



The
PHS

NEWSLETTER

APRIL
2017



SCIENCE WEEK

By Miss Hopkins (Science Teacher)

Last month, staff and pupils celebrated British Science Week. It was a week long celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths. Featuring fascinating, entertaining and engaging events and activities across the school.

Pupils enjoyed a trip to Bristol Science Centre, a GeoScience Rainforest Animal experience, an inflatable space dome and National Demo Day. In addition, Year 7

and 8 took part in the Great Pontypridd High Egg Drop Challenge; designing a structure to protect an egg from a drop of 2 metres and investigated smart materials and their properties in Product Design.

The week concluded on Friday 17th March with a celebration assembly for Year 7 and 8, where prizes were awarded to our school's 'super scientists'. This is the first time we have taken part in British Science Week, and the whole Science Department is looking forward to an even bigger and better week next year. ■

AROUND THE SCHOOL

LEGO CLUB

By Mrs Finney (Maths Teacher)

Year 7 and 8 pupils have joined our LEGO Club which has become extremely popular. The school's teaching assistants and nurture teachers were trained as LEGO Therapists to be able to work with groups of pupils to help them develop a variety of new skills.

During their LEGO sessions the pupils work as a team and take up the role of either an Architect, Director, Supplier or a Builder. Whilst working in a group of four, the pupils develop their communication skills, they learn to work effectively as part of a team and by following instructions aim to build a LEGO model. LEGO Club develops and reinforces play and social skills through LEGO building. It also focuses the students on the tasks that need to be performed through encouraging verbal and non-verbal communication and problem solving.

Mrs Shine-Roberts and Mrs Morgan-Jenkins cannot wait for the pupils to walk through the door to start their daily LEGO build. The pupils are also enthusiastic to get their hands on the LEGO and build their model whilst learning and improving their essential skills.

We are all extremely excited as we will be visiting LEGOLAND in April to see how real life size models are built and in use. ■



"Audi in Year 8 has brought so much enthusiasm and happiness to the group. A real pleasure to have as part of our LEGO club. Well done Audi!"

Mrs Morgan-Jenkins

SOUTH WALES MINING: AN ANIMATED HISTORY



By Mr Husband (Art Teacher)

This month, 40 pupils across all key stages have embarked on a year long animation adventure. With the aid of Heritage Lottery funding, they have been given the opportunity to create their own animated documentary using the latest technology. The group has been tasked with researching and writing their own historically accurate script and in conjunction with professional animators Gritty Realism, have been learning how to create a hand-drawn stop motion film.



Earlier this year, pupils took a stroll back in time as they delved into the depths of the Rhondda Heritage Park mine. Led by retired miner Anthony Fidler, the tour gave pupils a chance to experience working conditions, adding depth to their documentary and giving them an experience they will never forget. With over 1000 photographs taken on the day, pupils sourced an array of information which helped them to build up their story of days gone by. They had opportunities to experience what it was like to be a miner, and used this information to piece together their storyline.



Back at school, the pupils have been collating their information and designing their own scenes and characters. Over the next year their aim is to create a short documentary that will be exhibited at various museums and heritage sites. They will now begin to build up their unique story, retelling their mining heritage and showcasing it to the world.

We look forward to the coming months where pupils will have further chances to explore their heritage, and conducting interviews with those who lived through such times. ■

AROUND THE SCHOOL

OUR DIGITAL LEADERS

By Mrs Dober (Teaching and Learning)

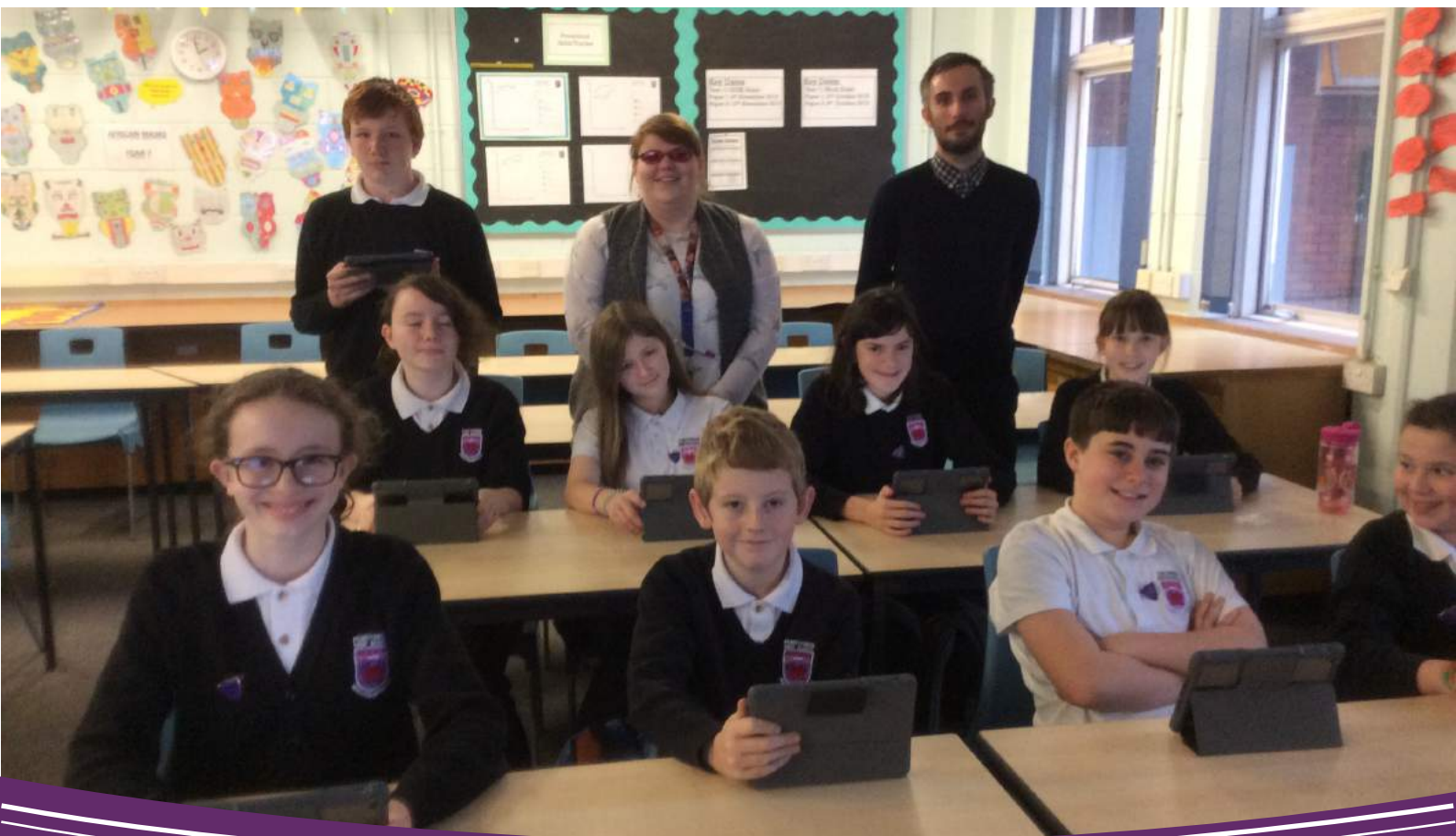
Earlier this year pupils were given the opportunity to apply for the position of Pupil Digital Leader. On completion of their application forms pupils were invited to attend a short interview and those successful were appointed to the Pupil Digital Leaders Group.

The Pupil Digital Leaders have already attended a number of lunchtime meetings where they have trialled some brand new apps on the iPads. Most recently the pupils took part in a virtual reality tour of a space station using the Google Expeditions App during National Science Week.

Over the coming weeks the Pupil Digital Leaders will be taking part in staff and pupil training sessions and

giving us further feedback on the type of digital activities you enjoy and would like to see more of in lessons. If you have any opinions or suggestions to improve our use of digital technology in lessons at Pontypridd High please pass them on to any of the pupils named below:

Briar Rose Allen
Cai Davies
Megan Webster
Cole Marshall
Mollie George
Tara Davies
Caitlin Beamand
Emma Jameson
Lowri Thomas
Brooklyn Dommett
Logan Eynon



"Aidan Pritchard in Year 8 has made an excellent contribution to science this year. His behaviour and class work is exemplary. Additionally, Aidan has attended and made a fantastic effort in Science Club. Da iawn Aidan!"

Miss Hopkins

AROUND THE SCHOOL

WARNER BROS. TOUR

Harry Potter

By Miss Thomas (English Teacher)

To celebrate Book Week Year 8, 9 and 10 pupils attended the Warner Bros Studio Tour, London – The Making of Harry Potter.

The first Harry Potter book, 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone', was published in 1997 to immediate popular and critical acclaim. Six further best-selling books and eight blockbuster films followed. The books have been translated into 79 languages, won multiple awards, and sold more than 450 million copies worldwide, becoming the best-selling book series in history! It was fitting to say the least that we took a trip here!

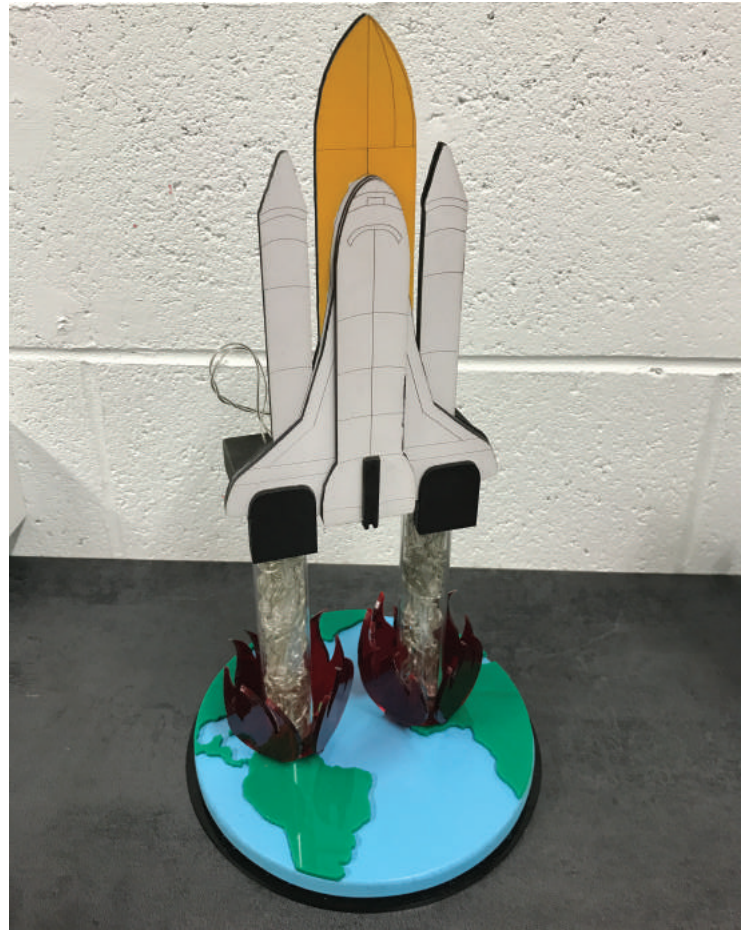
Mrs Herman kick started the day with a Harry Potter trivia quiz on the bus. It is safe to say that the pupils really knew their stuff! Once we arrived the day was filled with magical experiences; from riding a broom stick to a wand masterclass. The pupils entered the tour through the famous Great Hall doors and the Harry Potter series came to life. Mrs Jenkins was lucky enough to push the doors open as it was her birthday! We saw artefacts, costumes and the mechanics behind the magic. We were able to explore the Hogwarts Express Train, the 'Knight' Bus and take a peek inside 4 Privet Drive.

The tour allowed us to experience the world of Harry Potter in minute detail, and really begin to appreciate the time, effort and creativity behind each movie. The butter beer ice-cream was a huge hit too! We can't wait to return next year! ■



"Regan Fear in Year 9 has been working exceptional in engineering, he has shown a natural ability and flair for the subject that will serve him well in a future career" **Mr Williams**

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT



THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT

By Mr Van-Baaren (Head of Technology)

Year 11 students have been busy this term making their prototype desk lights as part of their GCSE Product Design coursework.

Pupils have been busy following the design process which included research, sketching, developing ideas, modelling, material testing and planning for making. It has been a busy few months in the workshop with some fantastic work being produced.

The design brief required pupils to design and make a desk light that was inspired by either the Welsh

designer Bethan Gray or French designer Philippe Starck. The brief encouraged pupils to use creativity and imagination whilst applying iterative design processes to develop and modify designs, and to design and make a prototype that solved real world problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants, aspirations and values.

During the summer term the GCSE and A Level coursework will be on display for all pupils to view. Year 8 pupils will have a sneak preview of the excellent work that has been completed on Options Evening. If you are thinking about studying Product Design for GCSE you will not want to miss this exhibition! ■

"Great dedication and commitment from Dylan Wert in Level Product Design. He coursework is excellent and this is down to his tremendous work ethic and drive. Well done Dylan!" **Mr Thomas**

MUSIC DEPARTMENT



By Mr Capel (Head of Music)

Pontypridd High School Choir took part in the Voice in a Million concert in Wembley Arena on March 9th 2017. We were part of a massed choir made of 5,000 pupils secondary and primary age from around the UK. The event was a fantastic opportunity for our choir members to experience singing in a world famous venue. The behavior and attitude displayed by all of our pupils was fantastic and this allowed everyone to gain as much from the experience as possible.

The day began with a morning rehearsal where we covered the final dance moves, a few vocal warm-ups and did a final check of the lyrics. We then boarded the coach and headed to Wembley Arena. On arrival we headed straight to the venue, walking past the world famous Wembley Stadium in the process. Then after a quick security check we took our seats for the rehearsal.

After an exciting rehearsal where we rehearsed the dance moves and songs in order of the concert we were

treated to a performance from an up and coming boy band named 'Roadtrip'. Samantha Rutter and Abigail Williams also represented our school in the banner parade that took place at the start of the concert.

Between the rehearsal and the main event we all received our T-Shirts and the pupils were able to get photos signed and some 'selfies' with 'Roadtrip'. This really enhanced the experience for many of our pupils and added another wonderful element to the day.

The main event was a spectacular experience of group singing mixed with special performances from schools and solo singers who had auditioned for stage performances. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed being part of the group choir and performed well throughout the day. They cannot wait to audition for next year so that we can get on stage!

The music department would like to thank all staff who supported this trip and also the pupils for being so excellent throughout the whole day. We cannot wait for next year! ■

"Well done to our Year 9 and 10 Music GCSE classes for the effort and focus they are putting into improving their performing, listening and composition skills. Some extremely talented and creative pupil work is being produced." **Mr Capel**

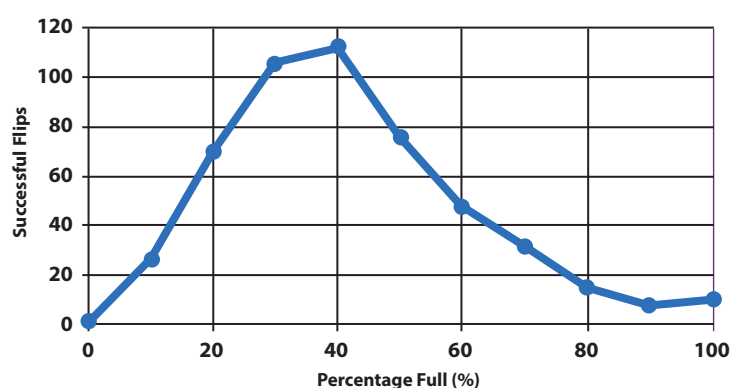
FLIPPING FANTASTIC



By Mr Astley (Maths Teacher)

As part of National Science Week the Maths Department carried out a 'bottle flipping challenge'. Every class in Key Stage 3 took part and the results for the whole department were collated.

Maths Department Bottle Flip Challenge



Water bottle flipping is an activity and a challenge that involves throwing a plastic water bottle, typically full or partially full of liquid, into the air so that it rotates, in an attempt to land it upright on its bottom. It became an international trend in 2016, with numerous videos of people attempting the activity being posted online.

Pupils used many analytical and mathematical skills during the experiment as well as demonstrating their flipping prowess. It was a close run thing but we found that a bottle 40% full allowed for the most successful bottle flip!



Also this term, 10 students in Key Stage 4 recently took part in the UKMT Challenge. This is a competition for the best mathematicians in the UK. Morgan Jones achieved the silver award whilst Seren Thompson, Jessica Barnes and Daniel Tollen received bronze certificates. Well done all. ■



AROUND THE SCHOOL

WORLD BOOK WEEK



By Mrs Marvelley (Leader of Pupil and Parent Voice)

The week beginning 27th February saw us celebrating all things book related at PHS! Year 7 launched the week with a Celtic yarn spinning adventure led by Jim McCool. Year 8 were delighted to take part in author workshops with Anthony Ormond, author of 'Tommy Parker and the Pen of Destiny', while Year 9 visited the Harry Potter Studios.

All KS3 form classes played our 'Guess the Shelfie' competition, guessing which book shelf belonged to which member of staff, as well as creating book freeze frames. At lunchtimes, pupils and staff played Quidditch, participated in a literary treasure hunt and attended the Mad Hatter's Tea Party.

Booky events and activities continued in lessons, with a wide range of activities including making Mad Hatter's hats in Art, Willy Wonka's chocolate bars in Food and Nutrition, designing alternative book covers in ICT, performing scenes from Matilda the Musical in Music and completing book reviews in Welsh and French.

Thursday saw us celebrate World Book Day with staff and students dressing as literary characters and our Lower Block top corridor transformed in to a magical Roald Dahl world.

The week ended with staff and students gathering together to celebrate the events of the week, announcing competition winners and commending the 'Book/Week/Stars' from each subject area. A great way to end a week that had been filled with fun and enjoyable learning experiences. ■

"Aimee Monk Year 11 has been absolutely outstanding in the work and revision she has put in for her GCSE's in a few months. Aimee has been a credit to Year 11 and a role model for her peers." **Miss Moses**

WELSH BACCALAUREATE

COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

By Mrs Pane (Welsh Bacculaureate Administrator)

As part of their Welsh Bacculaureate qualification, Year 10 pupils are required to carry out a 'Community Challenge'. The purpose of the Challenge is to explicitly develop planning, organisation and personal effectiveness skills. In order to achieve this goal, the pupils were tasked with identifying and developing activities to help support younger pupils gain knowledge, understanding and skills in any chosen area.

Working in teams, the Year 10 pupils decided that they would coach the younger Year 8 pupils through a range of activities that included football, rugby, netball, cake decorating, music, dance art and history. The teams worked very hard and spent a number of months planning lessons, developing PowerPoints and gathering all necessary resources in order to



successfully carry out their coaching sessions.

On Tuesday, 21st March, pupils were finally given the opportunity to carry out their Community Challenge, which they did so with real enthusiasm. Staff were impressed to see how well the Year 10 pupils engaged with the younger year group, sharing skills, encouraging participation and boosting confidence. Many pupils were commended for their efforts.

Despite some disappointment when rain stopped play later in the afternoon, the day was an overall success with many pupils expressing a desire to repeat the Challenge! ■



"Jasmin Davies-Harris in Year 11 has worked with dedication and determination to achieve fantastic results in her catering coursework this year. She has impressed me immensely and made me very proud". **Ms Cahill**

AROUND THE SCHOOL

CURRICULUM FOR LIFE

By Miss Bolderson (Y.E.P. Service Officer)

As part of the Curriculum for life Award; the YEPS team engaged with a number of young people providing a variety of activities during March. The activities consisted of Construction Skills Certificate Scheme (CSCS); first aid course and a Health Project.

The CSCS, enabled ten young people in Year 11 the opportunity to gain a vital health and safety qualification to support them to seek employment in the field of construction.

First aid course where 10 young people all achieved a level two qualification in basic first aid! Brooke Edwards (Year 7) said, "The course was very useful and I now feel confident in helping someone if they ever required first aid".

The "Health Project" was participated by 7W (16 pupils) which consisted of four weeks of different activities including cooking on a budget; free running; karate; cake baking and gymnastics.



Saffron Haslam in Year 7 said, "The Health project was awesome!"

Overall the 'Curriculum for Life' funding award has encourage the number people to attend the free afterschool provision organised by YEPS, enhancing their socialising opportunities, life skills, gaining confidence and increasing self-esteem. ■

BRISTOL ZOO

By Mr Johnson (Head of Business and Enterprise)

Earlier this term, the department took it's GCSE Year 11 classes to Bristol Zoo. Pupils had been studying the zoo since September as they had chosen it as the venue to focus upon for their Controlled Assessment which was taking place in February. Giving them a choice of venue was very important in ensuring that they have as much input in decision making as possible.

It was a beautiful day, sunny and dry, which meant that we could wander around the zoo, taking in the sights, from hearing the roar of the Lions to seeing the baby Penguins splash around in their tank.

We were very fortunate to attend a workshop that had been arranged for us- this allowed us to discover even more about how the zoo operates as both a business and a charity- invaluable information that would be incorporated into our Controlled Assessment preparation. Whilst in the workshop, we also had the opportunity to handle some creepy crawlies including a Snake, which was quite an experience!

We thoroughly enjoyed the day as it helped the pupils with their preparation for their exams. ■

"Kara Mor O' Brien always puts a vast amount of effort into her Spanish work. She always has a high level of motivation and tries her best at all times."

Mrs Jones

ROSSLYN PARK 7's

On Monday 20th March 2017 Mr Thomas and Mr Longden took a group of twelve Year 11 boys to London to play in the largest schools rugby tournament in the world with 170 teams entered in the Under 16 competition, Rosslyn Park 7's. The squad of boys had trained at lunchtimes and after school for six weeks in preparation for this one tournament.

Pupils departed school at 16:00 equipped with high socks and sliders, the bus journey was far from boring with many classic songs being sung and every song that was played seemed to have a deep bass. Upon arriving in London the team enjoyed a very nutritional pre-tournament meal at Nandos, following this there was a stop in a local shop for a quick protein drink (Ioan Evans) then back to the hotel for an early night (for most Lucas!!!).

In the morning the team enjoyed a full English and continental breakfast at the hotel with as much as they could eat then off 15 minutes down the road to Richardson Evans Memorial playing fields that boasts 24 full size rugby pitches.

Pontypridd High School were involved in one of the first games of the day against a very prestigious Clifton College team. Clifton took the initial lead and scored three early tries in the first half. After an explosive half time team talk and a couple of substitutions the boys kept their heads up and the comeback was on scoring two early second half tries. During the second half possession was turned over by both sides and Clifton went down the middle to score their fourth. The boys responded quickly and almost straight from kick off struck back, scoring in the corner. Unfortunately time



"Grace Wilde in Year 9 has to be one of the most focused and conscientious pupils I have ever had the privilege to work with. Her effort in GCSE PE is outstanding! Well done Grace – I know your hard work will be rewarded." **Mrs Samuel-Jones**



was against us at this point and Clifton won 26 – 19. The second half performance by the Pontypridd boys was just an appetiser for the rugby they were about to put on show in their next three pool games.

The second game was against another well-known rugby school, Monmouth. Monmouth took an early 7 point lead but this would be the ignition that got our boys playing. After that Pontypridd High played perfect sevens, keeping the ball away from their opponents and stretching them from touch line to touch line. Eventually the pressure told and we ran in two tries before half time. Second half saw more of the same, not only in attack but the defence stepped up and there was no way through for Monmouth. Every kick off was contested and when possession was won back there was no stopping the play makers. Pontypridd High ran in another three tries in the second half and the final score was Monmouth 7 Pontypridd High 31.

The third game was against The Oratory School where Pontypridd High sculpted one of the best games of rugby 7's that can be played. Fast, electric play combined with hard hitting defence and composure under pressure resulted in Pontypridd High School drawing a wide audience of spectators from other schools, parents and referees. Two referees and two teachers commented that the performance by us was the best that they had seen. Needless to say Pontypridd High were run away winners by 36 – 12.

After a long day and tired legs you would have been

forgiven if you thought Pontypridd High had given their best performance in the third game and left it all out on the field. This could not be further from the truth. The boys saved their best performance till last when they took on Tonbridge School. A thrilling end to end game where there was no margin for error. Both teams played exceptional rugby 7's, moving the ball and keeping a high line in defence. Pontypridd were down at half time but the team spirit and bond was clear to see. The boys left everything on the field for each other and the badge and a last minute team try saw Pontypridd High win 24 – 21.

In the end it turned out that the first game was the group decider with only the winners from each pool progressing to the knock out stages. The boys should be extremely proud in the way they played and many other staff and officials commented on what good rugby 7's they played.

The next day the buzz around the school was amazing with pupils and staff very interested in the stories and congratulating the boys on their performance. The boys were a pleasure to take away and their performance on the pitch made a lot of schools take notice of Pontypridd High. Well done to everyone and good luck in the future wherever your careers take you. ■

The Squad: Kieran Gough, Ioan Evans, Jake Morgan, Lucus Welsh, Declan Davies, Cameron Lloyd, Kailum Johnson, Morgan Davies, Evan Lloyd, Morgan Llewelyn, Kian Cross and Alex John.



P.E. DEPARTMENT

Athletics - Congratulations to Gracie Wheeler (below) in Year 11 who was selected for the Welsh Cross Country Team. Gracie travelled down to Porthcawl on Friday 24th March to spend the night with the Welsh camp and then on Saturday 25th ran for Wales in the SIAB Schools International Cross Country at Margam Park. Warm and dry weather conditions and a relatively firm course made for competitive racing at the 850 acre Estate, near Port Talbot in South Wales. The stunning Margam Castle offered a scenic backdrop to the four SIAB races

Gracie ran the 4610m course in a time of 18 minutes 25 seconds placing her 24th overall and the 5th Welsh athlete to finish.

This is just another stepping stone in Gracie's wonderful career and we wish her all the best in the future.



Taekwondo - Congratulations to Year 7 pupil Amelia Ellis (above) who won the British Taekwondo championship and finished 2nd in the World Championships.



Football - Congratulations to Jasmine Simpson (above) in Year 10 who has been selected to represent Wales in a Tri - Nations tournament in Dublin during the first week of the holidays.

"Gareth Williams and Anna Smith in Year 13 have shown a vast amount of dedication to the Welsh Baccalaureate. They have both worked extremely hard to produce very impressive projects." Mrs Jones

MEETING THE FERNS!



By Thea Davies (Year 7)

With great excitement, I stepped onto the bus that was going to take myself and my school netball team to meet The Silver Ferns!

The Silver Ferns are a prestigious Netball team who are currently placed 2nd in the World and amazingly, I had a chance to meet them in person.

After the short bus journey to Cardiff, all ten of our year 7 Netball team, including me, excitedly stepped off the bus and entered the door leading to the entrance. We made our way upstairs, to where all the other five schools were eagerly waiting to meet The Silver Ferns.

Our school took a seat in the waiting room, when a man entered and told us all that to begin we were going to have a tour of the Netball arena. He also told us that there was going to be a competition for two of the best questions asked. As part of the tour, we saw The Silver Ferns' and Wales' changing rooms, ice baths and the Netball court on which they compete. After the tour, we headed back to the waiting room and The Silver Ferns



arrived. I was so excited to see them all and eager to ask them my question.

They all took a seat at the front of the waiting room and introduced themselves. They were all so friendly. It was time to ask our questions. After a couple of other people had asked their questions, I raised my hand and asked, 'Why do you think your team is extremely successful across the World?' One of the members answered me, saying, 'I think the reason we are a successful team is because we all work extremely hard six days a week and we all get on so well with each other.'

After all the questions had been asked, they announced the two winners. The first winner was a pupil from one of the other schools and then to my amazement they called me! I made my way to the front and collected my signed t-shirt as my prize. It was so exciting! Five minutes later, it was autograph and photograph time. I managed to get all my photographs and autographs in time. What an amazing experience!

Thank you so much Miss Grant, for arranging this unforgettable visit! ■

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

Are you on Twitter?

Why not keep up to date with our departments...

Who to Follow	Handle
English Department	@PHS_English
Geography Department	@PHS_geogdep
History Department	@PHShistorydept
ICT Department	@PHSICT
Law & Sociology	@pPHSLawSoc
Maths Department	@PHS_md
Performing Arts Dept.	@PHSpad
P.E. Department	@PontyHighPE
Pupil Parliament	@PHS_PupilPar
Science Department	@PHSScienceDept
Technology Department	@PHStd
Welsh Department	@PHS_Cymraeg



TRANSITION EVENTS

June

Monday 26th to Thursday 29th - Year 6 Transition week

Thursday 29th - Year 6 Parents Meeting

July

Monday 3rd to Wednesday 5th - Year 5 Transition week

Wednesday 5th - Year 6 Parents Meeting

Thursday 6th - Year 6 Form Tutor Day

SCHOOL EVENTS

April

Monday 24th – Summer Term begins

Wednesday 26th – Options presentation to Year 8 parents (5.30pm)

Thursday 27th - National Numeracy Test (KS3)

Friday 28th - National Reading Test (KS3)

May

Monday 1st – Bank Holiday

Wednesday 3rd - National Numeracy Test (KS3)

Thursday 4th - National Reading Test (KS3)

Thursday 4th – Year 8 Parents Evening

Tuesday 9th – GCSE exams start

Wednesday 10th – Drop in Surgery with Head and Deputy Head

Monday 15th – A-Level exams

Friday 26th - End of Half Term

June

Monday 5th - Return to School

Tuesday 27th – GCSE and A-Level exams finish

July

Wednesday 5th – Drop in Surgery with Head and Deputy Head

Tuesday 4th - Hairspray School Production

Wednesday 5th - Hairspray School Production

Thursday 6th - Hairspray School Production

Friday 21st – Staff Training (INSET) Day