

## Crickhowell High School's Skills Challenge – Carron Goold, Director of Learning

For KS4, we start the model with 3 hours per fortnight for Year 9 students. This has proven very beneficial. We developed skills for all Challenges and completed the Enterprise Challenge this Summer half term. We held a Summer Fete on the last day of term, which everyone enjoyed!

The First Give programme has been a huge success again for 2019. Kristy Williams AM came in as one of our judges, she was very positive about Welsh Baccalaureate and the whole event. Students raised £250 for their charities and Kirsty Williams matched the amount! Therefore, including the First Give donation, our charities received £1500 in total.



Students have 4 hours of Skills Challenge lessons per fortnight in Year 10. We found that completing the Enterprise Challenge at the start of the year and actually holding a Christmas Fayre, was enjoyable for all, engaged staff and students, and made £800 for our 'charity fund'.

For the Community Challenge, students were given a choice of Brief, then classes were organised in accordance with their choice. Staff were responsible for organising the volunteering for their groups. Improving the environment groups worked in the local Church grounds, Crickhowell town and the school grounds, gardening, litter picking and planting and maintaining flowers and vegetable patches, baskets etc.. The coaching groups have taught Year 7 students and the Social Action group have supported the elderly community, with visits to our local residents' home, Greenhill. This Challenge has been extremely enjoyable this year! We've had such positive feedback from many members of the local community, including the Vicar, residents and Llangattock Litter Pick Group.

There has been a huge improvement in engagement with the Sixth Form students. We have made the Skills Challenge Certificate compulsory, and this is working well. Although we only have 2 hours per fortnight, we have collapsed days for controlled assessments, trips and a Welsh Bacc week at the end of the year. Liaising with other subject teachers and Student Voice to check their other demands, has enabled us to take into account students' needs and other pressures, and get them on board. This has worked well for us.

We have collaborated with USW Treforest for Personal Statement writing and UCAS applications. The students also had an overnight trip to Aberystwyth Uni for research methods and evaluating sources in preparation for the Individual Project. As well as this, we had access to the staff areas of the National Library for Wales.



Most of the Y13 university offers included WB SCC, as part of the offer. Many students have sent cards and thank you notes, stating that 'if it wasn't for WB, I wouldn't be going to uni!' 'Thank goodness for WB!' etc.

Taking opportunities to engage with local businesses and universities throughout the course, has given context to the Skills Challenge Certificate and has promoted the relevance of the subject in our community in relation to developing skills and life experiences; this has also prepared our students for their future careers and lifelong learning.

Whilst there are many positives to the Skills Challenge Certificate, as with any other subject, there are also challenges. We have discovered that you must take risks and trial ideas that you think will work in your school, then evaluate and change if necessary. Support, flexibility and understanding from the whole school, is essential to enable a successful and enjoyable course to be delivered.

