

3-16

Ebbw Fawr Learning Community

Newsletter

National Recognition for Ebbw Fawr



Education Minister Huw Lewis AM, has announced that Ebbw Fawr Learning Community has been chosen as one of the schools who will lead on the design and development of the new curriculum for Wales which is due to be available to schools by 2018.

In a double announcement the Minister also said that Ebbw Fawr has been asked to join the network of schools who are leading on the new arrangements for teachers professional development to ensure that all teachers in Wales get high quality, professional learning opportunities throughout their careers. The selected schools will work together as *pioneer schools* driving forward improvements in standards.

Mr Lewis said "All of our pioneer schools will have a crucial role in ensuring that our ambitious and exciting future for education in Wales is realised."



Ebbw Fawr Learning Community Director Graeme Harkness said after the announcement;

"I am delighted to say that Ebbw Fawr has been asked to become a New Deal Pioneer School and a New Curriculum Pioneer School. This is a tremendous accolade for the school, but particularly for the staff who have readily engaged to improve their practice over the last three years. We are now working through the implications of this and look forward to sharing the outstanding practice that exists here with other school across Wales."

During the launch conference in Cardiff, a member of staff at Ebbw Fawr, Rebecca Hodson was invited to speak after the Minister to provide a teachers view of the impact of the schools work and particularly the impact when professionals take responsibility for their own learning.

Calendar Dates



CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS
Monday 21st December 2015 -
Friday 1st January 2016

INSET DAY
Monday 4th January 2016

START OF TERM
Tuesday 5th January 2016

YEAR 11 INTERNAL MOCK EXAMS
Wednesday 6th January 2016 -
Friday 15th January 2016

YEAR 10 PARENTS' EVENING
Thursday 14th January 2016

YEAR 11 PARENTS' EVENING
Thursday 11th February 2016

HALF TERM
Monday 15th February 2016 -
Friday 19th February 2016

PRIMARY PARENTS' EVENING
Monday 7th March 2016 &
Tuesday 8th March 2016

YEAR 9 PARENTS' EVENING
Thursday 10th March 2016

WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING



Thanks to students and staff we raised £164 at our World's Biggest Coffee Morning for Macmillan Cancer Support at the end of September. A very special thanks to Key Stage Three and Four students from the Learning Resource Base and Year 10 and 11 GCSE Catering groups who made this event possible. They used skills learned from the lessons to create, make, bake and decorate lots of cakes to be sold in the Main Hall. Congratulations to all involved and a massive diolch yn fawr.

Students becoming young investors

Students at Ebbw Fawr Learning Community have invested just over £900 from a fund-raising day into businesses in Africa and Asia through the Lendwithcare scheme.



This is an innovative way to help people in developing countries transform their own futures. Lendwithcare enabled the school to lend the money raised by each class directly to small business owners in developing countries to help them grow their businesses. Rather than receiving a one-off donation, the entrepreneurs will pay the loan back to each class, using income from their growing business. Each class will then get to choose what to do with the money next.

Organiser, Mr C Walters said "Businesses invested in by our students will help to buy seed for farmers in a co-operative in Zimbabwe, put stock in a clothes shop in Cambodia and even helped buy fishing nets in Ecuador."

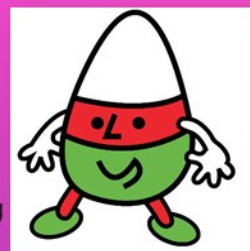
Director Graeme Harkness said "This initiative is designed to inspire a fascination and curiosity about the world; develop research and critical thinking skills; and equip our students with knowledge about personal finances, such as savings, debt and budgeting, and career choices such as business or enterprise. It is about connecting our classrooms to real people trying to better themselves, and their families, through hard work."

To find out more go to the Lendwithcare website and you too can fight global poverty by supporting people to help themselves.

CANLYNIADAU GALA NOFIO UWCHRADD 2015 URDD GOBAITH CYMRU

Dydd Iau 12 Tachwedd/ Thursday 12 November 2015

The following pupils represented the school team in the Gala Nofio. They all did exceptionally well, especially KIAN O'CONNELL who finished first place in both the breast stroke and the individual medley races, qualifying for the National Finals on Sunday 24 January. Also a big congratulations to past pupil AMY RICHARDS, who represented Coleg Gwent, finishing first in the Freestyle and Fly races. Ardderchog Kian and Amy!!



Blwyddyn 7

Madison Lovell
Alex Gummer
Mia Jones

Tahnee Jones
Eleanor James
Robyn Newbrook

Blwyddyn 9

Kian O'Connell



On Sunday 8 November four of our students represented Ebbw Fawr Learning Community at the Armistice Remembrance service. Senior Ambassadors Olivia Hoskins and Jonathan Powell along with Ashley Davies and Morgan Bull from the primary phase participated in the service and presented a poppy wreath at the cenotaph. This followed a series of assemblies at the Learning Community exploring remembrance and armistice along with our thought for the week discussion and reflection each morning. Our students did us proud at the service, wearing our uniform with pride and showing good awareness of the importance of remembrance. Well done Olivia, Jonathan, Ashley and Morgan, we are proud of you!

Year 7 Football

The Welsh cup is the foremost competition that the boys play in and the first round had to be played by the end of September. This is a difficult challenge as we were only getting to know the squad by then, but the boys who took part all did an exceptional job.

In what was their first competitive game for the school, the boys took a little while to get used to the large playing area and the full-size goals. At club level they play on a reduced sized pitch with three quarter size goals.

They went a goal down to Oakdale, then 2-1 down before taking command of the game. They eventually ran out 5-3 winners with goals from Kian Hiscocks, Jamie Barnes (2) and man of the match Harrison Baker (2).

Blackwood were a strong school outfit with many of their boys representing Caerphilly County

schools team. Our lads put up a good fight for long periods but finally succumbed to lose the game 6-0. It is unfortunate to go out of the competition early but the experience will do the boys good and we hope to do better next year. After the disappointing defeat to Blackwood the squad reacted in the right manner with a win against West Mon School (Pontypool). We went a goal down early in the first half, but bounced back with a great team display, scoring three excellent goals. The pick being a superb strike from outside the box by man of the match, Jack Winterson. Once the boys were on level terms they outplayed their opponents and their dominance was rewarded by two further goals from Aaron Jones and Jamie Barnes (pen).

We look forward to exciting times ahead for this excellent group of boys.



999 EMERGENCY



During the first half term, Year 3 and 4 studied the topic '999 Emergency'. Students learnt about the fire, police and ambulance services as well as the coastguards and the mountain rescue team. A highlight of the topic was a visit from a nurse, who showed us some of the equipment that she uses every day in her job. A particular favourite with the students was the space blanket. All children thoroughly enjoyed the visit and were especially keen to actively participate – both in modelling the uniform and being bandaged up!

Learning Resource Base Community Visit



Students from the Learning Resource Base have been participating in a number of visits in the local community. During October they visited the local Owl Sanctuary as part of their science curriculum as they have been studying 'Predators and Prey'. In November they were invited by Mr Nick Pepper, Head of the local fire station, to visit the station to see how it operates. The students were dressed up in full kit and were thrilled to be able to use the hoses in a drill. We were accompanied by a group from Pen-Y-Cwm Special School as part of the outreach programme between the two schools. The visits aim to broaden the students' understanding of the local community as well as different jobs. Future visits include the Police Station and Bedwellty House and Park.

Forest School Activities



A new term saw the start of a new challenge - Forest School. This is a stimulating set of activities, that offers learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a

woodland or natural environment. Students initially gained experience of working at two local nature reserves; Beaufort Woodlands and Silent Valley, where many conservation activities have enabled them to work together and bond whilst developing their skills.

First up was to prepare a section at Beaufort Woodlands to create a “glade” or open space which would benefit fauna and flora. The management work will help an old hedgerow gain valuable light and prevent thinning and further degradation. Future plans are to manage the hedge by means of layering. Tasks involved trimming and felling of willow and alder; nothing will be



wasted either, small branches will be shredded and used for covering the improved footpath they created, whilst larger branches will either be used for hedging stakes or stacked to create a hibernaculum (home and shelter for many native creatures). We were supported with the activities by Sally Morgan – Project Officer at Keep Wales Tidy.

A few weeks in and Chris Reed – Assistant Reserve Officer at Gwent Wildlife Trust invited us to help remove a barbed wire fence and posts at the Silent Valley Nature Reserve. The reasoning behind the removal of the fence was to manage the growth of bracken, which has severely overgrown and is choking the glades. Roaming animals will then be able to naturally manage the bracken by foraging and eating.



Other projects have included the creation of a wooden viewing platform, path maintenance, fence maintenance and a survey on dog fouling. The viewing platform activity enabled the students to participate in developing their skills with tools, working together and importantly

numeracy. “Measure twice, cut once” was the motto they learned repeatedly and thankfully no waste material was generated by mis-measuring! In rotation the students had the opportunity to complete some path maintenance adjacent to the platform, grass and weeds that had grown into the path were cleared and swept to restore the path to its former glory. It has taken us a few sessions but teamwork and hard graft prevailed and the result is astonishing. The job is not quite complete but we will continue when the weather allows.



The last couple of weeks have been difficult due to extreme weather conditions, but we have endeavoured to support the community as best as possible. Sally from Keep Wales Tidy had asked us to help out with a “Dog Fouling” survey and

raising awareness activity. Sally had the unfortunate job of removing the dog foul but the students enjoyed marking the areas with chalk spay and stencils, thus raising awareness of the issue. Approximately 30 bags were removed in the first week and an improved 10 bags in the second. Hopefully this trend will continue and we will eradicate this anti-social behaviour in the community.



Our current task is the creation of wild flower containers around the base of trees, something I saw previously in a



London borough that would enhance the look as well as supporting the Welsh Government pollinator project. There are 7 trees in total and 2 have been completed so far.

Many thanks to Mr Battle for his support with the following students: Zac Davies, Jordan Miles, Taylor Jack Bull, Aled Brain, Liam Jones, Shane Jones, Delmi Willis, Nicola Bennett, Megan Farr, Liam Callaghan, Lee Price, Charlie Jenkins, and Liam Bailey. Keep a watch out for future newsletters to follow their progress. Also our thanks to the following people and groups that provided opportunities for the students: Gwent Wildlife Trust – Chris Reed and Liz Winstanly, Keep Wales Tidy – Sally Morgan.

Ebbw Fawr Netball



EBBW FAWR NETBALL
AUTUMN 2015

Some incredible netball played this season in both the league and friendlies across Blaenau Gwent and South East Wales. Match results are displayed on the digital screens and the netball display board. Ardderchog Ferched! We're looking forward to receiving our new dresses later this season! New members are always welcome – see Mrs Price for further details!

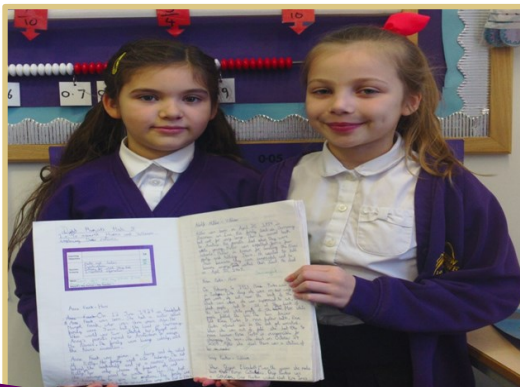
Heroes & Villains by Catrin Young and Grace Bradley

Last term we learnt all about heroes and villains. We found out lots of information on famous heroes and villains like for example: Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Grace Darling, Guy Fawkes, Adolf Hitler and many more.

A hero is someone who stops something bad happening, for example Martin Luther King stood up for his rights and stopped the separation between the black and white people. A villain is someone who for example starts a war, tries to kill someone, etc. Superheroes and villains have strengths and weaknesses. Superheroes do not have to be like Batman.

We have also had lots of class assemblies about heroes and villains. Class 10 and Class 11 did a fantastic production about this topic. The song they sang brilliantly was "I need a hero". In topic we drew a superhero like Wonder Woman and Super Man. Also we designed our own superhero or villain and, wrote what their powers were.

We really enjoyed our Heroes and Villains topic and the activities we did on superheroes and villains. Whatever you do make sure you... BE A HERO!!!



Anti-Bullying Ambassadors



Over the past two weeks, ten of our Year 11 students better known as Ebbw Fawr's Anti-Bullying Ambassadors have been giving up their time to go into Year 7, 8 and 9's PSHE lessons to promote their anti-bullying scheme. In order to do their bit for Anti-Bullying week, they created a presentation on bullying; giving students all the information they need to know if they feel like they're being targeted and delivering activities for students to complete. As well as this they also gained some new members to the team from the classes they visited. We look forward to seeing our new additions start their roles very soon.

Powerlifting Champion



In October Miss Kathryn Holley represented Wales in the Powerlifting World Championships in Italy. She did incredibly well and came 3rd in the competition overall. This is a fantastic achievement and we are all very proud of you. Well done Miss Holley!

Children in Need

Students and staff in the Primary Phase enthusiastically took part in Children in Need along with students from the Secondary Phase who together raised a grand total of **£1,510.00**. Students chose either to dress as Pudsey, wear football clothes, fancy dress, a onesie or non-school uniform. A prize of either a pair of Pudsey ears or a Children in Need pencil and notepad was given to the best dressed student in each class. A fun day was had by all!

7CRH raised the amazing sum of £100.75 for Children in Need. The class chose to do a bake sale and make origami stars, claws and bunnies. The students sold all the cakes and all the origami by going around other classes and the street, as well as selling lots of their produce in our class, raising just short of £70!



Anti-Bullying Week 2015




Anti-Bullying Week was a huge opportunity for us to highlight to our young people the effects of bullying and very importantly, how to stop it.

The aim of the week was to

- To empower children and young people to make a noise about bullying – whether it is happening to them or to someone else, face to face or online;
- To encourage ‘talking schools’ where all children and young people are given a safe space to discuss bullying and other issues that affect their lives, and are supported to report all forms of bullying;
- To raise awareness of the impact of bullying on children’s lives if they don’t tell anyone it’s happening – or if they are not given appropriate support – with a focus on the impact on mental health.



What we did

- Anti-bullying assemblies delivered for all year groups..... check out some of the videos shown to learners at 
<https://youtu.be/mBwf-VPZqDs>
<https://youtu.be/vmQ8nM7b6XQ>
<https://youtu.be/ltun92DfnPY>
- Students signed up to online platform ThunderClap, and became one of the 1,291,115 learners who expressed their view against bullying on social media
- PSE lessons were focused on the effects of bullying and the support offered to victims of bullying
- Year 11 Bullying Ambassadors delivered bespoke lessons to KS3 learners on the support they can provide.

Remember bullying can happen to anyone at any age. Being bullied at school, home or online might involve someone pushing you, hitting you, teasing you, talking about you or calling you names. Nobody has the right to hurt you or make you feel bad. If you are being bullied you don't have to deal with it alone. We are here to help you.

Carillion Visit

A group of more able and talented year 10 students visited the Carillion A465 (phase 3) project to find out more about careers in civil engineering. The project is part of an ongoing multi million pound initiative upgrading the existing highway to provide better links within Wales on behalf of Welsh Government.



The project team were very impressed with the students' questions and obvious interest in the project and they commented that they were sure that we had some future design and construction professionals in the making.

15 students were invited onto the site as part of Ebbw Fawr's strong links with Carillion. The children, along with Mr Ager, visited aspects of the project, looking at what is involved with the development of a scheme that cost over £150 million to complete.

Back in the site office, the students supported by Martin Gallimore, the Carillion Sustainable Communities Manager, learnt all of the amazing facts associated with the new improvement scheme and met with graduates from both Carillion and ARUP, who spoke about all of the different careers on offer in civil engineering.

Martin Gallimore said "This was an excellent day for the project. It was great to see the children understanding the world of construction and hopefully becoming interested in a career in the industry. This was another well organised event and will further harness the outstanding relations that we already have. We are very passionate about our considerate constructor philosophy and events such as this really demonstrate the importance of our relationship with the communities in which we work."

All in all, it was a very informative visit and one that will hopefully inspire our students to pursue careers in engineering and construction.

English Shakespeare Festival



Last week KS3 Drama Club and Primary Phase took to the Beaufort Theatre stage as part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival. The festival is the largest youth drama festival in the UK, offering students the opportunity to perform Shakespeare on their local professional stage. The festival allowed us to access Shakespeare through performance and really engage in, and understand, the language first-hand.

The KS3 Drama group performed the hilarious A Midsummer Night's Dream with a confidence and understanding beyond their years. All students gave assured performances demonstrating a range of vocal and acting skills that ensured the performance was a roaring success. The Primary Phase performed Romeo and Juliet with energy and enthusiasm that showed not only how much they enjoyed the performance but also how well they understood the challenge that they were presented with. We are very fortunate to have excellent theatrical and technical talent across both our phases at Ebbw Fawr and we cant wait to see our students 'tread the boards' in the near future. All students received excellent feedback regarding their performance, effort and behaviour at the event and deserve a very big congratulations for all their hard work - a resounding success!

Year 8 Welsh Cup Football



The Year 8 football team have progressed into the national stages of the Welsh Cup Schools Football competition after winning through their regional final with a dominant display against Oakdale. After victories in previous rounds over Blackwood, Brynmawr and Tredegar the team were drawn against Oakdale in the final. The final score was 13-2 to Ebbw Fawr and the boys remain unbeaten this season after a brilliant display of both attacking and defensive football. Captained by Calen Jones, the goals were scored by Eli King (5), Morgan Davies (3), Matthew Jones (3), Tyler Davies and Nathaniel Williams. Man of the Match was Keiron Markey. The draw for the national rounds will be made over Christmas and we look forward to testing ourselves against the best school football sides in Wales. Well done boys.

Mrs Christine Richards

After many years of service in both Ebbw Fawr and Pontygod Primary School, Mrs Richards has decided to take early retirement. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Richards for all her hard work and wish her every success and happiness for the future.



Digital Ambassadors

This term saw the introduction of a new scheme here at the secondary phase; the introduction of Digital Ambassadors. Following on from the successes of a



similar programme in our primary phase under the guidance of Mr Vaughan, we have now appointed over 20 year 9 digital ambassadors. After a rigorous appointment process, which included application letters and a very tough interview (including yr6 ambassadors being part of the interview panel) the students are now in place. Their roles are very varied and include,

- Helping to keep the digital signage up to date
- Working with members of staff on a variety of different projects
- Supporting departments with how they use ICT
- Creating user guides for different applications and software

As a school we are very fortunate to have a great deal of ICT facilities and equipment, the Digital Ambassadors will play a vital role in supporting both staff and students in becoming even better at using computers, iPads, and even video cameras in their lessons. This dedicated team will ensure that digital learning will continue to develop from strength to strength in the months to come.

Operation Christmas Child

Ebbw Fawr Learning Community has supported this charity for several years. This year children and their families have again taken the time and effort to put together shoe-boxes filled to the brim with gifts. These presents will make such a difference to the recipients across the globe; those not as fortunate as ourselves. The Primary Phase

collected forty boxes and the Secondary Phase collected sixteen with Year 8 and 7CAJ very generously filling the boxes and staff contributing to the shipping costs. Thank you to everyone who supported this event.



**Wishing you a very Merry Christmas
and a prosperous New Year**



Hard Work Definitely Pays

Congratulations to James Gauci in year 11 who won a £25 iTunes gift voucher for 100% attendance to maths extra revision classes. All students who have had 100% attendance to the sessions were entered for the draw and James' name was pulled out. It just goes to show that extra work does pay off. So make sure that if you are given the opportunity to attend extra revision sessions, go to them, you might just win an iTunes Voucher too!!



An Inspector Calls

The English Department, along with a students ranging from Year 9 to Year 11, journeyed to Bath to watch a superb performance of Stephen Daldry's acclaimed production of 'An Inspector Calls.' JB Priestley's play, set in 1912, and first performed in 1945, has long been considered a British classic. It has been a long standing text on the GCSE English Literature specification for some time and the play itself is still as popular with modern audiences today. The play is the story of the Birling family, who are systematically interviewed by the mysterious Inspector Goole following the death of young girl. What follows is something of a whodunit since the Inspector, like a Christie sleuth, prowls the Birlings' drawing room, stripping the family of its self-delusions and revealing their culpability in the destruction of a human life. The English Department would like to thank all the students who attended the trip for their superb behaviour.