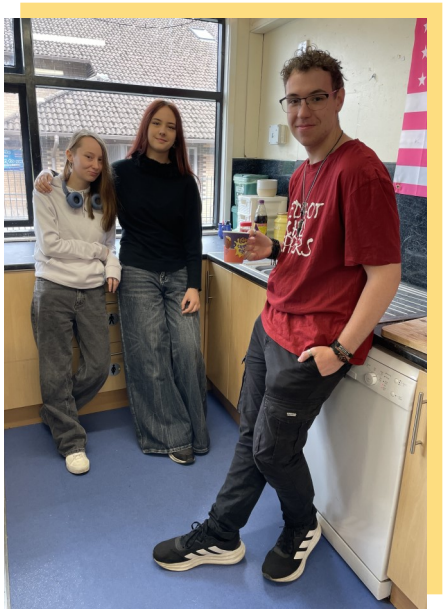


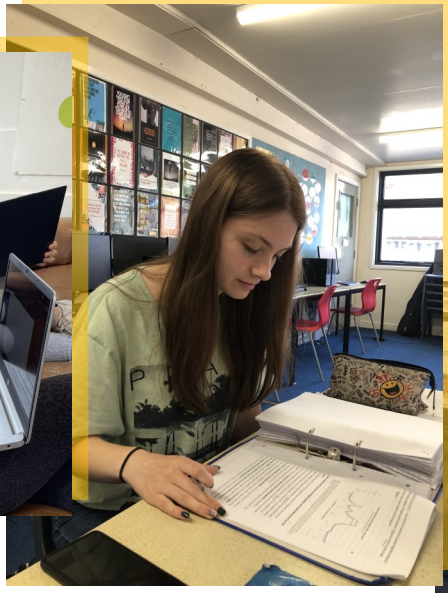
The Unofficial Guide to *sixth form*

Ysgol Uwchradd

Llanidloes

High School

CHWECHED
Powys
SIXTH



why choose Llani?

The choice was easy for most of us...

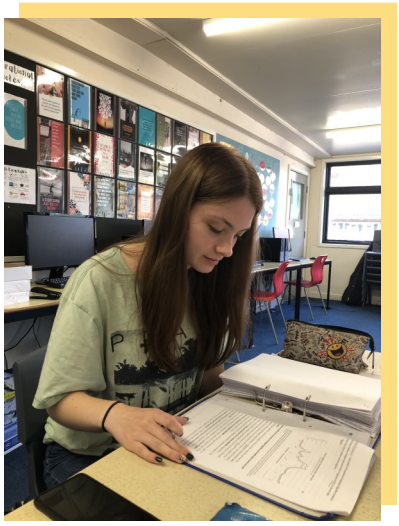
I really did not want the pressure of all my exams at the end of Year 13 - I really liked having modular exams at GCSE so I was sure that I wanted to stay in Wales for this.

I had to work hard for my GCSEs and I had heard that A-levels were much harder - I didn't want to waste valuable time travelling which I could spend relaxing or doing extra studying to get the results that I needed.

Some of my friends considered going to Shrewsbury but I knew that I wouldn't be able to stick those early mornings - and I couldn't afford the train fares, and the trains get cancelled A LOT. It was a no-brainer really.

Every year the results are fantastic - that is the main thing as that's what counts in the end, isn't it?

Welsh Bac gets accepted instead of an A-level grade even on competitive courses in unis in England.



I wanted to have somewhere to study and socialise—not spend my time in Costa!

My sister had fantastic support at Llani when she applied to uni - I think they looked at 10 drafts of her personal statement and gave her lots of advice at every stage - and I know other people in other places who got NO support.

I got an unconditional offer and a scholarship based on my Welsh Bac Individual Project which was related to my degree scheme."

I knew that I wanted to do A-levels as it means there a wider choice of careers available to me. I know the teachers and they know me and so it was an easy choice to stay.

how is sixth form different?

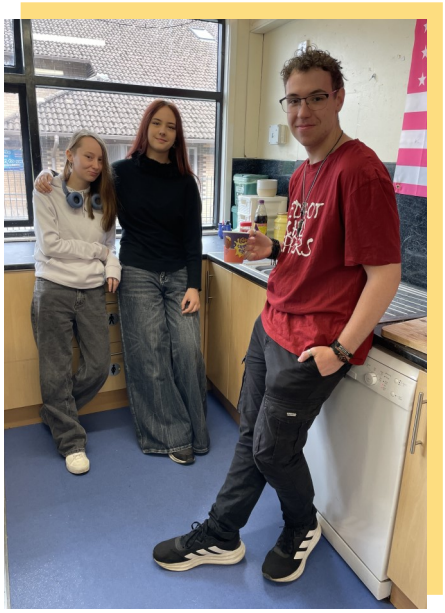
Sixth Form is SO different from lower school

You might think that because you're in the same building that it's basically the same as Year 11 but it's not.

I was worried as most of my friends were going to college but we're part of one big social group in the Sixth Form group - cliques don't seem to exist anymore .

Teachers are open and friendly and you can approach them for help with your work at any time. We are treated more maturely by them.

The atmosphere in the Sixth Form block is great and I think everyone makes new friends - in their own year group and with the other year group.



Some of us go on regular work experience or volunteering for an afternoon a week or a whole day, when we are free, to build up experience for applying for jobs or uni.

We also don't have a uniform and this makes it feel very different from the rest of the school.

We can sign out to go into town or on driving lessons. Others use the gym regularly in the sports centre.

As in uni, we have a deadlines system and must get work in to the main office by 1:30pm on the deadline day—it's good training!

a day in the life of

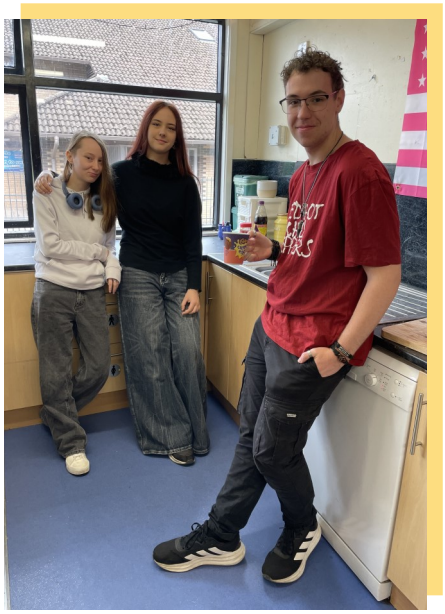
Maths

First lesson I have maths. It's great being in such new classes, you'll never be with the same people and it's fun to mix with new friends each lesson. Classes tend to be smaller for A level which means that teachers respond in a more friendly manner to each student, and with two teachers for most subjects the topics we cover feel a lot more varied. I have pure maths today but I'm also doing statistics. The work is definitely a step up, but it's a lot more interesting because of it.

1 & 2

History

It's turned out to be one of my favourite lessons. Because the teachers are more friendly at Sixth Form, the classes are able to have lots of active discussions - we are not just learning about history we are able to give our views, too. Due to the small size of the class our lessons are not rigid and we can always spend longer on topics we find interesting.



Break time!

This is when we catch up in one of the two common rooms. Because we will be in different classes to the ones you were in lower school, you will get to know people really well. We've all made friends with people we didn't talk to in year 11, and everyone just seems to get along! The kitchen is very popular as it which is used thoroughly and sends an aroma of pizza and coffee through the rooms.

3

Lesson 3 - Physics

Next it's physics for me - loads more experiments than at GCSE which makes the ideas come alive, instead of just taking notes. The lessons go way faster than a GCSE due to the fun and amusement of the tasks and experiments. Physics compliments further maths really well because there is an element of mechanics calculations in both.

llanidloes sixth form

Free lesson

(I mean study period)

4

Generally, these are used to relax and take your mind off work... no they're supposed to be used for working in the study room or catching up on work that has been missed. If you haven't got work to do, you can listen to music, chat or play games along with having the odd cuppa and microwaveable pizza.

Lunch time!

This is the time everyone looks forward to so they can dig into their lunchboxes, head to town or to the canteen. The freedom of having a wider choice of food is extremely popular with most people heading to the chippy or using the microwave to cook a pizza. The common room is full of people chatting and socialising, talking about the day or even reflecting on their work in the previous lessons.

Biology

5

Last lesson of the day is biology. Developed further from GCSE we cover work in much finer detail and find out the truth behind what we've previously learnt. More interesting because the class is smaller and again we have done more experiments. All experiments are fun and can make the lesson go very quickly which is an advantage at the end of the day!

life in the sixth form block

We decided to get some goldfish with some spare money we had raised - Mrs Jerman and Dr Creasey came around to the idea surprisingly quickly - luckily as we'd already bought them...!

OK, the sink isn't always clean but as least it's our sink - it's a bit like going to uni and settling in with your house-mates.

bill and charlie

Some of us have learnt that washing up liquid is NOT as good as dishwasher tablets—unless you want to cover the floor with bubbles as well...

It's great having the freedom to decide when to work in the study room, when to relax in the common room, and to have a cup of tea— all under one roof. We also have the freedom to pop down to Co-op or Subway.

We have set off the fire alarm in the whole school toasting croissants but in general our cooking skills are improving...

There is often a queue outside Mrs Jerman's office - her and Dr Creasey seem to have dealt with every problem before and have advice and guidance for everyone.

We have the freedom to decide what we do, within reason, in the Sixth Form block e,g, to decide when to put up our Christmas decorations even if Mrs J gets a bit exasperated when they go up at the beginning of November!

This year we have had a bit of a Jeff Goldblum obsession and have decorated the Sixth Form block with a giant poster...

extra opportunities

Taking an active role in politics

Each year we have a Q & A session with local political figures such as our MP and AM and ask them lots of tough questions—we're not sure why they come back each year!

When there's a general election or Welsh Government election we invite in the prospective candidates to give them a grilling...

Visiting speakers

Past pupils regularly come back to talk to us about their studies and careers—lots as part of induction but also people like Professor Neil Evans from Glasgow University. Staff also get other people in such as some paediatricians for a medical workshop.

Seren Academy

The Seren Network is the Welsh organisation to help the most able get into Oxford Cambridge and other competitive universities and courses. We get invited to conferences and workshops in order to support us.

"Because everyone in a class has chosen to be there, everyone wants to learn."

"The freedom and independence you get through going to Sixth Form makes it feel different from lower school."

"The teachers are more open and friendly, and you can approach them for help with your work at any time."

"The responsibility with regard to work gives you an insight into Uni life, so you know what to expect in the next phase of education".

"Sixth Form gives you the responsibility to be your own person while the structure allows you to grow and reach your maximum potential."

"In Sixth Form you can help with lots of extra-curricular activities – by helping with pupils with their numeracy and literacy skills as well as attaining certificates for 5x60 and other coaching courses including tag rugby and basketball – giving opportunities for pupils to extend their qualifications out of school"

"Although hard work, Sixth Form is fun and rewarding."

"The transition from GCSE to A-level would have been a daunting experience, however, due to the help of the teachers and older students the change was an enjoyable and manageable experience."

"We have good relationships with the teachers and you get treated more maturely by them."