



AMAZING MIA THORNE

By Miss Pritchard

The WellChild Awards is one of the most emotional nights of the year, and this year's brought another inspiring evening of tears and triumph as it celebrates children who've defied incredible health odds to succeed in life.

This year's awards evening took place at London's Royal Lancaster Hotel. The charity which cares for seriously ill children, celebrates their success with many celebrities attending.

This year's awards were extra special to us at Pontypridd High School as our very own Mia Thorne in Year 8 was chosen amongst thousands of children to attend the evening and receive the 'Inspirational Young Person 11-14' award.

Mia Thorne is a remarkable young person who has a form of cerebral palsy that affects the right side of her

body. Doctors told her parents that she would never be able to walk or talk however Mia has proved them all wrong! Instead, she dedicates her life to helping others. She has been doing charity work since the age of 7 years old and continues to fundraise. As an ambassador for children's charities Caudwell Children and Dreams Come True, she has raised more than £100,000 with black-tie balls, park races, cake sales, handmade bracelets and an ice-skating challenge.

Prior to the awards evening Mia met with Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, interviewed for Hello Magazine and appeared on Channel 5 news. She is an extremely humble pupil who does all of these great challenges alongside her school commitments. Mia is determined to make a difference, and receiving this national award is proof that she already is!

We are incredibly proud of Mia's achievements and wish her every success in the future with her next fundraising idea. ■



WE'RE IN GOOD HANDS

By Mrs Dober

Earlier this term a group of 12 pupils travelled to the WIMAT Centre at the Heath Hospital to learn about the use of robotics in surgery.

The demonstration was led by a group of professionals from CMR Surgical, the company who have designed and created 'Versius' – a next generation surgical robot. Over the course of the morning pupils learnt all about Versius and how it has the potential to improve a range of surgical procedures.

We learnt from CMR: 'Versius has been created to transform the way we think about surgery. As a surgeon recently commented, Versius has created 21st century laparoscopy. It gives surgeons the freedom of port placements, but with the benefits of fully wristed instruments, 3D HD vision, natural instrument control

and a choice of ergonomic working positions that has the potential to reduce stress and fatigue. In short, it offers surgeons the best of both worlds.'

After an initial talk pupils were then given the chance to try out the training equipment used by the surgeons and operate 'Versius' themselves. Some of the pupils showed a real flair for operating the robot and were able to use it to stack blocks on a peg board. Throughout the trip pupils conducted themselves excellently and asked a wide range of thought provoking questions.

We would like to thank the Moondance Project for giving us the opportunity to view the demonstration. We would also like to thank Finn Stevenson and all of his colleagues from CMR Surgical for taking the time to teach us so much about the next generation in surgical technology. It really was a fascinating experience for all.





AWARDS CEREMONY

By Mr Cripps

The 2019 Awards Ceremony took place earlier this term. The evening was a fantastic celebration of our students' academic, sporting and extra-curricular achievements.

There were many awards to present including prizes for each subject, a student of the year from each year group and transition awards for our younger students as they have moved from primary into secondary school. We also celebrated awards for fantastic examination success in the summer at GCSE and A Level and prizes for international sport.

The Citizenship Award was won by the 'Stories of Coal' animation documentary. Mr Husband, Mr Cooke and a selection of students who worked on the project proudly showed off the results of their hard work. The Endeavour Award was won by William Mansell for his strength and determination to overcome his disability and achieve his goals. Isobelle Preston received the Rhys Morgan Outstanding Achievement Award for her passion and desire to succeed in her academic studies and also for her contribution to the wider school community.

The winners of our most coveted awards were: Audi Silsuktipapsorn (Student of the Year), Mr Phil Winterburn (Support Staff Member of the Year) and Miss Kelly Fleming (Teacher of the Year). These awards were voted for by the students and staff of Pontypridd High and all recipients thoroughly deserve this success.

Head Girl Billie-Mai Cox and Head Boy Lewis Hooper spoke very well, introducing this year's 6th form leadership team and outlining their plans for the year ahead. The evening ended with Governor Sally Moses congratulating everyone for what they had achieved and thanking all staff and each family for their commitment and support.

Congratulations also to all those students who achieved great things though the year and made progress in many different ways. Many students were nominated for awards and their achievements have been recognised in school assemblies with certificates being presented by Headteacher, Huw Cripps.

Everyone has something to aim for over the next year to ensure they feature in the Awards for 2020. Well done to you all. We look forward to celebrating all our achievements again this time next year. ■

PETS AS THERAPY

By Mrs Finney

This term several pupils have been eager to pick up their reading books and spend time with the golden retriever lanto from the programme Read2Dogs.

lanto attends Pontypridd High School weekly and listens to a variety of different stories read to him with the aim of improving pupil's confidence and literacy skills. lanto and his owner Melanie are part of the charity Pets As Therapy who encourage pupils to improve their self-esteem and emotional wellbeing along with raising academic abilities.

Most adults are apprehensive about speaking in public. as it can be very daunting. Young people are no

different. Research shows that young people can become nervous and stressed when reading to others in a group. However, when a Pets As Therapy (PAT) dog enters the group, the pupils often become less stressed, less self-conscious and more confident as the dogs are non-judgemental. Before long the pupils are starting to look forward to the reading experience as they are going to read to their new friend, the PAT Dog. PAT Dogs provide comfort, encourage positive social behaviours, enhance self-esteem, motivate speech and inspire young people to have fun.

We would all like to thank Melanie and lanto for their valuable time in helping to make a real difference to the pupils. ■





TRANSITION VISIT

By Miss Pritchard

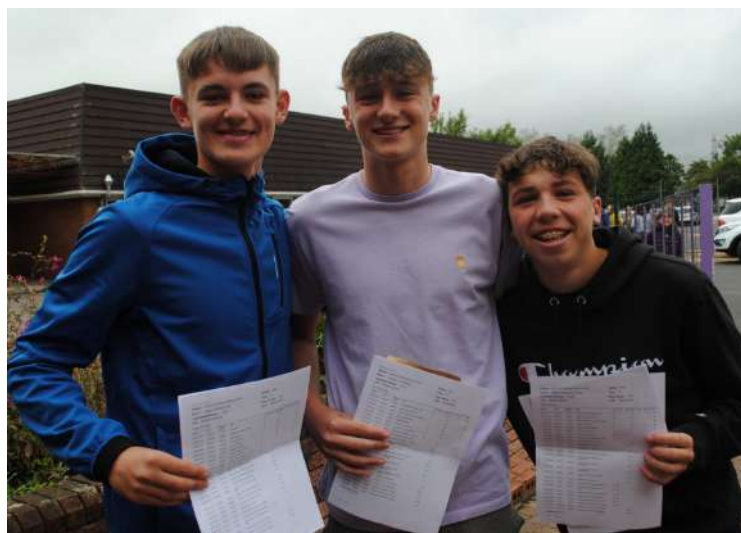
Following a very successful Year 5 transition programme last summer it was great to see everyone back again at Pontypridd High for the start of our Year 6 arrangements.

Not only were all of our cluster schools involved but also pupils who will be joining us from other primary schools such as Abercynon, Coedpenmaen and Hafod.

Over the two days at the start of October children were able to mix with others from different schools and also to meet up with staff with whom they are now far more familiar. Everyone was able to participate in all of the activities which included 'throwing a pot', a new experience for many but something which showed a level of talent and skill not seen before. Mr Eldridge in

ICT was very pleased with the progress made using 'microbits' and in Science Mr Smith conducted different experiments in the laboratory which everyone enjoyed.

These two days certainly made a positive contribution to the transition into Year 7 in September 2020 and we appreciate the high attendance at our Parent / Carer meeting which followed the days children had spent with us. It was very satisfying to know that children already feel very confident and assured about the step up into High School. If you were not able to make this meeting and would like to visit us please contact Miss Katie Pritchard (Year 7 Wellbeing manager) or myself Huw Cripps (Headteacher) and we can arrange a meeting, tour of the school and answer any questions you may have about moving into Year 7 next September or indeed in future years. ■



AMAZING GCSE RESULTS!

Great results again this year at Ponty High!

Congratulations to all our students who have achieved success in their examinations. We are very pleased that our results compare very favourably to the new Welsh Government performance indicators. In particular, the total points scored by each student for their best 'Capped 9' qualifications. On average our students have achieved a score of 387 points each, an increase of nearly 40 points on last year. This means that on average, each student achieved above the equivalent of a C grade in each of their 9 best GCSE results. Without question it is amongst the very best in the Local Authority.

Such positive outcomes reflect the high expectations we have for our pupils and it is to their credit that they have responded so positively to the challenge we set for them. Our congratulations to Keynaan Edwards, Anna Jones, Nia Davies, Annaleigh Hall, Jodie Matthews who all achieved 8 or more A* and A grades. Also to Kane Tuttsell, Jessica Lloyd Thomas, Ffion Jones, Malachy Jennings, Abby Davies, Caitlyn Evans, Keelan Evans, Lucie Kate Evans, Lewis Ferguson, Jessica Davies, Kerianne Jones, Noor Randhawa, Ffion Davies and Elli

Mai Collins who all achieved a significant number of excellent grades. In addition well done to Ollie Beamand, Kate Barret, Tyler Brown, Sean Davies, Leona Gibbs, Grace Pyatt, Elis Rowe-Jones and Cameron Weeks amongst many others who also achieved great results. Be very proud of yourselves.

We are also delighted with the positive outcomes achieved by many of our students in Year 10 who have completed exams as part of different GCSE courses. They now have a very firm foundation from which to start Year 11 and the confidence to know they are capable of achieving success at this more challenging level.

For students across our Year 11 group to achieve such fantastic results is a very positive reflection on the commitment of students and the excellent teaching they are receiving from staff. The support of each family is essential and as always it is very much appreciated.

Mr Bill Davies, Chair of the Governing Body would like to thank all pupils and staff for their effort and hard work and congratulate everyone on gaining these GCSE qualifications. ■

A LEVEL SUCCESS



I would like to congratulate each of our students who have achieved success with their 'A' level results.

I am delighted that 100% of our students have achieved the Level 3 Threshold and Welsh Baccalaureate results are exceptional, with 100% passing the Skills Challenge Certificate at grades A* to C. In addition I also want to congratulate the many students who have achieved very good grades at the end of their A/S Year 12 studies. In terms of our Sixth Form provision these results are very encouraging for the year ahead.

With regard to final A Level results, particular mention must be given to Kimberly Jones with A*A*ABD and Georgia Wheeler with A*A*A grades along with Tessa Pounder AAAB and Taylor Daniels A*A*B. Similarly impressive results were achieved by Daniel Tollan, Lia Ferguson and Lydia Pearce with AABB, Morgan Jones, Lucy Hughes and India Lloyd Evans passed with AABC. Congratulations also to Alex John A*CCD, Chloe Ellis ACCD, Brittany Cowley A*BC, Roisin Moses A*BCE, Lucy Jones A*ADE, Chalis Matthews ABDE and Sophie Tarr ACCE who all performed to a very high standard. Twin sisters Alice and Kate Newton both achieved ACCD grades in support of each other!

Most pleasing is that these positive outcomes are allowing all students who successfully completed courses to access a course and destination of their choice. As Headteacher I am very much aware that a major part of this success is a result of the very positive relationships and partnerships we have established with each family over a number of years. As always the commitment from all students, staff and the support of each family is greatly appreciated. Mr Bill Davies, Chair of Governors expressed his delight at what has been achieved. He congratulates all of the students on their results in addition to thanking staff for their continued hard work and support which ensures Pontypridd High continues to provide a very successful Sixth Form provision.

We thank those students who are now leaving us for their contribution to our School and wish them well as they move on to new challenges beyond Pontypridd High. ■

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

November

Monday 4th - All pupils return to school

Monday 11th - Maths Exam Unit 1 (Year 11)

Monday 12th - Maths Exam Unit 2 (Year 11)

December

Thursday 5th - 6th Form Open Evening (U.S.W.)

Monday 16th-18th - Year 10 Work Experience

Wednesday 18th - End of Term

Thursday 19th - INSET

Friday 20th - INSET

January

Monday 6th - All pupils return to school

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 2019 to August 2020

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.

