

Dear Parent/Carers,

This week has been filled with creativity, curiosity, and meaningful reflection across our school community.

Excitement is already building as we begin rehearsals for our Christmas shows. The children have made a wonderful start, learning songs, practising lines, and working together to bring each performance to life. We look forward to welcoming parents and carers to enjoy these special celebrations with us later this term.

Our Alternative Curriculum Day centred on the fascinating world of *Fibonacci's sequence*. Pupils explored patterns in nature, art, and mathematics, discovering how this famous sequence appears in everything from pinecones and sunflowers to architecture and design. The day encouraged problem-solving, creativity, and a deeper appreciation for the beauty of numbers in the world around us.

Pupils in Years 4 to 11 also took part in an assembly reinforcing the routines and routines of the school—The YAW WAY. The message emphasised the importance of consistency, respect, and responsibility, and all pupils should now be clear on these expectations and able to explain them at home and follow them daily.

During reflection time, we drew inspiration from the words of Nelson Mandela:

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

Pupils discussed what courage means to them, sharing examples of moments when they showed bravery—whether trying something new, standing up for others, or persevering when things felt challenging. It was a powerful opportunity to build confidence and emotional resilience.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to sharing more of our learning journey with you throughout the term.

Key dates

| Date | Event |
|------------------------------|---|
| Friday 28th November 2025 | Year 7-11 Flu Vaccinations |
| Monday 1st December 2025 | Year 11 Mock Exam week |
| Wednesday 3rd December 2025 | Christmas Concert 5pm |
| Thursday 4th December 2025 | GCSE Success evening 6pm (Yr 11 2024/5) |
| Monday 8th December 2025 | Year 4, 5 & 6 Christmas show 2.15pm |
| Tuesday 9th December 2025 | Year 4, 5 & 6 Christmas show 2.15pm |
| Wednesday 10th December 2025 | Year 2 & 3 Christmas Show 9.15am |
| Thursday 11th December 2025 | Reception & Year 1 Christmas Show 9.15am |
| Friday 12th December 2025 | Nursery Show 9.15am |
| Tuesday 16th December 2025 | Year 4, 5 & 6 Cinema Trip |
| Wednesday 17th December 2025 | Year 7 & 8 Cinema Trip |
| Thursday 18th December 2025 | Year 1 & 2 Christmas cinema on site Christmas Pantomime Year 3-7 Year 9 –11 Cinema trip |
| Friday 19th December 2025 | Staff pantomime & end of term |
| Monday 5th January 2026 | INSET DAY (school closed for pupils) |
| Tuesday 6th January 2026 | Pupil return for Spring Term |



Alternative Curriculum Day

Ysgol Afon Wen celebrated its first ACE (Alternative Curriculum Experience Day) of the school year with a whole-school Fibonacci Day, bringing together all three phases for a rich, cross-curricular learning journey. Pupils explored the famous Fibonacci sequence and discovered how it reaches far beyond mathematics, appearing in art, music, science, and even literature.

Throughout the school, learners investigated the Fibonacci sequence and how each number is formed by adding the two before it. Older pupils explored the link between Fibonacci numbers and the Golden Ratio, understanding how this ratio appears in architecture, nature, and design. Younger children used practical resources to spot patterns, predict the next number, and build sequences independently.

The expressive arts played a major role in the day. Pupils used art techniques to visualise Fibonacci spirals, working with squares of side lengths 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 to create beautiful patterns. These spirals were transformed into snails, galaxies, rainbows, and decorative pieces full of colour and creativity. In music, pupils learned how Fibonacci numbers influence composition, exploring connections to Mozart, the structure of classical pieces, the Golden Ratio, and even the design of the bass clef.

Science lessons focused on finding Fibonacci in nature, such as petals, pinecones, seed heads, and natural spirals. A flower display allowed pupils to see the sequence in real-life examples, and many classes took their learning outdoors to create Fibonacci patterns using natural materials during Forest School sessions.

Literacy lessons were also linked to the theme. Pupils researched Fibonacci's life, answered comprehension questions—including GCSE-style reading questions for older learners—and wrote creative Fibonacci poems using a structure based on the sequence. Humanities lessons added context by exploring who Fibonacci was and why his ideas were so influential historically.

Across the Activate, Advance and Achieve phases, activities were carefully designed to match pupils' levels. Early phase learners engaged with pattern spotting, counting using manipulatives, simple spiral colouring, and nature-based pattern creation. Older pupils took on advanced challenges, including constructing Fibonacci spirals using measurement, coding Fibonacci generators in Scratch, solving number puzzles, and producing detailed pieces of Fibonacci-inspired art.

Fibonacci Day was a vibrant, engaging start to the ACE for this school year. It highlighted the school's commitment to creative, meaningful, and connected learning, allowing pupils to see how one mathematical idea links to so many aspects of the world around them.





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Alternative Curriculum Day



Fibonacci Sequence warm up ☻

Start

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Lap of SportsHall | 8 Seconds of Hic knees |
| 1 Lap of SportsHall | 13 Seconds of Hic Flicks |
| 2 Laps of SportsHall | 21 Chest passes |
| 3 Lunges | 34 Bounce passes |
| 5 Squats | |



Celebration of Success

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

| | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Nursery | Nova Collins & Nova-Rae Weston | Year 4 | Leo Winfield & Nansi Sims | Year 9 | Isabella Reardon & Mason Behit |
| Reception | Huxley Hazel & Marlowe Driscoll | Year 5 | Harlan Webb & Zack Jaswal | Year 10 | Perfect-Favour Aikorie-Osahon & Lauren Evans |
| Year 1 | Noah Boffy & Florence Palmer | Year 6 | Gracie Rowe & Oscar Williams | Year 11 | Zac Davis & Molly Lewis |
| Year 2 | Alba Edwards & Josie-Anna Fodjo | Year 7 | Tianna-Leigh Horton & Lexi Hughes | | |
| Year 3 | Malia Rees & Mirella Driai | Year 8 | Immy Batten and Hallie Davies | | |

Christmas Reward Trips

Christmas reward trips - film choices

Christmas Film Screenings – Pupil Voice Choices

We're excited to share the films chosen by our pupils for the festive season!

- Monday 16th December – Years 4, 5 & 6
Film: Wicked: For Good
- Tuesday 17th December – Years 7 & 8
Film: Elf
- Wednesday 18th December – Years 9, 10 & 11
Film: Home Alone

An updated letter with the film choices, payment details and the consent form link was resent on 19th November.

- ✓ Deadline for consent and payment: Friday 28th November.



Attendance this week

We kindly request that parents and carers inform the school office on the first day of a student's absence and on each subsequent day the student remains unwell. This can be done by:

- Telephoning the school office
- Using the *My Child at School* app

Emailing the attendance inbox at: Attendance@ysgolafonwen.rctcbc.cymru

Please note that if your child is unwell and unable to attend school, the school may request medical evidence to support the absence. This ensures accurate record-keeping and enables us to provide appropriate support for your child. The *My Child at School* app allows you to upload such evidence directly.

Acceptable forms of medical evidence include a doctor's note, prescription, or confirmation of a medical appointment.

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-----|--------|-----|---------|-----|
| Nursery | 82% | Year 4 | 89% | Year 9 | 85% |
| Reception | 88% | Year 5 | 89% | Year 10 | 80% |
| Year 1 | 87% | Year 6 | 88% | Year 11 | 81% |
| Year 2 | 90% | Year 7 | 92% | | |
| Year 3 | 92% | Year 8 | 86% | | |

Congratulations to **Year 3 and 7** who have the highest attendance this week. The school expects every pupil to have at least 90% attendance to school. A high level of attendance to school supports high levels of attainment and wellbeing.





Lateness

Being on time to school is more than just a good habit—it sets students up for success throughout their day and helps them build skills that will benefit them for life.

When children arrive on time, they have a chance to settle in, greet their friends, and get organized. Students who arrive late often feel rushed or stressed, which can make it harder for them to focus and learn.

Teachers use the beginning of the school day to explain the schedule, review important information, and begin lessons. Missing these moments can leave students confused and make it more difficult for them to follow along.

Learning to be punctual teaches students responsibility, time management, and respect for others' time—skills they will use in school, future jobs, and everyday life.

Even a few minutes of missed instruction can add up. When students are late, they may miss key directions, warm-up activities, or the introduction to a lesson. Over time, this can create gaps in understanding.

Late arrivals can interrupt lessons and distract other students. Being on time helps create a smooth, focused learning environment for everyone.



Headteacher Surgery

Our next Headteacher Parent Surgery will take place on **Friday 28th**. This is an opportunity for parents and carers to discuss any questions, concerns, or ideas in a supportive one-to-one setting.

If you would like to attend, please book a timeslot by emailing sangera2@hwbcymru.net.

We look forward to seeing you there.



Catering examination



Year 11 pupils took part in their practical Hospitality examination this week with Miss Price, showcasing an impressive range of culinary skills. The dishes they produced were not only beautifully presented but also exceptionally tasty, with many looking as though they belonged on the menu of a professional restaurant.

Their hard work, creativity, and attention to detail were evident throughout, and we hope their examination results reflect the outstanding quality of their food and presentation. Well done to all involved!



Coffee Mornings

It was a real pleasure to meet with the parents and carers of our Year 4, 5, and 6 pupils this week. These conversations provided a valuable opportunity to discuss any matters arising, celebrate the many things going well at Ysgol Afon Wen, and offer families a chance to share their feedback on how we are doing. It was wonderful to further strengthen the partnership between home and school, and we truly appreciate the time and openness shown by all who attended.

We truly value the time families take to engage with us, and we look forward to welcoming more parents and carers to future events. Further information about upcoming opportunities for other year groups will be shared soon.





Senedd feedback

Student Voice in Action:
SLT Question Session



Last night, our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) took part in a lively and thought-provoking session with members of the School Council and its sub-committees. This event was all about giving pupils a real platform to challenge, question, and influence the decisions that shape their school experience.

Over the course of the evening, students grilled SLT on a wide range of topics—from teaching and learning to wellbeing, inclusivity, eco-initiatives, and community engagement. Questions were sharp and purposeful, reflecting issues raised in recent Senedd meetings. Pupils asked about practical changes such as putting all lessons on Google Classroom, introducing more educational trips, and creating after-school study clubs. They also raised ideas for improving wellbeing, like positivity rewards, themed days, and clearer information on support services.

Environmental concerns were front and centre too, with suggestions for tackling chewing gum litter and increasing recycling opportunities. Inclusivity and safeguarding were key themes, with proposals for a “We’re Listening” button on the school website and more visible safeguarding information around the building.

What stood out most was the confidence and maturity of our pupils. They didn’t just ask questions—they offered solutions, demonstrating their commitment to making Ysgol Afon Wen the best it can be. SLT welcomed the challenge, responding openly and taking away actions to explore further.

Flu Vaccinations

Flu Vaccinations for Years 7–11

Flu vaccinations for pupils in Years 7–11 will take place on **Friday, 28th November**. Please note that this will be a **nasal spray vaccination**.

It is essential that **all consent forms are returned by Tuesday, 25th November**, indicating either **YES** or **NO**. Every pupil must return a form, regardless of whether they will be having the vaccination.

All pupils have already been given a consent form. If your child needs another copy, they can collect one from **Reception** or ask their **Form Teacher**.





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Community events



FESTIVE TOWN TAKEOVER IN YOUR PONTYPRIDD

COUNTER FORCE Poetry

The Festive Town Takeover Poetry Competition is back! Feeling creative? If you are aged 16 or under, we'd love for you to show us your writing talent.

Create a poem on the theme of 'festive'. Let your imaginations run wild!

Closing Date for entries: Wednesday 10th December 2025

<https://forms.gle/Sd3PnL4Fm75QuRAG3>

For any queries or further information, please contact: counterforcepoetry@gmail.com




HAWTHORN & LOWER RHYDYFELIN KIDS CLUB
PRESENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Happy Boots
Boots Hoops

WELSH GYMNOEDD Y GYMNODD Y
YSGOL AFON WEN
NEIGHBOURHOODS MATCH

Welcome
AUTUMN

Friday 21st November

6pm-8pm @ Hawthorn Community Centre

JOIN US FOR A FRIENDLY, HANDS-ON SESSION WHERE FAMILIES CAN COME TOGETHER TO CREATE BEAUTIFUL AUTUMNAL AND CHRISTMAS WREATHS USING NATURAL MATERIALS*

RAFFLE AND REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

*ALL MATERIALS WILL BE PROVIDED
ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Nut free school

To keep all our pupils safe, especially those with severe nut allergies, we kindly ask that no nuts or nut-containing products are brought into school. This includes items such as peanut butter, Nutella, cereal bars containing nuts, and snacks with mixed nuts.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain a safe environment for every child.





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Pantomime trip

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are delighted to inform you that Year 3-7 learners from Ysgol Afon Wen will be attending a pantomime performance of *The Little Mermaid* at **Tylorstown Welfare Hall** on **Thursday 18th December**.

This promises to be a fun and festive experience for our learners as we approach the Christmas break.

Key Information:

- **Venue:** Tylorstown Welfare Hall
- **Departure Time:** 12:00pm
- **Lunch:** Learners will have an early packed lunch provided by the school at **11:30am** before departing
- **Performance Duration:** Approximately 2 hours
- **Cost:** £12 per learner

We kindly ask that payment of **£12** be made by **Thursday 27th November**, via the Ysgol Afon Wen payment [link on the RCT website](#).

Please also complete the attached the consent form via QR code below:



Please ensure your child wears their school uniform and brings a coat suitable for the weather, as we will be walking between the buses and the venue.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. J Cobb





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Extra Curricular Activities



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Extra Curricular Activities Autumn Term



Football (Years 5-6) 15:15-16:00 Venue: Astro Turf
Choir (Years 7-11) 15:00 - 16:15 Venue: A37
Mathematics Club (Year 11) 14:45-15:45 Venue: C Block
Debate Club (Years 7-8) 13:15-13:45 Venue: C11
YEPS Gaming Club (Years 7-11) 14:45-16:15 Venue: B1
YEPS Swimming (Years 7-11) 14:45-15:45 Venue: Swimming Pool
GCSE Science Revision (Years 10-11) 15:15-16:00 Venue: A32
GCSE Art Coursework Catch Up Club (Year 11) 15:00-16:00 Venue: A36



Art (Years 1-2) 15:15-16:00 Venue: Activate
Just Dance (Years 3-4) 15:15-16:00 Venue: Activate
Creative Sparkle (Years 4-5) 15:15-16:00 Venue: Main Canteen
Textiles Club (Years 10-11) 15:15-16:00 Venue: A19



Choir (Years 1-6) 15:15-16:00 Venue: Activate
Arts & Crafts (Reception) 15:15-16:00 Venue: Activate
U13 Girls Football (Y7-Y9) 14:45-15:45 Venue: Astro
School Report Club (Years 7-11) 14:45-15:45 Venue: C11
Clwb Saesneg (Years 10-11) 14:45-15:45 Venue: C14

Book give away

We are excited to share that our school will be hosting a **Book Giveaway** for all pupils! Every child will have the opportunity to choose a free book to take home and keep. Our goal is to encourage a love of reading and help families build their home libraries.

For families in the Activate and Advance phases, we invite you to come into the Activate Hall on **Monday 24th November @3.10pm** and help yourself to any books that interest your child or family. Please feel free to browse and choose what you need.



Lost Property

In addition to the book fayre explained above, the school will put out all lost property in the Activate Hall on **Monday 24th November @3.10pm** . If your children have lost any items of clothing this term so far, please come to collect them. Any lost property not collected, will be placed into the uniform swap shop.





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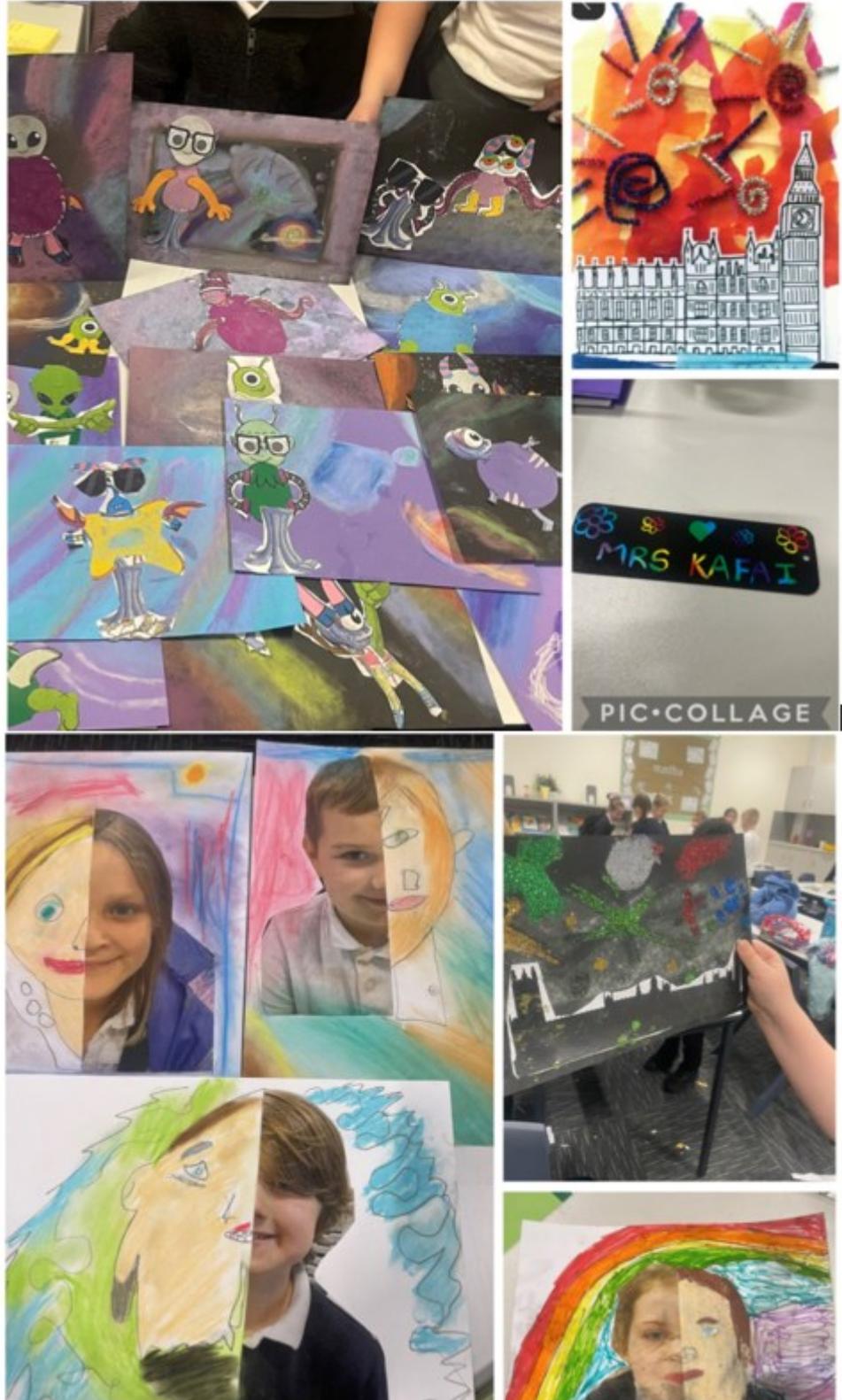
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Creativity Faculty News

Creative Sparkle Club is open to Year 4 and Year 5 pupils every Wednesday.

We spend our sessions making fun and imaginative art and craft pieces. Children have the chance to explore new materials, learn creative techniques, and take home their wonderful creations each week.





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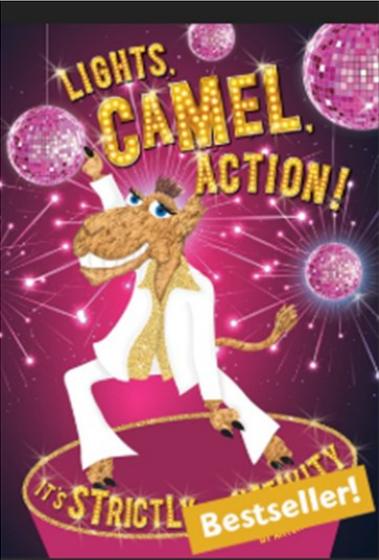
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Creativity Faculty News

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Thursday 11th December | Reception & Year 1 Christmas Show 9.15am |
|------------------------|--|

Reception and Year One families are invited to our Christmas show, "Baarmy Bethlehem," at Ysgol Afon Wen!

Join Cheeky, Rascal and Scamp—the party sheep—as they set off on an adventure to Bethlehem, searching for a celebration. Along the way, they discover the true meaning of Christmas as the nativity story unfolds before their eyes. We look forward to welcoming you to this joyful and heartwarming performance!



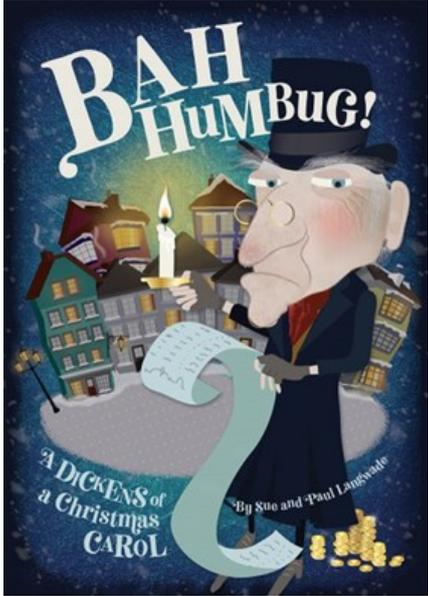
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|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Wednesday 10th December 2025 | Year 2 & 3 Christmas Show 9.15am |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|

Year 2 and Year 3 families are warmly invited to our Christmas show, "Lights, Camel, Action!"

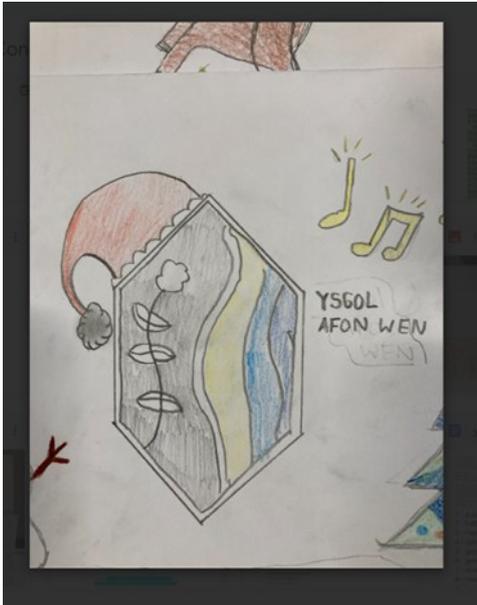
Join us at Ysgol Afon Wen as our talented pupils retell the nativity story with a dazzling mix of music, dance, and festive fun. We look forward to welcoming you for an unforgettable performance that is sure to get everyone in the Christmas spirit!

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Monday 8th December 2025 | Year 4, 5 & 6 Christmas show 2.15pm |
| Tuesday 9th December 2025 | Year 4, 5 & 6 Christmas show 2.15pm |

Pupils in years 4 to 6 have been working hard in Expressive Arts lessons and with their teachers to bring 'Bah Humbug!' to life this Christmas. Set in Victorian London, 'Bah Humbug!' is a fabulous retelling of Charles Dickens' classic story, A Christmas Carol. Join Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim and the rest of the gang in this humorous and festive musical.



Creativity Faculty News



Ysgol Afon Wen is looking forward to its first festive event of 2025 - the YAW Christmas Concert.

Pupils across all three phases are busy rehearsing and preparing musical items to entertain family, friends and the local community.

The concert will take place on **Wednesday 3rd December at 5pm**, with tickets available on the door. Tickets are priced at £3 per person which also includes a complimentary programme and free entry to the raffle. We look forward to kick-starting your Christmas season, so please join us for an opportunity to hear the talented pupils of Ysgol Afon Wen.

Y9 pupils Harley G Hayden B, Kegan P, Oliver M and Logan Wall did an amazing job in decorating the school themed planters. Well done boys. Thanks to Mrs McCabe for getting the paint. I look forward to you seeing these in the community in bloom.





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Creativity Faculty News

Pupils have recently demonstrated impressive progress in their inference, deduction, and analytical skills through an in-depth exploration of how Gothic writers create an atmosphere of fear and unease. Engaging thoughtfully with a range of Gothic texts, they have examined the techniques authors use to build tension, evoke suspense, and shape the reader's emotional response. The standard of work produced has been exceptionally high, with pupils offering perceptive interpretations and sophisticated written responses that reflect both maturity and critical insight. Da iawn Year 9!

