



Right of the month: Article 3: All adults should make decisions in the best interest of children.

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been a very busy week in Ysgol Afon Wen and we are pleased to present some of the work the children have produced in this newsletter. We have started celebrations for St Dwynwen's Day as well as preparing for exciting future events such as the Eisteddod and World Book Day. Year 9 have received information about starting their GCSE Options process and the Senedd are preparing for their second meeting of the academic year.

We are pleased to confirm that following engineers visits, the school telephone line has been modified and this should help to direct your call to the most relevant person. We will be monitoring its implementation closely over the forthcoming weeks.

Dates for your diary

Date	What's happening?
Monday 27 th January	Year 9 options process starts
Tuesday 28 th January	Senedd 2 Meeting
Wednesday 5 th February	Year 9 Interim report published
Friday 7 th February	ACE day (no pens day)
Thursday 13 th February	Year 9 Core subjects Parents Evening
Friday 21 st February	Eisteddfod
Monday 24 th February	Half term
Wednesday 26 th February	Ski trip departs
Monday 3 rd March	All pupils return to school after half term
Wednesday 5 th March	Ski trip returns
Thursday 6 th March	World Book Day
Thursday 6 th March	Year 9 Options Evening

Ski Trip

Ski trip. If you have not filled in the fitting and passport information sent out via ClassCharts, please can you do so. https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQVXb-SqRip4MhrdNKPkPzkA3PaZT0Lv5IzOGct4Jg1_8Mdg/viewform?usp=sharing

Headlice

Some parents/children have reported cases of headlice. Please check your child regularly.

Please note that the headlice treatment is available on the Common Aliments Scheme in pharmacies, which means it is available free of charge on the NHS.

[Head lice and nits - NHS](#)

Head Lice
Patient information leaflet

GIG
NHS
Common Ailments Service

Debris
Doesn't
Choose
well

Only use this leaflet if your pharmacist has advised you about your or your child's condition.

Head lice are tiny grey-brown insects that live in hair. Nits are the yellow-white eggshells which are left attached to the hair after the lice hatch. Head lice are spread by close head-to-head contact and are more common in young children. Head lice are not a sign of having dirty hair. There is no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.



A head louse

Head lice can make the head feel very itchy or like something is moving in the hair. However, many people with head lice do not have symptoms.

Finding head lice

The only way to be sure someone has head lice is by finding a live louse. If a louse is found, check everyone in the household for head lice and treat anyone who has live lice as soon as possible. Check the hair using a louse detection comb. This is a fine-toothed comb which can find live lice in wet or dry hair.



Nits attached to hair

Lice move less when they are wet so combing wet hair with conditioner is a more reliable way of finding lice than combing dry hair. You can also use wet combing to treat head lice. Good lighting and a magnifying glass will help you to see the lice better.



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Eisteddfod: Friday 21st February 2025

We are thrilled to announce that we will be holding our annual Eisteddfod on Friday 21st February 2025.



This event celebrates Welsh culture and traditions, and it will be a fantastic opportunity for our students to showcase their talents. Students are encouraged to participate in various performances, including singing, dancing, reciting poetry, and more. It's a wonderful occasion for the whole school to come together and appreciate the rich heritage of Wales.

As part of the Eisteddfod celebrations, we are excited to announce a special homework project for our pupils. Each year group has been assigned a craft activity that reflects the spirit and culture of Wales. All entries will contribute points to their respective house, so we encourage everyone to participate!

ACTIVITIES

Please find the details of the assigned home projects below:

Nursery - Love Spoon

Reception - Daffodil

Year 1 - Welsh Lady

Year 2 - Dragon

Year 3 - Rugby/Football Shirt

Year 4— 6 Take a picture of themselves by a Welsh landmark and write a short fact file on it

Year 7 to Year 9 will be completing assignments in different subjects across the school to earn points for their house. More information to follow from class teachers and/or Google Classroom.

All students are required to complete their project by Monday 17th February and bring it to school for display. This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to express their creativity while learning about Welsh traditions.



Urdd



Our four houses are:

Rhondda (Green), Cynon (Yellow), Taf (Blue) & Elia (Red)

On the day Nursery to Year 9 will be asked to wear a top of their house colour and appropriate PE bottoms and trainers as there will be some active events.

Form teachers and class teachers will confirm the houses for individual pupils and the colour.





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Year 9 Options Process

Please refer to letter sent via Class Chart (and sent home in paper version with the pupils) for more information. Pupils need to start making appointments to see their core subject teachers: English, Mathematics, Science, RE, Welsh.



Thursday 13th February 2025

Year 9 Core subject parents evening

3.15pm – 6.00pm



Thursday 6th March 2025

Year 9 Options evening

3.15pm – 6.00pm

School Website

The school is currently working with a digital media company to make the school website accessible, informative and easy to use. We look forward to sharing this with you in the future. In the meantime, please bear with us.

Nursery Work

Winter art developing the fine motor skills in the nursery this week.



Senedd Meeting

Next Tuesday, 28th, marks our second school Senedd of the year, and we couldn't be more excited! Throughout this week, all learners have actively participated in class discussions, sharing their ideas and opinions on key topics. Form Representatives will bring these views to the school Senedd, ensuring every voice is heard as part of our commitment to *a voice for all*. The Senedd is a key part of our process for capturing student voice, and the discussions will directly inform an action plan for our sub-committees to develop and implement. We are proud to foster an environment where every learner feels empowered to contribute, and we look forward to seeing the ideas generated during this important event.





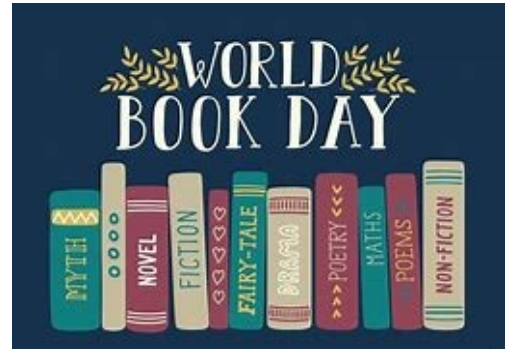
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World Book Day: 6th March 2025

We are very much looking forward to World Book Day on 6th March; it is always one of the highlights of the year. On the day, there will be many opportunities for pupils to celebrate their love of reading through sharing and discussing their favourite books with their class, as well as time to “drop everything and read”.



Instead of the more traditional practice of dressing up as characters from books, we are encouraging pupils to “wear a quote” from their favourite book, author, or literary piece. This will encourage creativity and enable pupils to reflect thoughtfully on the books they have experienced throughout their life.

What does “Wear a Quote” mean?

Pupils can choose a quote that resonates with them from any book or author they love. They can then find a way to “wear” it. Here are some ideas:

- Write or design the quote on a piece of paper and pin it to their jumper.
- Create a homemade badge, sash, or headband displaying the quote.

Use fabric paints or pens to write a quote on a t shirt.

We believe the “Wear a Quote” day will also reduce the need for parents to buy or create costumes in an effort to support both family wellbeing and environmental sustainability. If parents and pupils would prefer to dress up as a character from a book, they may do so. **If not wearing a quote, or dressing up, pupils must otherwise wear normal school uniform on the day.**

We want to hear about the books pupils love to read and to inspire other children to read too and so pupils are encouraged to bring in the book that the quote comes from, so they can share with the class.

All pupils will be given a World Book Day £1 voucher, which they can use at Storyville book shop and other participating stores.

School Carpark

We have received communications from parents who are frustrated by other parents blocking bays and preventing them from leaving site. Additionally, parents are raising concerns of parents parking on the cones. Please could I kindly request that everyone uses the facility appropriately.

Active Travel Project

Reception to Year 6 have started the WOW living schools project, where pupils who choose to travel actively to school win badges at the end of every month.





Attendance

Nursery	89%	Year 4	88%	Year 9	82%
Reception	88%	Year 5	90%	Year 10	80%
Year 1	93%	Year 6	94%	Year 11	84%
Year 2	93%	Year 7	87%		
Year 3	89%	Year 8	90%		

Congratulations to **Year 6** 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.

Celebration of Success



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

Nursery	Aleigha Cegiela	Year 4	Lennon Driscoll	Year 9	Ryley Bengough
Reception	Jesse Taylor	Year 5	Armani-Mai Jones	Year 10	Lillie-May Jones
	Evan Wilson		Georgie King		Xavier Warner
Year 1	Megan Strange	Year 6	Thom Deren Richards	Year 11	Deme Jane Williams
	Elsie King		Eryn Williams		Colton Connor
Year 2	Samuel Preece	Year 7	Benjamin Philips		
	Ashton Yim		Indy-Mae Watton		
Year 3	JJ Moore	Year 8	Harry Bloodwoth		
	Leo Morgan		Dewi James		

Year 2 Outdoor Learning

This week some Year 2 pupils have enjoyed learning about mathematics outside. They were making symmetrical patterns using pumpkin seeds in apples which resulted in bird feeders.





Wellbeing Information for Parents and Carers

Please see attached information leaflet.



Family Information Service

The Family Information Service (FIS) provides free and impartial information, guidance, and signposting to a wide range of services for children, young people, and their families in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Our service is open to everyone—no referrals or eligibility criteria are required.



Gwasanaethau i
Blant a Theuluoedd
Services for Children
& Families

- Email: fis@rctcbc.gov.uk
- Freephone: 0800 180 4151
- Freephone (from mobiles): 0300 111 4151



Resilient Families

We provide families with an assessment to identify the right services based on your circumstances. Our aim is to offer quick, effective support and guidance to help families overcome challenges together. We focus on helping you develop resilience and the skills to cope with difficult times, even after the support has ended.

Parents and carers can self-refer by calling 01443 425006.5006.



Comets and Rockets Programme

We offer one-to-one play therapy and group programmes to support children and young people aged 3-17 who have witnessed or experienced domestic abuse. We also provide support for parents to help them understand the impact of domestic abuse on their child and offer programmes to strengthen attachment.

- Tel: 01685 353999
- Email: referrals@smt.org.uk
- Website: smt.org.uk



Men's Shed

Men's Sheds' are social groups set up in local communities for the benefit of men.

The Men's Sheds movement is based on the understanding that men are more likely to help themselves and attend something they have set up or have some control over. While they might struggle to talk face to face, men do talk shoulder to shoulder when engaged in some form of activity or shared task.






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ACE Day



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**FRIDAY
7TH FEB**

A MORNING OF ~~NO PENS~~

On the morning of Friday 7th February, Ysgol Afon Wen are putting down their pens/pencils in Activate, Advance and Lower Achieve

Creativity
Pupils can expect to verbalise their learning and talk their ideas through with one another.

Innovation
Pupils can expect to problem solve through talk and collaboration

Life
Pupils can expect to critically think about ideas related to their learning.

Benefits of No Pens activities:

- **Enhances Verbal Communication:** Encourages pupils to express themselves clearly and confidently.
- **Promotes Collaboration:** Fosters teamwork through group discussions, problem-solving, and shared activities.
- **Boosts Engagement:** Hands-on and interactive tasks help pupils stay motivated and excited to learn.
- **Supports Inclusion:** Provides opportunities for all learners, especially those who may find traditional written tasks challenging, to shine.
- **Develops Critical Thinking:** Encourages creative approaches to learning without relying on traditional tools.
- **Strengthens Speaking and Listening Skills:** Builds skills essential for debates, discussions, and real-world interactions.

We look forward to seeing our pupils thrive in this dynamic learning environment and discovering the many ways they can communicate and learn beyond the written word!





Creativity Faculty NEWS



These lovely examples of Welsh love spoons have been created by year 7 speech and language students in readiness for St Dwynwen's Day this Saturday 25th January. St Dwynwen is the Patron Saint of Lovers here in Wales.

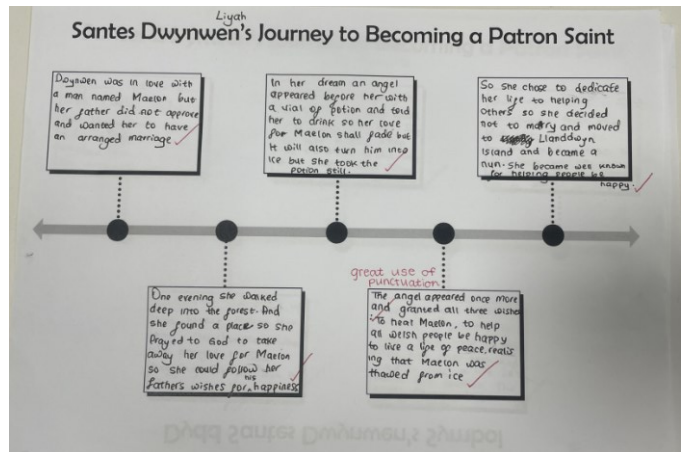
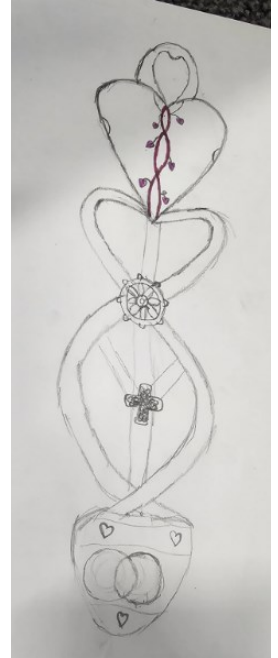
Some departments have been teaching this story of Saint Dwynwen and celebrating this cultural day this week.

In Welsh and English lessons students in years 7 and 8 have read the story of St Dwynwen and created story boards and summarized the wonderful story as well as create love spoons and understanding the meaning of the designs in them.

Mae rhai o adrannau wedi dysgu'r stori Santes Dwynwen a ddathlu y diwrnod diwylliannol yr wythnos hon.

Mewn gwersi Cymraeg a Saesneg, mae disgyblion ym mlwyddyn 7 ac 8 wedi darllen stori Santes Dwynwen a chreu byrddau stori a chrynhoi'r stori aruthrol a hefyd creu llwyau caru a deall ac ystyried yr ystyr mewn nhw.

'In English Year 11 have done us proud this week in their English Language Group Discussion Exams. Their hard work has paid off. Da iawn all!'



On **Monday 27th January**, Year 7-9 pupils will participate in a National Literacy Trust webinar featuring award-winning author, Tom Palmer, and Holocaust survivor, Alfred Garwood, for Holocaust Memorial Day.



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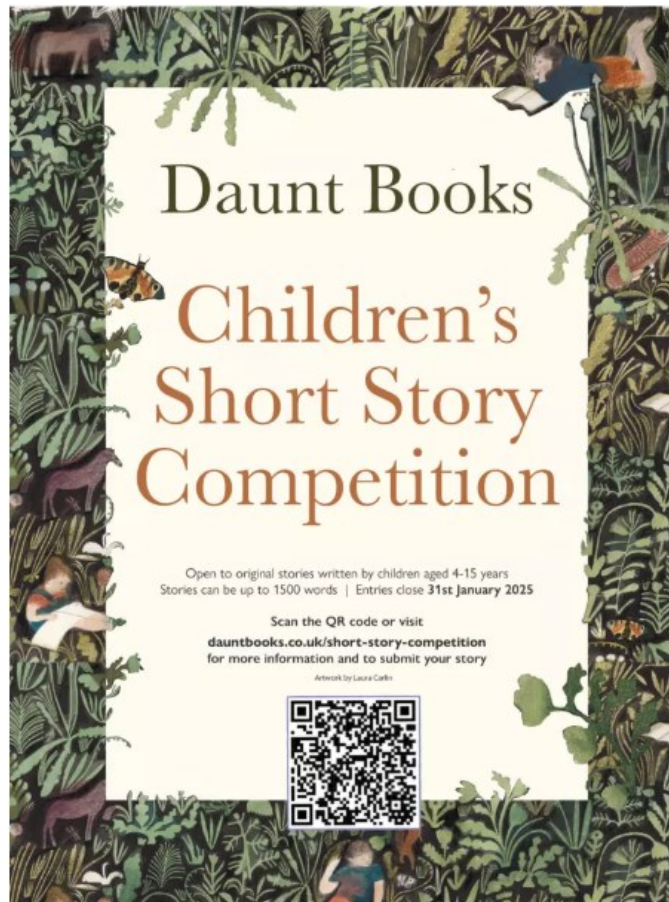
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Children's Story Competition

The annual Daunt Books Children's Short Story Competition is back, celebrating the wonderful creativity of young writers. This is a fantastic opportunity for children to get writing (or typing!) and be part of something truly special. Winning stories will be published in a book featuring a stunning cover by illustrator Laura Carlin and an introduction by Hiba Noor Khan, acclaimed author of *Safiyah's War* and *The Line They Drew Through Us*.

Winners will be announced by **28th March 2025**, so get those ideas flowing and join in the excitement—this could be your moment to shine!



RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch

Year 10 geography students delivered a lesson to Year 5 on identifying birds and how to record data in the form of a tally chart.

Students then had the opportunity to take part in the RSPB "Big Garden Birdwatch" exploring the school grounds and tallying how many different species they saw.

If you'd like to take part over the weekend, please find more details at <https://www.rspb.org.uk>.

