11- 18

Last inspection:

Not yet been inspected

already off to a flying start



Pupils who attended the futures workshop at Bath University. Pictures: christinsleyphotography.co.uk

in the inaugural Year 7 Barry derby against Pencoedre High; school pantomime *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, which showcased the huge talent across the school; an outstanding night of music from 'Year 7 and Friends'; as well as multiple successes for boys and girls – individually and as teams – across the many sporting disciplines.

“A real highlight for me has been seeing the growth in confidence and maturity of the pupils who attend our ‘nurture’ group in the mornings as they settle into high school.”

The new School Parliament has been very active, raising key issues for the school community and pushing forward a new vision of charity for the school.

There have been deliveries of food hampers to local elderly residents, presents for poorly children through the LATCH charity, and the continuation of sixth form links to impoverished communities through its HelpLanka appeals and school trip – all organised by the pupils with invaluable assistance from staff.

The school raised hundreds of pounds for Children In Need in 2018 and school trips and visits have continued to supplement the curriculum, including local visits to Porthkerry park (DT), Vale of Glamorgan archives (history), the Gower Coast (geography), a day encouraging pupils’ development of International Languages at Cardiff City, and its very active Duke Of Edinburgh team.

The school is a hive of creative and academic energy.

There is always plenty of



Chemistry with L-R Rosie Hopkins, Lucey Williams and Ariana Novikova at Whitmore High School

learning to do and plenty to get involved with.

Staff and students work hard and enjoy being in the school.

“Our school fantastic,” Mr Thompson added. “Because of the pupils.

“It is their input and their

enthusiasm for learning which makes the experiences exciting for all.

“Pupils at Whitmore want to do really well at everything they attempt and they do almost everything with a smile on their face.”

Great Savings on Travel Insurance!

- ✓ Pre-existing medical condition cover
- ✓ No upper age limit on all policies
- ✓ £10m medical emergency & repatriation
- ✓ Up to £15,000* cancellation
- ✓ 24 hour medical emergency helpline



Which?
Travel Insurance May 2018



Trustpilot
Over 30,000 5Star Reviews

NEW YEAR SALE!
Ends: 28/02/19

20% OFF[†]
Quote: NQ20

Call **FREE** 7 days a week
0800 088 4822
staysure.co.uk

*Available on Comprehensive policies only, subject to medical screening and not available online. †Discount applies to the base premium of policy and not to any medical screening costs where relevant. Trustpilot rating correct at time of print. Staysure is a trading name of TICORP Limited. Staysure Travel Insurance is arranged by TICORP Limited, registered in Gibraltar company number 111526. TICORP Limited is licensed and regulated by the Gibraltar Financial Services Commission number FSC1238B and trades into the UK on a freedom of services basis, FCA FRN 663617. Staysure Travel Insurance is administered by Howserv Limited which is registered in England and Wales number 03882026. Howserv Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN 599282.