

# Christmas Newsletter 2025

*The River centre 3-16 Learning community*

 01495369628



[www.trc3-16.co.uk](http://www.trc3-16.co.uk)



@Rivercentre316



In this Newsletter:

What has each campus been doing this term



## Primary Campus

Dukestown Rd,  
Sirhowy,  
Tredegar NP22 4PY

## Secondary/Ty Afon

River Centre 3-16 Learning Community  
Pontygof  
Ebbw Vale  
NP23 5AZ

# Message from the Head Teacher

## Message from the Headteacher – Autumn Term

**Dear Parents/Guardians and Carers,**

**As we come to the end of the autumn term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. It has been a busy and productive term, and I am incredibly proud of the hard work, resilience, and enthusiasm shown by our pupils. Our pupils have embraced countless opportunities for growth, including a variety of educational trips that have enriched their learning beyond the classroom. These experiences reflect our commitment to providing a broad balanced curriculum that inspires curiosity and confidence.**

**I would also like to express my gratitude to our dedicated staff, who work tirelessly to provide a nurturing, engaging, and inspiring learning environment for every pupil. Their commitment ensures that our school remains a place where pupils feel valued, supported, and encouraged to shine.**

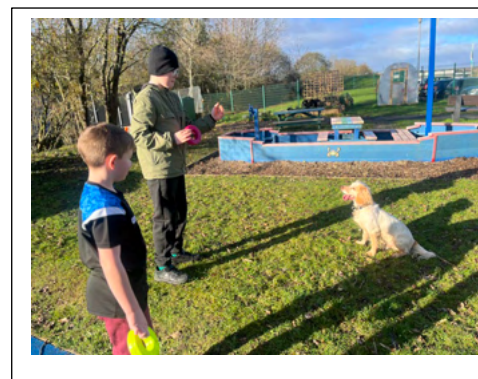
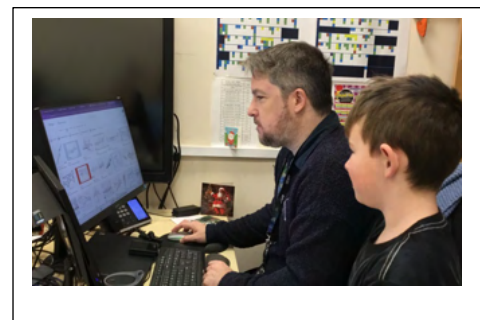
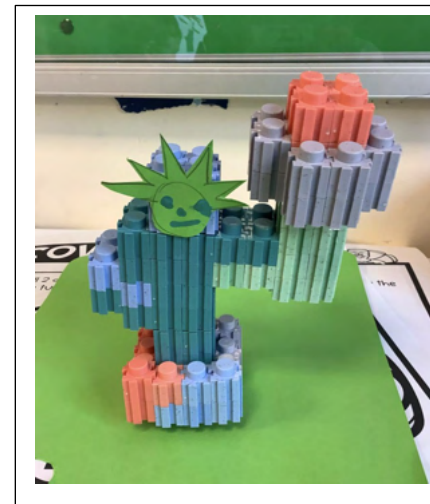
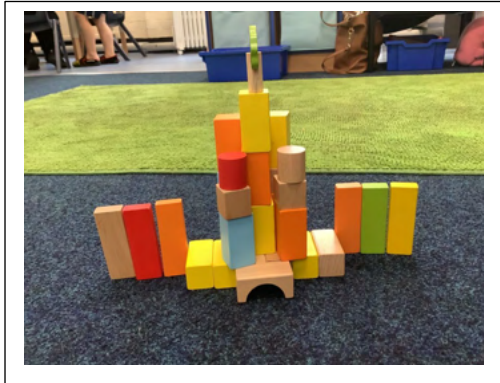
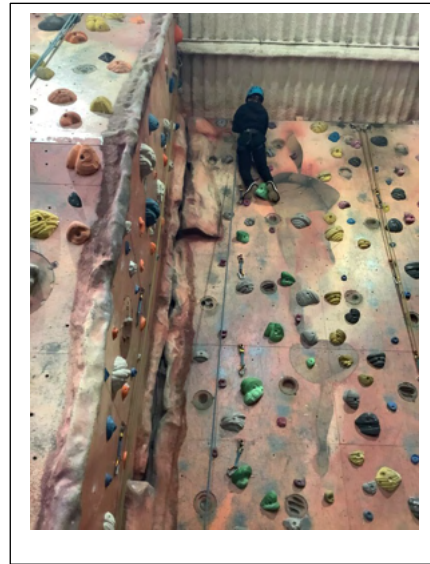
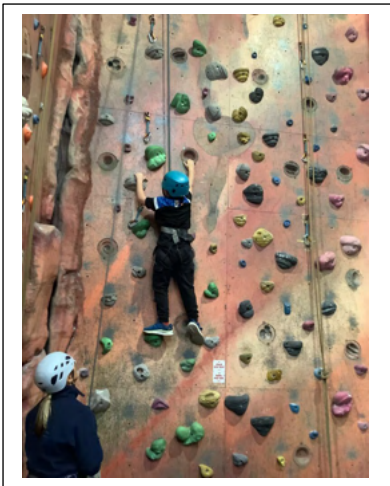
**As we approach the Christmas break, I hope you are able to enjoy some restful time together with loved ones. On behalf of everyone at The River Centre, I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.**

**We look forward to welcoming the pupils back for the spring term in January.**

**Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.**



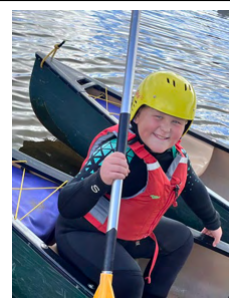
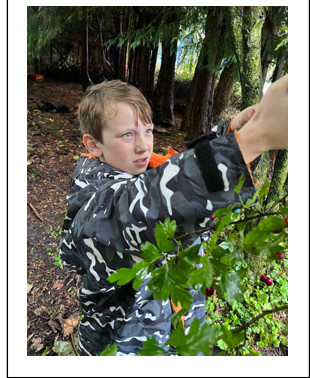
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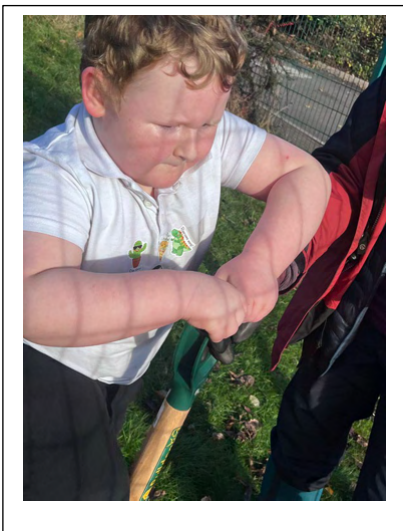
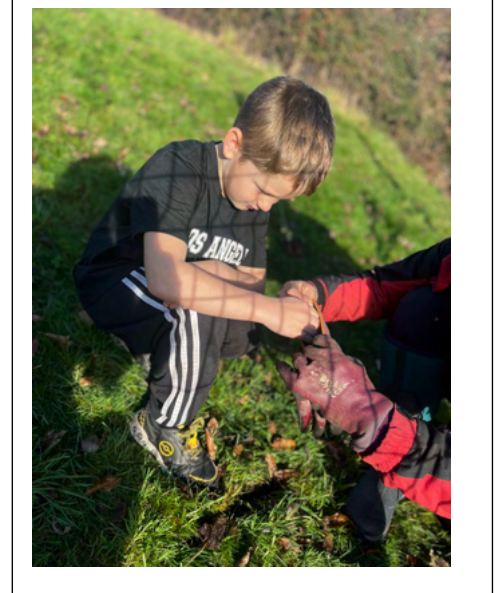
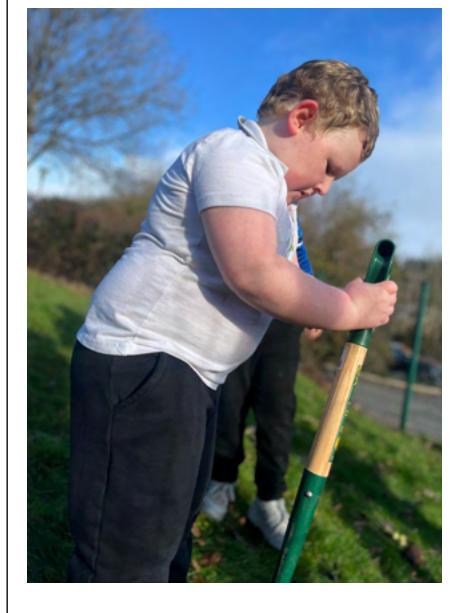
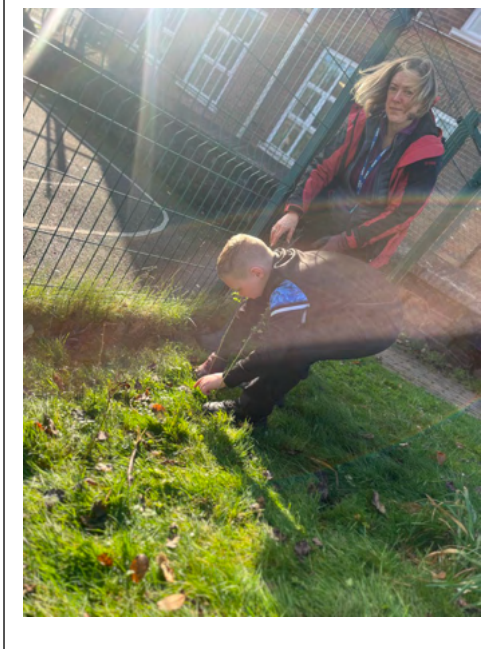
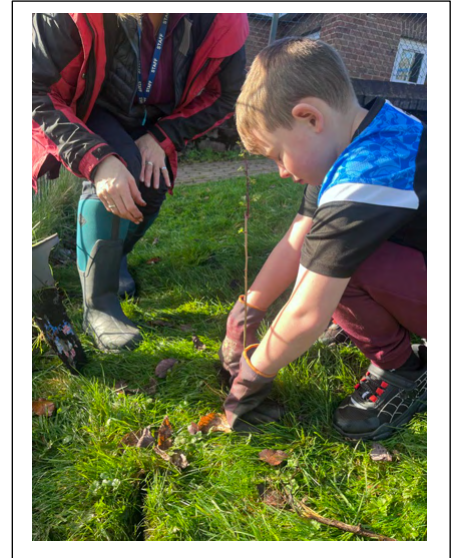
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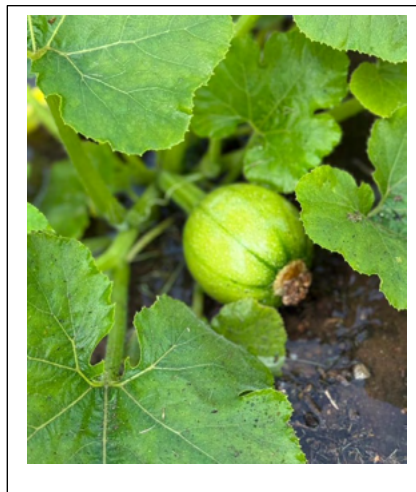
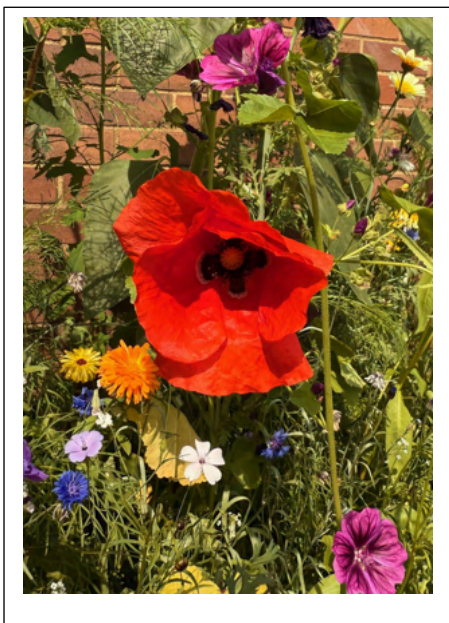
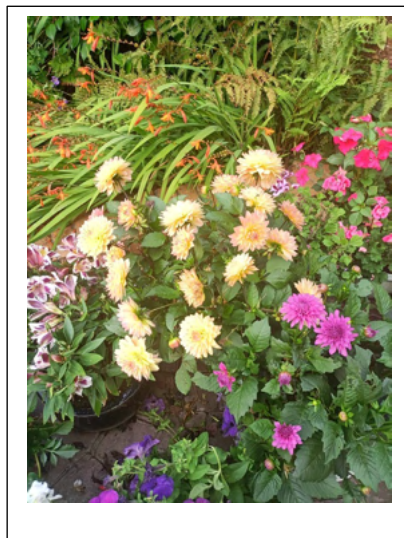
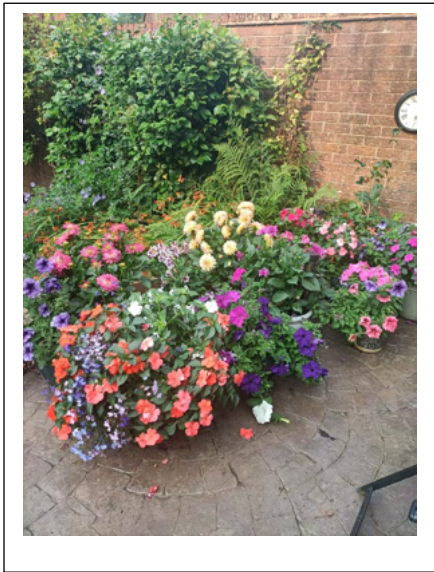
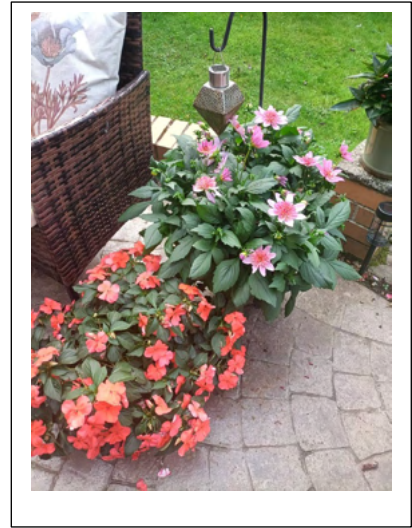
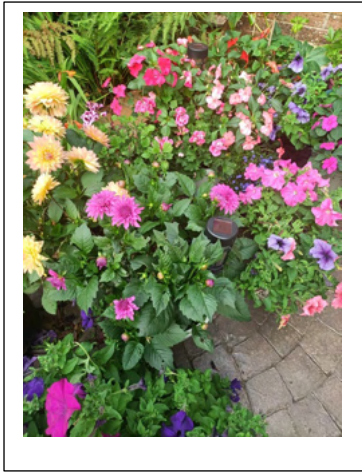
# Dosbarth Melyn



# Working in the Garden

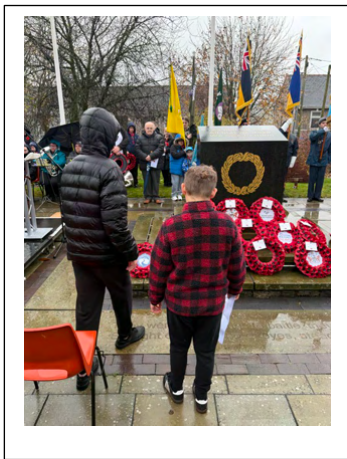
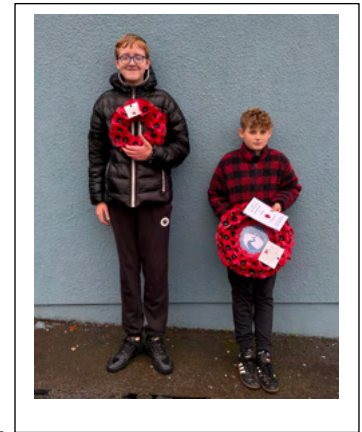
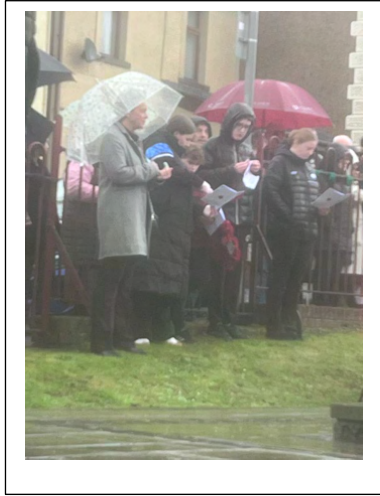


# Dosbarth Enfys



# Rememberance

Enfys Pupils representing TRC at the Rassau and Beaufort Remembrance Day Parade and Service, 2025.

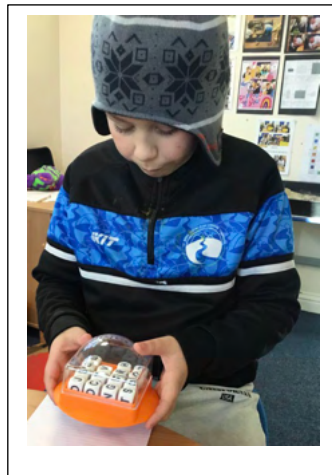
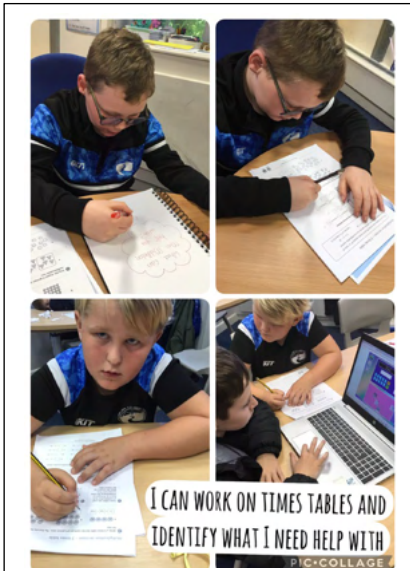
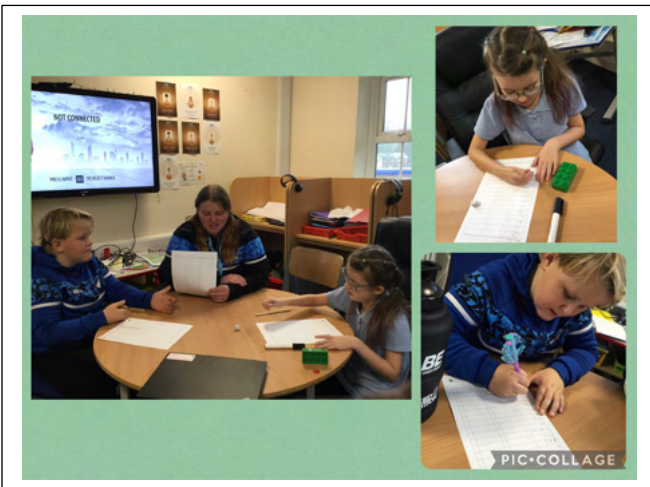
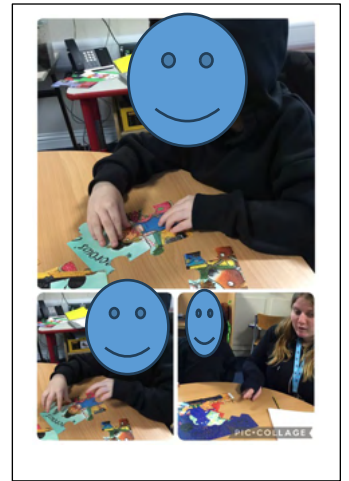
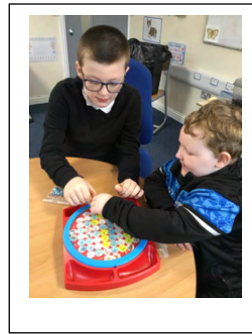


# Intervention

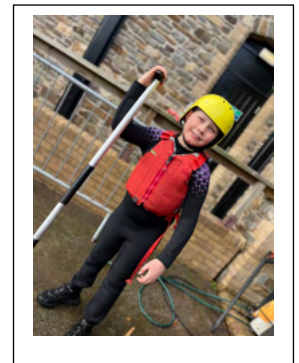
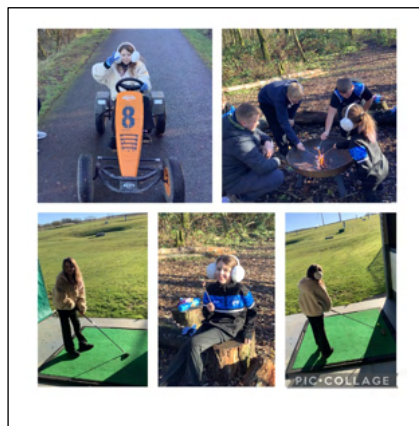
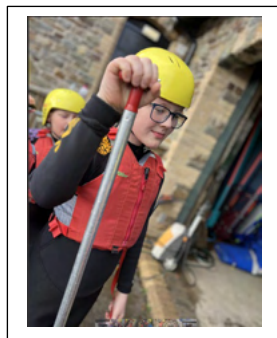
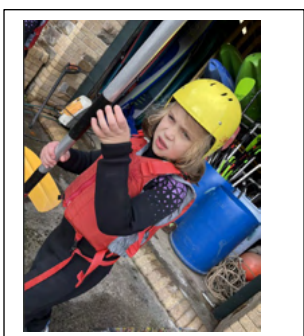
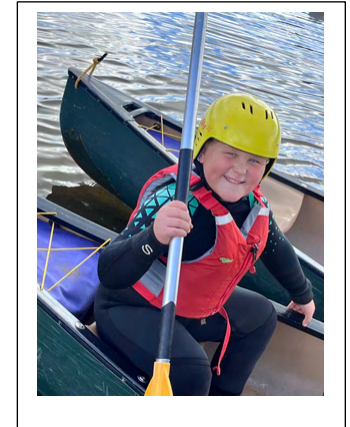
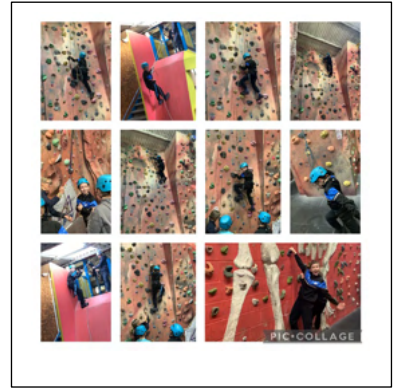
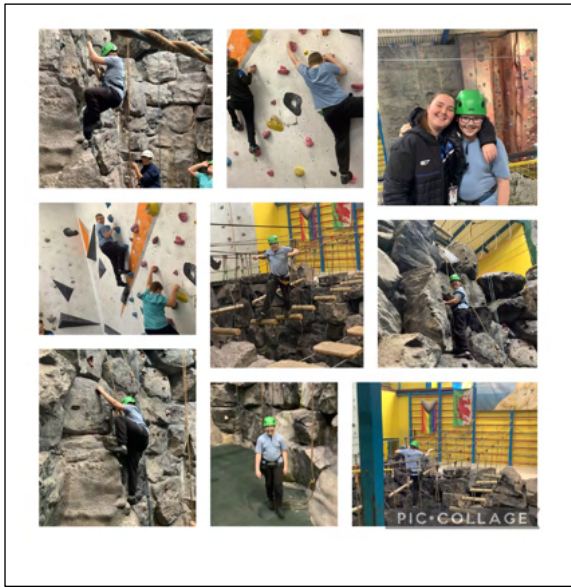
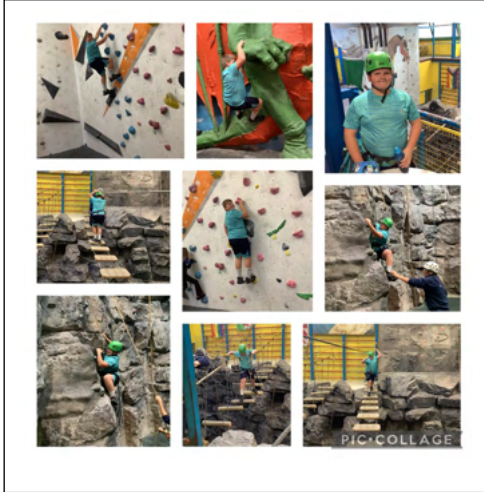
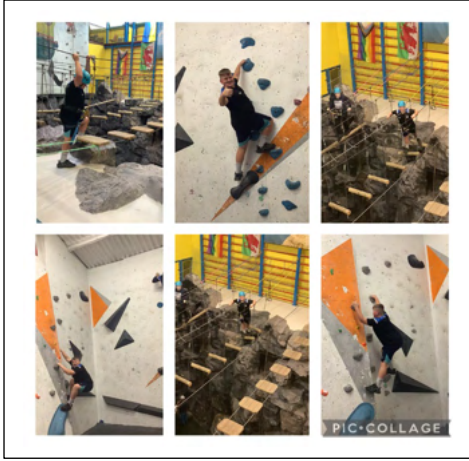
In our intervention class, this term we've been busy with lots of exciting learning! In numeracy, the children have been learning how to partition three-digit numbers, building confidence in breaking numbers into hundreds, tens, and ones. In literacy, we've focused on reading both individually and in groups, helping to develop fluency and comprehension skills. The children have enjoyed completing word searches and some have taken part in CVC word hunts, making phonics fun and interactive.

We've also had opportunities to work together in mixed-age group sessions, promoting bonding and teamwork across the school. Social development has been a big focus too, with social stories supporting skills like using kind hands, speaking appropriately, and toileting routines.

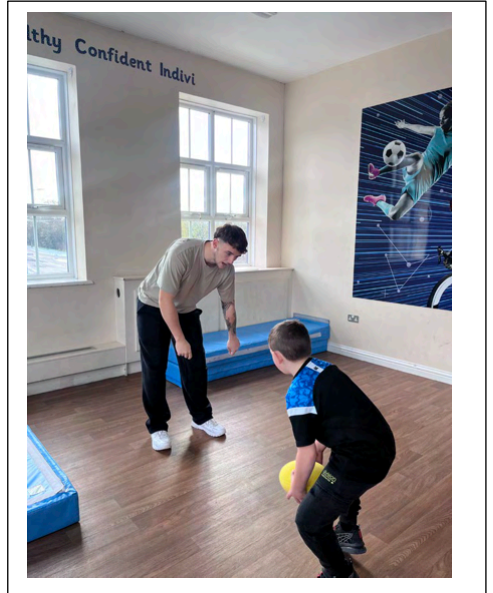
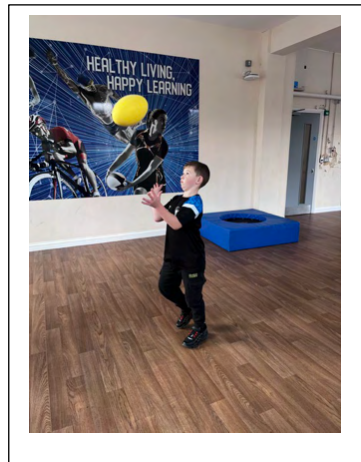
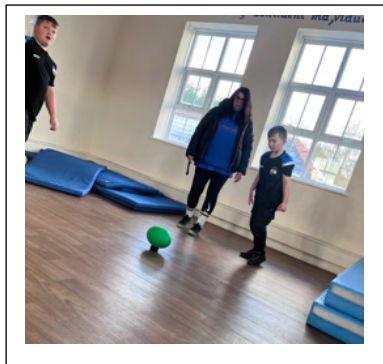
Beyond the classroom, we've been out and about! The children have enjoyed shopping trips, practicing real-life skills like handling money and making choices. For well-being, we've taken trips to Cyfarthfa Park and enjoyed local well-being walks, giving everyone time to connect with nature and relax



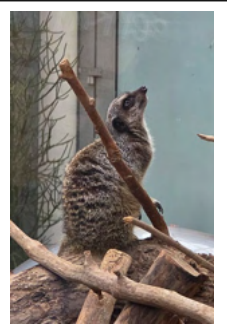
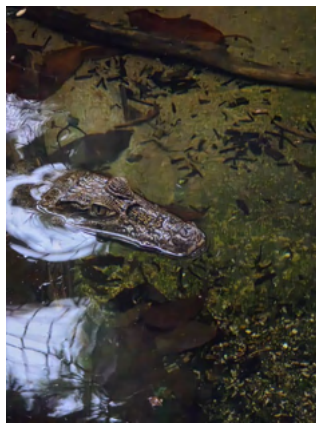
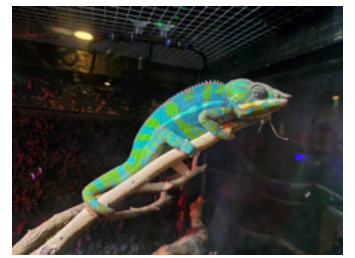
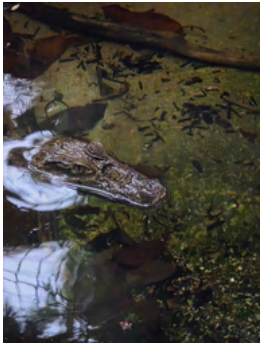
# Llangorse / Bryn Bach Park

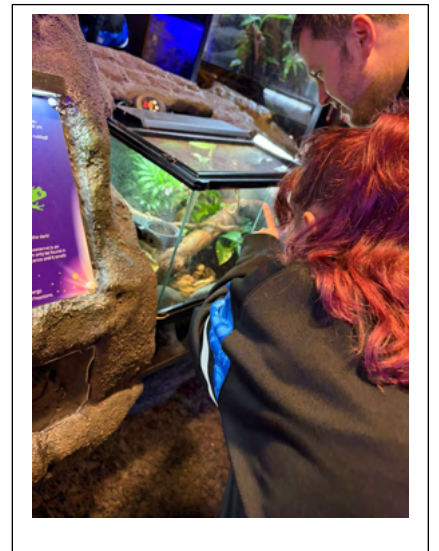
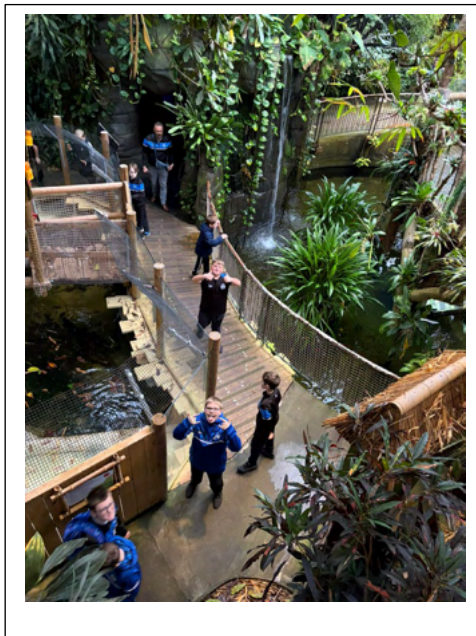
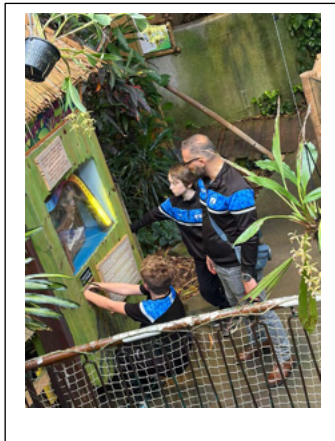
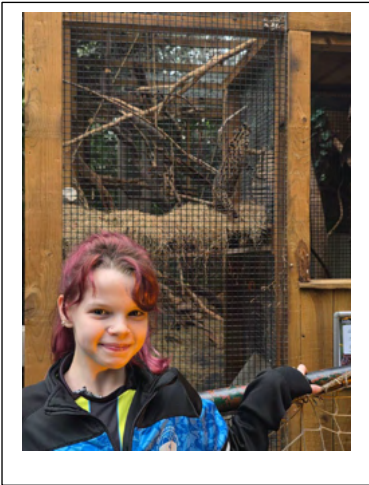
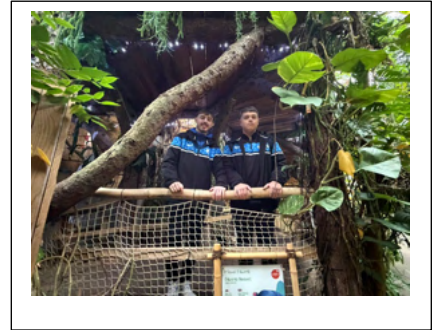
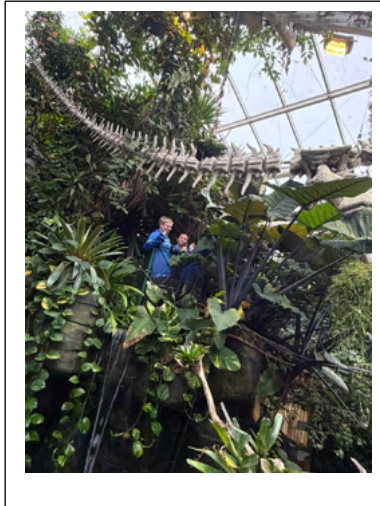
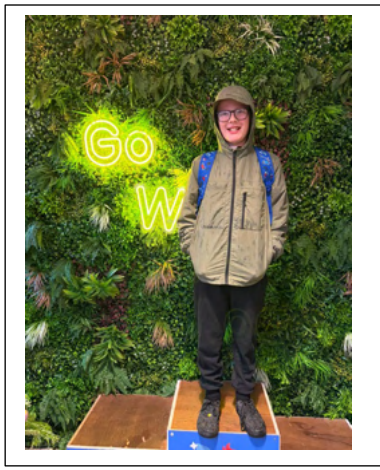


# Dragons Rugby

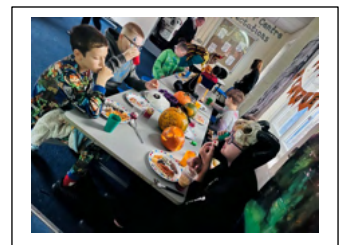
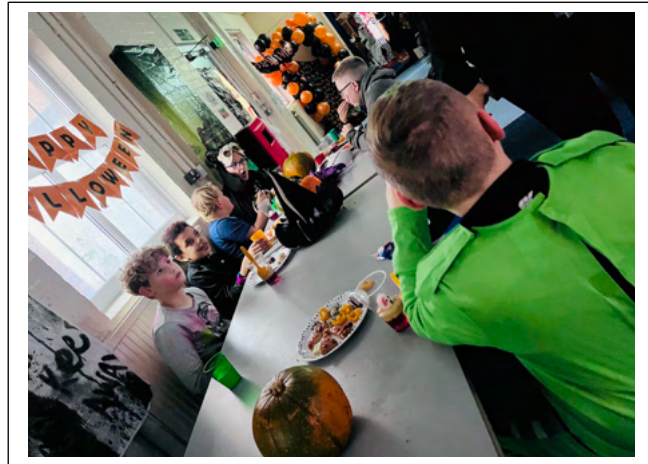
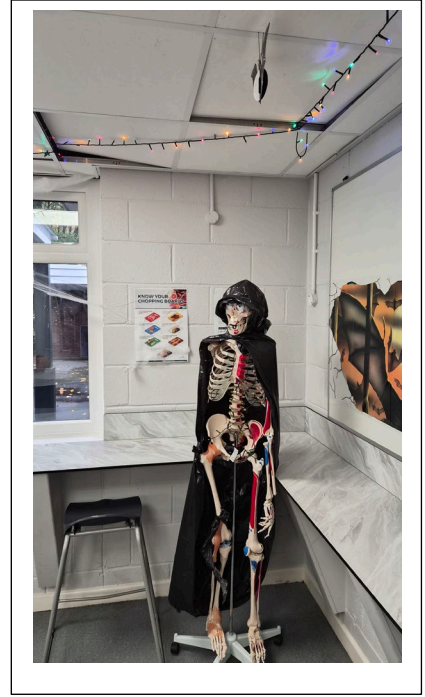
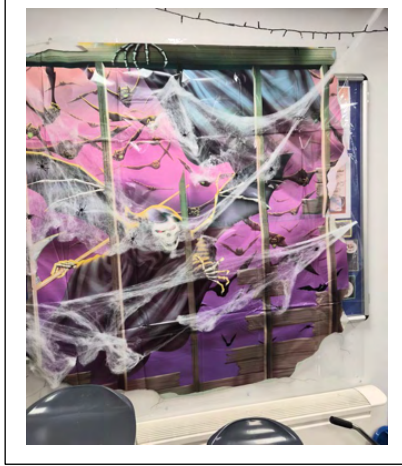


# Trip to Plantasia





# Halloween



# Christmas





# Football

Our school team took part in a football tournament against 6 other teams and we came through victorious! So proud of them all



# Secondary

# DofE

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

On 4th November, some of our pupils had the incredible opportunity to visit the Senedd and meet the Duke of Edinburgh HRH Prince Edward. They shared their inspiring experiences of volunteering at Bryn Bach Park and showcased the impact of their efforts. During the visit, they also met the Minister for Education and other key stakeholders, engaging in meaningful conversations about youth development and community service.

It was a truly memorable day where our pupils represented themselves and The River Centre with pride and professionalism. Well done to all our DofE participants—you were outstanding ambassadors



The pupils have been actively volunteering at Bryn Bach Parc this year. Their efforts include cutting down trees along the lake to help protect the dam from further root damage. In addition, they have been constructing bird boxes and clearing undergrowth around the archery site to improve the area's biodiversity and accessibility"



As a reward for their exemplary behaviour throughout the term, Duke of Edinburgh pupils visited Planet Fitness in Tredegar. During the visit, they enthusiastically explored a variety of machines and exercises, embracing the opportunity to try something new. Their conduct throughout the trip was outstanding and reflected positively on both the school and the Duke of Edinburgh programme



# Btec Cookery



## STEM-EX Update: Lighting Up Creativity and Building the Future

It has been a busy and innovative term for our STEM-EX students, with fantastic progress being made across Key Stages 3 and 4.

### KS3: Where Art Meets Technology

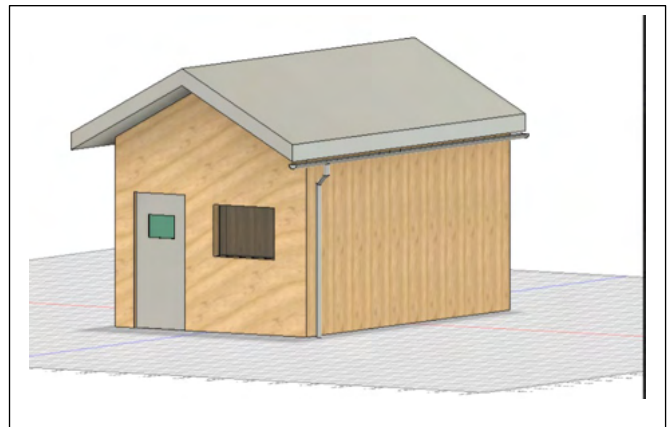
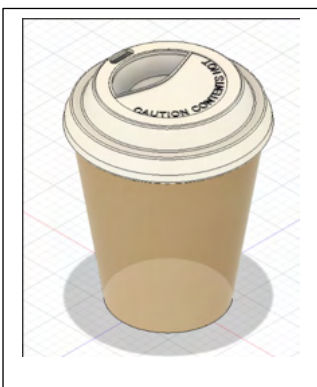
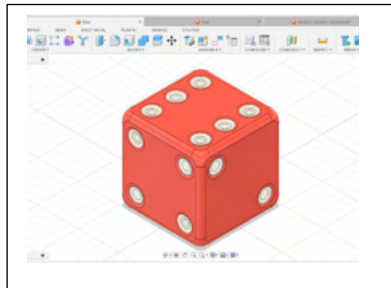
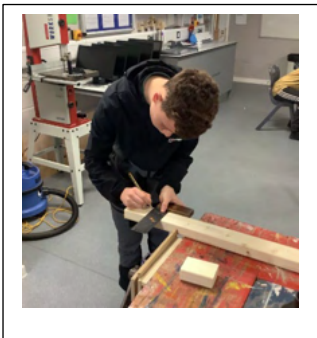
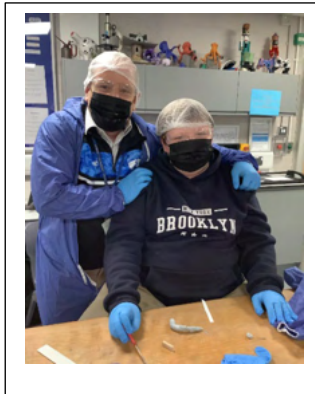
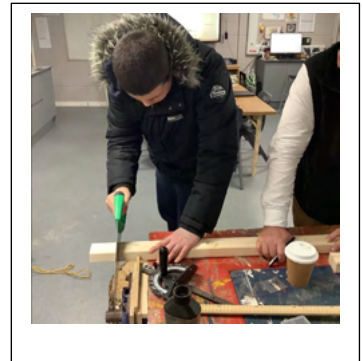
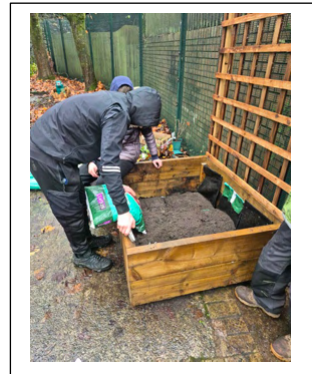
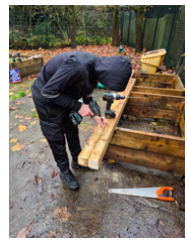
Our KS3 students have been bridging the gap between Science and Art in a truly creative way. They are currently using Micro:bits and simple circuitry to engineer their own "layered perspective light art." To bring their designs to life, they are using Fusion 360 (industry-standard CAD software) to design and 3D print custom components.

Connecting this learning to the real world, we were thrilled to welcome guest speakers from the Welsh semiconductor industry. Students were fascinated to learn that right here in Wales, we are manufacturing high-tech processors used by global giants like Apple!

### KS4: Mastering the Built Environment

Our KS4 students are hard at work on their The Built Environment GCSE. They are developing a dual skillset that is highly engaged in modern construction:

- **Traditional Skills:** Developing precision in the workshop through carpentry, cutting, measuring, and interpreting complex technical drawings.
- **Digital Skills:** advancing their 3D modelling capabilities using Fusion 360 to create digital twins of their construction projects.



There has been an Anti-bullying Week poetry competition this week. This is the winning poem written by Alex Rowe from Year 9.

Year 9 have been learning about Frankenstein. Keegan Jones has been working on adjectives to describe the Creature.

Year 11 visited Cardiff on a Literacy trip. They were looking at Literacy, Poetry, Art, and national treasures.



They Look At Him

They look at him with angry **stares**,  
And act like they don't **care**.  
They make him feels there's no one **there**,  
And look through him as if he's **air**.

People watch and no one **helps**,  
He simply wants to shout and **yelp**.  
Each nasty word cuts like a **blade**,  
And leave a scar which does not **fade**.

But stand up tall and don't give **in**,  
Be the voice which you needed **within**,  
Look at them with strength and **pride**,  
I will no longer run and **hide**.

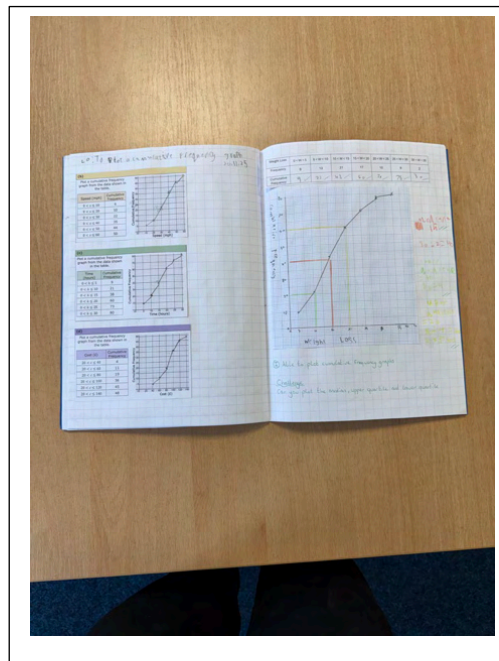
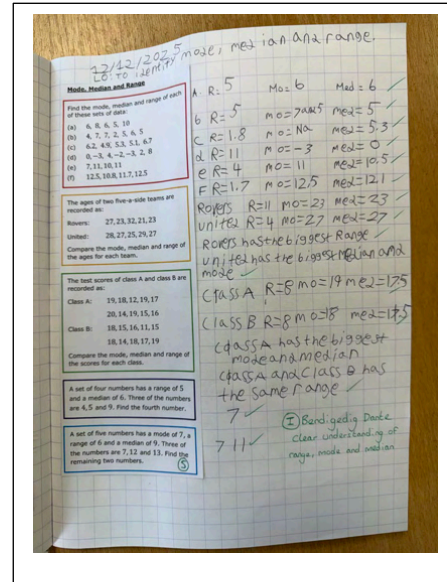
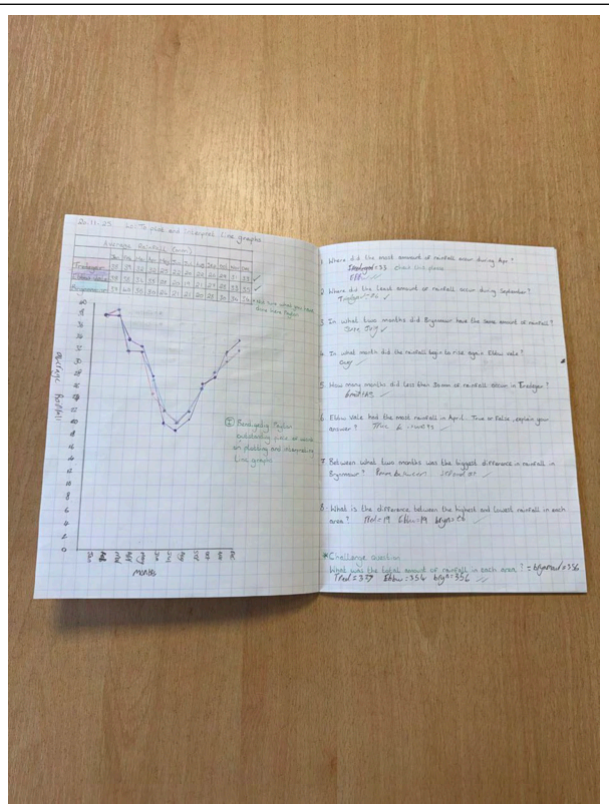
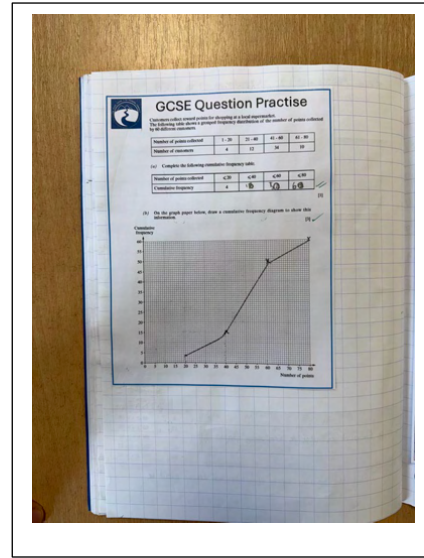
By Alex Rowe



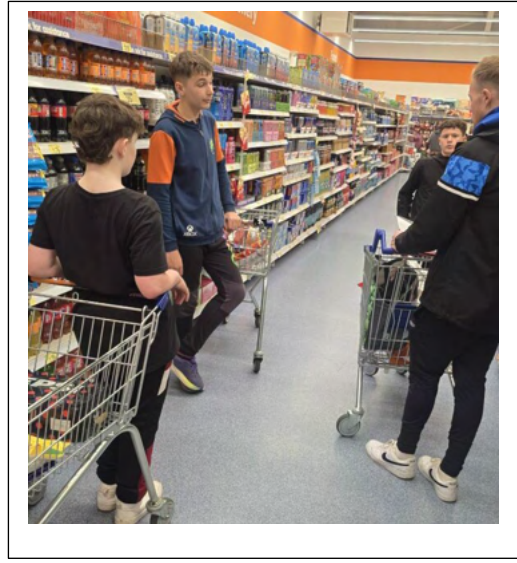
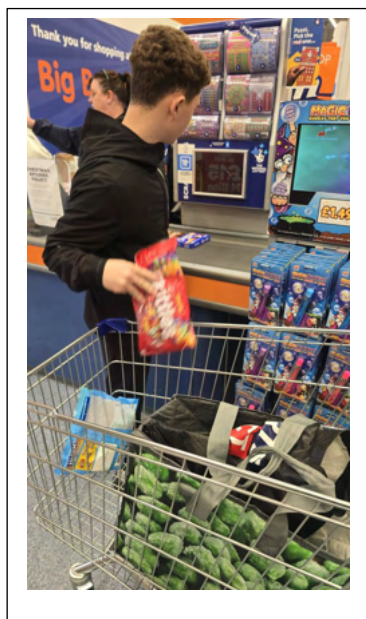
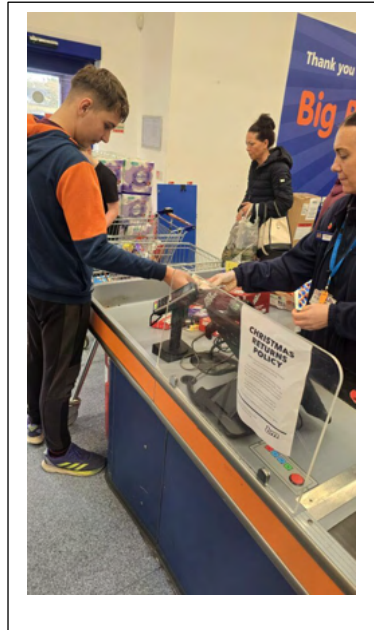
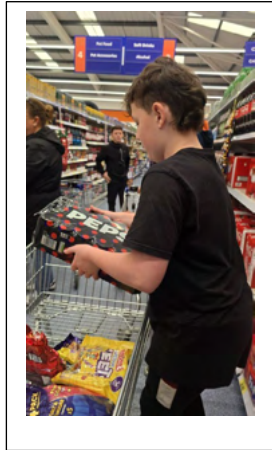
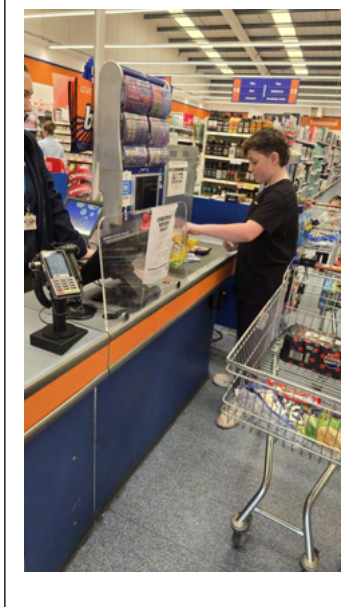
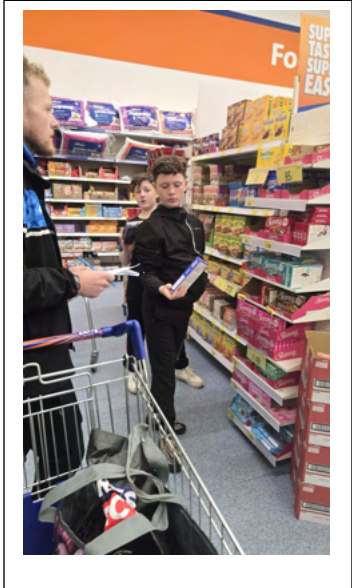
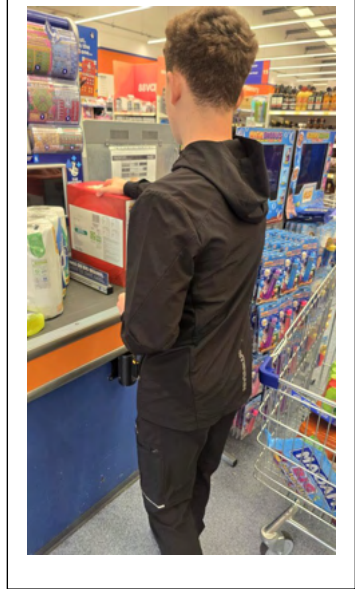
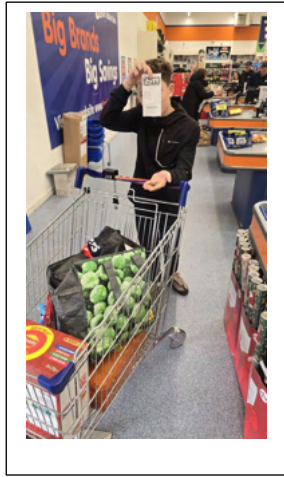
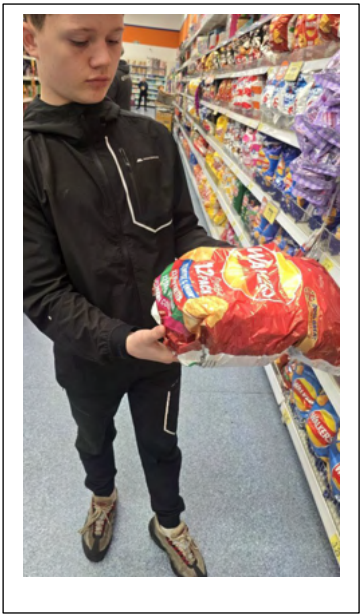
# Mathematics

## Maths and Numeracy Update

This term, our focus has been on all things statistics! Pupils have explored how to collect and represent data using frequency tables, bar charts, and line graphs, as well as learning about averages — Mean, Median, Mode, and Range. We've also taken maths beyond the classroom with practical activities in the community, including shopping at B&M, Home Bargains, and Ebbw Vale Market for school supplies and ingredients for our cooking sessions. To celebrate the end of term, our KS4 form group enjoyed a fantastic trip to the cinema to watch *Jujutsu Kaisen* followed by a meal at McDonald's — a highlight that everyone loved!



The Pupils had a £25 budget each to pick stuff they wanted to be in our reward tuckshop. They walked around B&M and worked together to stay in budget and made sure to get the best deals. Super proud of how they worked together using Math skills in the real world and made decisions on not only what they liked but what they thought other students would want too.

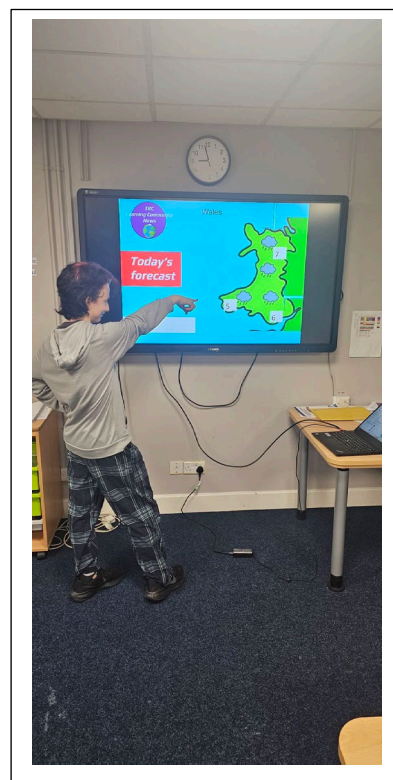
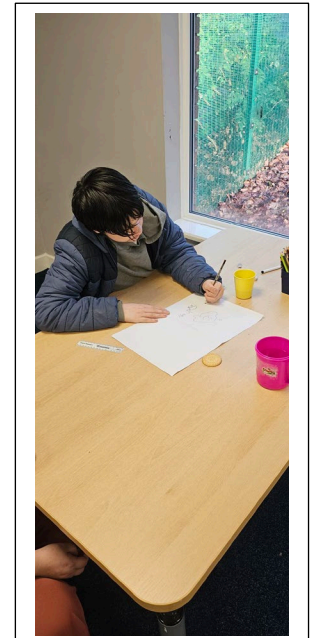
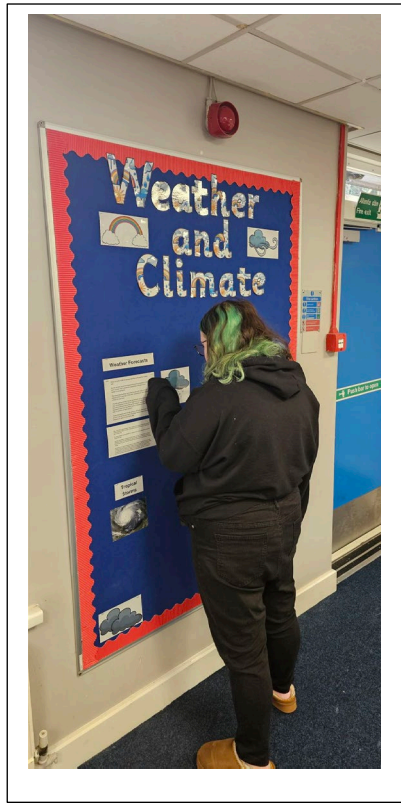


# Humanities

It's been a very busy half term in Humanities. Key Stage 3 started by finishing off their work on Coal in the Valleys. They completed a piece of extended writing looking at the reasons for the end of coal mining in the UK, where they produced some very good work. They were able to describe the decline of the coal industry and showed good levels of understanding around the topic! They then moved on to our new topic of Weather and Climate. We've been studying where our weather in the UK comes from, the different elements of weather, the weather associated with high and low pressure and how tropical storms are formed along with the impact they can have. Most recently, we've been looking at droughts and wildfires, examining the links between the two and the impacts they can each have. During this, the pupils have created their own weather forecasts by using key terminology to describe their predictions. They also used their knowledge of weather systems to match up the weather we can expect to see with the air mass that brings them. We had a few predictions of a White Christmas, so let's wait and see if we have any budding meteorologists on our hands!

Key Stage 4, on the other hand, have been firmly focused on gaining qualifications. The pupils have been working on their King's Trust booklets diligently, completing numerous booklets and editing their own work to make sure they achieve top marks! The dedication they have shown to attaining these qualifications has been remarkable and a credit to them! They have looked at Managing Money, Customer Experience, Career Planning, Sustainability, Teamwork skills and Preparing for the World of Work, with most pupils now making some final finishing touches to their work. Recently, we have focused on interview technique, with pupils learning about how to prepare for an interview, how to shake hands correctly and what to wear to an interview. Try shaking their hands when they get home and watch them impress you! All of this practice has led up to some mock job interviews, which some of Year 11 have completed. There were obviously some nerves on show, but they all performed admirably, and will continue to improve with feedback and some tweaks.

Overall, it's been a great term in Humanities and the pupils have earned their rest over the Christmas break. We look forward to welcoming them back in the new year, and continuing with our push towards achieving as many qualifications as we can! Well done all!



# Health and Wellbeing

## Physical Health and Healthy Living

This term, pupils have been learning about physical health and the importance of making healthy choices. Lessons have focused on understanding how the body works and how lifestyle choices can support long-term wellbeing.

Pupils began by learning about key organs in the body, including the heart, lungs, stomach, and brain. They explored the role each organ plays and why it is important to look after them. Through discussions and activities, pupils developed a clearer understanding of how exercise, food, and rest all contribute to keeping the body healthy.

A major focus has been on nutrition. Pupils learned about different nutrients, such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals, and why the body needs each one. This knowledge was then applied to real-life scenarios, where pupils planned balanced meals and discussed healthier food swaps.

Pupils also took part in creating their own meal plans, thinking carefully about variety, portion sizes, and nutritional value. This encouraged independence and helped pupils recognise how food choices can impact energy levels, mood, and overall health.

Alongside this, lessons explored other aspects of healthy living, including the importance of physical activity, hydration, sleep, and personal hygiene. Pupils were encouraged to reflect on their own habits and identify small changes they could make to improve their wellbeing.

These lessons have helped pupils develop greater awareness of their bodies and the choices they make. By building knowledge and practical skills, pupils are being supported to take responsibility for their health and make positive choices now and in the future.



## Developing Confidence Within the Community

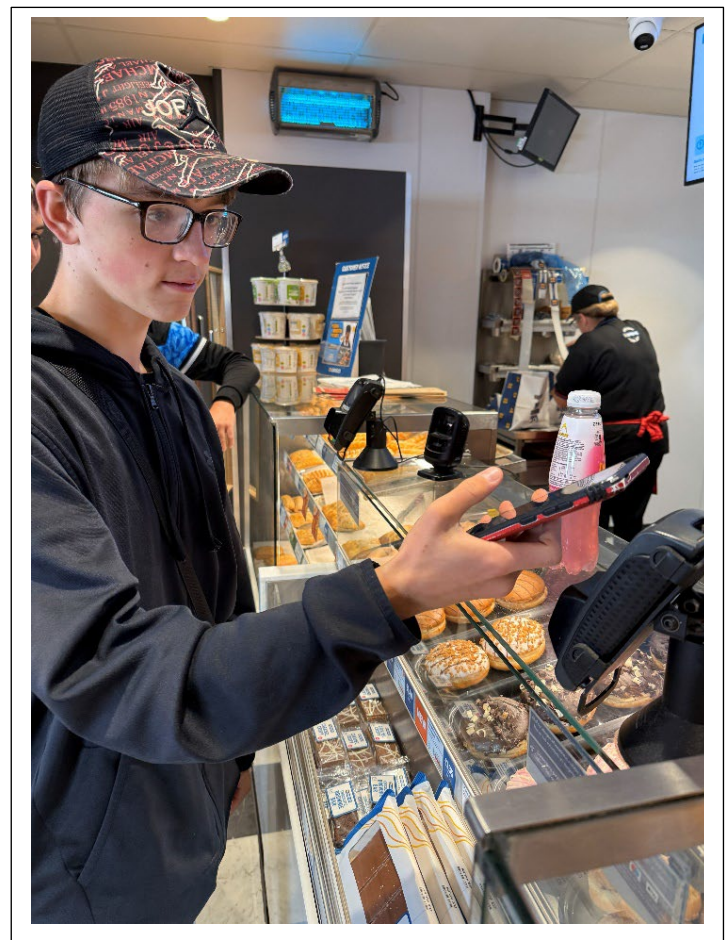
Developing independence and confidence in the community has been a key focus this term. Pupils have taken part in practical, real-life experiences designed to help them feel more comfortable and capable when out in public spaces.

One important skill pupils have been developing is purchasing their own meals. Through supported visits to local shops and cafés, pupils have practised choosing items, handling money, and completing transactions independently. Alongside this, pupils have been taught the correct ways to communicate with members of the public, including how to greet staff politely, ask for what they need clearly, say “please” and “thank you,” and wait patiently for their turn.

These experiences have also provided opportunities to practise appropriate behaviour in public spaces, such as using an indoor voice, showing respect to others, and following social expectations. Staff offered guidance and reassurance, gradually reducing support as pupils’ confidence grew.

For many pupils, these activities were challenging at first, but it has been fantastic to see their progress. Pupils are becoming more willing to speak up, make decisions, and take responsibility for themselves. Each small success has helped build self-esteem and resilience.

By learning these essential life skills in real-world settings, pupils are gaining confidence that will support them beyond the classroom. These experiences help prepare them for greater independence in the future and empower them to take an active, positive role within their community.



## Cynefin Project: Discovering Our Local Area

This term, pupils have begun an exciting *Cynefin* project, exploring the meaning of belonging by learning about our local area and its rich history. Through hands-on experiences and meaningful visits, learners have been developing a stronger connection to the place they live and the stories that shape it.

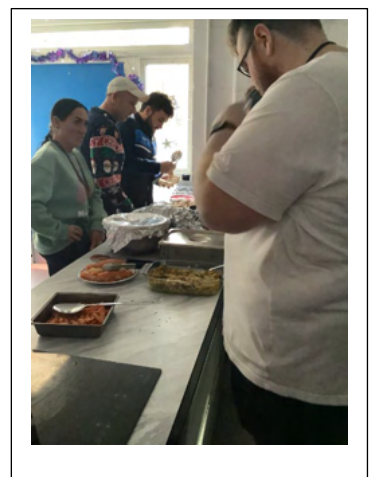
As part of the project, pupils visited the Aneurin Bevan Stones, where they learned about Bevan's lasting impact on society and his role in shaping the National Health Service. This visit provided an opportunity to link local history to national change, helping pupils understand how individuals from their own community can influence the wider world. Pupils showed curiosity, respect, and pride as they explored the site and discussed its significance.

Another key visit was to the grave of Crawshay, where pupils learned about the area's industrial past. This allowed them to reflect on how the local landscape, economy, and community have evolved over time. Discussions focused on how the past continues to influence the present and why it is important to preserve local heritage.

Throughout the project, pupils have been encouraged to ask questions, share ideas, and reflect on what "Cynefin" means to them personally. The project has supported the development of historical understanding, communication skills, and a sense of identity. By learning about where they come from, pupils are building pride in their community and gaining a deeper appreciation of their place within it.



# Christmas



## Christmas Trip 2025 - Cardiff Museum and Winter Wonderland

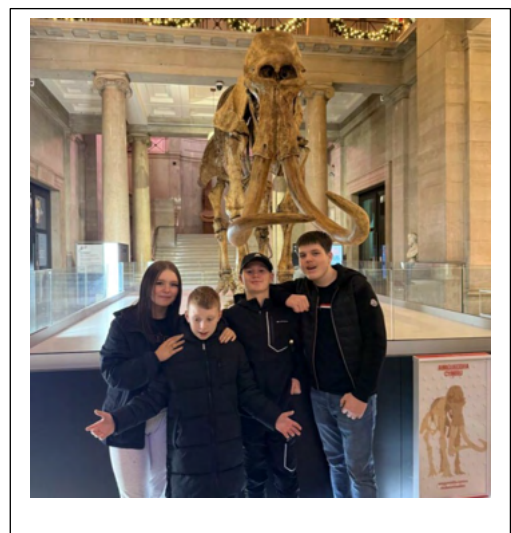
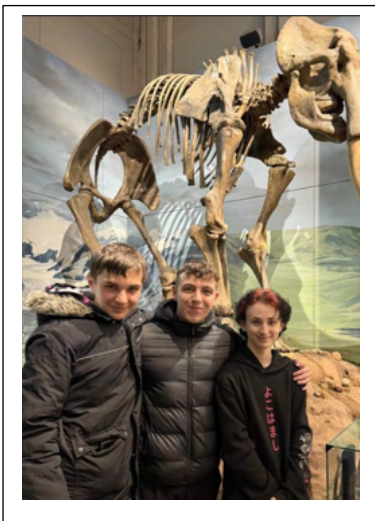
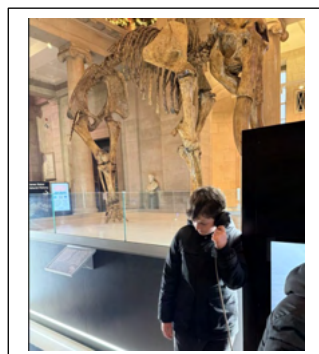
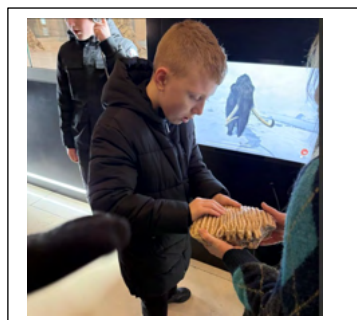
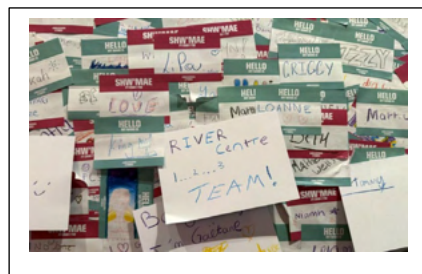
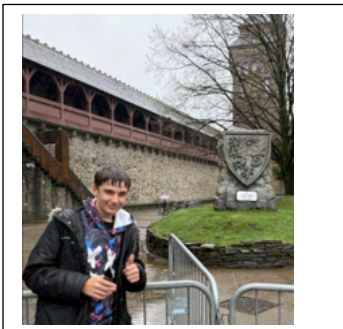
"Our Christmas reward trip to Cardiff was a truly proud and memorable day for staff and pupils alike. Visiting Cardiff Museum, Winter Wonderland, and finishing with ice skating, the pupils represented the school and its values fantastically throughout the entire day.

Pupils from different year groups came together seamlessly, looking after one another, investigating and exploring as one team. Their behaviour, teamwork, and enthusiasm were outstanding, and they demonstrated the skills we work so hard to build every day. It was inspiring to see them encouraging each other, supporting one another's confidence, and embracing every activity with positivity and respect.

The day was topped off with a festive walk around Winter Wonderland, watching pupils cheer each other on at the ice rink and simply enjoying being together. Laughter, encouragement, and smiles were everywhere — a perfect reflection of the amazing young people we know them to be.

We finished the day in true festive style with sweet treats from the stalls, enjoying churros dipped in Nutella, and a joyful sing-song on the bus ride home — a perfect end to a fantastic day.

We could not be prouder of our pupils.



# ARC

The pupils in Arc have been working hard again this term. One of our main jobs was to try and stop our water pipe freezing over the winter. We dug a trench to lay the pipe in protected it with insulation and filled the trench back in.

We also cleaned around the big wheel for the local Navigation society, using the bush cutter and strimmers.

The society were very thankful.

Merry Christmas from the Arc pupils.



# Ty Afon

## Exploring Romans, Remembrance, and Remarkable Achievements

This term has been an exciting and enriching one at Ty Afon Campus, with students across Key Stages 3 and 4 engaging in a wide variety of learning experiences.

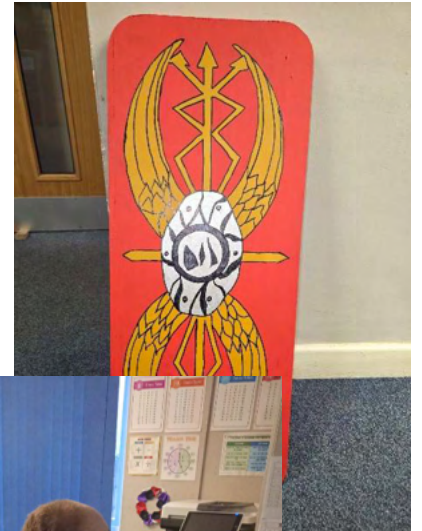
### KS3: The Romans in Wales

Our Key Stage 3 students have been busily working on the theme of *The Romans in Wales*. As part of their studies, they enjoyed visits to the Caerleon Roman Museum and Roman Baths, where they explored the history of Roman expansion across Europe and the lasting impact of Roman culture in Wales.

Back in school, students examined what the Romans brought to Wales, studied Centurion armoury, and even built their own Roman shields and mosaics inspired by their visit. They also investigated the science behind extracting pure salt from rock salt, designing experiments to recreate Roman methods using modern scientific equipment.

### Remembrance Day

On 11th November 2025, students and staff gathered to commemorate Remembrance Day with a visit to the Ebbw Vale Cenotaph. They laid poppies and observed a solemn moment of silence in honour of those who lost their lives in conflicts. The occasion was made even more meaningful as students had the opportunity to meet Staff Sergeant White, who graciously introduced them to fellow veterans, encouraged conversations, and joined them for photographs.



#### KS4: Culinary and Employability Skills

Key Stage 4 students have been showcasing their talents in the kitchen as they completed their final dishes for the BTEC Home Cooking qualification. Their culinary creations included a range of fantastic meals and some truly impressive desserts.



As part of the King's Trust Personal Development and Employability qualification, students also took part in collaborative projects such as the *Bridge-Building Challenge*. Using only lollipop sticks and split pins, they designed and constructed bridges capable of spanning a 0.5m gap and supporting a 1kg load — a true test of teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving.



**Wellbeing and Creative Expression** All students had the chance to participate in reflexology sessions, offering a therapeutic boost to wellbeing. In addition, they explored the theme of *Fear* through art and self-reflection, drawing inspiration from the modern artist Margo in Margate.

Ty Afon Campus continues to provide a rich and varied learning environment, where students not only gain knowledge but also develop skills, creativity, and resilience.

