

# IN THE LEAD

## CYFARTHFA HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

### NEWS & FEATURES

Cyfarthfa Alumni's  
Cancer Research  
Breakthrough

**PAGE 3**

Prize-Winning Pair  
Ride High

**PAGE 4**

Supporting Students'  
Needs

**PAGE 6**

Students Back Anti-  
Bullying Campaign

**PAGE 7**

Saints March In With  
New Rugby Posts

**PAGE 8**



## We Will Remember Them

Cyfarthfa High School is proud to support the 100th Anniversary since the formation of the Royal British Legion. Students participated in a community project in Trago Mills and at Thomastown Park Boar Memorial to mark this occasion. The school's Expressive Arts Faculty, Science and Technology Faculty worked with students to create a series of displays. These were exhibited in the school to remember those from the area who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Students also played an important role in the local Service of Remembrance.



# FROM THE HEAD'S DESK

Once again it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our latest edition of the Cyfarthfa High School newsletter.

I'm sure you'll agree that the quantity and quality of events and activities taking place throughout the school on a weekly basis is admirable!.

This is achieved through the collective work, commitment and determination of our staff and students.

Cyfarthfa is a family that cares for one another. As we continue to face so much uncertainty in the world, it is reassuring that we can rely on one another, and remain dedicated to our goal of providing a first-class education for all of our children.

This is certainly reflected within the pages of the newsletter.

I'd like to wish all of the staff, governors, students and their families a very Merry Christmas.

I look forward to seeing you all again in the New Year.

Rod Francis  
Headteacher

## Read all about it at relaunched library



During the autumn term the school library was re-launched with new books and clubs for students to join and develop new skills and pastimes.

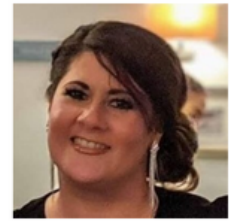
## Alumni Achievements Shared



Major Kylla Patterson



Dr. Samantha Burvill



Rebecka Bow



Careers Wales is supporting Cyfarthfa High School to build and maintain a community of alumni.

It is hoped that these employer alumni will act as role models to current students and be involved in the following types of activities: telling their story to pupils, offering work experience or work shadowing experiences, supporting careers events in school or attending events such as presentation evenings and prize giving.

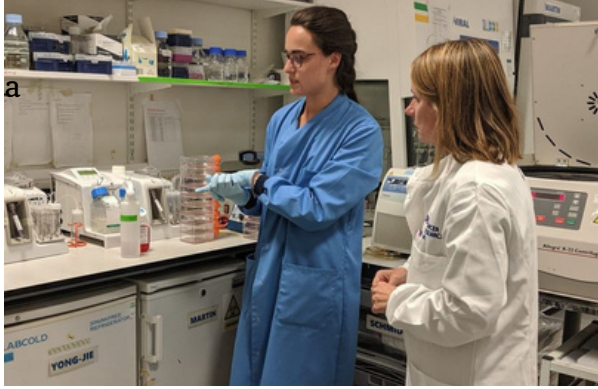
The initiative aims to provide added value to careers activities, believing that pupils may be more engaged with former students of their school with whom they may share similar experiences and have faced the same barriers.

If you or someone you know are a past pupil of Cyfarthfa High School and would like to support your former school, please contact us.



# Cyfarthfa Alumni's Cancer Research Breakthrough

A former Cyfarthfa High School student is helping to develop a blood test that may help treat cancer. Caitlin Davies is researching a test that would be able to detect resistance to commonly used chemotherapy in men with prostate cancer. It means patients could be offered an appropriate treatment at an early stage, which would improve their chances of survival.



The 26-year-old from Pontsarn said the research is "very promising" and that it could be helping patients on the NHS within a matter of years, once trials are completed. Caitlin studied biomedical sciences at Queen Mary University of London, before achieving a first-class honours and being fast tracked onto a PhD course as soon as she graduated. She said: "At school I took the sciences and ended up going to London to study biomedical sciences. While I was there I undertook a project with one of the professors at Barts Cancer institute. Through that, I was fast tracked onto a PhD program. I was lucky enough to join a really interesting lab group working on developing blood tests to be able to diagnose and prognose cancer. I've been doing that for the last four years and I'm coming to the end of it now."

Caitlin said patients would benefit from the blood test by avoiding invasive biopsies. It would also give clinicians a better idea of the most effective treatment the patient would respond to.

Caitlin said she is soon to hand in her thesis, concluding her role in the research, however that the blood test could soon be available for patients to benefit from.

Caitlin wanted to go into medical research since she attended Cyfarthfa, where she studied maths, biology and chemistry for A-levels, achieving AAB.

However, she said her main motivation came from wanting to give hope to individuals and families struggling with a cancer diagnosis.

She said: "We've all been touched by cancer in some way or another and obviously that is a driver. This particular area of research was interesting to me mainly because of its ability to be translated very quickly into something that could be beneficial to patients.

"There's still a lot of work to do, but it's about giving hope to patients who might be undergoing cancer treatment or families who are struggling because their family member has cancer. That's the most important thing." (Wales Online)

## Cyfarthfa Connect

### Youth Parliament



Congratulations to Year 11 pupil Andrew who has been elected into the position of Youth Parliament Member for Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney. A fantastic role model and ambassador of our school.

### School Kitchen Staff

Cyfarthfa High School has food preparation staff vacancies available in our kitchen. The school provides a healthy, balanced diet to students and staff alike. More information and an application form are available from Merthyr Tydfil Council website.

### Engineering Week



To celebrate Engineering Week, Year 9 students were working on wind turbines with EESW STEM Cymru



Cyfarthfa High School  
Cae Mari Dwn  
CQueens Road  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 0LS

01685 725222

[www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/](http://www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/)



# Children in Need Day Success

## Cyfarthfa Connect

### Forest School

Cyfarthfa High School is delighted to become a Forest School - but needs your help to achieve success.

Forest School is a child-centered mission to inspire and enable children and families to enjoy the natural world around them.

As staff and students at Cyfarthfa prepare for their first outdoor activity, they need wet-weather gear to face the stormy climate of south Wales!

If you have any spare wet-weather trousers or tops, then please contact Mr Mike Smith at Cyfarthfa High School on 01685 725222.

### Storyteller Phil



Students from Year 7 were enthralled by storyteller Phil Okwedy. As well as enjoying some exciting folklore, his tales from his own life gave the students many ideas for their projects, focusing on racism, heritage, family customs and identity

### LGBTQ+ Meeting

Students gathered for the first time this term to discuss LGBTQ+ issues and the desire to make active change to support inclusion and prevent discrimination.



Thanks to the amazing efforts of the school's senior team and our fantastic community of students we raised a wonderful £945.20 for Children in Need!

## Prize-Winning Pair Ride High



A pair of Cyfarthfa students achieved equestrian glory after taking part in the Red Dragon Endurance ride and Pony Club Endurance ride at the Royal Welsh Show.

Best newcomer to Endurance and first in PC Grassroots Endurance for Summer from Year 9.

And fourth in PC Grassroots Endurance for Gracie in Year 8. Both girls were part of a Date Valley Pony Club team of four who were placed second overall and first for tack and turnout including vet checks on their horses' fitness.



Cyfarthfa High School  
Cae Mari Dwn  
CQueens Road  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 0LS

01685 725222

[www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/](http://www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/)





## Operation Santa Appeal

Students and staff have been generously supporting the Merthyr Tydfil Operation Santa appeal.

We want to thank everyone for making donations of toys and gifts to ensure children who are likely, otherwise to miss out at Christmas time.

Mrs Lewis has dropped the large selection of gifts off to the Council for distribution throughout the county borough.

## Lights! Cameras! Action!



During the autumn term Year 7 students have really enjoyed their Lead Creative Schools project, learning through multimedia workshops, storyboarding and film making techniques. Could we have a budding Spielberg amongst them?

## Cyfarthfa Connect

### New Skills Blossom



Outstanding manufacturing skills were on display in Technology class this term. Students made aluminium hanging basket brackets - a skill that can blossom and grow!

### Senior Team Meets



Mrs Lewis had a rewarding afternoon with the senior team planning for the development of the role of senior prefects this year. Some members of our student leadership team joined the Senedd Active Citizens conference to focus on giving students a voice and a choice.



Cyfarthfa High School  
Cae Mari Dwn  
CQueens Road  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 0LS

01685 725222

[www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/](http://www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/)



# Supporting Students' Needs

## Cyfarthfa Connect

### Wellbeing Wednesday



Students dusted off their trainers and water bottles and got active this term. Wellbeing Wednesday is one of several new extra-curricular activities taking place in the school.

### Top Student Fans!



Year 7 pupils heated acrylic to understand its properties during manufacture.

### Parents' Evenings

These will run online using our new school cloud system. Details will be shared on Class Charts and social media.

They will be held on:

Year 7 – Thursday 13 January

Year 9 – Thursday 27 January

Year 10 – Thursday 24 March

Year 8 – Thursday 28 April

Kooth.com is a commissioned free service available for young people aged 11-18 (up to the eve of their 19th birthday) for young people living in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area. The Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board have commissioned this service, so it is free at the point of access for your young people to receive help and support. Kooth.com is a free, safe, confidential and non-stigmatised online counselling service for young people offering advice and support. The counselling service is offered from 12pm noon to 10pm Monday to Friday and 6pm to 10pm at weekends. Kooth gives an alternative way of ensuring children and young people can access free support as and when they need it. We have no waiting lists and young people can access online chats for up to 1hr a week with a qualified Counsellor.

A range of information and self-help tools are also available online via our website for children and young people to access themselves 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We are offering free virtual assemblies to all year groups as well as virtual staff training to all staff working with students at your school. These are currently being delivered via MS Teams or Zoom. The assemblies last 30mins and the staff training lasts for one hour. The training will cover information about our robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place to protect vulnerable young people and keep them safe. I can also post some free Kooth resources to your school on request (Kooth cards and A4 posters).

We feel it is important that you know about Kooth.com and understand what it can offer. For further information or to book the free assemblies or staff training sessions at a convenient time, please contact me on [emusgrave@kooth.com](mailto:emusgrave@kooth.com). It is advisable to book early to avoid disappointment.

## Hello Yellow Campaign



A huge thank you to everyone that took part in #HelloYellow. Students and staff donned an entire yellow outfit, or sported a splash of yellow, to show young people that they are not alone with their mental health.



Cyfarthfa High School  
Cae Mari Dwn  
CQueens Road  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 0LS

01685 725222

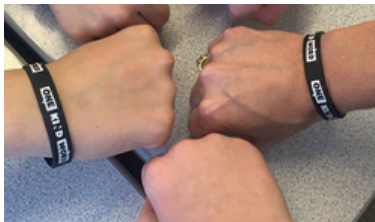
[www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/](http://www.cyfarthfahigh.merthyr.sch.uk/)



# Cyfarthfa Students Back Anti-Bullying Campaign

Cyfarthfa High School is backing the development of an anti-bullying campaign together with other young people across Merthyr Tydfil.

Having had an Anti-Bullying Strategy for schools in place since 2009, Merthyr Tydfil Council's Cabinet has reaffirmed its commitment to a county borough-wide 'Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)' programme where all schools have staff trained in PBS and annual refresher systems in place. In the lead up to this year's National Anti-bullying Week, students wore wrist bands with the slogan 'One Kind Word', which was the theme for the week.



Since the County Borough Council published its first anti-bullying strategy in 2011/12, research has found:

- There has been an increase in the number of incidents reported for physical and gender bullying
- Cyberbullying incidents appear to have decreased significantly
- There was a spike in incidents in 2017/18 but since then, these have decreased
- The number of racial incidents remains low and has reduced since 2011/12



## Getting on 'yer bike for charity!

Well done to Mr Alan Townsin and former staff members Mr Matthew Trowbridge and Mr Nic Jones for their commitment to charity fundraising.

The foursome cycled an eye watering 106 miles from Cardiff to Tenby in the Carten100 Annual Bike Ride in aid of Velindre Cancer Centre.

## Cyfarthfa Connect

### Community Support

Cyfarthfa High School has launched a new organisation with the local community to support the education, health and wellbeing of students and families in the area.

The Cyfarthfa High School Families and Communities Together encourage adults and students alike to aspire to and achieve their full potential as mature and confident individuals, so that they realise that they have a unique contribution to make to the social, cultural and economic activities in Merthyr Tydfil county borough.

The new association plans to run activities that will benefit members of the local community while also raising money to provide the students with additional resources for learning.

The group met for the first time this term and are looking forward to making a positive contribution to people's lives in the years ahead.

### Well done Sam!



Congratulations to Sam in Year 7 who had a presentation in Chapter Arts Centre for coming third in a competition to

design a Postcard for the Future.

We are very proud of him and his creative artwork and ideas in his futuristic shopping scene.



# Cyfarthfa Connect

## Siaradwr Cymraeg



Well done to Bethan for achieving her "Cymraes y Tymor" certificate which recognises those who use the Welsh language in school. Da iawn Bethan!

## Term Times

### INSET DAYS

The school has professional learning days (Insets) and will be closed to all students on:  
Tuesday 4 January 2022  
Friday 27 May 2022  
Friday 24 June 2022

### Academic Year 2022

#### Spring 2022

Tuesday 4 January – Friday 18 February

Monday 21 February – Friday 8 April

#### Summer 2022

Monday 25 April – Monday 30 May

Friday 3 June – Friday 22 July

## Emergency Contact

Should you wish to contact us in an emergency during the Christmas holidays then please contact [studentinformation@cyfarthfa.high.merthyr.sch.uk](mailto:studentinformation@cyfarthfa.high.merthyr.sch.uk)



## Saints March In With Rugby Posts To Inspire Sport Stars

When it comes to finding new rugby posts, it's a case of "try, try and try again" for Cyfarthfa High School's Welsh Rugby Union Hub Officer Jack Smyth.

Following his appointment at the acclaimed Merthyr Tydfil secondary school last year, Jack ran onto the school pitch to find only one solitary rugby post in place.

The original rugby posts were allegedly broken during the first Covid lockdown in 2020 and removed before the students returned to school in the autumn.

Jack explained: "Part of my role is to encourage and nurture sporting talent from within the school and the lack of basic equipment like rugby posts was hardly going to inspire the students.

"Initially I was looking to buy new posts and have them installed but this would have been hugely costly and beyond our budget.

"At that point I turned to many various organisations from the local council to my colleagues in the WRU to help replace them, either through financial support or donating second-hand posts. Unfortunately none were in a position to help us at that time."

Following weeks of further investigation, Jack arrived at the doors of Merthyr Saints Football Club who had purchased a set of posts five years earlier to provide further sports provision on the site.

When this failed to fully materialise, the posts remained unused the football club lived up to their name.

"They really are saints in more ways than one because when they heard of our predicament they reached out and offered to donate the posts to us," Jack added.

"We've had a very successful season this year and all of our teams are grateful to Merthyr Saints for helping us achieve our goals!"

