



TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

After 36 years in teaching it is time to reflect one final time on my experiences of the past 17 years as Headteacher at our school.

In 2007 I wrote in our Newsletter about the importance of giving everyone the opportunity to learn and make progress in a way that is most appropriate to them. For everyone to have high expectations, show respect for each other and take responsibility for their actions. When I wrote those things I was referring to the school I joined, Coedylan Comprehensive school. Of course we changed the name to Pontypridd High School but my sentiments remain the same and I believe we have been committed as a school community to achieving them.

We have a school to be very proud of and together we have faced different challenges and difficult decisions to make. Our strength has been to view many of these situations as an opportunity to change and improve. A time to be innovative, to be creative and to work collectively as a team to support each other and find the best solutions and a way forward that gives everyone the best chance to succeed.

This is one of the things I have enjoyed the most about being a Headteacher, using all the skills and talents of staff and students alike to achieve the success we all deserve. Indeed I have been fortunate to work alongside



very committed, professional and inspirational staff colleagues. I would like to thank them for all the support in whatever way they have contributed to our school over the last 17 years.

Likewise, in my time as Headteacher I have met thousands of children as they have had made the transition from primary school (continue over page) to the time of

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

their leaving. There have been great success stories of course, different characters to work with and so many fantastic achievements where individual children have grown into responsible young adults ready to take their place in society. Frequently I will hear of success for many of these children and the influence of our school is certainly impacting on places far and wide from Pontypridd. Long may that continue.

The positive relationships that have been made with different families have been a particularly positive and mostly enjoyable part of my role also. Of course there have been some disagreements and different views and opinions have been expressed but in the end we have to recognise that by working together we have a much greater impact on each child. Most important of all is that we have been able to celebrate so many achievements and events together from our annual Awards Ceremony to School productions and sporting events.

As Headteacher I have greatly enjoyed working with our School Governors. My thanks initially to Peter James as Chairperson and for most of my time as Headteacher Mr Bill Davies. A number of Governors have been in our Governing Body for the full-time I have been in post and their time and commitment to our school is always greatly appreciated.

As a school we work with many different partners and agencies, including the Local Authority and my thanks to all of them for the support they have given.

To achieve any level of success it is almost always a team effort and we need the advice and support of many others to be the safe learning and work environment we have continued to foster and provide.

My decision to finish has coincided with the changes we will see when the new, 3-16 Bro Taf School opens in 2024. I am delighted that Mrs Kayleigh Oliver will be the new Head of School for the last year of Pontypridd High, supported by Mr Rhys Ivins as her Deputy and my current leadership colleagues. I wish Mr Mark Thomas every success also in his role as Executive Head next year and with the new school. There are clearly many changes for everyone to work through but there is no doubt that the facilities all students, staff and the community will be able to use and benefit from will be fantastic in the years ahead.

Our school motto is 'Learning and Achieving Together' and I certainly could not have achieved anything without people working in this way. To be the Headteacher and work alongside you for so many years has been a great privilege and I will take such positive memories with me. I wish everyone connected with Pontypridd High every success for the future.

Thank you all

Huw Cripps
Headteacher
Pontypridd High School



COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

By Miss Griffiths

This month, Mrs Thomas and Mr Longden took pupils from Years 9 and 10 to Coleg Y Cymoedd to prepare for their future independence.

The day began with a tour of the excellent facilities followed by a taster session of a course that each pupil was interested in. Our learners enjoyed sampling A Level subjects, while others enjoyed a crime scene forensics session. There were some fantastic creations made in the hairdressing, barbering and nail technician workshops. Many pupils enjoyed taster sessions in each of the construction trades, making use of the plumbing, carpentry and electrician facilities.

Our learners then cooled down with ice-cream before having some fun with some hands-on experiences that the college provided, such as virtual reality adventures, sculpture and sports.

Pupils left the college with some positive aspirations of what they could be studying after they finish Year 11.



MATHEMAGIC DAY

By Miss Toomey

Last month, a group of Year 7 and 8 pupils attended Technquest for a day full of fun. This was a mathematics enrichment trip where pupils were able to explore the wonderful exhibits that Technquest has to offer, they also got to learn some fascinating mathematics facts.

While we were there, pupils got to watch a "Mathemagic" show where they were picked to participate in some maths related magic tricks! Here the pupils learned about mathematics through magic and how mathematics can be used in everyday life to help them solve problems as well as confuse their friends!

The pupils also took part in a variety of other activities which involved solving problems using their mathematical knowledge. Everyone had fun learning something new and judging by the smiles we seen all day, they all had a fantastic time.



LONDON CALLING



By Mrs Thomas

Earlier this month, many of our Year 10 historians travelled to London to visit the excellent Imperial War Museum and to have some well-deserved fun in the London Dungeons after sitting their GCSE History exam a few weeks earlier.

Our day began with singing on the bus at 7am. After a long journey, we arrived at London's Imperial War Museum for our first visit of the day. Once welcomed by staff, our learners were free to explore the galleries of the museum, covering all British conflicts from the First World War until the present day. They paid special attention to the floor dedicated to the Second World War, to enrich their understanding of key features of their GCSE unit, 'Depression, War and Recovery'. A V2 missile was on display, many of which were fired on London from 1944. The sheer size of the bomb brought to life the damage and destruction that was caused.

The surviving Spitfires and tanks on display were a treat, with some pupils surprised as they thought they might be replicas, rather than the real thing. Pupils were also able to access the brand new Holocaust galleries, showing the events and hatred that led to so much suffering. We were all so proud of the respectful manner

in which our learners conducted themselves. A short walk through the streets of London allowed us to see the famous sights of Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament and the Shard in the distance.

Our final experience of the day was a much anticipated tour around the London Dungeons. Our students wanted to consolidate their knowledge of our unit on crime and punishment through the ages, in addition to being jump-scared out of their wits! A boat ride to Traitors' Gate started our tour, with pupils showing off their knowledge about treason, witch trials, prisons and more. Poor Mrs Cook and I were targeted by the actors to be tortured or imprisoned in cages at every opportunity! After an afternoon of shrieking and laughing (nervously), some brave students opted to ride the 'Long Drop' to end our tour with a final scream.

A long bus ride through busy London traffic brought us back to Pontypridd, where everyone was ready for a well-deserved sleep (the singing only stopped as we drove through the school gates)! All of the learners were excellent ambassadors for the school and the Humanities Faculty. They engaged fully with all the fun and asked pertinent questions throughout the day. They were a delight to take away and we are all very proud of them.

HELPING HANDS

By Mrs Finney

Pontypridd High School aims to be a fully inclusive school. We respect that everyone has individual needs and are committed to supporting those who may require extra care and attention. We believe the pupils should be at the centre of everything we do and our aim is to deliver a fully inclusive education provision for all of our learners.

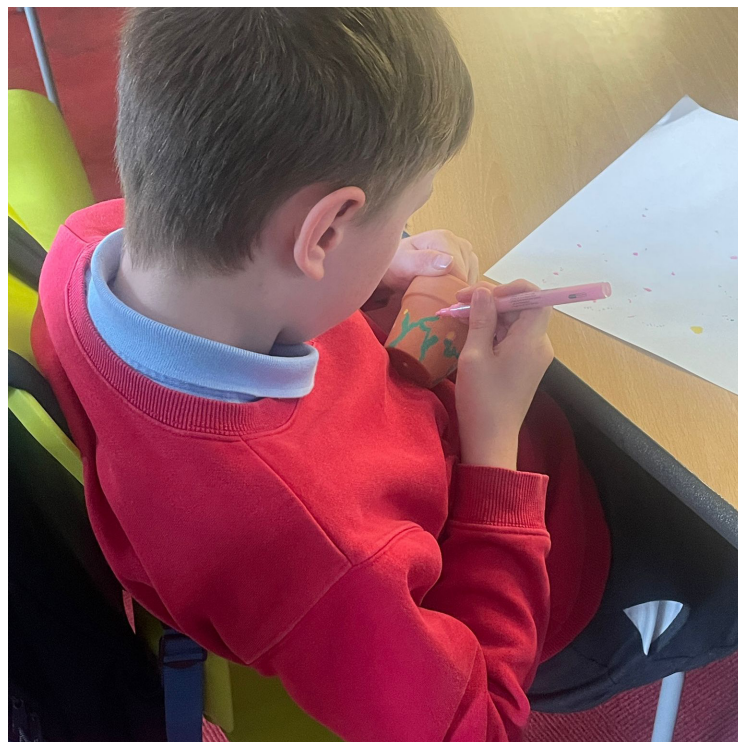
An enhanced transition programme called 'Helping Hands' took place during the Summer term for CLA (children looked after) and vulnerable pupils who required extra support with moving to High School. 'Helping Hands' is a programme where pupils attend once a week for 6 weeks and have fun and relaxed lessons to ensure that the pupils have a positive experience from their visits and an insight to school life and its environment. The sessions provide pupils with

the opportunity to build their confidence and plan for the move in conjunction with other young pupils from different schools.

During the visits this year the pupils had the opportunity to participate in cooking lessons, gardening activities and spend time within the nurture and sensory provisions. Pupils and parents also spent time updating their 'All About Me' profile to enable new staff to learn what is important to each pupil and the best ways to provide support.

Parents and carers were also invited into school for a coffee morning to have the opportunity to meet key members of staff and discuss any concerns.

The 6 weeks proved to be very successful and pupils, parents and staff are excited to meet again in the Autumn term to continue building relationships.



FAREWELL YEAR 13



By Mr Longden

As you complete Year 13 and reflect on the years you have spent at school there is no doubt that your character, resilience and perseverance has been tested in many different ways, both collectively and individually.

In such circumstances you certainly deserve credit for the commitment shown to your work in each of your chosen qualifications. Throughout this you have remained positive and your 'can do' attitude has allowed you to reach the end of Year 13 successfully.

We are all fortunate to learn and work in a very successful school and as you reflect on your time with us I am sure there will be many memories of friends along with experiences, events and possibly mishaps and misdemeanours that will put a smile on your face?!

One way or another our time in school remains with us forever and I trust that you will also reflect positively on those people who have provided advice and support throughout this time. I can assure you that every effort has been made by all staff to provide you with the very best.

The final A Level results will not be available until August 17th so for now you have plenty of time to relax, enjoy the summer and think about your future plans. You have different skills and talents to offer society and your time has come to be confident in your own ability, to meet your aspirations and I am sure you can be successful at whatever you choose to do.

Best wishes for a very happy and healthy future from everyone at Pontypridd High School and I trust you will make the most of every opportunity that comes your way. Good luck.

CAREERS DISCOVERED

By Miss Griffiths

This term, Years 7 and 8 took part in a Careers Discovery Day. Employees from a range of careers such as Screen Alliance Wales, Little Inspirations, WSP and Admiral visited the school to set up a careers fair where Year 7 and 8 had the opportunity to meet them and ask about their careers.

The pupils learnt about the skills required for each of the careers, the links from different subjects in school, and an understanding of the jobs available. The day was very positive for all of those involved and helped to give our pupils an insight into the world of work.

The following pupils showed excellent engagement during the careers day and have been chosen as Careers Champions of the half term:

Jacob Williams (Year 7), Nia Saunders (Year 7), Riley Tucker (Year 8) and Emily Casati (Year 8).

Also this term, Years 9 and 10 had an insight into the different uniform careers available to them post 16, and the steps they need to take to be successful in the career pathways.

The pupils were able to meet employees from the following: BAM Construction, Ministry of Justice, British Transport Police, Screen Alliance Wales, the Royal Air Force, Little Inspirations and Careers Wales. The pupils learnt first-hand from the employees about their careers and the skills/qualifications they need to achieve those careers.

The following pupils showed excellent engagement and a positive learning attitude through the day and have been awarded the Career Champion award:

Travis Nesling (Year 9), Joshua Keepin (Year 9), Alfie-Lewis Jones (Year 9), Maddie Jones (Year 10), Casey Linsey (Year 10), Lauren Toogood (Year 10) and Ellie-Mai Davidson (Year 10).





This week we have visited the school gym where there was a careers day. There were several interesting and educational stands talking about their job roles and other similar roles. The stand that particularly intrigued me was the Ministry of justice stand that taught me different job roles working with criminals. There were also various other stands that taught me about job roles surrounding the construction, engineering and child care fields.

Ever since I was 9 years old I had my heart set on being an accountant, however, this careers fair has thrown me off my original life plan, considering other careers.

Ellie May Davidson.
Year 10



GOODBYE YEAR 11



By Mr Longden

In July we celebrated the end of Year 11 with our Leaver's Prom at Bryn Meadows Golf and Country Club.

We are incredibly proud of the way our Year 11 pupils have worked over the course of their time at Pontypridd High School and particularly over the last three years.

Year 11 presents many challenges for pupils including coursework deadlines, speaking and listening examinations and written examinations. The class of 2023 have taken all of this in their stride, engaging positively with all the help and support provided by staff to ensure the best possible chance of success.

After all of this hard work the prom was a perfect opportunity for pupils and staff to enjoy a night of celebration together. Year 11 pupils were impeccably

dressed and represented the school in an exemplary manner. Mr Cripps also took the opportunity to thank Year 11 for their contributions to our school and to wish them all a very happy and successful future. Congratulations class of 2023 and we look forward to seeing you all on results day in August.





HEAD STUDENTS

By Mrs Thomas

We are excited to introduce you to our new Head Students at Pontypridd High School.

Over the next year, Oliver Lloyd, Emilie Doxsey and Maren Billie will be working closely with many of you to ensure that your voices are heard, and that our school continues to succeed. Let's find out more about them...

Emilie Doxsey (left)

Emilie is a hardworking pupil who studies History, Product Design and Engineering. She is regularly commended for showing perseverance and for aspiring to achieve her best. Emilie is a very motivated and responsible student who sets a good example for her peers. She is a good listener and considers her responses carefully, making her an empathic and considerate leader. Emilie's attitude to learning is outstanding and she has shown dedication to the Aspire programme by accepting challenges outside her comfort zone. Emilie presented a passionate speech in the English Speaking Union's public speaking competition, and although she was actually quite nervous, she debated with skill and confidence. These qualities will certainly help her lead her peers effectively.

Oliver Lloyd (centre)

Oliver is a conscientious and friendly pupil who studies Geography, History and Art. He has excellent attendance and is regularly praised for his engagement in learning and completing his work to the best of his ability. Oliver's work ethic is impressive and he has an amazing memory! He talks with clarity, conviction and confidence, making sure he explains his answers and the reasons he has come to his conclusions. If this weren't enough, Oliver is a good friend and a fantastic learning

partner for everyone who sits around him. Oliver is an excellent role model who we are sure will lead students successfully.

Maren Billie (right)

Maren is an enthusiastic and diligent pupil who studies Geography, History and Art. She comes to school every day with a smile, an excitement for learning, and a dedication for going above and beyond. Maren's drive and impressive work ethic mean that she is often praised for excellent engagement with her learning and for showing perseverance. She also played an important role in the English Speaking Union's public speaking competition by leading a discussion and posing challenges to other speakers. Maren regularly contributes to class discussions and asks thoughtful questions to extend her learning. Her positive attitude and kindness will help her to lead other students well.



SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL



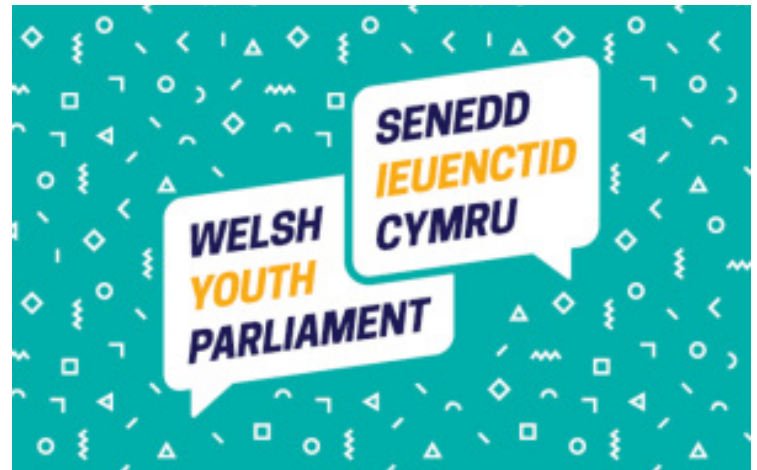
By Jack Donaldson (PHS School Council Member)

In May, ten members of the School Council attended a trip which was hosted by the Welsh Senedd in the Transport for Wales Headquarters.

Many topics were discussed on the day, but the main theme of the event was 'Sustainable Travel'. There were representatives from the Welsh Youth Parliament (WYP) and from organizations such as SusTrans. There was a lot of talk about how we can make travel in Wales more sustainable. We also heard from students of attending schools about their troubles with travel. Such as how

it may be unsafe to walk to school but are not allowed to catch the school-provided bus because they are not outside 3 miles of the school for example. Another student also talked about how travel to a Welsh Medium school was too difficult, they had to attend an English medium school instead.

As many of the schools were Welsh medium (6 out of 8), the English medium schools had to wear headphones so guests speaking in Welsh were able to be understood by their English school students. The event was a positive and we agreed on many issues. The school council were looking forward to attending one of these events again.



ALPACA ADVENTURE



This month, Mr Thomas' class went walking with Alpacas in the Brecon Beacons with a firm called Alpaca My Boots. The following is a pupil's account of their adventure...

"The journey up was fun; we ate and were also excited to see the Alpacas, but it was in a really strange place. When I saw them I had a different reaction. I was scared and wouldn't go near it or touch it. When the owner gave me my alpaca on a rope, they smelled of popcorn. When we walked them up a mountain, they kept stopping and I wondered why; the owner explained that they walk in a certain order! When we got to the top of the mountain they started rolling around on the ground. Mine also ran down the hill on the way back, dragging me with it and stood on my foot. Before we left, we fed the alpacas. On the way home we were listening to music in Sir's car. Overall I had a really nice time. I would definitely go again."

The owners of the business commended the pupils from PHS, who said that they represented the school admirably.





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



September

Monday 4th - INSET Day

Tuesday 5th - Beginning of term

October

Thursday 5th - Awards Evening

Monday 16th - Year 11 Progress Evening

Friday 27th - End of half term

November

Monday 6th - Beginning of term

December

Friday 1st - INSET Day

Thursday 7th - Carol Service

Thursday 21st - End of term

Friday 22nd - INSET Day

FOR 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.

