

Big energy savings at Ysgol Pendalar

Cutting energy bills doesn't mean spending a fortune on new equipment and fancy technology, as a Caernarfon School have just demonstrated.

Ysgol Pendalar has seen big reductions in gas and electricity usage over the past year, saving a total of £2,000 – around 10% - over the last 12 months.

This huge saving was achieved through simple, no-cost measures including efficient management of heating controls and settings, and turning equipment off when not in use.

Achieving these savings all boils down to behaviours of staff and pupils, and most importantly the dedication of the caretaker, Richard Jones, who keeps a close eye on how the buildings systems and equipment are used.

Donna Rees-Jones, Headteacher at Ysgol Pendalar said:

“We've tried hard to use our gas and electricity more sensibly since the beginning of the year. We realised that by carefully managing our existing systems we would not only become more efficient, but also increase our comfort levels.”

“Most of our savings have been down to ensuring that the heating is turned on when it is needed, and not on too high. Richard, the caretaker, is responsible for adjusting the controls to suit our needs. It is essential that this is done regularly due to the extensive use of the building by the local community, meaning that the hours the building is in use varies from week to week”

Councillor Gareth Roberts, Gwynedd Cabinet Member for the Environment recently visited the school to thank the staff and pupils for their commitment to reducing the school's carbon footprint. Councillor Roberts said:

“The energy performance of Ysgol Pendalar over the past year must be commended. It goes to show that making small changes to our behaviour can have a great impact on how much energy we use.”

“I’m pleased that the school has shown such great commitment to improving their environmental performance. They have demonstrated that you can reduce your electricity and gas use considerably without having to spend a penny on new equipment or technology, and without compromising comfort – a great example for us all.”

“I think that we can all learn from this and follow their lead by trying to understand the systems that we have in place and make sure that we manage these to suit our needs and try to cut the amount of energy we waste”

Ysgol Pendalar, built in 2007, is a purpose built special education needs school for children aged 3-19. The school is equipped for the needs of its pupils which includes a hydrotherapy pool which needs to be heated to 30°C. Total annual energy bills at the school are consistently in excess of £25k a year.

Gwynedd Council has adopted a Carbon Management Plan since 2010 that has challenging targets to reduce the Council’s Carbon Footprint 30% by 2015. This is extremely challenging and would not be possible without commitment and dedication of staff and building users as is demonstrated at Ysgol Pendalar.