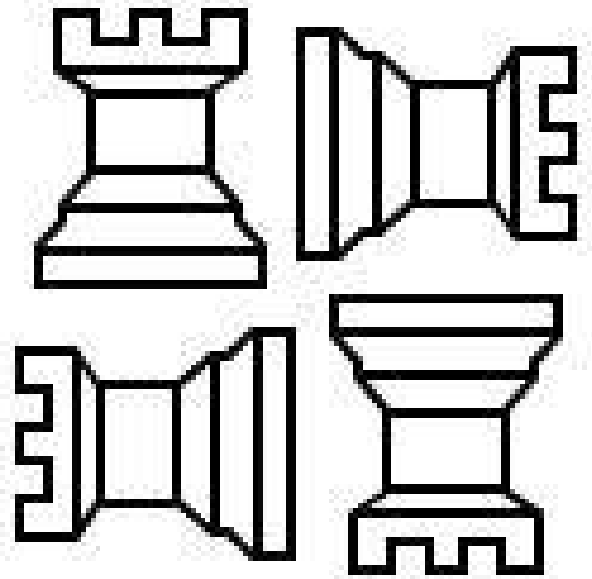
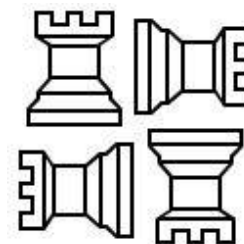


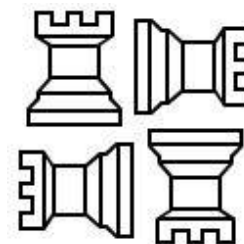
# Ysgol Branas School Annual Report 2019- 2020





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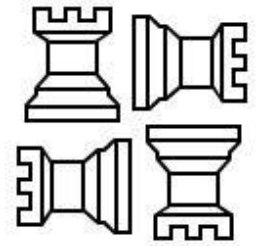


## SCHOOL DETAILS

**Name:** Branas School  
**Address:** Branas Isaf  
Llandrillo  
Corwen  
LL21 0TA  
**Telephone:** (01490) 440545  
**Email:** mary.hughes@branas.co.uk  
**Headteacher:** Mary Hughes MA (Ed) BSc (Hons) PGCE MRSC

## PROPRIETOR DETAILS

**Name:** Lee Jones  
**Address:** CareTech Community Services  
5th Floor  
Metropolitan House  
3 Darkes Lane  
Potters Bar EN6 1AG  
**Telephone:** 01707 601 800  
**Email:** lee.jones@caretech-uk.com



## About the school

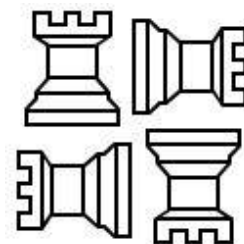
The School supports the following mission statement:

*“We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that nurtures mutual respect and encourages reflection so that our learners develop the knowledge skills and confidence to enable them to achieve their potential in all aspects of their lives.”*

### Our Values:

- **Aspiration** : We encourage each other to be the best we can be
- **Curiosity**: We never stop learning and wondering about the world
- **Independence**: We think for ourselves and determine our own future
- **Innovation**: We look for new and creative solutions to problems
- **Reflection**: We learn from our experiences
- **Tolerance**: We value difference and respect other people’s opinions
- **Trust**: We believe in the honesty and reliability of others
- 





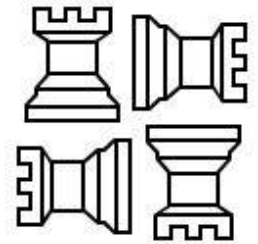
## Our Aims:

- All learners will undergo an initial 6-week assessment in order for us to fully understand them and their needs for effective learning;
- Everyone in Branas Isaf supports and challenges learners to invest in education as a priority for a successful placement;
- All learners are supported and challenged to achieve at least 95% attendance in school;
- All learners are supported and challenged to engage in creative learning experiences appropriate to their needs, and supported by an accurate individual learning plan;
- All learners are supported and challenged to achieve nationally recognised academic awards in core subjects;
- All learners are supported and challenged to achieve accreditation in a wide range of subject areas ;
- All learners are supported and challenged to become independent learners;
- All learners learn how to keep themselves safe, and build positive relationships with those around them;
- All learners are enabled to take part in decisions that shape their lives, the school and the community in which they live;
- All learners are supported to demonstrate the behaviours needed to stretch themselves and cope with the challenges of learning;
- All learners are enabled to attend and participate in regular therapy sessions;
- All learners learn strategies to manage their feelings and know where to go for help when things are difficult;
- All learners will have the opportunity to participate in work experience and work related learning opportunities;
- All our learners learn the skills to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts;
- All our learners learn the skills to use digital technologies creatively and safely in preparation for the world in which they will live;
- All learners are supported and challenged to lead healthy, active lifestyles and be prepared to make a positive contribution to society as adults.

## Our Learners

All young people in Branas School have a history of harmful behaviours and social, emotional and mental health needs often accompanied by a range of additional learning needs.

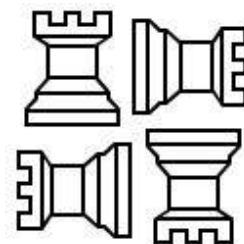
Most of the learners have had interrupted histories in education and care. There are a wide variety of attainments on admission. All have fragile self-esteem and demonstrate difficulties with authority and a lack of trust in adults. Many have experienced loss and trauma, leading to attachment difficulties. As a result,



many experience difficulties in forming and maintaining appropriate, positive relationships with others and have a limited ability to work cooperatively.

Learners are:

- aged 11 to 18;
- boys only;
- placed within the residential setting of Branas Isaf;
- residents from placing authorities throughout the United Kingdom;
- all present a range of harmful behaviours;
- most are in receipt of an EHC plan or a Statement of SEN.



## Inspection information

Branas School had an Annual Monitoring Inspection from Estyn, on behalf of the Welsh Government, in November 2019. Prior to this, the last inspection was in November 2018. The strengths identified during this inspection were:

### **Strengths**

*“The school has recently had a significant turnover of learners, amounting to almost half of the learners on roll. Since then, staff have been undertaking initial assessments to ensure that planning meets the needs of the new learners appropriately. They have prepared suitable individual plans for all learners and begun to measure progress made against the initial set targets.*

*Recent changes to the senior leadership team have improved its capacity to plan and monitor the success of the school, although it is too early to measure the impact on learners’ standards and teaching.*

*The headteacher has undertaken a comprehensive self-evaluation of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. She has a clear view of the areas in need of improvement. However, actions to make the changes needed have been slow to progress, mostly due to the recent significant change of learners on roll.*

*The school has improved the opportunities for learners to gain accreditation for their learning. As a result, most learners at key stage 4 gain a wide range of suitable accreditation for their achievements, including GCSEs in the core subjects of English and mathematics.*

*The school’s classrooms and outdoor areas across two sites are resourced appropriately, and they support learners’ learning well. Staff have a sound understanding of learners’ social and emotional needs and provide suitable opportunities for learners to develop their personal and social skills through a wide range of educational activities, including outdoor education and vocational courses.*

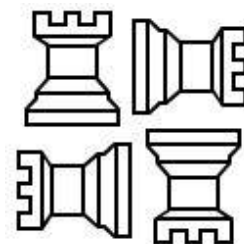
*The school provides an appropriate range of learning experiences for learners in key stage 3 and key stage 4”.*

There were several areas of improvement identified and five recommendations were left:

### **Areas for development**

*“The recent significant turnover of learners at the school has required leaders to focus their priorities on assessing needs and making suitable provision. However, leaders have been slow to address the recommendations made at the last annual monitoring visit.*

*Teaching does not consistently take enough account of learners’ emotional wellbeing. It is not sufficiently flexible to engage and motivate learners, particularly when they experience periods of anxiety. For example,*



*learners do not have individualised learning activities, off-site where appropriate, to support their emotional wellbeing better.*

*Teachers' planning to improve opportunities for learners to develop their skills across the curriculum is developing. Despite this, learners do not practise and develop their skills well enough across the curriculum, including in vocational, enrichment and outdoor pursuits.*

*The school monitors learners' progress in relation to their behavioural targets. Leaders regularly analyse data to check for patterns of behaviour. However, they do not use this data well enough to plan appropriate strategies for improvements. As a result, the behaviour of a very few learners, especially when experiencing periods of anxiety, disrupts the learning of their peers.*

*Learners are not regularly punctual to start lessons. This includes arriving to school in good time. As a result, valuable learning time is wasted.*

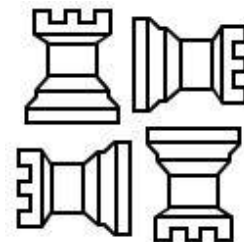
*The school does not have permission of the Welsh Government to use part of its site."*

## **Recommendations**

The school should:

- R1. Ensure that teachers use information on learners' ability and emotional wellbeing when planning lessons
- R2. Improve the assessment of learners' skills and ensure that planning enables them to develop and practise these skills across the curriculum, including vocational, enrichment and outdoor activities
- R3. Ensure that data on learners' behaviour is used effectively to plan learning experiences that motivate and engage learners
- R4. Ensure that learners arrive to lessons on time
- R5. Apply to the Welsh Government for a material change to the registration of the school





## Progress since last inspection

### **Recommendation 1: Ensure that teachers use information on learners' ability and progress when planning lessons to meet learners' learning needs**

*"The new SLT is in the early stages of developing improved processes for quality assuring the work of the school. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the new arrangements on teachers' planning."*

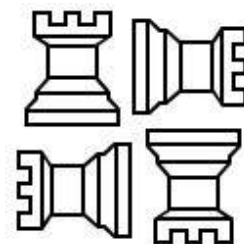
### **Recommendation 2: Further strengthen the provision for learners to develop their skills across the curriculum, including in vocational, enrichment and outdoor activities**

*"The new SLT is in the early stages of developing improved processes for quality assuring the work of the school. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the new arrangements."*

Until the monitoring visit, the Headteacher and Head of Education were unaware that there had not been a material change request to include the use of Unit 18, Ty'n Lliidiart Industrial Estate, Corwen. This unit has been used in the service for some years and was mentioned on several inspection reports; however, it had not formally been approved.

A material change request was made in November 2019, with the inspection visit taking place early December. Some electrical work was required which held up the approval, but the material change was granted in June 2020.

The school now meets all the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003



## Admissions

Branas School is approved to offer places for 25 learners, but the places in school are limited by the places available in the feeder homes. Branas School has supported the learners who are at college within the service and has offered a bespoke programme of education for a 17-year-old pupil.

On the last day of the summer term, the admissions register showed that the school had 20 learners. The cohort composed:

- Year 6 – 1 pupil (this pupil was 11 and attended school from Easter 2020)
- Year 7 – 1 pupil
- Year 8 – 1 pupil
- Year 9 – 3 learners
- Year 10 – 4 learners
- Year 11 – 9 learners (2 with a planned repeat of the year in 2020-2021)
- Year 12 – 1 pupil

The learners are all in the care of their local authority and live in residential care within Branas Isaf. The local authorities placing the learners during the 2019-2020 academic year were: Blackburn with Darwen , Blackpool, Bristol, Caerphilly, Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Gwynedd, Hampshire, Knowsley ,Lincolnshire, Oldham, Reading, Rochdale, Shropshire, Somerset, Southampton, Staffordshire, Tameside, Telford & Wrekin, Torbay, Warrington and Worcestershire.

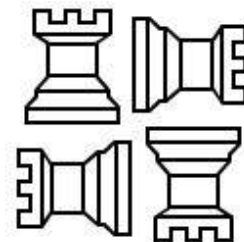
12 of the learners are accommodated under a Section 31 Full care order, 2 learners are accommodated under Section 76 and 5 learners are accommodated under Section 20. One pupil was on an interim care order.

Of the 20 learners on role at the end of term, 5 learners did not have an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN.

Of these, 2 learners were awaiting the production of the EHCP after an assessment was accepted by their local authority. One other pupil is in the process of information gathering for an assessment.

As a result, 85% Of the learners at Branas School have a documented Special Educational Need.

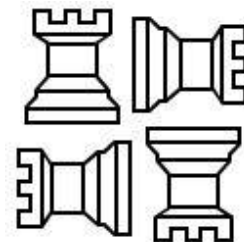
Learners without an EHC Plan or Statement were designated as School Action Plus because of their SEMH needs and all learners had regular Individual Education Plans and monitoring of provision and outcomes



## Attendance

Branas School prides itself on its attendance, being a testimony to good partnerships with home and providing a motivating and engaging education for the learners.

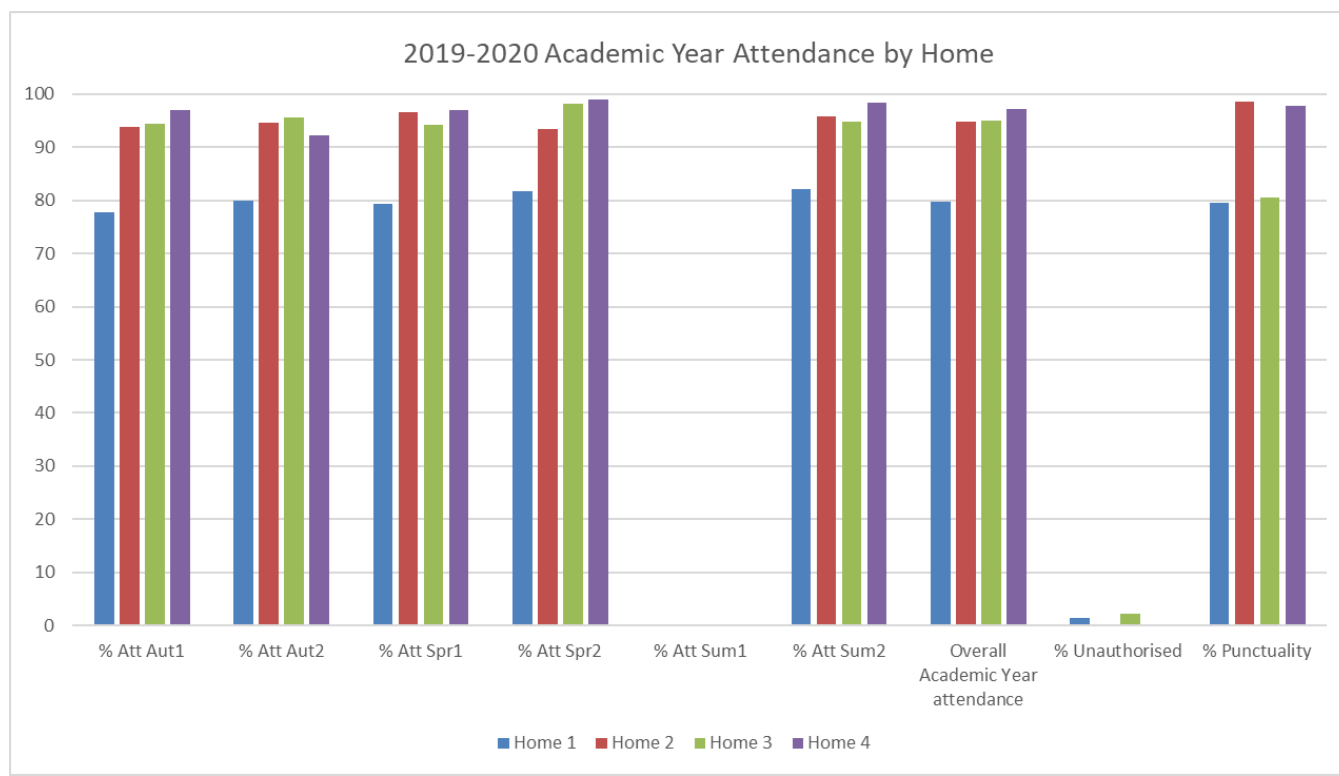
ID	Admission Date	Leaving Date	Destination	% Attendance	% Unauthorised Absence	% Late
Learner 1	01/09/2016	24/07/2020	Post-16 Placement	98.5	0.0	1.1
Learner 2	01/09/2016	24/07/2020	Post-16 Placement	95.2	0.0	1.1
Learner 3	20/01/2017	24/07/2020	Post-16 Placement	74.4	23.7	14.2
Learner 4	07/03/2018	06/12/2019	Returned to the Home Authority	97.5	0.0	5.7
Learner 5	10/04/2018			96.1	0.0	2.5
Learner 6	02/07/2018			100.0	0.0	2.9
Learner 7	05/09/2018			99.3	0.0	17.3
Learner 8	05/09/2018	24/07/2020	Post-16 Placement	91.6	2.5	3.3
Learner 9	16/01/2019	12/02/2020	Returned to the Home Authority	94.9	0.0	8.2
Learner 10	29/04/2019			96.8	0.0	0.7
Learner 11	3/6/2019			94.6	3.6	7.2
Learner 12	21/6/2019	24/07/2020	Post-16 Placement	98.1	0.4	1.1
Learner 13	4/9/2019			96.8	0.0	20.1
Learner 14	4/9/2019	24/07/2020	Returned to the Home Authority	92.0	0.0	5.4
Learner 15	4/9/2019			86.7	9.0	20.4
Learner 16	20/09/2019	24/07/2020	Post-16 Placement	90.8	0.8	2.1
Learner 17	07/10/2019			97.0	2.2	9.9
Learner 18	21/10/2019	24/07/2020		97.4	0.0	15.9
Learner 19	7/1/2020			97.8	0.0	0.0
Learner 20	24/02/2020	08/08/2020	Deceased	100.0	0.0	0.0
Learner 21	20/04/2020			100.0	0.0	0.0
Learner 22	20/04/2020			100.0	0.0	0.0

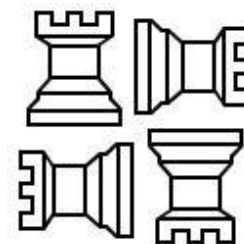


Considering the very special needs of the learners, Branas School is very pleased with the attendance figures. One learner showed persistent attendance issues, which affected the overall statistics of the school, taking the school attendance to 94.7% for the academic year. Without this learner, the school had an attendance of 95.6%.

Branas School works closely with the Care Homes to support the needs of the learners, and regular feedback is given to the Registered Managers relating to attendance and punctuality. This integrated working generally results in improvements to attendance throughout the year and ensures that any learners who are having attendance issues have their learning supported by the school within the home.

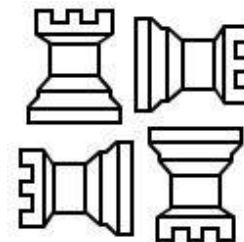
It should be noted that there was no recorded attendance during Summer 1 half term as the school was operating an alternative programme of education during the Covid-19 programme. During this time, all learners were provided with a full time package of education, spread between home and school.





## Attainment - 2019-2020 Results (Year 11 only\*)

	Subject & Level	Grade
Candidate 1	33 X AQA UNIT AWARDS ENTRY LEVEL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ENTRY LEVEL PSE AWARD ENTRY LEVEL SCIENCE FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 ENGLISH FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 2 MATHEMATICS GCSE APPLIED SCIENCE GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE ENGLISH (Spoken Language Endorsement) GCSE SC RELIGIOUS STUDIES JOHN MUIR DISCOVERY AWARD	Pass Entry 3 Entry 3 Entry 3 Pass Pass C 4 (four) Pass E Pass
Candidate 2	24 X AQA UNIT AWARDS ENTRY LEVEL ENGLISH ENTRY LEVEL PSE AWARD ENTRY LEVEL SCIENCE FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 ENGLISH ENTRY LEVEL MATHEMATICS GCSE APPLIED SCIENCE LESSONS IN FINANCIAL EDUCATION AWARD LADDER SAFETY LEVEL 1 WORKING AT HEIGHT LEVEL 1 WORKPLACE FIRST AID LEVEL 1	Pass Entry 1 Entry 3 Entry 3 Pass Entry 2 E Level 1 Pass Pass Pass
Candidate 3	25 X AQA UNIT AWARDS GCSE SC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PSE AWARD ENTRY LEVEL SCIENCE GCSE APPLIED SCIENCE GCSE JAPANESE GCSE SC RELIGIOUS STUDIES JOHN MUIR DISCOVERY AWARD	Pass C Level 2 Entry 3 A 8 (eight) 8 (eight) Pass
Candidate 4	28 X AQA UNIT AWARDS ENTRY LEVEL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PSE AWARD ENTRY LEVEL SCIENCE FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 ENGLISH FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 MATHEMATICS GCSE APPLIED SCIENCE GCSE SC RELIGIOUS STUDIES JOHN MUIR DISCOVERY AWARD	Pass Entry 3 Level 1 Entry 3 Pass Pass C E Pass

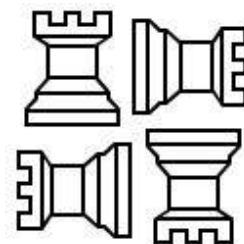


Candidate 5	23 X AQA UNIT AWARDS ENTRY LEVEL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PSE AWARD GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE ENGLISH (Spoken Language Endorsement) ENTRY LEVEL SCIENCE FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 ENGLISH FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 2 MATHEMATICS LEVEL 2 FOOD HYGIENE AWARD LEVEL 3 FOOD HYGIENE AWARD JOHN MUIR DISCOVERY AWARD	Pass Entry 3 Entry 3 2 (two) Pass Entry 3 Pass Pass Pass Pass Pass
Candidate 6	30 X AQA UNIT AWARDS ENTRY LEVEL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PSE AWARD GCSE APPLIED SCIENCE GCSE SC RELIGIOUS STUDIES FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 ENGLISH FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 MATHEMATICS ENTRY LEVEL MATHS ENTRY LEVEL SCIENCE JOHN MUIR DISCOVERY AWARD	Pass Entry 3 Level 1 D D Pass Pass Entry 3 Entry 3 Pass
Candidate 7	22 X AQA UNIT AWARDS ENTRY LEVEL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PSE AWARD GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE ENGLISH (Spoken Language Endorsement) GCSE MATHEMATICS GCSE APPLIED SCIENCE GCSE SC RELIGIOUS STUDIES ENTRY LEVEL SCIENCE FUNCTIONAL SKILLS LEVEL 1 ENGLISH JOHN MUIR DISCOVERY AWARD	Pass Entry 3 Level 1 2 (two) Pass 4 (four) C U Entry 3 Pass Pass

\* 2 Learners did not take their examinations at the end of Year 11, but have planned to remain at Branas School to develop their skills.

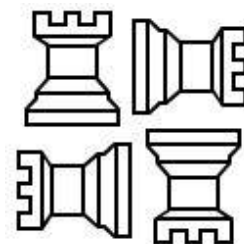
**In addition, the Y7-10 Learners gained the following qualifications:**

- OCR Information Technology , Entry Level 3 – 5 Learners
- AQA Functional Skills Mathematics, Level 1 – 2 Learners



- AQA Maths, Entry Level 2 – 1 Learners
- AQA Maths, Entry Level 3 – 3 pupil
- AQA Step up to English, Entry Level 2 – 1 Learners
- AQA Step up to English, Entry Level 3 – 8 Learners
- AQA Personal & Social Education, Entry Level 2 – 6 Learners
- AQA Personal & Social Education, Entry Level 3 – 2 learners
- AQA Unit Awards – 12 learners gained a total of 291 awards
- WJEC Applied Science, Entry Level 2 – 1 learners
- WJEC Applied Science, Entry Level 3 – 7 learners
- WJEC Applied Science GCSE – 1 pupil (E)
- John Muir Discovery Award – 11 learners

The Year 12 pupil gained an additional 14 AQA Unit Awards.



## Assessment

Branas School is currently an examinations centre for AQA, WJEC/Eduquas, OCR, Edexcel/Pearson and ASDAN.

The school currently follows the programmes below:

- English – AQA Functional Skills Levels 1 and 2 and GCSE
- English Literature – AQA GCSE
- Maths – AQA Entry Level, AQA Functional Skills Levels 1 and 2 and GCSE
- Science - WJEC Entry Level, WJEC Single and Double Award GCSE
- Information Technology – AQA Entry Level, OCR Entry Level 1 – Level 1 Information Technology, WJEC GCSE
- Art – WJEC GCSE and AQA Unit Awards
- Design Technology - AQA Unit Awards
- PSE / PSHE – AQA Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 Awards
- Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> Language - WJEC Entry Level
- GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES – WJEC Short Course GCSE

In addition, the school offers the ASDAN Bronze, Silver, Gold Personal Development Programme, a variety of ASDAN Short Courses which can be tailored to the individual's interests, AQA Unit Awards and the John Muir Award.

During the 2019-2020 Academic Year, Branas School provided an online tutor for one learner who completed his Japanese GCSE.

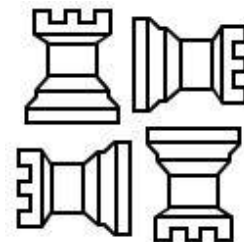
## **Further Accreditations**

Learners at Branas School also started learning musical instruments during the 2019-2020 academic year, with 2 learners taking up the violin, 2 taking up the guitar, 1 saxophone and 1 flute. All learners had informal lessons from members of the team and are hoping to continue their hobbies next year. Assessments are hoping to be taken next year for those learners still within the school. Accreditation is being considered for Music qualifications.

The successful AQA PSE programme is no longer being awarded and as a result, Branas School has been seeking an alternative qualification, which offers the benefits reaped over the last few years. The personal and social education (PSE) qualifications from Agored Cymru support key educational policy areas of the Welsh Government including the Personal and Social Education Framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales.

The qualifications meet the five different themes within the framework:

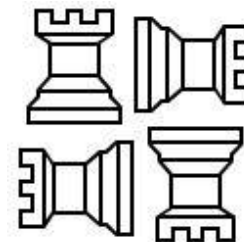




- active citizenship
- health and emotional well-being
- moral and spiritual development
- preparing for lifelong learning
- sustainable development
- global citizenship.

The qualifications support learners to increase their skills and knowledge to improve their personal and social development and emotional health and wellbeing. This ensures that young people become equipped and confident individuals so that they can effectively and successfully live in a fast changing society and fulfil their ambitions.

The school has previously achieved the Bronze “Rights Respecting School” award from UNICEF and is currently awaiting information relating to the application for Silver. We are also working towards the Eco Schools Award and the Outdoor Learning Quality Mark, but progress has been hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic.



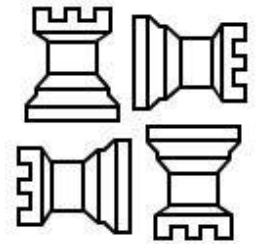
## Behaviour

Behaviour has been tracked through the academic year with the intention of spotting trends and identifying areas for improvement.

The start of the academic year saw a large influx of new learners, which as a result affected the number of incidents in the school. Branas School recorded 94 notable incidents and 114 recorded physical interventions during the academic year, which was a considerable increase on previous years.



The graph shows incidents and interventions over the school year, on a week-by-week basis. The trend line shows a clear decrease as we progress through the year, with a substantial reduction from February half term.



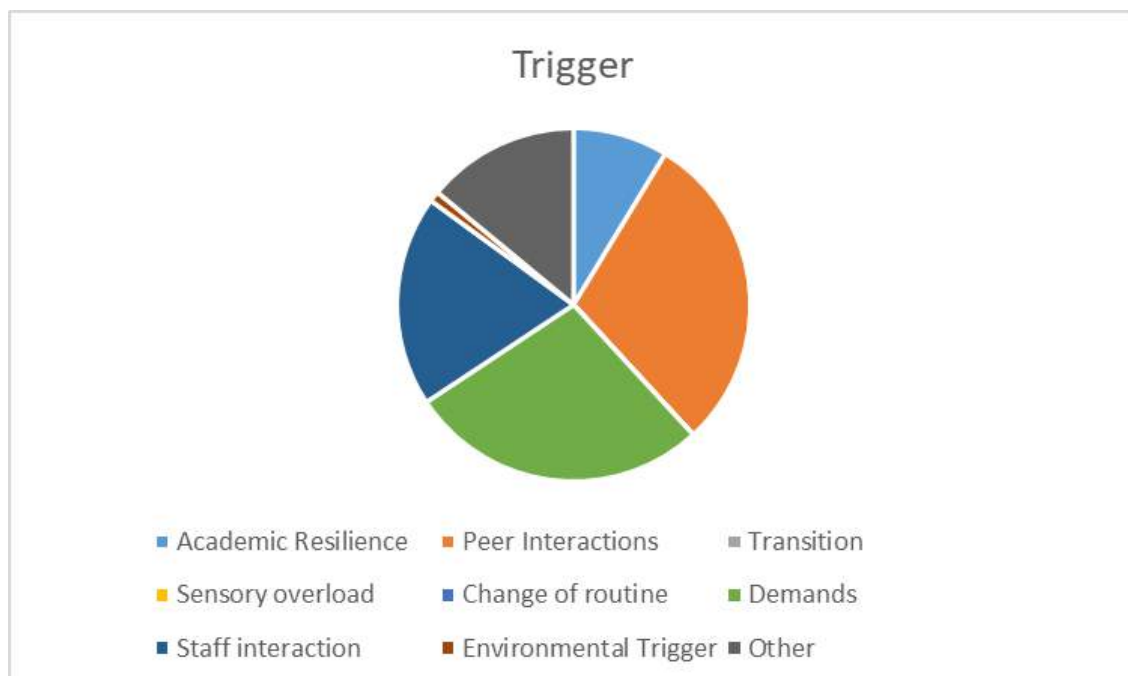
The majority of these incidents were caused by three learners, all of who had significant issues with academic resilience and social interactions.

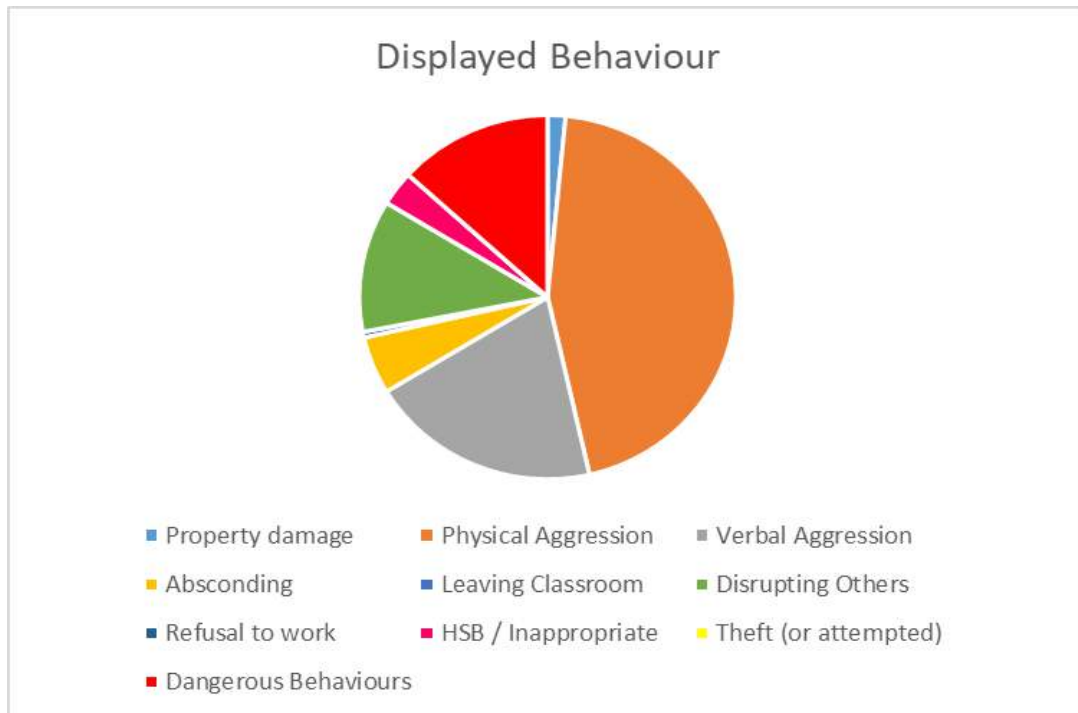
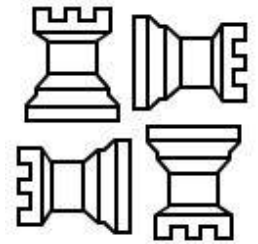
- Pupil 1 had 12 incidents and 24 physical interventions
- Pupil 2 had 22 incidents and 23 physical interventions
- Pupil 3 had 5 incidents and 22 physical interventions.

As a result, 15% of the learners contributed to 41% of the incidents and 61% of the recorded physical interventions.

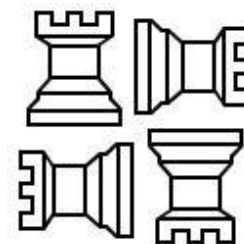
Throughout the course of the year, individual programmes were put in place, which had a positive impact on behaviour, resulting in not only a decrease in incidents, but also a decrease in the severity of incidents.

Additional tracking methods were again used this year, which have allowed us to drill down to times of the day, days of the week, subjects, behaviours seen and trigger behaviours. This evidence supports the focus in school on academic resilience and social skills, as these are the key triggers for incidents in school.





Additional measures were also put in place to support learners at peak times of the day, such as providing sports equipment for break times and lunchtimes, allowing fishing activities as rewards, introducing more quiet spaces around school and producing individual reward programmes for learners where appropriate.










## Behaviour Points

Branas School operates a reward-based system of points within the lesson to encourage good behaviour. Last year, the collation of the points has moved from a class based system to a House based system, which has proved popular with the learners. The winning House each half term gets a prize and learners with high numbers of points personally are rewarded.

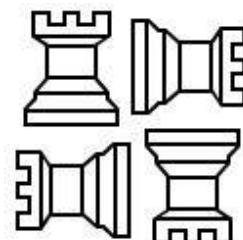
Tracking these points throughout the year enables the school to look for patterns in behaviour in certain lessons and link these to triggers for poor behaviour which we can work on as a staff team. The learners worked through “Levels” to gain their rewards and at the first opportunity over 80% of the learners moved up to the first level.

### BRANAS SCHOOL POINTS SYSTEM

	Point	What it means to me?
	Point 1 On time and ready to learn	You are on time and you are ready to work.
	Point 2 On task and completes work or activity for 15 mins	You work well for the first 15 minutes on the lesson, making sure you participate fully.
	Point 3 On task and completes work or activity for 15 mins	You work well for the second 15 minutes on the lesson, making sure you participate fully.
	Point 4 On task and completes work or activity for 15 mins	You work well for the third 15 minutes on the lesson, making sure you participate fully.
	Point 5 Cooperates with staff	You cooperate with all staff using respectful words and actions. This means that you are following instructions and do not interrupt others or violate other people's personal space.
	Point 6 Safe words and actions	You are not aggressive or destructive and you do not threaten yourself or others. You do not use inappropriate words or go anywhere which is not allowed.
	Point 7 Individual target behaviour	This is a target we will set together based on something that you need help with.

Behaviour Points and House Points are added to the Weekly Quiz scores (used to promote general knowledge and inspired interesting conversations and discussions among staff and learners about current affairs) and scores for events such as Sports Day or other House competitions.

Awards and Rewards are given for learners to praise good behaviour and celebrate success as much as possible within the school.



## HOW THE POINTS ADD UP

The number of points you get will determine which Level you are at in school. People who manage to earn promotion to higher levels will be able to choose better rewards and access more in school.

### ORIENTATION

Everyone starts at this level.



### LEVEL 1 (GROWTH)

To be promoted to this level you need to get:

- o 90% of skills points every day for the last 3 weeks
- o An average points score of 80% for the last 4 weeks.
- o Skill point 6 every day for the last 3 weeks.



### LEVEL 2 (GROWTH)

Once you have achieved level 1:

To be promoted to this Level 2 you need to get:

- o 95% of skills points every day for the last 3 weeks
- o An average points score of 90% for the last 4 weeks
- o Skill point 6 every day for the last 6 weeks.



### LEVEL 3 (INDEPENDENCE)

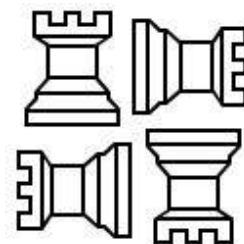
Once you have achieved level 2:

To be promoted to this level you need to get:

- o 95% of skills points every day for the last 4 weeks
- o Skill point 6 every day for the last 6 weeks.

As you move through the levels, the rewards available to you increase.

You can never drop a level once you have achieved it, but you might have to restart your counting if you have a blip.



## School Trips

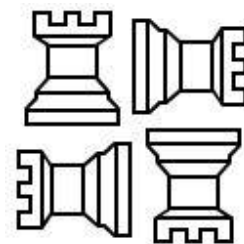
Over the past Academic Year, Ysgol Branas has run a variety of trips, enrichment activities and educational visits. The following places are just some of those that have been visited by learners over the last academic year. No trips took place after March 2020 due to lockdown restrictions.

- Blue Planet Aquarium
- Bodnant Gardens (National Trust)
- Breakout Escape Room, Chester
- Caernarfon Castle
- Catalyst Museum, Widnes
- Chester Cathedral and walk on the walls
- Chester Zoo
- Chirk Castle
- Clay's Golf Driving Range
- Conwy Castle
- Danger Point, Lifeskills Activity Centre
- DEWA Roman Experience, Chester
- Dolbadarn Castle
- Erddig House & Gardens, Wrexham
- Fishing, Llandegla Trout and Carp Fisheries
- Fly Fishing, River Dee
- Geocaching at Loggerheads Country Park, Mold
- Great Orme Copper Mine, Llandudno
- Grosvenor Museum, Chester
- Horseriding and Vaulting, Calon RDA
- Indoor Climbing at Awesome Walls, Liverpool
- Indoor Climbing at The Beacon, Caernarfon
- International Slavery Museum, Liverpool
- Liverpool Mosque, Synagogue and Anglican Cathedral
- Liverpool World Museum
- Llangollen Steam Railway and Dee Valley Walk
- Llechwedd Slate Cavern, Blaenau Ffestiniog
- Manley Mere Adventure Trail
- Maritime Museum, Liverpool
- Mersey Ferry and the U Boat Story
- Museum of Liverpool
- National Slate Museum, Llanberis
- Penrhyn Castle and Gardens
- Powis Castle
- SpacePort, Liverpool
- Tanygrisiau - Cwmorthin and Rhosydd Slate Mines (and geocaching)
- Tate Gallery, Liverpool
- Techniquet, Glyndwr University, Wrexham
- Theatr Clwyd, Pantomime (Dick Whittington)
- Theatr Clwyd, Pantomime (Jack & the Beanstalk)
- Weaselling at Monument Boulders, Llangollen
- Welsh Mountain Zoo

Branas School also presented its second Pantomime this year, with over half of the school taking part in “Rhyming Captain Hook”. The performance was again a great success, allowing external stakeholders the opportunity to see the learners in action. The set and costumes were all sourced or created by the learners and

It is anticipated that the enrichment activities will continue to offer a wide range of opportunities for the learners to close the gap between the generally disadvantaged Branas learners and those in Mainstream schools.





## Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholder feedback was collected using Google Forms this year and the results of the external stakeholders questionnaires can be seen below. This feedback followed the same format as the Estyn Inspection questions and asks a final question about whether they would recommend the school.

Responses were received from 28 individuals.

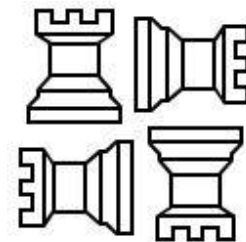
Out of these, 15 were from external stakeholders, i.e. Social Workers. As the school had 20 learners on roll, this is a 75% uptake, which is very pleasing.

Having said that, the update from internal stakeholders is less satisfactory as surveys were completed by very few of the care staff. Additional work is required to improve this feedback for the autumn term.

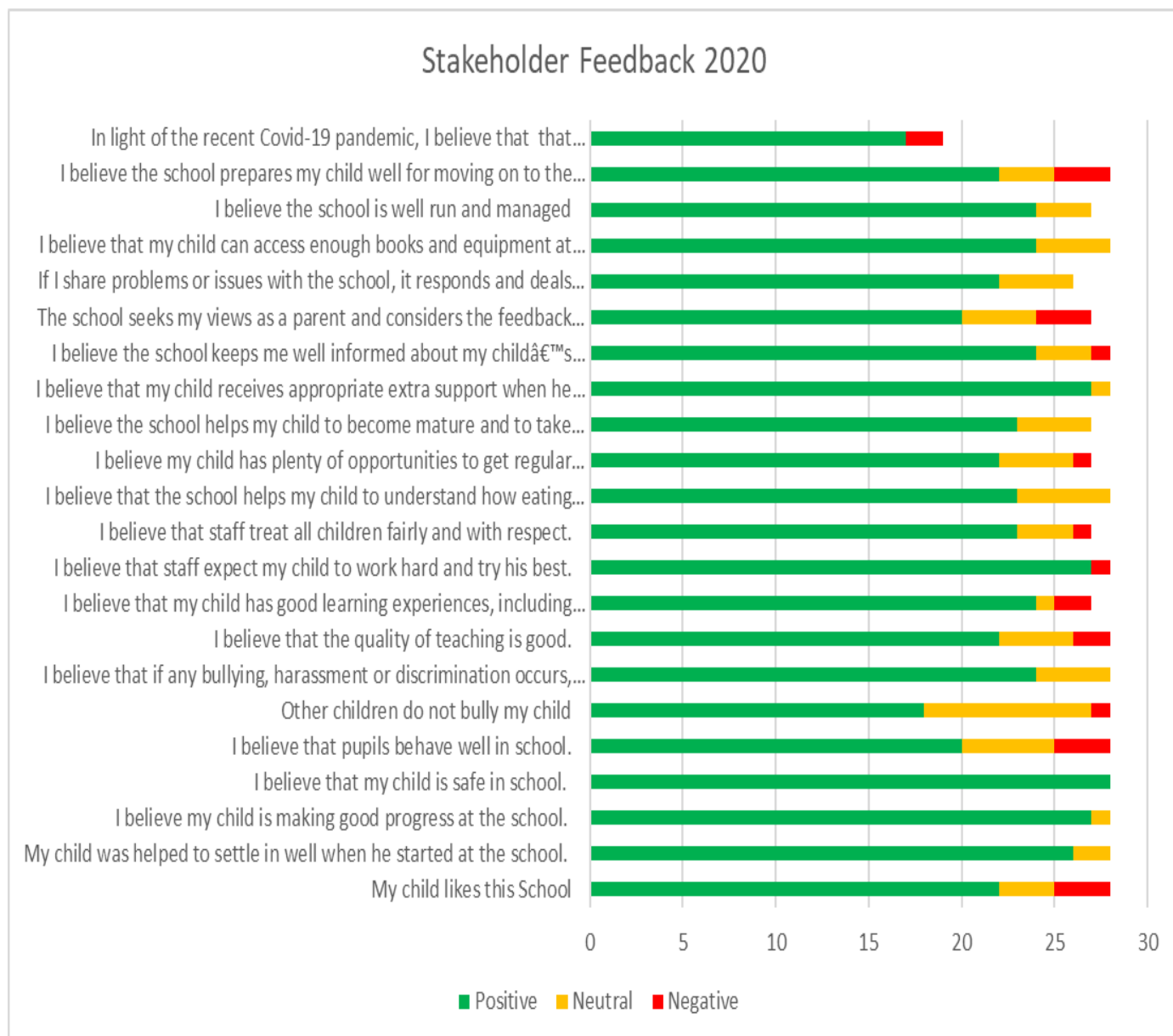
Space was left for comments, but this option was only taken up by four stakeholders. Moving forward, we will look at making the comment box mandatory to encourage more feedback.

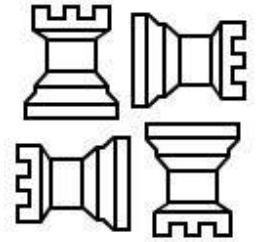
- Fantastic School
- I have been pleased with how the school have managed some challenging behaviour so far but decided to answer the questions honestly, as I could not really provide a detailed answer to some of them. It is early days and I am always happy to meet with Head/staff to discuss.
- The school have managed the transition really well and \* has started to really engage in education for the first time. We have a long way to go, but it is great to see the effort everyone is putting in to getting \* to the right place.
- Mary does an excellent job as Head teacher to the Branass School, aiming to help all young people to have the opportunity to achieve their full potential according to their ability and needs.

Overall, the feedback was very positive with the average score for “Would you recommend Branass School to others” being 8.4 which was pleasing.



Breaking down all feedback into positive, neutral and negative, the feedback can be summarised as follows:

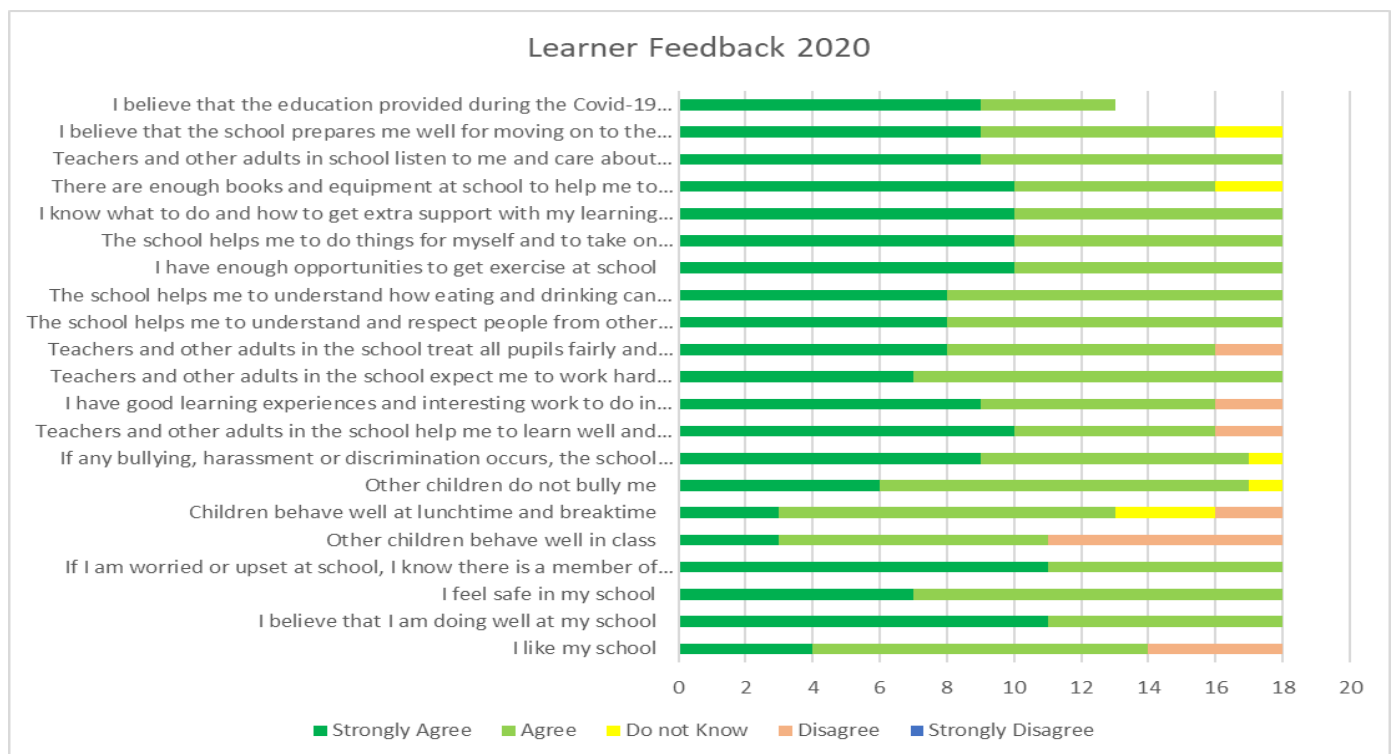


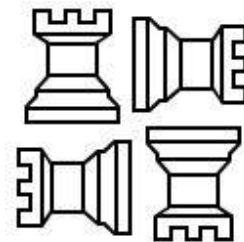


Learners were also asked for their feedback in the Summer Term and the questions were amended to ask opinions on the Covid-19 provision.

It was pleasing that the vast majority of pupils feel safe in school and that all pupils feel safe and supported in school. Comments left by the learners in their feedback were:

- Bullying - I haven't met the others yet so I don't know if they will.
- Could do with more books and games
- Please can we do more cooking in school
- The Headteacher is cool like all teachers are.
- Can we have more basketballs
- I liked being outside
- walking is hard for my staff sometimes





## School Response to Covid-19

The response to COVID-19 has dramatically changed our lives. In this challenging context, Branas School are proud that we managed to maintain a full education programme for our learners for the duration of the summer term.

Initially, the school was not able to use the school building for a period of 2 weeks, due to the home on the same site being in isolation. Other pupils remained within their homes to avoid the risk of spread of infection. The homes also became the social and educational settings for pupils. The school used an online platform (Google Education) as well as on-site activities from staff who were attached to individual homes. Our PE teacher attended weekly to deliver a range of activities in the outside areas of the children's homes and our Outdoor Education Instructor completed John Muir Discovery Projects in the grounds of each home. All pupils also completed their learning in the core subjects.

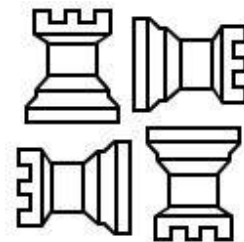
After this initial 2 weeks, the school building reopened. A rota was produced which maintained distancing for the pupils, but allowed all the learners to have a structure for their learning, combining academic lessons in the school building with the very successful home based sessions, with a visiting teacher. The continuation of school routines enabled our vulnerable pupils to maintain a sense of normality and reduce anxieties. All pupils were temperature checked before coming into the school environment for infection control and pupils had personal packs of stationery labelled with their name, which did not leave the school site to reduce the sharing of resources.

By visiting the homes, the teaching staff were able to deliver an alternative programme, using the resources on offer. One of the main successes was with the development of cooking skills and the production of a school recipe book, produced collaboratively using Google Education.



Branas School also managed to hold a socially distant Sports Day, which was split over 2 days and compared overall results. This had to be held on the school field rather than the usual stadium, but it was an extremely enjoyable event and the adapted sports will be adopted for activities in the next academic year.





## Plans for the future

The current Headteacher has been in position for nearly 3 years and it is clear that the school is on a journey towards improving to enable the best provision for the learners. Estyn saw improvements in the leadership of the school, stating, *“The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership to the school. She has a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement. Since her appointment, she has implemented a wide range of improvement activities such as learning walks, regular meetings with care and other staff, and more accurate identification of individual learners’ learning needs.”*

The start of the 2019-2020 saw some unforeseen challenges, which affected the ability of the leadership and the school in general to drive forward the improvements as much as planned. Despite this, the trials faced have strengthened the team and given valuable insight into how we can move forward with some of our more complex young people.

In addition to driving the standards in line with Estyn recommendations, all the learners at Branass School have had significant difficulties with education before attending Branass School and it is their resilience and social skills, which remain at the forefront of the educational ethos at Branass.

As a result, the key areas of focus for the school development in 2020-2021 will be:

### **Priority 1: Improve Literacy, Numeracy & Digital Competence skills**

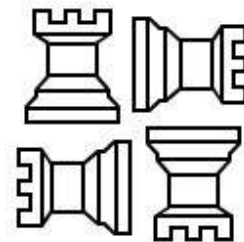
- To increase staff awareness of literacy, numeracy and digital competence within their subjects.
- To continue to embed literacy, numeracy and digital competence into the schemes of work for all subjects, including enrichment and activity programmes.
- To increase the standard of literacy, numeracy and digital competence across the school.
- To include literacy, numeracy and digital competence skill sessions for all staff, including care where required.

### **Priority 2: Improve the quality of teaching**

- To ensure that all lessons are good or excellent.
- To progress the lesson observation and drop in programme to enable sharing of best practice
- To enhance the peer observation programme and collaborate more with other schools.
- To improve the CPD provision for teachers by developing a robust and regular training package
- Improve the use of digital technologies in the classroom by developing teacher skills. (skills audit and training)

### **Priority 3: Improve the level of baseline testing & tracking**

- To ensure all learners are baseline tested on arrival in all subjects
- To continue to develop a whole school tracking system to check progress at termly intervals



- To continue to develop a resilience and attitudes to learning tracking system
- To ensure follow up testing done at appropriate intervals
- To ensure all teachers are using the results of baseline testing to inform teaching.

#### **Priority 4: To continue ensure that safeguarding and child protection is at the forefront of every member of the school.**

- To continue to have high quality and regular safeguarding training which includes updates to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- To ensure that all appropriate members of staff have received prevent training to ensure that staff are made aware of the most up-to-date guidance available to protect Learners.
- To review school digital technologies and the designated member of staff responsible for these, implementing more robust Chromebook monitoring software.
- To continue to operate suitable and up-to-date policies and protocols for all areas where we are able to safeguard children

#### **Priority 5: To prepare for the implementation of the new ALN bill in 2020**

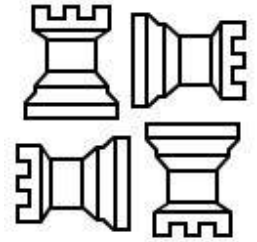
- To continue to ensure all staff, including care and therapy teams, are aware of the changes in the ALN transformation in Wales.
- To plan and prepare for new IDPs for learners from Welsh Authorities and continue implement effectively English EHC Plans.
- To train at least two members of staff in “people centred outcomes” in preparation for new plans.
- To embed person centred outcomes in the planning for all learners.

In addition to the above, works are planned to improve the facilities within the school environment and we are planning to have a new kitchen and preparation area to allow for delivery of cooking skills within the school. We are also planning to improve the facilities within nit 18 to provide additional toilet facilities , improve the electrical supply and to complete the new music studio area.

## **Quality Assurance**

The Quality Assurance Framework for all CareTech school is implemented by CareTech’s Head of Education (Declan Tuer). This prescribes the school monitoring activities and includes formal lesson observations, paperwork audits, scrutiny of pupil work, supervision of all staff and monthly reporting through the Head Teacher’s Monthly Monitoring Report.

All teachers have been observed during the year. All policies have been reviewed with staff according to the Policy Review schedule.



The Head of Education chaired regular meetings throughout the year between the CareTech Headteachers, including weekly meetings during the Coronavirus lockdown. At these meetings, Headteachers:

- Shared good practice particularly with regard to the Thrive Approach, Literacy interventions, and Numeracy interventions
- Discussed the strategic development of the CareTech schools
- Agreed standard success criteria for demonstrating performance against the CareTech performance indicators
- Agreed the Core Induction Training programme for new teaching staff
- Discussed the use of common documentation for IEPs and IBPs

In addition, the Headteachers of Hidelow Grange School and Ysgol Branas have continue to work together to align policies and practice across the two schools. The Governance Board had 3 meetings during 2019-2020 with the purpose of providing confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.

The governance teams have four core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its learners, and the performance management of staff;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent; and,
- Ensuring that the school operates effectively as part of the wider service provision.
- 

The purpose of this framework is to provide an overview of the necessary structures and competencies surrounding governance, and apply them to the governance teams in place for each school, or group of schools within CareTech Children's Services.

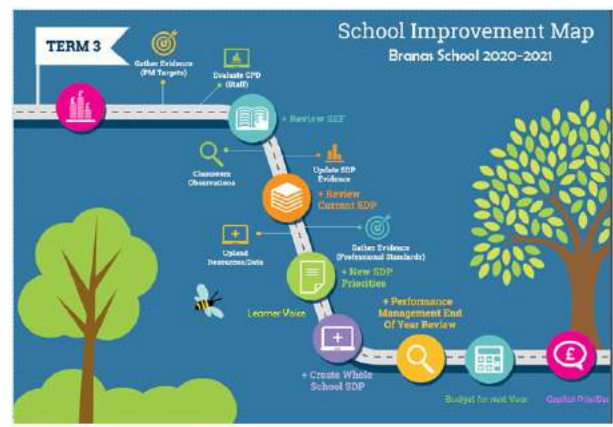
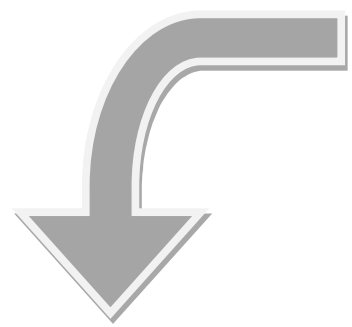
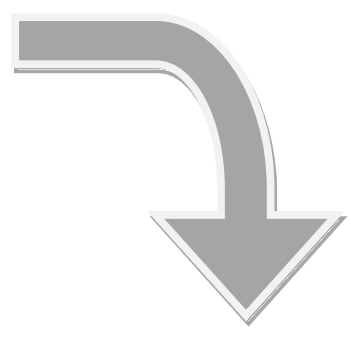
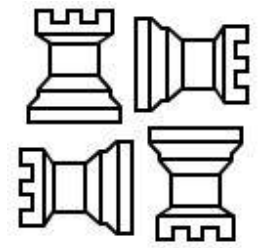
Ysgol Branas School has a schedule of improvement, which will take place through the year, which is published in advance to ensure all aspects of quality assurance are covered in a timely manner. Quality Audits during the academic year have been scored as follows:

### Safeguarding Audit

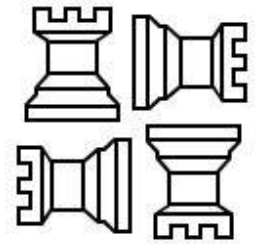
October 2018 – 62%  
June 2019 – 81.4% ↑  
July 2020 – 85.0 ↑

### Quality Review

October 2018 – 62%  
June 2019 0 71.5% ↑







## Appendix – Staff Team

### **Mary Hughes - Headteacher**

Mary has worked in Education for over 25 years and has been in a Senior Leadership position for the past 10 years in another school, moving to Branas to take up the Headship in January 2018. Mary has an Honours Degree in Chemistry, being a Member of the Royal Society of Chemistry, a Postgraduate Certification in Education (Science) and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. Mary has had considerable experience leading and manage the academic side of a school, including, but not limited to; monitoring, maintaining and improving academic standards within the school; managing systems for tracking learners' academic progress; academic performance management; responsibility for Safer Recruitment; managing the collection and analysis of value added data; producing analysis of external examination results for stakeholders, maintenance and updating of the school development plan; whole school self-evaluation; curriculum development and writing the whole school timetable. Mary also has extensive experience in teaching learners with Additional Learning Needs and has a Level 7 certificate in teaching dyslexic learners. In addition, Mary has experience with the school inspection framework, working alongside both Estyn and CSSIW and is a member of the Institute and Records Management Society. Mary is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the School having completed the Level 3 DSO training alongside Prevent Training and has also undergone recent training in Attachment and Loss, Self-Harm and the RAID© course Challenging Behaviour Training.

### **Alison Hughes - Assistant Headteacher - Science / Geography / 1:1 Support**

Alison has a B.Ed (Hons) Special Education (with Outdoor Ed) from Manchester University and has a postgraduate diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy.

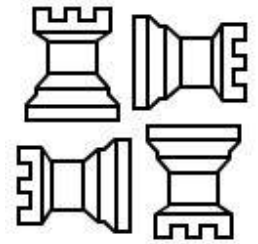
Prior to working at Branas, Alison enjoyed working in mainstream/specialist education and care settings for many years, initially working within the open and secure units of a children's home, gaining invaluable experience in managing crisis and challenging situations with young people and those around them, with honesty, respect and a sense of humour. Alison has a love of the outdoors and is a qualified Yoga teacher.

### **Jane Grant (Nee Hughes) – English Teacher**

Jane holds a BA Hons 3D Design, BTEC 3D Design and PGCE Design and Technology.

Jane currently teaches English and GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE to all Learners and endeavours to ensure her learners reach their potential.

Jane also plays an active part in the school enrichment programme, working with the learners on the school allotment and regularly taking learners on educational visits.



### **Lawrence Gallagher - ICT Teacher**

Holds BSc and PGCE and currently teaches ICT across the school, having previously taught Science, Maths and PSE in addition. Lawrence strives to help his Learners get the most out of school based learning by encouraging socialisation, sportsmanship and team spirit and constantly motivating Learners so making schooling an enjoyable and prosperous part of their life.

### **Jane Corlett – Maths Teacher**

Jane has a Cert. Ed. in Biological Sciences and a BA (Hons) Business, which was completed part-time in 1997 whilst continuing to teach. From 1997 onwards, she undertook a variety of Supply posts alongside some voluntary work. Jane also completed a part time Post Graduate Diploma course in Environmental Decision Making in 2007. In 2009 Jane was awarded an Undergraduate Certificate in Mathematics by the Open University and in 2010 completed a Chemistry course (EQ5) building on previous knowledge. Prior to her employment at Branas School, Jane's first teaching post was Withensfield School, Wallasey – teaching Science along with some English and History. Jane has also worked at two other schools, Ridgway High School and Hilbre High School.

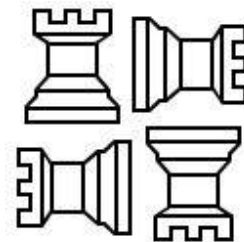
### **Stephen Myers-Whittaker - DT and Art Teacher**

Stephen has a BA (Hons) Graphic Design & Communication and teaches Art and DT at Branas School. Stephen has a PGCE in Art & Design, National Certificate of Art & Design Foundation Studies, and GNVQ Business Owner Management. Prior to working at Branas, Stephen worked at Hawarden High School as Teacher of Art, PSHE & Welsh Bacc and Teacher of Graphic Products at Christleton High School, Chester.

### **Luis Prtak - Literacy and Humanities Teacher (2 days per week)**

Luis is currently employed to teach 1:1 Literacy and Numeracy Intervention Programmes and to deliver Enrichment Activities. He has previously taught Maths, English, Science, History, Geography and organised Enrichment Activities at Branas since 2010.

Luis has a First Class Honours Degree in Production Engineering and has been a Commercial Director, Managing Director and has run his own successful I.T. Company. He has been a volunteer with Scope, delivering outdoor activities to children with Cerebral Palsy, and Colomendy Outdoor Education Centre since 1985. He has worked in Education since 1990 as a Learning Support Worker with KS1 and KS2 children with Autism and Moderate to Severe Learning Difficulties. He obtained a PGCE in Design and Technology in 2007 and holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Mathematics Education. He has taught DT, (Resistant Materials, Product Design, Graphic Design, Food Technology, Textiles), Art and Design and Mathematics to GCSE and A Level in mainstream schools in the UK and English in Romania. He has also been a Chair of Governors, delivered Road safety and Cycling Proficiency Training in primary Schools and been a Dragon Sports organiser.



### **Ryan Valentine - Health & Wellbeing (PE) Teacher**

Ryan is employed to teach Health and Wellbeing at Branas School, which includes aspects of PSE, Human Biology & Physical Education. He has UEFA A and B licenses and has qualifications in Personal Training Gym instruction and gym instruction.

Ryan started his career in professional football aged 15 and enjoyed 15 successful seasons as a professional until injury forced him into part time football. He is now a first team coach at club Bala Town.

Ryan is now using the experience he has gained from professional football, fitness and education with the pupils at Branas School.

### **David McSorley - Outdoor Education Instructor**

Dave has previous experience spanning over a number of years of working in the field of Residential Child Care. David has been a Registered Manager previously at two of the Children's Homes within the Branas Isaf Organisation before transferring to his current role. David holds NVQ4 Care, NVQ4 Management, NVQ – D32/D33 Assessor (A1) and IOSH Managing Safely qualification. David provides outdoor pursuits to the young people at Branas School as part of the enrichment programme one day per week.

David holds the following Outdoor Qualifications:

- MLTB – Mountain Leader Award – Summer
- SMLTB – Mountain Leader Award – Winter
- BMC – Mountain Instructor Award – Training Only
- BMC – Single Pitch Supervisor Award
- NCA – Local Cave & Mind Leader Award – level 2 (North Wales & Derbyshire)
- BCU – Level 4 – Inland Assessor Grade 4 – Inland Level 3 Coach - Sea Kayak Assessor Grade 2 – Sea kayak Advanced Proficiency Award – Inland Kayak Proficiency Award – Sea Kayak Proficiency Award – Open Canoe
- RXA – Level 4 Powerboat Award – Level 2 National Dinghy Certificate