



Secondment

My secondment with the local education authority to prepare plans for reorganisation of schools finished at the end of the autumn term. I am very grateful to Mr. Gilbey for covering my absence as headteacher throughout the term in such an exemplary fashion. At no point did I ever have to worry about anything – it was all taken care of!

H.J. DAVEY, Headteacher.

OPTION CHOICES: YEARS 9 AND 11

We have planned a number of information evenings for parents this term to assist with the task of course selection for Years 10 and 12 in 2009-10. The first talk will be held on Monday 26th January at 7.30pm in the Main Hall and will be for parents of Year 11 pupils. Information evenings for Year 9 parents will take place on Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th February at 7.30pm in the Main Hall. Detailed booklets about option choices will be made available.

WELSH BACCALAUREATE

Year 13 students are busy researching and writing the first draft of their Individual Investigations as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate. This is a 2,500 word investigation into a topic of interest to them. We look forward to seeing the results. Year 12 students are attending lectures at the University throughout January during Welsh Baccalaureate lessons. These lectures are on our current module namely Wales, Europe and the World. We are very grateful to Mrs. Sue Pester, Mr. Rodney Parish and everyone else involved at the University for organising these sessions for us. This is a great opportunity for those students in year 12 to have a taste of University life and to benefit from new teaching and learning styles. We look forward to restarting the language courses as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate at the beginning of February once the January examinations are over.

TRAFFIC PLANS

We have been informed by the Highways Department that work will commence in February on introducing some traffic calming measures along the Cefn Llan road. This will undoubtedly reduce some of the problems at the back of the School and make it safer for the students. There will be parking restrictions which will help to reduce the problems caused to traffic flow and there will be raised humps, ramps and additional signage – including some long overdue flashing lights on the Waunfawr.

STOP PRESS

The school has just received splendid news that Year 12 pupil Elinor Thorogood has won a bronze medal in the triad triathlon in the Youth Olympics at Sydney this weekend! Elinor left the UK on the 2nd January for the Gold Coast where she spent ten days at a training camp before moving on to Sydney for the Olympic festival itself. She actually flew out from the VIP lounge at Heathrow with Alesha Dixon! We are delighted and very proud of Elinor's continued achievements.



Elinor Thorogood won a bronze medal.

PUPILS MAKING TELEPHONE CALLS TO PARENTS.

There have been a number of occasions recently where pupils have contacted their parents and asked them to come and collect them when they are feeling ill. Please could you remind your son/daughter that should they feel unwell during school hours, he/she is to report to Reception or their Year Manager. Their parent will then be contacted by the school when a member of staff has assessed the pupil. This will save parents making unnecessary journeys to school, paying for taxis which are not required and staff having to search the school premises for pupils who leave site without permission.

NUMERACY

The Numeracy Centre is seeking a Nintendo DS which will invaluable to the pupils. With this in mind fundraising started at the end of last term. All pupils who come to Numeracy are being asked for ideas for future fundraising. If anyone is willing to sell or give an unwanted DS to the Numeracy Centre together with Braintraining or Maths games, please could they contact Mrs. Goodband at the school.

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

Year 7 – Free Ordnance Survey Maps
– All Year 7 pupils will be receiving a free 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map of Aberystwyth and Cwm Rheidol, courtesy of the Welsh Assembly Government. These maps will be distributed in the next month during Geography lessons. The map will belong to the pupil and they should use it at home and bring the map to school for use in class when requested by the teacher. We hope that this will be an invaluable life-long resource for the pupils and inspires them to explore the local Geography.

R.A. Allen (Head of Geography)

DONATION TO MEURIG WARD, BRONGLAIS HOSPITAL

A donation of £110 was presented to Meurig Ward by Anne Davies and Val Ward in memory of their colleague and friend Sian Moore who died of cancer in October and worked as a cover assistant at Penglais. This comprised £65 from the Learning Support Assistants and Cover Assistants collected in lieu of sending Christmas cards and £45 raised by the Art Department from the sale of carrier bags designed and made by pupils.

LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE

Gareth Dally – Well done to Gareth Dally who was awarded a prize for Outstanding Achievement in the Learning Support Centre. Gareth will be leaving school in July.

RADIO LUXEMBOURG'S SPECIAL APPEARANCE AT PENGLAIS

A wonderful afternoon was had at Penglais School on Friday 12th December. The popular Welsh band, 'Radio Luxembourg', who appeared live at Glastonbury and the Green Man Festival in Brecon, entertained an excited crowd of three hundred pupils in the Main Hall. There was an electric atmosphere as the crowd sang and danced with the band. Old favourites were performed, such as 'Eli Haul' and 'Mostyn and Diego', as well as brand new songs, premiering at this gig! One pupil commented, "Wow! I never thought they were **this** good!" Happy faces beamed all around the room when the band promised to make a comeback next year. All profits made from the gig will be donated towards the Ceredigion Urdd Eisteddfod in 2010 and the school looks forward to the band's next visit to the school!



SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

During the last two weeks of the autumn term the science department was visited by Roger Morel and his science circuit bus. Pupils from Years 8, 10 and 12 were given hands-on experience of forensic science and DNA fingerprinting. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience and the department is grateful to Roger for arranging the visit and the centre for widening participation, Aberystwyth University, for providing the funding.

PENGLAIS VISIT TO INDIA

A group of 8 students and 2 teachers travelled to India in October 2008. We left Penglais on the evening of October 16th and arrived at Pinegrove School in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh on the afternoon of Saturday the 18th. From leaving Penglais to arriving at Pinegrove, the journey took us an exhausting 39 hours including a lot of travelling and more than our fair share of waiting around.

Our journey really began to get interesting when we landed in Delhi at half past midnight to find no one to pick us up. After a lot of ringing around, we discovered that instead of being driven to the school in a mini bus as planned, Captain A J Singh, the headteacher of Pinegrove had arranged for us to travel by train. However the train didn't leave until 7.30 that morning. Thankfully, when we finally did get on the train, it was plain sailing from there. The train journey of 4 hours was comfortable; we even got breakfast, 2 in fact!! We were then picked up at the train station by a mini bus that would take us on the last leg of our journey, the hour's drive to the school. When we arrived we were immediately met by some of the school's youngest and highest achieving pupils, the headmaster and welcome refreshments of drinks and sandwiches. They also gave us a Pinegrove hat, badge and garland. I don't think any of us has ever felt more welcome. We were then given a brief talk about the planned itinerary and shown to our rooms. Despite the advice to stay awake to avoid jet lag most of us had at least a little sleep before cleaning ourselves up and going to Captain Singh's house for a welcome dinner.



The next day we started on the first of many adventures. We went to an Indian air base which contained a very small community. From there we climbed a huge hill to a Hindu temple at the top. The next day, we went to a brewery owned by an ex-army captain where we were given lunch and a tour around the brewery. Later on that evening, we went to the house of a doctor who kindly gave us dinner before going back to the school for a well needed rest. The following day we were lucky enough to visit the governor of the state of Himachal Pradesh in Shimla, the old British summer capital during the days of the Raj. We were photographed with her for a local newspaper. We then drove to an Advanced Studies Institute, where we were given a quick tour and then moved on to have afternoon tea with the head of the local police department. After this we went to a camp site for a night in the forest. The screams in the middle of the night turned out to be two of the boys who had found some rather large spiders in their rooms! An early morning walk set us up for a new day visiting a local agricultural college and spending some time in the local market.

The next day we had the fantastic experience of having lunch with a local king and were shown around his palace. We then made our way to the senior branch of Pinegrove School where we enjoyed the same welcome the junior school gave us. That evening we had an early Diwali party at a hotel, attended by some new acquaintances and some friends we had met along the way.

On the Thursday, we were all extremely tired so spent the day in the junior school preparing for our presentation. However, on Friday it was back to our full day programme again when we visited some beautiful gardens and the famous rock gardens of Chandigarh. The following day was the Saturday when we put on a presentation at the junior school annual function and we all performed a number of different examples of Welsh culture (with a little ABBA thrown in for fun!) for the visiting parents and dignitaries. Watching Dan Commander diving through the ring of fire with the gymnastics team was a real treat! On the Saturday evening we had a relaxing night eating pizza at the home of a member of staff in the school. On our last day at the school, we repeated our presentation for the senior school and they also performed for us. We were then taken to a hotel for a farewell dinner with some members of staff and Captain AJ's family. Here we were presented with gifts to commemorate our visit. We were each given a mug, a t-shirt and a watch with the Pinegrove emblem on them and a mug which had a picture taken of the group when we first arrived. We then travelled back to the school ready for our departure to the train station at 4am the next morning.

After the 4 hour train journey back to Delhi, we were picked up by our guide and taken to the youth hostel and then shown around the city. We did some sight seeing and shopping before having dinner and settling down preparing for a busy day. The next day we travelled to Jaipur and toured around seeing the sights and staying in a beautiful hotel. The next day was Diwali and we travelled to the Red Fort which we reached on elephant. That evening we returned to the hotel where we celebrated Diwali in the hotel with special cultural attractions put on for us and a traditional Diwali feast. The next day we travelled to Agra where we visited the Taj Mahal. The next morning we visited to Amber Palace in Agra before travelling back to Delhi visiting the largest Hindu temple in the world and also the Ghandi memorial which was a profoundly moving experience. That evening went to see India Gate, commemorating the Indian soldiers who fought and died in the world wars on our behalf. We ate our final meal and travelled back to Delhi airport to fly home.



The whole experience was magical for all involved and changed us all for the better. We learnt something new everyday and made many valuable friends along the way. I have never before met such hospitable people and we were all moved by the kindness they showed us. Visiting a country with such a different culture to our own showed us just how varied and exciting the World can be. The pupils of Pinegrove will be visiting our school in July 2009 and we are all looking forward to their visit. They will be needing places to stay whilst they are here so if you would like to show the Indian people how hospitable the Welsh can be, please let us know at school.

By Georgina Andrew Yr 12

LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE

Fire Safety Talk – Mike Haste from Kidde Fire Protection Service kindly spared a few minutes from his busy schedule to talk to the pupils in the Learning Support Centre. He told us about the different fire extinguishers found in school. We were all given the opportunity to try out two different types. Many thanks to Mike Haste.



Physics Dept.

Eight year 12 students studying Physics have enrolled in the Engineering Education Scheme of Wales. The scheme provides the pupils with a real engineering problem for them to solve. The problem this year has been provided by EON at the Hydro-Electric power station at Cwm Rheidol. Pupils were given the task of finding a method to warn the engineers when the water levels have become dangerously low and to stop the generation of electricity if required.



During December, five members of the team spent three days in Bangor University constructing a prototype of their design and giving a demonstration to the EON engineers. During the evenings the students attended lectures but they also had the opportunity to try their hand at ten pin bowling. The pupils will finish the scheme with a presentation to representatives of industry in March. The students made excellent ambassadors for the school during their stay at Bangor.

Mr. S. Jones, Ruth Ashford, Joe Warren, Casper Drake, Willem Boshoff, Rohit Nan, Mr. D. Ball.

MEDIA STUDIES

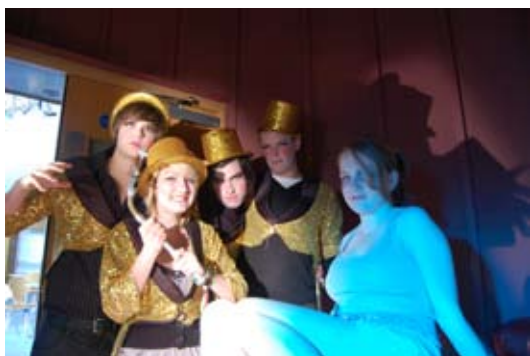
Over the course of the last year, a very fruitful relationship has been established between Penglais Media Studies Department and Aberystwyth Arts Centre. It began as a result of the Film Education screenings in the cinema; these films were shown as part of National Schools' Film Week and were accompanied by short lectures delivered by Professor Martin Barker of the Theatre, Film and Television Studies Department at the University. Groups of Penglais Media Studies students have seen 'Pan's Labyrinth' and 'Atonement' and have then been treated

to an analysis of the important aspects of the films in Professor Barker's pithy and illuminating style.

As well as these visits to the cinema, groups of students working on their own short films as part of their Media Studies course have been able to make valuable use of the video editing facilities in the Arts Centre's Digilab, where they have also received the assistance of the technician, Huw Evans.

This collaboration was taken a stage further last summer when the Arts Centre applied for, and then received, grant funding from the Film Agency

for Wales to work with our Media Studies students on a film project. The local organisation Film 15 was invited to run the project and during June of 2008 they delivered a four day course for the whole of our Year 12 Media Studies group. This began with short experiments based on watching professional films in a wide variety of styles. Our students then went on to make their own short experimental films which were followed by the scripting and filming of 'Hidden Costs' – a film about the dangers of binge drinking which was devised, written and filmed by our students with the assistance of the Film 15 project team.



Make-up

The film was completed over the summer and then featured as one of the entries at the Pink Snowball Awards in Machynlleth last November. It received its official premiere at the Arts Centre in December, where it was seen by an audience of invited guests including the Director of Education, Mr Gareth Jones and Mr Dan Thomas from the Film Agency for Wales. 'Hidden Costs' has now been shortlisted for the 2009 Zoom Young Filmmaker Awards in the 'Best Film in Age Category 14-25' and 'Best Fiction' categories. Zoom takes place on the 23rd of January.



On set - the Golden Wonders prepare for shooting

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all those people who have worked so hard on our film projects over the last eighteen months: Alan Hewson and Rachel Scurlock of the Arts Centre and Emma Macey, Jim Elliott and Alex Bluffield of Film 15. Special thanks should go to the Cath Sherrell, the Arts Centre's Education Officer for the Visual Arts, who worked tirelessly on the organisation and funding for the project.

The Filmmakers' Perspective – *“Making a film as a class was certainly a surreal experience. Of course we had all made films before yet not on such a scale, with all of us contributing in our own way it required a completely different level of co-operation and planning. We each had to find a role that would best complement our abilities in the same way that a professional cast would work. We began with the traditional brainstorming ideas and this was really intensive, we came to realise it was not just the concept we had to create but that we would also have to plan everything in meticulous detail, from costume to location. We tried to incorporate elements of an issue we had understanding of and that affects us in Aberystwyth and chose binge drinking culture. We used special effects to raise the technical standards of the film and spent many hours editing our interpretations of the film. Film 15 edited their interpretation of our film and with their help we learned a lot. From them we were able to try new techniques, such as blue screen, video editing and lighting. We also needed to use the best of our organisational skills to make sure everything was on target and that the film had continuity. Many of us had great fun in acting out hearts out in roles as the evil industrialists and the poor binge drinking girl which Tara graciously played for us. The film was entered into local film awards where it went down very well.”*

Jac Teague and Michael Crook, Year 13

KS3 PASTORAL TEAM

We continue to introduce our pastoral teams within school and this is the turn of Years 7, 8 and 9.

Year 7

The Year 7 Pastoral Team is headed by Mrs. C.A. Adamson (English), Head of Year. She is supported by Mr. O. Jones (P.E), Assistant Head of Year, Miss Siân Thomas, Year Manager who is available for parents to contact her on 621156, and the Year 7 Form Teachers – Mr. A. Vaughan (Information Technology), Mrs J. Lawrence (Geography / Geology), Ms. A. Mogg (Drama), Mr. S. Jones (Science), Miss D. Phillips (Maths), Mrs L. Huws (Welsh), Mr. R Edwards (Art) and Mrs A. Moakes (Maths). In Year 7 the team focuses on supporting pupils through the transition from primary school to secondary, ensuring that pupils settle in well. We have already had a meeting early on in the year for parents to meet the pastoral team, to iron out any settling-in issues. From now on the focus will be on maintaining the very positive start and encouraging good attendance. Your help is greatly appreciated in ensuring that pupils arrive punctually at school, fully equipped for the lessons and in school uniform. There will be a Parents' Evening in March with all subject teachers and an end of year report in July. Meanwhile, Mrs. Adamson is happy to meet with individual parents who wish to discuss any aspect of Year 7 life in Penglais!



Miss Siân Thomas, *Year Manager*; Mrs. C.A. Adamson, *Head of Year*; Mr. O. Jones, *Assistant Head of Year*.

Year 8

The Year 8 Pastoral Team is headed by Mrs. G.M. Rudge, Head of Year. She is supported by Mrs. J. Elgood (Geography), Assistant Head of Year and Miss Cara Jones, Year Manager who is available for parents to contact her on 621142, and the Year 8 Form Teachers – Mrs. K. Keirle (Maths), Mrs. J. Newbold (Modern Languages), Mrs. H. Isherwood (Science), Mr. P. Black (Science), Mrs. M. Scully (English), Ms. K. Porter (English), Ms. N Gruffydd (Welsh) and Mrs. C. Phillips (P.E.)



Miss Cara Jones, *Year Manager*; Mrs. G.M. Rudge, *Head of Year*; Mrs. J. Elgood, *Assistant Head of Year*.

The Year 8 pastoral team is encouraging students to make good educational progress by working hard in lessons, completing homework and involving themselves as much as possible in the extra curricular life of the school (P.E., Music,

fundraising, school trips, etc.). Parents may support their child to achieve their best emphasising good behaviour and attendance. Pupils should also be prepared for the school day with the correct books and equipment.

The Year 8 Parents' Evening is on Wednesday 11th March and the end of year report will be sent home in June/July.

We would like to thank parents for their support and encourage you to contact the Pastoral Team with any questions or concerns.

Year 9

The Year 9 Pastoral Team is headed by Mrs. A.J. Lewis (Religious Education), Head of Year, with Mrs. S. Owen (English) as Assistant Head of Year. Mrs. Claire Owen is the Year Manager and is available for parents to contact her on 621119. The team is completed by 8 Form Teachers Mrs. K. Shaw (Business), Dr. J. Devlin (Maths), Mrs. J. Wells (Design Technology), Dr. C. Warren (Science), Mr. N. Roberts (Religious Education), Mr. G. Davies (Design Technology), Mr. C. Evans (Music) and Ms. A. Rees (Physical Education).



Mrs. S. Owen, *Assistant Head of Year*; Mrs. A. J. Lewis, *Head of Year*; Mrs. Claire Owen, *Year Manager*.

The Year 9 team is focussing on ensuring that students are fully supported and informed when making option choices for Key Stage 4. As part of this process the following has been put in place:

- On Tuesday 10th February there will be an information evening for pupils and parents considering a vocational option as part of their GCSE courses. This will take place at 7.30pm in the Main Hall. Prior to this your child will bring home a letter regarding the particular vocational course he or she has expressed an interest in.
- On Wednesday 11th February there will be an information evening for pupils considering four traditional option choices at GCSE. This will take place in the Main Hall at 7.30pm. All pupils and parents are welcome.
- All pupils will be issued with a curriculum guide giving information on all courses available at Key Stage 4. This guide should be used by both pupils and parents to make informed choices.
- Before option choices are finalised, your child will be issued with a full report and parents will have the opportunity to meet with subject / pastoral staff at a Parents' Evening on Wednesday 25th February.
- On Friday 27th February, the timetable will be suspended lesson 5 for all Year 9 pupils. Mrs. A. Lewis and her pastoral team will explain the options process. The option choices sheet will be issued. This must be returned by Monday 9th March.

Approximately 40 pupils from year 9 have been involved in the PALS system. They have successfully helped Year 7 pupils settle into school by regularly visiting their registration forms.

Several pupils in the year group were involved in the production of Oliver and they are to be congratulated for their fantastic achievement. Two teaching groups designed bags for a local shop "The Dandy Wolf". The artistic talent was amazing.

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Llanbadarn Christmas Tree Lights

The Penglais Junior Singers and the Brass ensemble braved the cold temperatures to join the residents of Llanbadarn once again this year to sing carols at the annual ceremony for the switching on of the Christmas Tree lights.



'Candles and Carols' at Llanbadarn Church

The Autumn Term came to an end with the traditional 'Candles and Carols' evening at Llanbadarn Church on the last Thursday of term. Senior and Junior instrumentalists and singers are to be congratulated for their enthusiasm and hard work in preparing a programme of Christmas music that was enjoyed by a large audience, who generously contributed over £300 to the British Heart Foundation Calon Ceredigion Heart Nurse Fund.

The Department wishes to thank parents, relatives and friends that have supported Penglais young performers through an exceptionally busy Autumn term which included memorable performances of 'Oliver', 'Candles and Carols' and no fewer than seven performances for a variety of charitable and community groups during the Christmas season.



National Youth Choir of Wales

Congratulations to Tiffany Evans, Sophie Rudge and Ruth Taylor who were successful in the recent auditions for the National Youth Choir and Training Choir of Wales. They will attend a course and then take part in a concert tour with the choirs during the Summer holiday.

Spring Term 2009 performance dates

- Thursday 5th March** - Urdd Eisteddfod
- Friday 20th March** - County Urdd Eisteddfod
- Monday 23rd March** - Penglais Junior and Senior musicians perform at the Wales Millennium Centre
- Wednesday 25th March** - Spring Concert - Penglais School Hall
- Thursday 26th March** - Regional Festival Music for Youth



Bronze Medal for Elinor Thorogood at the Youth Olympics in Sydney

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 26th January	Information Evening about Year 12 Courses 2009-10 at 7.30pm in the Main Hall
Wednesday 4th February	Year 11 Parents' Evening at 3.30pm
Tuesday 10th February	Year 9 Information Evening (vocational courses) 7.30pm in the Main Hall
Wednesday 11th February	Year 9 Information Evening (other courses) at 7.30pm in the Main Hall
Monday 16th – Friday 20th February	HALF TERM
Wednesday 25th February	Year 9 Parents' Evening at 3.30pm
Wednesday 4th March	Year 7 Parents' Evening at 3.30 pm
Monday 9th March	Year 9 Option Choices form to be returned
Wednesday 11th March	Year 8 Parents' Evening at 3.30pm
Wednesday 18th March	Year 12 Parents Evening at 3.30pm
Friday 20th March	PTA Curry and Quiz Night at 7.30pm
Wednesday 1st April	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Friday 3rd April	END OF TERM

Yours faithfully,

H.J. DAVEY
Headteacher

COLOUR
Penglais Newsletter

View the newsletter in full colour on the school website
www.penglaisschool.org.uk