

## Timetabling the Key Stage 4 National/Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School is a Roman Catholic Secondary school located in Barry, Vale of Glamorgan. It is co-educational, educating boys and girls aged 11-16 years. At KS4, alongside the Welsh Baccalaureate, students follow a core curriculum of GCSEs in English Language, Mathematics, Mathematics – Numeracy, Science: Double Award, Religious Studies and Welsh Second Language alongside three optional subjects. As at September 2015, 750 pupils were enrolled at the school.



Amy Leftley is the Acting Assistant Head of Staff Development and the Welsh Baccalaureate Co-ordinator within the school.

### How have you timetabled the Welsh Baccalaureate this year?

"Our current Year 10 students have four hours of Welsh Baccalaureate lessons a fortnight; one hour has come from a previous 'careers' lesson and the remaining three hours have come from option subjects. During the summer term of Year 9, our students had three days 'off timetable' in order for us to complete a large part of the teaching and learning programme for the Enterprise and Employability Challenge. We chose this option as we allow our students to develop their enterprise beyond the assessment requirements by enabling them to make their products and sell these at our annual Christmas Fayre.

We knew that, had we started in the autumn term, we wouldn't have had enough time to undertake the teaching and learning, complete the assessment and make the products ahead of the Fayre. We completed the final part of the assessment in February 2016, later than anticipated and will therefore be entering our learners in the summer rather than January.

We have recently started the Global Citizenship Challenge and plan to complete the teaching and learning programme before the summer holidays. We anticipate the Community Challenge, including assessment, being completed in the first half of the Autumn term before we move on to the Individual Project."

### Why and how did you choose this model?

"We have taught the Welsh Baccalaureate at the school for a number of years and have a supportive Senior Leadership Team who understand and value the qualification. Internal discussions were held with relevant members of staff to identify what was felt to be the necessary number of hours to deliver the qualification."

### How it is working so far?

"The students are engaged in the Welsh Baccalaureate Challenges and are enjoying the content.

Elements of the teaching and learning programme have taken longer than anticipated and we are concerned that the learning hours for some of the Challenges do not enable comprehensive teaching and learning to take place. Some elements of the content are completely new to students, for example they may have had very little experience of concepts such as business before entering Key Stage 4. To address this in the future, we have set up a 'mini baccalaureate' and it will be interesting to see how this impacts on teaching and learning requirements over time."

### What will you change about Welsh Baccalaureate timetabling in the future?

"At the moment it is too early to make any firm decisions regarding changes to the timetable. We will be discussing how realistic it is to run the Enterprise and Employability Challenge in conjunction with a Christmas Fayre and whether we can continue to do this however, we feel that we need to allow the course to run for a full cycle (2015-2017) before we can truly evaluate what is working and what needs further development or change."

### What key advice would you give to other centres?

It is very unlikely that centres will complete this qualification and allow students to reach their full potential if they do not have sufficient allocation on their timetables. We would struggle to complete everything with less than four hours a fortnight. If this time isn't available I would recommend crash timetable days.

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*The revised Welsh Baccalaureate KS4 National/Foundation qualification was introduced from September 2015. Entries for the three Challenges can be submitted either for the January or June Series during the two years of the course. The Individual Project entries must be submitted during the second year of the course in either the January or June series. Further information can be found on the WJEC website at [www.wjec.co.uk/welshbaccalaureate](http://www.wjec.co.uk/welshbaccalaureate).*