

TONYREFAIL SCHOOL



Mission Statement: To provide every pupil with the best possible education in a safe and pleasant environment and ensure all pupils achieve the highest possible standards of which they are capable.

Tonyrefail is a school of some 1,065 pupils and 66 staff. Coupled with this is a strong team of support staff, all contributing to a very efficient educational institution. In its present form, the school was officially opened in 1973. The school is situated at the heart of the Community of Tonyrefail and Gilfach Goch and the school is justly proud of its links within this area. The school is some 16 miles from Cardiff and only 6 miles from the M4. It enjoys a pleasant position close to open countryside in the Ely Valley.

The school is proud of having won a number of distinguished awards. The first is the prestigious Schools Curriculum Award, the only one awarded to a secondary school in the old Mid-Glamorgan area. The basis of the Award is the quality and extent of school/community links and the way in which these links enrich the school curriculum. The second is the Prime Minister's Charter Mark, awarded for excellence. Only two secondary schools in Wales were successful in gaining this honour in 1996 and now Tonyrefail is one of the few schools in Britain to be second-time winners, having won again in 1999. The basis of this Award is the quality of service provided to pupils and parents. The third is Investors in People, gained in September 2002, recognising the quality of staff development at all levels. The School is currently reapplying under the new Investors in People framework. The school has recently gained PESS status, placing it at the forefront of Sporting development within the Authority. In June 2004 the School gained the Basic Skills Secondary Quality Mark. In May 2006 the School was selected to be one of three schools piloting the E3+ Project for RCT Council. Since September the school has provided a varied programme of after school activities for our pupils from 3.05-5.00pm. Colleagues at Tonyrefail School have led some of the activities and others have been provided by outside professional bodies. The aim is to provide pupils with additional learning opportunities to further enhance their skills and to develop their confidence and self-esteem. From September 2007 we have been asked by RCT Council to extend our provision to 8.00pm.

There is an ongoing programme of major structural improvements. The school is in good decorative condition and extensive investments have been made so that there is an excellent range of facilities for all departments and

good staff accommodation. A new Science Block in the Lower School was completed in July 2004. PE changing facilities have recently been modernised. A full size Astro Turf was opened in May 2006 by Jane Davidson, Minister for Education.

The school was successful in its bid to be included in the Technology Schools Initiative. The teaching area for Technology was substantially extended and equipped to the highest level. Pupils and staff benefit from the very best teaching conditions.

Together with the workshops, laboratories, extensive classroom facilities, and a modern refurbished library, the school is also fortunate to have at its disposal two halls, two fully fitted gymnasias, a swimming pool and a Youth Wing. The Youth Wing is extensively used by the Youth Club which is based in the school, as well as affording a less formal area for use by staff and pupils during school hours.

The atmosphere pervading the school is one of calm, with the best of traditional standards of behaviour and courtesy firmly supported by staff and parents. The school has a strong Department structure through which effective learning can be promoted and pupils counselled and guided. The Pastoral system is well established, providing a programme of Personal and Social Education, and this is supported in all subject areas.

Extra-curricular activities are seen as the enrichment of the basic entitlement of pupils. The ethos of the school is that of a caring community and great emphasis is placed on charity work. Pupils are encouraged to join the large number of clubs and societies catering for a wide range of interests. The school is particularly proud of its traditions and successes in sport, music and drama.

The school has an annual planning cycle, which involves all staff through Subject Leaders and Year Team Leaders. Based on the Philosophy and Aims of the school, particular priorities are identified for the coming year, then plans are drawn up for the running and future development of the school. The needs for resourcing in both staff and material terms are judged against these plans. There is close co-operation and teamwork with the Governors of the school.

The school has a carefully organised and planned programme of professional development designed to support teachers in delivering the curriculum, to allow them to extend their subject expertise and to prepare for the next stage in their career plan. Each year, teachers attend a wide range of courses organised by the LEA, together with nationally based courses. Every department is encouraged to organise courses, which will enhance the delivery of its specialism within the curriculum.

Tonyrefail School was inspected in February 2004. The Report was very pleasing and some of the key headlines are included below:

- ◆ **Tonyrefail is an improving school.**
- ◆ **It provides a secure and caring environment in which all pupils are valued and supported.**
- ◆ **The school is a community that pupils and staff are proud to be part of.**
- ◆ **There is a clear sense of direction and shared values about working together to improve standards and a very open and self critical culture that encourages everyone to work collaboratively to drive up standards and initiate change.**
- ◆ **The Acting Headteacher (now the Headteacher) provides very good leadership, by example, has high expectations and successfully empowers staff to take on and implement new and exciting initiatives. She is a strong leader with the ability to tackle difficult issues in a positive way.**
- ◆ **The senior Management Team is forward thinking, efficient and work collaboratively with staff and governors to improve standards.**
- ◆ **Open communication exists at all levels.**