

SCHOOL MAGAZINE



AUTUMN 1
EDITION



Respect. Communicate. Enjoy.



Welcome



A Term of Progress and Possibility

As we reach the end of this first half term, I'm delighted to reflect on what has truly been a term filled with progress, creativity, and endless possibility across Ysgol Ty Coch.

From the very first day back, our learners have embraced new challenges with enthusiasm and resilience. Across all departments – Explorers, Adventurers, Navigators, and Pathfinders – we've seen pupils grow in confidence, develop vital life skills, and engage in rich, meaningful learning experiences.

In the Explorers, classes like Dosbarth Glan yr Afon and Pabi Coch have explored themes ranging from Space and Diwali to Welsh culture, with a strong focus on communication, regulation, and teamwork. Their creativity shone through in projects like the collaborative Welsh Dragon for Shwmae Day and the expressive artwork at Seren Fach, which will soon be showcased at the Vale Gala Ball.

Our Adventurers have embraced both the arts and the outdoors. From musical storytelling with Welsh National Opera to scavenger hunts in Forest School, learners have developed vocabulary, sensory awareness, and a love for learning. The use of technology in Pilli Pala has sparked curiosity and boosted confidence, showing how digital tools can enhance inclusive education.

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The Navigators have taken learning to new heights – quite literally – with activities like candle-making, cyanotype photography, and even driving theory practice. These experiences not only build skills but also prepare our older learners for life beyond school. The celebration of Welsh language and culture, particularly through Shwmae Day and outdoor learning at Barry Sidings, has deepened pupils' connection to their heritage.

Meanwhile, our Pathfinders have been busy mastering essential life skills – from cooking and budgeting to navigating the community. Their readiness to apply these skills in real-world settings is a testament to their growth and independence.

Beyond the classroom, our community spirit has been stronger than ever. We marked TA Appreciation Day with heartfelt gratitude, celebrated Harvest Festival with generous food bank donations, and raised funds for Macmillan Cancer Support and through our Golf Day. The unforgettable trip to Llangrannog was a highlight, filled with adventure, laughter, and lasting memories.

This term has reminded us that when learners are given the space to shine, they do so brilliantly. It's been a joy to witness their achievements and the dedication of our staff, governors, and families who make it all possible.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Let's carry this momentum forward into the next half term, continuing to nurture progress and possibility in every corner of our school.

Simon Wilson

kindest Regards
Simon Wilson
Headteacher

Governors



My name is Alison Tovey, and I have proudly served as a school governor since 24th February 2021, taking on the role of Vice Chair for the past two years. My connection with the school spans over a decade, as my daughter Izzy has been part of our school community for the last 10 years. She spent seven years at our Tonteg site and the latter years at the BYC site, giving me a broad perspective on the school's journey and development.

I am deeply passionate about our school and committed to supporting its continued success. Being a governor allows me to help shape the best possible learning environment for all our children, ensuring they thrive both academically and personally.

Seeing Izzy grow and flourish here has shown me how special this school is. Being a governor gives me the chance to give something back and help make sure every child has the same opportunities to succeed.

Alison Tovey

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Who's Who

Senior Leadership Team



Sean Gilbertson
Assistant
Headteacher



Sarah Jones
Deputy
Headteacher



Simon Wilson
Headteacher



Julia Render
Deputy
Headteacher



Lucy Board
Assistant
Headteacher



Lyn Bundy
Business Manager

Wider Leadership Team



Bledwyn Griffiths
TLR Pathfinders



Bethan Saunders
TLR Explorers



Rachael Rogers
TLR Navigators



Emily Rust-Jones
TLR Adventurers



Deborah Ramsay
TA Coordinator



Quality of Life

Meet Meet our Assistant Headteachers



Since joining the school in September 2024, I've really enjoyed becoming part of such a warm community, getting to know our pupils, staff and families. It's been great to work on projects that move the school forward, such as the Pyramid communication approach and the Quality of Life Pathway, both of which place learners at the center of everything we do.

I've also worked with colleagues from other special schools to help shape the new qualifications for Wales for learners with ALN – an exciting opportunity to ensure pupils are engaged in relevant and useful qualifications.

As one of the Assistant Headteachers at Ysgol Ty Coch, I oversee the Navigators and Adventurers departments, working closely with the department leaders, Rachael Rogers and Emily Russ. I love visiting classes and seeing pupils communicating, learning and enjoying their experiences as they prepare for their next steps. Highlights from last year included our Sports Days and Prom, which captured the joy and achievement we strive for. As one of the school's Educational Visits Coordinators, I'm keen to support more classes to get out on educational visits, as these experiences enrich learning and build confidence.

Lucy Board



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Quality of Life



Meet Meet our Assistant Headteachers



As Assistant Headteacher, I oversee the Explorers and Pathfinders progression groups, leading teaching, learning, and wellbeing across our PS1 department. Now in my 11th year at Ysgol Ty Coch, I am incredibly proud to be part of such a dedicated, skilled, and nurturing school community. My role focuses on ensuring that every pupil's Individual Development Plan (IDP) is meaningful, person-centred, and tailored to their unique strengths, interests, and aspirations.

Placing learners at the centre of everything we do is fundamental to my practice, ensuring that each child's voice is heard and that their experiences in school are purposeful, enjoyable, and enriching. I lead on the Quality of Life Pathway, working closely with staff, therapists, and families to promote Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and develop Capable Environments that are inclusive, safe, and responsive to every learner's needs. I also support the development of wellbeing, behaviour, and fundraising initiatives across the department, helping to strengthen our sense of community and provide enriching opportunities for our pupils.

This year, I was especially proud of our pupils who attended Llangrannog. Their enthusiasm, resilience, and teamwork shone through, and it was wonderful to see them challenge themselves, build independence, and create such joyful, lasting memories together.

Gean Gilbertson

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Building Update



We're thrilled to share that our building has recently undergone a refreshing transformation, bringing new energy and comfort to our learning environment.

Two of our classrooms, Aderyn and Afon have been completely refurbished, offering bright, modern, and welcoming spaces for our pupils and staff. These updates include fresh décor, improved lighting, new furniture, and enhanced learning resources, all designed to support a more engaging and inclusive educational experience.

In addition to the classroom refurbishments, our new café and Innovation Centre are also beginning to take shape. These exciting developments will provide fresh opportunities for creativity, collaboration, and community within our school.

The refurbishment reflects our ongoing commitment to providing the best possible environment for learning and development. We're incredibly proud of the results and can't wait for everyone to enjoy the new spaces.



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Highlights from The Explorers



learners at
the centre



Dosbarth Glan yr Afon class have settled back into school life brilliantly after the summer holidays!

This half term, we've explored a range of exciting topics including Space, All About Me, Autumn, Diwali, and Halloween. Through these themes, the children have been developing their regulation, communication, and social skills in creative and meaningful ways.

We've also been working hard to build essential life and independence skills, alongside developing our social interaction and play skills. We're so proud of everything they've achieved so far this term – keep up the amazing work, Glan yr Afon!

enjoy learning



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Highlights from The Explorers



In Dosbarth Pabi Coch, we love getting creative together! To celebrate Shwmae Day, we joined forces to make our very own Welsh Dragon. Our amazing dragon was beautifully hand-drawn by the super-talented Claire Howland, and we had so much fun bringing it to life! We explored lots of different textures and materials to create colourful, scaly details – and with everyone working on different parts, our teamwork really shone through. Da iawn, Pabi Coch!



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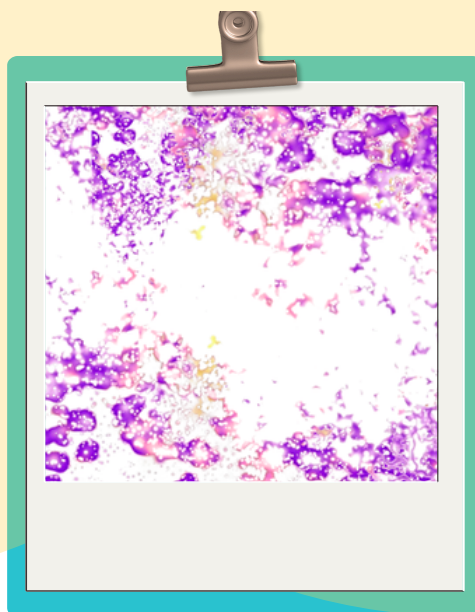
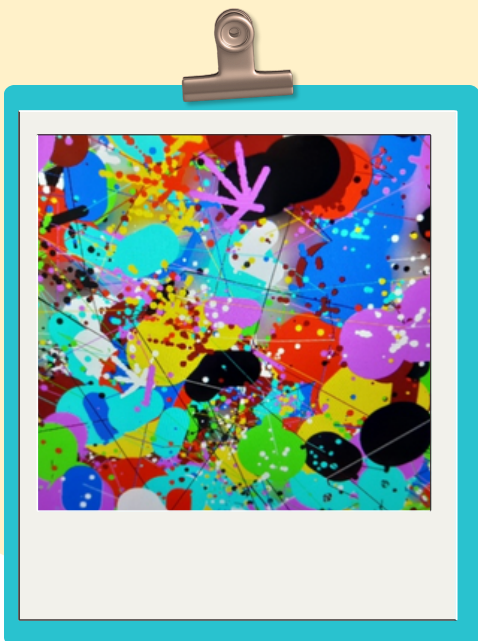
Highlights from The Explorers

It's been a wonderfully creative half term at Seren Fach, where learners have been busy channelling their artistic talents.

Staff at Seren Fach have been thrilled to see such dedication and joy in the art-making process. "It's been a delight to watch the learners take ownership of their work," said one team member. "They've really embraced the opportunity to express themselves, and the results are stunning."

The artwork will take centre stage at the Vale Gala Ball, where guests will have the chance to bid on these one-of-a-kind pieces. Not only will this showcase the talents of Seren Fach's learners, but it will also help raise funds to support our school.

As the half term draws to a close, there's a real sense of pride in the air. Seren Fach has proven once again that when learners are given the space to shine, they do so brilliantly and with a splash of colour.

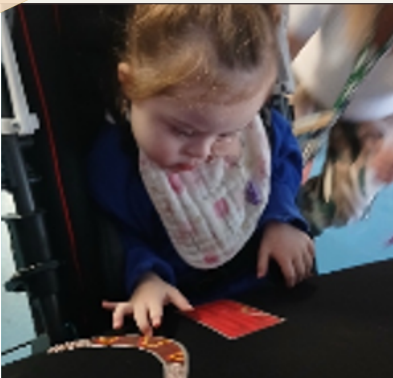


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Highlights from The Explorers



During this half term, Enfys have focused on enhancing and refining their communication and interaction skills using a variety of methods. The primary emphasis has been on supporting learners in developing their ability to make choices and express preferences. Additionally, learners have been provided with numerous opportunities to practise their choice-making skills through activities such as Attention Autism, arts and crafts, music, and Welsh.



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Highlights from The Explorers



Dosbarth Carw have had a fantastic start to the school year! We have been working incredibly hard to develop our communication skills. We've been learning to make choices and communicate throughout the day in lots of different ways.

This term, we've also loved exploring the wonders of autumn. Our sensory garden and our autumn-themed tuff trays have provided lots of exciting opportunities to learn about the season.



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Highlights from The Adventurers



Learners in Dosbarth Cadno have really enjoyed starting work in a new workshop with Welsh National Opera. We have been finding out about a fictional character called Angharad and her cat and have had creative ideas about what she will do in her adventures.



Learners have been singing and signing and creating music. We are looking forward to further communication and music making as this project develops further.



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Highlights from The Adventurers



Lindysyn explored and compared the sizes of planets in the solar system developing vocabulary related to size and had lots of fun whilst doing so!

In our Forest School session, the children had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the outdoor environment through a guided scavenger hunt. Using their observation and movement skills, they explored the natural surroundings to locate a variety of items such as leaves, twigs, stones, and other seasonal treasures.



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Highlights from The Adventurers



This half term, our brilliant Learners in Pili Pala have been making the most of the interactive whiteboard to explore a world of engaging literacy and numeracy games.

enjoy learning

From phonics adventures to number challenges, the children have embraced technology with enthusiasm and curiosity. The interactive whiteboard has become a gateway to fun, focused learning, helping pupils build essential skills in a dynamic and inclusive way.

Staff have noted a boost in confidence and participation, with learners showing increased motivation and enjoyment during sessions.



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Highlights from The Navigators



On Friday one of our KS3 classes enjoyed attending the Morfydd Owen festival in Pontypridd. Morfydd Owen was a Welsh composer who had a passion for making hats out of lampshades. The parade was in memory of Morfydd Owen. What a wonderful display of colour and music. Our pupils had the best time.



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Highlights from The Navigators



This term in Dosbarth Blodau we have been learning about woodland wonders. Nocturnal and Diurnal animals. Did you know that women lose more hair in the autumn? I found that out on Google! We also learnt about autumn and we were hunting for autumn items down the sensory garden.

Written by Maddie



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Highlights from The Navigators

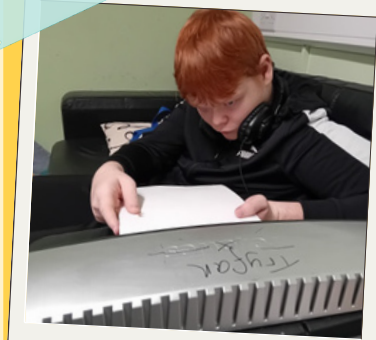


In Dosbarth Tryfan, we have been exploring an alternative photographic technique called cyanotype, which uses the sun's UV light to create negatives on paper. We've also been making quite a mess while creating our own paper, using recycled sheets from the school printers!

We're hoping to turn our creations into cards to sell at the school fayre. Another lovely ongoing activity is candle-making, with the aim of selling them at our upcoming fundraising gala in the Vale at the end of the month. Sixth Form smells wonderful!

Our new teaching assistant, who teaches youth boxing in his spare time, has been working with our pupils using boxing gloves and pads. It's been a fantastic way to burn off some energy.

We're also very excited to share that one of our pupils is nearly ready to take his driving test. Staff have been supporting him with his theory practice, and we're all incredibly proud of his progress!



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Highlights from The Navigators



Dosbarth Cwningen have had a fantastic time exploring our Woodland Wonders topic so far!

We've been learning all about woodland habitats and the fascinating animals that live there. Using natural materials, we created our very own woodland habitats in the Sensory Garden, which helped bring our learning to life.

We've also discovered what different woodland animals eat and explored their diets in more detail. To celebrate Diwali, we used natural resources to design beautiful Rangoli patterns, combining creativity with cultural learning.



As part of our music work, we've been experimenting with woodland-inspired sounds, composing our own rhythms and melodies to represent different animals. We enjoyed celebrating Shwmae Day, where we sang along to our favourite Welsh songs. We have also enjoyed reading our class book *The Wind in the Willows*.



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Highlights from The Pathfinders



Barcud Coch have been exploring Welsh colours as an exciting extension to our Shwmae Day celebrations. Building on our prior classroom learning, we've taken our knowledge outdoors, applying it in a real-life context during our visit to Barry Sidings. As part of our term's topic, 'Natural Worlds', we've been identifying colours in the natural environment and naming them in Welsh—spotting glas in the sky, gwyrdd in the trees, and melyn in the autumn leaves. This immersive experience has deepened our understanding and brought the Welsh language to life in a meaningful and memorable way. We even had time to spot these colours in the park and enjoy playing on the park equipment with our friends.



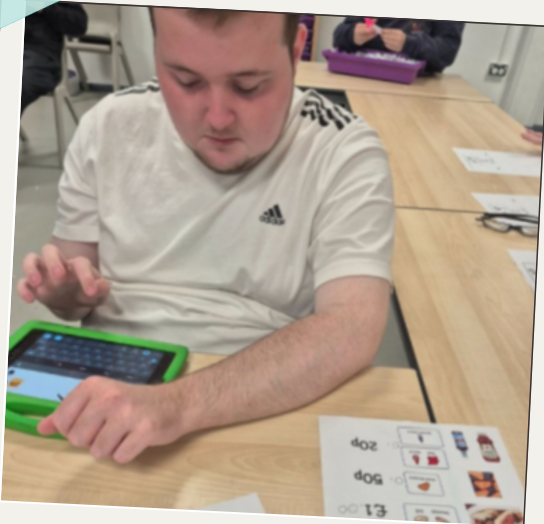
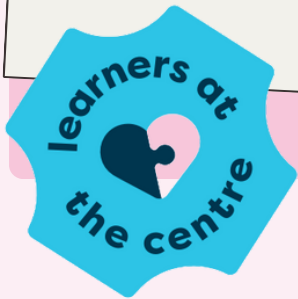
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Highlights from The Pathfinders



The Learners in Graig Ddu have been working really hard during these first few weeks back at school, further developing their core life skills. From handling money and cooking tasty meals to getting to grips with everyday household tasks once again, it's been brilliant to see their confidence grow and their independence shine through. Now, they're ready to take things to the next level by using these skills out and about in the community. We're looking forward to the coming weeks, applying our skills to buy goods from the local supermarket and access our local sport and leisure facilities once more.



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TA Day

At Ysgol Ty Coch, we proudly marked TA Appreciation Day with heartfelt recognition of our outstanding Teaching Assistants. These dedicated professionals play a vital role in supporting our learners and enriching the learning environment across the school. Their commitment, compassion, and tireless efforts do not go unnoticed. Whether offering one-to-one support, assisting with classroom activities, or helping pupils thrive in their individual journeys, our TAs are truly indispensable. We extend our sincere thanks to each and every one of them, your contribution makes a lasting impact, and we are incredibly grateful.



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Thank You Diolch



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We'd like to extend our deepest gratitude to all the amazing parents, carers, and staff who generously donated items towards our food bank collection as part of our Harvest Festival. Your kindness and support make a real difference in our community, and we're so proud to be surrounded by such thoughtful and compassionate people. Thank you for being part of something truly special.



We raised £120 for Macmillan Cancer Support as part of the World's Biggest Coffee Morning!
 A huge thank you to everyone who donated, baked and brewed, your support means the world and helps make a real difference.

We're thrilled to share that we've now collected the funds raised from our recent Golf Day! A huge thank you to everyone who took part and supported the event.

Special thanks to our amazing partners Pinnacle and Woody's Lodge for their continued support of our school community. Your generosity and partnership make a real difference.



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Llangrannog

Llangrannog Adventures: A Trip to Remember!

What an unforgettable experience our learners had at Llangrannog! From the moment they arrived, the excitement was palpable and it only grew as the days went on. Whether it was tackling the high ropes, racing down the ski run, or simply enjoying the beautiful coastal scenery, every learner embraced the adventure with enthusiasm and joy.

The trip was packed with laughter, learning, and lasting memories. It was wonderful to see friendships flourish, confidence grow, and smiles all around. The children showed incredible teamwork, resilience, and positivity throughout, a real credit to themselves and the school.

A massive thank you goes to the amazing members of staff who made it all possible. Your dedication, energy, and care ensured that every child had a safe, fun, and enriching experience. We couldn't have done it without you!

Llangrannog 2025 – you were brilliant!



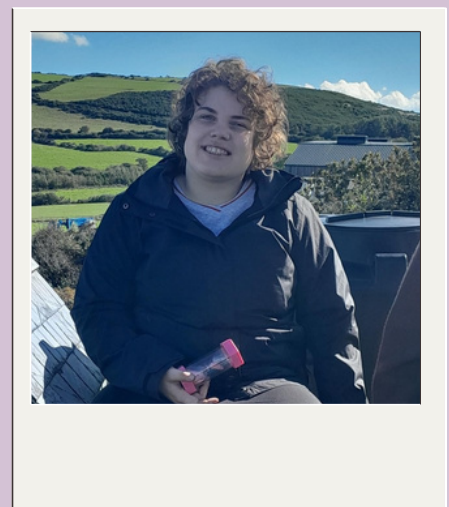
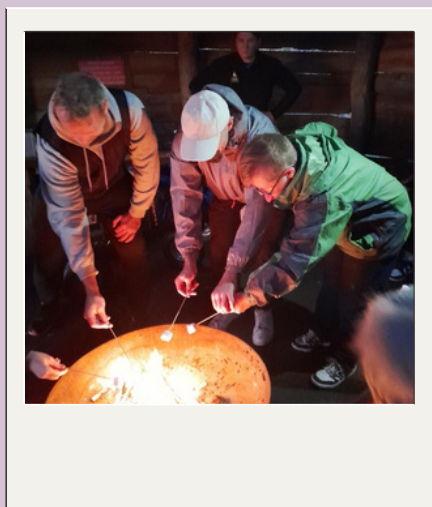
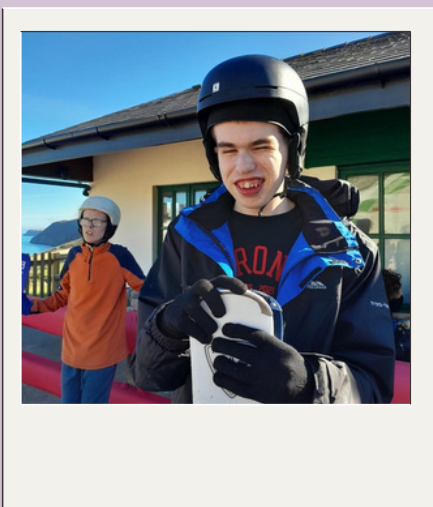
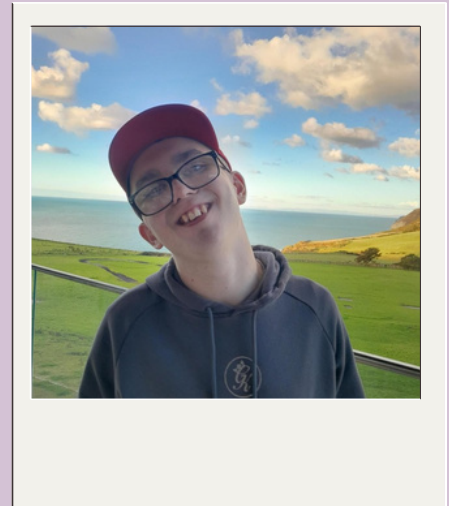
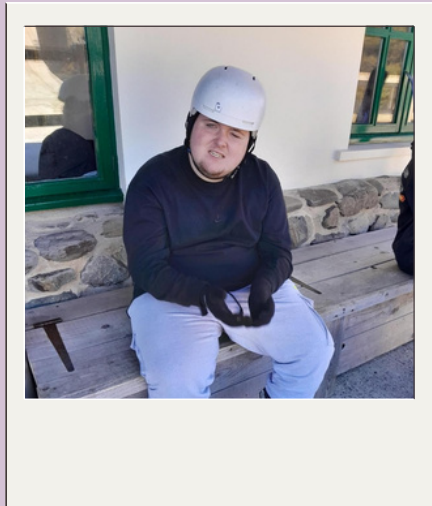
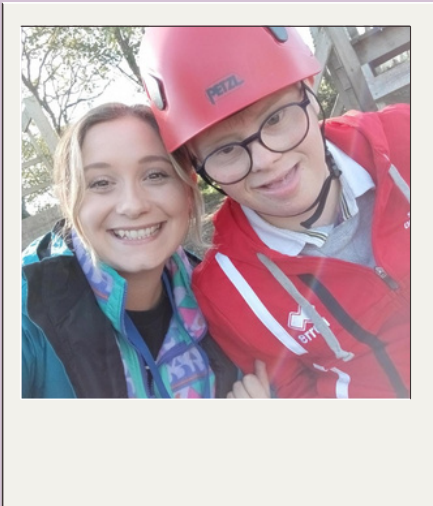
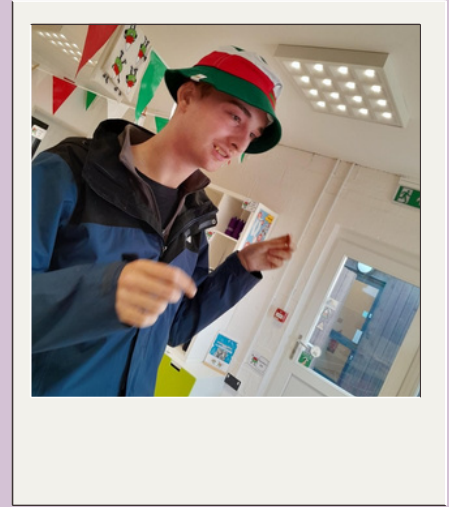
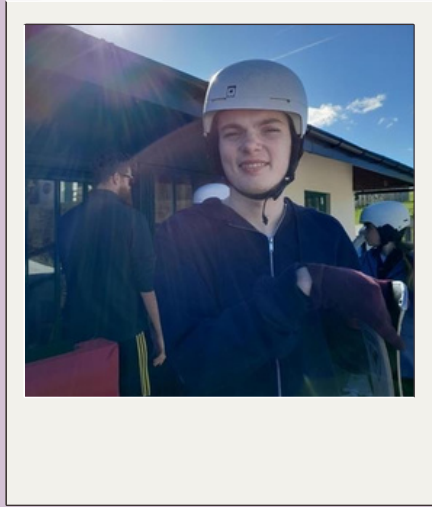
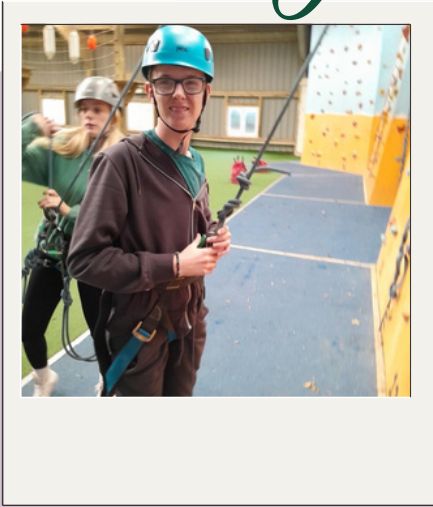
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Clangrannog

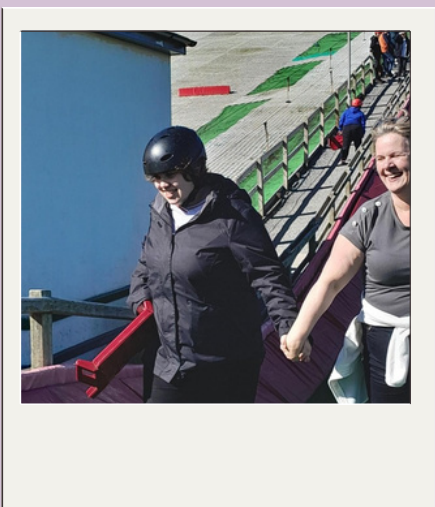
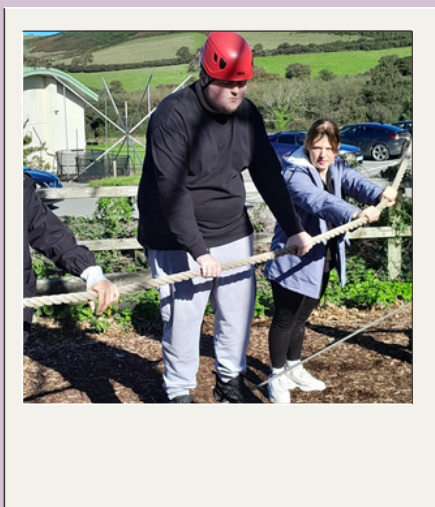
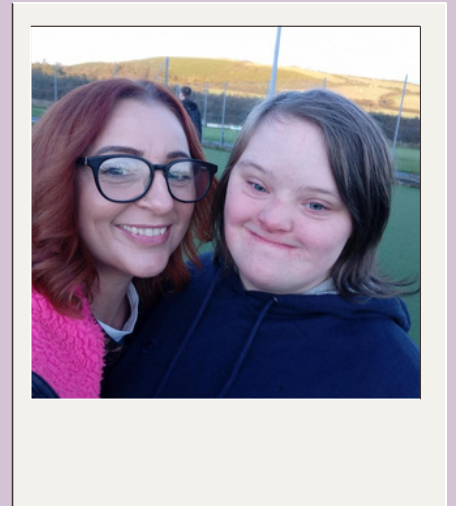
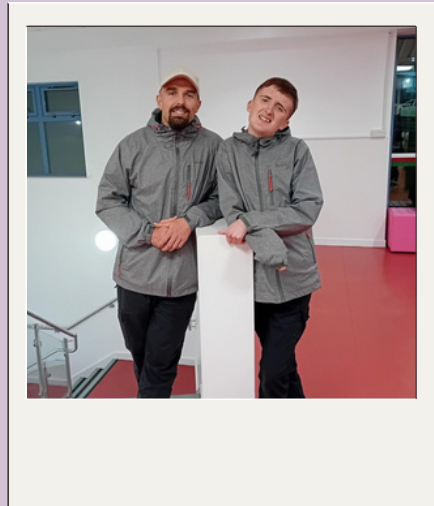
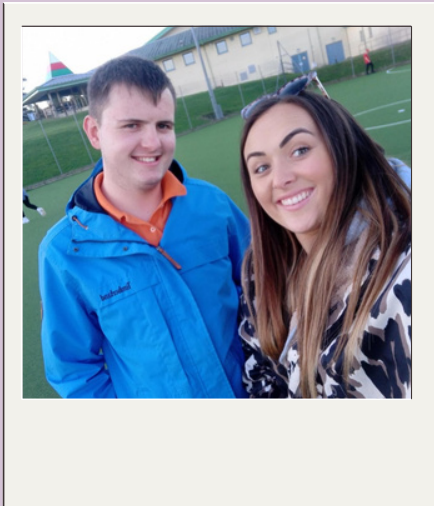
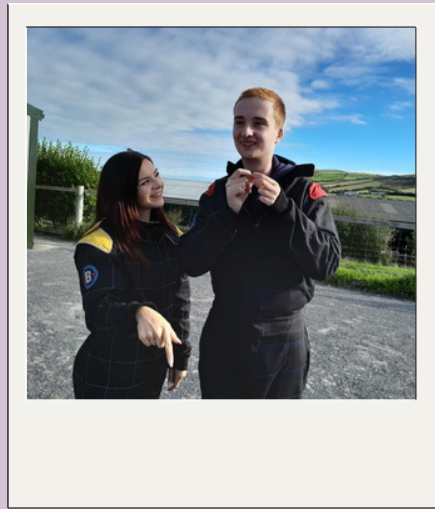
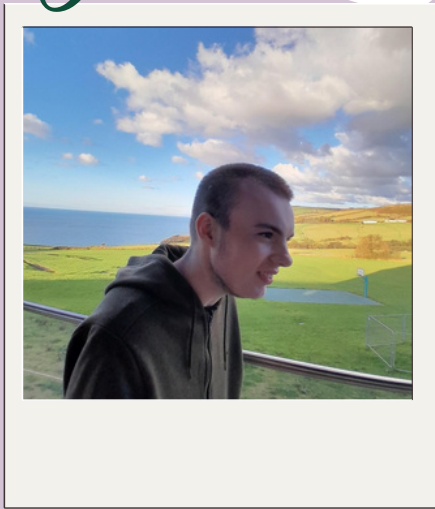
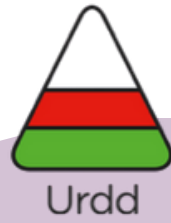


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Clangrannog



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The Gallery



Cariad by Seren Fach

Dewi the Dragon by Pabi Coch



Rangoli patterns by Cwningen



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School Diary Dates 2025 – 2026

Inset Days

Monday 1st September 2025	Monday 23rd February 2026
Tuesday 2nd September 2025	Monday 5th January 2026
Friday 24th October 2025	Monday 20th July 2026

Autumn Term Diary Dates

Calendar Event	Date	Where?
Collection for Harvest	15/9/25	Tonteg Site Buarth y Capel Site
Llangranog Residential Trip	22,23 & 24/9/25	N/A
14-19 Learning Pathways Qualifications Parents Meeting	18/09/25 3.30pm	Tonteg Site
Parents Evening	26/11/2025 3.30-5.30pm	Buarth y Capel Site Tonteg Site
Children in Need (Own Clothes Day)	14/11/25	Tonteg Site Buarth y Capel Site
Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Market	12/12/25	Buarth y Capel Site Tonteg Site
Sensory Garden Christmas Carol Service	16/12/25	TBC Tonteg Site
Christmas Concerts Explorers and Adventures Navigators Buarth y Capel Carol Service	8 & 9/12/25 10 & 11/12/25 10 & 11/12/25	Tonteg Site Tonteg Site Buarth y Capel Site

Spring Term Diary Dates

Calendar Event	Date	Where?
St Davids Day	2/3/26	Tonteg Site Buarth y Capel Site
World Book Day (Fancy Dress / Own Clothes Linked to a Favourite Book)	6/3/26	Buarth y Capel Site Tonteg Site
Red Nose Day	TBA	Buarth y Capel Site Tonteg Site

Summer Term Diary Dates

Calendar Event	Date	Where?
Move Week (please send children to school in suitable clothing)	w/o 18 th May	Tonteg Site Buarth y Capel Site
Buarth y Capel Sports Day	TBA	TBA
Tonteg Sports Day	TBA	TBA
Summer Fete	27/6/26	Tonteg Site
Year 6 Leavers Assembly	6/7/26	Tonteg Site
Parents Evening	8/7/26	Tonteg Site Buarth y Capel Site
Buarth y Capel Leavers Assembly	9/7/26	Buarth y Capel Site
Tonteg Leavers Assembly	10/7/26	Tonteg Site

Internal Transition Days (Pupils meet new teacher, spend time in new class if moving).	17th June 2026 24th June 2026 1st July 2026
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Key

w/o = Week of

TBA = To Be Announced

TBC = To Be Confirmed



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