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YSGOL GYMUNEDOL
CWMTAWE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

PARENTS' NEWSLETTER

Autumn - Winter 2022

CYLCHLYTHYR RHINI

Hydref - Gaeaf 2022

Dear Parents and Carers / Annwyl Rieni a Gofalwyr

At the beginning of a new year I would like to welcome pupils back to the school and hope you all had a relaxing break. I am delighted to bring you our latest newsletter, highlighting school events and the many successes of our pupils. I hope you enjoy reading it. Finally, I'd like to wish you all a happy and prosperous new year.

Ar gychwyn blwyddyn newydd hoffwn groesawu ein disgyblion yn ôl i'r ysgol gan obeithio i chi gyd fwynhau gwyliau ymlaciol. Mae'n bleser gennyf gyflwyno ein cylchlythyr diweddaraf sy'n amlinellu digwyddiadau'r ysgol a llwyddiannau niferus ein disgyblion. Hyderaf y byddwch yn mwynhau ei ddarllen. Yn olaf, hoffwn ddymuno blwyddyn newydd dda a llewyrchus i chi gyd.

Yours sincerely / Yn gywir

Mr. C.L. Hitchings

**HEADTEACHER /
PRIFATHRO**

BRASS BAND / BAND PRES

Just before Christmas, the school brass brought some Christmas cheer to staff as they entered the school building in the morning. They played a medley of carols whilst our senior prefects were on hand to treat staff to tea/coffee and mince pies.



ART TRIP / TAIH CELF

During October half-term the Art Department took GCSE pupils on a trip to Paris. Pupils visited the Pompidou Centre, the Musee D'Orsay and enjoyed a boat ride along the Seine. Pupils saw artworks by some of the world's greatest artists such as Van Gogh, Picasso and Andy Warhol. They also visited the Parc Asterix theme parc on their journey home.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY / DYDDIADAU AR GYFER Y DYDDIADUR

Mon 09 Jan	INSET day for pupils
Tues 10 Jan	First day back for pupils
Wed 11 Jan	English Literature GCSE – Unit 1
Mon 16 Jan - Fri 20 Jan	Year 11 Science GCSE Practical Exams
Thurs 19 Jan	PTA meeting – 5.30 p.m.
Mon 23 Jan - Fri 27 Jan	Year 11 GCSE Oral Exams
Mon 23 Jan - Fri 3 Feb	Year 11 English GCSE Oral Assessments
Mon 30 Jan - Thurs 2 Feb	Year 11 GCSE Group Oral Exams

CHARITY WEEK / WYTHNOS ELUSEN

Charity week, which was held during the Autumn half term, raised a grand total of £3,516.46.

Year 7 = £825.89 / Year 8 = £735.60 / Year 9 = £872.61 / Year 10 = £670.40 / Year 11 = £407.96

Representatives on the school council chose the charities for their year groups to support.

Year 7 held a singathon to raise money for the Mr. X Appeal.

Year 8 held a danceathon in the school hall to raise money for the Cwmtawe Pupil Wellbeing Fund.

Year 9 held a Quizathon to raise money for the Leon Heart Foundation. It proved a huge success with the pupils. The winners were Soffia, Cobi, Freya, Evan and Iwan from 9E. Second place was shared by 3 groups - Freya, Molly-Mae, Lena, Beth (9Y); Fynnan, Olly, Charlotte and Oliver (9Y) and Niamh and Katie (9I)

Here are the winners receiving a large bar of dairy milk for their outstanding efforts.



A kahootathon was held by Year 10 to raise money for Welsh Air Ambulance, whilst Year 11 held a music hour to boost the funds of our local food banks.

AFTER SCHOOL COOKING CLUB / CLWB COGINIO AR ÔL YSGOL

Pupils in Year 9 and Year 10 have been taking part in 4 weeks of after school cooking sessions, after the school were awarded a grant by Neath Port Talbot Community Food Connections. The grant has allowed us to provide ingredients for pupils to make enchiladas, cottage pie, bread and butter pudding and pasta and meatballs. After Christmas it will be the turn of pupils in Year 7 and Year 8.



SEREN DEBATING TEAM / TÎM DADLAU SEREN

A team of Year 8 pupils attended a debating competition at the Princess Royal Theatre in Port Talbot on the 22nd November. Ruby Davies, Emilee Cockings, Matilda Davies and Freya Walker were the four chosen speakers, with Finn Coleman and Ester Adebayo as support. A 'SEREN' initiative, the competition pitted pupils against other schools from the locality, debating a range of contentious topics. Cwmtawe were drawn against Ystalyfera and had to support the notion that 'Prisons should focus on rehabilitation'. It was a closely contested debate, with Ystalyfera just edging out Cwmtawe. The victors would also go on to reach the final, eventually being beaten by overall winners, St Joseph's RC School.

Despite losing, Cwmtawe's team represented the school admirably and will be able to use the skills learnt from the competition in future lessons and oracy assessments. Da iawn to all involved!



NATIVITY! THE MUSICAL

A long-awaited school production proved to be extremely successful with the pupils and local community. 'Nativity! The Musical' got everyone in a Christmas mood as they left the school hall humming and singing 'Sparkle and Shine'. Indeed, Thursday's show was a complete sell out. There were outstanding performances by all pupils and our very own Mr. Lear, who played the wonderful and wacky Mr. Poppy.



SKILLS DAYS / DYDD SGILIAU

Year 6 pupils enjoyed two action-packed days at the beginning of November when they joined us for our Sports Skills Day and Technology Skills Day.

Sports Skills Day consisted of an exciting range of games and activities including rugby, racquet skills and basketball, courtesy of the physical education department and our sports ambassadors. It was a welcome taster of physical education at Cwmtawe School.

Our technology department also ran a very successful skills day where pupils baked cookies, created a pen holder and stitched bunting for a school party! They were extremely excited to use the fantastic array of equipment in our kitchens and workshops.

We hold several skills days for Year 6 throughout the academic year as part of our primary school transition programme. The 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.



WREATH MAKING / GWNEUD ADDURNIADAU NADOLIG

Staff enjoyed an after school festive wreath making workshop in the run up to Christmas.



GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKET / MARCHNAD NADOLIG ALMAENEG

Mrs Keane's Year 10 German class visited the Frankfurt German Christmas Markets in Birmingham. The market was fun, lively, festive and had a great mixture of the sights, sounds & atmosphere of a traditional German Christmas Market.



FRENCH / FFRANGEG

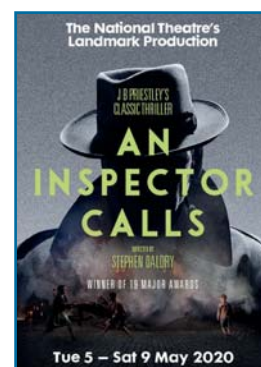
Year 8 and Year 9 pupils have been writing letters to pupils to a school in Brive, France. They were delighted to receive responses from their French penpals.



ENGLISH / SAENSEG

THEATRE TRIP / TRIP I'R THEATR

On Thursday 20th October, 100 pupils went on an 'Out of Hours Learning' trip to Cardiff's New Theatre to see a performance of J.B. Priestley's famous play 'An Inspector Calls'. This is one of the texts that Year 10 will be examined on next Summer as part of the GCSE English Literature course and Year 11 pupils will also write about it in their GCSE drama exam. It was a fantastic production that was enjoyed by all pupils and staff – a real treat to be back in a theatre after the disruption caused to the industry by 'Covid-19'.



WORLD CUP / CWPAN Y BYD

Pupils who earned the highest points on Class Charts were rewarded with VIP hospitality to watch the Wales v Iran game in the World Cup. They enjoyed watching the game in the gym whilst savouring some light refreshments. Sadly, their cheering was not enough to spur Wales on to a win!



Chwaraeon / Sports

BASKETBALL / PÊL-FASGED

In November our Year 7/8 and Year 9/10 basketball teams competed at the Neath Port Talbot heats of the Basketball Wales School's tournament. Both teams emerged undefeated and now progress to the regional heats in the new year.

The Year 7/8 team has also been successful in gaining a place in the Junior NBA tournament due to take place at Cardiff Metropolitan University in March.

They'll soon be sporting their new kit sponsored by Admiral and designed by Sportec! We think they deserve it due to their hard work and dedication to training.

The squads now boast three Welsh internationals. Congratulations to Idris O'Brien who has been selected for the under 15s; and Gabe Potter and Teifion Arber who have been selected for the under 13s. We're very proud of their achievements.



GIRLS FOOTBALL / PÊL-DROED MERCHED



Our Year 8 girls competed in the Regional Swansea City Football Club 6 a side tournament at Coleg Sir Gar having come runner up in the earlier Neath Port Talbot round.

Image opposite of our Year 7 girls just after they'd beaten Dwr Y Felin School by 6 goals to 0.



BOYS RUGBY / RYGBI BECHGYN

Here are pictures of successful Cwmtawe rugby teams in 2022.

The Ospreys Bowl finalists in 2022 and the year 9 Ospreys Plate winners.



ART COMPETITION / CYSTADLEUAETH CELF

Pictured opposite are this years' excellent entries for the annual Welsh celebrity exhibition which is run by Gallery Simpson that is situated in High Street, Swansea. Pupils had the option of creating a Pet Portrait or a portrait of this year's celebrity - Rhys Ifans.



PLATFORM

The mental health and societal change charity *Platform* have been working with a small group of Year 11 pupils for the last 10 weeks of the Autumn term. They have been working through the 'State of Mind' program that aims to give students tips on managing their own stress and anxiety levels.

NPT'S YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH FORUM / FFORWM IECHYD MEDDWL POBL IFANC

This new mental health board promotes the importance of being kind online. Discussions are centred on young people's mental health and how we as schools can support those struggling. Year 10 pupils Joe Flint and Elinor Aiden represent the school on this board and feed back to pupils in Cwmtawe.



FLOURISH

The Flourish Project is a project designed to help young people develop healthy self-esteem as well as mental and emotional well-being. Research proves that there is a correlation between students' mental wellbeing and their academic progress. Happy children thrive and unhappy children do not achieve their full potential. This programme is run as hour sessions by a trained facilitator over eight weeks. Topics covered are beliefs, mindset, social media, self-esteem, dreams and aspirations, goal setting. The project gives staff a clearer understanding of some of the key concepts about pupils' wellbeing.

The project is sponsored by Edenstone Foundation.

YEAR 7 - MEET THE FORM TUTOR / BLWYDDYN 7 - CYFARFOD YR ATHRAWON DOSBARTH

"Meet the Form Tutor" evening was introduced this year to provide parents with an opportunity to meet their child's form tutor, provide feedback about how their child has settled into Cwmtawe School and answer any other questions that parents had. Parents were also able to visit their child's form room and communal area and meet other key staff.

PEER MENTORING / MENTORA CYFOEDION

Every Year 7 pupil has had the opportunity to meet with a peer mentor during a registration session. Year 7 pupils were able to have a one to one session to discuss their personal journey in moving from primary to secondary school and to find out about the extra-curricular activities available. Peer mentors also offer extra support within the school. There was a wonderful atmosphere in all sessions.



2022 GCSE RESULTS / CANLYNIADAU TGAU

This is the first year that pupils have taken formal examinations since 2019 and more than eight out of ten pupils in last year's Year 11 achieved 5A*- C grades, with two thirds also achieving this with English, Mathematics and Science. Over a quarter achieved five or more GCSEs at the highest A* or A grade level.

Delighted headteacher, Mr. Lee Hitchings reported to the media last Summer that "the whole school community is celebrating. These are excellent results for Cwmtawe Community School in what has been an extremely difficult two years, due to unprecedented disruption to their education."

"This has been an excellent year group - the results are thoroughly deserved, reflecting the hard work of pupils, teachers and support staff. I'm sure that parents will be very proud of the young people's achievements, and we wish our students well as they go on to further education or start other careers".

The school's results included some exceptional individual achievements:-

Beth Jones 11 A*, 3A

Jack Powell 11A*, 1A

Evie Norris 11A*, 3A

Evie Matthews 10A*, 2A

Owen Chilcott 10A*, 1A

Pranaya Vaidhaya 9A*, 4A

Darcie Priestley 8A* 3A

Katie Richards 8A*, 3A

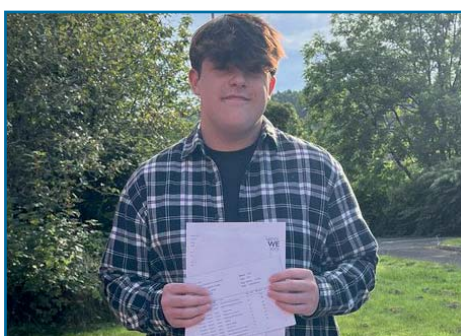
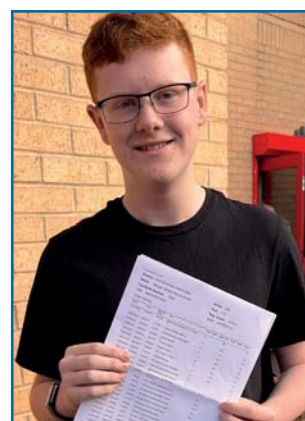
Eva Campbell 7A*, 5A

Jacob Harris 7A*, 1A, 4B

Morgan Amirat 6A*, 7A

Joshua Young 5A*, 5A

Pictured are pupils celebrating an excellent set of GCSE results last August.



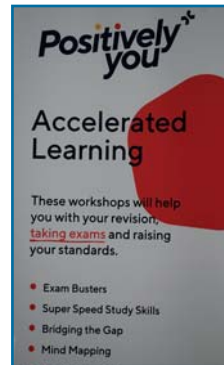
GEOGRAPHY / DAEARYDDIAETH

Year 11 pupils studying GCSE Geography have been out collecting data for their NEA. On the first day they used transects to investigate changes in width, depth, velocity and load along the length of the River Sawdde. A second day was spent in Swansea comparing quality of life in different areas of the city.



PASTORAL DAY / DYDD BUGEILIOL

Year 11 had an exciting health and wellbeing day, learning important life skills. They learnt about knife crime, mental health, road safety, and a whole lot more.



POP-UP BOOK STORE / SIOP LYFRAU

As a school we are grateful to Ty'r Gwrhyd bookstore in Pontardawe for bringing their pop-up book stall to the school. Pupils were delighted to spend book vouchers they had received under the Welsh Government's scheme to promote reading for pleasure. You can buy or order Welsh and English books from the shop which is in the heart of Pontardawe. It shares a building with Pontardawe Library, which is situated behind the art centre.



LANGUAGES DAY / DYDD IEITHOEDD

At Cwmtawe, a whole week is dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of languages. Pupils enjoyed meals with a European theme in the school dining hall and took part in quizzes during registration. Staff and pupils were also encouraged to greet each other in different European languages to celebrate, respect and learn more about the diverse cultures within Europe. In addition to this, there was also a European Day of Languages 'showstopper bake off' competition which pupils thoroughly enjoyed creating at home. 1st prize went to Cai Lewis in Year 7, 2nd prize went to Oscar Horne in Year 8 and 3rd prize was shared by Poppy Haggerty and Chloe Mansell in Year 9. Some Year 7 pupils also completed a flag hunt around the school building to discover different greetings in a variety of languages.

Two pupil language ambassadors from Year 10 (Madeleine Herdman and Isabelle Jones) also did a fantastic job of delivering key stage 3 assemblies throughout the week. The opportunity to apply to become a pupil language ambassador has now been opened up to Year 9 pupils.

During modern foreign language lessons pupils had the opportunity to 'dress up' and have their photos taken in 'photo booth' style and staff played their part by arranging a coffee morning on the Friday, with delicious snacks from all parts of Europe which raised over £100 for Macmillan's Cancer Appeal.

7U, now 8U have also been corresponding with pupils in a school in France. 7U received letters from them and have since sent letters back out to them. Now in 8U, pupils are eagerly awaiting a second response. Pupils both in France and Cwmtawe were thrilled to receive letters.



LEON'S GARDEN / GARDD LEON

We are extremely proud to celebrate the opening of a new sensory study garden on the 13th October 2022. The garden was developed in memory of Leon Montanari, who was a pupil at Cwmtawe Community School. This project is a collaboration between the Leon Heart Fund and EdenStone Foundation. The new outdoor space is a wonderful addition to the ALN department and is loved by all the children and staff.

To celebrate the opening of the garden we welcomed surprise visitors - three Welsh rugby players – Justin Tipuric, Dan Baker and Duncan Jones.

Cwmtawe is grateful to everyone who supported us on our special day and would like to give a special thank you to Julie Montanari, Leon's mother, and the Edenstone Foundation.



SEREN NETWORK / RHWYDWAITH SEREN

Seren is a Welsh Government initiative dedicated to helping Wales' brightest students achieve their full academic potential and support their education pathway into leading universities in Wales, the UK, and overseas. Many pupils from Cwmtawe have been fortunate to benefit from this project. Here is a report by 3 of our pupils.

Hello, I am Emma Thomas and I am in Year 10. I am grateful to be part of the Seren Network and have so many creative opportunities. The Seren Masterclasses take place once a week and the majority are online but there are some face-to-face sessions which are great as we can mix with new people from other schools. I decided to take psychology as I wanted to have the chance to learn about something new that I may not be able to do in the future. So far, we have learnt about the brain, phobias and different types of therapies. This is very interesting as we do lots of fun and interactive tasks which allows us to have a good time whilst learning. I have a great teacher who is very enthusiastic about her subject. I have enjoyed learning about how the brain works and how it can affect people's thoughts and acts. I am excited to continue learning more about the human mind and behaviour in the near future.

Hello, I am Seren Thair and I am a Year 10 pupil in Cwmtawe and have been taking part in a series of opportunities with the Seren Network. Out of the many different options of masterclasses for the Autumn term, I chose humanities which covers topics in geography and history, both of which I'm exceedingly passionate about and took as my GCSE options. For the past 4 weeks I have participated in online classes which have covered geography and from next week forward for another 4 weeks I will start on the History side of my course. Our main focus has been on climate change and how it is affecting our planet and what we as young people can do to reduce these factors at home. I am very grateful to have been offered such a special and beneficial opportunity.

Hello, I'm Sofia Bajada and I chose to do law in the autumn term as I thought it would be a valuable experience to learn a new topic. So far, I have found the course very interesting, and I have particularly enjoyed the face-to-face sessions as we get to interact with new people and visit the college! My favourite thing we have learnt so far is homicide, as I have enjoyed looking at different cases.

Hello, my name is Isabel O'Sullivan. I have been offered the chance once a week to have an online teams call with a physics teacher in St Joseph's sixth form. In these calls we have been speaking about radiation from beta particles and how to block the radiation, as well as magnets and the effects they have on electricity and speakers. We have also been learning about Cern, a science lab in Switzerland which is funded by countries all over the world to help discover more about nuclear physics. These scientists will then give away their findings for free. This has been a very insightful and interesting course and if given the opportunity I would definitely do this again.



ANNUAL FUN RUN / RAS HWYL BLYNYDDOL

Everyone welcomed the return of the PTA fun run this year. It has become an eagerly anticipated event in our school calendar. Both pupils and staff made an outstanding effort to dress up and raise money for the PTA, as can be seen from the images below. Funds raised are used to enhance provision for your children. In recent years the PTA has funded resources, pupil rewards, presentations as well as new sports equipment.



SKILLS DAY / DYDD SGILIAU

Year 6 pupils recently enjoyed a day of fun activities in preparation for their first year in Cwmtawe next year. Pupils took part in creating a radio jingle, a poster and a video presentation to the theme of 'Happy' by Pharrell Williams. The day was packed full of opportunities for our new pop stars and designers to express their creativity. Two action-packed skills days will take place at the beginning of November when they will join us again for our Sports Skills Day and Technology Skills Day.



Chwaraeon / Sports

NATIONAL WELSH GIRLS RUGBY TEAM / TÎM RYGBI MERCHED CENEDLAETHOL CYMRU

At the beginning of September, a group of girls watched the Girls Welsh National Rugby Team training at the Vale Hotel before leaving to compete in the Rugby World Cup. They enjoyed learning new rugby techniques and taking selfies with the players. Our pupils wished them well in their ventures in the World Cup.



BOYS RUGBY / RYGBI BECHGYN

The image opposite shows our boys from Years 9 and Year 10 who have been selected for the Swansea Valley Boys under 15's team. Congratulations to all!

NETBALL / PÊL-RWYD

Congratulations to Sophia Jeremiah (Year 8) Soffia Haeney (Year 9) and Lillia Jones (Year 8) on being selected for the Afan Nedd Tawe under 14's netball squad.



Head Girl Lola Thair and Year 10 pupil Megan Hamer have been selected to the Afan Nedd Tawe under 16s netball squad.

BASKETBALL / PÊL-FASGED

Year 8 pupils Teifion Arber, Gabriel Potter and Idris O'Brien have been selected to the Year 8 boys Wales basketball squad with Idris O'Brien having been selected to the under 15s national Welsh basketball squad.



GIRLS FOOTBALL / PÊL-DROED MERCHED

Year 10 pupil Emma Thomas has played for Wales in the under 15's national team against Serbia. Cwmtawe is extremely proud of her success.

WALES NATIONAL RUGBY TEAM / TÎM RYGBI CENEDLAETHOL CYMRU

Congratulations to former pupil Joe Hawkins on his call up to the Welsh international squad. He recently captained the under 20s and we are eagerly anticipating his senior international debut in the Autumn internationals.

The image opposite shows Joe as a boy supporting the national team.



LADIES WELSH NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM / TÎM PÊL-DROED CENEDLAETHOL Y MERCHED

Pupils from Years 10 and Year 9 enjoyed watching an enthralling game between Wales and Bosnia & Herzegovina. They were delighted to witness a Welsh win. Alas, qualifying for the Euros was not to be as the Welsh team lost the following game to Switzerland.

MATHEMATICS / MATHEMATEG

- 170 pupils took their GCSE Mathematics exams in November.
- Students have been attending subject support sessions during lunchtimes and after school since September to prepare for these examinations.
- Targeted students also attend Bootcamp sessions during registration on Tuesday - Friday mornings.
- Their results are expected in January 2023.



LEARNING ABOUT OUR PAST / DYSGU AM EIN GORFFENNOL

Nearly fifty Year 7 pupils thoroughly enjoyed taking part in an interactive Victorian experience. It was a unique opportunity to experience live theatre in an innovative form. *Theatr na Nog* is one of Wales' most exciting theatre companies, and with *The Trial of Elgan Jones*, pupils needed to listen, consider and collaborate before delivering a necessary verdict. They were the jury for a 14 year old Elgan who was charged with poaching, theft and murder on the Margam Estate. A young boy's life hung in the balance and the pupils' judgement would be the difference between life and death.

They found Elgan Jones guilty of trespassing but not guilty of thief and murder!



LUNCHTIME CLUBS / CLWBIAU AMSER CINIO

A wide range of clubs are held during lunch hours, with something to suit everyone.

CICS: CHRISTIANS IN CWMTAWE SCHOOL / CRISTNOGION YN YSGOL CWMTAWE

CiCS has made its long-awaited return to Cwmtawe! New and old members have come together to immerse themselves in the lived experience of members of the local religious community. CiCS is an all-inclusive club held every Tuesday; providing opportunities to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose and their influence on human life today. The welcoming environment allows all learners to explore belief systems in an exciting way. Learners will be challenged to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in light of what they have experienced. Will you take the challenge?



UKULELE CLUB / CLWB UKULELE

There is an ukulele class to suit all levels – staff and pupils alike. Here is a picture of the Year 7s club.

SPORTS / CHWARAEON

Clubs and training are held during lunch hours. Here is a picture of one of the lunchtime fitness classes.



ECO-CLUB / CLWB ECO

Every Monday lunchtime there is an Eco-club in technology with Miss Ellis and Miss Davis. We have been busy completing an eco-audit to help plan out activities for the year and keep Cwmtawe as a Platinum Eco-School. Pupils have been re-using socks to make a range of pumpkin decorations, they also help run the uniform swap shop and are looking at other swap shop opportunities such as books and games. We are always looking for new members from all year groups so come and join on Monday's in T3.



NEW TOILETS / TAI BACH NEWYDD

Over the Summer holidays, our pupil toilets have been completely renovated. We worked closely with our School Council, visited other 'new build' schools and spoke to contractors to devise options. The School Council made the final decision on colours and finishes which we think look fantastic!



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE / TREFN CWYNO

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 please make an appointment to speak to the Headteacher. Our full complaints procedure is published on our website www.cwmtawe.org



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