



YSGOL GYMUNEDOL
PORTH
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Porth Community School

Middle School Newsletter - October 2019

IMPORTANT DATES

Friday 25th October

Break up for Half term holiday

Monday 4th November

Pupils return to school

ADVANCED NOTICE

Thursday 16th January

Year 7 Parents Evening

Monday 24th February

INSET day

Thursday 27th February

Year 8 Parents' Evening and
Options Evening/Careers
Talks 3.30pm & 5pm

ATTENDANCE

Pupil attendance is always something we monitor very carefully. Although we are aware that pupils should not be in school when they are unwell, when they are well, they should be here every day.

Please support us by ensuring your child comes to school every day when they are well enough to do so.

A message from the Headteacher

It has been a real pleasure reading the Middle School newsletter and seeing all the fantastic opportunities that our pupils have had so far in both their learning and extra curricular activities. Have a lovely half term and I look forward to seeing you all after the holidays.

I am delighted to report that all of the pupils have settled incredibly well into school this half term and have got used to new routines and have made lots of new friends.

We have had a busy half term in Middle School. On Thursday 3rd October, we welcomed over 140 families to Porth Community School during our Year 5 and Year 6 Open Evening. A huge thank you to all the pupils who supported the evening, you were a credit to the school!

Darcy and Marshall from Year 8 have also been visiting all our feeder primary schools and our Year 6 pupils in Porth Community School to deliver Transition Assemblies. In addition we have had our annual 'Meet the Form Tutor' evening, where all Parents/Carers had the opportunity to meet their child's form tutor.

I am pleased to announce that we have now selected a fantastic team of Transition Ambassadors and Year 8 Prefects. Thank you to all those pupils who applied. All pupils had to apply through a formal application and then had an interview. We were extremely impressed by the quality of both applications and interviews. A huge congratulations to those pupils who have been selected.

Last year all pupils in Middle School selected six values that they felt were important. Each half term we focus on one of the chosen values. Our value this half term is **Respect**. Every week form tutors nominate one pupil to receive this award. A postcard is then sent home to each nominated pupil. Well done to those pupils who have received an award-da iawn!

Thank you once again for working with us to ensure our pupils are safe and happy and encouraged to 'aspire together, achieve together' as they work towards their goals and ambitions.

I hope that you have a great half term holiday and we look forward to seeing you all on Monday 4th November.

Mrs S Cribb
Head of Middle School

What has been happening?

Modern Foreign Languages

We had a successful open evening where prospective pupils enjoyed themselves ordering from the languages café with Mrs Williams, and also enjoyed a picture presentation of our lovely trips to Barcelona and Disney, as well as the very first Eisteddfod. We discussed how languages are delivered here at Porth, and met many parents that had been taught in the very same class room!

We celebrated European Day of Languages on Thursday the 26th of September with a European cheese tasting event. Pupils enjoyed some smelly Roquefort, and some Welsh black coal cheese, amongst many others! It was a brilliant event (sorry - my jokes are terrible - Mr Stephens). I would make some more, but you won't be able to camembert it! Languages have an exciting trip planned for Year 8 to Normandy in 2020. Pupils will have the opportunity to experience plenty of French culture during the month of June. We hope to have letters out before Half Term. Watch this space!



Languages club for Year 8 has started Monday lunchtime week 1, with the opportunity to try games and activities in lots of languages and to plan events for the year ahead.

In Welsh, Year 7 pupils are covering a 'Pontio' (bridging) module to brush up their skills after the long summer break. Once complete we will be studying 'Hobiau' (hobbies). In MFL, Year 7 are enjoying an introduction to Spanish, learning about Spanish culture, and learning to greet in Spanish. Pupils will be looking forward to a café lesson soon, where they are able to order food through the medium of Spanish.

Year 8 - our topic is 'Gwyliau' (holidays), and pupils are learning to talk about where they went, with who and how they travelled. In MFL, Year 8 pupils are studying the 'Studio 1' modules in the French language, initially covering 'Mon Autoportrait'. Pupils will also experience a French café lesson!

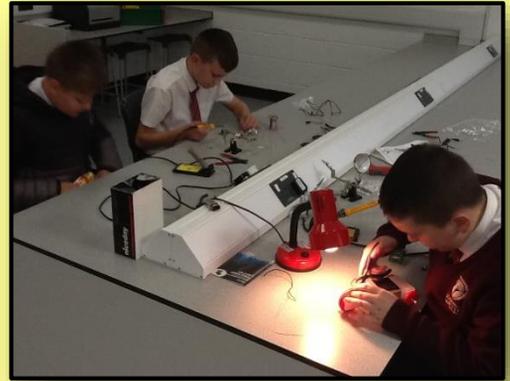
Madame Williams/Mr Stephens

What has been happening?

Creative Design

All pupils in Year's 7 and 8 are now well underway in their project work within Creative Design.

This year's projects in Year 7 include Animal Desk Organisers, Cushions and Healthy Lunch Snacks.



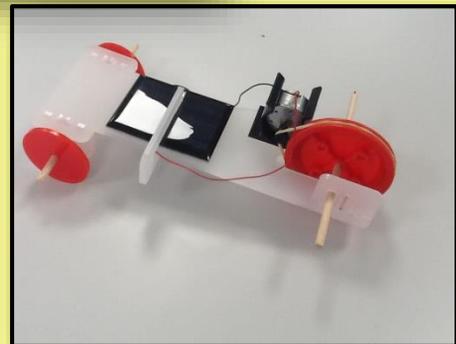
Year 7 developing their skills.

In Year 8 pupils will be producing Personalised Kit Bags, Mini Travel Games and Multi-cultural dishes.



Our after school clubs have also started well. Pupils are enjoying the opportunity to improve their cooking skills and building solar powered buggies!

Solar powered buggy project



What has been happening?

English

In **Year 7**, we have been studying Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, much to Miss Regan's enjoyment! We have been using Harry Potter to become confident readers, learn about different styles of writing and improve our comprehension skills. Next term, we are going to be studying Other Cultures. In **Year 8**, we have been studying the novella: Stone Cold. Through this we have been learning about different styles of writing, creating speeches and improving our oracy skills. Next term, we are going to be studying Gothic Horror.

Miss Regan

Maths

Years 7 and 8 have made a fantastic start to their Maths work this term. The pupils have impressed their teachers with their hard work in a variety of Number topics. We look forward to moving onto different topics and carrying out investigative and enrichment activities in the lead up to Christmas. Just a reminder that all pupils have access to Times Table Rockstars, an online game where they can become rock stars and complete times table battles against children from all around the world. If any pupils have not yet received their log in information for this, please ask them to see their Maths teacher. We also have a lunchtime Maths club (every Tuesday in E13) where we will be taking part in the Puzzle of the Week challenge, also against children from all around the world. Wish us luck!

Miss Pennington

Science

This half term, Year 7 pupils have been learning all about what it takes to be a scientist and how to keep themselves and fellow students safe in the lab! They have had the opportunity to use new equipment and prove their safety skills by conducting investigations and obtaining their Bunsen burner licences.

Year 8 have been studying ecosystems, learning how different animals and plants adapt to survive both predators and harsh environments, and even designing their own adapted organisms. They will continue to develop their science investigation skills this term by looking more closely at plants and how they produce their own food through the process of photosynthesis.

Budding scientists also have the opportunity to expand their knowledge as part of our new and exciting STEM club. Run by Miss O'Callaghan and Miss Davies after school every Tuesday, the club welcomes all Nythbran pupils to try their hand at a range of activities, from growing their own bacteria to creating and designing rockets or even studying the wildlife living in our very own nature garden. Students should speak to a member of the science department if they wish to join!

Miss Davies/Miss O Callaghan

What has been happening?

World Studies

In Years 7 & 8 pupils study Geography, RE and History alongside PSE as part of a new World Studies programme. Each term will centre on an overarching theme which is individually linked to all 3 humanities subjects and PSE sessions. Each subject is taught separately and builds to an assessment or project. From September to Christmas, pupils are studying:

YEAR 7 TERM 1: Identity

- PSE: Personal and National Identity
- Geography: Describing Places
- History: Life in Medieval Wales & England
- RE: Diversity & Worship

YEAR 8 TERM 1: Human Rights

- PSE: Racism, Rights & Responsibilities
- RE: Prejudice & Discrimination
- History: Child Labour
- Geography: Global Poverty

Mrs Bowling

Performing Arts/Drama

In Year 7 pupils have been studying Mime and Movement, looking at the importance of movement in performance and the use of mime as a form of communication.

In Year 8 pupils have been studying the disappearance of Jo, looking at a mystery about a boy who disappears from home. Pupils have been taking on the role of Detectives to help solve the case. They are also creating a news report.

On Thursday 12th December, Porth Community School are putting on a pantomime 'Emperors New Clothes'. During this evening, there will also be a musical section. There are a number of clubs available including Choir, Band Club and Guitar/Ukele Club during lunchtimes. Drama club started on Monday lunchtimes, which has been really well attended.

Auditions for Christmas concert are happening on the week beginning 18th November.

Mrs Ince/Miss Gronow

Message from the Canteen

Thank you to everyone who has joined us in our newly refurbished canteen. Please look out for our special menus! We look forward to feeding you all next term. Year 7 and Year 8 manners have been superb.



Mrs Gibby and Team Porth

World Mental Health Day

On Thursday 10th October, pupils were invited to wear yellow for World Mental Health awareness. We managed to raise a wonderful amount - thank you to all that donated.



What has been happening?

PE Department



It has been a very successful start to the academic year here at Porth, with a large numbers of pupils engaging in both lunch time and afterschool activities. We as a department are extremely excited for what is going to be a brilliant year.

We welcome a new member of the PE department Mr Greatrix, who has adapted to life at Porth very quickly and has settled in well.

He has been delighted to have some lively debates about the Rugby World Cup.



We are also very fortunate to welcome Mr Betts who has been successfully coaching the afterschool football here at Porth.

PE lessons at Porth have been centred around rugby and fitness testing this side of the half term. The boys have worked extremely well in fitness testing, with a special mention to Alfie who achieved the highest Year 7 bleep test score of 12.3, and Jaden with 11.6. These are amazing scores considering an excellent score for a 14-16-year-old is 12.6, da iawn boys! The girls will be looking to do these same tests after half term, which I am sure they will look forward to ...

What has been happening?

PE Department



The boys are fortunate to have two male staff teaching them during lesson which allows for two types of activity. Competitive and Inclusive, all students are able to perform in a safe environment which aligns with their individual's needs. For example, currently within rugby we have a contact and a tag group, all learn a variety of skills in these lessons which are centred around the game being played. Fixtures have been coming thick and fast for the middle school boys, with rugby and football dominating. It was amazing to see that over 30 pupils attended the first Year 7 football game at Ferndale which was won 3-1. Football is always a popular sport here at Porth, which is fantastic.

The Year 8s won their first game away at Ferndale winning 5-2. They were the first year group to play in the Welsh Cup. Their competitors - Cyfarthfa brought their 'A' game that evening, they were a strong and powerful side. Nonetheless, the boys did not let this get to them during the first half, which saw us lead 1-0. The second half was another story with a lack of organisation and accuracy of passing enabled Cyfarthfa to start putting on the pressure ending the game 6-2 to them. Following this, both year 7 and 8 enjoyed an interschool game which saw the year 7s come up on top with an 8-7 victory. Their winning streak did not finish their as they played their first game of the welsh cup which was won 12-2 with special mentions from Jensn, Dylan who scored some brilliant individual goals and some good leadership shown from Keelan.

28 pupils attended the first Year 7 rugby game at St. Johns. The game was a hard fight, but a well drilled and established St. Johns side grabbed the half time lead of 9 tries to 1. However, the boys showed extreme determination and grit to win the second half by 5 tries to 2 but ultimately, this was not enough. Following this defeat, the boys were hungry for a victory and Nantgwyn became their next target. The boys were unstoppable when they faced a rather large Nantgwyn side, with a special mention to Alfie, Ben, Dylan , Keelan who excelled and led the boys to a 44-12 victory at home.

Looking into what is to come after half term. The girl's netball league is starting, which has seen fantastic number at both lunchtime and afterschool training. Mrs Isaacs has been working extremely hard within lessons as well to make sure the girls have the best possible chance moving into the new season. This means that the girls will have lots of opportunities to participate in afterschool games and training, so please come a long and gain some amazing experiences.

What has been happening?

During this past term, the middle school girls have been working exceptionally hard during PE in netball and fitness testing. Netball clubs run every Tuesday lunchtime and Monday and Tuesday afterschool. Currently the numbers at the trainings have been amazing, with an average of 30 girls participating across the school, which is brilliant as we prepare for the Junior Netball league that has started in the new term.



Mrs Isaacs wanted to give a special mention to the effort, determination and overall commitment from the girls involved in school clubs and PE lessons. The girls have been working hard to prepared for this difficult league, but there is no doubt the girls will be tough competitors. We are also very fortunate to have specialist coaches from the Rhonnda netball team come in and coach the girls every Tuesday. These coaches are fantastic with the girls and are really pushing their ability levels and tactic knowledge during these sessions. Within PE lessons, the girls have been working very hard on improving their knowledge and tactical awareness of the sport and have shown an incredible amount of development over the past eight weeks.



Another special mention to the senior netball squad members Halle, Cari, Evie and Neave. These girls have been fantastic this year in regards to the standard they have set as role models to the middle school girls. During training sessions, they have been involved in coaching and refereeing small groups and games. These girls have become further role models with their fantastic achievement of being selected for the Rhonnda Netball Squad, which is a highly competitive and high ability team. Neave has also been selected for the County squad which is a fantastic achievement. We would like to say a huge congratulations and thank you to those four girls for their achievements and help during this half term.

Next half term the girls look to hit the ground running with the Junior League starting up this week. They will also be carrying on with fitness testing/training with the introduction of the rugby season. This is a great opportunity for the girls to get involved in with some rugby tournaments being played during the Christmas half term.

What has been happening?

Middle School

Attendance Matters

It is essential that you contact the school before 8.30am on the day your child is absent. Please call the school on 01443 682137 and leave a voice mail message at any time. The school operates a 'First-Day-Calling-System' to ensure that parents and carers and school coordinate any absences. Our Attendance Officers will contact you if your child is absent and we do not know the reason.

To help with the smooth running of the system, please ensure you follow the school's procedure:

- Inform the school if your child is going to be absent from school because of a dental or medical appointment at least two days in advance of the appointment so the register can be marked appropriately.
- Telephone the school before 8.30am if your child is unwell or has an emergency appointment. Please give an indication of approximately how many days you anticipate your child being absent from school. If your child is absent for more than three days, please contact the school on the fourth day to keep the school informed. Also if your child is absent following a weekend please telephone the school on Monday.
- Provide a doctor's certificate if the illness is prolonged.
- Advise the school if your child is going to be late for any reason.

If a child is ill during the school day they will be taken to a First Aider, where they will be seen by a designated member of staff. A decision will then be taken whether or not to contact parents or carers.

Please contact our attendance officers, Miss Davies or Miss Hollyman as soon as possible if your child is absent. You can contact the school by either telephoning us on 01443 682137 or by emailing hollymanj1@hwbmail.net or daviesr1531@hwbmail.net.

During the last 2 weeks, Year 7 and Year 8 were set a challenge to try and achieve 100% attendance for the last two weeks of half term. Pupils who were successful were rewarded with early lunch passes (Year 8) or Dominoes vouchers (Year 7).

Events like the '2 Week Challenge', are going to become a regular occurrence at Porth Community School in order to help raise the profile of the importance of attending school.