



The  
PHS

# NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER  
2016



# SHWMAE WEEK

By Mrs Thomas (Head of Welsh)

**Shwmae Bawb! Wel, am wythnos – What a week! Year 7 and 8 students at Pontypridd High School celebrated Welsh Skills Week in style last week by making Wales and the Welsh language the centre of everything they did.**

All lessons had a Welsh theme and at lunchtimes pupils had the opportunity to have fun in a Welsh quiz, Welsh bingo, Welsh aerobics, a Welsh cafe and have their photograph taken in our Welsh photobooth.

The week ended with a special assembly to award certificates to the best pupils in every subject. Additional prizes were

given to Evie Rixon of yr 7 and Lucas Rose of yr 8 who won "The Wonders of Wales" photographic competition and to Tian Norman, yr 7 who won a Nando's voucher for collecting the most tocynnau iaith (language tickets) for his extensive use of Welsh during the week. The highlight of the assembly was the yr 7 / yr 8 registration class RAP competition which was amazing. The overall winners were 7P who under the guidance of their enthusiastic form tutor Miss Hopkins, wrote and performed a brilliant RAP on what being Welsh meant to them.

The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the week and even the staff joined in the celebrations by having their own Brecwast Cymraeg on Friday morning. Thanks to everyone who contributed.



## BEAUTIFUL WALES

During Shwmae Week there were many activities that took place, both inside and outside the classroom. 'The Wonders of Wales' photography competition was very popular and the entries were of an exceptional standard.

The winning entry for Year 7 was Evie Rixon (below) with her panoramic photo of Tenby North Beach and the harbour. The Year 8 winner was Lucas Rose (right) with his fantastic photo of an old abandoned building in the Welsh mountains. ■



**During Shwmae Week our Geographers got creative using paper mache to build model Pen-y-Fan mountains.**

They worked collaboratively in groups using a balloon, a box, newspapers, flour and water to recreate this natural feature of Wales. They showed strong group work skills and especially enjoyed painting the models and adding finishing touches. This fitted in with the map skills topic which they are studying at the moment. The winners for the best mountain were Molly Meecham, Bonnita Hayman and Macy Williams who worked fantastically as a group.

Similarly, our Geoscience pupils enjoyed designing and writing postcards from Wales. They used their artistic talent to draw Welsh themed postcards and then used their creative writing skills to write about all the brilliant things that Wales has to offer its visitors. The winners of the post-card competition (all year 8) were:

- 1st – Ffion Hooper
- 2nd – Chloe Foggarty
- 3rd – Jenna Coley
- 4th – Mason Owen





## MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE BRECON BEACONS

By Mrs Davies (Head of Culture and Religion)

**To celebrate Shwmae Week the Culture and Religion department took advantage of the sunny October weather to explore the Brecon Beacons.**

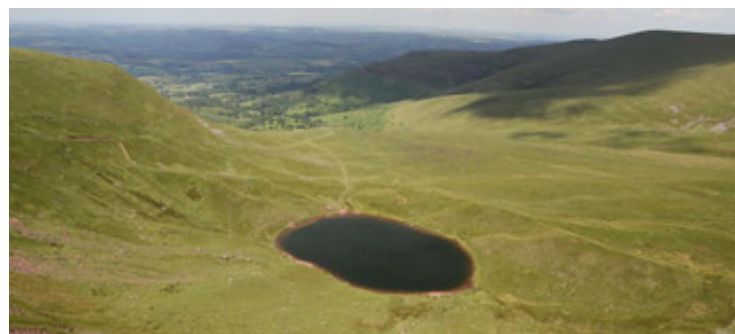
To compliment the work they are doing with Miss Jones on 'Myths and Symbolism in Religion' Miss Jones and her Year 7 groups visited locations on the Brecon Beacons linked with famous Welsh myths and legends. Mr Stephen Axe was their guide for day.

One of the places they visited was Cwm Llwch, on the North side of the Brecon Beacons. Llyn Cwm Llwch is described as the finest example of a glacial tarn, being almost perfectly circular and located beneath Corn Ddu, the second highest mountain in the Brecon Beacons National Park. They were focusing on the legend of Llyn Cwm Llwch, a moral story about trust, involving fairy guardians and a day visitor to a beautiful island that only appears on May Day. The visitor is entrusted not to pick any flowers but he succumbs to temptation.

Ben Fuge said: We had a really fun day. We learned stories we didn't know before. We never knew that the Beacons was such an interesting place. I'd like to go again. I can remember all the stories Steve told us."

Kamika Stuckey said: "It was sunny but cold. The sheep were really close."

Caitlyn Edmunds said: "Steve told us the stories in a really fun way. I loved being able to go under the shelters and pretend that we the people that used them."





# PUPIL PROFILE

## THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!

During the summer holidays Jocelyn Churchill, was the only student representing our school at a NASA project at Kings College, London. The project was run by ISSET, project leader was the most experienced of the British astronauts, Michael Foale.

Jocelyn along with a group of students devised, worked on and presented a project for NASA's consideration as an experiment in the Space Station. Jocelyn also presented their proposal to a team of professionals including Michael Foales in a large lecture theatre full of students who participated within their own groups and represented schools from other areas across the United Kingdom.

As well as keen interest in Science and Maths, Jocelyn is a member of several orchestras including the Four Counties Youth Orchestra, Rhondda Symphony Orchestra, where he has been leader of the double bass section, and the Orchestra of Junior Conservatoire of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff. This summer he played with the 'Glam Reunion Orchestra and Choir at the annual Gala Concert in St. David's Hall, Cardiff under Nick Davies and Maestro Anthony Gabrielle. "As well as revising for my exams I'm also auditioning for the National Youth Orchestra for Wales in November" said Jocelyn.

Jocelyn is currently in Year 13 studying Maths, Biology and Physics. He would like to further his education by going to university to study Physics.



Jocelyn standing alongside Michael Foale



Jocelyn during rehearsals in the orchestra



# PUPIL AND PARENT VOICE

# PUPIL PARLIAMENT

By Mrs Marvelley (Development of Pupil and Parent Voice)

**The Pontypridd High School Pupil Parliament 2016-17 has been successfully formed.**

Pupils from all year groups were invited to apply for the Parliament and we received many strong applications. Staff involved in the interview process were incredibly impressed by the confidence, eloquence and passion shown by pupils and were delighted to offer Parliament positions to the successful candidates.

The first Full Parliament Meeting of 2016-17 took place on 10th October and the pupils' energy and enthusiasm made it clear just how strong a Parliament we have. After discussion of many ideas, pupils decided to focus on two key projects for this term: improving the school environment and developing and implementing a lost property policy. You can expect to hear more from them on these issues!

As well as Action Teams to focus on each of the two priorities, the Parliament has formed a Communication Team with the remit of developing greater communication to and from the rest of the student body, staff, governors, parents and the



**Members of the Pupil Parliament for 2016-17**

wider community. For more news and views from the Pupil Parliament please follow them on Twitter @PHS\_PupilPar.

# YOU SPOKE, WE LISTENED

**Prior to the Year 7 'Meet the Form Tutors' evening, a group of Year 7 parents met with Mrs Marvelley to share their views on the school's transition process. We were delighted with the overwhelmingly positive feedback.**

It was wonderful to hear that our wide range of transition activities meant that by the time pupils officially joined us in September, they already knew staff, had formed friendship groups and were 'excited' and 'at ease' about beginning their secondary school journey. We were also pleased to hear that parents felt we couldn't have done any more to support them throughout the process, with members of staff such as Miss Churchill and Mrs Finney receiving special mentions as people who helped put parents at ease and kept them informed.

We are always striving to keep improving all aspects of our provision and parent consultations are a key part of helping us to do that. Two actions have been undertaken as a result of the Year 7 Parent Consultation:

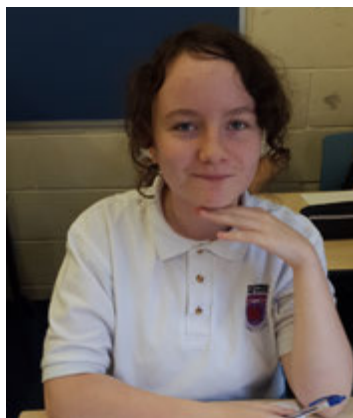
1. Parents would like more information on how pupils acquire a locker. Miss Churchill has now written more detailed locker information in to this year's transition plan.
2. Parents felt that Parents Evening experiences could be enhanced by less queueing. Mrs Marvelley is now reviewing the format and structure of our Parents Evenings.

If you have any suggestions for ways we can improve our Parents Evenings or if you would like to be involved in future Parent Consultations, please email Mrs Marvelley at [marvelleyc@pontyhigh.co.uk](mailto:marvelleyc@pontyhigh.co.uk).



# YEAR 7

# MY FIRST TERM...



By Miss Churchill (Head of Transition and Year 7 & 8)

**The transition from Primary School to High School is a big step for all pupils. Miss Churchill recently caught up with some pupils in Year 7 to find out how well they have settled into their first term.**

## **Lowri Thomas**

Previous Primary School: **Cilfynydd Primary**

*"My first term has been really good, I've tried lots of new things like Engineering. I have also been to the after school clubs and taken part in cooking and spin classes, which has been fun."*



## **Brooklyn Gilder**

Previous Primary School: **Cefn Primary**

*"My first term has been fun. I've met loads of new friends and I have enjoyed the new lessons too. Art and Math's are my favourite because I really like my teachers."*

## **Ellis Owen**

Previous Primary School: **YGG Abercynon**

*"I was nervous when I first came because I was on my own but I have enjoyed making new friends and getting to know different people. I really enjoy my Science and Engineering lessons."*

## **Sophie Edmunds**

Previous Primary School: **Maesycoed Primary**

*"I've found the first term really good. My favourite things so far have been Shwmae week where we took part in loads of activities for Welsh. I have made new friends who are lovely and I'm looking forward to the rest of the year."*



## **Briar-Rose Allen**

Previous Primary School: **YGG Evan James**

*"I have settled in really well, the staff here are really nice. I was nervous coming here because I was on my own but I was confident I would make friends because the school has helped me to socialise by doing circle time in registration and the teachers have helped too."*

## Lauren Williams

Previous Primary School: **Coedyfan Primary**

*"I have enjoyed my lessons so far. My favourite subjects are English and Spanish. I have also settled in well and made lots of new friends."*

## Millie Jones

Previous Primary School: **Coedpenmaen Primary**

*"I have really enjoyed the new experiences at Ponty High. I've enjoyed cooking so far and I made fruit crumble recently. I have also represented the school in cross country which was a great experience."*

## Jordan Scott

Previous Primary School: **Trehopcyn Primary**

*"My first term has been fun and exciting. When I first came I was nervous but I've got used to it and now I know where to go for all my classes. My favourite lessons is English because I like writing."*

## Tori Jones

Previous Primary School: **Craig yr Hesg**

*"I have loved moving around for lessons and getting to go to different places. History with Mr Roach is my favourite. I have also joined the netball team and have enjoyed representing the school."*

## Steffan David

Previous Primary School: **Abercynon Community School**

*"I have enjoyed making new friends and meeting new teachers. I've enjoyed learning new subjects like Science because it's different to primary because we can use things like Bunsen burners."*

## Thea Davies

Previous Primary School: **Fynnon Taf Primary**

*"I have settled in well to Ponty High. I came from Fynnon Taf Primary on my own so I found the amount of days we had for transition really helpful as we had a lot of time to get to know the other pupils and staff before September. I am really enjoying my Art lessons so far."*

## Taylor Jones

Previous Primary School: **Trerobart Primary**

*"I have loved History this term because it is fun and educational. I have also made new friends and settled into Pontypridd High."*





# FOOTBALL FOCUS

By Miss Grant (P.E. Department)

**Miss Grant recently sat down with Jasmine Simpson and Sophie Norman, both in Year 10 to find out a little more about their love of football.**

## **Why did you start playing football?**

**JS** - I've just always loved football? Looking back at photographs when I was little I've always got a football with me. Had my first football kit for my first Christmas. I started playing football at the age of 6/7 for Graig AFC.

**SN** - I started playing football because I liked the sport and I enjoyed watching my own dad play.

## **Who do you play for?**

**JS** - I currently play club football for Rhydyfelin Rebels U16s. The other squads I play for are BGC of Wales U16s, Swansea City Academy U16s, South Wales Girls Performance Centre and Wales National U16s.

**SN** - I play for Rhydyfelin Rebels, South Wales Performance Centre and Wales U15's national/Regional Squad.



**Sophie (14 shirt) and Jasmine (10 shirt)**





## When do you play?

**JS** - I have a very busy training schedule which is: Tuesday – Swansea City Academy, Wednesday – Wales National, Thursday – Club and South Wales Girls Performance Centre and Friday – BGC of Wales! Club fixtures are played on a weekly basis on a Sunday afternoon. The other squad I play for fixtures are arranged as and when.

**SN** - I play for Rhydfelin on a Sunday. I train with the performance centre on a Thursday Evening and I train with the Welsh U15's squad on a Wednesday!

## Who is your favourite player?

**JS** - My favourite male footballer is Cristiano Ronaldo who plays for Portugal (Captain) and Real Madrid. My favourite female footballer is Steph Houghton who plays for England (Captain) and Manchester City (Captain).

**SN** - My favourite player is Gareth Bale. He is one of the best players in the world and he is Welsh! My favourite women's player has to be Sophie Ingle because she is what I would love to be like when I'm older and she also plays as a Welsh centre back!

## Why should girls get into football?

**JS** - Why not? Equal opportunities, girls can play football just as boys can. The standard of girl's football is extremely high. There are 2000 female players, 136 teams and 52 clubs in the South Wales Women and Girls League.

**SN** - Girls should play football because it's actually a fun sport to play and women's football is actually getting a lot more popular over the years. By playing football you can make a lot of new friends like I have done already.

## What are your ambitions?

**JS** - I have already met one of my ambitions and that was to play for Wales at U15s level. My future ambitions is to play for Wales at a senior level and possibly coach/manager either my national team or professional club.

**SN** - My ambitions for when I am older is to play for Manchester City women's team and play for Wales as my own national team. I wouldn't mind actually if I was able to play for a Great Britain Olympic team!

Any girls interested in playing football for the school come and see Miss Grant for further details.



Jasmine and Sophie at club level



Celebrating another goal together



# AWARDS EVENING

**Earlier this term, pupils, staff and parents joined together to celebrate the achievements of pupils from the last academic year.**

We were joined by a former pupil, Mr Bruno Sussat as our guest speaker, Mr Stuart Tucker Challenger Adviser and Mr Jon James and Mr Howard Davies from the construction firm ISG. The evening was a great success with so many awards to present. Amongst these were to Amy Herman our Pupil of the Year for 2016, Mrs Heather Young Non-Teaching Award and Ms Gabby Jones Teacher of the Year. We also celebrated awards for fantastic examination success in the summer at GCSE and A Level in addition to prizes for international sporting honours, attendance and in each subject area. Mr Jon James presented a Citizenship award to Jordan Williams for all his work in the local community and Mr Stuart Tucker to Sian Smith for her 'Endeavour' and perseverance through Year 11. After outstanding success at A Level, Joseph Isingrini is leaving us to begin his studies at Oxford University and he was presented with the 'Outstanding Achievement' award by Mr Bruno Sussat.

Since leaving Pontypridd High Bruno has achieved fantastic academic success at Cambridge University and is now pursuing a career with Ernst and Young which has already presented him with many new challenges and exciting opportunities. He was introduced by our Head Girl, Olivia Davies and Head Boy, Ben Gooding. His speech was very well received and he emphasised the importance of persevering through all those demanding times in order to be successful in school. He also reflected positively on his time at Pontypridd High and the support and encouragement he received from all staff. It was great to see Bruno again and we all wish him well for the future.

Congratulations also to all those pupils who also achieved great things through the year and made progress in many different ways. Many thanks also to Joseph, Jocelyn and Samantha who 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! ■



**Amy Herman and Mr Bruno Sussat**



**Jordan Williams and Mr Jon James**



**Sian Smith and Mr Stuart Tucker**



# TEACHING AND LEARNING

# DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

By Mrs Dober (Teaching and Learning)

**Over the last 18 months significant funding has been spent on improvements to our IT network. This has included the purchase of more technology to improve learning and the digital skills of our pupils and staff. A number of staff have become Digital Leaders and attended after school training sessions to develop lessons incorporating use of iPads to enhance learning experiences across the school.**

Mr Allen in the Science Department used the iPads to teach a unit of work on the 'The Thermogram'. Pupils were challenged to create their own video clips including images and audio to teach others about the uses of the Thermogram and how it works. This task incorporated a number of skills including presentation skills and script writing in addition to pupils using their Scientific knowledge, selecting appropriate images and using digital technology!

Miss Stickler has used the iPads in English lessons to create adverts for a Welsh product as part of Shwmae week. Pupils were challenged to choose a Welsh product and create an advert that would encourage people to buy it. They had to use their persuasive writing skills as well as oracy skills to think about their expression and tone of voice throughout the advert.

Pupils have been busy in their Mathematics lessons over Shwmae week planning a trip to a Welsh location and creating an advert to sell the trip to other pupils. Pupils had to cost every aspect of the trip and work out the cost per pupil. They then had to create a video clip explaining the cost and how they worked it out. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed these lessons.

The Geography Department have been using digital technology to create videos about the floods in India in 2015. Pupils were challenged to select appropriate images and use their Geographical knowledge to prepare a script that would teach others about the



the floods. Mrs Farrow was thrilled with the quality of the work produced and has said that the clips will provide excellent revision resources for the GCSE examinations.

Our thanks to Mr Cooke, Network Manager, for his support in the classroom. Like literacy and numeracy, digital competency is hugely relevant in ensuring we prepare our pupils for the future.

# ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

# ROALD DAHL



By Mrs Van-Baaren (English teacher)

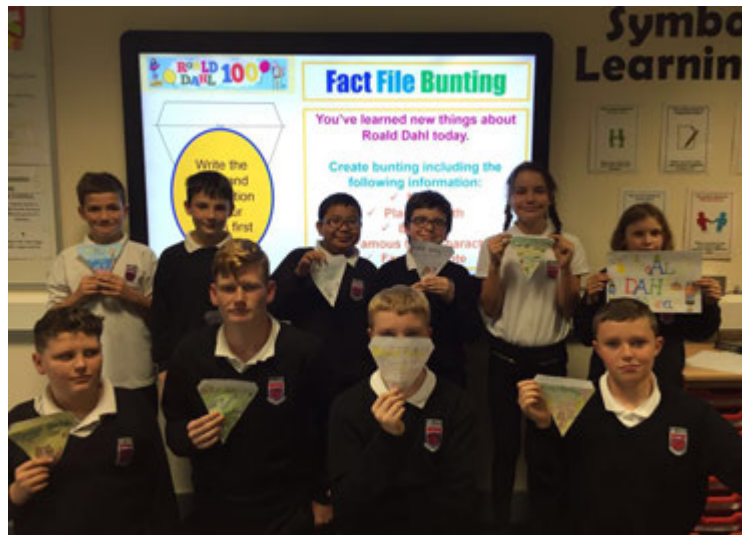
**2016 marks the 100th year since the birth of Welsh legend Roald Dahl. To celebrate this, the pupils in the English department have been having a whizzpoppingly fantastical time.**

Students in Year 7 have spent the first half term exploring the life and works of Roald Dahl. Students have created their own gobblefunk, written deliciously descriptive pieces of writing about Charlie and the

Chocolate factory, created their own dream jars and lots of other splendid activities.

September 13th was Roald Dahl Day. Our pupils in key stage 3 took part in the biggest ever global celebration of his birthday! We had a glorumptious time of it.

The biggest message the students have taken away from studying Roald Dahl is that his stories are about children having courage and being brave.



# OF MICE AND MEN

**Year 11 students had the excellent opportunity to see the production "Of Mice and Men" at the Newbridge Memo on 4th October.**

Students greatly enjoyed the performance, and this will help them in their preparation for the English Literature examination in January.

A major part of the exam is to focus on the novel "Of Mice and Men."

