



SUPER SONIC AEROSPACE BRISTOL



By Miss Eveleigh

As part of STEM week, 45 students from Years 7 and 8 visited Aerospace Bristol where they were able to learn about the fascinating history of aviation from the very first flight of the Wright Brothers through to present day aircraft.

As 2018 saw the celebration of 100 years of the RAF, students were also able to visit the hangars which were originally built in 1917 by the War Office to house the aircraft used by fighter squadrons before they were sent to the front line in France. These have now been converted into the present day museum where our students were also able to view aeroplanes used in World Wars I and II.

A highlight for everyone was being allowed to board an actual British Airways Concorde aeroplane, almost 15 years after its last flight.

Students attended a workshop where their task was to plan an airline business and plane design that would make more profit than that achieved by Concorde in the past. They did this by designing where the aisle and seats would be located on the plane and what type of seats they were. Special mention must be given to the group of girls who matched Concorde's profit and the group who thought it would be a good idea to put additional seats on the wings, giving a whole new meaning to the expression 'winging it'! Everyone made a great effort to solve this challenge and an excellent learning experience was had by all.

SCHOOL COUNCIL



By Trudy Pounder

At the beginning of term we redesigned the School Council room and agreed on a new logo which was designed by a Year 9 member of the council.

As a group we have met with the Director of Education to discuss the proposals for school reorganisation in Pontypridd. In this meeting we had the opportunity to put forward our views about the 21st century schools project. We also met with a Estyn inspector to discuss health and well-being in our school.

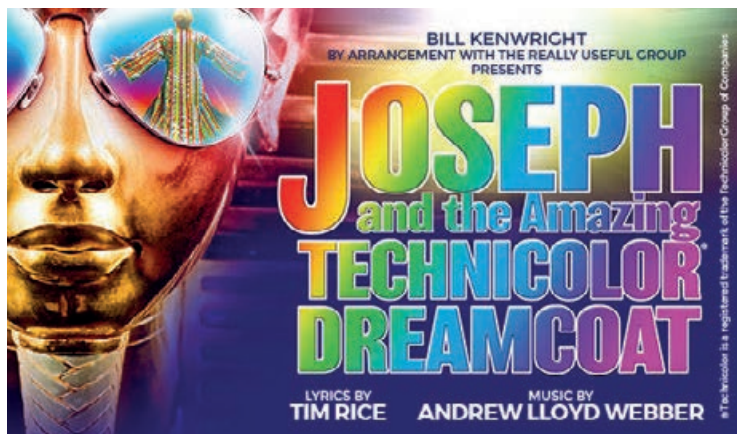
Our sixth form members have given a presentation to the governing body about the work we have done so far. This includes supporting National Anti-Bullying Week and the Poppy Appeal. In addition we have chosen to support three charities: Mind, British Heart Foundation and The Trussel Trust. We shall fundraise for each of these and also for the Creative Arts faculty in order to support the school's production of High School Musical. The cost is £1/ticket and they come in books of £5. Tickets are available at reception for the general public but if anyone is interested in buying a book they can contact the school.

1st Prize: Signed Wales Football Jersey

2nd Prize: 2 x tickets for Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat at the Wales Millennium Centre

3rd Prize: Gift voucher for 'The Groomers/A Dogs Best Friend'- Beddau

We also plan to collect donations for the local food bank at all future school events too in order to show our support for local charities in addition to those named above. ■



A FAREWELL MESSAGE

I feel privileged to be given an opportunity to write my farewell in our School newsletter. It gives me a chance to thank the whole of the Pontypridd High School community for supporting me, especially our fantastic pupils.

In the four years and one term I've worked in the School, which have flown by, there have been many great memories and I've seen a lot of changes that have supported the pupils' learning and outcomes. I've tried to place an unrelenting emphasis on our core purpose of learning and teaching and enhancing pupil experiences, which I believe we have developed well. It has been thrilling to work alongside a great team of staff in providing so many exciting learning opportunities for our students, that range from animation projects to drama performances to STEM week and many more as well as improving the day to day provision the pupils' receive in the classrooms.

I am leaving Pontypridd High at an exciting time, both for the school and in terms of wider school changes; with a new curriculum on the horizon, as well as the reorganisation plans for schools in the Pontypridd area being finalised in the Spring. I sincerely hope these plans include a thriving sixth form somewhere in the town.

There are countless individuals to thank, but I must give special mention to the headteacher, Mr Huw Cripps, who has been a crucial factor in my own and the school's development. Without his support and guidance I would not have been successful in my application to become a headteacher. I am leaving to undertake a new challenge as the head of Bedwas High School in Caerphilly. It's a very exciting opportunity and one I am very much looking forward to. Obviously, my leaving is tinged with a little sadness in leaving Pontypridd High, especially the excellent staff and wonderful pupils. Come January, Huw will be supported

by some very good leaders such as Mrs Laura Dober and Mrs Kayleigh Oliver who will both become acting Deputy Heads and will no doubt continue the successful journey of the School.

I've been humbled by the many good will messages from the staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers. My aim as a school leader is always to provide the best possible educational experience for all of the students who pass through our doors – which I have tried to hold true for Pontypridd High and will also do so for Bedwas High. Looking back I trust we've done this over the last four years or so and therefore the school has improved for the good of all the pupils and the wider community. Therefore I leave the school with great pride and satisfaction. Pontypridd High will always be a special school to me and I am sure that with your continued support the school will carry on growing and developing, so that all are 'Learning and Achieving Together'.

The last thing is to say thank you all for your support and I wish you a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Best wishes

Stephen Diehl



PUBLISHED AUTHORS



By Miss James

Congratulations to 36 budding young writers from Year 11 who have recently become published authors. The pupils were tasked with writing a one hundred word mini saga based around the hit TV show 'Stranger Things.'

The TV show focuses on a parallel universe called the 'Upside Down' that is plagued by a dangerous monster. The students were then asked to create a weird and wonderful story that had the same dramatic, nail biting tension as the well-loved show – but in only one hundred words. Students worked hard to ensure their writing was dramatic, creative and powerful, whilst sticking to the one hundred word limit.

The students who got their work published are: Annaleigh Hall, Regan Fear, Bethany Davies, Grace Wilde Leah Pryse, Abby Davies, Maxwell Pounder, Malachy Jennings, Anna Jones, Olivia Murray, Jodie Matthews, Nathaniel Partington, Abbie Markey, Cerys Owen, Lewis Ferguson, Jessica Davies, Ffion Jones, Dafydd Mountjoy, Kurt Bradbury, Ben Mann, Onkanoor Randhawa,

Keynaan Edwards, Caitlyn Evans, Grace Pyatt, Kyle Davies, Paige Davies, Kira-Jean Bines, Tyler Brown, Ria Williams-Blacker, Ellie Davies, Ella Phillips, Keriann Jones Keelan Evans, Aliyah Kennedy, Kate Barrett and Holly Nash.

Jessica Davies: 'No'

"I really enjoyed creating my story and the variety of sentence starters that we were given to inspire us. My family are really proud of me being a published author. My Grandad has been waiting years for me to write for him and now I've finally achieved it!"

Lewis Ferguson: 'At the mercy of the woods'

"I've always enjoyed creative writing and loved the challenge of only have one hundred words to fit my story in to. I liked the competitive element of the task and I was really thrilled when I found out that my story had been published."

The collection of stories, entitled The Stranger Sagas will be available to read in the Library and is now ready to order. It's the perfect stocking filler! ■

MINION ROOM MATTERS

By Mrs Shine-Roberts

During the Autumn Term our busy Minions have been working super hard. After learning all about the hardships of War and the devastating circumstances that our fellow men and women had to endure we really felt a need to contribute to the 100th anniversary of the end of World War 1.

Amy in YEPS had a special surprise for us. They had organised for young people in 7W and 8W to make ceramic poppies that would then be displayed at Ynysangharad Park in Pontypridd as part of the 100th anniversary ceremony. Our students felt very proud and privileged with many of them attending the ceremony.

During National Anti-Bullying Week, young people in the minion room showed their passion for no bullying

by creating an anti-bullying poster about respect which is now on display in lower block for all to see. Students made presentations to their peers in class which demonstrated how to identify and stop bullying. At the end of Anti-Bullying Week everyone signed the anti-bullying contract which showed their commitment and dedication to putting a stop to bullying.

Please congratulate Leon Williams in year 10 for becoming our newest and second Minion Mentor. Ellis Holvey has been helping Leon and both are very dedicated to creating a lovely atmosphere during break and lunch times. They always welcome students making sure no one is feeling alone or left out unless they want to be. Along with staff they ensure all are well behaved, clean up after themselves but also have lots of fun. Thank you Leon and Ellis, you are amazing! ■



THE ETIHAD EXPERIENCE



By Mr Longden

In October, twenty pupils and two staff attended a football tour of the Manchester City football training facilities and the Etihad stadium where they play in the Premier League.

The trip was a fantastic experience, training with the Academy coaches at the training ground and a guided tour of the stadium followed by tickets to watch Manchester City v Manchester United in the Premier League.

It was an early start on the Saturday departing School at 7am. However, the boys did not mind as they were taken aback by the comfy leather seats and charging sockets which led to a very entertaining sing along on the bus making the four-hour journey feel very short. Premier league treatment from the start!

On arriving at the training ground we were met by three academy coaches and a security guard. Security was tight as the first team players such as Raheem Sterling and Sergio Aguero were training in the same facility in preparation for the match with United the following day. The first thing the boys were told was that they

would be treated exactly the same as all the academy players. In the changing rooms everyone was given their own full Manchester City kit to train in, shirts had to be tucked in at all times and socks pulled up. The coaches had high expectations and high standards for everyone.

We walked to the £200 million indoor training facility where the group received high quality coaching and worked up a fair bit of sweat. On completion of training there was an opportunity for photos before changing and heading over the bridge to the Etihad stadium itself. After a quick look around the mega store and picking up some souvenirs we had a guided tour of the stadium.

We saw the exclusive tunnel club where season tickets can cost in excess of £15,000, visited the dugout pitch side and got to sit where the managers are on match day. We also had pictures with the man of the match trophy and sat in the press conference room where all interviews take place after the game. However, the highlight was the home changing rooms with a unique circle shape so everyone can see each other and everyone had pictures under the names of their favourite players. Following the tour it was back to the hotel for food and an early night.

After a full cooked breakfast on the Sunday morning it was back to training but this time on the outdoor 4G pitch, another fantastic facility and one all the boys made great use of. After training we headed over to the fan park where the atmosphere was electric. We saw the players come off the team bus and into the stadium and then took our seats early, three rows back from the touchline on the edge of the goalkeeper's box directly in front of where Manchester City warmed up.

The game kicked off and everyone got into the spirit, singing and chanting whilst watching a fantastic game of football. During the second half, Aguero scored directly in front of where we were sitting. In the end, City were too strong for United, winning 3 -1.

The whole experience was amazing and one which all who went will not forget. ■



MORE ABLE AND TALENTED

OUR SHINING STARS

By Miss Stickler

This year, 8 students secured a place on the Seren Network programme. Each were selected because of their fantastic GCSE grades which places them amongst the top students in Wales. Every one of them has fully embraced the programme and had numerous opportunities to stretch and challenge themselves outside of the classroom.

On Thursday 6th December they attended the annual Seren Conference in Newtown, where the Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, was the guest speaker. Throughout the day the students attended lectures, workshops and talks linking to specific subjects and higher education.

The Seren Network provides a wonderful range of learning experiences in addition to meeting young people from across Wales. At the end of this term Year 12 are attending Bath University for the day and in February a residential visit to Cambridge University has been arranged. Many of our Seren students are also in the process of applying for Summer Schools both in the UK and in America! We wish them luck with their applications.

As staff we greatly value the Seren Network and here is what our students think:

Trudy Pounder

So far, as a part of the Seren Network we have attended a law lecture and the Seren Conference where we had the opportunity to talk to several universities. I have also decided to apply to a summer school at Yale and Oxford as a result of being in the Seren Network.

Aled Moore

Having been selected to be a member of the Seren Network I attend monthly super-curricular sessions on natural

sciences and geography where I am surrounded by like-minded people and am challenged to be the best that I can. Through the project I have applied for summer schools in both Oxford and Cambridge as through the project I have the support and encouragement I need to aim for the top universities in the UK.

Cara Watkins

I was selected to be a part of the Seren Network project. Through the project I have been able to attend super curricular sessions which challenge me and allow me to meet like-minded people who are interested in similar things to me. The Seren Network has showed me that I am able to achieve great things and get into the top universities if I put my mind to it. Through the Seren Network I have been given a lot of opportunities. If I wasn't a part of the Seren Network then I believe that I wouldn't have the chance to attend these sessions or know about the opportunities available to me.

Abby Watkins

I am very happy to be a part of this network as it allows me to attend lots of super curricular activities that are very beneficial. So far I have attended lots of after school sessions and attend the Seren Conference where I could learn about many things that interest me such as natural sciences. The Seren Network has also helped me learn about different universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. I now know there are lots of summer schools that are open to me in these universities and also abroad like Yale in the United States.

Tom Penikett

So far in Year 12 I have taken part in the EESW STEM challenge with RCT council in which I have visited the University of South Wales and used my free lessons for work experience. In addition I have also attended two Seren workshops in Nantgarw College and the Seren conference in Newtown. I also hope to apply for various summer schools with Seren, attend more Seren workshops

throughout the year and complete the EESW challenge.

Liam Hooper

As a result of my GCSE grades in Year 11 I was invited to take part in an organisation called the Seren Network. During the Seren events I have been taking part in Maths experiences where I have been solving and working through further Maths topics that are not on the A level Maths course. The work is challenging but pushes you to work harder and revise more in your own time. I have also had the opportunity to apply to summer schools to go to the top Universities in Britain and around the world.

Billie-Mai Cox

Since being in year 12 I have taken part in the Seren Network where we are privileged to attend subject specific

lectures that can help open doors to our future. These typically relate to career aspirations such as medicine which I find to be incredibly helpful and insightful. As part of this I travelled with 10 other pupils to a Seren Conference in Newtown which included many interesting talks, including ones on admissions to Oxbridge. This helped me feel more comfortable and able to apply to such a prestigious university.

I have also been able to attend many sessions at the University of South Wales for various classes and mock lectures that relate mostly to Biology. This is one of the 5 A-Level choices I am studying and something I hope to pursue in the future. By attending these I am able to gain confidence and also get more familiar with the university lifestyle before I send in my application next year. ■





AWARDS CEREMONY

By Mr Cripps

This year, our Annual Awards Ceremony took place on Thursday 27th September. As always the evening was a great success with so many awards to present.

This year, our Annual Awards Ceremony took place on Thursday 27th September. As always the evening was a great success with so many awards to present.

The winners of our most coveted awards were: Isobelle Preston (Pupil of the Year), Mr Owain Cooke (Support Staff Member of the Year), Miss Rhylana Griffiths and Miss Linsey Passmore (Teachers of the Year). All recipients thoroughly deserve their awards.

We also celebrated awards for fantastic examination success in the summer at GCSE and A Level in addition to prizes for international sport, attendance and for outstanding progress and contributions within each subject area. The Citizenship Award was awarded to Logan Webb-Eynon for his contribution to our school community and the Endeavour Awards to Michael Bowen and Courtney Loveridge for their perseverance and commitment.

The Rhys Morgan Outstanding Achievement Award was given to two pupils: Liam Hooper for his fantastic

contribution to school and Amelia Ellis for her achievements in taekwondo.

Head Girl Chalis Matthews and Head Boy Daniel Tollan spoke very well, introducing this year's 6th form leadership team and outlining their plans for the year ahead. Our special guest was Garyn Smith. Garyn has achieved sporting success since leaving Pontypridd High School and it was great to welcome him back. It was great to see him again and we wish him the very best for the future.

Congratulations also to all those pupils who achieved great things through the year and made progress in many different ways. Many pupils were nominated for awards and their achievements have been recognised in school assemblies where certificates have been awarded along with a commemorative programme. Everyone has something to aim for over the next year to ensure they feature in the Awards for 2019. Well done to you all.

Many thanks also to Isobelle and Leah who sang and played so beautifully for us all and the evening ended with Mr Bill Davies, Chair of Governors congratulating everyone for what they had achieved and thanking all staff and each family for their commitment and support. We look forward to celebrating all our achievements again this time next year! ■

MORE ABLE AND TALENTED

TRANSITION PROJECT

By Miss James and Mrs Madley

During this term Year 6 students at Maesycloed Primary School researched African Art as part of the transition process from primary to secondary school. Students explored the colours, patterns and culture of Africa to create a variety of creative art work.

The students enjoyed developing a range of artistic processes such as; water colour painting, collage and scraffito art. This experience has enabled them to sample the type of lessons they will have when they join Year 7. Year 6 worked really hard and produced vibrant, high quality work which will now be displayed at the primary school.

Whilst half of the class were busy creating African inspired masterpieces with Mrs Madley, the rest of Year 6 were working with Miss James to design, market and sell a brand new sweet or chocolate bar. Each group was given '£500' to bring their ideas to life.

The group started off with some tantalising market research whereby they were able to taste and analyse sweets and chocolates currently on the shelves. After some scrupulous questionnaires were undertaken, they then designed and marketed their new creations as well



as considering manufacturing and shipping costs. Budgets and profit margins were discussed before the final products were pitched at the end of the project.

Congratulations to Daisy Moon, Amy Gray and Marci Phillips for winning the overall competition for their sweet 'The Rainbow Drop': a glittery, colourful jelly sweet with poppy candy, lemon, cherry and strawberry flavours. Miss James was very impressed by the professional and creative nature of Year 6 and thought that all the wonderful new tasty treats sounded wonderful. ■



ENTERPRISE WEEK

By Miss Griffiths

Following on from the success of STEM Week, all Year 7 and 8 pupils took part in Enterprise week at the end of November.

The purpose of such weeks is to develop skills and experiences around a common theme. This week had a focus on the skills of problem solving, working with others and giving presentations in addition to a specifically designed numeracy task.

The students worked as individuals and in groups to complete a range of tasks. They had the opportunity to speak to business partners who joined us on different days and through this students developed wider learning and enjoyed the experience of setting up an enterprise business.

Enterprise week involved students 'pitching' their ideas for what to sell in the School's Christmas Fair in a 'Ponty Den' version of the famous television programme. The winners of this activity were given a stall in the Christmas Fair and a £25 loan to create the products they had designed.

The standard of their presentations in front of the 'Ponty Dragons' were exceptional and it is evident that everyone met the challenge of the week.

Of the five winning teams, students were able to decide what any profit made from their sales would be spent on. All had a successful experience and paid back the initial £25 loan. A number of charitable causes will benefit in addition to an early Christmas present for the young people involved.

This was an invaluable experience for these students and they thoroughly enjoyed every part of the Enterprise week. ■



MORE ABLE AND TALENTED

FAMILY TREE

By Miss James

At the beginning of the Autumn Term a number of students in Year 7 undertook a research mission to find out more about their family trees.

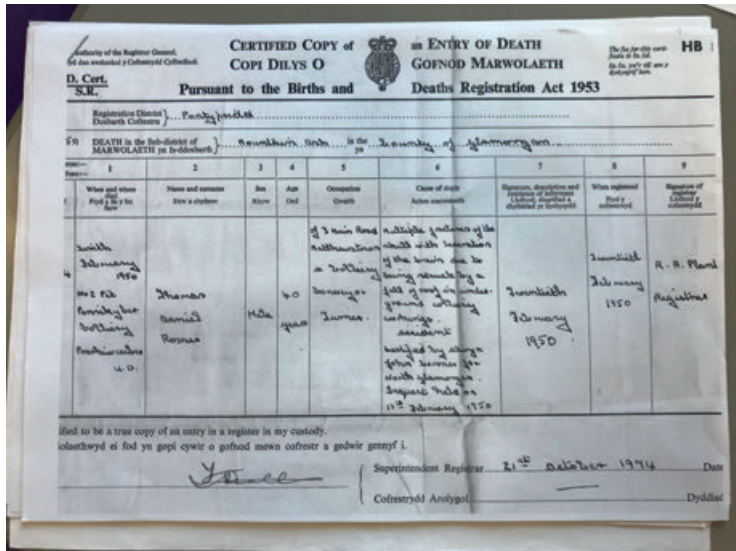
Students were asked to investigate where they had come from and exactly how much did they know about their ancestry. Was there a tradition of jobs in the family? Had the family previously lived in Scotland for generations? Had they moved from another part of the world? Did they migrate from another country all together? Were there any wonderful stories to tell?

All the pupils threw themselves into the project, exploring old family secrets and interviewing the older generation to find out exactly what life was like before the use of technology. Some even joined the website ancestry.co.uk to do some real digging!

We found out that a lot of our great-grandparents played big parts in World War Two as nurses, factory workers and even medal winning heroes out in the trenches. We also learnt about what life was like during the 20th century including: scary air-raids, rationing, and even no television or radio!

Austin Critcher unearthed an old death certificate of his great-grandfather Tom Rosser who tragically died in a colliery accident and this research clearly showed the dangers of working underground at that time. Austin said that the project "was really fun and I learnt a lot. Especially about what my Nan grew up with and how hard her life was. She grew up with so many new inventions like irons, washing machines, TV and commercial airplanes and home ovens. Signing up to ancestry.co.uk was really easy and cheap too – I would definitely recommend other people signing up and having a look." – Austin Critcher, 7Y

Luke Pritchard in 7Y commented that "it was really sad seeing what my older relatives had to go through and what they have done to change our lives. My great-grandfather died in the war when he was shot - we still have the helmet he wore. It made me appreciate how lucky we are to be here today." ■



THE FUTURE OF DESIGN

AUTODESK® FUSION 360

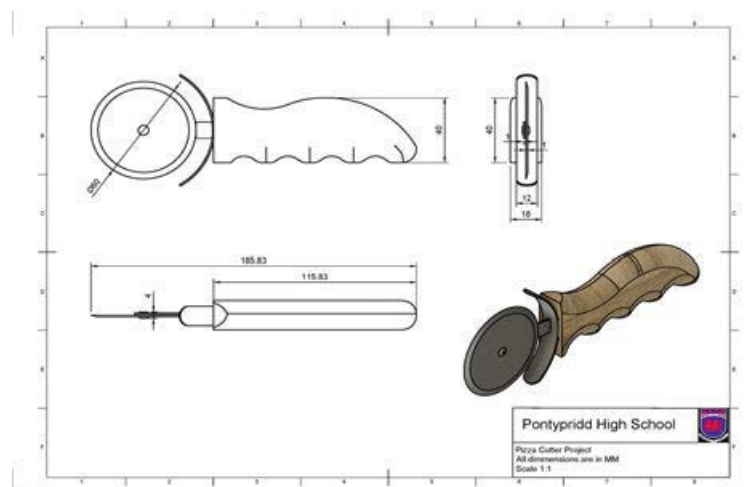
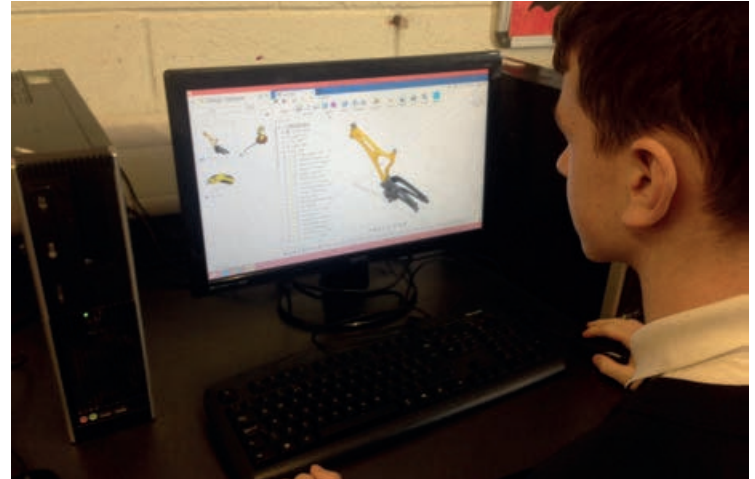
By Mr Thomas

Year 9 and 10 Product Design pupils have recently been introduced to the industry standard computer aided design (CAD) software Autodesk Fusion 360.

This software enables pupils to draw their designs in 3D, view their designs in different materials and create realistic high quality rendered images of their designs. This advanced software can also simulate forces on the products to show points of weakness and aspects to be redesigned, encouraging the iterative design process. Technical drawings can also be produced on Autodesk Fusion 360, improving the quality of drawings produced and allowing easy modifications to be made to designs. As well as aiding pupils with coursework, the skills gained from using this industry standard software can be used during further study at sixth form, university and in future design careers.

Design and Technology teacher Mr Thomas has advanced his own skills using the software by completing the Autodesk Fusion 360 Instructor Training, a course run by STEM Learning at the National STEM Centre in York. He is one of the first teachers in Wales to become an accredited instructor for this software. He is using the skills and knowledge from this course to aid pupil learning and continue to improve the standard of designs produced by pupils.

This will help to ensure the Faculty for Technology and ICT at Pontypridd High School continues to stay at the forefront of D&T teaching in Wales. ■



INNOVATION AWARDS



By Mr Van-Baaren

Seren Hopkins in Year 12 has been recognised for her outstanding GCSE Product Design work of the Hobbit inspired hedgehog shelter design at the 2018 WJEC Innovation Awards ceremony at the Senedd.

The Innovation Awards, in partnership with the Welsh Government, recognises the most original project work by WJEC students studying Design and Technology, with awards for GCSE, AS level and A level work.

Seren was presented with a trophy and a prize of £100 and £100 for the school.

WJEC chief executive, Roderic Gillespie, said: "This was my first Innovation Awards as chief executive of WJEC, and I was incredibly impressed with the standard of the entries".

The Innovation Awards is an annual competition partly funded by the Welsh Government's Department for the Economy and Infrastructure.

The awards ceremony was hosted by Kirsty Williams,

Cabinet Secretary for Education. She said: "A huge congratulations to Seren and all the contenders for their amazing projects. Wales has a great history of inventors and is home to a number of ground-breaking inventions, including the microphone! And it's wonderful to see our young people following in their footsteps."

"Occasions like this really highlight the wealth of talent we have in Wales and I'm honoured to be invited to host this ceremony. Our National Mission commits to ensuring learners reach their potential and working on projects like this enable them to fully exercise their creative skills; crucial to their success in education and work."

By reaching the finals of the Innovation Awards Seren has qualified for the Big Bang Fair 2019. In a 'Dragons-Den' style interview, the panel of judges in Birmingham will interview Seren and other regional winners from across the United Kingdom, to decide the winners and runners up of the award of either the UK Young Scientist or the UK Young Engineer of the Year 2019.

This is a fantastic achievement for Seren and as a School we are extremely proud of her. ■

MORE ABLE AND TALENTED

TOP SECRET

MISSION



By Miss James

Thirty students in Years 8 and 9 have been up to a secret mission over the last month: the ambitious vocabulary challenge!

The group were given ten extremely challenging words to try and seamlessly slip into their writing without their teacher's noticing! From sanguine to ubiquitous, the students were really challenged to use their creative skills to use these words with confidence, precision and most importantly, without getting caught. Miss James was really impressed with the inventive ways that these unusual words were being used and particularly impressed by the range of subjects that they were used in. There were a plethora of 'plethoras' used in Maths and Art, an ebullient array of 'ebullient' in English and even an 'ephemeral' moment in Science.

The overall winner for Year 8 was Nia Prichard, who managed to use seven of the ten words in very creative

ways. A variety of subjects were used including this awesome sentence in Geography, "The flood in Tewkesbury was not fortuitous."

Nia said, "I loved taking part. I learnt so much new vocabulary that I'm still using all of the time, like plethora. It was fun sneaking the words in to subjects I wouldn't normally use them in. My favourite word to use was contusion."

The overall winner for Year 9 was Caitlin Powell who used all ten words over three weeks! Miss James particularly liked the use of, "I was apprehensive yet sanguine." Caitlin also loved using the word 'plethora' and enjoyed sneaking the words in to every day subjects.

Congratulations to everyone on having a penchant for wonderful words! Can you find some of the ambitious vocabulary used in this article? ■

CLA FRIENDLY AWARD

By Mrs Finney

Pontypridd High is very proud to have received Gold and Platinum award for being a 'Children Looked After' (CLA) Friendly School.

To achieve this award the school had to meet criteria to ensure that CLA pupils are monitored to ensure they are achieving their academic potential and engaging in the range of school life and activities. Awareness of these students has been raised, enabling everyone to provide children looked after with high aspirations for the future.

The DEN (Developing Emotion through Nurture) room has helped support CLA students, providing them with

a safe environment to use during unstructured times. Here they can also access support and guidance from the school ELSA's (Emotional Learning Support Assistants) where valuable advice is available at all times. The DEN also offers students literacy and numeracy support to help enhance and improve basic skills.

The Gold and Platinum Award for becoming a CLA friendly school was presented in the Muni Arts Centre Pontypridd in October. During the awards ceremony we were able to present and showcase our work to schools within RCT and Merthyr Tydfil. Also congratulations to Charley Burnell-Heath Year 10 and Lauren Williams Year 9 who both collected a prize for contributing to the 'Design a Logo' Competition for a CLA friendly school. ■



INSPIRED BY CULTURE



By Mrs Madley

GCSE Art students visited Oxford this term to explore the Pitt Rivers Museum which was founded in 1884. The museum displays more than 26,000 cultural artefacts from all around the world which have been donated by early anthropologists and explorers.

The objects on display are arranged according to geographical or cultural areas and include musical instruments, weapons, masks, textiles, jewellery and tools. Students study different cultures for their course work, so this is the perfect location to study artefacts first hand.

Ellis Holvey said he *"was amazed to see the Samurai armour and weapons and how well preserved they were after being used in battle. A really inspiring day out"* whilst Amy-Li Hunt *"loved the models of the old ships and the detail you could see. The way the museum is set out is really interesting and the objects look pristine, even though some are hundreds of years old"*.

Students were also able to visit The Natural History Museum on the same day and were able to draw life size



skeletons and see many unusual creatures and fossils.

Nantgarw China Works is the only surviving early 19th century porcelain works in the UK. In the years 1813-1814 and again in the period 1817-1820 the finest porcelain in the world was produced here in Wales by William Billingsley, one of the most remarkable porcelain painters and manufacturers of his time.

Nantgarw China Works is still extremely active in encouraging, supporting and promoting contemporary artists working with ceramics. The China Works currently provides studio space and facilities to outstanding ceramicists who create, fire and exhibit new work on the premises. These artists actively pass on their skills to both adults and children through regular workshops at China Works.

Our students have been very fortunate to work with Sally Stubbings, who is 'The Artist in Residence' at the China Works. Over the course of six weeks, year 9 and 10 students have worked on an 'after school' project to learn new ceramic techniques from Sally. This has included ceramic tiles, vases and masks. All will be displayed in an exhibition at Nantgarw China Works in the New Year. ■

AROUND THE SCHOOL



By Miss Brayford

This term saw the launch of our first STEM themed week for Year 7 and 8. STEM week celebrates careers and studies in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Students participated in the 'Bright Ideas Challenge' project. This aimed to inspire young people about the positive role STEM skills play in society and to encourage students to become the engineers and scientists of tomorrow. Students were given a design

brief based around 'Energy' and worked in teams during the week to plan and design a solution to different problems. Alongside this they took part in 3 practical challenges including 2D Jaguar car designs, model building and coding micro bit robots.

Two trips also took place - one to Bristol Aerospace museum and the other to the Royal Mint. Both experiences allowed students to see STEM working together in the real world. We saw amazing problem solving skills when building towers of marshmallows, rocket mice, catching bubbles and geodesic domes to name a few.

The week was rounded off with the 'Ponty High Big Bang' fair where students had their designs on display ready for the reveal of the Bright Ideas Challenge winners. A fantastic week was had by all with students and staff alike enjoying all the different STEM challenges. ■





MATHAMAGIC

By Miss Eveleigh

In October the Maths Faculty took 90 students from Years 7 and 8 to Techniquest in Cardiff Bay to experience Mathemagic.

The morning was taken up with students being given the opportunity to experience two floors of fun, one specifically set up for them to apply their numeracy skills to real life problems; this included using numeracy to create a song. The other floor contained many activities including an interactive screen.

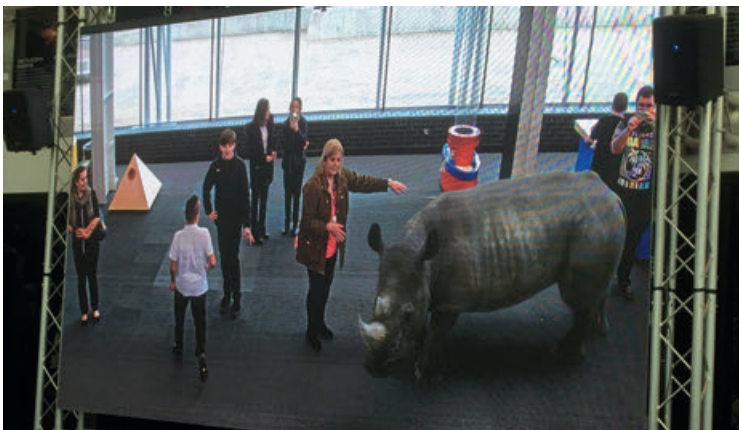
Students also had the opportunity to speak with three STEM professionals. They discovered how diverse STEM jobs are and the different areas they could work in. In

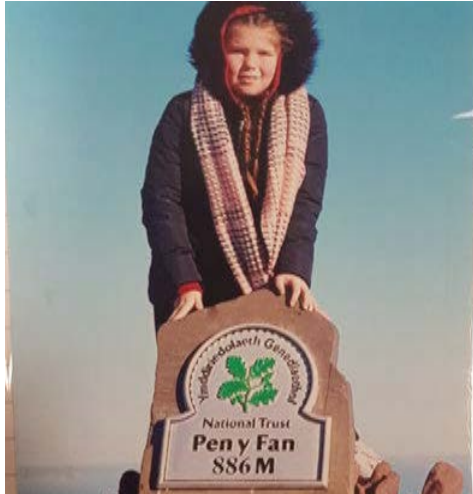
TECHNIQUEST

the afternoon, everyone was thrilled to be involved in Mathamagic.

The interactive show encouraged students to use their knowledge and understanding of things such as probability and estimation, and how it can be applied in a fun way. They were able to see how probability is used in game shows and learned how they could give themselves a higher chance of winning!

Special mention and well done to all those pupils who voluntarily took part in the show and were willing to have their numeracy skills tested individually in front of everyone else. Mathamagic was a thoroughly enjoyable day.





LIFE EXPERIENCES

By Miss Griffiths

Our homework provision for Year 7 and 8 now has an extra feature called 'Something for the Weekend'.

The homework tasks themselves aim to develop literacy, numeracy and digital competency skills. By adding 'Something for the Weekend' we are encouraging students to develop the broader life experiences and personal skills they need.

To reward engagement with these additional activities

there is a bronze, silver and gold award linked to each task. The response so far from students has been very encouraging and many have gone above and beyond expectations to achieve the gold award. Thank you for the support from each family in giving the time to help children undertake these extra experiences.

Here are some photographs of the excellent examples of students who have achieved the gold award for the two most recent 'Something for the Weekend' homework challenges. Keep up this excellent effort Years 7 and 8! ■



CHECKMATE

By Amy Bolderson

Young people from YEPS have created an outdoor area to benefit young people and encourage playing the game of chess.

Young people proposed the idea of having an outdoor chess board to enable them to benefit from being in the outdoor environment but also to play this traditional game. It has lots of benefits such as turn taking, improving memory and creativity. YEPS has successfully funded this project and empowered the young people to design and create the environment. Well done to those who have helped and bring on the chess games!

YEPS Extra-curricular

The Autumn Term has been a great success and lots of young people have learnt new skills, gained confidence



and challenged themselves, having fun in the process! In the New Year, YEPS after-school activities start on January 21st and activities can be booked online - www.wicid.tv. The activities include construction, craft club, boxing, woodwork and dance to name just a few. For more information contact Amy on 01443 494911. ■





WHAT'S GOING ON

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DATES

As a school we understand the importance of being regularly informed of any upcoming events and important dates.

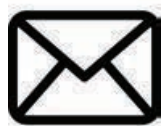
As well as sending out letters, emails and text messages the school website is full of information and current news - www.pontypriddhighschool.co.uk

How to contact us:

Email: contact@pontypriddhighschool.co.uk

Tweet: @pontypriddhs

Phone: 01443 486133



SCHOOL EVENTS

January

Monday 7th - Start of Spring term. All pupils return
Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th - GCSE English exams
Thursday 10th - GCSE Results from November Exams
Thursday 24th - SLT Surgery

February

Friday 1st - INSET Day
Thursday 7th - Careers Fair
Monday 18th to Friday 15th - World Book Week
Monday 25th to Friday 1st - Half-Term

March

Tuesday 5th - Year 9 Parents Evening
Thursday 7th - SLT Surgery

ROOM HIRE

Pontypridd High School regards the school buildings and grounds as a community asset and will make every reasonable effort to enable them to be used as much as possible.

Charges – Lettings September 2018 to August 2019

Hire of School Hall	£25.00/hour
Hire of School Gym	£25.00/hour
Hire of Sports Hall	£25.00/hour
Hire of Drama Studio	£20.00/hour
Hire of Training Room	£20.00/hour
Hire of Classroom	£15.00/hour

Tea/Coffee charges at an extra cost of £2.00/head. Caretaking costs (hourly) will be charged for any lettings outside of school hours. This cost is in addition to any room hire charge.

