

## Merry Christmas!

The pupils showed some festive spirit in their jumpers on National Christmas Jumper Day and a substantial sum of money was raised for various charities.



A wonderful Christmas concert was held at the end of term. The standard of the performances was extremely high including recital parties, choirs and a dramatic presentation. It was lovely to see pupils aged 3 to 19 taking part.



The Lower School Christmas shows were an astounding success with excellent performances from all the pupils.

Here pupils recount their contributions:

Santa had left presents in the children's houses and the presents came to life. They did not know the true meaning of Christmas so an angel had to explain to them. I was the angel!

**Ella-Rose Alford**



We sang lots of songs in front of lots of people. My favourite song was 'Clychau Santa Clos.'

**Hanna Davies**

Everyone explained the true meaning of Christmas because the toys did not know. The angel had recounted the story and Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the three wise men were there.

**Alfred Jones**



I was feeling very excited and a little bit nervous as well because mum and dad were there and there were lots of other people as well. I was very excited because my parents were there but nervous in case I forgot the words, but I didn't!

**Gwion Widgery**



Year 2 enjoyed completing Christmas themed activities in Salem Chapel.

The choir also entertained people at the Glamorgan Royal Hospital.



The *Siarad and Siocled* Club members had the chance to visit Winter Wonderland as an end of term treat. Winter Wonderland was fantastic! The ice skating was difficult at first, but then I got used to it. The ferris wheel was also fun. The food in Winter Wonderland was excellent! There were lots of things to do there such as the ice skating ride, which spun around and around! We had a brilliant day! By Laylan Phillips 7P.



The pupils have been busy collecting goods for the charity Crisis at Christmas. It was lovely to be able to give so many donations to the less fortunate over the Christmas period.



Pupils also enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner and the school would like to thank the catering staff for their hard work.



The school also held a Christmas Fair. Thank you to the Middle School pupils who worked hard on their Christmas stalls. They raised over £500! All money raised will go towards the school's charities.



## Spaceman in Garth Olwg

On Monday the second of December, the pupils of Ysgol Garth Olwg and the cluster primary schools had a very special experience as NASA astronaut Steve Swanson came by to pay them a visit.

During the day, Steve gave a talk to each school in turn, and had lunch in the company of the Lower School whilst being entertained by the pupils.

The pupils' enthusiasm and attentiveness whilst listening to the astronaut were a wonderful feature of the whole day as were the interesting stories and important themes that he raised in his talks.



In the talk with the Upper School, Steven discussed his early life and education. He had an inspirational message for the pupils about the importance of making careful decisions when plotting your course through school, further education and finally to the world of work. He was passionate about the importance of choosing appropriate subjects and selecting a career that is of interest and enjoyment. He noted that he had had some failures during his education, which came as a shock to many! He added that the fact that he had persevered and had not given up when faced with disappointment and challenges had made quite an impression on his employers at NASA and that this had been an

important factor in his eventual success as an astronaut.

In the afternoon, pupils from Ysgol Evan James joined the Middle School as they listened to Steven discuss his training as an astronaut, what it's like to fly on the shuttle and the Russian Soyuz rocket and what day-to-day life is like aboard the ISS. The pupils were fascinated to see how astronauts work and play in a zero gravity environment.

Lunch was taken with the Lower School where the vocal ensemble provided the entertainment. The standard of their singing made quite an impression on Steven Swanson and he was very complimentary of their talents. He also enjoyed the honest curiosity of some of the youngest pupils at the school with such questions as "Has anybody ever been left out there?"

In the evening, the pupils of the Senior School – along with some of their parents – and the Garth Olwg staff had the opportunity to listen to Steven. Everybody enjoyed the unique opportunity to be able to pose questions to an astronaut who has experienced three missions.

Steve left the school noting how much he had enjoyed the day and he was full of praise for Garth Olwg pupils. And who is not to say, that given such a fantastic experience, we might one day see a former Garth Olwg pupil reaching for the stars!



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## Outreach Programme to Auschwitz

This year marked the 80th Anniversary of the outbreak of World War II in Poland. In order to mark the occasion Ysgol Garth Olwg has partnered with the Holocaust Educational Project to send two pupils from year 12, Ewan Edwards and Lewis Williams, to represent the school on an outreach programme to Auschwitz Birkenau. The programme aims to develop pupils' understanding of the Holocaust and raise awareness by providing first hand experiences such as hearing first-hand testimony from a Holocaust survivor. The visit takes place in February and both pupils are excited for the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the topic. Congratulations boys!



## Rotary Public Speaking



Congratulations to the school's public speaking team - Huw Griffiths, Efan Fairclough and Gruff Roberts from Year 12 who managed to secure the 2nd place prize in the final round of the Rotary competition. Gruff came 2nd as opponent and Efan 3rd as Chairman. The adjudicator noted that it was great to see a team of boys. Well done!

## Fun in the Biology Department

We welcomed Year 12 and 13 pupils studying Biology and/or Medical Sciences from the local area to Garth Olwg on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November to a Genetics Conference. It was

great to see pupils from Rhydywaun, Plasmawr, Llangynwyd, Bro Edern and Cwm Rhondda all together listening to two very interesting lectures. Thank you to Dr Alwena Morgan and Dr Zoe Hudson for their time.

Year 13 Biology went to Techniquet's laboratories in November to extract their DNA to discover whether their phenotypes matched their genotypes. It was a great opportunity to enhance their practical skills and of course they had some time to play in the rest of the museum.



It was a pleasure to travel to London with a crew of Senior School pupils to visit the world famous BodyWorlds exhibition. It was a special opportunity to see how the human body and all its internal organs are structured. It was much better than any textbook or video clip. Everybody was fascinated and all had a good time. It was great to see the Christmas lights in the capital city too. It was a wonderful way to finish the term and to have time to socialise.

## Mellt Gig

At the end of November, a group of students from the Upper School went to watch Mellt playing at Ysgol Llanhari. Everyone was very excited to see the young band from Aberystwyth, who won a prize for Welsh Album of the Year in 2018. Tom Parry, a pupil at Ysgol Llanhari, opened the gig with a wonderful performance of his original songs. Then Glyn, Ellis and Jacob took to the stage to give us an incredible performance of hits such as 'Rebel' and 'Planhigion Gwyllt'. Everyone had a fantastic time dancing and singing along! Many thanks to Ysgol Llanhari for the warm welcome, and to Urdd Rhondda Cynon Taff for organising a great gig.



## Llew Jones in Patagonia

After residential weekends to meet the crew at Urdd centres across Wales, it was time to meet again at Gatwick Airport. We arrived in Patagonia after two flights, in time for settling in at our hall in the Gaiman called 'Maes Rhyddid'. The first full day in the colony was busy: we were welcomed and met by sixth form students from Coleg Camwy, visited Gaiman Primary School for the first time and performed at our first concert. It was clear amongst street signs and younger pupils that the Welsh culture has a major influence on them.



We spent our third night before heading back to Gaiman in Port Madryn to visit Welsh society there. The local kids performed folk dances and clog dancing as we enjoyed some of Argentina's traditional foods such as empanadas. I had a long talk with one of the local residents, Eduardo, and discussed his story. He was a very capable man who learned Welsh through reading and enjoys practising the language with Welsh people that visit his country.



As we met more local pupils, we went for the day to see penguins with Ysgol y Hendre. We were absolutely amazed by the wildlife of the country. During another ordinary day at Ysgol y Gaiman, I ran various sporting activities. The teachers praised us as the experiences were valuable for the children as we spoke Welsh with children of a variety of ages. The evening was one of the highlights of my trip, we had a night at 'Clwb Rygbi'r Ddraig Goch'. After buying one of their shirts and talking to some of the players, we had a 7 a-side-game against them before an overnight bus to the Andes.

The weather in Trevelin, Andes, was a colossal change compared to the hot Gaiman sun due to its high altitude. After a morning with the local secondary school, we were treated to a football match. It was fantastic to be surrounded by beautiful mountain views before heading to a big concert in town. The next day, we held talks with Esquel's Welsh society before another concert. I was amazed that the residents had so many connections with family and friends in Wales. After a morning in the log cabins in Esquel, we visited the tulip-filled garden, a major tourist attraction. There was a chance to take several photos here before our trip to the Green Farm. The crew were excited because we sampled *asado*, the country's other traditional food, which is a huge piece of meat cut above the fire. We travelled to Buenos Aires the next day for our last two evenings.



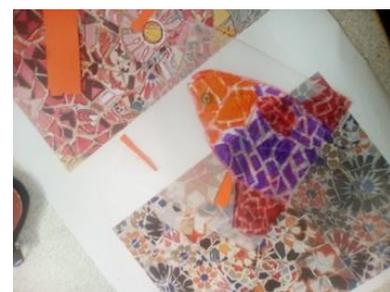
The first night was a very luxurious one as we watched a tango show and got a taste of Argentinian culture. Our final day included a guided tour of the city's landmark locations. I was shocked at the busyness of the city after days spent in quiet villages. There were many protests because the election had taken place a couple of days beforehand. Hours following, it was time to travel back to Gatwick on a 13 hour flight. I must say that my visit to Patagonia was an amazing experience as I got to see the culture of Wales out there and to see such a pretty part of South America. I would like to thank everyone that helped me raise the money towards the cost of the trip.

INSET Days
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2020

Half Term Dates	Start	Finish
1 (Autumn 2019)	4/09/2019	25/10/2019
2 (Autumn 2019)	4/11/2019	20/12/2019
<b>3 (Spring 2020)</b>	<b>6/01/2020</b>	<b>14/02/2020</b>
4 (Spring 2020)	24/02/2020	03/04/2020
5 (Summer 2020)	20/04/2020	22/05/2020
6 (Summer 2020)	01/06/2020	17/07/2020

## Successful Futures Fortnight – A Wonderful World

In preparation for the new Donaldson Curriculum, we had a 'Dyfodol Llwyddiannus' fortnight in November. In Mathematics, Years 5 and 6 studied ratio whilst looking at the ingredients of foods from different countries. They analysed data on climate and the rainforests. Years 7 and 8 learnt about time zones and planned a trip using various timetables. A high standard of work was completed and pupils enjoyed learning about different countries and cultures in Numeracy lessons. The Languages faculty started the fortnight by comparing the poems Glas and Let's Go To Barry Island. We compared both poems in English and Welsh and looked at what makes an ideal day. The Welsh department then looked at art and literature and created original pieces by mimicking the style of authors and artists. The English department focused on travel writing. The



International Languages department studied animals and the ideal school. The Expressive Arts faculty's rooms were transformed during the fortnight as we went on a trip to Catalunya guided by the song of the same name by the band 'Gwilym'. The pupils sang, played instruments and danced whilst researching into the history of Catalunya. They used the work of the artist and architect Antonio Gaudi as an inspiration to create a mosaic. The pupils created very creative and colourful pieces. The Gwyddoleg faculty worked jointly on the theme of evolution. In science, pupils studied how the earth and the solar system evolved, how the atmosphere evolved and finally how life evolved on Earth. In Technology lessons the pupils studied how mobile phone design has evolved over the years. The IT department looked at how video-gaming has evolved over time. The pupils enjoyed themselves and worked successfully. The Health and Wellbeing faculty went on a trip around the world as the pupils had a go at trying different sports from a variety of countries such as Aussie Rules and Bollywood dancing. Street food was the theme of the food technology lessons and the pupils cooked different food from Mexico.



The Humanities department celebrated the school's 'Successful Futures' fortnight by visiting St Fagans. All Year 7 pupils visited the open-air museum to develop an understanding of changes in the local area and the impact of the Industrial Revolution. As part of the project, there has been a big focus on group work and developing multimedia skills as they created vlogs and took pictures to assist them in their presentations at the end of the two weeks. The pupils had the opportunity to visit Rhyd-y-Car houses, assess the differences between church and chapel and changes in shopping patterns, which provided first hand experiences in order to support their work within the classroom. Some pupils were very fortunate to see a live exhibition of traditional craftsmanship in order to support their presentations.

This experience provided year 7 pupils with a creative and comprehensive base for them to develop their group projects in order to show the development of our Wonderful World.



Year 7 pupils really enjoyed watching the show Binit and they learnt about the importance of looking after our environment. The show was brilliant!

The Urdd visited the school to perform a show for pupils in Years 1 to 4. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed.



Congratulations to Anwen Davies,



Year 12, who has managed to reach the final round of The UK Educational Awards for her GCSE results and her extra-curricular work.



### 'Young Writers' Competition

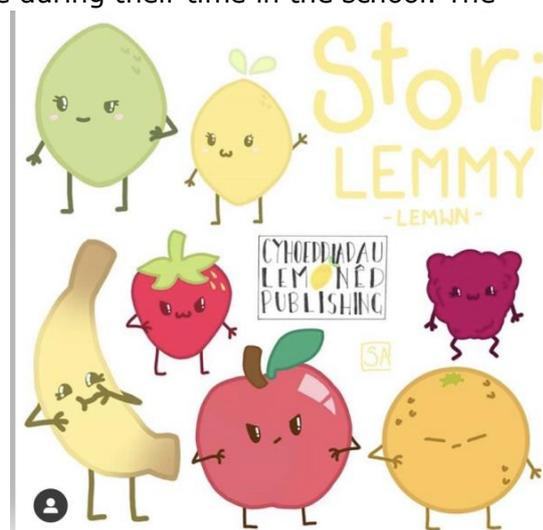
Congratulations to everyone who took part in the recent 'Young Writers' competition. The theme this term was 'Through Their Eyes' where pupils were asked to create a poem from the point of view of a person or an object. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the creativity of the task and came up with a number of topics ranging from Boris Johnson to pineapple on pizza. The pupils' hard work has been rewarded as 49 of the poems have been selected to be published in the anthology. This amazing achievement rewards their hard work and enthusiasm. Well done to everyone involved.

The Nursery and Reception pupils performed for a very happy audience at the Residential Home on campus.

### Lemonêd Publications

The Lemonêd Publications company was set up by a group of Year 10 and 11 pupils so that they could share their ideas on mental health and the problems that they have overcome during their time in the school. The group members are: Katie Burgess, Zoë Gable, Seren Collier, Arianwen Mahoney and Ebony Smith. They have worked tirelessly to write and illustrate a series of bilingual books for children and young people discussing mental health and how to cope with the challenges

of school life. The books will be published in February. In an awards ceremony by YPR (Ynysyawl Regeneration Project), Seren won Young Innovator of the Year, and Lemonêd Publications won Youth Enterprise of the Year. Well done girls!



## London Trip for History and Religious Studies Students

In the last week of the term, pupils from years 11, 12 and 13 that study History and Religious Studies had the opportunity to visit London. The pupils that study Religious Studies certainly had a very interesting day. The day began with a visit to Westminster Abbey. Everyone agreed that the building was very beautiful and they learned about the fascinating history of the country. After lunch, we visited a Buddhist temple. This was extremely beneficial as we study Buddhism and the opportunity to speak with Buddhist followers was particularly useful. We learned about Buddhist traditions, which will certainly come in useful when we sit our exam in the summer!



The pupils studying History had the opportunity to visit the Churchill War Rooms and the Imperial War Museum. The Churchill War Rooms was a very interesting experience. It was strange to learn how little people knew about them despite their crucial role in the Second World War. The Holocaust Memorial in the Imperial War Museum was a very emotional, educational, and memorable



experience. Our visits to these museums was an eye-opening experience for everyone and it will prove very useful for our exams in the summer.

Everyone also had the opportunity to eat in Covent Garden and visit Winter Wonderland. These experiences enriched our London visit and made it a very memorable trip. Thank you to the teachers for arranging and guiding us on the trip.

## Sporting Success

Congratulations to the following in the Urdd regional swimming gala:

Samson Dossett, Year 6 – 1st Butterfly & IM  
 Aled Evans, Year 8 – 1st Breaststroke  
 Owen Leach, Year 11 – 1st Butterfly  
 Freestyle Relay Boys Year 11 + - 1st  
 Medley Relay Boys Year 11 + - 1st  
 Gwen Salmon, Year 7 – 2nd Breaststroke  
 Evan Leach, Year 8 – 2nd Breaststroke and Backstroke  
 Freestyle Relay Mixed, Year 7 ac 8 – 2nd  
 Freestyle Relay Boys, Year 7 ac 8 – 2nd  
 Caitlyn Vincent – Year 8 -2nd Butterfly  
 Medley Relay Boys, Year 7 ac 8 – 2nd  
 Llyr Robins, Year 7 – 3rd Backstroke  
 Carwyn Salmon, Year 11 – 3rd Freestyle  
 Aled Evans, Year 8 – 3rd Freestyle  
 Rhys James, Year 5 – 3rd Freestyle  
 Begw Williams, Year 6 – 3rd Breaststroke

Congratulations to Paige Ward and Lauren Payne who have been chosen for Wales Schoolgirls under 13. Well done girls, the hard work is paying off!

Congratulations to Darcy Cromwell, Year 12, who competed in November in the British Dance Championship under 21. Darcy came 2nd, which is fantastic as she is only 16! Congratulations also to Darcy and Amelia Hughes, Year 10, who came 3rd in different competitions in the World Latin Dance Competition. Well done!

Congratulations to Rhys Green who came 3rd in the Dragon's Cup Go-Karting competition. Well done Rhys!

Congratulations to Eurion John, Year 8, who won Athlete of the Year 2019 with Pontyclun Athletics Club. Well done Eurion and good luck in 2020.

Congratulations to the first rugby team for reaching the final of the league cup. They unfortunately lost in the final to Bryn Celynnog but the team has played well all season.

