



Bryn Elia

Summer Newsletter

2023

Achievement for All
Llwyddiant i Bawb

Saying goodbye to our Headteacher:

We are very sad to say that our Headteacher, Mr Dave Humphreys will be leaving the school at the end of this term.

Mr Humphreys started at Ysgol Bryn Elian as Deputy Headteacher in 2008 having previously taught at Ysgol Emrys ap Iwan, Abergele and also Blessed Edward Jones High School in Rhyl.

He was appointed to Headteacher 6 years ago and during this time led the school during what was to become a very trying and turbulent time for all schools as they navigated their way through a National Lockdown and the Corona Virus pandemic.

During the pandemic, Ysgol Bryn Elian, under the leadership of Mr Humphreys ensured that no stone was unturned in relation to looking after the education and welfare of all the learners and staff at the school. The hard work and dedication of all the staff and a fantastic relationship with parents and the community saw the school thrive even during these most turbulent times.

Mr Humphreys is passionate, not only about education, but deeply passionate about the welfare and wellbeing of learners and has made sure that the school's motto of 'Achievement for All' is something that chimes through the very fabric of Ysgol Bryn Elian.

To this end the school was awarded an Inclusion Quality Mark in 2020 and became a Centre of Excellence for its exceptional work in the field of Inclusion.

Mr Humphreys has contributed greatly to the school as both deputy and Headteacher.

Over the last 2 years we have seen the school environment improve dramatically with a new 3G pitch, a new Multi Use Games Area Pitch, an outside gym, a new Science lab, a refurbished teaching block and a new PE suite and wellness room with gym and a newly refurbished studio to name just a few.

Its safe to say that Mr Humphreys will be sorely missed at the school. He will still be working in education as a consultant working with Newly Qualified Teachers and schools in North Wales and as an assessor for the Inclusion Quality Mark.

We wish him all the very best in his semi-retirement and his new ventures.

Congratulations to Mrs Lindsey Hastings

As Mr Humphreys departs Ysgol Bryn Elian for pastures new, he leaves the school in the very capable hands of Mrs Hastings who will assume the role of Headteacher from September 1st 2023.

Mrs Hastings was appointed following a rigorous recruitment, selection, shortlisting and interview process held over 2 days! She is very excited to take the reins from Mr Humphreys having worked at the school since 2004. During her time at the school Mrs Hastings has been a Learning Manager, Head of the English Department, An Assistant Head teacher and latterly Deputy Headteacher.

Ysgol Bryn Elian will start delivering the Welsh Government's new Curriculum for

Wales from September to both Years 7 and 8. Mrs Hastings has been instrumental in the strategic thinking and implementation of this exciting development in the Welsh educational landscape.

We wish her every luck (not that she needs it!) in this new challenge as Headteacher at Ysgol Bryn Elian.

Mrs Delyth Hughes will be leaving her post as a Welsh teacher to take up a Welsh teacher position at a school much closer to home at Ysgol David Hughes in Menai Bridge.

This time of year sees many changes in schools as staff choose to relocate, move to promoted posts, seize opportunities elsewhere or simply retire.

As a result, we say good bye to many staff at the school at the end of this academic year and we wish them all the very best in their future and thank them all for the invaluable contribution they have made to Ysgol Bryn Elian's continued improvement journey.

Our best wishes are extended to:

Mr Paul Woodhouse will be leaving us as Head of Business and ICT to take on a new role as Assistant Headteacher at Holyhead.

Miss Katie Seaborne will be leaving her post as maths teacher and our Numeracy Lead to also take on a new role as Assistant Headteacher at Holyhead High School.

Mr Dan Miller will be leaving his post as Learning Manager to take on a Head of Department role in his new school on the other side of the world in Qatar.

Mr Hakim Assouz will be leaving his role as a Teaching Assistant at the school to concentrate on other ventures.

Miss Sian Paul Will be leaving as an English teacher to retire.

Ms Gail Hughes will be leaving her role as Learning Mentor to retire.

Mrs Elaine Ellis will also be leaving her role as Learning Mentor to retire.

Mrs Jacquie Turbull will be leaving her role as a Teaching Assistant in order to retire.

Mrs Marie Crossland, the Headteacher's PA, will also be leaving at the end of this Summer in order to retire.

The Governing Body and the whole staff Body thank them very much for all the work they have done over the years and wish them every luck in their future posts or endeavours.

What's #MyBE?

This year we've been running the #MyBE initiative aimed at improving the everyday experiences of the learners at YBE. The most visible of these current projects has been the café for pupils serving coffee, tea and hot chocolate to students at the end of the day on Thursdays.

At first only Y10 and 11 learners were invited but now we can extend the invite everyone in all years. Generous donations from staff mean most of the drinks are given away free to learners, although we do ask them to pay a small amount if they can.



What's Next for #MyBE?

Plans for next year include buying and installing seating and benches around the school site, the provision of picnic blankets for pupils to use at lunchtime and planting 100,000 daffodils on the school site for an epic Springtime display for 2024!

If you'd like to find out more about what we're doing with the #MyBE initiative please contact Mr. Wilkins at wilkinsd9@ysgolbrynelian.cymru.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

This year we offered students in years 10 and 11 the opportunity to enrol on the Bronze and Silver programs. The students have independently arranged to engage in the Physical, Skill and Volunteering parts of the program. They have also completed a practice expedition where they were able to use navigation, teamwork and campcraft skills as well as testing their fitness in readiness for the final expeditions at the end of this term .

We would like to celebrate the commitment of the young people to the program and thank the parents who have helped out with transport arrangements as well as the staff who have given their time to help.

We look forward to an enjoyable and engaging final expedition with both groups this term.



Glan-Ilyn

At the beginning of June, some Year 7 pupils enjoyed three days in Glan-Ilyn Urdd Camp with the Welsh Department, participating in exciting outdoor activities and practising their everyday Welsh language skills.

Lakeside at Llyn Tegid in Bala, we couldn't have asked for better weather and this allowed the pupils to get stuck in to all activities including climbing, kayaking, archery and paddle boarding.

It's great to see we have so many talented outdoors-people at Ysgol Bryn Elian, and all pupils showed their nerves of steel when they leapt into thin air on the 'Descender'! Overall it was a great trip filled with laughter, and opportunities to embrace fears and learn new skills. Da iawn chi Blwyddyn 7!



2 case studies published by Estyn!

In October, the school was visited as part of a Thematic Inspection on Developing pupils' English reading skills from 10-14 years of age. As a result, the school was asked to submit two Case Studies as examples of excellent practice. One of these was focussed on disciplinary literacy and the other on transition in learning. Both case studies were published by Estyn on their website. The case studies can be seen below.

Case study 1: Planning for the consistent development of disciplinary literacy, including reading

Information about the school.

Ysgol Bryn Elian is an 11-18 comprehensive in Colwyn Bay, Conwy, with 976 pupils. In 2022, 24.7% of pupils had additional learning needs and the three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals was 20.3%.

Context and background to the practice

School leaders identified four key areas as a focus for improving provision to develop literacy skills across the curriculum: explicit language development, access to varied and challenging texts, improving learner accuracy and supporting extended writing.

Description of activity/strategy

Using the revised Literacy Framework, all departments identified the literacy needs for their subject to enable learners to progress. Leaders provided opportunities for collaboration, professional learning and exemplification to support the development of consistency.

As part of explicit language development, teachers in every subject provide systematic vocabulary instruction to help pupils access and use academic language. Teachers prioritise the teaching of tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which learners are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.

To comprehend complex texts, pupils need to actively engage with what they are reading and use their existing subject knowledge. Reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, prediction and questioning, improve pupils' understanding of texts. Teachers introduce strategies through modelling and group work, before support is gradually removed to promote independence.

Impact on provision and standards

The introduction of disciplinary literacy as a fundamental practice has impacted positively on provision, especially curriculum design and teaching. Incorporating and prioritising disciplinary reading has enabled pupils to recognise, transfer and adapt a range of reading skills, from skimming and scanning, to making inferences, sequencing information, summarising, and comparing and contrasting information and ideas,

across the curriculum.

Case study 2: Transition projects to share teaching strategies between the primary and secondary phases, including teaching reading

Information about the school

Ysgol Bryn Elian is an 11-18 comprehensive in Colwyn Bay, Conwy, with 976 pupils. In 2022, 24.7% of pupils had additional learning needs and the three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals was 20.3%.

Context and background to the practice

Leaders found that not all staff had the knowledge and skillset to support the progress of those pupils whose reading had regressed significantly, including those who joined the school with a reading age of less than 6.

Description of activity/strategy

In 2021/22, the school used the Accelerated Learning Programme grant to employ a primary school teacher from one of its cluster schools to teach in the secondary school and to increase the number of sessions secondary staff taught in the cluster primaries. Developing pupils' reading skills was a particular focus, specifically confidence, fluency and vocabulary acquisition. The primary specialist supported the lessons of the most vulnerable and negatively impacted Year 7 pupils. This allowed her to work with staff on planning interventions and improving their pedagogical skills while also supporting pupils directly.

Impact on provision and standards

Secondary staff's knowledge and understanding of curriculum, assessment and teaching has increased to support planning for transition. They are better informed of the approaches needed to secure improvement in outcomes for vulnerable and lower attaining learners, including their reading skills. Primary staff are better able to challenge more able learners through their collaboration and professional learning with secondary teachers. Seventy-five per cent of learners in the target group improved their reading skills more than expected, measured by initial baseline testing and retesting at the end of the year. Pupils are more confident in reading aloud and their fluency has improved. They are better able to transfer key reading skills from one subject to another because of the consistent experience in their lessons.

Welsh Bacalaureate

Year 10 Enterprise students have been working hard preparing for their Welsh Bacalaureate Summer Fair on 30th June.

They have faced the 'Dragons', been given £10 per group and are hoping to raise more money than ever for Hope House / Tŷ Gobaith on the day. Together with their 10 hours of Community volunteering and Global Challenges for the SCC they are becoming socially responsible citizens and we are very proud of their achievements so far

Safeguarding Corner

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS – WHAT TO DO AND WHO TO CONTACT

If you have concerns for your child, yourself or family outside of school please contact the following services:

- GP
- 101/999
- Childrens Services (Tel: 01492 575111/Tel out of hours: 0300 123 3079)
- Family Centre: 01492 576503 FamilySupport.Central.conwy.gov.uk
- Youth Justice: 01492 577377
- Youth Service: <https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Education-and-Families/Conwy-Youth-Service.aspx>
- Barnardo's: cymru@barnardos.org.uk 0292 20577074

Mental Health Services

- <https://cadmhas.com/support-for-you/support-for-young-people/>
- Mind <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>
- Papyrus <https://papyrus-uk.org>
- CAMHS
- <https://www.mhm.org.uk>

Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Dr Anna McCormack-Colbert

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Simone Gould

Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Bronwyn McKibben (Designated Teacher for Looked After Children)

Safeguarding Lead: Mr Dave Humphreys

Pupils and parents/carers are able to speak to any staff in school as all staff are safeguarding trained, at times the pastoral team will be the first port of call. They are listed below along with our Trauma Informed Trained staff.

Safeguarding Corner

Inclusion Team: Mrs B. McKibben, Mrs E. Ellis, Mrs G. Hughes, Mr K. Wallis, Mrs F. Hooper, Miss E. Williams, Miss M. Bibby, Mr D. Miller, Miss S. Gregory, Mr M. Jones, Mr J. Chaplin, Miss M. McManus, Miss J. Satchel, Mr I. Butler.

Trauma Informed Trained Staff: Mrs J. Jarvis, Mr A. Jones, Miss C. Owen.

A range of information and resources have been shared with parents and carers this year through Social Media and the SIMS App, we have shared information in relation to:

- Tiktok
- Snapchat
- Prevent and Radicalisation
- Fake news and disinformation
- Misogyny and Andrew Tate
- SCSS information and Webinars
- Cyber Safety including sharing images

We are incredibly lucky to have links with a range of external providers who support not only staff, but also pupils and parents/carers. We would like to thank them for all the work that they have done this year to support our school community, we look forward to continuing to work closely with them next year. If you feel that you, your child or your family would benefit from accessing one of these support systems, please do contact a member of the inclusion team to complete a referral:

- CAMHS inreach
- Family Centre
- Youth Service
- TRAC
- Youth Justice
- Barnardos
- Anna Freud
- North Wales Police
- School Based Counselling
- Trauma Informed Schools
- School Nurse

School Council

The school council have been meeting every Tuesday Week B at lunchtime to discuss their priorities for this year, alongside any issues that the pupil body wish to raise. They have been working on increasing awareness of peer-on-peer abuse within the school community. So far, they have completed two pupil questionnaires, have created content to display around school to raise awareness of the school council as well as creating QR codes for pupils to raise any concerns, issues or ideas for the school council to discuss in their meetings.

The school council received training from Jane at The Spectrum Project on Gender stereotypes, healthy relationships, consent and peer-on-peer abuse. From this training they have planned sessions with Jane for years 7-10 through PSE sessions in June and July to raise awareness and understanding of healthy relationships and other VAWDASV topics.

In addition to this, they have looked at other issues our current youth face both in North Wales and across the county. As a result, they have arranged for school beat to deliver sessions on Alcohol and Cannabis this term, as well as Bryon and Hermen from Milk Influencers who will deliver sessions to years 8-10 regarding Drugs, Violence and Gang culture.

The school council are now working with Mrs Gould on behaviour, rewards, phones and uniform for the next academic year, as well as looking at their priorities for the next academic year ready for the next cohort of School Council.

We have been fortunate enough to have two visits from speakers from Milk Education.

Hermen Dange visited on Friday to use his personal experience to show the reality of gang culture from school, to prison, to completely rebuilding his life at 28. He talked about the causes and consequences of drug crime along with making better choices and mental health.

We also had Byron Highton with us who has dedicated his life to stopping knife crime in the UK, he educated the pupils on the cause, dangers and aftermath of knife crime including social media and being a bystander.

Our pupils were engaged throughout and some even took part in some demonstrations; following both sessions pupils commented on how they found the talks interesting, important and that although upsetting it had changed the way they think and how they might behave in certain situations.

Staff feedback was also positive, they shared how engaging the talks were and how well they presented tough topics that affect our pupils and the community. We can't wait for the next talk in the next academic year.

Byron, Hermen and Milk Education can be found on social media for further information.



Humanities Department

Year 10 Geography Fieldwork

The Year 10 Geography students are looking forward to two days of fieldwork in July. The focus of the days will be to collect primary data with an emphasis on river and urban characteristics. We will be visiting the Afon Colwyn in Old Colwyn and Colwyn Bay town centre. The data collected will then be analysed and students will reach their own independent conclusions in preparation for their NEA which will be completed under examination conditions in December. We have been out and about on the school site, trying out the equipment that we'll be making use of in the fieldwork.



Eco-Committee 2022-23

This year the Eco-Committee have achieved their Green Flag: 5th Platinum Award – something we are incredibly proud of! The Eco-Committee held their most recent meeting at the end of May. They reviewed their objectives for the year, discussed how they would like some more Geography lessons focusing specifically on the environment and how they could educate all pupils to have an understanding of their individual as well as collective impact on the environment. The Eco-Committee now plan to highlight the issue of litter within our school community and will start by running a poster campaign.

WelshWise Quiz

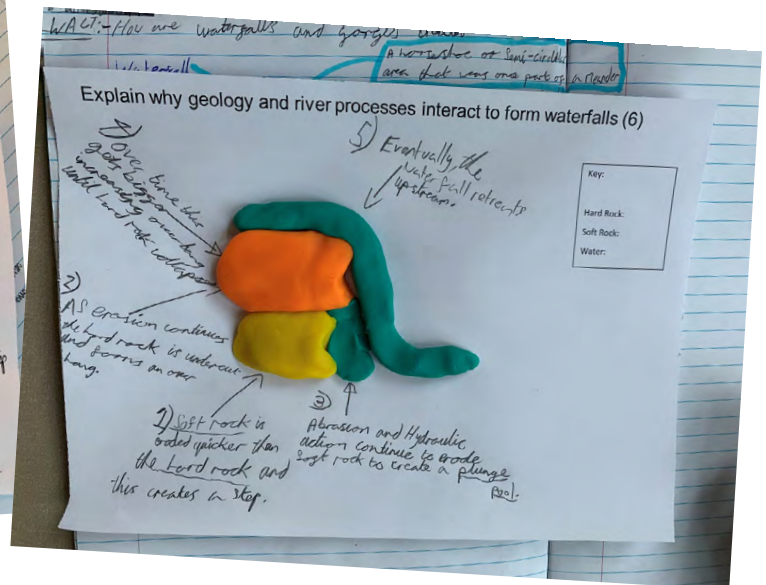
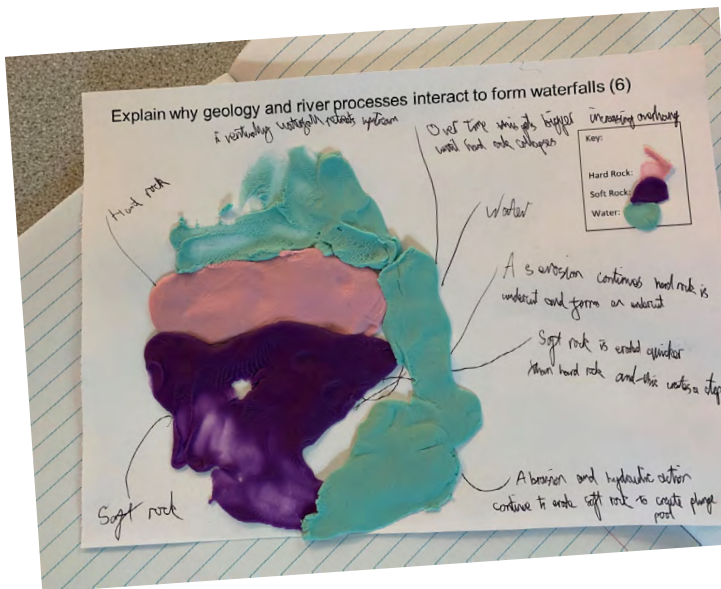
In February, Ysgol Bryn Elia was delighted to host the Geographical Association WelshWise Quiz for 2023. The WelshWise Quiz brings together pupils from various schools for face-to-face geographical fun and is designed to promote pupil interest in geography in Wales. Two teams from Years 8 and 9 in YBE competed and, although we did not win, our learners did us proud and were a credit to both themselves and the school.



Humanities Department

Humanities: Year 9 Play-Doh waterfalls

In a bid to encourage Year 9 pupils to successfully access extended answer GCSE questions, Miss Owen's Geography classes used Play-Doh to help them to explain how waterfalls form. Learners were given three colours which represented hard (resistant) rock, soft (less-resistant) rock and water. Some learners attempted 3D models while others opted for 2D models to annotate. The learners really enjoyed this hands on creative activity with a practical approach to learning.



Humanities: Year 7 'water cycle in a bag'

Last term, Year 7 geographers learnt about weather, climate and climate change. As part of this learning experience they have created their own water cycles. Once created in a plastic bag using water, blue food colouring and pens, the bags have been attached to the window. The sun has then worked its magic causing evaporation and condensation to take place thus illustrating the movement of water through the system. Learners have observed their water cycles operate, reinforcing their classroom learning.



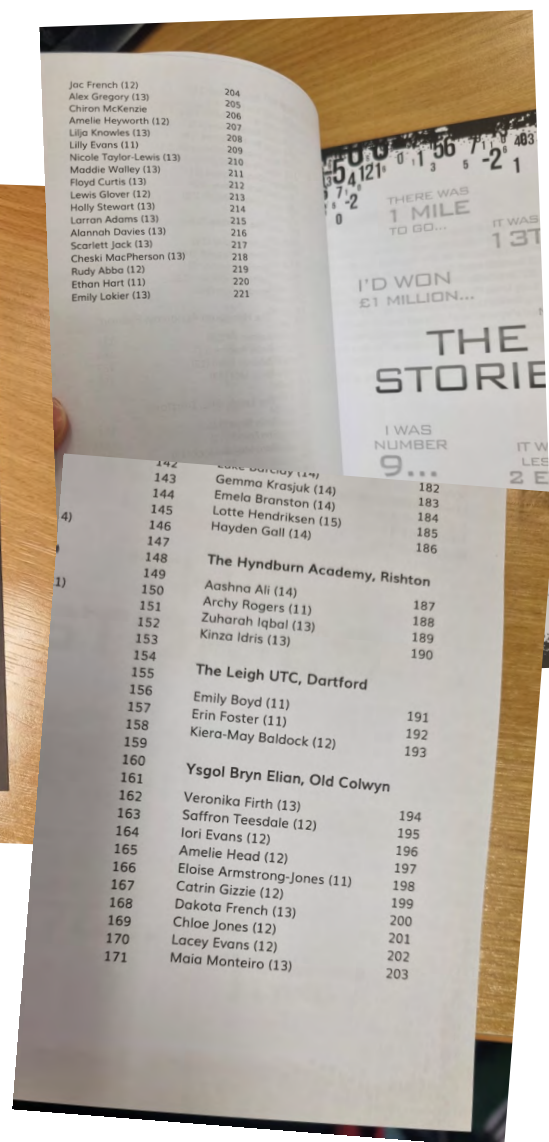
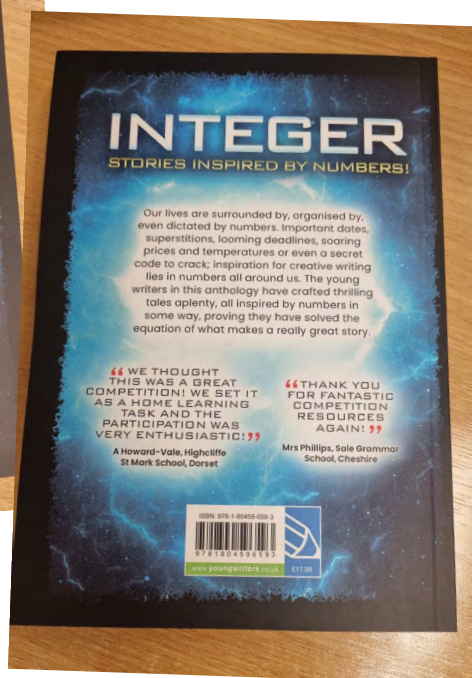
English Department

In terms of the English department, we've had a fair bit going on since January.

After writing Winter Wonderland poetry - 16 learners from years 7 and 9 have had their work selected for publication. This poetry anthology by Young Writers is being published this month, which is very exciting!

The Carnegie Shadowing group have been making their way through the shortlisted and now the longlisted books, posting reviews on each novel on the Carnegie website. They've had a lovely time completing activities on each of the stories and have learned a lot about the creation of a character and have scrutinised each story in order to determine who should win the medal for writing. The Carnegie group have voted for their favourite novel, and this will contribute towards who will be awarded in the ceremony at the end of June.

Some of our Year 7 and Year 8 learners have had their mini stories published. The theme was 'numbers' and they had a maximum of 100 words to tell their tale.



Maths Department

Year 12

Thank you very much to all the Year 12 learners that have been helping out in Mathematics lessons. The younger learners have appreciated the assistance and the Year 12 learners have been excellent role models.

Year 11 Financial Mathematics and Additional Mathematics

Year 11 learners have had the opportunity to gain a Level 2 qualification in Financial Capability and Careers Development. Many learners have already completed and gained the qualification. A number of learners have also studied towards an Additional Mathematics qualification which bridges the gap between GCSE and A Level Mathematics.

Problem Solving Session

A group Year 10 learners attended a problem-solving session. The problems were varied and challenging with the learners enjoying the collaboration and the creativity. They demonstrated perseverance and resilience to solve the problems.

Maths Careers Talks

Sixty Year 10 learners engaged in the opportunity to find out about the diverse careers that involve and rely on Mathematics. Hosted at Bryn Elan, the learners completed activities as well as learning about the different careers.

Royal Institution Mathematics Masterclasses

Two Year 9 learners had the opportunity to attend the Royal Institution Masterclasses at Bangor University. The sessions ran on a Saturday morning and covered a variety of Mathematics, extending the curriculum into new areas of Mathematics for them.

Mathematical Association Junior Mathematics Challenge

A group of Year 7 and Year 8 learners have been working hard at lunchtime in preparation for entry into the Junior Maths Challenge, developing their Mathematical thinking and reasoning skills. They had excellent results, congratulations to them all. One learner is moving onto the next stage of the competition.

Mathematics Club

Working with the Further Maths Support Programme Wales, the KS3 Maths club has gone from strength to strength. It is open to all KS3 students and over the course of the year learners have developed their logical reasoning and strategic competency skills, though playing mathematical games, as well as their wonder of Maths through Maths magic with numbers and shapes with disappearing faces.

Maths Department



MFL Department prepare for trips

During activity week, The MFL department are running 2 trips. One trip will explore the stunning area of Normandy in Northern France and the other will journey to the capital city of Germany, Berlin.

The Normandy trip, run by French Teacher Mr S Davy has an exciting programme of French language, culture and history. They will travel by coach to Plymouth where they will make the rest of the journey by ferry. 50 Students will get to see the Bayeux Tapestry, visit Mont Saint-Michel and experience a 3D WWII immersive production. In Berlin, 40 students, will accompany Mr M Jones and fly from Manchester and stay in former East Germany. There, they will see famous landmarks such as the Reichstag Building, the Brandenburg Gate and the TV tower. The trip will be capped off with a meal at the Hard Rock Café on the final evening.

These trips are a significant opportunity to try out the language that all students work hard to learn in the classroom. We can't wait to go and we look forward to planning future trips abroad!



Performing Arts Department

Hop in Harmony

Thursday 23rd March saw the Performing Arts Department latest show 'Hop in Harmony' display the talents of the pupils here at school. A packed audience listened to a huge variety of performances ranging in style from classical to jazz, pop music and musical theatre, clapping and singing along (when they knew the words). There was a stunning performance on the harmonica from Leo Plant, followed by some lovely piano solos, a lively song and dance performance of 'Revoltin' Children' from 'Matilda' by the Variety Club. Not to be outdone, some year 7 & 8 pupils who attend Band Skills club gave us a rousing rock version of 'Seven Nation Army' contrasting with a lovely rendition of 'Castle on a Cloud' from Les Mis sung by Lucy Spindley. The evening began and ended with Denys Podcherniaiev (who came to us from the Ukraine in September) performing 'Brazil' on his classical guitar and 'Jazz Carpathian Mountains' on his violin.

Band Skills Club

A large number of pupils in Year 7 – 10 are still attending band skills club and have now been put into 3 new bands and are currently learning to perform pop/rock songs. In September the new Year 7 pupils will also be encouraged to join the club, with the hope that in the future there will be enough bands to perform in a 'Bands' night here in school.

Recording Studio

The Performing Arts Department has received funding to allow the purchase of professional sound recording equipment so that a recording studio can be created in the music room. Staff are currently learning how to use the equipment and hope that any performers who wish to record tracks, create their own albums or bands who would like to record will be able to use the facilities from September.

Science Department

Following on from the fantastic GCSE and A level results last summer, the Science department has been working on developing practical skills which had become a challenge during the lockdowns. We have made good use of the new A level Science lab and 6th form laptops to facilitate practical work, research in lessons and private study within the Science department. We continue to look to purchase resources to facilitate practical work.

We are very lucky to have a rich and diverse site which lends itself to field work. Within the rich woodland habitat there are 200 year old trees and an array of animal and plant life. This site has enabled most year groups to experience some field work this year and this looks set to continue, especially whilst the weather is good.



We are currently developing our curriculum to enrich the experiences of learners in Science and hope they come to us ready to use their literacy, numeracy and digital skills to underpin and report on their scientific inquiries.



Design & Technology

Year 12 Gold Crest

Earlier this year, five year 12 pupils took on the challenge with the EESW to work alongside the world leading engineering company, JCB. Ianto Evans, Christopher Jones, Ffion Boardman, Elliot Dutton, and Joseph Elliott all worked towards developing an AR (augmented reality) system, which would enable JCB trainee employees to learn and develop engineering and manufacturing skills, without needing to be in the factory. At Venue Cymru's STEM Awards event, the team were awarded first place for the 'Best Innovation' category. They have also successfully achieved the coveted 'Gold Crest Award'.



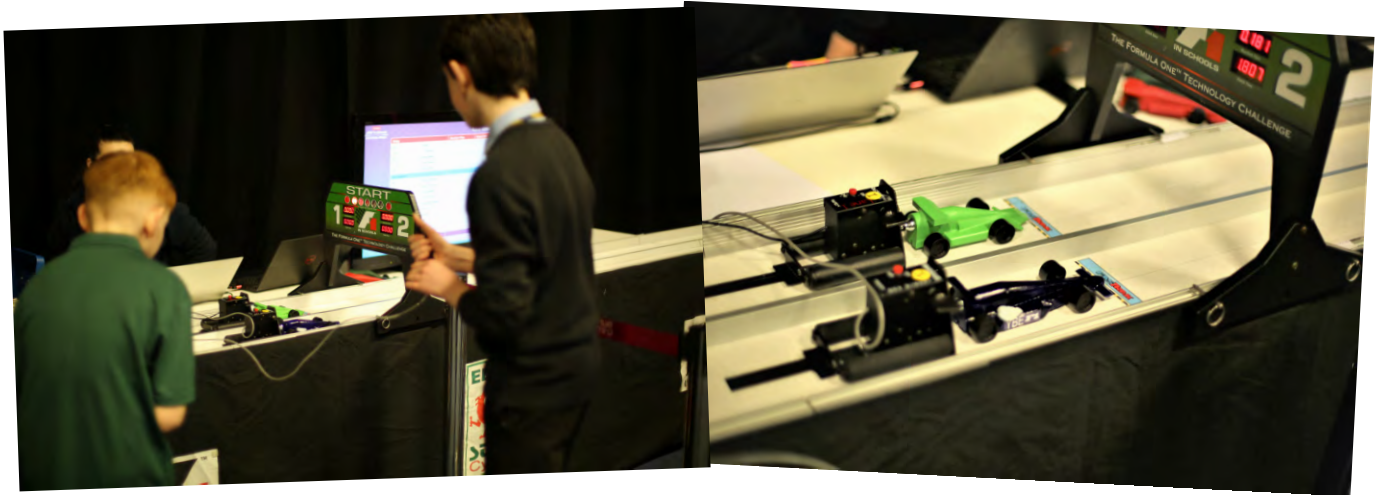
The team at JCB are so impressed with the AR Project, they have invited the YBE pupils to their Wrexham offices to deliver a presentation to the owners of JCB.



Design & Technology

F1

At the same event at Venue Cymru, two year 9 pupils, Reece Aronwich and Lewis Hutchinson, both competed in the F1 event, where they successfully designed and raced their own F1 racing car. They are already thinking about next year where they will compete in the higher category.



Microbits

In May, Technocamps visited Bryn Elan to deliver a Microbit STEM activity to a group of year 8 pupils.

The class were tasked with programming a robot, with the aim of completing several challenging tasks. The whole class enjoyed problem solving, and many pupils impressed the Technocamps team by successfully completing all challenges.

