

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week, we were delighted to welcome the interim Director of Education, Mr T Britton, to the school. During his visit, he observed strong classroom practice, the consistency of rules and routines, and the consistent focus on wellbeing across every phase of the school.

This encouraging visit comes at an exciting time for the school, as we look ahead to the official opening of Ysgol Afon Wen. The opening event will involve more than 50 guests and marks an important milestone for our community.

This week's Thought for the Week has been, *"Kindness should become the natural way of life, not the exception"*, Religious leader, Buddha. This message strongly reflects the values we continue to promote across the school. Our assemblies this week have focused on the importance of building a community of wellbeing and ensuring pupil voice is valued and heard.

Finally, we are proud to now have over 1,200 followers on Facebook and 645 followers on Instagram, helping us to celebrate and share the great work and success taking place across the school.

## Parental Communication

Please ensure that you have downloaded and logged into the My Child at School app and turned on notifications. All Ysgol Afon Wen information is sent through MCAS, supported by the school's website and social media.



## Key Dates

Date	Event
Thursday 5th February 2026	Year 10 Success Evening 4.30-5.30pm
Wednesday 11th - Friday 13th February	Year 6 Residential trip to Llangrannog
Thursday 12th February 2026	Year 9 Progress Evening core subjects
Monday 16th February	Week of half term



## Youth Centre Refurbishment

Below are some of the before and after photographs of the Youth Centre refurbishment on site.





YSGOL  
AFON WEN

# Newsletter 23.01.26

Article 24: Children have the right to the best health and medical care.





## SPOTLIGHT ON

# ROUTINES



### Tips for keeping a healthy routine for school

Please contact your child's Progress Lead or class teacher if we can be of support

#### Routine Activities

Encourage your child to have a similar set of activities that they do each morning after they wake up. This is important because routines can help to provide a sense of stability and safety. Feelings like anxiety can often make a person feel like they are not in control and therefore some form of a routine can create comfort and stability. You can help with this by talking to your child about the importance of a routine. Remember to remind your child that it's okay if it doesn't always work out, and that there's always tomorrow to try again.

*Establishing routines for children is essential for their development, providing structure, reducing anxiety, and fostering independence*

### ATTENDANCE MATTERS



Lost minutes = Lost learning



Every school day counts BUT every minute is equally important!

#### Have some sort of a plan

Try to plan activities where you can. This can either be for later that afternoon or even better for tomorrow or the rest of the week. Having something to look forward to can help to lift our mood and give some structure to each day. But it's okay if it doesn't work out as there are often reasons why our plans don't happen as we want them to. Remember, lazy days also count as a plan

#### Family time

Organise family time activities. This could involve games or other activities you can organise and do together, whether it's at the dinner table, on the bedroom floor or while you're taking a walk to the shops or a park. They don't have to require lots of effort to set up, cost lots of money or need technology.

#### Sleep routines

If your child is in the habit of going to sleep quite late then this may be impacting on them going to school. You may be finding that they are struggling to settle into a sleep routine for school. It can help to discuss bedtimes with your child by allowing for a realistic and gradual change. You could try to settle on a cut-off time for them getting into bed and then try to work this time backwards slowly. Then the next day, or a few days later, you could encourage them to go to bed another 30 minutes earlier. Keep doing this over a few days and weeks until they are falling asleep at a time that fits with a routine for school. If you are finding that anxiety is meaning you or your child struggles to sleep then there are also things that will help. If you can, ensure mobile 'phones are not charged at night in your child's bedroom.

Think about having a family central charging point - model the expectation yourselves!

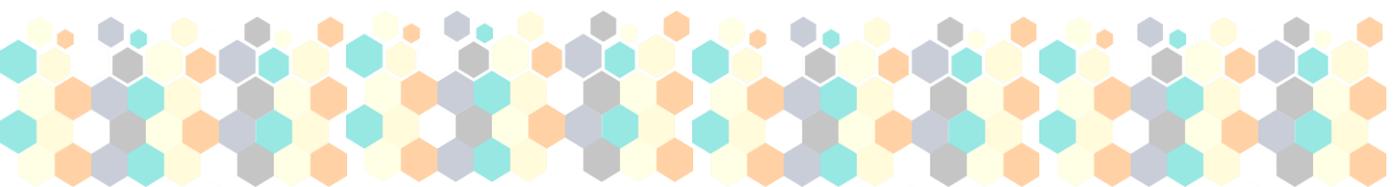
## Celebration of Success

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

<b>Nursery</b>	Alba Lawton & Rosie Riley-Williams	<b>Year 4</b>	Keallan Hobbs & Olivia Rees	<b>Year 9</b>	Daniel Ogunleye & Carys Elliott
<b>Reception</b>	Anwen Hooper & Arlo Birkinshaw	<b>Year 5</b>	Albie Hill & Ayva Mardon-Hughes	<b>Year 10</b>	Ffion Elliott & Ryley Bengough
<b>Year 1</b>	Adrian Crollman-Coombe & Leo Brittain	<b>Year 6</b>	Mollie Humphries & Zuhair Douba	<b>Year 11</b>	Jayden Brown & Lexie Hughes
<b>Year 2</b>	Jack O'Dwyer & Alfie Booker	<b>Year 7</b>	Joey Pritchard & Jasmine Grant		
<b>Year 3</b>	Leo Williams & Keelan O'Brien	<b>Year 8</b>	Ceinwen Tipples & Jacob Gay		

## Cheerleading Team

An introduction to Ysgol Afon Wen's first-ever cheerleading team.





## SPOTLIGHT ON PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM



### WHAT IS 'PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM'?

If your child's absence falls below **90%**, this means your child is 'persistently absent'.

90% attendance means that **19 days** in one academic year are missed due to non-attendance.

Pupils who miss school frequently fall behind in their studies. Research shows that persistent absence is **strongly linked to lower academic achievement**, which in turn affects long-term prospects, such as higher education opportunities and employability. Attending school is about more than just academics; it provides **social and emotional support systems that help pupils feel connected and cared for**. Missing out on this support can exacerbate mental health challenges and create a cycle of avoidance.



Have you downloaded the **MCAS app** to monitor attendance and punctuality?



### SUPPORTING YOU AND YOUR CHILD

We recognise that returning to school following a period of absence can be daunting. We can provide enhanced support to ensure a confident return to school. This includes:

- Phased / Gradual return to school in partnership with home and a bespoke timetable
- Additional peer / mentor support

### EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY

*Unless your child is too unwell to attend, your child should be in school every day. Minor coughs, colds and sore throats should not prevent your child attending school.*



### DROP IN SESSION

*Are you finding it difficult to encourage your child to attend school regularly?  
Is your child experiencing challenges in school that are hindering them from achieving high rates of attendance?*

**IF SO. WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT.**

Key staff will be available to discuss any concerns you may have and offer bespoke and personalised support to help ensure your child attends school.



3.30PM - 4.30PM



THURSDAY, 5<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY



YAW COMMUNITY HUB

## Year 3 and 4 Swimming lessons

Year 3 and 4 will be taking part in swimming lessons for the next three weeks, commencing on Monday 26th January and finishing on Wednesday 11th February. The pupils will follow the National Swimming Plan and be taught by qualified pool staff. Swimming is part of the PE Curriculum and is therefore compulsory, unless there is a valid reason why your child is unable to take part.

Pupils will need to come to school with suitable swimwear (this can be worn under their uniform) a towel, spare underwear and goggles if they require them. Pupils are expected to wear normal uniform on these days unless it is their P.E day.



## Wellbeing Support

As always, we will continue to ensure your child is supported in all aspects of school life this year. Your child's class teacher / form tutor will always be your first point of contact. Please note that Miss Price has taken over the role of Year 7 Progress leader from Mr Williams.

Should you require any additional support, please reach out.

Nursery – Year 3	Mrs N Rowland
Year 4 – Year 6	Mrs V Geach
Year 7	Miss M Price
Year 8	Miss L Burnett
Year 9	Miss L Phillips
Year 10	Miss H Boyce
Year 11	Miss M Jenkins
ALNCO	Mr S Lock





## Activate Phase (Nursery to Year 3)

### Nursery | Spring 1 | My home, my country and people who help me.

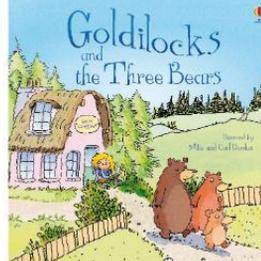
Recognise how I belong to a wider community



Enjoy singing Welsh rhymes, developing how I listen, as well as attention and concentration.



Show care and consideration for others helping how I feel connected to others.



Goldilocks and the Three Bears, the classic story of a young girl who discovers a house in the woods while its owners are away. Follow her journey as she tries different bowls of porridge, chairs, and beds to find the ones that are "just right."

Investigate cause and effect to help develop my understanding of how things work.

Solve problems, by selecting appropriate tools and resources, reflecting on my own learning.



Take notice of others and my environment



### Reception | Spring 1 | Let's get moving!



Recognise changes that happen to my body, as I move and the way music can influence movement.

Exploring different ways to move my body, showing control and coordination.

Recognise routines that are important to me and my health.



Understand how to take and care be safe when travelling and moving.



*We're Going on a Bear Hunt*  
Michael Rosen Helen Oxenbury



Understand the purpose of transport and the features of transport systems.



Know the stages of human life, drawing on my own experiences.



We're going on a bear hunt. Follow and join in the family's excitement as they wade through the grass, splash through the river and squelch through the mud in search of a bear. What a surprise awaits them in the cave on the other side of the dark forest!





## Activate Phase (Nursery to Year 3)

### Year 1 | Spring 1 | Land of the dragon.

Explore the properties of water and ice in order to save the dragon.

Identify ways to be brave and confident inspired by knights and dragons.

Recognise how bodies change when they grow from babies to adults



Create a range of artistic effects using layering of colours and closed shapes.

Marmaduke's not like all the other dragons - his ears are too big and he never even tries to fly. He just wants to fit in. And Princess Meg? She doesn't really have any friends, and she's far too busy having fun to notice ... Until one day when Marmaduke and Meg's lives collide and they both realise just how much they need each other.



Discover the importance of castles and their connection to Welsh history.

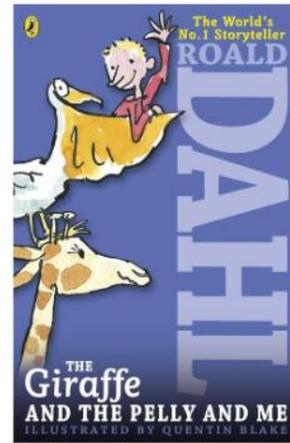
Explain why it is important to treat others fairly and recognise my own rights.

### Year 2 | Spring 1 | Famous Welsh people.

Investigate why Aneurin Bevan was important for health in Wales and how healthy choices help our bodies.



Understand how my culture is similar and different to others.



Enjoy listening to Welsh folk music and participating in Welsh dance.



Explore important people and symbols associated with Welsh culture.



Investigate how humans and animals grow and develop

Recognise and respect the differences in others role and abilities.

Billy's biggest wish is to turn a weird old wooden house into a wonderful sweet shop. But then he finds a giraffe, a pelly and a monkey living inside - they're the Ladderless Window Cleaners! Who need ladders when you've got a giraffe?

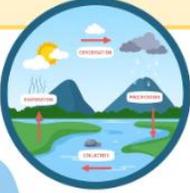




## Activate Phase (Nursery to Year 3)

Year 3 | Spring 1 | Love where you live.

Discover the processes behind the water cycle and the effect of the sun.

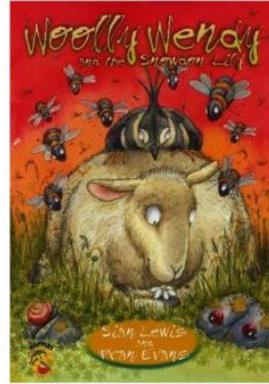


Explore how my community has changed over time and identify on a map special places in our community.



Understand how the organs of our body work and the importance of hygiene.

Recognise the positive impact on belonging to a community and the power of friendships.



Woolly Wendy cares about the world of nature, she really does. The problem is, she doesn't stop to think. Off she trots up the highest mountain in Wales in search of the rare Snowdon Lily. Look out, birds, bees and flowers, clumsy Wendy's about.

Explore the importance of human rights and how all families differ.

Use block-coding to animate a sprite and create your own world.



## Good luck

Today we say a fond farewell to our student teachers who have spent time in Activate and lower Advance. They have been an absolute joy to have in our school, and we wish them the very best for their futures.



Y1 ARE FEELING THE LOVE FOR DIWRNO

SANTES DWYNWEN



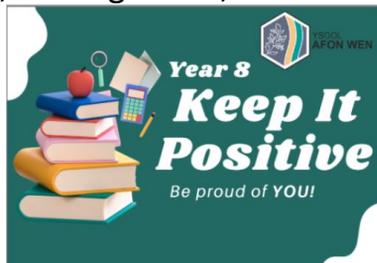
## Advance Phase (Year 4 to Year 8)

### Year 8 Focus: Building Self-Regard and Celebrating Success

This term, our focus for Year 8 is on developing positive self-regard as a learner and encouraging pupils to feel proud of their achievements. Following a recent pupil survey, it became clear that many students find it difficult to recognise, celebrate, or take pride in their own successes, even when they are making strong progress.

In response, Miss Burnett and the Year 8 form tutors are working to help pupils identify their strengths and acknowledge their efforts. We want pupils to develop confidence in themselves, recognise how far they have come, and feel comfortable celebrating their progress.

By placing a strong emphasis on positivity, our hope is to shift mindsets and help pupils build a healthier, more confident relationship with learning. This term is about focusing on what is going well, valuing effort, and learning to be proud of achievements, both big and small.

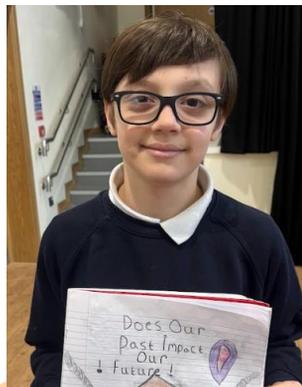


Postcards are awarded to encourage pupils to share their successes.



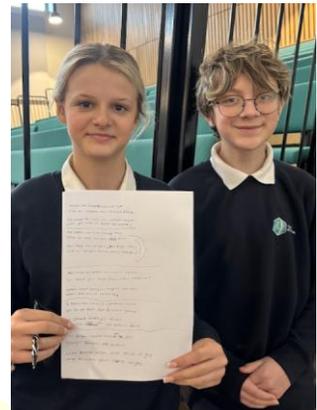
**Esme and Bella:**  
Sporting achievements  
in gymnastics and  
weightlifting.

**Riley:**  
Proud of his  
efforts in school,  
especially his  
Humanities work.



**Amelia and Jayden:**  
Proud of their  
efforts in school,  
especially their  
Welsh poems in  
Drama.

**Harper and  
Autumn:**  
Proud of their  
achievement of  
reading a book over  
the weekend.





## Advance Phase (Year 4 to Year 8)

These are the topics being studied by Advance pupils in the Spring term:

### Year 4 | Spring 1 | Power and protest.

Build a solar power car investigating the power of the sun's energy.



Show power and movement through stick figures and the studying the work of S Lowry.



Use block-coding to create a short animation



Understand the right to be heard and how to express emotions in a healthy considerate manner.



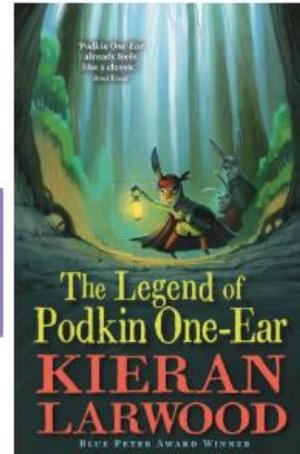
Establish fluency when multiplying and dividing as well as applying this knowledge to measurement and area.



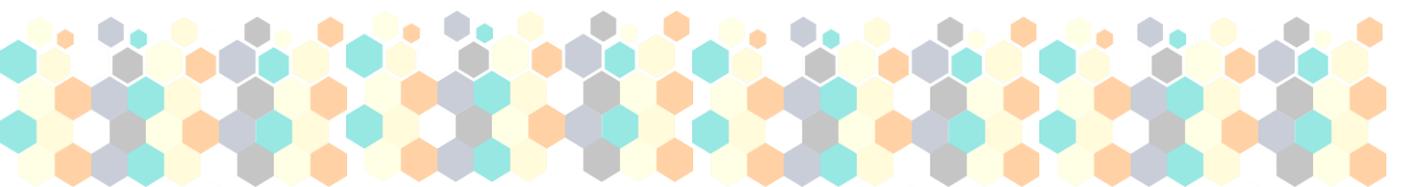
Discover the role of protest and power in Welsh history.



Communicate how my body and mind feels in Welsh.



The legend of Podkin One-Ear. Podkin is the son of warrior chieftain, who quickly becomes responsible for the safety of his family following an attack from the terrifying Gorm. Follow Podkin on this spellbinding journey.

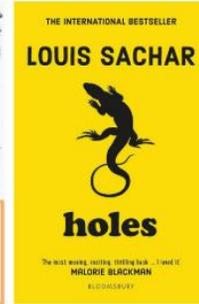




## Advance Phase (Year 4 to Year 8)

### Year 5 | Spring 1 | Revolution!

Explore simple strings of python code to create patterns and games.



Communicate my personal interests related to television and films in Welsh.

Understanding the significance of mark marking in Art.

Investigate the impact of technological changes on our lives.

Study the importance of personal strengths, resilience and self-belief in coping to daily stressors and pressures.

**Holes by Louis Sachar.** Stanley Yelnats' family has a history of bad luck so he is not too surprised when a miscarriage of justice sends him to Camp Green Lake Juvenile Detention Centre. Help Stanley navigate the many challenges he faces each and every day.

Learn how the body changes and importance of self-care.



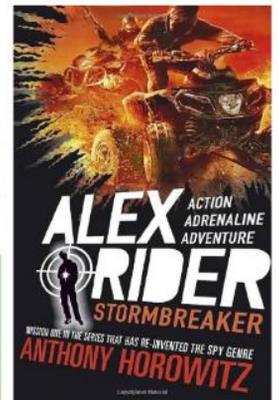
Explore the work of T. S. Lowry and how to use stick figures in my own work.

Create a wind turbine exploring the impact of green energy.

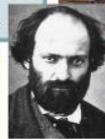


### Year 6 | Spring 1 | Innovate and Inspire.

Explore the work of Paul Cezanne and his impact on still life. Create my own still life.



Develop an understanding of python code.



Explore how role-models and aspirations can inspire positive well-being.

Investigate how Humans have shaped our environment.



Be inspired by famous Welsh scientists, investigating those from the past and present.

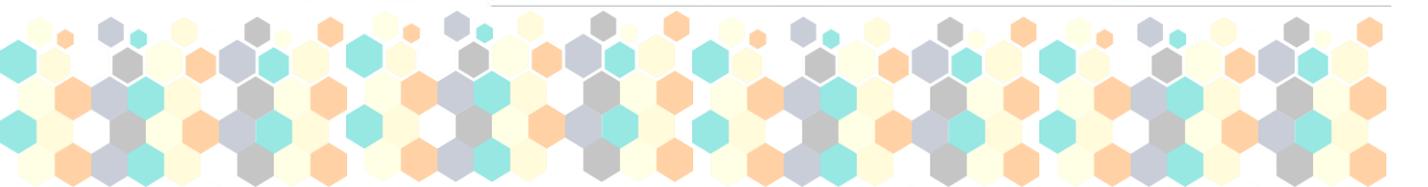
Explain the emotional, physical and social changes that occur during adolescence.



Communicate interests related to travel and holidays in Welsh.



**Stormbreaker by Anthony Horowitz.** Join Alex Rider on a fast-paced journey, as he finds himself dropped into a world of espionage and action, all whilst trying to discover what happened to his uncle.





YSGOL  
AFON WEN

# Newsletter 23.01.26

Article 24: Children have the right to the best health and medical care.

Achieve Phase (Year 9 to Year 11)

## Year 11 further studies



Nurturing Success

Ysgol Gyfun  
**BRYN CELYNNOG**  
Comprehensive School

Penycodcae Road  
Beddau  
Pontypridd  
Rhondda Cynon  
Taff  
CF38 2AE

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Headteacher: Ms. Debra Baldock, B.A., N.P.Q.H.  
Deputy Headteacher: Mr. Chris Davies, B.Eng.

16<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

### SIXTH FORM SIGN UP MEETINGS

We would like to invite you and your child to attend a meeting with a senior member of staff to discuss their options for joining Bryn Celynnog's Sixth Form.

Senior members of staff will be available for appointments between 3:15pm and 5:30 pm:

- Monday 26th January – Thursday 29th January

Each appointment will last approximately 10 minutes and will be held in school on the ground floor of the new block.

Please take time to read the Sixth Form Prospectus (link: [Prospectus](#)) carefully and encourage your child to speak to the teachers noted in the prospectus, so that the decisions you make are as informed as possible.

To make your appointment please contact Miss Jade Smith via the following email address: [jade.smith@bryncelynnog.org.uk](mailto:jade.smith@bryncelynnog.org.uk)

We very much look forward to meeting you at this important stage in your child's education.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Nelson  
Assistant Headteacher

[Sixth Form Prospectus – Bryn Celynnog  
Comprehensive School](#)





## Life Faculty News

### Health and Social Care

**Health and Social Care deadlines**

✉ WATKINSA255@HWBCYMRU.NET

29/01	Task 2 - Influences
05/03	Task 3 - Effects
19/03	Task 4 - Assessing Government Guidelines
23/04	Task 5 - Analysis

**COURSEWORK 2 DEADLINES**

### Celebration of success in LIFE

#### Pupil shoutouts

**Humanities:**

Y7 - Seren Coles  
Y8 - Jacob Davidge  
Y9 - Molly Mills

**History:**

Y10 - John Moore  
Y11 - Agata Swiatkowska

**Ethics:**

Y10 - Alyssa Saunders  
Y11 - Amelia Weyman

**PE**

Y7 - Lara May  
Y8 - Mia Roffey  
Y9 - Finley Phillips & Sofia McFarlane-Baxter  
Y10 - Piotr Kudelka  
Y11 - Lola Knowles

### Fixtures

- 21/01/26 - U15's cricket tournament
- 27/01/26- Year 8 football vs Cardinal Newman
- 22/01/26 - U13's Girls football V Cardinal Newman
- 28/01/26 - U13's cricket tournament

### First Aid Training

The LIFE faculty would to thank Hawthorn Leisure Centre for providing their expertise in supporting KS4 in their first aid practical experiences throughout the past couple of weeks. Pupils have gained experience within CPR, defibrillators, recovery position, how to administer an epiPen and treat concussion. Pupils have thoroughly enjoyed.

### Extra Curricular

#### YAW EXTRA CURRICULAR - SPRING TERM



Day	Activity
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Y9/10 Boys Football U13's Boys Rugby All Girls Rugby All Girls Cricket Lunchtime - Cheer
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Y7/8 Boys Football All Girls Football All Girls Netball

**For all extra-curricular activities, please meet at the changing rooms.**

