



Hwb+ CASE STUDY



YSGOL SYR HUGH OWEN

Using Hwb+ to develop literacy and use of the Welsh Language.

Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, is a Welsh medium secondary school based in Caernarfon, Gwynedd. Approximately 98% of the students are fluent in the Welsh language, and study Welsh first language courses.

Since Autumn 2014 Mererid Llwyd, has been leading and encouraging effective use of the Hwb+ platform across the school to develop literacy and in her own subject, to develop Welsh literacy and further use of the Welsh language.

"As soon as I'd had the opportunity to take a look at Hwb+, I saw straight away that it would be a good chance for pupils to communicate while they were out of class. This would improve a number of skills including communication, their abilities to share opinions, their reading skills and also ICT."

Mererid started to encourage use by prompting students to start thinking about the learning platform, and how they would be using it within and outside of the classroom.

"When we began using Hwb+ I thought that this would be the ideal occasion for us to discuss safety on the internet, and so I set this up as a discussion, which they answered in their own time – I was then able to elaborate more within the lessons, as they'd translated their thoughts into writing. I had it on the big screen when they came into class, and I was able to question their answers – why did you say that? How could you improve the use of Welsh in this answer? With this activity I referred them to language and grammar tools and provided them with feedback."

"The reception I had from bringing Hwb+ into our Welsh lessons was fantastic. For once they were really enjoying doing their homework and they also liked responding to each other using this as an opportunity to improve their work."

As the year went on Hwb+ was eventually proved effective in allowing students to practice flipped learning on their own accord, extending their learning past the classroom. One of Mererid's drives in using Hwb+ was to develop literacy and the use of the Welsh language. "It's a great tool for developing both Welsh literacy and for promoting the Welsh language among our students. I'm really glad that the

interface on Hwb+ is bilingual, this is so important to my subject and it's also important that students see that they can actually use Welsh online. We hope students will be able to carry this thought with them when conversing on social networking sites within their own free time."

"Hwb+ definitely contributes to a great perception of the Welsh language, and proves that our Welsh lessons in school are keeping up with the times. It's become apparent in using Hwb+ that students are more aware that they need to ensure accuracy regarding spelling, grammar and language when writing online, to an audience. Hwb+ caters for a common interest among our students keeping them engaged."

Use of the Hwb+ learning platform continues to develop with other year groups now on board via the Welsh department. The schools progress hasn't gone unnoticed—last year Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen were invited to attend an awards ceremony by the North Wales E-Learning Technologies Conference.

"A more recent method of using the Hwb+ in class consists of using the blogs to allow students to discuss their library books. Before they go into the library to choose their next book they read the blogs on our site to see what their peers recommend as a good read! Promoting reading in the Welsh Department. This particular task contributed to our award for innovation and creativity through the use of digital technology at the North Wales E-Learning Technologies conference."

"In preparation for our next steps with Hwb+ at Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, we've set-up a professional teaching community on Hwb to share best practice regarding use digital technology. This is working very well to date."

"We've always offered courses for professional development for all of our staff, and have had two members of Cynnal (both teachers, seconded with Hwb) over to deliver professional development with regards to effective use of Hwb. We're currently at the stage where all departments are using particular elements of Hwb+ and we're hoping that usage will continue to grow."