

The S4 programme has helped our students significantly. The S4 project started at Cymer Afan school for year 7 pupils. The school shut and these pupils were transferred to Ysgol Cwm Brombil where the project was continued with the inclusion of both previous Cymer Afan pupils and our current pupils at Ysgol Cwm Brombil. The project helped, in this unique circumstance, to knit together our pupils to help form one community with a joint goal. Initially Cymer Afan pupils were unfamiliar with the new area of Port Talbot that they found themselves in but I strongly believe that the S4 project supported their willingness to participate by offering opportunities that they would never have experienced.

From your feedback sheets and speaking to pupils it is clear that pupil attitude towards stem subjects have changed. Many of our pupils do not traditionally come from stem backgrounds and often felt that these subjects were not available or approachable. By visiting Swansea University pupils have had the chance to be inspired to progress and been able to see the range of opportunities for “everyday” people in Science roles. They have been able to see that Science is not just an elite subject but a subject that is reflected across their communities in which they can be a part of.

Several of our pupils have behavioural disorders but throughout the workshops they have participated keenly and attentively and this can be attributed to the dedication of the staff and the careful planning and delivery of resources to ensure that pupils are enthused.

As a department we have grown closer through the project as we have attended workshops in pairs and this has given us a full day to discuss our pupils and our science teaching – time we would never have had whilst teaching our full timetables way from one another. Ideas from workshops have supported our own lessons. For example, our SOW regarding DNA has been adapted to incorporate experiments used in the workshops. Science/triple Science is not an option at GCSE at Ysgol Cwm Brombil so it is difficult to determine how the project has affected pupils’ GCSE choices. However it has certainly helped some to focus on a career and their options would be influenced by this.

During Covid recovery the project changed significantly. Clearly face to face lessons at Swansea University was not an option. However, a web site was developed with take home experimental kits which the pupils enjoyed thoroughly. The pupils also had live lessons with resources sent to our site. This was a new way of learning which was very exciting for our pupils.

As a school staff and pupils would like to thank all that were involved in the S4 project for their continued support from the start to the end of the project. Our pupils, many of which had never and thought they would never attend a university think differently now. You have raised their aspirations and allowed them to view Science as an exciting and approachable subject. Thank you.