

Summer Newsletter 2026

The River centre 3-16 Learning community

 01495369628  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 – Summer Term



Dear Parents / Carers,

Together, we have celebrated many achievements, overcome challenges and watched our pupils grow in confidence, resilience and independence. Their successes are a reflection of the strong relationships between home and school, and we are truly grateful for the trust you place in us every day.

Our pupils continue to demonstrate the values that are at the heart of our community – being Resilient, Inclusive, Valued, Empathetic and Respectful. We are incredibly proud of everything they have accomplished and of the positive impact they have on our school community.

At the end of another school year at The River Centre 3–16 Learning Community, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support, encouragement and partnership throughout the year.

As we look ahead to the new academic year, we are excited about the opportunities that await us. We remain committed to providing the very best learning experiences for every child and young person, ensuring that they feel safe, supported and inspired to achieve their potential.

For now, I hope you all enjoy a well-deserved summer break filled with rest, fun and special moments with family and friends. We look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed and ready for another successful year together.

Thank you once again for being such an important part of The River Centre family.

With warmest wishes,

Kieran Dash

Acting Head Teacher

The River Centre 3–16 Learning Community

"Where Courage Meets the Classroom, Nurturing Brave Pupils Every Step of the Way"

Dosbarth Coch

This half term, the children in Dosbarth Coch have had a fantastic time exploring our exciting topic, Watery World. We have taken part in a wide range of creative, practical, and fun activities to help us learn all about water and its importance.

We began by experimenting with creative bubble painting techniques, where the children used bubbles and paint to create colourful underwater effects. This was a great way to explore textures and patterns while being imaginative.

During our water play sessions, we investigated capacity, using different containers to pour, fill, and measure. The children showed great curiosity as they compared which containers held more or less water.

One of our highlights was our trip to Cyfartha Park, where we enjoyed spending time together and had lots of fun exploring the water park. It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn outside the classroom and enjoy the outdoors.

Back in class, we got creative with food by making turtle pictures using rice cakes, grapes, and kiwi. The children practised their fine motor skills carefully cutting the fruit and assembling their designs.

We have also been learning about the water cycle, understanding how water moves from clouds to rain and back again. Alongside this, we discussed ways to use water responsibly and save it, helping the children to understand how to care for our environment.

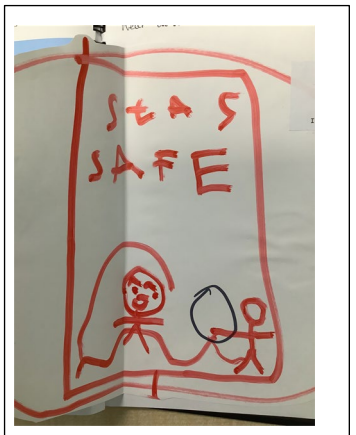
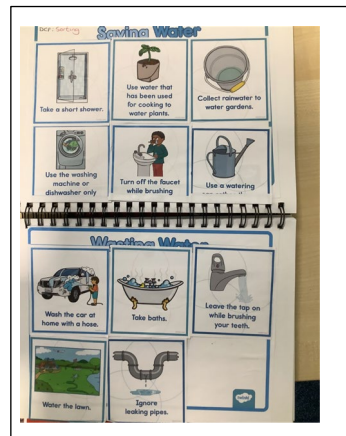
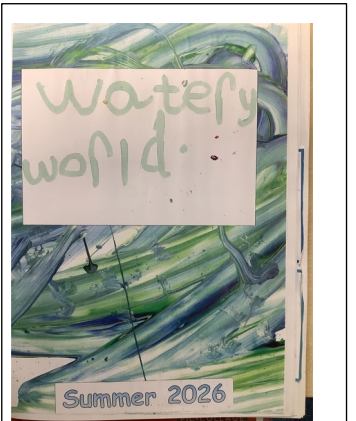
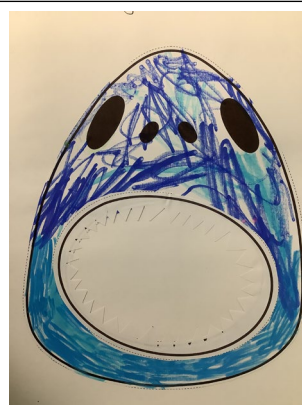
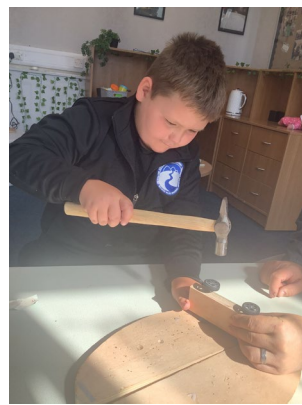
Our creativity continued as we made rain shakers, exploring sound and rhythm while linking to our watery theme.

To develop our scientific thinking, we carried out an investigation to test different objects, sorting them into those that float and those that sink. The children made predictions and talked about their findings using simple scientific language.

We also took part in important learning about water safety, discussing how to stay safe around water both at home and when out and about.

A special highlight of the term was our visit from 'Lemmie Out', where the children had the opportunity to use real tools safely to build their own wooden cars. They showed great focus and care while working, and we had lots of fun testing the cars by racing them down a ramp!

It has been a busy and exciting half term full of exploration, creativity, and hands-on learning. We are very proud of all the children for their enthusiasm and teamwork throughout our Watery World topic.

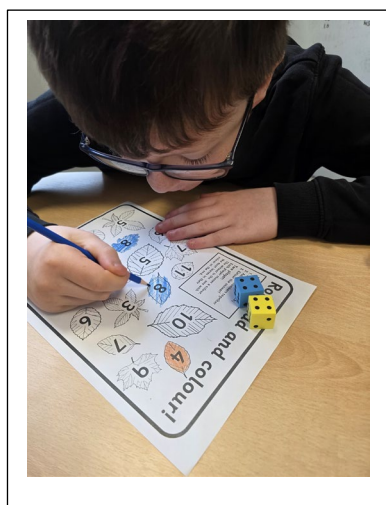
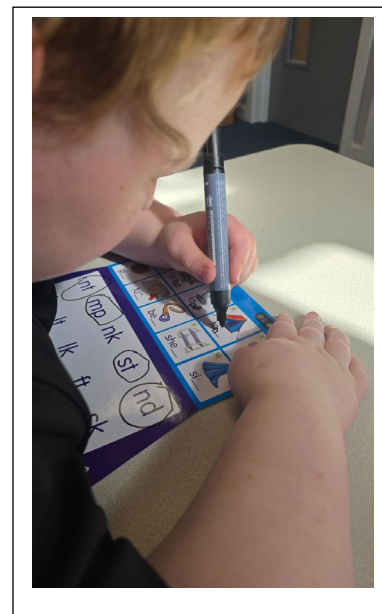
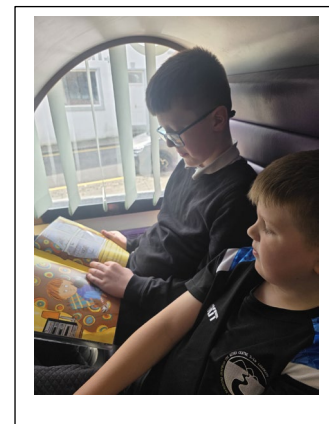
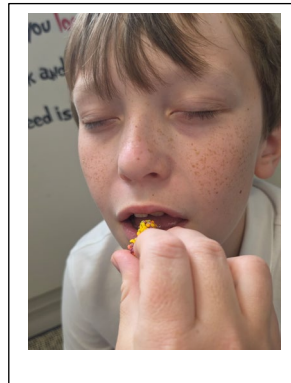


Cwtch

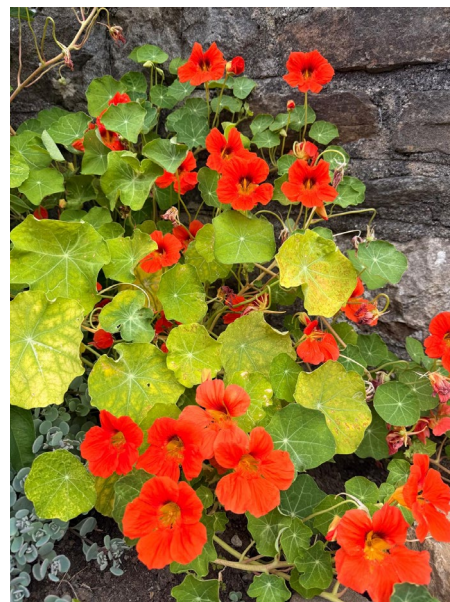
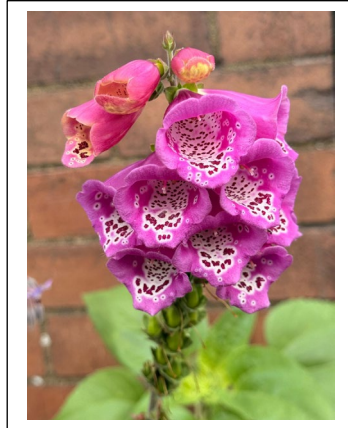
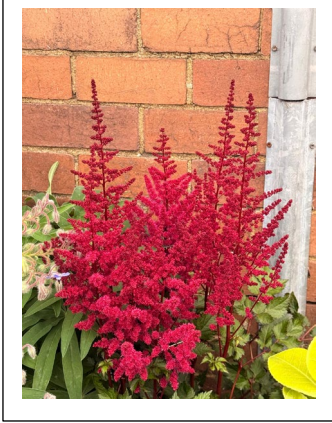
This term in the Cwtch we have had lots of lovely sessions indoors and out in the community. We have visited the Library in Tredegar, walked to local parks, visited the pet shop, gone shopping and much more!

The Children have taken part in loads of Bucket sessions and Lego Therapy with Miss Silverthorne who is very impressed with their building skills! The Children have been working on their Literacy, Numeracy and Wellbeing targets with Miss Middleton who has been very impressed with their efforts!

We have carried out group wellbeing sessions such as Sensology which included trying some sweet, sour and even spicy foods! We play a board game every day with a mixture of pupils. We have had lots of creative sessions this term in the Cwtch - making friendship bracelets, junk model making, drawings and much more.



Enfys



A fantastic summer term with lots of time spent in the school allotment, preparing the vegetable beds, planting and growing. We have had a wonderful harvest of broad beans, peas, rhubarb, raspberries and strawberries. We have needed to water our plants a couple of times a day because of the hot sunshine. Our tomatoes have loved in though, and are thriving in the polytunnel!

Enfys pupils have continued to enjoy our days of outdoor education, with pupils learning to swim, ride a bike and working toward our paddle award.

We have also enjoyed taking part in many of the terms' workshops, with visits from the bee lady being a big hit!

Playing board games on our 'tech free' mornings has been enjoyed by staff and pupils. Scrabble, chess and Guess Who are current favourites.

Additionally, pupils in Enfys have enjoyed Bush Craft, learned about fire safety, saving water, the importance of recycling...They have taken responsibility for recycling all the shredded paper, both at primary and at secondary campus.

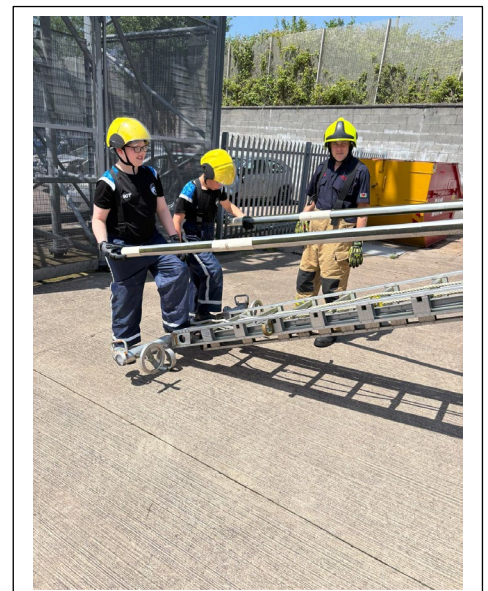
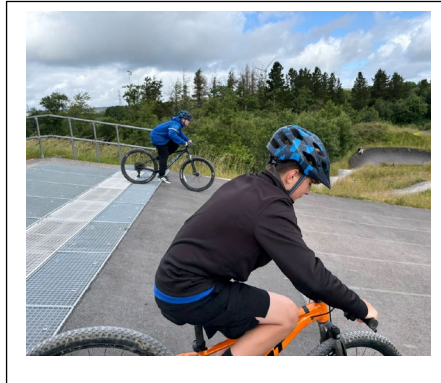
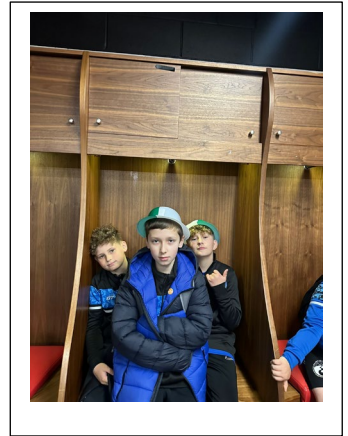
Glas

This Term in Dosbarth Glas we have been transitioning to secondary ready for September.

We have been lucky enough to go on lots of trips including a tour of the principality stadium, Cyfartha Park and Barry Island.

We have also taken part in dragons rugby sessions and have done lots of fun activities at Bryn Bach Park.

We also took part in phoenix project at local fire station

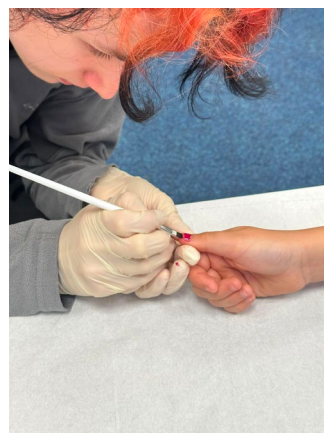


River Centre Salon

Over the past few months, our Beauty pupils have worked incredibly hard towards their qualifications, developing both their theoretical and practical skills.

Alongside completing the theory sections of their course work they have shown fantastic creativity while preparing for the summer fete. The pupils came up with their own ideas for items to sell and discussed pricing.

They have also gained valuable hands-on experience by practicing nail treatments on other pupils across the campus, helping to build their confidence, improve their techniques, develop their communication and customer service skills. I am incredibly proud of everything they have achieved so far and are excited to continue supporting them as they work towards achieving their qualifications

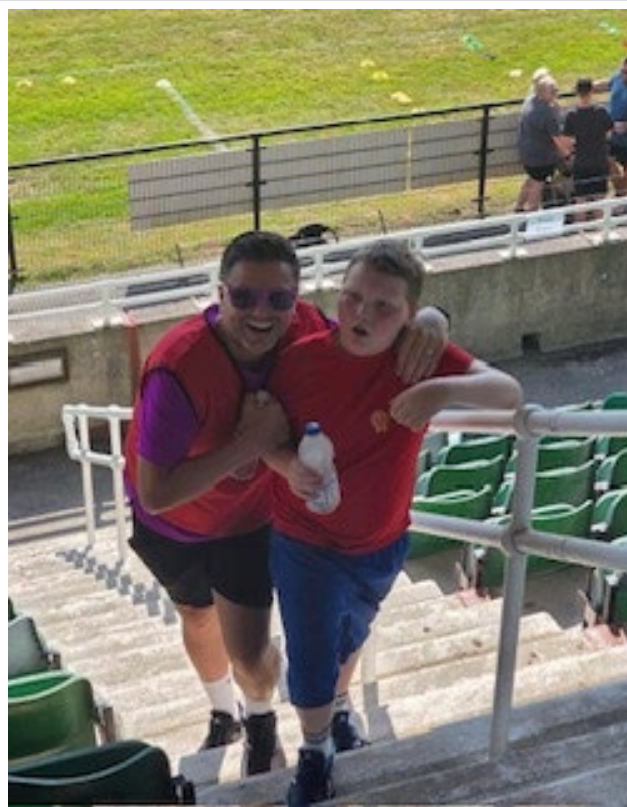


Sports Day

Congratulations to all our students for making this year's Sports Day such a fantastic success. Your enthusiasm, determination, teamwork and sportsmanship were a credit to our school, and we are incredibly proud of each and every one of you.

A heartfelt thankyou also goes to our wonderful parents and carers form coming along, supporting and participating.

Dioch!



The Duke of Edinburgh participants recently completed both their Bronze and Silver Expeditions, and we would like to congratulate everyone on successfully achieving their respective awards.

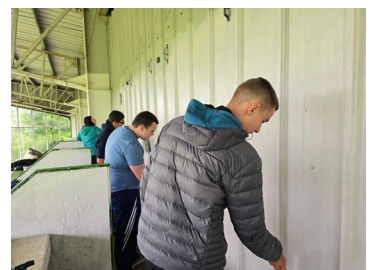
The Bronze Expedition presented some particularly challenging and interesting weather conditions, but the group showed great resilience and determination throughout. Well done to all involved for keeping positive, working together, and successfully completing the expedition. A fantastic achievement—congratulations on earning your Bronze Award!

The Silver Expedition took place in the Gower, where participants enjoyed much more favourable weather conditions. Over the course of three days and two nights, the Silver Award participants challenged themselves with demanding hikes, demonstrating determination, resilience, and teamwork throughout the expedition.

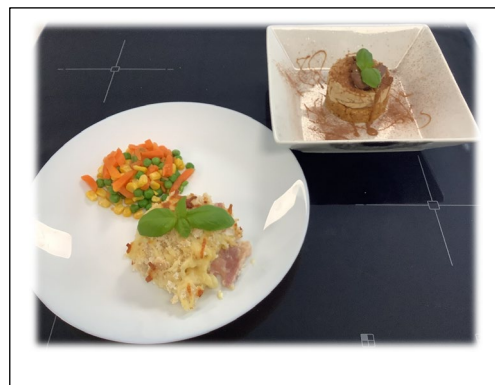
Their hard work and commitment were rewarded with the successful completion of their Silver Expedition, and they richly deserve their Silver Award. In a fitting full-circle moment, the three participants finished their Silver Expedition at the very spot where they had begun their Bronze Expedition journey. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and the progress they have made along the way. Congratulations to all three on this outstanding accomplishment.

The Bronze and Silver Award participants have been outstanding in their volunteering efforts this year. They have continued their valuable conservation work at Bryn Bach Park, helping to preserve and improve the local environment for the community to enjoy.

In addition, they have dedicated their time to volunteering at Ebbw Vale Rugby Club, where they have helped to paint the main home stand and carried out litter-picking around the site. Their hard work, commitment, and willingness to give back to the community have been truly commendable, and they should be extremely proud of the positive impact they have made. We are incredibly grateful for their efforts and proud of their achievements.



Btec Cookery



LLC

We have had an action-packed Summer Term in English, utilising the outdoors to inspire us into writing poetry about our local area and our country, as well as finding clues to enable us to decode information. We have also welcomed our new students over from the Primary Phase, who enjoyed engaging in the Social Story and problem-solving narrative.

We also say farewell to our Year 11's who have worked extremely hard in all areas of their literacy; Oracy, Reading and Writing to fulfil their potential and complete their English coursework and exams. We are excited to see your achievements and wish you well in the next step of your learning journeys.

Worried and Scared <i>Worried and fearful</i>  <i>Ell</i> Why?	Devoted and Spooky <i>Tour Guide/Jorge</i>  <i>Jonas</i> Why?
Chick and Inquisitive <i>Intelligent and curious</i>  <i>Max</i> Why?	Chewful and Helpful <i>Happy and optimistic</i>  <i>Nina</i> Why?
Upset and Despairing <i>Loyal and sincere</i>  <i>Sam and depressed</i> Why?	Mad and Disappointing <i>Phuriel</i>  <i>Angie and cynical</i> Why?

L.O: I can use accurate words to encode and decode information.

Happy-Terrified
Growing-Rustling
Cans-Leaves
Car-Noise
Broken-Pounding
Hop-Run
Warm-Slowly
Jumped-Crept
Enemy-Friend
Angry-Relieved

The girl walked through the forest, feeling very **terrified**. The trees were **rustling** in the wind, and the ground was covered in **leaves**.

Suddenly, she heard a **noise** behind her and began to **run** quickly. Her heart was **pounding** and her hands felt cold with fear. The shadow of someone jumped towards her, moving **slowly** between the trees. She decided to hide and face whatever was coming.

Just then as the figure **crept** up to her she saw that it was her friend Lucy. She felt **relieved**.

Tommy Boulter



Stem-Ex

STEM-EX returns this September for Years 7, 8, and 9.

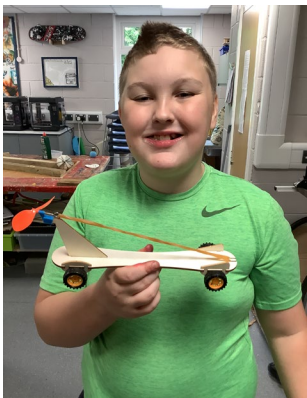
It's a hands-on programme where you design and build real projects — like balloon-powered cars, trebuchets, shadow puppet theatres, hydraulic claws, micro:bit alarms, and bridges.

Each project teaches real science and engineering skills, not just theory. As you complete challenges, you earn XP and badges to track your progress.

This past year, our first cohort completed their **Built Environment GCSE** — a huge achievement. Now our new Year 11s are moving on to the **Three-Dimensional Design GCSE**, building on skills they've developed through STEM-EX.

It's exciting to see the pathway in action: pupils starting out building and problem-solving in Year 7 STEM-EX projects, and going on to turn those skills into real GCSE qualifications.

A new year of building, testing, and learning by doing starts soon.



Mathematics

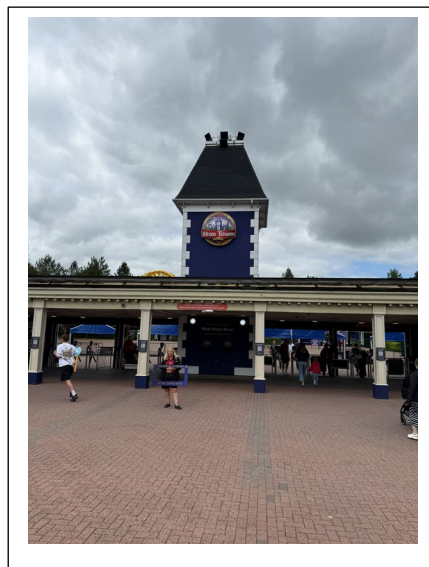
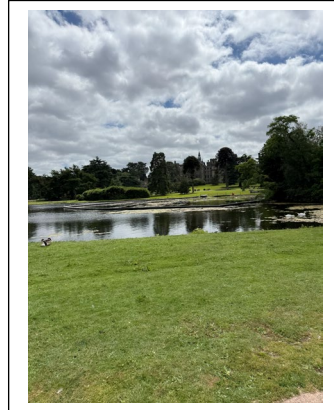
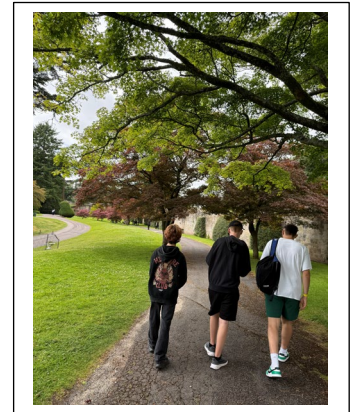
This term has been an incredibly important one for our KS4 pupils, who have worked exceptionally hard towards their GCSE and Entry Level qualifications.

Through revision sessions, practice papers, and lots of determination, they have shown resilience and commitment throughout the examination process.

We are extremely proud of every pupil and the way they approached their assessments, and we look forward to celebrating their achievements on results day.

Our Year 10 pupils have also enjoyed a busy and exciting final term, taking part in memorable experiences including trips to Alton Towers, Old Trafford, the cinema, and bowling.

It has been a fantastic way to finish the school year and create lasting memories together."



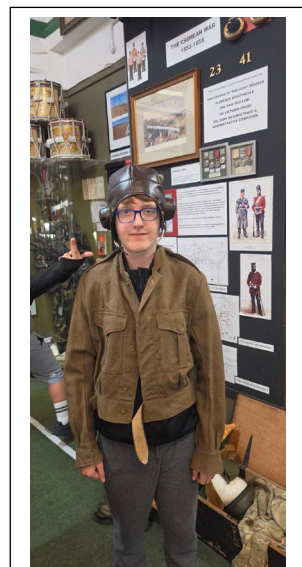
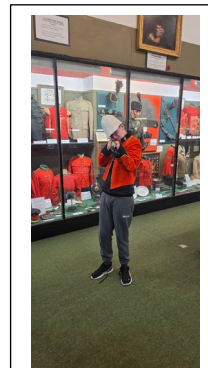
Humanities

Year 11 returned from the break with purpose, determination, and just a hint of "let's get this done", successfully completing their King's Trust qualifications. Their hard work has paid off brilliantly, and they should feel proud of what they've achieved. Year 10 have been hot on their heels, working steadily towards their own qualifications with the kind of focus that suggests they've realised that Year 11 aren't the only ones capable of impressive things.

Meanwhile, Year 9 have continued their journey through the Second World War from a British perspective, exploring the Blitz, rationing, evacuation, and VE Day. They've asked thoughtful questions, debated the realities of wartime life, and shown real maturity in their discussions. Their learning was brought to life during a visit to the Royal Welsh Military Museum in Brecon, where pupils enjoyed seeing real artefacts, uniforms, and stories from Welsh soldiers. The museum staff were impressed by their curiosity and excellent behaviour — always a proud moment.

Alongside all this, we've been welcoming pupils from the primary site for transition sessions. These have been lively, creative, and occasionally involved more cardboard than anyone expected. Pupils worked with Humanities, Numeracy, and STEM-EX teachers to design and build Viking shields — a brilliant hands-on project that combined history, maths, and engineering. The shields were colourful, sturdy, and in some cases large enough to make staff wonder whether the pupils were preparing for battle rather than secondary school!

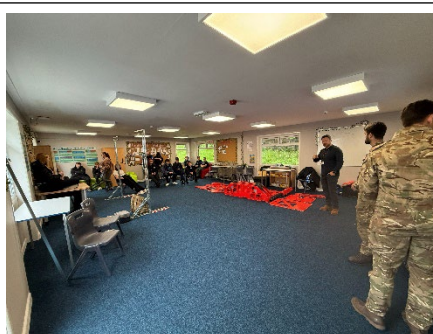
It's been a busy, productive, and enjoyable half-term across Humanities. Pupils have shown resilience, creativity, and a genuine enthusiasm for learning. We look forward to seeing what they achieve next as we move towards the end of the school year and the start of a new one!



Health and Wellbeing

2nd Army Engagement Visit

We were pleased to welcome the Army Engagement Team from Brecon Barracks back to the school at the start of the term. Learners took part in a range of practical team-building activities and had the opportunity to explore military equipment, including decommissioned weapons, helping to develop their understanding of the role of the Armed Forces. The team spoke about the wide variety of career pathways available within the Army, highlighting that young people can join with few or no formal qualifications while gaining access to apprenticeships, recognised qualifications, further education and long-term career opportunities. Learners engaged positively throughout the visit, asking thoughtful questions and showing particular interest in the Army Foundation College and the training opportunities available. The visit was both informative and inspiring, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with the Army Engagement Team in the future.

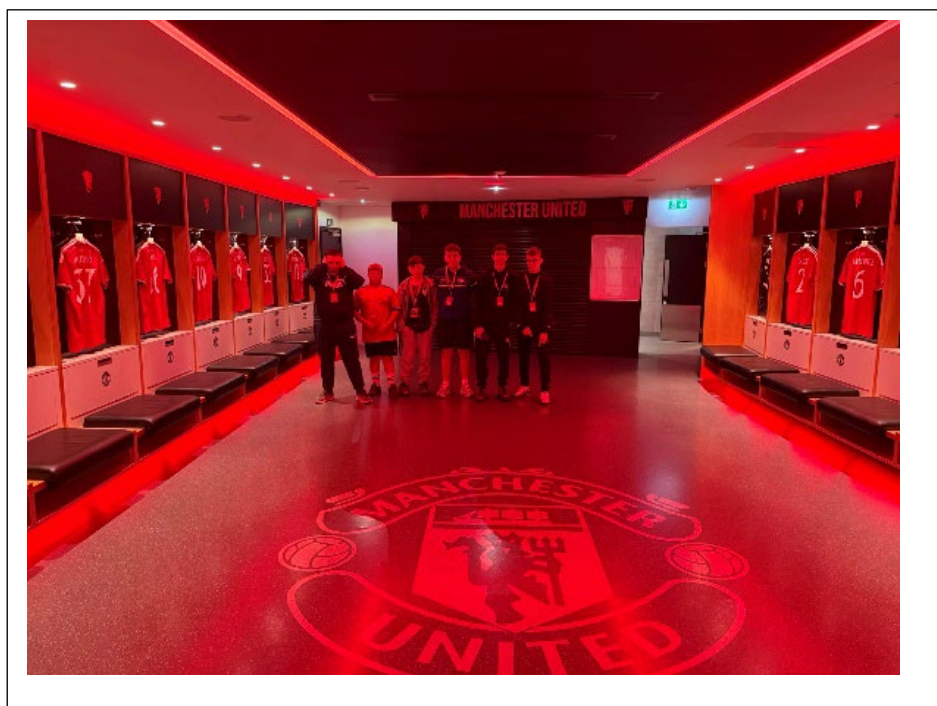


Missing People Project

Learners welcomed representatives from the Missing People charity, including individuals with lived experience of being missing as children. Through powerful personal stories and interactive scenarios, pupils explored the importance of making safe and informed decisions, recognising risks, and understanding where to seek support if they or someone they know is in difficulty. The session also introduced learners to the wide range of services available to support vulnerable young people and their families. Our pupils engaged with the discussions in a mature, respectful and insightful manner, demonstrating empathy and thoughtful decision-making throughout. The visitors were particularly impressed with the learners' contributions, with some pupils even being invited to consider becoming paid Student Ambassadors for the charity during their time at school. We are excited to see where this opportunity may lead and look forward to strengthening our relationship with the Missing

Old Trafford Stadium and Museum Visit

Our school football team enjoyed an unforgettable trip to Old Trafford, home of Manchester United, where learners took part in a behind-the-scenes stadium tour and explored the club's museum. The visit provided an opportunity to learn about the history of one of the world's most iconic football clubs while celebrating the achievements of the game. Throughout the day, our learners were a credit to the school, demonstrating excellent behaviour, respect and enthusiasm. They embraced every opportunity, supported one another and represented the River Centre with pride. It was a fantastic day enjoyed by all, creating memories that will last for years to come.



A Busy and Successful Summer Term at Ty Afon

The Summer Term has been an extremely busy and productive one at Ty Afon, with many exciting opportunities and achievements for our students.

A particular focus this term has been on our Year 11 students as they completed their GCSE examinations and prepared for the next chapter of their educational journeys. Alongside their examinations, students have worked hard to complete coursework and secure the qualifications needed to help them fulfil their aspirations and achieve their future goals. Staff have been immensely proud of the determination, resilience and maturity shown by our learners throughout this important period.

Pontypridd Lido Visit



This term, students also enjoyed a fantastic trip to Pontypridd Lido, where they had the opportunity to experience outdoor swimming in the beautiful surroundings of Ynysangharad War Memorial Park. The visit provided an excellent opportunity for students to engage in physical activity whilst enjoying one of South Wales' most iconic outdoor leisure facilities.

The weather was kind, spirits were high, and students embraced the experience with enthusiasm and confidence. It was a wonderful day enjoyed by all, promoting both physical wellbeing and positive social interaction, while creating memories that will last long after the term has ended.

Learning About Biodiversity



We were delighted to welcome Rebecca Ward, Biodiversity Officer for Blaenau Gwent, who delivered an engaging and interactive session on the importance of biodiversity.

Students developed a greater understanding of the vital role biodiversity plays in supporting healthy ecosystems and explored the incredible variety of invertebrate species that can be found across the UK. Through practical activities, learners used nets to sample local wildlife and investigate aerial invertebrates within our surrounding environment, gaining valuable first-hand experience of ecological fieldwork.

The session also encouraged students to think about how they can make a positive difference in their own communities. Working together, they created plans to enhance our school garden and make it a more welcoming habitat for wildlife, helping to increase biodiversity and support local species.

It was a highly informative and enjoyable experience that inspired students to take a greater interest in the natural world and their role in protecting it.

A Fond Farewell

As our Year 11 students prepare to move on to further education, training and employment opportunities, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our leavers every success for the future. We are confident they will continue to thrive as they take the next step in their lives and we thank them for the positive contribution they have made to the Ty Afon community. Good luck to each and every one of you—we wish you happiness, success and fulfilment in all that you do.

ARC

The year 11 Arc pupils achieving their First Aid at Work certificates



Busy jobs on the Arc site.





A Thank You From the TRC 💙

What a year it has been!

As my first year as Family and Community Engagement Officer comes to an end, I just want to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported our family events and activities.

This year we have enjoyed Coffee Mornings, Easter Afternoon Tea, and lots of opportunities for families to come together and be part of school life. Thank you to all the parents and carers who have attended events, donated items, or offered support.

A huge thank you to all our staff for helping to organise and run events throughout the year, and to Social Services, Education Welfare Officers, Youth Services, health professionals, and other agencies who work alongside us to support our pupils and families.

We are really excited for The River Centre's first-ever Family Fun Day and can't wait to see everyone come together for a fun morning. Thank you to Blaenau Gwent Youth Service, Bianca Bakes, Mogsy Belle, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, Portal Training and Cloud Nine Wax Melts for helping make it possible.

Most of all, thank you for making my first year in this role so special. I feel incredibly lucky to be part of such a caring and supportive school community.

Have a lovely summer and we look forward to seeing you all next year!

Cath Baugh

Family and Community Engagement Officer 💙