

Foreword by the Headteacher



I take this opportunity to thank you for your support during this term. It has been a joy again this year to see pupils of all ages interacting with each other across the whole school and witnessing this has been a source of great satisfaction to me as the school's Headteacher. As you are aware we have recently received an interim visit by Estyn as part of the new inspection framework. We are pleased to share with you that we received very positive feedback and we will build on this success in the new year. I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As a school we very much look forward to continuing to work together as one community in the New Year.

The Lower School

The Lower School received a very warm welcome from Salem Chapel during the Autumn half term. The Thanksgiving service was hosted by the Health and Wellbeing Forum. Food was also collected for the food bank, many thanks to those and staff for their generous donations.



Year 3 and 4 pupils had a great opportunity to showcase their culinary skills in the Cogurdd competition. The food looked wonderful and everyone tried very hard. Well done everyone!



On a trip to St Fagans, year 1 and 2 children learnt about shopping traditions in the olden days, visited the old houses and also learnt about festive traditions. It was a wonderful day.



A huge congratulations to Harper Lee from year 3 who has been selected to play football for the Aston Villa team. You have a very bright future ahead of you and we look forward to following your prosperous career!

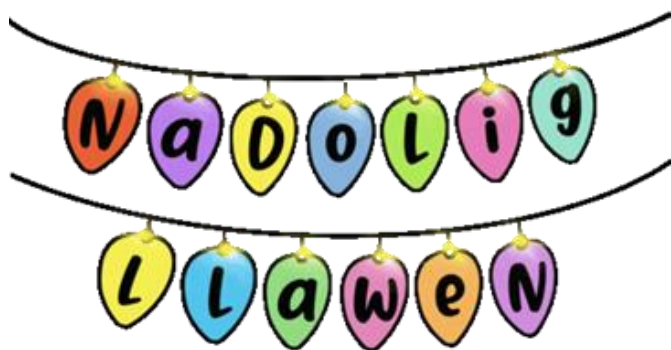


Martyn Geraint entertained year 3 and 4 pupils at the Jamboree. A fun morning was had by all, singing all the well-known songs! Everyone enjoyed singing 'afal, oren, banana' at the top of their voices!



How many of these toys do you remember?!

During an old toy workshop, pupils from reception to year 2 learnt about the development of toys over time!



A scary night full of fun and laughter was had at this year's Halloween Disco. The costumes were frightful and everyone enjoyed dancing and joining in the games provided by year 12 pupils.



The choir has had a busy but very successful term. They competed in Eisteddfod y Rhondda, Eisteddfod y Cymoedd and performed at the Garth Olwg and Efail Lower Christmas Fairs. We also had a lovely morning of singing on the Lower School yard.



The Middle School



The boys took part in the Urdd football competition at the beginning of October. Although they fought hard and played exceptionally well – sadly they lost in the final.

We had the opportunity to be part of the Guinness World Record attempt to break the record for the most people to write a poem in English. Miss Rose came down from the English Department to the 'Gorlan' to lead the session whilst Dr Williams kept a close eye on all the strict rules. We succeeded to be part of the poem by offering ideas to the poet online and voting for various suggestions. Thank you Miss Rose for arranging this work!

On 'Shw'mae!, Su'mae!' day, members of the choir visited the Lifelong Learning Centre to sing to the Welsh learners that attend lessons at the venue. During their visit, the children asked questions and helped them practise their conversational Welsh skills.



We enjoyed a special dance session taught by an expert from Eventbrite called 'The virtual Thriller dance session'. We had a lot of fun mastering the various moves and steps!



At the end of October, many of our pupils competed in the COGURDD (the Urdd Cooking competition) and POBURDD (the Urdd Baking competition). In the baking competition the children needed to bake four muffins and they needed to prepare a wrap in the cooking competition. The judges had a very difficult task choosing our winners, but they finally chose – Phoebe (Year 6) as the winner of the baking competition and Elsi (Year 6) and Eva (Year 5) as winners of the cooking competition.



During this year, we will collaborate and offer our thoughts on various Welsh books. We have already offered our opinion on two Welsh books called – 'Ac rwy'n clywed dreigiau' (which is a bilingual book full of poems about dragons) and 'Digon o Sioe' (which is a funny book and part of the Fferm Cwm series Cawdel). Mrs Widgery presented our ideas and feedback to the authors, publishers and the book council. We will continue with this work over the rest of the school year.



Early in November, numerous teams of girls from our department took part in the Urdd football competition. The team shown in the photograph won the tournament and Flo Kavanagh-Reid from Year 5 was announced as the Player of the Tournament. The team will now progress to the national round at Aberystwyth in the spring. Good luck girls!



The Chief Poet Gwynfor Dafydd came to visit us. Our school had raised the funds that allowed his crown to be made. Gwynfor won the prestigious award at the National Eisteddfod at Pontypridd earlier in the summer. The crown was striking. Gwynfor explained all the various patterns and symbols on the crown and allowed us the honour of wearing his crown and therefore feel like winning poets. He also did a poetry masterclass and a Q&A from with year 11 and 12 pupils. Thank you, Gwynfor!





On the 10th of December, all the pupils from Year 5 and 6 performed their Christmas show – 'What on Earth? Cosmic Friends?' at the Theatre, which is part of the Lifelong Learning Centre. We would like to thank all the parents for their continued support, supplying costumes and for watching the performances. We hope that everyone enjoyed and that you continue to 'Praise the Mule' and 'Do the donkey'!

We went to the Showcase cinema in Nantgarw to watch the film 'ELF' for our end of term trip. We also went to tenpin to bowl. We had a wonderful time together ... even though Mrs Widgery threatened to give every winner a spelling test back at school!



We used the cookery classes upstairs to work on our numeracy, literacy and cooperating skills. We followed instructions and recipes in order to create mince pies, marshmallow cakes shaped like trees, and snowmen biscuits. We had a lot of fun...despite the mess!



Celebrating Christmas

On Friday, December the 13th we had a particularly busy day. Members of the choir sang on the Lower School yard as the parents brought their children to school. Everyone wore their Christmas jumpers so the school was very colourful. Lunch time was the best session of the day....we enjoyed eating our Christmas dinner together in the school canteen. Thank you to our wonderful catering staff for the tasty food!



Mandarin



Last year, some of our learners from years 5 and 6 had the experience of taking part in a Mandarin competition. The children learned Mandarin songs, Kung Fu moves and traditional dances. One of the groups managed to reach the semi-final round, but the other group managed to reach the final round. Although we didn't win, we were very proud to take part and learn about the traditions and culture of another country. We would like to thank Wan for her training and fun lessons!



Marcelle Visit

At the end of November, Marcelle Dos-Santos came to visit us as part of our work on Black History Month. She discussed communities and culture as part of this year's theme of 'Reclaiming the Narrative'. I found the subject very interesting and I think everyone learned a lot from her. We learned that wherever you are and whatever you do, your culture doesn't change and the importance of not forgetting your culture and working with your community. I really enjoyed the discussion and learned a lot. (Ava Carrol Year 6)

Marcelle came in to talk to us about communities and culture. Everyone enjoyed it. We look forward to Marcelle's visit every year. – Logan Watts (Yr.6)

As part of Marcelle's work she also led an assembly for the Upper School sharing her personal story including the challenges and successes of her life. Marcelle's message was an important one emphasizing the role of communities to build and sustain us, while also referring to perseverance through challenges to succeed. We are looking forward to welcoming Marcelle back as part of a wider project in the Middle School in the New Year. Diolch yn fawr Marcelle!



The English Department



Congratulations to the year 7 pupils who have been ambitious and have taken part in the 'Young Writers' creative writing competition.

A group of year 9 pupils have been preparing ahead of the 'Seren Debate: Lloyd Chalk, Noah James, Mai Pearce, Erin Harris, Isabella Collins. Good luck for competition in January!



Well done to the group of pupils who took part in the National Languages Competition by GHQ. It was a real challenge with pupils solving puzzles and cracking different language codes. Well done for being so ambitious! Well done to every English student for competing in the 'Tower Poetry' competition.



Only Boys Aloud Workshop

Year 7 boys had a lot of fun at the Only Boys Aloud workshop. A lot of singing and games had been played and everyone had a great time. Thanks to Iori and James for coming along with his infectious energy

Morfydd Owen Festival

In order to celebrate the life of the composer Morfydd Owen, a festival was held around Pontypridd with many different activities organised. Ysgol Garth Olwg was part of the concert on Sunday and very high-quality performances were given by Miley Goss and Cadi Desouza. It was great to be a part and thank you to the girls for such special performances.



Paris Trip

Upper School pupils had a *fantastique* time on the *voyage à Paris*. We visited a Christmas *marché* and saw some of Paris' iconic landmarks such as *la tour Eiffel* and the *Arc de Triomphe*. The highlight was our day at Disneyland Paris with artificial snow and Disney characters dressed in Christmassy costumes. It was a fantastic opportunity to eat *la nourriture française* and *parler français*.



Music Theatre Wales Workshop

Many thanks to Music Theater Wales for coming in to share information about the new exciting project regarding composing for a show. GCSE Music pupils also enjoyed the performance. It was a great opportunity to have a live performance.



Sumae Shwmae

In order to celebrate Sumae Shwmae we held a few musical performances to celebrate the day. The choir and soloists performed in the Lifelong Centre at the RCT Council event and the Band Rhyddid held a gig for all year 7s. It was great to have a band of Year 11 pupils performing for the pupils. Everyone really enjoyed it!

Garth Olwg Lifelong Centre Christmas Fair

To start the Christmas celebrations the pupils of Ysgol Garth Olwg had performed at the Garth Olwg Lifetime Centre Christmas Fair. It was an eventful day where the Equality Forum had been responsible for the sweets stand, the school's Christmas decorations and joyous singing.



South Wales Welsh Schools Orchestra

Rhys, Kristina and Twm had a special experience being part of the South Wales Schools Orchestra in November. The experience of performing in the Hoddinott Hall at the Millennium Center was gained. Also congratulations to Twm for performing with a piano solo.



Rotary Vocal Competition

In November Miley and Cadi performed in the county's vocal Rotary competition. It was a special experience for both and there were many compliments about the performances.

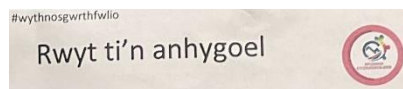
Carol Service

To celebrate a successful term from Ysgol Garth Olwg we held a Carol Service to showcase the school's talents. It was great to have the pupils perform so well and be able to show many different talents.



Anti-Bullying Week

To raise awareness for the anti-bullying week, the Equality Forum distributed nice messages around the school in order to promote positivity. In addition to this we had created a positive video of pupils and teachers to cheer everyone up. These and all the activities can be seen on our Instagram account @cydraddoldebgarth_olwg.



Radio Garth

In order to promote Welshness we have started Radio Garth Olwg in the school. I would like to thank Annie and Ellie who made a podcast discussing Human Rights Day – it was a very interesting conversation from them. Also to add excitement to Christmas - we have been doing 'Vlogmas'. A different video will be released every day up until Christmas. This content can be seen on our Instagram account @radiogarth_olwg. Many more podcasts will be created in the new year.



Christmas Songs Advent Calendar

Here is the link to to our Christmas Advent Calendar to celebrate Christmas music.

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLs0l326epvjwHqnGibhtVpZrn-0PSuRzz&si=5koXtPTvXdPYEUsr>

Gwaun Celyn School Partnership

Pupils from the Lower School and Year 10 went to Ysgol Gwaun Celyn to play Welsh games to encourage them to speak Welsh.



The Chemistry Department

Pupils also enjoyed the Top of the Bench competition in Swansea University.



Year 12 and 13 pupils enjoyed their visit to Cardiff Metropolitan University for a Criminology taster day.



Glan-Llyn Trip

Our trip to Glan-llyn was fantastic and an amazing opportunity to make new friends, use our Welsh in a social setting and develop confidence. We took part in several fun activities such as the high ropes, bushcraft and a poetry competition; additionally we visited yr Ysgwrn. We had the opportunity to attend many interesting and useful lectures that will help us in school. We thoroughly enjoyed this trip and made many lovely memories along the way. Lauren Knight, Year 12.



Youth Parniament

Congratulations to Ava Martin-Thomas which has been elected as a member of the Youth Parliament for Pontypridd.



Llangrannog Trip

I enjoyed Llangrannog because of the opportunities to do new things and to face our fears. On the first day after arriving everyone was very excited. We ate lunch before going into registration classes. First, we climbed a big tower with a bag to jump on, that was my favourite thing from the first day. My room had gone to sleep fairly quickly, apart from me and someone else. On the second day, we did many things but my favourite thing was the go-karting. I liked this because I could go quickly around the course. I also liked the high-ropes course and the disco at night. After that, everyone in our room went straight to sleep. On the third day, everyone was tired after the disco, but everyone was also sad because we needed to go home. Everyone was busy packing in the morning before breakfast. We both did more activities and then we went home. Ioan Richardson Year 7

