



# Ysgol Hendrefelin

## Newsletter (Summer 2025)

Dear All,

We would like to thank you all again for your continued support of the school. We have had a lovely Summer Term.

We'd like to thank our school council for their input into many successful events/activities that have taken place this year.

Please take some time to read the snapshot reports from each of our Units highlighting aspects of the curriculum, trips, activities, fundraising and links to community activities that have taken place across our school over the summer months.

## Bryncoch Site update:

### Key Stage 3 MLD: Curriculum Update

During the spring and summer term of 2025, our whole school themes have been 'Diversity' and 'Connections'. These concepts have sparked lively discussions and engaging learning opportunities across a range of subjects, allowing our learners to truly flourish. We have focused on Egypt, exploring both its ancient history and modern society. Our learners have gained insight into the geography of Egypt, discovering the diverse landscapes and features that make this country unique. They've investigated the awe-inspiring Pyramids, diving into their architectural wonders and the cultural beliefs tied to them. By examining daily life in ancient Egypt, students learned about the customs and social structures that shaped the lives of its people. They also explored the fascinating world of Egyptian Gods, enriching their understanding of an elaborate mythology. In addition, our learners have had the chance to engage with simple hieroglyphics, which allowed them to connect with messages from the past and appreciate the significance of written language through history. Their exploration of modern Egypt sparked discussions on contemporary issues and achievements, bridging the gap between past and present. This exploration culminated in project presentations on Egypt, giving our learners a sense of pride in their work and learning journey.



We remain focused on promoting the health and well-being of our pupils, as it plays a crucial role in helping children navigate the world confidently. To support this, we recently invested in the Jigsaw programme, a fantastic resource designed to cover the Health and Well-Being Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE) aspect of the Curriculum for Wales. Jigsaw aims to build children's capacity for learning while equipping them for life, integrating personal and social education, Relationships and Sexuality Education, emotional literacy, mindfulness, social skills, and spiritual development into lessons. The learners take part in engaging lessons which encourage not only their knowledge and understanding but also their emotional

literacy. Every session includes a time of guided breathing, promoting mindfulness and calming our minds so that we are ready for learning.

We've also assessed reading progress recently and are thrilled to share that our pupils are making significant strides. They are incredibly proud of their reading development—a vital skill that fosters independence and opens the door to a world of literature. Parents have echoed these sentiments, noting the positive changes they see at home.

Finally, our commitment to outdoor learning continues to enrich our pupils' experiences. Year 8 pupils are joyfully participating in the Down to Earth project, while Year 9 pupils are enjoying surfing lessons at Caswell Bay. These activities not only enhance physical skills but also promote resilience and teamwork, reflecting our dedication to a well-rounded education.

### **Trips/Fundraising/Working with the Community**

As part of our Egypt project, students from all classes visited Swansea Museum to see the Egyptian Mummy, identified as Hor, a clothier priest and scribe of the God Atum. This experience captivated our learners, particularly with the full-size X-ray revealing the body within, which deepened their understanding of ancient Egyptian culture. Subsequently, all classes visited the Egypt Centre at Swansea University, enjoying a day of hands-on learning that could not be replicated in the classroom. We were pleased to have school governor Mrs. Macpherson-Jones accompany us, providing invaluable support to our pupils.



The unit also participated in a gymnastics tournament in Gorseinon, which our pupils had been preparing for all term. Performing in a 'real' gymnasium left a lasting impression, and they exhibited remarkable skill and enthusiasm.

Additionally, our pupils enjoyed a harp workshop organised by Cerdd NPT Music and took part in a football tournament that excited all participants.



Our school community actively engaged in fundraising for 'Red Nose Day' through activities like guessing the number of sweets in a jar, identifying a teddy's name, and participating in a whole school walk.

We are pleased to announce that the school has signed up for a food share scheme aimed at providing weekly packages for families in need. Our objective is to ensure that pupils and their families receive essential nutrition, with packages including fresh fruit, vegetables, bread, cakes, and household items.

We were so excited that our classes participated in the innovative Project Siarc in conjunction with Swansea University, which focuses on the fascinating world of elasmobranchs—this includes sharks, rays, and skates! Throughout this project, each class had the unique opportunity to engage in interactive activities, including 'meet the scientist' sessions. These sessions allowed our pupils to learn directly from experts in the field, deepening their understanding of these incredible creatures.

To further enhance their learning experience, they created informative displays to showcase what they had discovered. We believe that sharing knowledge is just as important as gaining it! This hands-on approach not only sparked creativity but also equipped our pupils with valuable skills.

The final displays was exhibited at the National Botanic Gardens of Wales, offering our pupils a wonderful platform to share their hard work and newfound knowledge with the wider community.



## Aspire: Curriculum and Wellbeing

We are immensely proud of the progress made by our pupils this year. Each pupil has made measurable steps forward, not only in academics but also in emotional regulation, communication skills, and overall wellbeing. Many pupils entered Year 7 feeling unsettled and anxious, but through structured routines and positive reinforcement, they are now thriving.

We use a range of specialist approaches, including:

- **ABLLS:** A system to assess and track key areas such as communication and independence for pupils with more pronounced autism needs.
- **PANDA Approach:** Supports pupils with Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), focusing on anxiety management, negotiation, and adaptability.
- **Attention Autism:** A sensory-based programme that builds attention and social interaction skills in a motivating and fun way.
- **Welcomm Speech & Language Screening:** A tool to identify gaps in communication development, allowing for targeted interventions.



## Academic and Social Progress

Our Year 11 pupils have completed the Entry Pathways in Preparing for Work course, where they have learned life and career skills like animal care, road safety, and workplace preparation. These lessons provide them with practical skills for their future.

This term, many pupils have embraced new opportunities beyond the classroom. They have visited colleges, signed up for courses, and worked well with transition staff. These experiences have been vital in helping them take steps toward their future education and careers.



Our pupils have enjoyed valuable real-world learning experiences, such as visiting a Morrisons store to practice being sales assistants. This hands-on activity has been an enriching experience, and we are grateful to Morrisons for their support.

## Digital Competency

Improving digital competency has been a key focus this term. Pupils have worked with the J2E suite and made significant progress in using digital tools effectively for learning and communication. This has boosted their confidence and creativity.



## **Visitor Feedback**

Recent visitors, including professionals and parents, have praised the positive atmosphere of the Unit. Pupils are more settled, engaged, and confident, reflecting the effectiveness of our personalised approach. Staff dedication and the nurturing environment have contributed to the growth of pupils' independence, communication skills, and emotional resilience.

## **KS4 BESN Velindre Site**

### **Curriculum**

Vocational activities are always a large part of our timetable as our pupils thrive in practical situations and the progress of our Year 11 group, who are working to obtain key qualifications in site safety and construction skills has been excellent. Since September, they have been actively engaged in completing various modules that will significantly enhance their readiness for work in the construction industry.

Our students have been working hard towards obtaining their Site Safety Card, which is a crucial step for anyone looking to work on construction sites. In addition to this, they have been completing several modules, including:

- **Working at Heights**
- **Ground maintenance**
- **First Aid**
- **Introduction to Construction**
- **CSCS Card (Construction Skills Certification Scheme)**

These modules have provided our pupils with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to work safely and effectively within the construction sector. They have shown impressive dedication to their studies, and we are confident that these qualifications will open up further opportunities for them once they complete their studies.

### **Trips/ activities/Fund raising/sponsoring/community activities**

One of the highlights was a visit from the motivational speaker, "The Grief Preacher." His session was truly impactful, delivering a powerful message that resonated deeply with our pupils. His personal story and insights into overcoming adversity left a lasting impression on everyone present. The students responded positively, and we have already noticed a shift in their attitudes and outlooks on challenges and personal growth.

The Grief Preacher's ability to connect with our pupils on such a deep level has proven to be a great example of a positive role model. His message of resilience, hope, and

the importance of maintaining a positive mindset has not only inspired the students but has also created a sense of community and support among them. This visit left pupils wanting to write thank-you letters to show how he had impacted them personally.

Careers guidance and preparation for post-school life have been a central part of our efforts, and I am pleased to report significant progress in this area. We have been fortunate to have had visits from the Legacy Team and our Careers Advisor, who have provided invaluable support and guidance to our Year 11 pupils. These sessions have been well-received and have given the students a clearer understanding of their career options, pathways, and the practical steps needed to achieve their goals, which have included helping with applications, bank accounts and interviews.

Additionally, we have organised visits to local colleges and ITEC (Information Technology Education Centre), which have allowed students to explore their options for further education and training. These visits have sparked a lot of interest and enthusiasm, helping the students to make informed decisions about their next steps.

As part of our commitment to ensuring our students are ready for the transition to college, we have placed a strong emphasis on fostering independence. One of the key areas of focus has been transport, where students have been applying for bus passes and learning the routes they will need to take to get to their chosen colleges. This has been an important step in helping them develop the confidence and skills required for independent travel.

Looking ahead, we have more visits and career-related activities planned over the coming weeks to continue supporting our Year 11 students in making successful transitions into the next phase of their education and future careers.

The pupils have also had the opportunity to try new outdoor activities which have proved to be very popular. These activities are not only fun but also aim to promote teamwork, resilience, and personal growth.

Recently, we've been engaging in Bushcraft and various outdoor activities, which have been a great success. These sessions allow our students to connect with nature, develop practical survival skills, and build confidence. The pupils have responded positively, with many expressing how much they've enjoyed these hands-on experiences.

Additionally, we have resumed surfing sessions, a favorite activity among our students. This return to surfing has brought a renewed sense of excitement and enthusiasm. Our pupils thoroughly enjoyed the challenge, with many showing significant improvement in their skills and teamwork. It's been an excellent way for students to develop resilience and have fun in the process.

These activities are a valuable part of our broader efforts to engage students outside the classroom. They help foster a sense of adventure, personal achievement, and a

deeper connection with the outdoors, all of which are key aspects of building confidence and well-being.

### **KS3 BESN Theodore Rd site**

All pupils at Theodore Road have had the opportunity to participate in Surfing, Skateboarding, forest schools, swimming and cookery as part of their regular timetable. In addition, pupils have taken part in Abseiling, Gorge walking and bushcraft kindly organised by the Cynnydd Team.

Staff have undertaken training in a variety of areas. They have all completed Trauma Informed Approaches training provided by the Wellbeing Team. Selina Gregory and Carla Bevan have completed their Mental Health First Aid courses. All staff have updated their Teamteach certification and more staff have passed their MiDAS tests for the minibuses.

**Bush Craft**



**Paintballing**



**Skateboarding**



### **KS2 Learning Support centre – Curriculum**

During the Spring Term the pupils at the LSC studied the Six Nations Rugby Tournament. Pupils studied the history behind the tournament, how it was formed and when it began. Pupils studied previous names for this prestigious tournament. Information was then applied through numeracy whereby pupils studied which nation has won the tournament the most, which country has won it the least, who has scored the most points, who has played in the most tournaments and which player has longest period between their first and last games. Pupils studied games when a try was 3 points and worked out scoring and made comparisons to the current 5 points for a try. Pupils studied the use of a GPS on a player and looked at various player GPS stats and compared for different rugby positions.

In language pupils watched highlights of several games and wrote simple match reports with the use of describing words to make their report interesting. Pupils studied different players and wrote player profiles.

Pupils studied the Geography of the Six Nations. Pupils looked at the cities that host the games and studied the venues. Using the internet, pupils produced factsheets and Power Point presentations on the six cities of the Six Nations.

Using the 'Cruyff Court' pupils engaged in tag rugby lessons using the 'Striver' programme. With Striver, each unit has a personal best activity that pupils take at the beginning and end of each unit to see if progress has been made and to support the teaching of rugby.

### **Trips/Activities/Fund Raising**

Pupils enjoyed a visit to the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagans and looked at the different exhibitions and exhibits. Pupils participated in several Mountain bike rides at the Afan Forest Park. The pupils at the LSC raised money for Red Nose Day.

### **Key Stage 4 MLD Bryncoch Curriculum**

With coursework deadlines looming and exam prep well underway, it's a very busy time for KS4. This is especially true as this is the first year we have been working on primarily Entry Pathway qualifications, due to them better fitting the needs of our learners.

As part of our new 'Creative Arts' qualification, most pupils have undertaken the module 'Planning and delivering an exhibition.' Whilst working towards this, pupils have researched exhibitions, spoken to a local artist about them and planned and advertised their own. This culminated in the pupils arranging a fabulous exhibition in the school hall, showcasing their work from art, photography and pottery. Our catering group also provided refreshments for the event. It was a very successful day!



We also re-introduced a face-to-face parent's evening which was excellently attended. Feedback from the evening was overwhelmingly positive and it was great to see parents face to face to discuss pupils and their progress.

We have also been doing lots to prepare pupils for the world of work and life beyond YHF. Events this term have included:

- Careers interviews and college visits - support from our career's advisor and college visits to familiarise our pupils with the colleges are ongoing.
- The 'What's Next?' careers fair – a fair specifically targeted for those with ALN. Perspective employers and key organisations have stalls to discuss options.



Our second industry insight session. This time with a creative arts focus. Local artist, Jeffrey Phillips, came in to talk about his experience in the industry and creative arts.



We also ran our annual 'Work Skills Day.' Pupils had fun taking part in Literacy, Numeracy and Problem-Solving challenges. The problem solving one was particularly fun and involved team working and an egg! They also had CPR training as well as

mock employer interviews with local employers such as the DVLA and First Start Team.



### **Trips/ activities/Fund raising/sponsoring/community activities**

It's been a great term for trips. Along with the previously mentioned college transition and careers fair trips, pupils have also had the opportunity to attend:  
-Our residential adventure to Manor Adventure. Pupils had a great time getting involved with archery, raft building, climbing, axe throwing and more!



The Lee Stafford Hairdressing event, where pupils met the successful hairdresser, heard him speak and learned some curling techniques.



### **Ysgol Hendrefelin Attendance 2024/2025**

As a school, we are united in promoting excellent attendance at school. Pupils understand that they should come to school regularly and many pupils are motivated to do so.

Most pupils are aware of the importance of their individual attendance and will often ask 'how's my attendance?', indicating a growing comprehension of the need to come to school.

### **"Continue to strengthen arrangements to improve attendance"**

We have introduced and embedded several strategies and interventions to promote excellent attendance including:

- Termly attendance assemblies (embedded)
- Termly certificates and rewards
- Site specific attendance displays
- Attendance poster competition
- WOW postcards sent regularly to pupils based on individual progress
- Spot prizes/ individual incentives
- Fun challenges to promote attendance
- Regular meetings with our EWO
- Data collected and analysed to inform next steps
- Referrals to EBSA for persistent absenteeism/ difficult to reach pupils
- CAP Team referrals (Year 11 persistent absenteeism/ at risk of NEET)
- Reintegration in mainstream
- Attendance postcard design competition (July 2025)
- Attendance of individuals discussed in weekly Wellbeing meetings

- Family support through home visits and supporting parent/ carers to attend meetings
- Home school sessions
- Outreach
- Bespoke curriculums

Overall attendance is marginally up across the whole school compared to the same period last year and is up 0.6% since the pandemic.

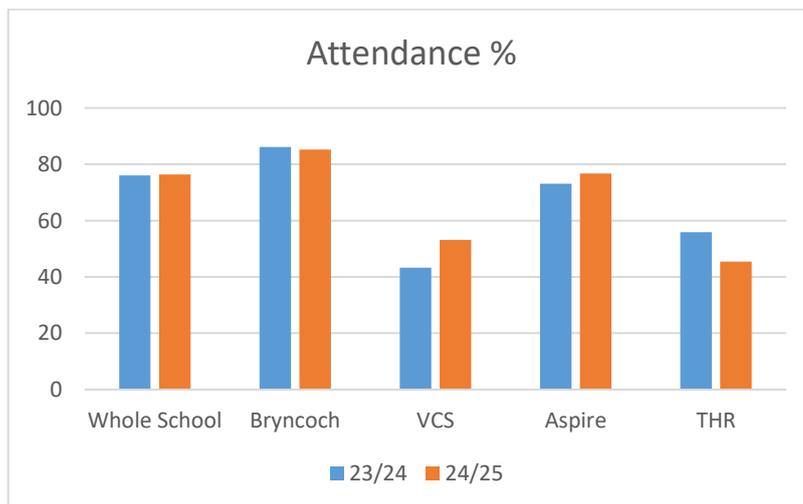
VCS and Aspire have seen the greatest improvement but Bryncoch has the highest attendance across the 4 sites.

THR has dropped by 10% but this is, to a large extent, due to the system of phased integration and pupils on PSPs with a RTT which has resulted in a huge drop in exclusions on the site.

Exclusions are down by almost 57% across the school and all 4 sites have seen a drop.

Attendance % up to 31 <sup>st</sup> May	2023/2024	2024/2025
Whole School	76.1	76.4
Bryncoch	86.2	85.3
VCS	43.3	53.2
Aspire	73.1	76.7
THR	55.9	45.4

### Attendance %



### Exclusions

Whole School	Number of Exclusions (session)	%
23/24	1235	2.74
24/25	534	0.98

We are looking forward to another fun packed year with lots on the agenda!!

**Important dates for your diary for Academic Year 2025-26**

**INSET days:**

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025