



The  
PHS

# NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER  
2017

**Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**



Artwork by Lewis Spooner in Year 7

*On the First day of Christmas my true love sent to me  
a Partridge in a Pear Tree.*



# GRAND DESIGNS

By Miss Griffiths

**Year 7 have been delving into the History, Geography, Culture and Religion of Wales in Humanities this term. They have looked at the main physical and human features of Wales, developing their map skills and learnt about the different religions and views of people in Wales.**

Miss Griffiths' class 7A took part in a Dragons' Den style assessment where they worked in groups to create a sales pitch for a castle in Pontypridd.

The aim of the assessment was to develop the pupils' problem solving, decision making and numeracy skills. The pupils were required to decide where the best location in Pontypridd would be to build their castles and give specific reasons why their location was the most suitable. Following this, the pupils had a budget of £150 to design their castle and had to decide on specific features they would have in order to create a strong and

powerful castle within budget.

For homework the pupils were asked to create a 3D model or drawing of their castle to support their sales pitch. Miss Griffiths was very impressed with the high standards and enthusiasm of the pupils! Amazing effort 7A!

The competition became very serious when it came to the Dragons' Den activity! With Miss Griffiths as the new Alan Sugar, the pupils presented their sales pitch. But which castle did Miss Griffiths want to invest in?

It was a very difficult decision to choose a winner as the whole class put in a lot of effort and produced excellent sales pitches. But the winner was Anwen Hughes (bottom left). The effort that went into creating the 3D piece was astounding. She presented her sales pitch with clear and specific examples of what her budget included and why the location was the best place to site the castle! ■





# AROUND THE SCHOOL

## HEADTEACHER'S CORNER

**It seems a long time since we were all in school in the summer to collect our A Level and GCSE results and it is very pleasing that our students performed so well, matching the high standards of previous years. Success at A Level has given our students the opportunity to study in different universities and for others the chance to take up employment. It is good to hear of their ongoing success and as always, it is good to see so many from Year 11 returning to the Sixth Form. In January we shall receive the results of GCSE exams completed in November. Having witnessed the amount of preparation from everyone I have no doubt that the grades awarded will be much deserved and a great foundation for further success next summer.**

As some students leave so the Pontypridd High journey begins for others. Our transition programme is a very comprehensive one which certainly eases the process of moving into secondary school. However, the demands placed on Year 7 students are always going to bring new challenges and I am delighted to report that they have responded well and have thrived on the different opportunities provided to them. Likewise we have welcomed a number of new staff into our school this term and I would like to thank each of them for the

committed and enthusiastic manner in which they have worked. Quite rightly we all want the very best for each student and I can assure you that all staff work in collaboration to ensure the very best experiences are provided that add to the quality of learning. This newsletter includes examples of such work and I very much appreciate the time and effort staff give in ensuring this happens each week of the year.

Traditionally the end of a calendar year is a time for reflection and to look forward to new beginnings and exciting times ahead. In the last twelve months we have continually adapted the way we work to meet the needs of all students as best we can and by working in partnership with many people and organisations we will continue to do this. We should be proud of what we have achieved in 2017 and I am sure that by working together we can look forward to another enjoyable and successful year in 2018.

Many thanks as always for your support and on behalf of all the students, staff and governors I wish you a very happy Christmas and new year. ■

Huw Cripps  
Headteacher

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## OF MICE AND MEN

By Miss Pullen

**Earlier this month, Year 11 pupils attended a series of GCSE Literature workshops at the University of South Wales.**

Both days were very successful and the pupils got a great deal out of the revision sessions that they attended. Particular highlights were: ninja style revision, 21st century Steinbeck productions and visual revision.

Our pupils will sit their Unit 1 Literature exam on Tuesday 9th of January and this was an excellent opportunity to shake our revision techniques up!

Follow English\_phs on Instagram for the latest updates from the English Department. ■

# AROUND THE SCHOOL

## DIANA AWARD

By Mrs Samuel-Jones

**It was an absolute honour and privilege to have attended "The Diana Award" ceremony in City Hall, Cardiff. We had been invited as guests to celebrate the incredible achievement of one of our Year 11 pupils, Megan Thorne.**

The Diana Award is a charity legacy to Diana, Princess of Wales. It was her belief that young people have the power to change the world. This is now supported wholeheartedly by TRHs The Duke of Cambridge and Prince Harry.

Megan was nominated for this award for the phenomenal work that she does for the "Dreams Come True" charity which aims to grant magical wishes to enrich the lives of children and young people with serious and life-limiting illnesses. Megan has worked tirelessly alongside her 10 year old sister, Mia to raise their profile in Wales and together, over several years, they have raised over £80,000 to help fund these magical wishes. Making craft items to sell, arranging bake sales and bucket collecting are just some of the ideas and projects Megan has worked on.

In 2017 Megan organised a big walk to Penyfan which raised over £1000 and she recently organised a Princess Ball that was also held in City Hall. Her next project is to organise, together with her sister, a charity ball in the Celtic Manor next July. She has successfully persuaded Admiral and THG Travel to sponsor the event and various celebrities are lined up to attend and help host this black tie event.

Megan is also named on the Diana roll of honour awards which recognises her drive to go above and beyond to create positive change for others and as a result of her contribution and dedication to Dreams, she became a patron for the charity in July.



At the ceremony, The First Minister of Wales, the Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM spoke about how quick society is to judge youngsters today. They can be perceived as being lazy and doing little for their communities. He said how proud he was of all the recipients and it truly was a humbling experience to have heard about all the incredible work that all the youngsters do regularly to make a difference in people's lives.

We are incredibly proud of Megan, and her sister Mia for all of the work that they do and for the astonishing difference they make by allowing these children to have their "Dreams Come True." Megan is so quiet and unassuming and always so embarrassed to receive such acknowledgement but we must celebrate her remarkable achievement and publically share how incredibly proud we are to have her as a pupil at Pontypridd High School.

If anyone is interested in supporting the Black Tie event at the Celtic Manor on July 21st 2018, please contact the school and we will be able to forward you Megan's contact details. You too could help make a "Dream Come True."



# AROUND THE SCHOOL

## SPORT AWARD

**Congratulations to Chloe Jordan who won the Nation Radio Young Volunteer of the Year Award at Cardiff City Stadium this month.**

Chloe was voted for by the public after reaching the shortlist and is very proud that she has been recognised for all her hard work. Amongst her favourite sports that she volunteers with are Hockey Wales Events and Disability Sports Coaching which is organised by the National Youth Board.

Chloe commented "being a Young Ambassador for Sports Volunteers has opened up so much opportunity for me and I would encourage others to get involved."

Chloe would like to go to university in Ulster to study Sports Studies when she leaves Pontypridd High School. Chloe, you are an excellent role model at the school and we are very proud of you!



## LAMDA EXAM SUCCESS

**Congratulations to Nia Prichard from year 7 who has successfully completed her LAMDA Exam in Musical Theatre.**

LAMDA's performance examinations use drama to develop self-confidence, physical presence and a strong speaking voice

Nia has been a member of the Arius School of Performing Arts for 5 years and to complete her exam she had to take part in a series of tasks including; a vocal performance of "pulled" from the Addams Family and "Hopelessly Devoted to You" from Grease. She also had

to do a verbal performance of "Good Morning Baltimore" from Hairspray after which she answered a series of questions about the shows.

This is a great achievement at year 7 and Nia is aiming to get her Grade 8 Gold Award which will earn her UCAS points for university. Good luck Nia!



# MATILDA THE MUSICAL



**By Miss Passmore**

**29 key stage 3 Pupils performed in 'Matilda the Musical' at Pontypridd High school on the 30th of November 2017.**

The musical is based on Roald Dahl's classic children's book Matilda. Which followed the story of a bright little girl who loves books. Matilda is discarded by her dim-witted parents - her father insists on calling her a boy and calls her 'stupid' for preferring reading to watching the telly. Her headmistress, the outrageous and wicked Miss Trunchbull, doesn't make life easier for her at school either. With an amazing imagination and sharp mind, and with a caring protector in her teacher Miss Honey, Matilda dreams of a better life, daring to take a stand against unjust forces and suggests that

sometimes you have to be a little bit naughty...

After two months of rehearsals, the long awaited school production was performed to over 250 year five & six pupils during a morning performance and over 300 audience members for the evening performance. The performance was an amazing example of the school working together to display the pupils' exceptional talents. The hard working pupils performed with enthusiasm and sparkle showing the great talent we have in Pontypridd High school. The pupils danced with passion, sung with beautiful harmonies and acted superbly making the audience laugh and smile throughout the show.

Congratulations to all those who performed on stage and also to those who worked hard behind the stage!



# MUSICAL MAESTROS



By Mrs Evan-Jones

**On Thursday evening, 7th December at St Catherine's church in Pontypridd, pupils from Year 7 to Year 13 took part in the annual carol concert. The congregation were treated to a festive mix of solo, duet and ensemble performances along with the traditional readings highlighting the story of Christmas.**

The performances were truly beautiful and displayed the joy of the festive season, highlighting the extremely talented pupils we have at Pontypridd High School. Many thanks to our hard working pupils, staff and Rev. Peter Lewis at St Catherine's Church.

A fantastic evening capturing the spirit of Christmas. Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi gyd.

Also this term, great musicianship and skills are being developed by pupils in their instrumental and singing lessons provided by CAVMS. They really enjoy performing and are reaping the rewards. All attend a weekly session in singing, guitar, drums, piano, violin or brass tuition in the music department.

Pupils practise at home regularly and make progress through the term. Congratulations to the following pupils have been awarded Music Student of the Autumn Term for their hard work and improvement:

Cadie Pugh – Singing  
Amelia Thomas - Piano  
Nia Davies – Drums  
Sophie Edmunds – Bass Guitar  
Seren Hopkins - Violin  
Dafydd Prichard – Trombone

# MORE ABLE AND TALENTED

# PARLIAMENT TOUR



By Miss Thomas

**On Wednesday 6th December 2017 a group of Year 7 and 8 students, accompanied by those studying Law in Year 12, attended a Houses of Parliament Tour and Workshop.**

It was a fantastic day which started with a tour of the Houses of Parliament. The students explored the history of the buildings, the many different rooms and their purposes, the House of Commons and ended with a picture in front of the beautiful Christmas tree.

During the tour the students spent 15 minutes observing a debate in the House of Commons which was focused on the Brexit deal, something we were all very curious about. Following this the students were witness to the passing of a Bill that will improve the quality of technology. We were all very impressed by this.

Our day concluded with a workshop in which students were split into two teams. The teams took part in a debate about whether or not drivers in the U.K should have to re-take their driving test every 10 years. The students followed the House of Commons debating rules which included standing to speak, addressing one another as 'Honourable Lady/Gentleman/Friend' and taking a vote at the end. All were eager to express their opinions and very respectful of one another. Lili Griffiths (Year 7) was our chairperson and ensured that we all followed the rules perfectly, insisting on order when she needed to! ■



*On the Eighth day of Christmas my true love sent to me  
Eight Maids a-Milking...*



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

# NETBALL TOURNAMENT



By Miss Fleming

**On Thursday 14th December, Year 10 and Year 12 girls went to a Netball Tournament in Rhondda Fach. The standards were very high, with both teams winning and losing their games. After a long morning training and performing their best, both teams made it to the semi-finals.**

Unfortunately, Year 10 girls lost to Llanharri 7-5 and the

Year 12 team beat Y Pant 10-11. They were very close games, but the girls fought right to the end. Year 12 girls played Llanharri in the final, they were winning 3-0, but by the second half they were drawing 8-8. With 30 seconds to go Alice Newton scored the winning goal and the girls bring the trophy back to Ponty High!

A very successful day that would not have been possible without the hard training and dedication the girls have done throughout the year. Well done Girls! ■



*On the Ninth day of Christmas my true love sent to me  
Nine Ladies Dancing...*

# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME



## GET ME OUT OF HERE!

By Miss Bolderson

**Inspired by the television show, a number of young people have been tackling a range of jungle-theme challenges.**

The activities organised by Amy Bolderson the Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS), the 'I'm A Ponty High Student...Get Me Out Of Here' event was a great success - and a huge hit with the pupils at Pontypridd High School. The event was attended by 28 young people, aged 11-16, where they took part in the 'jungle challenges'.

Jodi Heath, a YEPS worker said, "the young people thoroughly enjoyed the activities that were based upon the television series. We saw students taking part in a variety of challenges within the school environment, helping them to show tremendous team spirit."

As part of their challenges, the students munched their way through a selection of weird and wonderful things. Among those taking part was Molly Davies, aged 12. She said, "the YEPS Extended Provision at our school is always great fun, but taking part in 'Get Me Out Of Here' was such a great event. I look forward to many more just like it."

Fellow student Ffion Davies, also aged 12, said; "I enjoy watching the ITV series each night, and to be a part of our own school version of this game show was brilliant - although thankfully we did not have to eat anything like they do on television!"

For more information on Youth Engagement and Participation Service, visit [www.wicid.tv](http://www.wicid.tv) or follow YEPS on Facebook social media or contact Amy Bolderson at Pontypridd High School on 01443 494911. ■



# HOSPITALITY & CATERING

## CHRISTMAS COOKIES RECIPE



By Miss Brayford

**I make these vanilla biscuits every year, cutting the dough out in different shapes every time. They look lovely when you put some coloured icing on them. This recipe makes a lot of biscuits - great for gifts and for Santa!**

If you decide to try this recipe over the Christmas holidays Tweet the school with a photograph of your delicious cookies!

### INGREDIENTS

Makes: 4 dozen cookies

470g plain flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
225g butter or cooking margarine  
300g caster sugar  
2 eggs  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
Icing for decoration

### METHOD

Prep: 20min › Cook: 8min › Ready in: 28min

1. Preheat oven to 200 C / Gas 6 and lightly grease two baking trays or line with parchment.
2. Sift flour, baking powder and salt together; set aside.
3. In a large bowl, cream together the butter or margarine and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then stir in the vanilla. Gradually blend in the sifted flour until evenly mixed. Cover dough, and refrigerate for 2 hours.
4. On a floured surface, roll out portions of dough to 5mm thickness. Cut out a tree shape using a knife or use a variety of Christmas cookie cutters.
5. Bake for 6 to 8 minutes in the preheated oven, or until edges are barely brown. Transfer from baking tray to wire cooling racks. Decorate with icing when completely cool.

# 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](http://www.pontypriddhighschool.co.uk)

How to contact us:

**Email:** [contact@pontypriddhighschool.co.uk](mailto:contact@pontypriddhighschool.co.uk)

**Tweet:** @pontypriddhs

**Phone:** 01443 486133

**Are you on Twitter?**

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

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| Pupil Parliament      | @PHS_PupilPar   |
| Science Department    | @PHSScienceDept |
| Sixth Form            | @PontySixthForm |
| Technology Department | @PHSTD          |
| Welsh Department      | @PHS_Cymraeg    |



### SCHOOL EVENTS

#### January

Monday 8th – Return to School

Thursday 11th – GCSE Exam results

Friday 26th – INSET Day

#### February

Thursday 1st – Year 11/12 Open Evening

Thursday 8th – Careers Fair

Thursday 15th – Year 10 Parents Evening

19th-23rd – Half term

Monday 26th – Return to School

Monday 26th – World Book Week

Wednesday 28th – Year 12/13 Parents Evening

#### March

Thursday 8th – Year 7 Parents Evening

Monday 12th – Science Week

Thursday 29th – Last day of term

### YEP SPRING TERM TIMETABLE

#### Monday

After school - Glass Fusing

#### Tuesday

After school - Basketball; Driving; Gaming Club; Film Club and Mosaics

#### Wednesday

After school - Judo; Pyrography; Woodwork and Gardening project and Homework and Tutoring Club

#### Thursday

After school - Abercynon L.C.: Swimming; Roller skating Spin, Gym and Football

#### Friday

After school - Film Club