



PARENTS' NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2015

CYLCHLYTHYR RHINI

RHAGFYR 2015

Dear Parents, / Annwyl Rhieni,

As we reach the end of another busy term, I am delighted to bring you our latest newsletter outlining various school events and the many successes of our pupils. I really hope you enjoy reading it.

I'd also like to take the opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Have a relaxing break and I look forward to welcoming pupils back at school on Tuesday 5th January.

Ar ddiwedd tymor prysur arall mae'n bleser gennyf gyflwyno ein cylchlythyr diweddaraf yn amlinellu digwyddiadau amrywiol yr ysgol a llwyddiannau ein disgyblion. Hyderaf y byddwch yn mwynhau ei ddarllen.

Hoffwn hefyd ddal ar y cyfle i ddymuno nadolig llawer a blwyddyn newydd lewyrchus i chi. Gobeithio y cewch wyliau ymlaciedig ac edrychaf ymlaen at groesawu disgyblion yn ôl i'r ysgol ar ddydd Mawrth, 5 Ionawr.

Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. C. L. Hitchings

Headteacher / Prifathro

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY / DYDDIADAU AR GYFER Y DYDDIADUR

14 December	Year 10 & 11 Trip to Auschwitz
15 December	Year 11 Gower College Transition Day
18 December	Last day of term for pupils
4 January	INSET Day
5 January	First day of term for pupils
6 January	January GCSEs start
12 January	PTA meeting – 5.30 p.m.
20 January	Year 10 History Trip to Cardiff
27 January	Year 11 Parents' Evening
2 February	Year 9 Options Evening (FGLSWEP Classes) - 6.00 p.m.
3 February	Year 9 Options Evening (CBH Classes) - 6.00 p.m.
4 February	Year 7 Geography Trip to Margam
10 February	Prom Fashion Show
12 February	Last Day for Pupils
12-19 February	Ski Trip to Austria
15-19 February	Half Term
22 February	INSET Day
23 February	First day back for pupils
24 February	Year 9 Parents' Evening
24 February	NPTC Afan Open Evening - 5.00 p.m. - 8.00 p.m.
25 February	NPTC Neath Open Evening - 5.00 p.m. - 8.00 p.m.
1 March	School Eisteddfod
4 March	Year 8 Religious Studies Trip to Jewish Museum
10 March	Year 7 Religious Studies Trip to Noah's Ark
18 March	Year 10 Big Bang Science Trip
23 March	Year 10 Parents' Evening
24 March	Last Day of Spring Term

Master Debaters!

Two Year 11 pupils, Lewis Jones and Olivia Rees, competed in the Wales Schools Debating Championships. They debated against nine schools from the local area who were mostly sixth form pupils. Both pupils won awards for 'Outstanding Individual Speaker.' Well done!



Mock Trials

A group of Year 10 and 11 pupils have appeared in Cardiff Crown Court.... as part of the Bar Mock Trials competition. This involved pupils 'mooting' two cases in front of real judges. As part of their preparations, pupils were mentored by two barristers from Iscoed Chambers and also had the opportunity to visit Swansea Magistrates' Court to get a taste of advocacy. Pupils excelled, winning 2 of their 3 heats against sixth form teams.



An Afternoon with Jasper Fforde

On Tuesday 24th November, pupils from 9B and 9C went for an 'Afternoon with Jasper Fforde' in Pontardawe Library. This established and published author spoke to the classes about what it is like to be an author, his rise to fame and his latest novel 'Dragonslayer 3'. Jasper also read out sections from the pupils' own fantasy and horror stories and gave out prizes for the ones he judged to be best. Ten pupils were awarded signed, first-edition copies of Mr Fforde's new novel while the top three overall winners were also given gift vouchers for 'Waterstones'. Mr Fforde chose Melanie Ward's horror story 'Whispers on the Beach', Georgia Cornwall's brooding narrative 'The Dark Secret' and Oscar Cox's haunting tale entitled 'Dark Forest'.

Mr Fforde also held a 'Question and Answer' session with the pupils and afterwards, during refreshments, all pupils were given library cards and made 'Friends of the Library.' Our thanks goes to Pontardawe Library and Mr Fforde himself - hopefully some of our more reluctant readers will now dive into the wonderful world of fiction.

European Day of Languages 2015

European Day of Languages 2015 was celebrated in style with an action packed week of activities arranged in school. Every morning, for the week of 21st – 25th September, the Pupil Language Ambassadors (PLAs) took year group assemblies to promote languages and highlight forthcoming events and support that they will offer pupils studying a modern foreign language in Cwmtawe. The PLAs also produced a quiz for pupils to do during morning registration when they were not in an assembly. The winning registration class was 10MI who were presented with a prize.



Mr Mattick also placed various flags around the school for Year 7 pupils to complete a treasure hunt, ultimately to raise pupils' awareness of the many countries in the world and their corresponding flag, plus a greeting.

Thursday was a big hit in the canteen with a special European themed menu. The canteen was decorated with European flags and bunting and the kitchen staff wore hats and garlands to add to the atmosphere. There was also a variety of European music played in the hall whilst pupils and staff ate their lunch.

The canteen staff did not stop the celebrations on Thursday, but continued on Friday with free food tasting available in the hall at break time – what a picture on some faces trying an olive or some feta cheese for the first time!

The highlight for both staff and pupils during the week was the visit from two Swansea City AFC Premier League players. Bafé Gomis and Gerhard Tremmel came to school on Thursday to have a question and answer session with Year 10 and 11 pupils, plus 2 PLAs from Year 9. It was a resounding success and hopefully a start of a link which can be developed in the future.



School Production **Bugsy Malone**

Since September pupils and teachers have been diligently preparing for the school production of Bugsy Malone. Held during the first week of December, our talented actors, singers, dancers and musicians relished the opportunity to showcase their performance skills. The leading roles were performed by the following pupils:-

Bugsy Malone	Ben Jones (Year 7)
Fat Sam	Ross Dyson (Year 10)
Dandy Dan	Euan Renesto (Year 10)
Blousey	Ellie Davies (Year 10)
Tallulah	Alanna Rees (Year 10) and Seren Shaw (Year 9)
Fizzy	Mollie Shephard (Year 11)



Macmillan Coffee Morning

The Modern Foreign Languages department held an extended coffee morning in conjunction with the Macmillan cancer charity. Donations of 'European themed' refreshments, from baguettes and pâté to croissants and homemade cakes, were brought in by staff and a raffle was drawn, raising £115 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Merci! Danke! Diolch! Gracias! Grazie!



Charity Week

Staff and pupils got heavily involved in a variety of sponsored events and activities during Cwmtawe's annual charity week. Over £8,000 has been raised and we are supporting a number of local charities: Mr. X, Age Concern, Teenage Cancer Trust, Motor Neurone Disease, Air Ambulance Wales, Interact, Raising Lolly for Efan and Oli, PONTY foodbank, Goedgedacht charity in South Africa and local homeless charities.

The ingenuity of the pupils in devising ways of raising money knew no bounds. Amongst the diverse activities were a mud slide, leg waxing, a slave auction, singathon, staff versus pupils sports matches, raffles, cake stalls as well as sponsored activities such as climbing Pen y Fan mountain on the first Saturday of the half term holidays.



Rotary Young Chef

Harriet Sadler and Morgan Casey, Year 10, took part in the area round of the Rotary Young Chef Competition on 21st October, competing against Maes y Dderwen school. They both produced a very high standard of food, for which they should be congratulated. Harriet was the overall winner, with Morgan a close second. Harriet will now return to Maes y Dderwen in February for the district final.



Art / Celf

Pictured here are the talented Year 9 pupils who last term drew a colourful mural for the new Pontardawe Community Centre's Crèche. Aided by Miss Hughes, Mr. Herdman and Cwmtawe veteran teacher Mr. Evans, pupils completed the large scale mural over three days before being presented with certificates and vouchers by the Rotary Club during the opening ceremony. The gifted pupils involved were: Poppy Ubsdell, Seren Shaw, Chloe Mills, Emily Richards, Celyn Harding, Ciara Williams, Jack Baker, Rebecca Brunton, Zoe Laugharne, Kelly-Anne Duke and Emily Baines.



Visit to Margam Park

Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Dyslexia had a thrilling time in Margam. They enjoyed the mud challenge, getting waist deep in the mud. Jamie says 'the mountain walk was amazing'. Kian enjoyed 'coats flying in the air' because it was so windy. The night walk without torches was 'scary but fun' and holding the 'mice we had humanely caught in our traps was awesome' – Jamie, Alice, Ryan and Kyle. 'Feeding the donkeys was brilliant' say Ryan, Alice and Joe. 'The river walk was cold but fun' - Aaron

Also Daniel Williams from Year 9 and Year 10 pupils Aaron Baggridge and William Brown are well under way with completing their Duke of Edinburgh Award - cleaning the cycle track of litter and rubbish every Thursday. They have already collected nine full bags!

Cwmtawe Pupils Extend a Helping Hand

Pupils at Cwmtawe have taken part in two charity events to raise money for a school in Nepal which was devastated by the earthquake earlier this year. The groups climbed the highest mountain in South Wales, Pen y Fan, and cycled 30 miles from Pontardawe to Mumbles and back, raising over £1,000. The money will be donated to Mahendra Jyoti Higher Secondary School "Building Back Better" project. The aim of the project is to build a new earthquake resistant school with improved facilities, teacher training and resources which will provide the pupils with a better educational environment and future opportunities.



International Education Week

The school celebrated International Education Week by hosting language and business experts promoting the advantages of learning European languages.

On Tuesday 17th November, Year 9 pupils took part in a variety of workshops involving Business Language Champion Tim Penn, Alex Pickering from Germany's Goethe Institute and Student Language Ambassadors from Cardiff University.

Local businesses were represented by Swansea's award-winning translation business Wolfestone, and one of Pontardawe's major employers Wall Colmonoy. Wall Colmonoy is a global metals business based in the USA which emphasises the importance of languages in its European operations.

Presentation Evenings

Cwmtawe was proud again this year to present awards for the academic triumphs of pupils from across the school in recognition of their hard work over the last academic year.

The Whole School Presentation Evening was on October 22nd and staff, parents, and pupils enjoyed musical items and speeches from our current and outgoing Head Boy and Head Girl.

Every department in the school awarded one hard working pupil with an 'Achievement' prize and another with a 'Progress' award and some pupils also received plaques and cash prizes.

The GCSE Presentation Evening was held on 11th November and was our best attended event ever, with more pupils given awards for earning eight or more GCSEs than ever before.

It was a pleasure to see our '2015 leavers' returning and we wish them well in their future studies and careers.



Drama and History Trip

The Drama and History Department organised a day trip to the Dylan Thomas Theatre in Swansea to watch a play called 'Rosie's War'. This production told the emotional and endearing tale of Rosie Birch, a young girl evacuated from Liverpool to Swansea on the onset of the Second World War. The story followed Rosie during Wartime Wales, as she experienced the blackouts, rationing and the bombing.

After the production pupils went to the National Waterfront Museum. At the museum they participated in various activities designed to further enhance their knowledge and understanding of life on the home front during the Second World War.

Bin it Roadshow

The **Bin it!** roadshow visited the school as part of Cwmtawe's Healthy Schools programme.

Year 7 and 8 pupils enjoyed a dynamic presentation with a hard-hitting message. The school is now looking forward to more recycling and less litter!

Bin it! aims to inform young people aged 11-13 about the environmental cost and social issues surrounding discarded chewing gum.

Warning of the Dangers of Illegal Highs

The Youth Offending Team, PC Puckett and WACADA visited the school at the beginning of November to hold a roadshow warning parents and pupils of the dangers of legal highs.

Careers / Gyrfaoedd

Swansea College of Art, UWTSD, visited the school on the 20th November. University lecturers delivered an assembly to all Year 11 pupils on higher education opportunities in film and digital media. Pupils were given an insight into the different types of job opportunities available in media and the creative industry in the local area.

Children's Rights

Huda Mohammed and Lewis Jones recently represented Cwmtawe in the Children's Rights Unit celebration event. Both pupils delivered an outstanding presentation on the excellent contribution our school council makes to the school community. They shared their experiences of all the changes the council has been involved in and how they feel that pupil voice has made a difference.

Kick Boxing Champion

Victoria Perkins from Alltwen has won the kick boxing junior ISKA Welsh Championship and an ISKA southern area title.



Skills Days

Cwmtawe continued its primary schools transition programme with two more action-packed days; Sports Skills Day and Technology Skills Day.

Sports Skills Day consisted of an exciting menu of games and activities including rounders, athletics and gymnastics, courtesy of the PE Department. It was a welcome taster of PE and Games lessons at Cwmtawe.

On Technology Skills Day, pupils spent the day learning about the model design and construction work involved in building bridges. Divided into mixed teams, pupils designed and constructed their own bridges out of paper. The finished products were pitted against each other to find out which was the best design.

Cwmtawe holds several skills days for Year 6 pupils throughout the academic year as part of its primary schools transitional programme. These days give pupils a chance to experience the varied curriculum at the school including ICT, music, sports and technology, leading to an induction day in the Summer. The events also serve to build relationships and team-building skills between pupils of different schools before they join as next year's Year 7. The skills days are incredibly successful at easing pupils into life at Cwmtawe and are some of the most eagerly anticipated events in our school calendar.

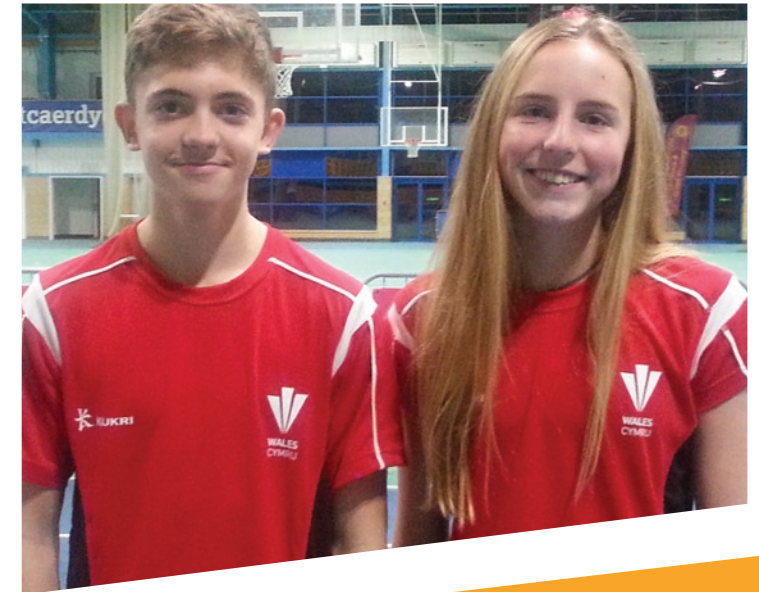


Table Tennis Champion

Tamlan Eastwood has been chosen to represent Wales in the national table tennis squad.

Welsh Schools Athletics

Olivia Michael and Thomas Slade are members of the Welsh schools athletics team and will compete in Glasgow against teams from other home nations.



German Christmas Markets

Year 10 pupils spent the last week visiting the Christmas markets of Bonn and Cologne. They enjoyed a festive advent trip on the river Rhine, savoring a three course meal. Pupils also tested their ice-skating skills in the open air at Bonn and visited the Winter Wonderland at one of Europe's largest theme parks in Phantasialand.



YSGOL GYMUNEDOL **CWMTAWE** COMMUNITY SCHOOL



Ffordd Parc Ynysderw, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4EG

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you are unhappy about something, please speak to your child's Head of Year in the first instance. Most matters can be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

If after speaking to the Head of Year you are still unhappy, ask to speak to the Deputy Headteacher. If the matter is still unresolved, then please make an appointment to speak to the Headteacher.

Our full complaints procedure is published on our website: www.cwmtawe.org



twitter.com/cwmtaweschool



facebook.com/cwmtaweschool



instagram.com/cwmtaweschool



youtube.com/cwmtaweschool



cwmtawe.org

Headteacher / Prifathro
Mr. C. L. Hitchings

Tel / Ffôn: (01792) 863200

Fax / Ffacs: (01792) 864773

Email / Epost: cwmtaweschool@npted.org

