



Penglais School get 'Tidy' boost

A bid by *Penglais School* to improve the local environment has been given a boost thanks to a cash injection by environmental organisation Keep Wales Tidy. The school was successful in its application to buy equipment to help create a tidier environment in their local community. Year 10 students have undertaken their first litter pick around the school grounds. The students managed to collect 10 bags of rubbish. Pictured below are some of the students who took part in the event towards the community participation element of the Welsh Bacallaureate.



YEAR 11 WELSH BACCALAUREATE

In the Summer term the current Year 11 at Penglais school held a variety of stalls in aid of their Welsh Bacallaureate qualification. They raised an impressive total of £700 through the holding of activities such as pin the moustache on the teacher, snail racing and teachers' top trump cards. The students then decided to donate their earnings to a charity called Beacon of Hope who provide specialist nurses to help and provide comfort to people who are terminally ill in Ceredigion. Dana Edwards the development officer for Beacon of Hope said, "I am very grateful to everyone who helped with the fundraising". She met with several pupils including Natalie Dolan, and Mathew Sharples who was responsible for the very successful teachers' top trump cards on Wednesday the 14th of October when she received the cheque from the students.

Reporter Becca Dawson, Year 12



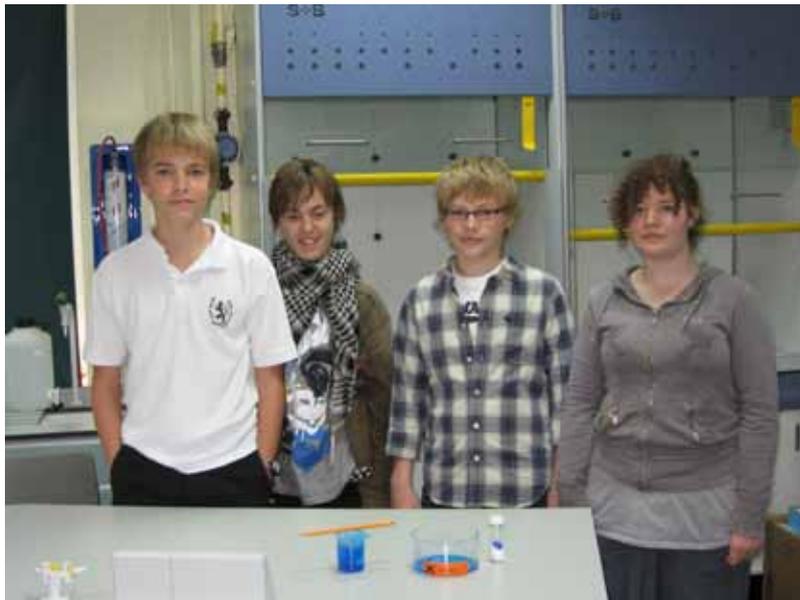
Back Row: Natalie Dolan, Matthew Sharples, Josh Ferreira
Front Row: Lianne Evans, Sarah Moore, Clarissa Busson, Dana Edwards (Beacon of Hope)



Photographer Tatum Roberts

Penglais Students 1st Place in Science Competition

On the 13th of October, four students from Penglais Secondary school took place in the Royal Society of Chemistry competition "Top of The Bench". The students achieved first place in the Mid Wales section heat which took place in Gregynog near Newtown and are going forward to the national final in March. The competition was similar to the TV quiz programme University Challenge but with Chemis-



try questions only and consisted of two rounds. Penglais was the victor in both rounds, beating Aberaeron in the second. The four students were (pictured from left to right) Nicholas Erskine - year 10, Grady Hassan - year 9, Rhys Elgood - year 11 and Paige Smeaton of year 9. They won £300 for the school and received a trophy. They also came second in a Crystal growing competition. Well done to the students. The School wishes them good luck in the final!

Report by Joe Regan, photography by Jack Iffla

CHANGES TO BUS CONTRACTORS

With effect from the beginning of the spring term in January, the following bus services will no longer be provided by Arriva. They will instead be provided by the following contractors:

YPO2	LLOYDS COACHES, MACHYNLLETH
YP05	MID WALES TRAVEL
YP07	MID WALES TRAVEL
YP08	LLOYDS COACHES, MACHYNLLETH
YP34/38/505	LEWIS COACHES, LLANRHYSTUD

There will be no change to picking up times.

WWAYS Lectures –

On Wednesday 4th November 80 pupils from Years 10-12 attended a talk on biofuels by Dr. Iain Donnison from I.B.E.R.S. Aberystwyth University. The last WWAYS lecture of the year, on 14th December, is a demonstration lecture on 'Chemistry and Light' by Dr. Peter Douglas from Swansea University. Pupils from Years 10 and 11 should see Dr. Warren in C2 if they are interested in attending.



OLYMPIC SUCCESS

Jackie Minchin was recently selected to swim for the Great Britain team at the Special Olympics. The European championships were held recently in Palmade, Mallorca. Thirty two European countries were there including Albania, Iceland, Sweden, Turkey and France. Jackie, who also works in the school office, has been swimming for over twenty years and travels to Cardiff every weekend to train. She has also previously swam for Wales in other tournaments. Jackie was most successful in the 50 metre backstroke in which she won Gold, she also competed in the 100 metre freestyle in which she won Silver and swam as anchor leg in the rely medley in which the team won Bronze. The GB team consisted of eight swimmers, four women and four men. They were chosen from Wales, England and Scotland but Jackie was very fortunate to be the only one chosen from Ceredigion.

SEVERE WEATHER CLOSURES

With the onset of winter I should like to remind parents / guardians of our procedures for closing the school in the event of severe weather conditions.

The decision to close the school is based on several factors but in particular:

- the difficulty of transporting pupils, particularly to the rural areas
- the availability of key staff
- the expected disruption to the timetable
- liaison with Ysgol Penweddig.

If it is clear that poor weather makes opening difficult the school will **make a decision before 8.00am which will be broadcast on RADIO CEREDIGION**. When poor

weather is forecast or imminent, please check this radio station. A message will also be put onto the school website and on the school office answerphone.

If a severe weather event happens during the school day itself the situation is more complicated. The bus companies usually make the decision and arrive to transport pupils home during the day. Other pupils will be sent home once most of the buses have departed. Please ensure that we have a contact number for you: several pupils still do not have one. Again messages will be put on the website or sent by the text messaging service.

Although every effort is made to stay open the school's experience on the last two occasions with severe weather does make a decision to close more likely. It is difficult to sustain the daily routine once buses start arriving and staff who live in rural areas depart. Little useful work is, in fact, done on such days. To give you an idea of disruption it only needs 15 teachers (out of 90) to be away for a school of this size not to function. Cover cannot be arranged and supervision becomes difficult. A similar issue would arise if illness affected a significant number of staff.

TRIPLE AWARD SCIENCE – YEAR 10 2010/11

Last year the school made a decision not to continue with Triple Award Science GCSE. The reasons for that decision may be summarised as:

- the difficulty of completing the syllabus in the Double Award time allocation
- the likelihood that pupils would achieve consistently higher grades with the Double Award course
- most medical schools do **NOT** require grades in Triple Awards Science
- the heavier content load in the new GCSE Triple Award Science syllabus.

At the recent meeting of parents with governors, several parents asked if the decision could be revisited for the current Year 9, starting GCSE courses in September 2010. The governors have decided that they would reconsider the issue if there was sufficient demand. The school would only offer the scheme:

- if in addition to Double Award time (10 periods) pupils took Triple Award as one of their options (an additional 4 or 5 periods)
- if a pupil took Triple Award Science he/she would only have 3 options left instead of the normal 4. This would inevitably restrict choices.

If you are a parent / guardian of a Year 9 pupil and would like the school to consider making Triple Award Science available in 2010-11 please write to Mr. Davey by **Thursday 10th December**. A decision would then be made in good time before the preparation of booklets for options.



MESSAGES TO PUPILS

Could we please ask parents to make arrangements with their children before they leave for school in the mornings. The school receives many requests from parents during the day to pass on messages to their children. This is not always easy in a school of 1360 pupils with a large number of classrooms and no tannoy system! Could we request that parents only contact school to pass on messages in an emergency. Many thanks for your co-operation

ARE YOU INTERESTED

In hosting a German student from January 2010 to May 2010?

Mia enjoys swimming, horse riding, reading books, ping-pong, sailing, biking and playing the piano. She would like to spend the Spring Term at Penglais Sixth Form.

If you are interested, please contact Donna Owen on 621163 for further information.

PTA AUTUMN FAIR

The PTA would like to thank all pupils, parents and staff involved in making the Autumn Fair such a huge success. The Sixth Form students worked very hard on stalls, selling the raffle tickets and much, much more. People commented on the lovely atmosphere at the school. Refreshments were served and the PTA raised a massive £5,500 which includes match funding from Barclays Bank. The school would like to thank Alison Callow for organising the match funding. These funds will be, rest assured, put to exceedingly good use.



SHORT STORY WINNERS

Several pupils from Year 9a1 entered a national writing competition for under 16s. Amazingly, there were four winners: Victoria Peel (aged 13) won the competition outright and Paige Smeaton (aged 14), Phoebe Williams (aged 13) and Ruth Dingle (aged 13) were runners up. If you fancy a dark and hair-raising read, then you can view their fantastic stories on www.247tales.com. You will need to hurry though, as they will disappear at the end of the month. The subject 'Ghosts' was obviously a topical one and all their stories have a wonderful twist to the tale.

The fact that there were over 150 entrants to this nationwide competition is just one measure of their success and Vic, the winner, will be receiving £75 worth of Bloomsbury books for her achievement. She has decided on a complete boxed set of the Harry Potter books as part of her prize.

Thanks go to Sally Owen who pointed the English Department to this competition. Bloomsbury Publishing, who run it, require entrants to compose a story in just 247 words and the subject changes each month: November's, needless to say, was 'Fireworks' and I think we can guess what December's might be.

So the message is . . . have a go! Just log on and send your piece of work in.

Deborah Davies – English Department



Thursday 17th
December

7.00 p.m.

Llanbadarn Church

Barcelona trip - October 2009

In early October, 18 pupils from years 10-13, flew out from Liverpool John Lennon Airport on a cold miserable morning to visit the area around Barcelona. We stayed in Calella, a small town on the outskirts of the city which had a lovely beach close to the hotel. The weather was really great – warm and sunny every day.

We spent all of Tuesday in Barcelona itself and managed to get a good feel for the city thanks to our helpful guide, Cristián, and our bus driver who navigated through Barcelona's

busy streets. We visited the Sagrada Familia Cathedral and learned that despite beginning work over a hundred years ago, it will not be complete until 2025! We saw a great deal of the architect Antoni Gaudí's work throughout the city and then had lunch in the Parc Guell, overlooking the city. We spent some time in the famous Ramblas, watching the street artists at work before heading off to the Pueblo Español to experience a walk through a series of typical Spanish streets. Afterwards we headed to the hill of Montjuich and the Olympic Stadium, former home to the football team Espanyol and were taken back to our hotel for a well-earned rest or walk to the beach!

Next day it was off to the local market for some bargain-hunting. Then we travelled quite a way on the bus to the Mountain of Montserrat with its impressive monastery built into the mountain. We even managed a trip on the cable car to the summit, where you could have a walk around.

On the final day we visited Port Aventura theme park where the highlight for many pupils was seeing the characters from Sesame Street! We had a good day in the park as the weather was pleasant but the park was reasonably quiet so no queues!

The journey home was uneventful apart from the squeals of people getting off the plane to another wet, miserable day in Liverpool! It was a shock to the system after so much sunshine and heat!

The pupils were all a pleasure to be with. In fact, the hotel staff commented how nice it was to have such a polite and well-behaved group of young people in the hotel. The bus company who transferred to Liverpool airport made the same comment. It was nice to hear so many pupils trying out their Spanish with people they met. Thank you all for being such fun to be with!



We are hoping to run this trip again, so look out for information in the New Year!

Mrs Newbold – MFL Department



CHILDREN IN NEED

On Friday 20th November Penglais School got involved in raising funds for Children in Need. Many pupils and staff came to school in fancy dress and paid for the privilege. The sixth form students arranged a show for each year group during the day which was very well supported. The sum of £1,765 was raised. Thanks to all concerned for their commitment and hard work.





Pupils from the Learning Support Centre enjoyed a performance given by drama students at the University.



Peter Williams, Adam Flint and Louise Drakeley made a donation of £30 to the Beacon of Hope. The money was raised as a result of their Welsh Bacallaureate project.

Futurechef nearly!!



Getting organised



Jon Griffiths won the school heat by beating twenty four of his peers on the 19th of October. He has been practising diligently since then for the local final.

Competitors for the local final held at Coleg Powys Newtown, were from Welshpool High School, Builth Wells High School, and Caereinion High School.

Jon made a gallant effort but was beaten by one point, by Ffion Evans from Caereinion High School. The School was very proud of the way Jon worked on the day. The food he produced was of a high standard and the lemon meringue pie was absolutely delicious.

A big thank you must go to Chef Chris Williams for giving Catering pupils a master class in producing good food, judging the school heats and for advising Jon.

Main course:

Chicken stuffed with cheese, served with leek crushed potatoes and a Shitake mushroom sauce.

Dessert:

Lemon Meringue Pie served with a raspberry coulis.

One and a half hours later!



Working with the Community.



Penglais pupils who belong to 2nd Borth Scout Group, together with scouts from Penweddig, Cubs and Beavers from primary schools donated items for 62 Christmas parcels or 'Bluey Parcels' [as they are known in the Army], for soldiers of the 1st Battalion Royal Welsh. The parcels were collected on the 26th of November by two soldiers and their Padre. The 1st Bn. Royal Welsh have expressed their gratitude for everyone's support. The Group were joined for the photograph by Royal Welsh Fusiliers Comrades Chairman Mr. Mike Binks, and Councillor Mr. Paul Hinge branch Secretary.

Mrs C Hague



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 2nd December	Year 13 Parents' Consultation Evening at 3.30pm
Thursday 10th December	School Concert in the Main Hall 7.30pm
Wednesday 16th December	Certificates Evening at Aberystwyth Arts Centre Great Hall at 7.30pm
Thursday 17th December	Candles and Carols Service at Llanbadarn Church 7.00pm
Friday 18th December	Carol Services at Llanbadarn Church a.m. School closes at 1.45pm
Tuesday 5th January 2010	Term begins for pupils



Two groups of sixteen pupils took part in a six week beginners' surf course after school this term. The Young Guns, Years 8, 9 and 10 met on a Tuesday in Borth and the Masters, Years 11, 12 and 13 met on a Thursday evening also in Borth.

By the end of the six weeks all pupils were doing really well and standing up in the white water. Some had progressed even further and were starting to surf like real pros !

I was very impressed with the teamwork and comradeship amongst the groups even in heavy rain and howling gales. We will be repeating the course in April when the sea starts to warm up again and there is a trip to Whitesands Bay in Pembrokeshire organised for activities week in July. We are able to do this thanks to the very generous price of £10 per lesson offered by the local instructors from Aber Adventures. We were also very fortunate to get funding from 5 x 60 to subsidise the course. Unfortunately, the subsidy will not be available next September so we are looking for sponsorship from local sources to encourage as many pupils as possible to take part in this fantastic sport. If you would like more information on surfing at Penglais please feel free to contact me in school.

Yours faithfully,

H.J. DAVEY Headteacher

Mr A. Fisher