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CWMTAWE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

PARENTS' NEWSLETTER

CYLCHLYTHYR RHINI

SPRING 2014

GWANWYN 2014

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to bring you my first newsletter as headteacher of Cwmtawe. It has been an extremely busy term, with a range of activities taking place across the school. The highlights on the following pages give you a flavour of some of the excellent achievements by pupils and the breadth of opportunities experienced since the last newsletter. I hope you enjoy it.

Mae'n hyfrydwch gennyf eich cyfarch yn fy nghylchlythyr cyntaf fel prifathro Ysgol Cwmtawe. Bu'n dymor hynod brysur gydag amrywiaeth o weithgareddau yn cymryd lle ar draws yr ysgol. Cewch flas ar rai o uchafbwyntiau'r tymor ynghyd â'r trawsdoriad o gyfleon a gynigir i ddisgyblion. Hydraf y byddwch yn ei fwynhau.

Yours sincerely

Mr. C. L. Hitchings

HEADTEACHER PRIFATHRO



ATTENDANCE PRESENOLDEB

School attendance has improved again this year and currently stands at 94%. This would not be possible without your support as parents/carers in ensuring your children attend regularly. It would also be appreciated if you could organise medical and dental appointments outside the school day whenever possible.

Good attendance has a direct impact on pupil achievements.



EXAMINATIONS ARHOLIADAU

It is essential that pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 avoid time off for any reason in the Summer term.

External examinations start at the beginning of May and run throughout June and cannot be re-scheduled. Dates for Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 internal examinations are detailed in the pupil planner.

PTA NEWS / NEWYDDION Y GYMDEITHAS RIENI

We would like to express our appreciation to the PTA and all parents/carers for their support of the school. It has been a busy year for fundraising and the donations provided by the PTA have allowed us to replace another minibus.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY DYDDIADAU AR GYFER Y DYDDIADUR

Year 10 Parents Evening	2nd April	Year 7 and 8 examinations	19-22 May
Year 9 Internal Examinations	2-4 April	Geography trip to Italy	22-27 May
Year 7 Parents' Evening	9 April	INSET Day	23 May
Easter Holidays (GCSE revision sessions)	14-25 April	New Year 10 timetable starts	2 June
Year 7 and 8 Junior Maths Challenge	1 May	Year 8 Parents' Evening	4 June
ICT trip to Paris	1-4 May	Year 7 French trip	13-16 June
National Literacy and Numeracy Tests	7-14 May	Year 11 Prom	19 June
Bank Holiday	5 May	Year 7 History trip	20 June
Welsh trip to Cardiff	16-18 May	New intake induction day	1 July

Pupils welcome Children's Commissioner

This term, we were visited by Mr. Keith Towler, the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

Mr Towler was taken on a tour of the school, guided by the Whole School Council, made up of pupils from each year group. They showed him some of the facilities of the school including the Dyslexia Support Unit, Study Garden, Literacy Support Room and Peer Mentoring room.

Mr Towler also sat down with the Whole School Council to answer some crucial questions, including the role of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in schools, his own educational upbringing and his views on the standards of education across Wales as a whole.



Mr Towler commented that the school was "going from strength to strength" and has established a strong link with the pupils which will be maintained over the coming year.

The Whole School Council plan to meet with Mr Towler in the near future to do further work on children's rights and the work of the UNCRC in Cwmtawe.

Cwmtawe pupils lead the way in Pontardawe

Dylan Williams and Harri Evans-Mason, both 15, have been selected to join Pontardawe Town Council for the next year to provide a viewpoint from the younger generation.

They will enjoy the same rights in discussions as all other members of the council but will not be able to vote. Both are looking forward to giving an insight to council members on how the youth feel about any ideas which will be introduced to the town of Pontardawe.



The Hub @ Pontardawe

If you live or work in Pontardawe or the surrounding area, you will soon be able to get a lot more than just books from the town's library.

From the 8th April the Holly Street building will offer easy access to many Council services as part of the 'The Hub @ Pontardawe' project. Open from 9.30am week days and Saturday mornings, with longer hours every Friday, you'll be able to order compost bins, report dog fouling or fly tipping, and deal with queries from food waste to drainage to blue badges and bus passes. There will also be help available to go online.

Not only that, for two days a week the building will host a range of FREE advice services from the Council and partner organisations such as NPT Homes Citizen Advice Bureaux, Job Centre Plus and Calan DVS.

Call in for help with things such as managing your finances, learning to do more online, benefits, finding training courses and maybe even a change of career! The advice services will be available every Tuesday and Thursday 9am-1pm and 1.45pm-5pm for anyone who needs free, confidential help.

Year 10 pupils a sure shot for success



SPORTS

CHWARAEON

Joseph Phillips has been selected to represent West Glamorgan in the Welsh Bowling Association's Under 21 Academy Team for 2014.

Alice Reynolds has been selected for the Welsh Junior Archery squad. Alice is already the Welsh Under-16s Recurve champion, Glamorgan champion and won gold medals at the Cymric Open, Doug Woodley Cup and the Two Rivers Championship in Chepstow.



Cwmtawe celebrates annual Eisteddfod



WELSH
CYMRAEG

St. David's Day was celebrated with the annual Eisteddfod.

Pupils dressed in house colours to cheer on and support their houses in a talented

display of song, poetry recital, dance, musical performances and sketches.

Headteacher, Mr. Hitchings, presented a trophy to the winning house - Tŷ COCH.



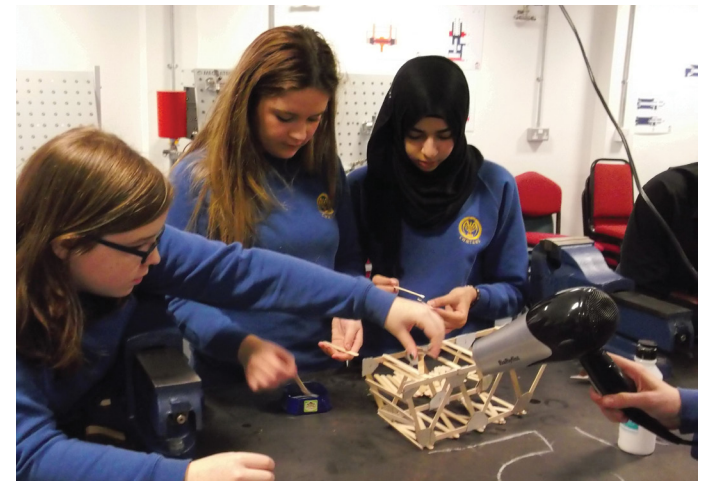
Girls in Technology



DESIGN TECHNOLOGY
TECHNOLEG

Sixteen pupils from Year 9 enjoyed a technology taster session at Gower College Swansea Tŷ Coch.

The girls got involved in a range of activities including electronics, plumbing, engineering and motor vehicle repair.



Pupils reflect on Holocaust Memorial Day



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

ASTUDIAETHAU CREFYDDOL

Holocaust Memorial Day was commemorated on January 27 with special assemblies and lessons.

The Religious Studies department created a display in the Hall and presented assemblies to each year group, explaining the events of

the holocaust to pupils and why we take part in remembrance of it - to pay respect to the 11 million people who lost their lives and to ensure that the human race learns from previous mistakes.

Local businesses serve up advice for enterprising pupils



BUSINESS STUDIES

ASUDIAETHAU BUSNES

Year 11 Business Studies pupils were recently visited by the owner of Bishops Sandwich Shop in Pontardawe and enjoyed a tasting session where they sampled a number of products from the shop.

Local business owner, Julie Bishop, was interviewed by the pupils and provided information on her business to support them with their research for their controlled assessment.

Bishops is just one of the many local businesses that visit the school to speak about



entrepreneurship to GCSE pupils hoping to follow in their footsteps.

Musical marines master the classroom



We were fortunate to enjoy a visit from the very talented Royal Marines band this term.

The band got pupils clapping, dancing and playing along to some of their favourite songs such as Valerie, Candy, Get Lucky and Telephone.

Later the group gave individual workshops and played together with the whole school orchestra.



Girls football team in a league of their own



The Under 13s Girls team recently won the Neath Port Talbot five-a-side tournament and were crowned as Neath Port Talbot Champions.

Following their victory they then competed in a Swansea City Inter-Counties Tournament at Pitchside Swansea. Five games of high-speed football saw the Cwmtawe girls beat Dyffryn Comprehensive School 2-1 in the final, gaining a place at the National Premiership Tournament which will take place at the Etihad Stadium (home to Manchester City) on Tuesday 20th May.

The girls will also represent Swansea City Football Club at this tournament. They will get to enjoy an overnight stay in a hotel, their own Adidas Swansea City FC kit, the opportunity to explore this wonderful stadium and meet FIFA referee, Mr Howard Webb, as well as all the premiership match officials.



We'd like to congratulate the following pupils on their triumphs and wish them all the best for Manchester:

- Georgia Cosiello (Captain)
- Izzi Thomas
- Bryanna Demery
- Alana Rees
- Hannah Carson-Jones
- Eve Jones
- Jamie Edwards
- Chloe McQuaide

Pupils fire up for business success



As part of their BTEC Work Skills course Year 10 pupils have been busy creating their own business ideas.

To showcase their products the budding entrepreneurs organised a one day enterprise event called 'The Dragon's Apprentice'. It was a hugely successful day, thanks to their innovative ideas, team work and diligence.



Neath Port Talbot Credit Union

Did you know that Cwmtawe Community School operates a School Savings Club with Neath Port Talbot Credit Union? Why not start saving NOW for School Trips; the School Prom; a new phone, or whatever you like.

You can join as a Junior Member with just £1.00. Save as much or as little as you want each

week, every Monday and Thursday lunchtime with Miss Ellis and Miss Trick.

Parents are welcome at the Credit Union too. Adult Membership costs £1.00 for your Membership Fee plus £1.00 to open the account

Rising Star



Taylor Brett in Year 10 successfully auditioned for the West Glamorgan Youth Theatre Company.

She recently took part in a production of The Roses of Eyam in the Dylan Thomas Theatre playing the part of Frances Torre.

Ski trips



In February, pupils enjoyed fantastic ski trips, both to the USA and Austria.

Pupils spent five days skiing in Lake Placid Olympic resort before spending 2 days sightseeing in New York City.

Both trips benefitted from top class tuition and made excellent progress on the slopes.

Pupils go bananas for Fairtrade Fortnight



ESDGC
ADCDF

Cwmtawe pupils took part in different events for Fairtrade Fortnight.

Things kicked off with pupils grabbing a bowl from Cwmtawe's Biggest Ever Banana Split at lunch time. They were also shown a presentation on fair trade banana production.

There was also fair trade cake sale, a fair trade coffee morning and chocolate hamper raffle, put on by our ESDGC Champions.

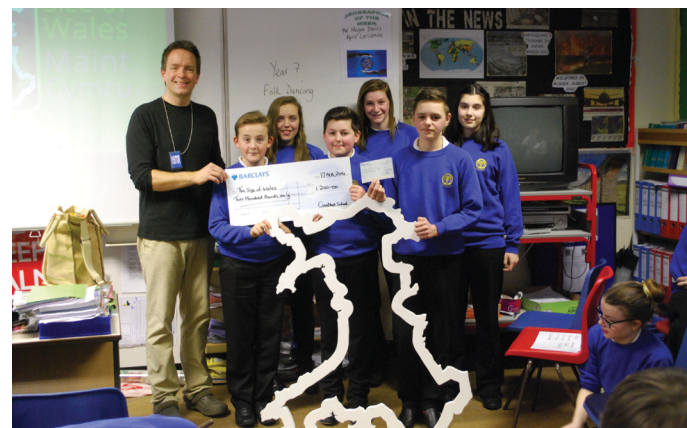
The pupils have raised over £150 to share between environmental charities.

Our Year 9 ESDGC Champions, Ellie Rehmetulla, Rhiannedd Williams, Rhys Kinsey-Jones, Ruth Lewis and Huda Muhammed, are currently setting up an Eco Club for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils and will be running workshops for other schools at an ESDGC conference in Carmarthen before Easter.



Mr. Nigel Little was welcomed back to the school to give a talk on rainforests and palm oil to Year 9 Geography classes.

He was presented with a cheque for £200, raised by the pupils during a non-uniform day. Size of Wales is a charity that aims to bring everyone in Wales together to help sustain an area of tropical forest the size of Wales as part of a national response to climate change.



The write stuff



ENGLISH
SAESNEG

Pupils who attend this weekly lunchtime club are involved in a number of competitions:-

- Rotary Young Writer of the Year;
- Poetry Games;
- Foyle Young Poet of the Year.

Elizabeth Perkins, Rhydian Stephens, Jessica Mackechnie and Adam Wake have successfully gained membership to Neath Port Talbot's Young Writers' Squad. Caitlin Tems, Katrina Richards, Eve Jones, Ajay Bater, Mai Rees, Vrishank Shrivastava, Ellie Rehmatulla all had their entries published for the Poetry Games competition.



Published writer and academic from Cardiff University, Jamie Woods, will be hosting a workshop after school on March 19th.

Only Kids Aloud



MUSIC
CERDDORIAETH

Lani Codd, of Year 8, gained one of the seventy places across Wales in the Only Kids Aloud choir, following an audition in front of Only Men Aloud conductor, Tim Rhys Evans.

During her first rehearsal she was told that the choir will have many engagements to fulfil, the most exciting of which is a trip to South Africa to perform with The Cape Town Opera this April.



A bone-chilling trip back in time



HISTORY
HANES

The History Department organised an educational visit to Cardiff Castle as part of their GCSE medicine course.

Pupils discovered more about the blood-curdling techniques of medieval medicine from the Barber Surgeon, tales of the Black Death,

treating battle wounds, setting bones and pulling teeth, not to mention the blood letting and leeches. They were fully engrossed by all of the gory details.

High-flying pupils on the right path



SKILLS
SGILIAU

Three Year 10 students recently attended a Pathways Taster Day at Oxford University.

This was designed to give academically gifted students an introduction to university life. The day involved a discovery hunt around Oxford followed by a tour and lunch at Worcester College.

Our pupils then joined a group from a school in Essex to take part in an Oxford style seminar.



Caoimhe Murphy, Alice Reynolds and Ellen Land

Equipped for every challenge

Staff in our Reprographics Room have opened a thriving Stationary Shop for pupils to purchase any classroom equipment they may need.

Stock includes pencil case fillers such as pens, pencils, rulers, protractors and compasses. The shop also offers an emergency exam kit and Cwmtawe branded USB memory sticks.



Back to Backs



HISTORY
HANES

In February, 30 Year 9 pupils visited Birmingham to see the last surviving court of back to backs; houses built literally back-to-back around a communal courtyard.

Pupils were taken on a fascinating guided tour, moving from the 1840s through to the 1970s, and discovered the lives of some of the former residents who crammed into these small houses to live and work.



Year 11 pupils take to the cat walk

On 18th February we hosted our Annual Prom Music and Fashion Show, giving pupils the opportunity to perform, whether it be modelling or singing or performing musical items for our sell out audience.

It was a very enjoyable evening where the Year 11 year group were raising money for their forthcoming school prom which is to be held at the Manor Park on Thursday 19th June.

Between ticket sales, programmes and the raffle our brilliant pupils helped raise £643.87

which will contribute greatly toward funding their school prom.

A big thank you goes out to all teachers, ICT staff, the music department, support staff and pupils who helped behind the scenes before hand and on the night. A massive thank you also to Hanson Hire of Windsor Road, Neath and Off The Peg of Cilfrew, Neath who allowed our pupils to model their Prom wear.

Our pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience and already have fond memories of the event.



Year 9 pupils get with the program



ICT
TECHNOLEG GWYBODAETH

On 19th & 20th March, twenty-seven Year 9 pupils visited Swansea University.

Pupils took part in a two day workshop focused on computer programming. The first day pupils were given the chance to build, create and program a car using Mindstorm NXT Lego. The final day was an introduction to programming.

The pupils were involved in creating an interactive story using code in Python.

The course was an excellent experience for the pupils who will go on to further develop their knowledge and understanding of programming during their GCSE studies.

Ponds and plant life in the park



ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

GWYDDONIAETH YR AMGYLCHEDD

Year 10 Environmental Science pupils spent two days at Margam Discovery Centre, practising survey skills and investigation techniques.

Pupils used quadrats to compare grassland sites, carried out investigation and role-play on siting a wind farm, set mammal traps and

carried out pond dipping using indicator species to monitor pollution.

It wasn't all work though and pupils also enjoyed a bonfire with marshmallows, singing and ghost stories!



Pupils have floods of fun at Noah's Ark Farm



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

ASTUDIAETHAU CREFYDDOL

In February, forty two Year 7 pupils visited Noah's Ark Zoo Farm in Bristol.

The aim of the trip was to develop their knowledge and understanding of stewardship and the environment.

Pupils watched an animal show featuring live animals and attended an educational workshop on conservation.

This raised pupils' awareness of the role that they can play in protecting and maintaining our natural environment and pupils even had the opportunity to handle a range of animals such as rabbits, baby chicks and even a snake.



Pupils aboard the ark

In March, Year 10 pupils attended the Pontardawe Art Centre to view the film 'The Butler'. The film develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of the GCSE unit 'prejudice.'

Pop Art



ART

CELF

Pictured below are the three gifted winners of the Year 7 Eisteddfod Art competition.

In Year 7 pupils have been studying Pop Art and were required to complete an Andy Warhol style print of a Welsh celebrity.

The year group as a whole produced many outstanding pieces of work but Olivia Cornelius, Emily Richards and Ciara Williams claimed the top three positions along with points for their house teams.



Pictured below are the talented Year 8 artists Cameron Williams, William Walsh and Wallis Thomas who have won the '3D Australian Creature' competition.

As part of their Aboriginal Art studies pupils were asked to create a 3D creature over several weeks as an extended homework task.

The response from the year group as a whole was outstanding making it difficult to choose the winners. Eventually the three outstanding responses shown below were selected. Each pupil was presented in assembly with a selection of art equipment by Headteacher Mr Hitchings and Head of Art, Mr Herdman.



Communicating success with BASEWALES



A thrilling morning of activities saw Year 9 students practise and demonstrate team working skills, utilise thinking and listening skills, communicate confidently and make effective decisions.

By identifying their individual skills, students were enabled to fully participate in each team task. Speaking about the BaseWales event, Mr Hitchings said “The feedback from pupils and teachers alike was overwhelmingly positive”.

Reflecting at the end of the activity, one student commented that “Communication is an important factor of life”, another said “We worked well together. We learnt how to co-operate. Everybody took part”. One group member realised “I should pick roles that suit



my skills” and “need to work better to complete the team challenge”.

The tasks gave students the opportunity to practise and improve their work related skills which met the Learning Outcomes.

Pupils set record numbers in Maths Challenge



The Mathematics department entered 25 pupils from Year 11 and 20 pupils from Year 10 for the 2014 Intermediate Mathematics Challenge. The challenge is a national competition run by the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust to identify the top mathematicians in the country.

From a national entry of over 200,000 pupils, only the top 6% receive gold certificates, the next 13% receive silver awards and the following 21% receive bronze awards.

The School’s pupils were very successful, gaining 3 gold, 5 silver and 8 bronze awards. The successful candidates were:

YEAR 11	
GOLD	William Thompson, James Battell, Owen Harris
SILVER	Ruby Williams, Saskia Buck
BRONZE	Aron Lewis, Emily Jones, Katie Morgans, Madison Stevens, Daniel Davies
YEAR 10	
SILVER	Ioan Clarke, Sam Stubbings, Gabrielle Hornshaw
BRONZE	Finley Topping, Megan Blackford, Leah Sell

William Thompson also received a best performance in school certificate.

Cwmtawe recognised for top rugby talent



Cwmtawe were recently awarded the WRU School of Rugby Award for their dedication to developing and promoting rugby at the school.

Cwmtawe is one of 22 schools throughout Wales to be recognised for their commitment to developing and promoting Rugby Union within the school. The school runs year group rugby teams with teachers from the PE and other departments giving of their time and energy to ensure good quality rugby coaching.

Cwmtawe was also recently recognised as one of the top six schools for producing rugby talent in the whole of Wales.



Former Cwmtawe pupils and Ospreys stars, Dan Baker and Justin Tipuric with previous Headteacher Mr. A. T. Jones, receiving the WRU School of Rugby Award

International Slavery Museum



Year 9 pupils visited the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool during February to see artwork, photographs and artefacts linked to slavery throughout the ages.

The pupils also took part in a workshop called ‘Understanding Transatlantic Slavery’. During the workshop they had a chance to handle historical artefacts linked to slavery.

The evening was spent exploring Liverpool and visiting the cathedral.

Youth Orchestra



Emily Jones of Year 11 has been awarded the prestigious honour of being selected for the National Youth Orchestra of Wales.

She joins fellow Cwmtawe pupil Cathryn Jenkins who is already part of the Orchestra.

Year 6 prove their strength in numbers



MATHEMATICS

MATHEMATEG

Ten teams of Year 6 pupils from local Primary Schools were invited to compete against each other in Cwmtawe's first ever Numeracy Skills Day.

The teams were made up of pupils deemed able and talented mathematicians from the surrounding area. They worked on a range of fun-filled tasks including planning a visit to the Eisteddfod and working with a foreign exchange trip to Paris. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the challenges and activities. The inaugural winners were Rhos Primary School with Ysgol Gynradd Trebannws finishing as runners up.

Cwmtawe holds Skills Days for Year 6 pupils throughout the academic year as part of its



transitional programme. These days consist of giving pupils a chance to experience the varied curriculum at Cwmtawe including music, numeracy, sports and technology leading up to an induction day in the Summer.



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