



GARETH WRIGHT

As this newsletter was being prepared the school was shocked and saddened by the death of a Year 13 pupil, Gareth Wright, from injuries received in a road traffic accident on Tuesday 28th March. Gareth had joined the sixth form from Tywyn School in September 2004 and had made excellent progress at Penglais. He was expected to achieve grade As in his A levels and had a place at Swansea University to study History with American Studies. He was a well liked, quiet, reliable student with a dry sense of humour. It is desperately sad that someone who could look forward to so much has been taken away in such a shocking manner. Our thoughts and sympathies are very much with Gareth's family and friends. He is being remembered in assemblies at school and there is a book of remembrance in the foyer in which pupils can record their messages.

CURRY AND QUIZ NIGHT

A most successful and enjoyable evening was had by all who attended the Curry and Quiz Night on Friday 3rd March. Even the heavy snow, which threatened to maroon us all, did not deter the hardened veterans of this annual event. There was, as usual, more than keen competition and the curry was, as ever, superb. Many thanks to Naheed Kaderbhai, Alison Evershed, Leo Lewis and the PTA committee who organised everything and to Brian Clissold and Phil Jones for their masterly compering of the quiz. The event raised a total of £971 for school funds.

PLANS FOR 2006-7

Although the overall budget settlement (excluding provision for special education needs) was only 2.2% this year – not even enough to cover all the pay awards, the huge increases in power prices and other financial pressures – the governing body has approved a working budget which delivers the following priorities for 2006-7:

- Maintenance of a broad curriculum at all levels including additional vocational courses in Key Stage Four, protection of minority subjects at GCSE and A Level and provision for 10 teaching periods for AS level subjects in Year 12 (instead of the current 9). This is an important set of priorities which guarantees a wide range of options in Years 10-13.
- A substantial investment in site development in 2006-7 and 2007-8. The repair, maintenance and cleaning budgets had been hit hard in recent years. Last year we were able to restore previous cuts. This year we can start more ambitious investment to enlarge the site manager's team and make the school a more attractive environment.
- A doubling of the furniture budget to replace damaged stock.
- Continued investment in ICT. Last year we purchased 150 new computers and installed 35 classroom projectors. This programme is being maintained with at least 50 more new computers this year.

That we have made any progress at all is due to the efficiency savings built into our plans last year.

WANTED –A GOOD HOME

..... for 25 German pupils from Altkönigschule in Kronberg from Sunday 21st May to Friday 26th May (5 nights). They are willing to pay a fee for hosting the pupils as paying guests. For further information please contact Mr. A. Pearson at the school.

S This appeal stems from an article I read one evening in December
U 2004, whilst the television news was showing images from Dafour in
D Sudan. The magazine article was inviting teachers to become in-
 volved in a visit to Sudan in order to gain an insight into the situation.

A Consequently I spent my February half term 2005 based in Khartoum,
N the Sudanese capital, visiting education projects based in the camps
 dotted around the city. It is very difficult to describe fully (in words)
 the situation in these camps. Try to imagine almost two million
 people living in one square mile of dust with no access to sanitation,
 where water is delivered by donkey cart, there is limited medical
 provision and a large proportion of unemployment. Yet, in the middle
A of all of this, there are schools being run by volunteers to give Sudan
P and its people a future. I spent my week in a variety of schools talking
P to pupils, teaching, observing and training teachers. My abiding
E memory is that of an intense desire to learn, in order “to give my
A children a future”, from a 25 year old ex-boy soldier who had worked
 from 6am to 3pm and was going to school until 8pm to gain a basic
L education.



On my return I undertook to raise £5,000 which will be sufficient to run a school in Sudan for a year. The appeal was launched in June 2005 with a fundraising event in conjunction with St. Michael’s Church. It was decided that the main thrust of fundraising would take place in 2005-6. I have now spoken to each year group in the school and have invited them to undertake a £25 challenge: £25 is sufficient to pay for a year’s education for one child.

The response has been excellent with students undertaking various activities from bag packing at Morrisons to sponsored silences and cake stalls. The latest own clothes day and disco raised £700 towards the target, a sixth form Valentine’s ball raised almost £600. Staff have also made numerous contributions, some in lieu of sending Christmas cards / presents. In one case a colleague and his wife lived off the contents of their cupboards for a month and donated all the housekeeping money!

The appeal now stands at £4,600 with a number of events being planned for the near future. We will exceed our target and make a difference to a huge number of young people.



Photographs by Ron Coello

If you would like more information or would like to make a donation, please contact me at school.

Adrian Wells

Design & Technology

Y10 Textiles

As part of their Year 10 course all students made a pair of pyjamas for children aged between 2 and 4 years. These have been made for the orphanages in Bosnia and Mr Eric Harries will be transporting them out there at the beginning of April. Well done from Mrs. Wells.



SCHOOL COUNCIL

One of the aims for this year has been to get the school fully up to speed on recycling. There has been some success in that the town council has agreed to include us in their kerbside collection of paper and plastic and these collections are made once a week.

The pupils have made an application to the Rotary Club for a sum of money to help install better recycling facilities on the school site. Dafydd Pearson, Year 13, and Tom Jones, Year 10, made a presentation to the Rotary Club to support this application and have received £225 for which we are extremely grateful.

'Lunchtimes are boring' has been a frequent complaint brought to the School Council. We have now bought CD players and table tennis sets for each of the lunch time rooms. These can be hired on a daily basis from the School Council office in the foyer.

The Council continues to be consulted and visited by many outside organisations, including the Young People's Partnership who recently ran a day's exhibition to let young people know about their entitlements.

The Council committee has asked officers of the YPP to help develop liaison with the School Council in Penweddig. Pupils are keen to improve the standard of safety on the buses which the two schools share.

The Penglais web-site now has space for School Council business and a forum for the exchange of ideas. The committee's next job will be to get this working well.

Finally, Mrs. Crockett and Mrs. Anne Davies attended a Welsh Assembly consultation on School Councils and were very pleased to discover that we have one of the best established councils in Wales. Two people provided by the Assembly will visit school in May to help pupils improve communication between the committee and the pupil body.

Design & Technology

Y11 Coursework

All students have been working hard to complete their "make" before the final deadline:- much of the work is of a very high standard and the pupils should be congratulated. A selection of their work is pictured below. Final evaluations should be handed in straight after easter.



Awduron yn yr Adran.

The Welsh department has played host to a number of authors in recent weeks: all year groups, except Year 11, were involved in this activity. Local author Sian Lewis and Meleric Wyn James and also Bethan Gwanas, who travelled from Rhydymain, read and discussed various texts with pupils. The work of all these is studied within the department and pupils of all ages benefitted from their visit.



CANTEEN AND VENDING MACHINES

In the summer term the vending machines are being stocked with a selection of healthier options and Fair Trade drinks and snacks in accordance with the school's new policy. The Fair Trade machine is leased until 2009: for this machine to be viable limited amounts of Fair Trade chocolate will have to be sold for the remainder of the lease. The full range of products currently available in the vending machines is given below:

Drinks – 500ml bottles

Water
Flavoured Water
Milk Shakes
Fruit Drinks
Lucozade Sport
Oasis

330ml tetra packs / small bottles

Fruit Juice
5-alive
Tropicana
Ribena Light
Milk Shake
Water

Biscuits / Cereal Bars

Hob Nobs
Mini digestives
Nutrigrain bars
Alpen Fruit and Nut
Jaffa Cakes
Cadbury's cereal and raisin
brunch bar (chocolate coated)
Flapjacks
Various cereal bars

Packets

Peanuts
Snak-a-jak (less than 10% fat)
Season crisps (baked, not fried, less than 10% fat)

Fair Trade

Choc-chip cookies
Ginger nut cookies
Geobars
Fair Break biscuit

Fair Trade fruit juice
Divine chocolate
Honey milk chocolate

This will be reviewed regularly throughout the year.

As part of the review of the school's policy the canteen staff will be running "Healthy Eating Islands"

in the D Block foyer and the main foyer. Canteen staff will sell healthy eating products, as an experiment at breaktimes, in the summer term. If these are successful the scheme will be extended. In addition the school will be providing more drinking water facilities.

Canteen prices will be increased on some products in the summer

term owing to increased costs, including food prices, increased wage and superannuation costs and maintenance costs in a very busy working canteen. We have tried to keep these increases to a minimum and as a general rule the 'healthier' options are being priced more competitively. The school is subsidising the canteen as the profit margin is practically non-existent. The governors are keeping to this policy although if the school continues to have budget settlements lower than inflation it will not be a sustainable option in the future.

One area of expenditure where pupils could help to reduce costs is to take more care of their canteen cards. Whilst many pupils manage to look after their cards, quite a few are managing to lose them. As a result we have to reconsider charging for replacement cards. The school will provide each pupil with a canteen card free of charge; it will replace the card **ONCE** but thereafter we shall levy a charge of £1 to replace the card. This has had to be brought in because of the excessive replacement costs incurred by the carelessness of a minority.



Penglais U14 Football Team



DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

MATHEMATICS

The Maths department would like to congratulate two pupils on their outstanding performance in Mathematics. Firstly, Rohit Nan (Year 9) who has achieved 100% in every Maths test this year: excellent work! Secondly, Josh Scott (Year 11) who scored highest in school in the recent Intermediate Maths Challenge run by Leeds University. Josh has been asked to join other high scorers in the next round of challenges. Good luck Josh!

Other pupils achieved Gold, Silver and Bronze certificates which will be distributed when they arrive at school. Those pupils were:

Gold: Josh Scott, Year 11

Silver: Roger Clarke, James Howitt, Tim Lewis (Year 11), Asim Skeete (Year 10)

Bronze: David Evershed, Silk Younger, Arthur Rowland (Year 10), Joe Warren, Caspar Donnison, Gareth Farrow (Year 9).

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

U14 Football – On Thursday Penglais Under 14s Football team travelled to Connah's Quay to take part in the Welsh Schools semi-final. Connah's Quay had previously knocked out quality opposition scoring 57 goals in the process. However, Penglais had also had a good run on the way to this game, having been crowned 2005-6 Champions of Ceredigion and Dyfed.

Having travelled for three hours to get to the game, Penglais started strongly. In the opening minutes the boys from Aberystwyth were winning all of the tackles and playing quality football.

Penglais continued to dominate the game throughout the first half giving the opposition little or no time on the ball. Our boys played with confidence showing they more than had the ability to compete at this high level. Penglais pushed forward but although they had chances they could not force a clear opening.

In the second half Connah's Quay came out strongly, pinning Penglais back in their own half. However, Connah's Quay were being forced into errors and could not create any real chances, allowing Penglais to battle back into the game. With seven minutes remaining a ball over the defence let Jonathan Evans in. The ball bounced 25 yards out and with the goalkeeper advancing Jonathan lifted the ball over him and into the net.

The boys fought well in the final minutes to deny Connah's Quay from getting back into the game. The game finished 1-0 to Penglais and afterwards the opposition coach was full of praise for the Aberystwyth boys. It was a magnificent team performance and Penglais have an excellent chance of winning this prestigious competition.

Thanks to all at Aberystwyth F.C for doing all they can to try and organise the final game at Park Avenue. The final takes place on Wednesday 5th April at Garden Village AFC, Gorseinon. Good luck boys!

Design & Technology Catering Y11

The final practical coursework took place on March 17th. Pupils prepared either a celebration meal or a selection of dishes suitable for young children. Many of the results were very pleasing. All pupils should now be revising for their written exam.





Pupils from LSC showing their craftware using a range of materials with different qualities. This was linked to Science, History, Art and English lessons.

SPECIAL NEEDS

On St. David's Day pupils from the Learning Support Centre prepared Welsh cakes and bara brith for the staff to enjoy at break time. Donations were received and will be spent on bulbs and plants for the garden.

SCIENCE

The A level Biology students visited the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER's) Open Day at the Arts Centre on 6th March. There were displays on inheritance, genes, DNA, selective breeding and genetic engineering. IGER staff were on hand to explain these subjects and answer questions.

Year 10 Engineers class have been re-planting a hedgerow in the school grounds. We have used 200 hazel saplings – these native trees will hopefully provide food and shelter for birds, insects and mammals, encouraging and supporting biodiversity within school. A big thanks to all the students involved in planting and to the PTA for funding this project.

30 pupils from our Science Clubs visited the "Science in the 21st Century" exhibition at Aberystwyth University on 16th March. This was part of National Science week and was funded by the Centre for Widening Participation. There were talks and demonstrations on sports science, movement of the continents and forensics as well as lots of hands on activities involving computer controlled cars, skulls, volcanoes, identifying plants and vegetables, generating electricity, giant land snails and making giant bubbles

Top of the Bench Chemistry Competition

On Friday 25th March the four winners of the mid-Wales section of the Top of the Bench competition, Berin Smaldon, Joe Warren, Ben Corbett and Roger Clarke, set off to London to compete in the national final.

After checking into the Holiday Inn, Kensington, we set off to explore the Science museum to try and give ourselves an advantage in the research section. We then had a tour of some of the sights, starting with a flight on the London eye.

We spent the evening relaxing in the Hard Rock café and a highlight of the trip for some was playing Jimi Hendrix's guitar.

Saturday was the day of the competition and this started in the Science Museum with a pen and paper test, followed by a research exercise in the museum galleries. We then went across the road to Imperial College where we carried out a practical challenge in their labs. We thought we performed well and so were disappointed when we didn't come away with the prize, but there were 28 teams competing from all over Britain.

We set off home tired but determined to make the final again next year. Anyone wanting to be involved in the competition next year, look out for the practices in early October.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD PRESENTATION EVENING

On Monday 13th March a Presentation Evening was held at Theatre Felinfach for all young people participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Ceredigion.

A group of Penglais students from Years 10, 11 and 12 received their complete Bronze Award and others received sectional certificates and will hopefully complete their award shortly. The awards were presented by the Mayor of Aberystwyth and were followed by a light buffet.



Bronze Award Certificates – Mark Johnson, Chris Morel and Ruth Clissold

Sectional Certificates (Skills, Expedition, Physical Recreation) – Rachel Purdon, Ben Corbett, Niall Thomas, Tom Barry, Tom Downes, Joe Downes, Gethin King, Jade Wilmot, David Evershed, Alex James and Stephen Arnold.

The Award was founded in 1956 by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and has been running for the last 50 years. It gives **ALL** young people between 14 and 24 an opportunity to experience challenge and adventure, acquire new skills and make new friends. There are three levels of award – Bronze, Silver and Gold each with an increasing degree of commitment. To gain any one of these levels each young entrant must complete four sections: Service; Expeditions; Skills and Physical Recreation.



SUPERVISION OF PUPILS IN THE MORNING

It has been drawn to my attention that some parents are bringing their children to school very early in the morning. The record recently seems to have been one pupil who arrived at 7.05 a.m. Can I make it very clear that most staff do not arrive on school premises until about 8.20 a.m. and consequently supervision is not available until 8.30 a.m. which is when the school will accept responsibility for pupils.

ELECTRONIC GADGETRY

The school has allowed pupils to bring mobile telephones to school on the strict understanding that they were switched off in lessons and assemblies. A similar rule has been applied to iPods and MP3 players. Whilst the school has had very few problems in enforcing this rule in lessons there are several areas of concern which I should like to raise with parents, staff and pupils.

- A significant number of pupils is now bringing into school a fearsome array of electronic gadgetry individually worth hundreds of pounds. The school cannot accept responsibility for the security and safety of this equipment. This is a particular problem for those pupils taking public examinations this summer.
- I am concerned about pupils' road safety – if they are plugged into a music player they cannot hear traffic. Even without music players pupils' road sense leaves much to be desired despite frequent warnings.
- Parents need to be aware that with increasingly sophisticated mobile phones the dangers of access to 'video nasties', pornography etc. is much greater.
- There is also a wider issue about permission for taking photographs / videos of others on mobile phones.
- Pupils use music players etc. at breaks and lunchtimes. There is, at the very least, a health and safety implication if a warning is given that cannot be heard because the pupil has earphones.

In common with other schools we need to rethink our policy on all of this because of the concerns raised. We shall do this next term with the teaching staff, PTA and School Council.

PROVISION FOR MODERN LANGUAGES IN KEY STAGE THREE

After extensive discussions with the modern languages department the school has revised its approach to provision for a second modern foreign language. Currently pupils study either French or German in Year 7 unless they are in the small supported groups. In Year 8 the top sets in French and German begin studying a second modern foreign language for two years.

Experience has shown that studying a new language with only 2 periods a timetable cycle is not a satisfactory activity. The number of students who actually study two modern foreign languages at GCSE is very small, usually only 5 or 6 out of 60 in the two top sets. Feedback at parents' evenings has also revealed unease at the situation. We have come to the conclusion that it would be better for pupils to continue their study of either French or German in the full timetable allocation of 5 periods in Years 8 and 9. We will however offer in Key Stage Four a two year course in GCSE Spanish for those able linguists who wish to study a second modern foreign language.

The transitional arrangements will be as follows:

- Current Year 7 continues with either French or German or European Studies until Year 10. This year group will have the option of a second modern foreign language in Year 10.
- Current Year 8 continues with present arrangements for modern languages.

There will be some savings in staffing (though this is **NOT** the reason for the changes!) in the modern languages department and this saving will be used to increase the number of groups in modern foreign languages in the current Year 7 transferring to Year 8 in September.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

END OF TERM

Term ends on Thursday 13th April and we shall be finishing at 1.45 pm when most of the buses will leave the school site.

Two bus services will leave earlier at 1.15 pm: the 585 (YP27) service and the 550 paying customer service.

The summer term begins on **Tuesday 2nd May**. A reminder that study leave dates for Years 11, 12 and 13 are as follows:

Thursday 11th May	Year 11
Friday 12th May	Year 12
Thursday 25th May	Year 13

Yours faithfully,

H.J. DAVEY
Headteacher