



Newsletter 17.10.25

Right of the month: To say what you think should happen and be listened to (Article 12) .

Dear Parent/Carers,

This week at Ysgol Afon Wen has been filled with exciting activities and important events across the school. Pupils enjoyed a memorable trip to London for a unique cultural experience, where they had the opportunity to witness a live sumo wrestling demonstration, sparking curiosity and discussion around Japanese traditions. Meanwhile, rehearsals for our upcoming school production of *Annie* are in full swing, with pupils showing fantastic enthusiasm and talent as they prepare for the big performance. We also held our annual flu vaccinations for all pupils from Nursery to Year 6, helping to keep our school community safe and healthy ahead of the winter season.

In addition, our Activate phase pupils took part in a thoughtful Harvest Festival celebration, reflecting on the values of gratitude and community. Year 11 pupils have also been busy this week, taking part in the Green Light Project in conjunction with the college – a fantastic opportunity for them to engage with real-world learning and develop skills for the future.

This week also marked our first Governing Body meeting of the academic year, and we are delighted to officially welcome **Mrs Helen Cook** as Chair of the Governing Body and **Mr Chris Gibbins** as Vice Chair – we look forward to working closely with them in the year ahead.

Finally, thank you to all the families who attended this week’s Parents’ Evening for Nursery to Year 6 – it was a valuable opportunity to discuss each child’s progress and wellbeing so far this term.

Key dates

Date	Event
Monday 20th—Wed 22nd October	School Production 5pm (3 nights)
Thursday 23 rd October 2025	Yr 11 Progress Evening
Thursday 23 rd October 2025	Halloween Disco
Monday 27th October 2025	Week of October half term





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School Production

Everyone is invited to join us for our school production of Annie next week. The pupils have been working really hard to prepare for the first performance. Performances will be at 5pm Monday 20th October until Wednesday 22nd October.

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Annie Jr.

October 20-22nd 2025 | 5pm |

All Tickets £5
Available on the door

Book by Thomas Meehan Music by Charles Strause Lyrics by Martin Charnin

Original Broadway Production Directed by Martin Charnin
Based on "Little Orphan Annie"® By Permission of Tribune Content Agency, LLC
Annie Jr. is presented through special arrangement with
and all authorized materials are supplied by
Music Theatre International, New York, NY
(212) 541-4684 mtishows.com





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Sumo Wrestling Trip

Today, a group of enthusiastic students from Ysgol Afon Wen had the unique opportunity to witness the ancient sport of sumo wrestling first hand in London. The trip provided a fascinating cultural experience that combined athleticism, tradition, and history.

From the moment the students arrived, they were captivated by the vibrant atmosphere and the ceremonial rituals that are integral to sumo wrestling. The wrestlers' powerful movements and the pageantry of the matches offered an unforgettable glimpse into a sport deeply rooted in Japanese culture.

Students also learnt about the origins of sumo wrestling, its spiritual significance, and the rigorous training required to compete. Many students expressed awe at the discipline and respect demonstrated by the wrestlers both inside and outside the ring.

"This was an amazing experience," said Lucy "I loved learning about a new culture and seeing something so different from any other sport I've watched before."

Teachers were equally impressed by the students' enthusiasm and engagement throughout the day. The trip was part of Ysgol Afon Wen's ongoing commitment to providing experiential learning opportunities that foster global awareness and cultural appreciation.

After the event, students will take part in a reflection session, discussing what they had learned and how the experience broadened their understanding of world cultures.

Ysgol Afon Wen looks forward to organising more enriching trips that inspire curiosity and respect for diversity.





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Harvest Festival

Today, our Activate Phase pupils, from Nursery through Year 3, joyfully came together to celebrate the annual Harvest Festival. It was a heart warming occasion filled with songs, stories, and gratitude as the children learned about the importance of giving and sharing during this special time of year.

A huge thank you to Trish from the St Katherine's Church in Pontypridd, who kindly led the service with warmth and enthusiasm. Her engaging storytelling and thoughtful reflections helped our young learners understand the true spirit of the harvest season.

We are also incredibly grateful for all the generous donations made by families and staff. All donations will be given to the food bank at the church, helping to support members of our community in need and truly embodying the spirit of the Harvest Festival.

Thank you once again to everyone who made this event so memorable!



Active Travel



We are really pleased to see so many children and parents participating in active travel to and from school. Please convey to your children that if they ride bikes/scooters there is a specific place to leave them safely in the school. We have asked all teachers to remind pupils that they need to be wearing helmets and should be walking from School Lane into and around the school to ensure the safety of others.





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Celebration of success

Congratulations to the following pupils who have been commended by their Progress leader or teachers. Well done!

Nursery	Peyton Roach & Nethan Perera	Year 4	Nirvana-Blu Jones & Lowen Llewellyn	Year 9	Ffion Bartlett & Tyler Loveridge
Reception	Lucian Williams & Jimmy Hughes	Year 5	Ellie-Louise Ashcroft & Millie Delaitre-	Year 10	Layla James & Rosie Hawkins & Ava Whitfield
Year 1	James Hall & Ivy Herbert	Year 6	Oscar Williams & Ben Mensikov	Year 11	Emilie Rees & Deagan Dragon-Shmylo
Year 2	Oliver Baker & Isabelle Biggs	Year 7	Taylor Wood & Jacob Mountjoy		
Year 3	Iwan Cowlshaw & Paislee Harris	Year 8	Luka Hicks & Ellie Rees		

YAW Senedd

This week marked a fantastic milestone at Ysgol Afon Wen as learners from across the school came together for our first Senedd meetings of the year. Following the completion of our Harvest Festival celebrations, Activate learners will also have the opportunity to take part in their own Senedd sessions next week—ensuring 'A Voice for All'.

The Senedd is a space where all learners, from Year 4 to Year 11, are represented through their Form Representatives and Deputies. It's a powerful example of pupil voice in action, giving everyone the chance to share ideas, raise concerns, and help shape the future of our school.

The focus this time was on Learning and Teaching, and the discussions were full of energy and positivity. Learners spoke passionately about how we can make lessons more engaging, supportive and inclusive. There was a strong sense of ownership and responsibility, with students offering thoughtful suggestions and showing real leadership.

Other areas explored included Wellbeing, Support and the School Environment, with learners reflecting on how we can continue to build a safe, respectful and rewarding atmosphere for all. From ideas around recognition and rewards, to ways of improving shared spaces, the Senedd was a celebration of collaboration and care.

We're incredibly proud of the way our learners conducted themselves—listening, leading and looking ahead. The Senedd is more than just a meeting; it's a movement that reflects the heart of our school community. Thank you to all who took part!





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Pupil Leadership team

The pupil leadership team have led assemblies this week in front of different groups of pupils explaining about the school's priorities for development this academic year.

They also had the opportunity to present this to the Governing Body last night.

They were exceptional and all pupils are clear on what we are working on as a school.




Priorities This Year
We can do this together!



2025-2026

PRIORITY 1: TEACHING AND LEARNING

This year, we are focusing on building strong reading skills- not just in English, but in every subject across the school!



We are also aiming high in maths and science so we can build skills and confidence for the future.

Our learning is designed to grow with us, so we aim to keep adding skills and knowledge each year to help us reach our goals!



We are making sure every pupil gets the support they need to do their very best in school and shine to reach their full potential.



PRIORITY 2: WELLBEING, CARE, SUPPORT AND BEHAVIOUR



We want every pupil to have great attendance and be on time, so everyone can enjoy learning and achieve their best!

We are making sure our school is a safe and kind place for everyone, with clear rules against bullying



We want to see everyone in school as much as possible so we are working together to make sure everyone feels supported to arrive regularly

We are building a school where everyone behaves in a way that helps themselves and others learn.

Together, we are building a school where every pupil, family and teacher feels proud to be part of our team!



PRIORITY 3: LEADING AND IMPROVING.

We're working together to improve teaching and learning, so everyone can do their very best.



By looking at what works best, teachers can plan new ways to help us all learn more

We are building our ALN's team's skills to make sure all pupils get the help they need to succeed.

By improving how subject leaders work, we can make learning even stronger for everyone.

By joining forces with teachers, pupils and partners we can achieve more together.

By strengthening our Activate Phase Leaders, we can make learning even stronger for everyone.





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Pupil Leadership team

Black History Month: Celebrating Unity and Responsibility

This week, our lead pupils have taken centre stage in delivering powerful assemblies that highlight the importance of recognising and celebrating the history and contributions of Black people in society. Their messages have been thoughtful, inspiring, and deeply rooted in the values we uphold as a school.

A central theme has been the idea of belonging to one community, a place where every pupil is respected, valued, and empowered. Our older pupils have embraced their role as positive role models, encouraging younger pupils to understand the importance of respect, responsibility, and cultural awareness in today's diverse world.

We're incredibly proud of the maturity, insight, and leadership shown by our pupils throughout these assemblies. Their voices are helping shape a school culture that celebrates difference and stands united in inclusion.

Halloween Disco

On Thursday 23rd October pupils in Reception to Year 6 are invited to a school disco. The sessions for Reception to Year 4 will be in the school day, Year 5 and 6 will be invited after school from 3.05—4.00pm. Nursery will have their own Halloween disco in the classroom.

Pupils are invited to wear their Halloween costume to school. Please ensure that it is appropriate for the school environment and learning as well as Halloween.

Consent must be provided for Year 5/6 pupils to attend after school. Pick up 4pm from the theatre.



<https://forms.gle/TnhnBsUFC2bXbnwB6>





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Green Light Project

Year 11 pupils have also been busy this week, taking part in the **Green Light Project** – a fantastic initiative run across RCT in collaboration with the college. This programme is designed to support their transition from Year 11 into the wider world, helping to ensure that every pupil leaves school with a clear pathway into further education, training, or employment.



Anti-bullying

Ysgol Afon Wen's Anti-bullying Ambassadors have been busy meeting in preparation for the launch of their Peer Support Scheme, which will be going live following Half Term.





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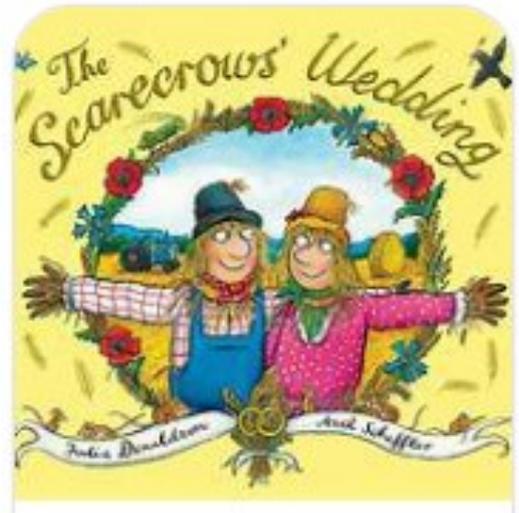
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Year 1 work

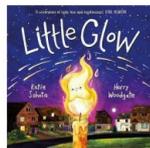
Year 1 have been studying The Scarecrows' wedding in school whilst completing this terms topic of CELEBRATIONS.

Trish, from St Katherine's Church came to support the pupils to conduct a mock wedding. They learnt a lot from the real life experience and made friendship vows for life.



Year 1 | Autumn | Let's celebrate.

Explore the importance of Diwali and how it is celebrated around the world.



The Scarecrows Wedding by Julia Donaldson. Join Harry O'Hay and Betty O'Barley on their big day, a farmyard wedding full of laughter, love, and a little mischief.

Little Glow by Katie Sahota. A gentle, heartwarming story that shows how even the smallest light can shine brightly, bringing warmth and hope to everyone around it."



Describe how my life may differ from children around the world.

Perform movement sequences inspired by a cultural dance.



Know how to show kindness and respect towards others.

Make comparisons with what I celebrate in my community and with others round the world.



Explain why it is important to treat others fairly and recognise my own rights.





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Community Corner

Christmas Card Competition 2025



The winning artist will receive:

- a £20 gift voucher
- a framed copy of their winning design
- 10 printed cards.

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Alex Davies-Jones MP, Member of Parliament for Pontypridd, has invited all young people in the area to take part in a Christmas card design competition. The winning design will be sent far and wide – **including to the King, Prime Minister and lots of other people in Westminster and throughout our communities.**

Entry Guidelines:

- **Christmas design with a little Welsh twist (no Ysgol Afon Wen logo)**
- **Design must be created landscape on A4 paper**
- **Please write the your name, class, and Ysgol Afon Wen clearly on the back of design**
- **Entries must be received by the end of lunchtime on Monday, 3rd November. Form tutors to place entries in Mr. Cobb's pigeon hole**

Remembrance Events

As Remembrance Day approaches, learners from Ysgol Afon Wen are proudly contributing to a special community tribute at Tesco Extra Upper Boat. In collaboration with the Royal British Legion, the store is hosting a two-week collection and inviting local schools to decorate their front windows with meaningful artwork.

Our GCSE and younger learners have created silhouettes and poppies with heartfelt messages. Look out for their powerful display from Thursday next week.





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Innovation News

Numeracy Pupil of the Month (September)



MATHSWATCH

Ownwork will be set weekly on *Mathswatch* to support learning and practice of key skills. *Mathswatch* is an online learning platform that provides short video tutorials, interactive questions, and instant feedback to help students develop their maths skills. The first Ownwork will be assigned on **3rd October**, with subsequent tasks following each week.



Username:
firstname.lastname@ysgolafonwen

Password:
revlse

all lowercase

Welsh Government Assessments

The Welsh Government Numeracy Procedural and Reasoning Tests are fast approaching and will take place between 10th November and 21st November 2025.

In preparation for these assessments, all pupils from Year 2 to Year 9 will have access to practice questions on MathsWatch. We encourage students to make use of these resources regularly in the weeks leading up to the tests to help build their confidence and strengthen their numeracy skills.

