



ROAD SAFETY WALES



By Mrs Taylor

In September 2023 the speed limit on roads where people live, or regularly walk and cycle will change. A new default speed limit of 20mph (instead of 30mph now) will come in. The new speed limit will help reduce collisions on our roads, make our streets nicer places to be and encourage more people to walk and cycle.

Pupils in Year 7 and 8 were asked in their Discover More lessons to create a design to promote the new 20mph

speed limit. This was part of a nationwide competition for primary and secondary school pupils. The winning sign, will be used outside schools, reminding drivers of the importance of driving within the 20mph speed limit.

We would like to congratulate each and every person who put in an entry. They were all amazing and it is nice to see how talented they all are.

I am proud to say that one of our amazing Year 8 pupil's has won the second prize out of over 2000 entries. Well done Kesav Sujeebun on an amazing achievement.

MATHS IN NATURE

By Mr Astley

This term, 12 Year 7 pupils were invited down to the National Museum of Wales to take part in a 'Maths in Nature' Challenge day.

The pupils started the day by using their measuring skills and the formula of a cylinder to work out the volume of a whale's vertebra. Using bone density pupils then estimated the weight of the whole whale skeleton.

The second activity focussed on bees and their vision. PHS pupils demonstrated excellent Numeracy skills during this task - this was commented on by the scientist leading the session. She also mentioned that Alexa Frelford was 'the only pupil out of 13 different schools' who had completed a particular challenging problem!

Pupils also enjoyed a session exploring Ming - the oldest living creature on record - and of course some free time exploring the Museum; where the dinosaurs proved the most popular attraction.



OXFORD UNIVERSITY



By Miss Stickler

Earlier this month, Miss Stickler and Mr Longden took 30 Aspire students from Years 9 to 11 on a visit to Oxford University. This was an excellent and informative day which allowed students an insight into what it could be like should they wish to apply for university in the future.

On arrival at Jesus college; a college with an affiliation to Wales, students were given the opportunity to ask questions to current student ambassadors about all aspects of student life. They then went on a walking tour

of the campus and the city, stopping off to see buildings such as the Radcliffe Camera and the Sheldonian Theatre.

On returning back to Jesus college, the students were given a taster lecture on the topic of classical conditioning and the placebo effect. There was thorough engagement by all and some really thought provoking discussion took place.

The visit to Oxford was finished off with a visit to the Ashmolean museum. This trip was funded in part by the Welsh Government Seren Project.

REORGANISATION PLAN

By Mr Cripps

As part of the building work associated with the next phases of our school reorganisation process (3G Sports pitch / new bus bay development) there will need to be a consultation on the plans for different parts of the work. This is called a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC).

This process gives staff and members of the local community the opportunity to view and comment on

the draft proposals before they are finalised and the planning application is submitted. The PAC consultation period is now live and will run until 6th April. All relevant documentation can be found if you scan the QR code. Please have a look at this at your convenience. A PAC drop-in session will be arranged at a convenient time during the consultation period where staff and members of the local community can view the proposals and ask any questions you may have.

With thanks and on behalf of RCT Officers.



SOAP BOX DERBY



By Mr Van-Baaren

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education is critical in today's world, where technology and innovation play an important role in shaping the future.

Soapbox Derby races have been a popular pastime for many years, and they offer a fun and engaging way to teach STEM concepts to primary school children. We are excited to be supporting Year 6 pupils in our cluster schools to deliver a soapbox derby STEM project. This project will help children learn about physics, engineering, and design while also promoting teamwork and problem-solving skills.

The project involves pupils designing and making

model soapbox cars. The cars will be constructed from a variety of materials, such as wood or plastic, and will be designed with aerodynamics and weight distribution in mind.

Once the cars are built, students will learn about physics by testing them on a downhill course. They will measure the car's speed, evaluate their class results, and make design changes for future improvements.

The soapbox derby STEM project is an excellent way to teach Year 6 about science, technology, engineering, and maths while also promoting creativity and critical thinking.

We are looking forward to celebrating and showcasing the work the pupils complete in the summer term.

EMBRACE EQUITY

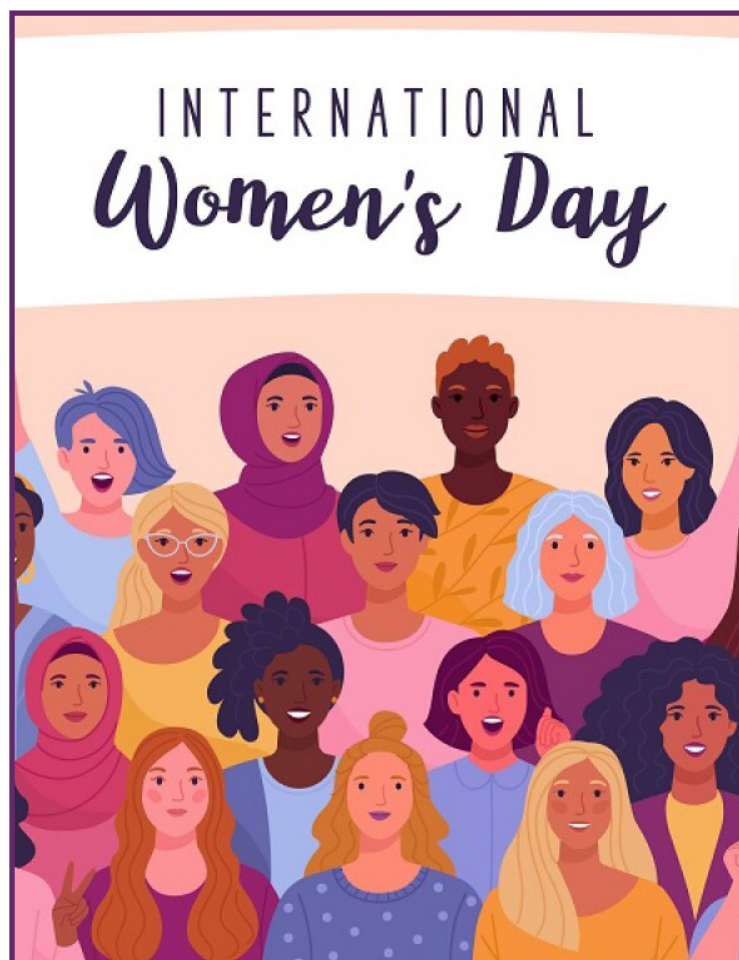
By Miss Jones and Mrs Stockman

This year's International Women's Day theme is to "embrace equity". At Pontypridd High School we agree that diversity and equality can only thrive in an environment that is fair and impartial. We strive to create an ethos that is free from bias, discrimination and stereotypes for all our pupils.

We believe it is extremely important that our young people are educated, inspired and engaging with days like International Women's Day. Due to this belief, throughout the week in which International Women's Day took place, a number of activities were run for both staff and pupils to get involved with.

An International Women's Day Assembly was delivered to each year group by Mrs Stockman and Miss Jones. This assembly was focused on delving into the history behind the day and why it was important to celebrate and acknowledge this day each year. We highlighted some inspirational women during the assembly and the impact their actions had on the world (most notably Malala Yousafzai, Rosa Parks and Frida Khalo) as well as inviting the pupils to think about the inspiration women in their own lives. We looked at some key terms that have become quite well known and important on social media at the moment. Words such as, "misogyny" and "manosphere" have boomed online and it is important the pupils understand how social media and the online world have an impact on today's society.

In anticipation of International Women's Day, female staff were asked to participate in a presentation that looked at their achievements and successes inside and outside of school. Male staff were also asked to reflect on the inspirational women in their lives and how their achievements and qualities have an impact on their lives. This was done with the hope of raising female



aspirations and allowing our young people to see they are capable of many things. This presentation was extended to past pupils, family members and our very own Council MP Alex Davies-Jones.

During lessons, pupils in Year 7 have been studying Malala and how important she has been for the educational rights of the girls and women in Pakistan. They have been reading the book "I am Malala" and completing many activities that look at human rights and the difficulties still faced in the world by girls today, not just in countries such as Pakistan but also in Wales, right on our doorstep.

ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS



By Mrs Atwood

This year's Science week theme was connections, which gave the Science department an excellent opportunity to take advantage of the connections between animals and humans.

Year 8 have spent the spring term learning all about animals, their habitats and their unique adaptations for survival in their environment. To allow pupils to experience these animals and visualise their adaptations first hand, we invited the fantastic Aled and Shona from A & S Animal Encounters to deliver a hands-on session for pupils.

Pupils had a chance to get up close and personal with

several unusual animals including a Binturong, Armadillo, Ball Python, Pancake tortoise and a Blue-tonged lizard. Pupils had the opportunity to learn about the fantastic morphological and behavioural adaptations of these animals, learnt where they are found in the wild and got to hold them. Aled and Shona have fantastic knowledge about these animals and were able to inspire the pupils into thinking about just how much animals have had to adapt to survive in an ever-changing world. The whole day was an amazing experience and helped us take learning outside of the classroom.

Pupils (and staff) thoroughly enjoyed the day, and we are looking forward to using our new found knowledge of some of these animals in our lessons.

SCHOOL EISTEDDFOD



By Mrs Mills

Ar ôl blynyddoedd diflas, braf oedd gweld yr Eisteddfod flynyddol yn dychwelyd i Ysgol Uwchradd Pontypridd. Lanswyd yr Eisteddfod gyda blwyddyn 7 ac 8, a chafodd y llysoedd traddodiadol eu ailgyflwyno sef Albion, Lady Windsor, Maritime a Tŷ Mawr.

Roedd cyfres o gystadlaethau llwyfan yn cynnwys danwsio, canu, llefaru ac actio. Yn ogystal â'r cystadlaethau gwaith cartref o bob cyfadran. Roedd rhain yn cynnwys arlunio dreigiau, cwblhau ymarferion ffitrwydd sêr chwaraeon o Gymru a hyd yn oed dylunio person Lego Cymreig.

Felly, ar ddydd Gwener, Chwefror 17th, roedd cyffro di-ri yn neuadd yr ysgol gyda blwyddyn 7 & 8 gyda diwrnod yr Eisteddfod, ac ein disgyblion dewr yn mynd ati ar y llwyfan i gystadlu. Hefyd, mae rhaid rhoi diolch enfawr i Miss Evans a Mrs Davies, cyn-athrawon yr ysgol a ddaeth

i feirnadu'r cystadlaethau llwyfan.

Da iawn yn wir i bawb a wnaeth cystadlu ar y llwyfan ar y diwrnod! Yn enwedig Isabella Flye ym mlwyddyn 7 ac Alfie Gwynne ym mlwyddyn 8 a oedd ar y llwyfan sawl gwaith yn ystod y dydd! Diolch i bawb a wnaeth cwblhau gwaith cartref i ennill pwyntiau i'w llysoedd hefyd.

Yn olaf, llongyfarchiadau i Miss Davies a llys Lady Windsor, y llys buddugol eleni! Pwy bydd y llys buddugol yn 2024?

After a quiet few years, it was nice to see the annual Eisteddfod return to Pontypridd High School. The Eisteddfod was launched with Year 7 and 8, and the traditional houses were reintroduced namely Albion, Lady Windsor, Maritime and Tŷ Mawr.

There was a range of stage competitions including dancing, singing, speaking and acting. As well as the



homework competitions from each faculty. These included drawing dragons, completing fitness exercises from Welsh sports stars, and even designing a Welsh Lego person.

So, on Friday, February 17th, there was excitement in the school hall with Year 7 & 8 and Eisteddfod day, and our brave pupils going on stage to compete. Also, a huge thank you must be given to Miss Evans and Mrs Davies, former teachers of the school who came to judge the stage competitions.

Well done indeed to everyone who competed on the stage on the day! Especially Isabella Flye in Year 7 and Alfie Gwynne in Year 8 who were on stage several times during the day! Thanks to everyone who completed homework to gain points for their houses too.

Finally, congratulations to Miss Davies and Lady Windsor, this year's winning house! Who will be the winning house in 2024?



CAREERS SPOTLIGHT

By Miss Griffiths

Pupil had a careers day in February where they took part in a career related learning activity in every lesson that day. These activities gave learners an insight into the types of careers that are linked to their subjects and encouraged them to reflect on their future aspirations.

Have a Go Workshop

8T learners had the opportunity to take part in three interactive workshops with employers in Engineering, Digital Technology and Creative Animation. During these workshop learners got to experience and have a go of welding using chocolate bars to make a bridge, created games consoles out of paper and circuit boards, and had a go of animation to design their own character.

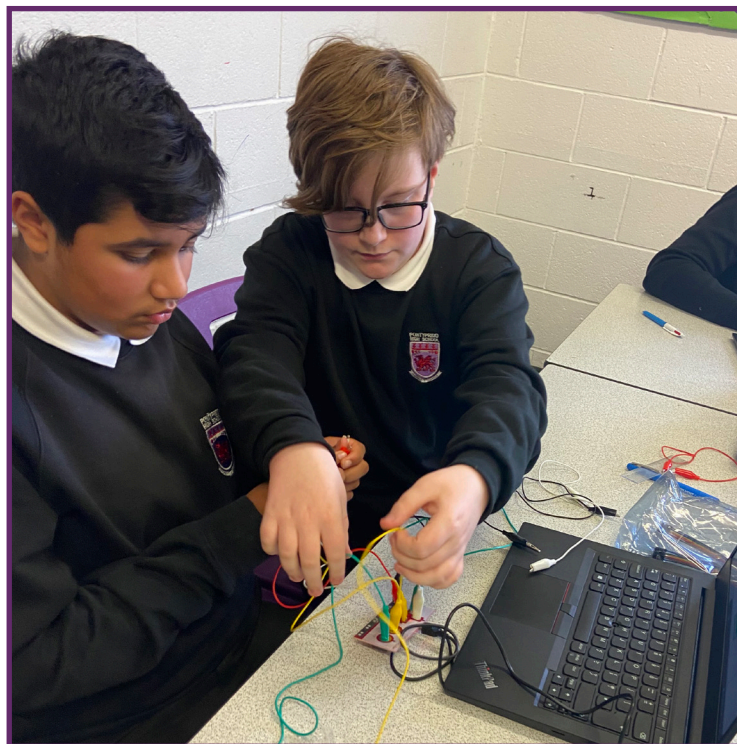
Choose Your Future Apprenticeship

65 year 10 learners attended a trip to Cardiff City Hall to meet over 70 employers and organisations with apprenticeship opportunities for them when they leave school. Some even got to experience the uniforms of these different careers.

What's Next?

- Careers Day in May for all year groups.
- Uniform Careers Fair for years 9 and 10.
- Career discovery day for years 7 and 8.

If any parent/carer or pupil would like any advice on career choices and opportunities for our learners, please email Miss Griffiths on griffithsr@pontyhigh.co.uk



RED NOSE DAY 2023

By Miss Lee

This month, our school council held a number of different activities to raise money for Comic Relief. They arranged a bake sale, a lucky dip and a 'guess the teacher in disguise' competition.

Comic Relief supports incredible projects and organisations who are making a difference for people across the UK and around the world. Many of the pupils enjoyed the day and raised £252! Many thanks to those pupils in the School Council who gave up many of their break and lunchtimes to organise this and thank you to pupils and parents who made purchases or donations on the day.

The money raised will help support people struggling with the cost-of-living crisis and tackle issues such as homelessness, mental health problems, and food poverty here in the UK and around the world.



LEADERSHIP CHANGE

By Mr Cripps

You will know that our school will become a new 3-16 school from September, 2024 and that I will not be the Headteacher when that change is made. After 17 years and after a great deal of thought and consideration I have made the decision that I will finish in my post as Headteacher of our school this summer.

I can confirm that the governing body have agreed that our current Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Kayleigh Oliver

will become the new Head of Pontypridd High School from September 2023 until August, 2024.

Governors have also agreed that Mr Mark Thomas will act as Executive Headteacher over the next year to support Mrs Oliver until he takes over as Headteacher of the new 3-16 school from September, 2024.

Mr Thomas and Mrs Oliver are very experienced school leaders and I know they are both very committed to achieving the very best for Pontypridd High in the 2023/24 school year. I wish them every success.

DOG MENTORING



By Miss Pritchard

At Pontypridd High School, we strongly believe that the well-being of our pupils is equally as important as their education and that it is very important to provide our young people with a range of therapeutic sources to support their development and progress. Therefore, we have signed up to an existing initiative called 'the Dog Mentor Programme' and have our very own dog mentor in school called Nellie.

Nellie is a 3-year-old Labrador who will be attending school two-three times a week to work with our young people. We believe there is significant potential for dogs to help young people in a range of educational environments, bringing benefits to their academic, emotional and social development.

There is an increasing body of research to support the benefit of a dog in school environments. In schools across the country, 'Reading Dogs' are being used to help children develop literacy and 'Therapy Dogs' can provide comfort and reassurance to children with anxiety and self-confidence issues. Increasingly in schools, it is becoming recognised that children's emotional wellbeing is at the root of positive behaviour and success, and a dog can therefore be used to support and improve the wellbeing of learners.

Children can benefit educationally and emotionally through working with a dog within a school environment. Research also suggests that contact with a dog can help children increase their understanding of responsibility and develop empathy and nurturing skills.

In many schools, dogs are making a difference in the behaviour of pupils. Some schools are using dogs to improve behaviour by promoting positive behaviour in students. In a controlled study, students were found to



The Dog Mentor

Building Characters



have fewer disciplinary referrals in schools with a dog than schools without. Students' behaviour improved toward teachers, and students also showed more confidence and responsibility. Additionally, parents reported that children seemed more interested in school as a result of having a dog at school.

Overall, our aim for our dog mentor is to work with young people and staff within the school to improve wellbeing and make a positive impact.

By working alongside the dog and learning how to become a good trainer, both staff and children experience the values and techniques that help develop:

- Communication
- Self-control and confidence
- Discipline and resilience
- Empathy and relationships
- Focus and concentration
- Stress coping strategies

Expectations of Students

It is very important that all pupils follow the guidelines stated below to ensure their safety and the safety of our

school dog, Nellie.

- All pupils must ask permission to stroke the school dog (Nellie) from the member of staff responsible for her at the time.
- There should never be more than 2 hands on the dog at any one given time.
- No deliberate running towards / around Nellie.
- No screaming, shouting or loud noises around the school dog.
- Do not repeatedly shout the dog's name as this will eventually cause her to ignore it and not recognise her own name.
- No eating around the dog.
- If Nellie shows any signs of being uncomfortable or distressed, apply the 2-metre rule.
- All pupils must wash their hands if they have touched the school dog.

Expectations of Parents/ Carers

- Inform the school of any allergies to pet hair that your child may have.
- Inform the school if you do not wish your child to interact with the school dog.

NSPCC ROCKS!

By Mr Williams-Burnett

Earlier this term, the Clwb Mathemateg element of our Maths Department took part in the nationwide competition, 'NSPCC Rocks!'

Year 7 competed against schools across Wales and the rest of the United Kingdom by answering questions on their times tables. The event was hosted by Times Table Rock Stars, where students are able to challenge one and other on their multiplication skills.

Nationwide, Pontypridd High School ranked 340 out of 17,256 schools. Amongst local schools, Pontypridd High ranked 1st and 2nd for 'school average correct' and 'school total correct' respectively.

Our top three students throughout the duration of the competition were, Alexa Frelford, Cody Williams and Owen Frelford, who achieved 1st, 2nd and 3rd place respectively.

A huge thank you goes to all participants of the competition – well done!



EXTRA-CURRICULAR

By Miss Fleming

Wednesday. There is no late bus on a Thursday.

The Health and Wellbeing Faculty are excited to launch our summer term extra-curricular timetable.

The activities take place after school with sessions starting at 3pm and finishing at 4pm in time for the pupils to catch the late bus which is available on a Tuesday and

For all after school sessions, pupils will have to bring their PE kit, and boots will be required for the rugby sessions (girls and boys). If any pupil is concerned about not having the correct boots or kit then please ask them to speak to a member of the PE faculty

Location	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunch Time Sports Hall	5-a-side Boys Year 7	5-a-side Boys Year 8	Girls Football	5-a-side Years 9 & 10	5-a-side Year 11
Lunch Time Gym	Girls Rugby	Bench Ball Year 7	-	Bench Ball Year 8	-
After School Sports Hall	Cricket All age groups	Girls Rugby	Netball Years 7 - 9	Netball Years 10 & 11	-
After School Field	-	Rugby Years 7 & 8	Rugby Years 9 & 10	-	-

WHOLE SCHOOL

FOR THE CALENDAR

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

Social Media: Instagram and Facebook

Phone: 01443 486133



April

Monday 17th - Beginning of term
Thursday 27th - Year 7 Progress Evening
Friday 28th - INSET Day

May

Monday 1st - Bank Holiday
Monday 8th - Bank Holiday Coronation
Friday 26th - Year 11 Leavers Assembly
Friday 26th - End of half term

June

Thursday 15th - Year 9 Progress Evening
Friday 23rd - INSET Day

July

Friday 21st - End of term

ROOM HIRE

We regard 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.

- Hire of School Hall - £25.00 per hour
- Hire of School Gym - £25.00 per hour
- Hire of Sports Hall - £25.00 per hour
- Hire of Drama Studio - £25.00 per hour
- Hire of Training Room - £25.00 per hour
- Hire of Classroom - £25.00 per 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.

