



IN THE LEAD

CYFARTHFA HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2021

No. 3

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Cyfarthfa High School takes the subject of mental health very seriously.



We are all aware of the huge impact that the pandemic and its subsequent lockdowns have had on our mental health. Not being able to spend time with relatives and friends has been incredibly difficult.

That's why we celebrated

Children's Mental Health Week by providing activities and challenges to support the wellbeing of the entire "Cyfarthfa family". The school has adopted the principles of "Perma" – the five key aspects for improving your life. These are Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Achievement. Working virtually, we want to spread the UK-wide message of "Express Yourself" by encouraging pupils to creatively express themselves.

The response has been great with plenty of pupils and their families getting involved by playing board games, finishing a jigsaw or cooking a meal together.

Budding Chefs Getting Creative!

Our pupils are creating some mouth-watering dishes during lockdown!



Our virtual lessons on food and nutrition have resulted in many of our pupils heading to the kitchen to create a world cuisine of their choice. They've developed many new skills while isolating at home, with cooking being one of the most popular.

From Italian and Indian dishes to lovely cakes and special treats, we've got some very creative children at Cyfarthfa!

See our social media pages for more examples.

Who knows, we could have a Great British Bake Off star in the making.....!

FROM THE HEAD'S DESK

Cyfarthfa High School's doors may be closed but our ethos to teach, develop and support our pupils is more important than ever.

Many of us were affected by the rise in the transmission of the virus at the start of the year and it was decided by the Welsh Government that all schools would remain closed for the time being.

This term has been a challenging one for staff, parents, carers and pupils alike.

However, thanks to the strong, caring school community we have pulled together at the most difficult of times and succeeded in continually providing a first-class education for our young people.

In turn the pupils themselves have shown their resilience and positive attitudes to learning by regularly attending live lessons and submitting online work which is of a very high standard.

We hope for brighter news ahead and look forward to opening the doors of our school once again.

ROD FRANCIS
HEADTEACHER

Cyfarthfa Connect

Music To Our Ears!

Two of the Music Department's Year 11 pupils, Daniel Mcaleer, (Head Boy), and Sally Price, (Deputy Head Girl), participated in the 'Welsh Language Christmas Carol Virtual Concert' held by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in December.



They performed a woodwind duet of 'Tua Bethlem Dref' and 'Deck the Halls' and were an absolute credit to the school.

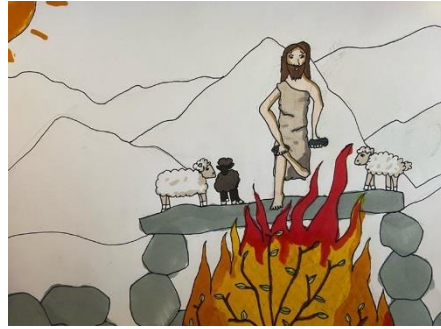
Staff are also pleased with the pupils who are receiving their lessons online.

Gratitude Expressed

Thanks to the following email we received:
"I wanted to send my gratitude to the school – to thank you for being consistent with online learning. The staff have been so supportive to my daughter and it really does show. The live lessons are amazing and structured well. I am having to work from home and I am barely even asked to help her because the staff at Cyfarthfa have provided all the support. As a parents I truly value you helping my child to continue her education."

BELIEFS PUT TO THE TEST

The introduction of Live Lessons has been a success for pupils this term who are studying Religious Education.



They have provided opportunities for pupils to interact with other pupils and their teachers.

The RE Department staff are highlighting so much of this excellent work on the Cyfarthfa High School Facebook page.

We would love to include it all here – but space is limited!

Year 8 pupils have been studying Moses. The task was to produce a creative piece of work on the 'Burning Bush'. Year 9 pupils have been studying arguments for and against the existence of God. The task was evaluation writing, where pupils had to give the arguments for and against God's existence.

PARENT'S EVENING - OVER THE PHONE

Due to the current situation, we are unable to host our annual parents' evenings and meetings in the usual format.

Instead each parent/carer will receive a phone call from their child's Form Tutor to provide an update on each child's academic performance and progress, their attitude to learning and a general update.

There will also be an opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns you may have. Ahead of the phone call you will receive either an interim or full report to support discussions in the call.

Appointments will not be made in advance.

However, Form Tutors will call again if you are unable to answer or feel free to call the school back.

Calls will be made by a No ID number.

| Year Group | Reports Sent by | Form tutor calls start | Calls end |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 9 (Progress update / options) | Friday 12 th February | Monday 22 nd February | Friday 5 th March |
| 11 | Friday 26 th March | Calls made in December | |
| 7 | Wednesday 28 th April | Tuesday 4 th May | Friday 14 th May |
| 10 | Wednesday 19 th May | Monday 24 th May | Friday 11 th June (Half term in between) |
| 8 | Thursday 17 th June | Monday 21 st June | Friday 2 nd July |

NB: Friday 26th March there will be no school or lessons due to a scheduled cluster training day.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE NEWS

Attendance and engagement in virtual learning is not as simple as being in the classroom.

The process deserves special attention and overcoming lots of technology issues. However, approximately 70% of the whole school population are now attending live form tutor sessions and lessons every single day. This is absolutely fantastic and we would like to congratulate each and every one of you for all your hard work and attendance to lessons while adapting once again to our 'new normal'.



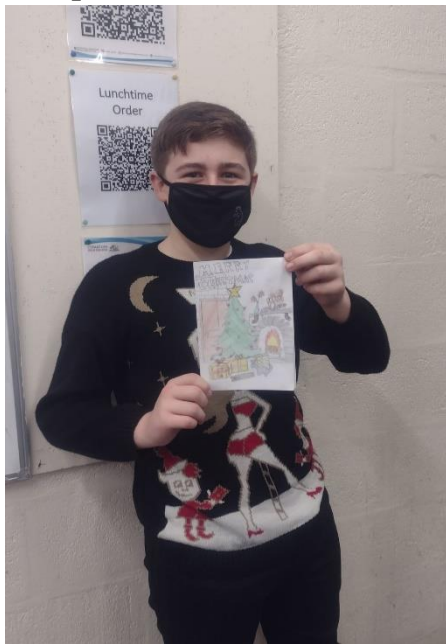
For any students who need support in accessing live sessions, the school will do everything we can to make this happen, so please contact the school directly. The work being produced at home is outstanding. We are extremely impressed with your hard work and the quality of work being produced. Please keep up the good work.

Blended Learning Timetables remain in place as previously shared until further notice.

Staff and pupils want to return to school as normal. Hopefully the lockdown won't be for much longer, so in the meantime, stay positive, keep engaging in all of your lessons and work and we will hopefully see you in person soon!

CRACKING CHRISTMAS CARDS!

Students got into the Christmas spirit by entering the festive Card House Competition!



We had plenty of great entries and it was difficult to decide on an outright winner! The standard and quality of each entry and high and brought plenty of festive cheer! It also meant that each of the Houses were in line for scoring some extra points over the yuletide period.

Eventually the judges agreed that the winners were:

1. Chace Forbes (Llewellyn)
2. Luca Grove (Llewellyn)
3. Jessica Craze (Owain Glyndwr)
4. Sophie Rees (Owain Glyndwr)

All entries received House Points and prizes for the winners too.

The images were shared as our 'Season's Greetings' message to our Cyfarthfa Family, Cluster and wider community.

Cyfarthfa Connect

International Languages

The Department was very pleased to welcome back Mrs Tippings in December after a year's maternity leave. She started back by teaching an online "Live lesson" to 150 year 9 pupils!

Sadly, that meant that Miss Jones has now left the department. Miss Jones worked very hard with Year 7,8,9 and 11 pupils in French, Spanish and English lessons. Mrs Shelton would like to say a huge "Thank you" to Miss Jones for everything that she did and we wish her the very best for her future.

Codebreakers

Move aside Bletchley codebreakers, pupils at Twynnyrobyn Primary School have got this covered!



They took part in a Year 6 Maths Transition Day in December and really did themselves proud by cracking a range of mathematical codes.

Safer Internet

This year Cyfarthfa High School is supporting Safer Internet Day 2021 by streaming live tutorial sessions to our pupils. The theme this year is "An internet we trust: exploring reliability in the online world".

Cyfarthfa Connect

Tweeting at Home

Students launched the 'Big Bird Watch' this term. They created their own bird feeders from recycled materials and encouraged birds into their gardens. They logged each species and captured these special moments for a bird photography competition. This is a great way of connecting with nature to enhance our well-being.

House Points

Cyfartha's House Points currently stand at:

Year 7

Caradog - 9963
Hywel Dda - 10018
Owain Glyndwr - 9067
Llewellyn - 9663

Year 8

Caradog - 9559
Hywel Dda - 9521
Owain Glyndwr - 9580
Llewellyn - 9278

Year 9

Caradog - 9524
Hywel Dda - 9174
Owain Glyndwr - 8747
Llewellyn - 9054

Year 10

Caradog - 8956
Hywel Dda - 8718
Owain Glyndwr - 8670
Llewellyn - 8224

Year 11

Caradog - 8298
Hywel Dda - 8226
Owain Glyndwr - 8035
Llewellyn - 7792

TOTAL

Caradog - 46,300
Hywel Dda - 45,567
Owain Glyndwr - 44,099
Llewellyn - 44,011

PUPILS' ARTWORK EXCELS

The Art Department is celebrating the fantastic achievements of pupils in their live and blended learning lessons.



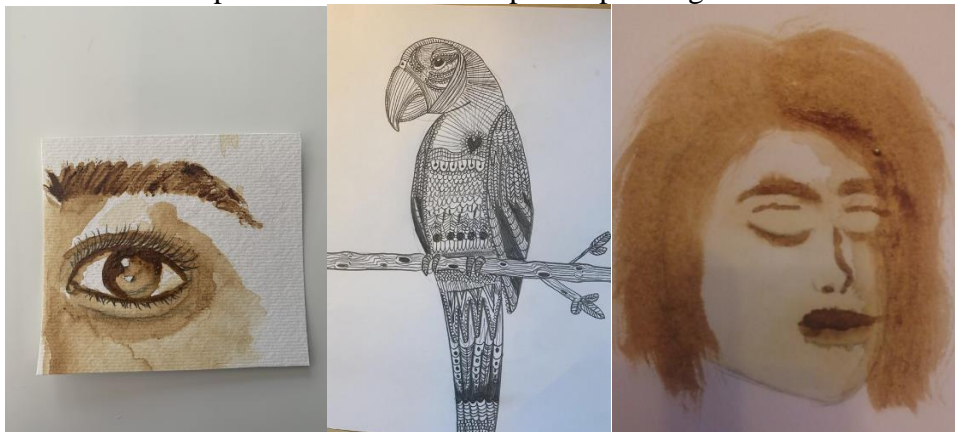
Pupils have been continuing to be creative and innovative in their approach to their studies, and we are proud of their efforts.

We have seen a wide range of artwork in our thematic projects at Key stage 3, with pupils demonstrating a high standard of drawing skills.

Pupils have worked with traditional tools and also digital media in a variety of approaches.

Art has been important for pupils to express themselves, and the enjoyment and engagement is clear in the range of artwork that has been created.

Key stage 4 pupils have also been continuing to develop their coursework on the theme of portraiture and even explored painting in coffee at home!



HIGH-TECH STUDENTS PRAISED

Pupils have been working hard developing their ICT and Computer Science skills.

Year 7 pupils have been working on the international iDEA award that helps to develop their digital, enterprise and employability skills.

In Year 8 pupils have been developing their numeracy skills through the theme park project that has allowed them to create spreadsheets with complex formulas.

Many Year 9 pupils are developing their literacy skills through the interactive multimedia project looking at gaming consoles and hardware.

The Year 10 and Year 11 ICT classes have continued their theoretical learning of ICT. They have been covering topics including Application Software, Information handling, Computer Animation, Digital Images and Human Computer Interfaces.

The Computer Science class have continued their work on Representing Data. Using the collaborative Microsoft Teams Whiteboard app has proved to be an extremely useful tool to help deliver this topic.

Computer Science pupils are expected to improve their numeracy skills by converting between Binary and Denary number bases.

It is great to see all pupils making progress throughout the series of lesson and handing in some excellent pieces of work as well as achieving excellent test results.

PUPILS BLOSSOM IN PASTORAL

Year 7 have had a challenging start to their school life at Cyfarthfa but have shown great resilience that starting comprehensive school during these unprecedented times has thrown at them.

Staff are so proud of the way they have adapted to blended learning, live lessons, handing work in and completing work on TEAMS.

All the while maintaining excellent conduct, attendance and enthusiasm for learning. Social media sites are awash with wonderful examples of just some of the fantastic work they are producing.

Year 8 please see Page 2

Year 9 students begin their next chapter as they look at options for next year. Making option choices that could fundamentally effect a student's learning pathway and eventual career.

Heads of Departments have worked tirelessly to enhance the Key Stage 4 Options Booklet which now includes video clips.

Students have also completed a Straw Poll to outline their intentions.

This information will now be closely analysed and will help to formulate the Option Boxes.

Students soon receive their reports along with the Option boxes. In replacement of the traditional parents evening the form tutors will call to discuss your report and academic progress. Part of the call will also require you to choose your options from the boxes, one subject per box. Please have your decisions ready to submit. Once these calls are complete and the options reviewed, letters will be sent out confirming your final choices in readiness for September.



Maria Nadir Year 10

Year 10 students have adapted skilfully and are working extremely well whilst at home.

Pupils have risen to the challenge of completing the most recent English mock examinations and continue to access the wealth of blended learning resources available

to them. The interaction between the teachers and pupils during live lessons is [commendable](#)

YEAR 11 students have completed assessments in their core subjects and they will be working on tasks for option choices.

A Parent/Carer and Student Forum was held to explain how qualifications can be awarded and how students must keep up their good work over the next few weeks.

It was very informative and gave many staff, students and parents the opportunity to learn more about the processes which are currently underway.

Student Support

Student support staff have been continuing with their great work virtually.

The live ELSA sessions have been a great success with many of our students benefitting:

Year 7 pupil "The sessions help to lift my mood and make me happy"

Year 10 pupil "I find the sessions helpful, relaxing and it's good to have someone to talk to"

Year 11 pupil "The support and sessions are amazing, I really enjoy them"

Please remember that looking after your mental health is so important during this time.

All students are part of the student support team and have access to the great well being activities that have been created.

Take a look - there is lots of variety and something for everyone.

Why not try some of the activities as a family. There are lots of great ideas, something for everyone.

Should you feel your son / daughter requires more intense 1:1 support please contact your child's relevant HOY to discuss the options.