

Ysgol Maesteg School

Summer Newsletter/Newyddiadur yr Haf 2007

Headteacher's Letter

Welcome to the Summer Newsletter. I hope you will enjoy browsing through the various pages which will give you a flavour of the large range of opportunities on offer to our pupils. The Summer Term has seen the usual array of successes in many areas as illustrated in our Annual Presentation Evening and PE Sports Achievement Evening. Celebrating our pupils' achievements with parents and the wider community is, as always, a highlight of the year. Many congratulations to the pupils on their remarkable achievements.

A number of colleagues move on at the end of this year—Miss Laura Davies, Mr Joe Jones, Mrs Sam Kingdon, Mrs Deborah Gwynne, Mr Kerry Preece and Mr John Williams. I would like to wish them well in their new posts and their new ventures.

This has been an action packed year. The successful Estyn inspection followed by the cutting of the first clod of the new school and an abundance of successes bodes well for the future.

Please note the senior school site is having a new roof and will therefore be off limits for the duration of the Summer, apart from the examination results days on 16th August for A levels and 23rd August for GCSE. I look forward to seeing you then.

Thank you to everyone for the continued support of Maesteg School. I wish you all a great Summer.

Ms A Carhart



Maesteg School Textile students were thrilled to have their GCE and GCSE Coursework/examination work displayed in "Terry Fabrics" City Road, Cardiff as a form of inspiration to other students and schools in the area. While it was on display, David Emmanuel paid a visit to the shop! Their work will be displayed until the end of term. Well done to all involved.



Dates for your Diary

End of Term : 20 July
Results days: 16 & 23 August
Start of New term : 5 Sept
INSET : 26th October
Half-Term : 29 Oct—2 Nov
End of Term: 21 December 07

WARNING!

An incident occurred in the Pen-coed region on Sunday evening, 8 July, where a man in a black car approached a young boy telling him that his mum had asked him to pick him up and take him home. The young boy cycled away but the car followed him for a while until the boy came across a friend of the family. This incident has been reported to the police. Please make children aware that they need to be cautious *at all times.*

Budding Chefs....

Year 11 students (Daniel Finnemore, Richard Reed, Wayne Harris and Kristian Jenkins) receiving their Catering Certificates from former Rugby International, Mark Jones at Bridgend College. Richard Reed also received the Student of the Year Award.

Congratulations!

English News..



On Friday, 13th July, Ms Turner took 9M1 English set to the Dylan Thomas centre in Swansea where the pupils were given a talk. They then went on to Cwmdonkin Park, where Dylan Thomas based his poem "Hunchback in the Park" and pupils had the opportunity to produce some descriptive writing in the style of Thomas.

Ms Turner

Maths News...

In March, 30 pupils from 8M1 took part in the National Junior Maths Challenge. This competition consists of 30 questions where pupils solve mathematical problems. Marks are awarded for each correct answer but 3 marks are subtracted for incorrect guesses.



There were many pupils who did well to accumulate over 30 marks but the pupils who came top this year were Harriet David and Patrick Morgan with 44 marks each. Both pupils will be receiving a National Bronze certificate.

The same class is completing a new investigation that links History and Maths through the theme 'Titanic'. Completed investigations will be sent off and will hopefully achieve the Level 1 Numeracy Key skill award.

Core Purpose: To raise self-esteem and develop "Learning to Learn" skills in order to become Lifelong Learners

Science News

On Tuesday 6th February 2007, the Science faculty was pleased to welcome Y Touring Company to the school, to perform their latest play "Every Breath". The performance consisted of a dramatization followed by an open debate session, where year ten pupils were given the opportunity to discuss and argue the issues concerned with animal testing to produce medical drugs. The aims of the session were to inform the audience of the range of scientific, social, moral and political views surrounding the issue, to encourage and stimulate informed debate and to provide an impartial forum for learning through debate. The visit was a huge success and the pupils very much enjoyed the experience.



The dramatization was based around a normal family and their differing opinions with respect to animal testing, which are brought to a head when the youngest member of the family suffers a severe asthma attack. After the dramatization the characters began the debate and the pupils were encouraged to take part and share their views. Many pupils got involved, and really relished the opportunity to quiz the actors on their viewpoints. Following the performance, the pupils continued their discussions in their science lessons, and became confident in their ability to formulate and argue their opinions.

The visit from Y Touring Company fulfilled part of the "thinking behind the doing" requirement of the new GCSE science course. AQA science requires pupils to be equipped to question, and engage in debate on the evidence used in decision-making and to understand the societal aspects and the limitations of scientific evidence. The performance was also expected to impart some of the knowledge criteria of the course, such as the fact that scientists are developing new drugs and that these need to be thoroughly tested, and that this testing is done first on animals and then on human volunteers. Based on the feedback from the pupils about the whole experience, the science faculty is confident that the performance was worthwhile, educational and enjoyed by all. The science faculty also hopes that the theatre company will come and visit them again next year, and perhaps bring a new, thought-provoking play to perform.

Ms Oxley

ATTENDANCE.....

The school is delighted to inform parents and carers that the overall attendance has increased by nearly 2% in 2006-2007.

Our current attendance is 90.3%. This has been achieved due to many factors, such as the introduction of lesson by lesson electronic registration, the importance of attendance supported at home and the work of agencies such as the Educational Welfare Service and Communities First.



However, the Welsh Assembly Government Attendance Target is 93%, meaning we must continue to aim for improvement.

Please can you continue to support your child's attendance by:

- Contacting the school that morning if your child is absent through illness. If they have "recovered" by 10am—send them to school!
- Our attendance percentage drops on a Friday!, Please don't keep them at home on Friday if they were ill on Thursday just because it is the end of the week. Staff are monitoring patterns of illness and will speak to you if they notice your child regularly taking the same day off.
- Please avoid term times for holidays. Despite what your child may tell you, they will miss important work. You should complete a holiday form before booking the holiday. The school retains the right to refuse to authorise the request, especially if there are ongoing concerns regarding attendance.
- Please continue to emphasise the importance of attendance. A 90% attendance rate is equal to one day off every 2 weeks, or a total of 4 weeks off in a school year!

Thanks for your continuing support.

J.D. Williams (Asst Head)



‘Never too old...’

**Bryngarw House
Summer Fun for All Generations.**

Tuesday 21st August 10am - 2pm

Grand Parents, Children and Grand Children are invited to come along to Bryngarw House for fun and frolics in the Summer Sun to celebrate the young and old.

If you fancy fun in the sun why not call Claire Bird on 643672 to find out more about our treasure hunt, nature bingo and guided nature walk.

You can even meet some of the dogs from the Dogs Trust, try out some new hobbies and enjoy summer music

(LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE TRANSPORT NEEDS)

Places are limited on some events so for **REGISTRATION** and further information call Claire Bird on 01656 643672

  

Welsh Department news....

A big thank you to Kurt Vincent, Lewis Hurley, Katy Skinner, Katie Bickle, James Rogers and Ryan Glave (year 7) for their help in the Primary Schools with the Welsh transition lessons. Miss James said they were a shining example to the year 6 pupils. Diolch yn fawr!

During October 1st-5th all 6 form Welsh pupils will have the opportunity to attend a Welsh language course at Nantgwrtheyrn. Pupils will take part in various activities based around the course. The course aims to enable pupils to use the Welsh language in various settings in the local community and enhance their experience of the Welsh culture.

There is an opportunity for all GCSE full course pupils to spend the weekend at Glanllyn, North Wales in November. Activities during the weekend will include building rafts, bowling, sailing, climbing...and of course a disco. Numbers are limited, so anyone who is interested but hasn't yet paid a deposit please see Miss James for details.



Drama News....

Lower School Drama students have provided delightful entertainment this term show-casing two separate mini performances in Yr 7 & 8 school assemblies. The evident talent that exists in lower school was demonstrated when the group devised and created two separate performances. The first was entitled "Daisy's Delightful Daydreams" which was a light hearted entertainment sketch that tracked the extraordinary life of a young girl Daisy who is whisked off into a magical world in order to find a friend.

The other was entitled "Danger" and was designed specifically to raise awareness of the possible dangers that face our pupils over the summer holidays. The piece was made to promote safety as a short "Theatre in Education drama."

Drama clubs are currently running most break and lunchtime sessions in Cynwyd Hall with Miss Davies where everyone is welcome.



Yr 10 Science Trip!

On the 11th May 19 year 10 triple science pupils visited the University of Glamorgan to attend 'Hands on Science' with Miss Martin. The pupils took part in workshops on Forensic Science, Cardiff Museum and Electronics. In the Forensic science workshop pupils had to wear contamination suits to take finger prints and dust for prints which they thoroughly enjoyed.



Presentation Evening 2007

On May 10th at 7pm, Maesteg School held its Annual Presentation Evening. The hall at the Senior School was full to capacity with proud parents, staff, governors and special guests, watching equally proud pupils receive a whole host of awards. The guest speaker was Janice Gregory, A.M. for who set the tone for the evening with a speech that focused on achievement. This was followed by the presentation to almost 200 pupils of awards relating to a wide variety of achievements from examination success to contribution to school and community life.

A new feature, this year, was the inclusion of a Community Focused School's award by the Police to 2 pupils from 1 of our Feeder schools – Garth Primary – reflecting the close links Maesteg School has with its local community.

Many of the prizes were the result of sponsors' very generous donations, without which we could not have rewarded so many pupils. Our thanks to all those who contributed to the success of the evening and congratulations to the students on their wealth of achievement, both inside and outside the school.

** Our sponsors were:*

Mr. B. Thomas, J.P., Mr. David John, Maesteg School PTA, Mr & Mrs Bryant, Mr & Mrs Barnett, The Inner wheel of Maesteg, Maesteg Operatic Society, Maesteg Lions Club, Communities First, Noddfa, Llangynwyd Middle Council and the South Wales Community Police.

TECHNIQUEST visit.....

Monday 9th July 2007, the science faculty of Maesteg Comprehensive were very lucky to welcome the Techniquest group in to school to do three one hour sessions with year ten pupils on gene technology. The sessions included a short dramatisation from the Techniquest team followed by a group discussion.

The pupils were asked to decide whether certain features such as eye colour, alcoholism, intelligence etc were the result of genetics or not. Pupils then had to rank the genetic code of famous people in order of how scientifically valuable it was. Finally pupils had to role play a scenario where a young boy had committed petty theft and the police had taken his DNA. Pupils had to decide in groups whether they felt that taking and storing the genetic code of criminals, particularly juveniles, was acceptable or not.

The sessions raised a lot of interesting moral, ethical and societal issues and the pupils engaged very well in all of the activities. This project is of particular relevance to year ten as the new science GCSE launched this year requires them to be able to be equipped to question and engage in debate on the evidence used in decision-making and to understand the societal aspects and the limitations of scientific evidence.

The performance was also expected to impart some of the knowledge criteria of the course, such as what gene technology is and what medical and ethical impacts it will have on future generations. The Techniquest group commented on how forthcoming the pupils were with their opinions and how maturely they handled the potentially controversial issues.

The Techniquest group also said that they really enjoyed the sessions and that Maesteg pupils were the **best** they had seen so far because they were such good communicators and had excellent interpersonal skills.

The science faculty were very pleased with the outcome of the day and hope that Techniquest will visit again with their next project.

Ms Oxley

TECHNIQUEST

Community Clean Up!

On Monday 9th July pupils from both the lower and upper Eco Schools Groups, took part in a community "litter pick". Pupils demonstrated pride in their local community by taking action against unsightly litter. Pupils worked with the community police officers and spent the afternoon collecting discarded litter. Despite the torrential rain pupils worked hard and did an excellent job.

The school was very grateful to those pupils who volunteered to be involved and were rewarded by the interest and positive comments received from the local community.

Ms Tranter



Maesteg School celebrate Sporting Success with the Community at the Annual Sports Presentation Evening 27th June 2007

"Young Sports Stars Strive for Excellence"



Kristian Jenkins being presented by Mr. John Williams (Assistant Head)



Bethan Hopkins being presented by Mr. Phil Jones

Pupils from Maesteg Comprehensive School have excelled in the all areas of physical competition over the past twelve months.

The young people have made huge strides by entering competitions and achieving success at: local, national, international and even Commonwealth level. The achievements just keep coming and coming.

At a special evening, held at the Senior School, to celebrate the achievements of remarkable young athletes (who have worked so hard to extend a positive image of themselves both here and in other communities), the event was a showcase of the talent that thrives and prospers in every part of the Llynfi Valley.

In attendance to congratulate our young people were; the Welsh Assembly Member Janice Gregory, her worshipful the Mayor of the County Borough of Bridgend, Councillor Mari Jones and her escort Violet Cody, Governors and invited guests from the Community.

The guest speaker was Miss Nicole Cooke, World number one professional Cyclist. She spoke about her extraordinary career, her successes and the importance of continuing at your studies both physical and academic.

Ms Anne Carhart (Headteacher) and Mr Peter Heatley (Head of Physical Education) hosted the event. They both congratulated and thanked the pupils, parents, teachers and the many others in the community, who made possible all the achievements being recognised.

The winners received a variety of awards ranging from ties to badges, cups, plates and certificates. What follows is a complete listing of all the awards presented and the awards winners. Well done again to all:

P. G. Heatley



Congratulation to the U14 school netball team who won the County Championships this year, beating approximately 45 schools.

An excellent achievement. Well done!

Three netball players have been selected to play in the Welsh netball 'Tier' system next season, this means they have been selected in the top 24 players for their age group. Beth Hopkins, Chloe Cole and Cathy Bastian are just a few steps away from playing for the Welsh National team. Good luck to them with the forthcoming season. We look forward to you getting your first caps ladies!!!!

Ms Matthews

The Girls of 1951 – 1957 Reunited!

On Saturday, 7th July, a few of the Girls of Llwynderw (1951 – 1957) Secondary Modern (as it was then called), attended a tour of the Lower School and enjoyed an interesting and memory provoking tour of the school.

They were Lynwen Roderick (nee Thomas), Rosalind O'Neill (nee Medway), Claire Elsmore (nee Wells), Joyce Gidding (nee Vincent) and Margaret Davies (nee Lewis). They witnessed many changes in the school (no computers in their day!)

Lena Bumford, who approached the school for a tour and organised a reunion at Maesteg Town Hall on Saturday, 30th June, (which was very well attended) was unable to attend the tour, due to a recent knee operation. We wish her well! It was our pleasure to meet and greet them and allow the memories to flood back!