

YSGOL
MAESTEG



Newsletter

Autumn / Winter 2019

Welcome to the latest edition of our Maesteg School newsletter. A bumper Autumn/Winter schedule means pupils and staff have been as busy as ever and our digital newsletter hopes to give you an insight on the recent news and events. Enjoy!

> A crowd gather in *The Atrium* for our *Year 6 Open Evening*

Year 6 Open Evening

At the start of term, we welcomed our local primary school pupils and their families to Maesteg School for our annual open evening. Year 6 pupils were able to experience our learning facilities first hand, enjoying classroom demonstrations from every department and in turn, learning more about our

successful transition programme. Sixth form students were on hand to guide families around the school, with year 6 pupils seemingly impressed with what they have in store come September 2020. "I really enjoyed this evening," said a pupil from Plasnewydd.

"Visiting each department made me really excited for starting at **Maesteg School** - it was amazing to watch the *Back to the 80's* rehearsals in the hall too."

We can't wait to welcome back Year 6 pupils for *Transition Day* in 2020 - we're glad they enjoyed their evening with us this term.

< Year 7 pupils demonstrate a *Lunar Eclipse* with *Oreo* cookies at the *Year 6 Open Evening*.



Strive Awards

2019

< Chloe Bowen, winner of
The Army Shield Award



This Autumn we once again celebrated the success of our students in our annual *STRIVE Awards*. The evening began with a beautiful vocal performance from **Sophie Thomas**, followed by an opening speech from Head Student, Isobel Hocking-Watts. We were fortunate enough to have past pupil Catherine Jenkins give us an insight into her time at **Oxford University** and how her career has panned out since leaving, she was an inspiration to us all. Mrs **Clarke** hosted the awards and it was evident that with over 120 pupils being recognised for their efforts and resilience, that **Maesteg School** pupils are *Motivated to Strive*. The talent on display was outstanding with further performances from **Ella Powys** and **Charlotte Lenehan** and a dance performance from **UDC**.



> Ethan Seymour presented with the
Headteacher's Strive Award
plaque by Helen Jones

As always we celebrated the success of pupils in subject areas but this year we saw the introduction of the *Character Awards* celebrating our students respect and kindness to others and resilience and determination in their attitudes to learning.

The final awards were presented by the *Headteacher*, **Helen Jones**. The *Army Shield Award* is always given to a student who has shown bravery and determination and this went to a very deserving **Chloe Bowen**.



> Head Student, Isobel
Hocking-Watts addresses the audience

The Headteacher's Strive Award plaque was awarded to Ethan Seymour. Ethan volunteers in the local community and has proved himself an asset to Maesteg School and the wider community.

The evening was completed with a thank you from the Head Boy and Head Girl, Alex Powys and Eve Wilson.

> Saffron Hall & Ruby Davies ~
Winners of the Rotary Award

We have many supporters who we, as a school, would like to thank but a special mention to **The Rotary**, **Mr and Mrs Hart**, **Huw Thomas** and our guest speaker **Catherine Jenkins**. A very well done to all receiving awards and the *year 12* and *year 13* students along with **Mr Shaw** who helped **Mrs Clarke** ensure the night was a success.



What's APPnin'?!?

Year 8 pupils **Grace Williams**, **Libby Anthony**, **Lily Howlett** and **Melike Taniyan** recently entered a competition to create an app that would make a positive impact in the local community.

The girls agreed on an idea that could potentially help people suffering with dementia and so began to work out how they could implement their ideas into a functioning app.

The main idea of their app, named *My Little Memory*, is to make lists to help the user suffering with dementia remember what it is that they wanted to do that day. Family members who would have a shared log-in, would be able to upload photo's, music and memories so that their loved one can stimulate their memory as they use the app.

There would be a voice control feature similar to that of Siri or Alexa in which the user can navigate the app in a simple

manner – like having a conversation with family or a friend. The girls have come up with the line “Time doesn’t stop, so why should memories,” which is a heartfelt reminder about the impact dementia has on people’s lives.”

“Our teachers have entered us into several competitions,” said Lily. “Vodafone are offering prize money for our school and the chance to help us fully develop the app.”

To help promote the app, the girls are working on their own website and are also holding a fundraiser day this December for the **Alzheimer’s Society**. The society invited the girls along to their *Christmas Café*, which gave them the chance to speak to people who had dementia as well as their families. The feedback was really positive and the girls can’t wait to bring the app to life! A wonderful idea from a special group of pupils.

Robin's Great Bridgend Bake off! 🏠

This November, Year 7 pupil **Robin Owen** was invited to Bridgend College’s *Entrepreneur Week* after someone at the college had heard about Robin’s business venture. Robin started baking independently in the summer, selling her cupcakes to neighbours and anyone hungry enough to buy one! She would bake a batch of 24 cakes and they would usually sell within the hour. Robin was thrilled to be asked to the event, especially after hearing Alana Spencer (winner of *The Apprentice*) would be running a Q&A. Robin sold her cakes alongside Alana, almost selling out due to their popularity! Robin was later able to ask Alana for some advice on the world of baking and was described by the former *Apprentice* winner as a “lovely little baking extraordinaire.”

Robin is currently putting together a big Christmas order together for her customers, hoping to expand her business by opening up her own bakery one day – Well done Robin, you’re an inspiration to us all!

> Robin Owen (Year 7) with Alana Spencer, owner of *Ridiculously Rich*



Young Carers get baking



Sticking with the theme
Of baking, a team of our *Young Carers* got
together this term to talk about what it

means to be a carer and to bake some Halloween goodies for a
cake sale. The pupils are raising funds to go on a trip next
summer and the hope is they raise enough money to go to
Oakwood. We are really proud of their efforts, not just
working together in their team but for the care they provide



their family members
whilst also coming to
school to study - Amazing
young people, well done
all! If you would like to
donate anything to our
team as they raise funds
for their trip, then
please get in touch. Their
hard work didn't stop at

Halloween, as the team have been baking again. This time they
turned their hands to making gingerbread men with the
assistance of **Miss Thomas**, for the local primary school
children who visited Maesteg School at Christmas - they were
certainly well received (as you will find out later in our
newsletter.)

To continue on the baking theme, **Mrs Petit** has been running a
Christmas Cooking Club this term, where *key stage 3 pupils*
have been enjoying making sweet treats for Christmas

including a variety of delicious treats that can easily be made again at home for their families over the festive season. Recipes included Christmas Tree Cakes, Christmas Fudge, Festive Jam Tarts and Nutella Christmas Tree Desserts. "The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the club and I've been told that their families really enjoyed tasting their wonderful bakes," said Mrs Petit.



Christmas in the Community

Maesteg School loves to celebrate Christmas each year by opening up the doors of the school to our local community for a day of festive fun, food, music and fellowship. This year was like no other, as we welcomed a group of pupils from **Caerau Primary** for a Christmas party and a chance to meet the ever jolly Father Christmas. Sixth form and



Staff were on hand to create Christmas crafts with the pupils before a good old game of *pass the parcel*. The focus of the day was about bringing our community together and enjoying the festivities, whatever the circumstances. "It can be a challenging period," said **Catherine Lewis** from **Caerau Primary**. "Some of our pupils have a tough two weeks off school and we like to ensure we can give them the best we can before we break up. This event is definitely part of that."

After the children had passed on their Christmas wishes to Santa, **Maesteg School** pupils were then host to our local pensioners, performing Christmas Songs to elderly residents who had come for a bite to eat and to socialise.



"Bringing the community

into our school is a massive deal, as we are a small tight-knit group and it's good for everyone to get to know each other," said *Deputy Head Girl* **Katie Stooke**.

"It's nice to see everybody receive a gift and some festive food," added *Senior Prefect* **Tegan McNamara**.

The event has been running for several years now, with the main aim to connect all members of our community, **Mrs Scarr** was really pleased with how it went, telling *ITV news*: "It doesn't get any more authentic than this really. What we saw here with the pupils communicating with the elderly and the young. It's really important that our pupils learn what charity is, what giving back is and what doing something good

in our community is as well.”

Christmas can be a hard time for many, so looking out for each other in the community ensures the joy of the festive season is shared by all. A huge well done to all pupils and staff involved, in what was another heart-warming Christmas party.

It's' The Most Wonderful Time...



Continuing with Christmas, our *Music Department* put on our annual *Christmas Concert* this week for a delighted audience. With Advent readings, congregational carols and Christmas poems too, it was certainly a festive affair.

Parents and Governors were treated to the sounds of our *School Orchestra* as well as some beautiful vocal arrangements. The Christmas concert has become a highlight in the school calendar and everybody left that night feeling ready for the holidays. A big thank you to the pupils for getting us in the festive mood,

your hard work and dedication was evident for all to see!

Sticking with **Maesteg School's** musicians, the ***Bridgend Youth Orchestra*** is every Friday between 6 – 8 pm at ***Y Dderwen*** and is available for all young instrumentalists.

They play a variety of musical theatre, film and seasonal pieces that appeal to everyone! This year, the Christmas concert was held in **St David's Hall** which was an outstanding venue in which to play.

A big well done to Bethan Williams, Cameron Loveday, Harly

Videan, Courtney Hembrow and Alice Stoyles for participating in the concert and representing Ysgol Maesteg.

To get involved in future events, please see Mrs Rees or a peripatetic teacher for more information.

RAISING MONEY - GIVING HOPE: CHARITY WORK @ MAESTEG SCHOOL



We've been raising money for *Children in Need* this term at **Maesteg School** with an array of events, which saw pupils dressed up as builders and

lifeguards amongst other things. The *Sixth form* tried once again, but fell to defeat against staff in a frenetic game of *Heathball*.

With stalls and activities a plenty, pupils raised an impressive **£1008.13** for Pudsey and all of the good causes he supports - Well done all!

As we've come to expect from our male members of staff, November has become the '*month of the mo*' and this year was no exception. As well as growing some furry facial attire, there was a **Movember** bake sale, a classic game of *name the bear* and a raffle too.

After a busy month of fundraising, our 'movellous' men raised **£1301** which goes to support suicide prevention, the fight against cancer and poor mental health. A huge thank you to everyone involved.



MOVEMBER





RAISING MONEY - GIVING HOPE:
CHARITY WORK @ MAESTEG SCHOOL

MAC CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISER

The *Maesteg Alternative Curriculum* (MAC) pupils have been busy this winter, creating Christmas crafts to sell at the Christmas Concert. From tree decorations to large wooden trees, the MAC base had it covered, with a special mention to **Brandon Dobbs, Rhys Dobbs, Lewys Sinnott and Cameron Fraser**



for their hard work. Their efforts paid off when they raised £295 in the last week of term, selling to parents and staff. **Mr Rhys James** who heads up the MAC base was delighted with their fundraising efforts. "All of the pupils have come together to produce some lovely pieces," said **Mr James**.

"We raised a lot of money, some of which we want to share with **Mrs Clarke** who is collecting for *Care for Uganda*."

Care for Uganda is a charity **Mrs Clarke's** year 10 Business class and **Mr Jones** form class are supporting, with the aim being to sponsor a child and fund their education for years to come. Pupils have been making *Christmas Eve plates* to raise money and help spread the seasonal good will.

"There has been so much fundraising going on this term, we are so proud of our pupils and the work they've been putting

in,” added Mrs Clarke.

There are still fundraising events going on as we type but special mentions must go out to Mrs Davies form who ran a *Cancer Research* bake sale.

There have been several collections for the local foodbanks, with Mrs Clarke & Miss White

taking sixth form down into Maesteg town to drop the food parcels to those who need them most this winter time.

Maesteg School's OASIS base raised £316.00 to help fund trips, and the care provision for pupils

Mrs Chown's form made a huge hamper for the Dog's trust and were just another example of our pupils embracing the theme of 'helping others.'



F.A.M.S Families Around Maesteg School

You are cordially invited to the next Parent Voice meeting at Maesteg School // Wednesday 22nd January 2020 // 5.30pm

In this meeting, come and work with us to:

- + Plan for 'Parent-Friendly' Status
- + Build the Alumni of the Future
- + Hear feedback on areas discussed last time
- + Ask questions you may have for the Headteacher

Together we continue to strive for excellence in the experience your child has at Maesteg School

#maesteg20
#motivatedtostrive



THE SCITECH EXPERIENCE



This term saw four groups of year 8 pupils present their findings about *climate change* and *the problem with plastics* to parents and governors at **Maesteg School**.

Two teams from both **Maesteg School** and **CCYD** came together to present after an innovative project was assembled between the **SciTech** team (*Computing, Science and Technology*) after developing work for the upcoming new curriculum.

Pupils researched climate change & plastic pollution, then developed a variety of methods to prevent the problem growing whilst educating others in the process. During the project, *Science pupils* looked into the causes of *global warming* and the ways in which humans can reduce it. They then looked at the impact of human activity and global warming on *Biodiversity*. Meanwhile, the *Computing pupils* researched

weather data and the changes in temperature and rainfall between 1991 and now. The *Technology pupils* focussed on the use and re-use of plastic materials, looking into how perceived 'one use' plastic can be moulded into other things.

Head teacher Mrs Jones joined Governors and parents to enjoy the presentations from our teams. **Mrs Matthews, Assistant Head** said, "This is the combination of hard work from teachers and pupils within **Maesteg** and **Y Dderwen**, where the curriculum has been developed to align with the 2022 Curriculum for **Wales**. All of us were thrilled to see each group present with confidence and clarity."

"It was great to see and a fab start of things to come from the new curriculum," added **Mr Rees, Head of ICT**.

MAESTEG SCHOOL PRESENTS:

BACK TO THE 80'S

Wednesday

5.2.20

Thursday

6.2.20

19:00 Main School Hall

Tickets: Adults £8.00 / Concessions £6.00

From the era that brought the world the Rubik's Cube, Max Headroom and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles comes the "totally awesome" musical Back to the 80's. In the style of movies such as Back to the Future, Ferris Bueller's Day Off and The Karate Kid, Back to the 80's is a nostalgic romp through the greatest hits of the decade. Back to the 80's is a high-energy musical with contemporary flair that that will not only delight and amuse audiences of any age, but inspire the next generation too!



#maesteg20

#motivatedtostrive

TICKETS ON



SALE NOW

CARE & COMPASSION FOR OUR COMMUNITY

This December Maesteg pupils Saffron Hall, Shannie Bowen and Abbie Steele volunteered their time for the *BCBC Olympage* at the *Bridgend Life Centre*. Our three pupils are AYPD (Active Young People Department) Ambassadors and decided to volunteer within their roles to help out at this wellbeing event. After the opening ceremony, the girls lead activities including *Cognitive competitions*, table tennis, basketball, curling and bowls. In between activities, our pupils were on hand to lend support to the athletes who were a mixture of ages from 40



all the way up to 85! “It was really good fun to care for the competitors and help them enjoy their day,” said Saffron. “It was a really rewarding day and we will certainly be helping out again next year.”

The girls’ day started at 8am and they worked right the way through to the afternoon, taking care of 350 people in that time. BCBC’s Operational Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing, Jane Thomas was thrilled with the dedication from our pupils. “They were truly outstanding. They worked so

hard preparing for the event, during the competition and they were the last volunteers to leave after clearing. They were intuitive, creative, super hardworking, patient and dedicated to task,” said Jane. “This is the fourth time we have organised the event and requested support from ambassadors but never have they been as good as your three young women.”

The event has aided the girls in finding their purpose, as they have come to find that giving back to the community is something that motivates them and inspires them as they consider their calling and future plans.

“It was amazing to see everyone enjoying themselves so much,” added Shannie. “We are hoping to encourage other pupils to support events like this in the future and to lend a hand to those who most need it.”



Four pupils from years 7 and 8 recently won the **Bridge FM Community Award** after starting up their own youth café in Caerau. **Cody Shearan, Grace Thomas, Tyler Harris & Cameron Davies** were all nominated after their efforts to create a safe and fun place for local teenagers to gather after school on a Monday evening.

“There’s nowhere to catch up with your friends in Caerau and it’s too easy to get caught up in trouble when you’re hanging around the streets,” said Cody.

“After a conversation with a local café, we made plans with the **Caerau Development Trust** to run a *Youth café* on a Monday for ages 11-14.”

The four pupils had a meeting with the owners of the café and by the end of November the *CDT Youth Café* was officially open for the young people in our community. Pupils have visited the café from all over the *Llynfi valley*, which is a credit to the hard work the pupils have put in. As well as food and drink, there is a pool and football table for people to play on and in January there will be laptops there for pupils to do their homework or just generally stay connected with family and friends.

And if setting up the café wasn't enough, our inspirational young people won the *Bridge FM Community Award* for all of their efforts. "We met the *Mayor of Bridgend*, Cllr **Stuart Balwin**, who was very impressed with the work we'd done," added Cody. "He congratulated us on our award and told us that we could definitely be working in a role like his one day!"

"The *Invest Local Caerau* group have invited us for another meeting to see if they can support our vision."

"We hope that the number of visitors to the café continues to rise in 2020 and that we can continue to be an important place in the heart of Caerau."

A fantastic effort from our pupils to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people in Caerau: An outstanding achievement.



Headteacher's Message

There is clearly a theme to this term's newsletter - that of 'Community'. As a school we work hard to create the sense that our pupils are part of a community and that by serving their community, they better themselves.

It is truly heart-warming to see so many of our pupils giving freely of their time to help and support others with the aim of making a positive difference to their lives. From the young people who supported the BCBC Olympage event, to the 'Youth Works' cafe it is clear that that young people of Maesteg School work hard to give something back to their community expecting nothing in return. I am genuinely humbled by their selflessness and kindness - qualities that each and every one of us should aspire to possess.

The new year will see the launch of Wales' new curriculum where the focus will be on producing pupils who are 'Ambitious and Capable', 'Healthy and Confident', 'Enterprising and Creative' and Ethical and Informed'. As a Pioneer school we have embraced this change and are well on our way to promoting these qualities as you can see from the examples covered in our newsletter. As ever, our children could not achieve these outcomes without your support; so on behalf of our school community, 'Thankyou' and 'Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!'

Helen Jones

Headteacher Helen Jones



- Pupils drop off food at the Local food bank this December. Students have been embracing the Local and wider community by serving others, raising funds and sharing their talents.

ADVENTURES

- WITH -

ART & PHOTOGRAPHY



Earlier this term, *Art & Photography* students took to the road in search of inspiration from the sights and sounds of **London**.

Pupils started the day in **Trafalgar square** at the *National Portrait Gallery*, where they came face to face with paintings from Matisse, Monet and Van Gogh (See below.)

It was incredible to see these iconic artworks up close and personal and the pupils were blown away by what they experienced. Before long, they were back on the coaches and heading west towards *KEW Gardens*. The gardens were looking spectacular in the autumnal sunshine, which gave our young photographers the opportunity to capture some wonderful images which will aid them in their studies.

It was a fruitful trip, as pupils came away freshly inspired with ideas for their coursework and the year ahead!



A RUGBY REPORT

And finally, we switch our attention to sport and a rugby report. We are celebrating this term with our *Year 9* rugby team who are the ***Ospreys East Plate*** winners for 2019. The boys won a hard-fought battle against **Llangatwg** after a splendid performance from our forwards, who **Mr Evans** described as 'Immense!'

Year 9 *Ospreys East Plate* winners 2019

"All the boys put in an excellent shift, but there were some real stand out performacnes in the group," said **Mr Evans**.

"Chris Edwards and Coel Curling were outstanding all over the field and Morgan Little captained the side really well too."



"We've had another successful term on the field," added **Mr Evans**. "Ethan Morris, Jack Tozer, Sam Creber, Dewi Hughes and Mason Watkins have all made

the ***Under 15 District*** and are showing real promise in their development. We are blessed with some real talent at **Maesteg School** and I'm always impressed with the attitude and commitment shown by the boys."

