



YSGOL GYMUNED
FERNDALE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL



SCHOOL PROSPECTUS
2016 - 2017

AN OUTSTANDING, DYNAMIC SECTOR LEADING SCHOOL

ENCOURAGE GROWTH THROUGH LEARNING | MEITHRYN TRWY GYFRWNG DYSG

INSPIRE * ENCOURAGE * GROW

TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY

PROSPECTUS 2017 – 2018



Headteacher: Mrs Emma Clarke

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WELCOME FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Thank you for taking the time to read our *School Prospectus* and I hope you find the document informative and useful.

Ferndale Community School is a mixed 11 – 18 record breaking school located at the northern end of the Rhondda Fach valley in the town of Maerdy within the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taff. We have just under 630 students on role and are situated in the heart of our community with an aim to provide the very best standards in teaching and learning for every single one. We provide an excellent learning environment with opportunities, inside and outside the classroom, to allow each student to thrive and succeed.

Whilst ensuring that the school remains happy, caring and inclusive to all we endeavour to set high standards of self-discipline and hard work. Students are stretched and supported academically and are given memorable experiences that excite them about learning for life. Visitors to the school are impressed by our students who are well presented, friendly, welcoming and keen to succeed.

We are committed to a culture of continued improvement and seek to ensure that every child in our care develops the skills that will enable them to be successful in our ever-changing world. One of our fundamental aims is to develop responsible, ambitious students who possess the qualities and qualifications that will equip them for further study or employment.

Here at Ferndale Community School you can rest assured that the entire staff both teaching and non-teaching are committed to ensuring the quality of education given to any individual is of the highest possible standard.

As society and circumstances change the school will develop appropriately. We will always endeavour to meet the needs of the valley we serve and will not only respond to changes from without but will also initiate change from within. Ferndale Community School is well placed to meet such challenges and confidently looks forward to the years ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Emma Clarke

Headteacher

1. School Details/ Manylion Ysgol

Name/Enw:	FERNDALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Address/Cyfeiriad:	Rear of Excelsior Terrace, Maerdy FERNDALE CF43 4AR
Telephone/ Ffon:	(01443) 755337
Facsimile/ Facs:	(01443) 756810
Email/ebost:	admin.ferndalecommunitysch@rctednet.net
Website/gwefan	www.ferndalecommunityschool.com
Follow us on Twitter & facebook:	@ferndalesch

Senior Leadership:

Headteacher:	Mrs E Clarke
Deputy Headteacher:	Mr R Owen
Assistant Headteacher:	Mr I Evans, Mrs C Owen and Mrs S Lake
Business & Facilities Manager:	Mrs M Coburn-Hughes

Chair of Governors: Mr P Jones c/o Ferndale Community School

Details of the full Governing Body are given in the Annual Report to Parents, issued to all parents/guardians of registered students in the Autumn of each year.

A full list of the School Staff is to be found in the School Handbook.

Cluster Schools: Maerdy Primary School
Darran Park Primary School
Penrhys Primary School
Tylorstown Primary School
Pontygwaith Primary School as of September 2018

School Unique Statement

Our mission statement encompasses the ethos and values of the school "Encourage Growth Through Learning / Meithryng Trwy Gyfrwng Dysg"

EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Rhondda Cynon Taff Education Authority

Director of Education
Education and Childrens Services
Ty Trevithick
Abercynon
CF45 4UQ
Telephone: 01443 744000

The LEA publishes a booklet Starting School 'A Guide to Policy and Admission Arrangements' as it is required to do by Section 8 of the Education Act 1980 and the Education (School Information) Regulations 1981, and this is available to all parents/guardians of children in their final term at Primary School, before entering secondary education in the following September.

SCHOOL HOURS AND ENQUIRIES

The morning session is from **8.35 am to 1.15 pm**, and the afternoon session is from **1.50pm to 2.55 pm**. The School Office is open 8 am to 4 pm Monday – Friday during Term time.

When calling at the school all visitors are requested to make their way first to the Reception. At the office you will be asked to sign the visitors book.

DIRECTIONS

Heading West on the M4.

1. At junction 32, take the A470 exit to Cardiff/Caerdydd/Merthyr Tydfil/Merthyr Tudful
2. At the roundabout, exit onto the A470 ramp to Merthyr Tydfil/Merthyr Tudful
3. Merge onto A470
4. Take the A4058 exit toward B4273/Pontypridd/Rhondda Valleys/Ynys-y-bwl
5. At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto A4058
6. Go through 1 roundabout
7. Continue onto Coedcae Rd/B4278
8. Continue onto A4058
9. Continue straight onto A4233
10. Go through 4 roundabouts
11. Turn right onto Strand/A4233
12. Turn left onto North Rd/A4233
13. Continue to follow A4233
14. Turn right into Ferndale Community School

Driving directions to from Merthyr

1. Head west on Bethesda St/A4102 toward Route 8
Continue to follow A4102
2. Go through 1 roundabout
3. At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto A470
4. At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto Heads of the Valleys Rd/A465
5. At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto Merthyr Rd/B4276
Continue to follow B4276
6. Go through 1 roundabout
7. Turn left onto B4275
8. At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto High St/A4233

Continue to follow A4233

9. Slight right onto Victoria Square/A4233
Continue to follow A4233
10. Turn left onto Maerdy Rd/A4233
11. Continue to follow A4233
12. Turn left into Ferndale Community School

THE SCHOOL DAY

The school day comprises of five one hour lessons giving a total of twenty five hours a week. Pupils are expected to be at school by 8.30 a.m. ready for the commencement of the school day at 8.35 a.m. The morning session continues until 1.15 p.m. with a break between 11am and 11.15am. The afternoon session commences at 1.50 p.m. and concludes at 2.55 p.m.

THE SCHOOL YEAR 2017 - 2018

The school year consists of 39 weeks of schooling spread over three terms.

Twenty five hours are spent on teaching during the normal school week, including religious education, but excluding the statutory daily act of collective worship, registration, tutorials and breaks.

A calendar of school activities is outlined in the student planner issued at the start of the school year. The school will close on Monday 7th May 2018 for the May Day Public Holiday

Parents will be informed via the school calendar of the dates for the five INSET days, for teacher training, and on which students are not required to attend.

CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The Education reform Act 1988 has stated in legal terms, and requires, what has for the most part been regular practice at FERNDALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL. The main provision regarding charging policy, in the Act, is that any activity that takes place wholly or mainly in school hours cannot be regarded as an optional extra and, therefore, cannot be charged for. Even where activities take place out of school hours they may not be charged for if they are required as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination. What schools are permitted to do is to ask for voluntary contributions from parents - and this is what we have done. In certain subjects, such as Technology, students are asked to pay a nominal amount towards the cost of materials or to bring the materials themselves. Parents in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit are urged to contact the School if they find any difficulty in making the voluntary contributions, when possible help will be given. We are not permitted to make a charge for trips and excursions, other than for board and lodging expenses, but again we are allowed to ask for voluntary contributions. It is clear, *however, that unless the cost of the visit can be met through such contributions then the visit cannot take place.* Students responsible for deliberate damage to school property will be expected to cover the cost of repair or replacement.

The Fern Partnership

The school is served by The Fern Partnership group and would welcome new members. The Partnership organises fund raising in the main however will be developing in the coming year

to run social events and, when required, informative discussions and talks on matters of particular interest.

The school, the Partnership and the school's Governing Body work together closely to further the education provided at the school and enhance provisions in the community. The Chairperson of the Partnership may be contacted through the school.

2. PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

The school follows encourages parents/carers to contact the school regarding concerns, questions, problems or delights. Parents/Carers may telephone the school at any time during the school hours of 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Initially your call will be taken by a member of the school office and, if it is convenient, your call will be immediately referred to the appropriate member the teaching staff. If this is not possible, an arrangement will be made, or another member of staff will help you should you so wish. The telephone number is 01443 755337. The school e-mail address is admin.fcs@rctednet.net



VISITING THE SCHOOL

Parents/Carers of all prospective students are welcomed to visit the school to see the facilities available and to talk to staff about the curriculum or to raise questions on other topics. Indeed, such visits are encouraged and welcomed.

During the evening set aside for the parents of new entrants (Year 7) students, there will be an opportunity to tour the school and the department and talk to students and to those members of staff most closely involved with Year 7.

STAFF/PARENT MEETINGS

In order that parents/carers may check their child's progress, occasions are set aside during the school year when parents/ carers are invited to meet teachers of the particular year in which their child is being taught. Advance warning is given of these meetings so that arrangements may be made to be at the school at the appropriate time. If at any time there is an urgent enquiry about progress, parents/ carers are requested to contact the appropriate Head of Year.

IF A PARENT IS WORRIED

The school actively encourages strong home - school links and wishes to establish good relations with parents/ carers as these can only be of benefit to the students. Should there be

any concern whatsoever about a student's progress, the school would hope parents/guardians will make direct contact. A concern quickly resolved is clearly more beneficial than allowing worries to build up. Visits to school are welcome at all times; if parents/carers are able to telephone if advance then we can guarantee that the person you wish to see, and can be of most help, together with the information you need, will be made available. For matters of immediate urgency, however, parents should not hesitate to visit the school without an appointment. Every possible help will be given by the most appropriate member of staff available.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Most complaints, or potential complaints, can best be resolved locally, in discussion with the Headteacher or other appropriate members of the school staff. However, should it not be possible to resolve the problem at this level the Headteacher will supply the complainant with copies of all relevant documents explaining the arrangements for considering complaints in this County, and the name of the LEA officer delegated to deal with them. A copy of the policy is also available on the school website.

The officer will do all he can to help you and will ascertain whether the complaint formally has to be dealt with by the Governing Body or by the Local Education Authority. Following a full investigation and consideration by the relevant body, at which all the evidence, written and spoken, will have been examined, the complainant will be notified, in writing, of the outcome and of any action taken or to be taken.

OBTAINING INFORMATION

The Governing Body issues an Annual Report to Parents every Autumn and the school produces a regular Newsletter distributed to the whole of the community. The School Prospectus is issued each year to incoming students. Copies of these publications are issued in accordance with Regulations, where these apply, or to meet the perceived needs of parents/students at different stages of school life. However, should you wish to obtain a copy of a particular publication, please enquire at the school office.

VIEWING SCHOOL RECORDS AND REPORTS

All students in the school have personal record folders which detail progress. These are available for inspection as required, as are all relevant government and LEA statutes and orders. Copies of these are available following a written request in line with the school's policy regarding Freedom of Information Act 2000.

3. ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFERS

WHO TO CONTACT AT THE SCHOOL

Your initial contact will usually be with a member of the school office – the administrative/clerical staff look after all admission formalities, the recording of names, addresses, telephone numbers, emergency contacts and so forth. Specific questions you may have about the curriculum and choice of subjects to be studied will be referred to the

relevant member of the Senior Management team who will provide you with the information you seek.

TRANSFERS AND ADMISSIONS

Students attending the primary schools linked with Ferndale Community School are automatically guaranteed a place on the completion of Year 6. The same applies to students who move into this traditional catchment area. Students who live further a field and wish to be offered a place in this school should contact the Headteacher in advance.

HOW NEW PUPILS ARE WELCOMED

All students due to start their secondary education at Ferndale Community School are involved in an organised induction programme. Parents from the primary feeder schools are invited to attend an open evening in the Autumn term.

Students from our feeder primary and junior schools due to start secondary education in September spend a number of sessions in the Summer Term being shown around the school.

Staff from Ferndale Community School make regular visits to all new entrants in their primary school and speak to their teachers. Students who enter the school at the beginning of a school year spend some time in discussion with teaching staff to ensure their placement in a



particular class enables them to make the best of their opportunities. The school is particularly experienced also in receiving students coming from other schools and at times other than the commencement of the school year.

HOW STUDENTS ARE WELCOMED MID YEAR

Should your son or daughter wish to join the school at other than the beginning of the school year - be assured that the school has much experience in this potentially disruptive effect on the child's continued education. If you wish to discuss this or other matters of concern with a member of the school staff, please telephone for an appointment, having to hand details of age, year-group, and other relevant information. Brochures can be collected or sent, and forms may be filled in pending a visit. Every effort will be made to affect a smooth transfer, and your child will be helped to settle in quickly.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Ferndale Community School cares about achievement and encourages its students to care. We pride ourselves on our ability in meeting the various individual needs of our students. We firmly believe that by getting to know each individual well we are able to make the best provision for their welfare and their progress. A high priority is given to the development of

self-discipline in our students and we have high expectations with regard to their attendance, punctuality, appearance, behaviours and respect for others.

FACILITIES

The school has been extensively modernised and the buildings and the grounds are well maintained. Facilities at the school are excellent with each department housed in its own suite of rooms, giving our students easy access to specialised equipment and resources. The school has a top quality Sports Hall which is also used by the community and extensive playing fields.

Recent developments have been the refurbishment of our Learning Resource Centre, Performing Arts Studio, and additional Information Technology Suites. The school has two distinct toilet areas for both boys and girls in the main and lower school.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING

CURRICULUM POLICY

It is a basic and essential principle that the curriculum of Ferndale Community School in both its contents and its delivery, should reject discrimination against students on grounds of gender, race, religion and colour.



The purposes of learning at school are:

- To help students develop lively, enquiring minds, the ability to question and argue rationally and to apply themselves to tasks and physical skills.
- To help students to acquire knowledge and skills relevant to life and employment in a fast changing world.
- To help students use numbers and language effectively, to instil respect for religious and moral values and tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life.
- To help students to understand the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations.
- To help students to appreciate human achievement and aspirations.

The curriculum will possess the qualities of breadth, balance, relevance and differentiation in order to ensure the opportunity for each student to participate in the main areas of learning and experience. In this way the needs of **all** students will be met.

ORGANISATION OF THE CURRICULUM

KEY STAGE 3

YEAR 7

On entry students are placed into a teaching group based on a variety of data and advice from their primary schools. In Year 7 there are no optional subjects. Students in Year 7 obtain ICT Level 1 qualification.

Subjects taught:

Mathematics, English & Read Write Inc., Science, French, Welsh, Geography, History, Religious Education, Performing Arts, Art, Technology, Information Technology, Physical Education and Personal, Social and Health Education.



YEARS 8 and 9

The common core curriculum of Year 7 is maintained. Students will be organised into teaching groups based on a number of criteria. In Year 8 students will complete the Essential Skills Wales Level 1 in Communication qualification and in Year 9 Level 1 or 2 in Application of Number.

By the end of Key Stage 3 all students will have 3 Essential Skills Wales qualifications. Changes may need to be made in the organisation of the curriculum for any of the groups during the currency of this prospectus. Parents will be advised of any changes well in advance.

KEY STAGE 4

YEARS 10 and 11

For these two years the students take a common core of Mathematics, English, Science, Welsh, PE/Games, PSE, Religious Studies, Careers, IT, and the Welsh Baccaulaureate

Subjects taught:

English Language, English literature, Mathematics, Core Science, Additional Science, Art, Cache Care, D&T Catering, D&T Resistant Materials, BTEC Construction, Engineering, BTEC Engineering, Essential Key Skills, French, Geography, BTEC Health and Social Care, History, Hospitality, ICT, CIDA, Music, Performing Arts Performance, Performing Arts Production, Physical Education, Religious Step Up, Sport, Studies, Welsh, Vehicle Maintenance, Welsh Baccaulaureate and wider Key Skills. All subjects lead to either GCSE, BTEC or other nationally recognised qualifications.

All subjects lead to either GCSE, BTEC or other nationally recognised qualifications.



SIXTH FORM

Due to the re-organisation of Rhondda schools from September 2018 we will be operating as a 11-16 school, post 16 students will travel to college or neighboring schools. Due to this, as of September 2017 no further intake will be enrolled into VI Form at Ferndale and alternative pathways have been established to allow pupil's to continue their educational, cultural and social development at Post 16.

Year 13 Pupils will continue their education following both school and consortium arrangements and have access to a wide range of courses to support them fulfil their potential.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Special Needs Department caters for students who have Physical Disabilities as well as those who have learning difficulties and need extra help with reading, written work and mathematics.

Mrs Parry, the school's special educational need co-ordinator, is responsible for the day to day management of students with special needs, liaising with and advising fellow teachers and keeping a register of all students with special needs.

All students identified as having a special educational need are assessed and placed on individual education plans. Their progress is carefully monitored and reviewed at least termly. Students with physical disabilities are placed in forms according to their academic ability. There are facilities in the school to ensure that their personal needs are met. The school site is accessible to wheelchair users.

A close working relationship with parents is encouraged through regular parents meetings and annual reviews. Whenever parents express concern about their child's progress or any other problems, they are welcomed into school for discussions with the relevant members of staff, or, where necessary, specialist support staff.

The school has strong links with external specialist services, including the psychological service, health and social services, physiotherapists and peripatetic teachers, such as teachers of the hearing impaired.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The National Assembly requires that Religious Education be provided for all students and it is thus part of the basic curriculum but not in the National Curriculum. In this, School Religious Education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. All KS4 students complete a GCSE in Religious Studies.

In Ferndale Community School all students have assembly at least one day per week and a collective worship in the remaining form periods. The new element that the 'ERA' introduces is that worship must be wholly defined as meaning that it should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive or any other denomination.

WITHDRAWAL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

If, on religious grounds, parents should wish to withdraw their children from collective worship and / or Religious Education classes, they should make a formal **written** request to the Headteacher to that effect.

MORAL STUDIES AND SEX EDUCATION

In consultation with the LEA and the Governing Body a programme has been drawn up to make students aware of the nature of society and the importance of an accepted moral code. Sex Education is not taught as a subject in its own right, but it is delivered as a cross curricular package of Personal, Social and Health Education. If parents wish to withdraw their child from the sex education programme they are asked to make a formal **written** request to the Head teacher to discuss this matter before taking this decision.

LANGUAGES AND THE WELSH MEDIUM

All students have the opportunity to study Welsh and French up to 'A' level. All students will study Welsh as a second language up to the end of Key Stage 4. Welsh is used as a medium of instruction, the intensity depending on the age/ability ranges of the students.



CAREERS ADVICE

Careers advice is given to the student from Year 9 by a team of staff, assisted by the Careers Advisory Service whose officers are always available to advise parents and students. There is a programme of films, slides, video tapes, lectures and visits to various commercial organisation and industry. The Careers Room is based in the Lower School,

containing a comprehensive range of careers literature which is available to student at all times. All students in Years 10, 11, 12, and 13 have an interview with the local careers officer and will undertake 'Work Experience'. Year 11 and 12 have a mock interview exercise with professional interviewers. This is considered an essential aspect of a child's education. A careers officer is present at Years 10 and 11 parents evenings. Parents seeking advice should contact the school. The school has been awarded the Careers Quality Kite Mark Award.

STUDENT PROGRESSION

Through the individual guidance and support that each student receives whilst at Ferndale Community School we hope that they are adequately prepared for the future.

SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The school has wide a range sporting facilities at the school. These include a large indoor multipurpose playing surface, tennis courts, rugby field, basketball court, gymnasium/ sports hall and a swimming pool. All students have the opportunity to take part in PE and Games, and to use the swimming pool. Sports in which the school competes against other schools include Rugby, Netball, Soccer, Hockey, Cricket, Basketball, Athletics, Swimming, Tennis and Cross Country Running.

Exemption from the Physical Education programme is only granted after a parental request **in writing**. A medical certificate is required by the school if exemption is requested for a considerable period.



YOUTH AND PARTICIPATION SERVICE

Our academic curriculum is enriched by a variety of additional activities. There are regular educational visits both at home and overseas that enhance individual development. Recent trips have been to Hollywood in LA, New York and Skiing trips to name a few. Activities in the sporting and cultural areas are plentiful with students performing at the very highest level. The creation of these opportunities ensures a rich and varied educational provision for all.

The school offers a programme of activities that allows the young people of our community to try different activities and have new experiences, broaden their horizons and acquire new skills and qualifications. The participation programme runs throughout the year. Further information will be provided at the start of each term to all students.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

During five years compulsory secondary schooling a number of choices has to be made by each student. At the end of five years the choice, of course, is whether to stay on at school in the sixth form, or leave.

Those intending to leave receive detailed advice from the School Careers Guidance staff and the LEA's Careers Advisory Officers, who visit the school, to discuss full time courses at further education colleges and other forms of training and education, as well as about employment opportunities.

For those planning to remain at school there are different ways of continuing studies, which are discussed in detail with individual pupils during their time in Year 11, and subsequently. The school staff are keen to help all students reach their full potential in achieving their personal goals, and will try to ensure personal preferences are met. Students and parents are

encouraged to enter into full discussions with members of the school staff well before the time comes to move into the senior school.

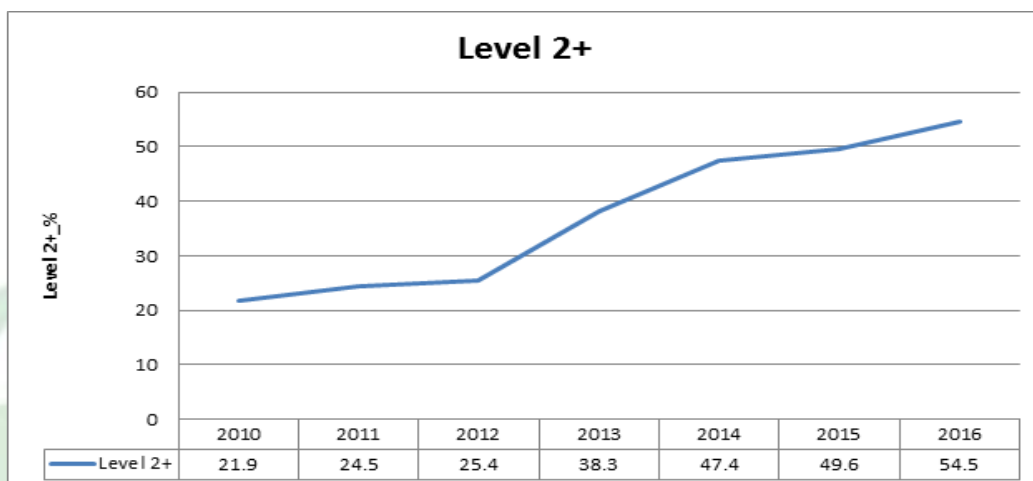
PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Very few students leave Ferndale Community School without any formal qualifications, and all are given the opportunity to obtain nationally accredited qualifications. Most students



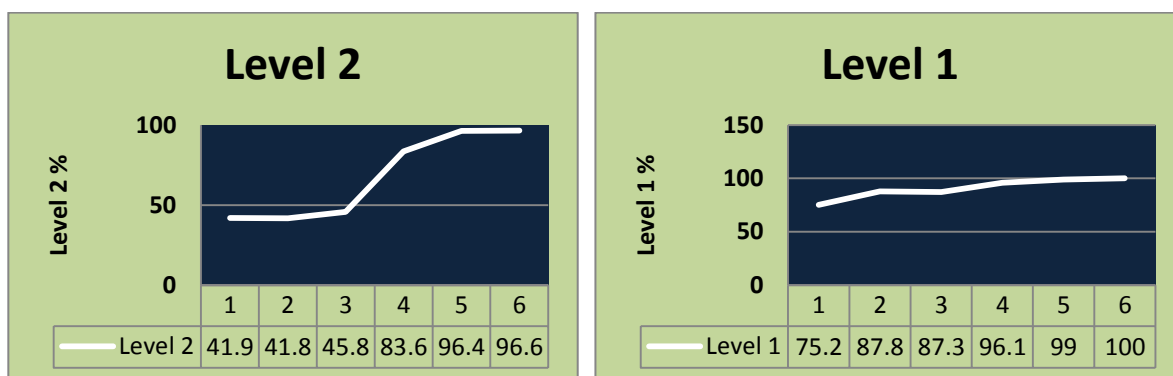
take GCSE examinations and, where there is a choice regarding the level of difficulty of different papers, parents are involved in the final decision of entry. The school's GCSE, AS, A and Vocational results and comparative information for the whole of Wales are included in the appendix.

In 2013 the school achieved Band One status and have continued to improve year on year and as of 2017 became a 'green school' in the schools categorisation.



The continued success and the accomplishments of the students is a result of the dedication, hard work and talent of the staff and students coupled with the support received from the community and governors. The three year average puts Ferndale at the top of RCT in regard to added value to the of which sets Ferndale in top quarter of schools in Wales for every measure.

Over a four year period Level 2+ at the school has more than doubled and an outstanding 96% was maintained for Level 2. In addition to this 100% of students achieved 5 or more a Level 1 qualification for the third year running. Every pupil leaves the school with at least 5 recognised and valuable qualifications.



NATIONAL CURRICULUM TARGETS

Each National Curriculum subject has its own set of challenging targets to suit all ages and abilities. Each target covers eight steps or levels of attainment, for five to sixteen year olds. Most students making steady progress will move to a new level of attainment every two years or so, commencing with Level 1 at the age of five to six, with an average sixteen year old reaching Level 7 by the end of KS4. Only the most able students will reach Level 8, which is more demanding than the current Grade A in the GCSE. It is unlikely that any student will be at the same level across all targets in all subjects, and some students will move up the levels faster than the others.

5. PASTORAL CARE AND DISCIPLINE

PASTORAL ORGANISATION

The pastoral organisation of the school has been established on a 'horizontal' basis, meaning that the school is sub-divided into year groups of students of approximately the same age. On entering the school a student is placed into a form group of approximately twenty eight students. A great deal of importance is placed upon the role of form tutor, (responsible for registration, among other things), who will be able to help, advise and, where necessary, indicate where improvement is required.

Having responsibility over a whole year group are the Heads of Year. They are concerned with the well-being of students in the year group and keep a watching brief over both academic and social development. The Heads of Year are supported by the Attendance and Wellbeing Officer a member of non-teaching support. Students who are not progressing as well as they should be, again both academically and socially, will be referred to the Head

of Year tutor by the form tutor. To reinforce and coordinate the work of form tutors and Heads of Year there are Senior Managers responsibility for each Key Stage.



CLOTHES AND GENERAL APPEARANCE

The school has a policy requiring all students to wear uniform. Details of the clothing are given in full in the School Handbooks and pupil planners. **Students must conform with the requirements** for general appearance, which includes the forbidding of eccentric styled haircuts and hairstyles. Hair colour must be restricted to natural colour ranges. The rules regarding appearance, including school clothing, have been drawn up with the safety and welfare of all students and staff in mind and to enable the school to maintain a respectable image in the community. Strict sanctions will be imposed on students who break the rules. Students are not permitted to

wear training shoes for general school wear and any doing so will be provided with black daps or may be sent home to change. The requirement for topcoats is that they must not advertise tobacco, alcohol, advocate drug culture or promote any other cults.

PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONTACTS

Effective partnerships are at the core of our work. The quality of relationships is central to an individual's development and the vital partnership between the home and our school is fostered and encouraged throughout a student's time at Ferndale. Our school is firmly embedded in and committed to the local community and we actively seek opportunities to engage with all sections, since links between all appropriate parties are regarded as essential.

Regular links are maintained with the various agencies that the school comes into contact with such as Eye to Eye, Youth Counselling Service and Communities First.

BEHAVIOUR

Good behaviour and effective learning go together. Just as we teach and model effective learning in the subjects of the curriculum it is essential that we model and teach the excellent behaviour for learning we expect our students to display.

The behaviour for Learning Policy provides a clear set of expectations for those who belong to our school community and a framework for consequences and rewards.

All students are valued equally whatever their personal circumstances. All relationships within the school community should be founded on mutual respect and high self-esteem.

HEALTH CARE STAFF

The school has access to a fully trained nurse which is timetabled during the week and a counsellor who will be pleased to be advised of, or be consulted on, any health problem

regarding your son or daughter, in relation to school activities. Should you wish to seek such advice, or to make a particular request, please contact the school nurse or school counsellor

HEALTH AND WELFARE

The school will endeavour to cope with any ailments that may crop up during school hours. However, it goes without saying, that children who are clearly unwell in the morning should be kept at home rather than be sent to school or treated with relevant medication such as paracetamol in order to attend without compromising their Health and Safety.

Students who are taken ill at school, or who have an accident, will only be transported home in an emergency. Wherever possible, the parents will be contacted and be asked to collect the child.

ATTENDANCE

The school does everything in its power to ensure that all students attend school as regularly as possible. Attendance letters are regularly sent to students with the best attendance or the most improved attendance. The Heads of Year and Assistant Headteacher liaise with the Education Welfare Officer, who will then contact the parents of those children whose attendance is causing concern. If necessary, the Education Welfare Officer will visit the home. It is essential that if a student is absent the parent/guardian contacts the school as soon as possible, to inform us of the reason for the absence. A note of explanation is also required when the student returns to school. Parents wishing to take their children on holidays during term time must seek permission off the school. A maximum of 10 school days may be granted in an academic year.

Targets

Through inspection of RCT schools since 2010, Estyn have reported attendance being significantly below the Welsh average. The "Information from Statistics for Wales First Release" reported the Welsh average to be at 91.1% for Secondary and 93.1% for Primary schools.

LA set attendance targets for schools, which are reported in each "Half Termly Attendance Monitoring Report". We have made significant progress in attendance and have superseded our annual targets for the past 5 years.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Attendance Target</u>	<u>Actual</u>
2011-12	88%	88.08%
2012-13	89%	90.36%
2013-14	90%	90.4%
2014-15	91%	91.6%
2015-16	92.9	91.9%
2016-17	93.2%	93.2%
2017-18	93.2%	

The school "Strategic Attendance Plan" indicates annual improvements year on year up to the current year of 2017. We envisage continuation of this improvement however at a reduced pace over the coming years. The plan also details targets for reducing authorised and unauthorised absences by 1% each year, along with reducing lateness to lessons.

THE FERN PARTNERSHIP

The Fern Partnership is registered charity who work in partnership with Ferndale Community School under a Service Level Agreement. The objectives and ethos of the trust is to *advance the education of the pupils and enhance provision in the wider community by working in partnership with trustees, staff, governors and members of our community.*

To date the Partnership employ over twenty staff of which some are school based and others based in the heart of the community. As part of the charities portfolio they manage and run two crèche Flying Start facilities, one in Maerdy and one in Cwmparc and also manage the local community Library.

There is likely to be further exciting and innovative opportunities developing in the future and we look forward to enhancing the service we provide to the pupils and the community.

