



WINTER/GAEAF 2024

# The New Illtydian

TOGETHER IN CHRIST WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE • GYDA'N GILYDD YNG NGRIST, FE WNAWN WAHANIAETH



## St Illtyd's Centenary Dinner

The Presidents lounge at the Principality stadium was the venue for the school's centenary dinner. Over a hundred guests attended to celebrate this landmark in the school's history. Brothers Michael and Ben represented the De La Salle order and were joined by Father Alexander and Father Sebastian, of the Oratory. Father Sebastian, himself an Old Illtydian, led us in prayer.

Nearly every decade was represented either through staff or pupils and it was wonderful to hear them recount their schooldays – from the time of the brothers to the merger with Heathfield House and beyond. Mr Phil Steele was asking the questions and compered the evening expertly. Our thanks to him.

A special mention to the 59'ers who turned up en masse and also to Michael Worthington, Josephine Affley, Ken Poole and John Manders for organising and making the night such a success. Thank you as well to all who attended. It was a great evening full of laughter with much to celebrate – here's to the next hundred!

**DB THOMAS, HEAD TEACHER**



## HEAD'S MESSAGE | NEGES Y PENNAETH

Another year has flown by with much to celebrate at the school and much to reflect on. The exam results achieved by our pupils were impressive. The school production reached new heights and our pupils continue to impress in the classroom, in the world of sport and in their work in the community.

Our faith life has been enhanced this year with more opportunities for collective worship and for our young people to develop and grow in their faith.

Christmas allows us this time of reflection, with a chance to count our blessings and give thanks for all that we are and for all that we have. It is a time of rebirth and renewal – welcoming our Lord Jesus Christ into our world with his promise of love and salvation.

It is important that we do not forget this and this has been a focus here at the school as we build towards Christmas and all that it involves. It is also important that we all have a great time with family and friends! It is a wonderful time of the year, and we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a truly Happy and Holy New Year. We look forward to welcoming everybody back to school on Monday, January 6th.

**DB THOMAS, HEAD TEACHER**



IT IS A WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR, AND WE WISH EVERYONE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A TRULY HAPPY AND HOLY NEW YEAR.



# CAVC Aeronautical Challenge

On Tuesday 9th July, Year 10 triple-award science students had the opportunity to visit the 'International Centre for Aerospace Training' (ICAT) in Barry (part of Cardiff and Vale College), to compete against different schools in the same year group and subject in the CAVC Aeronautical Challenge. This is where we were able to learn about various aspects of Aeronautical Engineering which widely incorporates within STEM education and teamwork, as well as getting in touch with our competitive side.

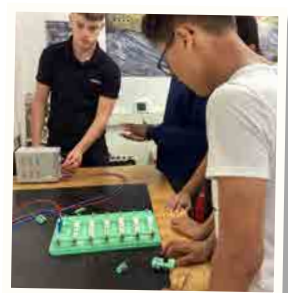
The first activity our team took part in was to create dog tags. This displays your craftsmanship skills based on your: accuracy of shape, size and design. We had to cut pieces of lightweight aluminium off, to achieve a general shape and file it down for the most accurate shape. Furthermore, we had to use a deburring tool to attain a smooth chamfer aesthetic for the chain. The dog tag also had

to be engraved using an engraving tool, which if you have difficulty with handwriting like I do, good luck mastering this tool.

The second area we explored was the aeroplane simulation which was breathtaking. This realistic experience illustrates what it is like to fly a plane and land it. The aim of the task was to land the plane with eggs on board and this task was not effortless as various people either crashed in the ocean or broke the eggs. This part of the competition was one of the most concentrated areas of the aeronautical challenge.

The next session was the electrical as well as the flying perspectives. We had to answer questions which were widely related to the physics of circuits, magnetic fields and speed. The flying point of view contained step-by-step instructions and accuracy by flying a drone to a destination based on the team's measurement.

The last parts of the competition were jacking up an aeroplane and creating a parachute to safely place an egg on the floor from a high distance. The aeroplane section was widely based on teamwork and communication, as the



wings had to ascend together otherwise this would make the task a lot more difficult. The key to the task was the team leader giving callouts and we had to follow precisely. Designing the parachute also had a lot of teamwork required. This is because we needed everyone's cooperation to design, create and keep our station clean in a small time limit.

All these challenges gave us experience as to what aerospace engineering is about and I believe this could inspire future year groups to this career or something associated towards this path.

**SHALID ROSARIO, 11LG**



# Cake sale



The Year 11 Prom Fundraising team organised a cake sale at the end of half term in order to raise funds for their Leavers Prom in the summer. The pupils planned and promoted the cake sale together and some of the pupils baked cakes for the sale. The cake sale was a great success, and the team raised £300 which will go towards paying for prom.  
**RUTH FRY, HEAD OF YEAR 11 AND TEACHER OF PE**

# Rights Respecting Schools – our journey has begun!



We are excited to announce that our journey to become a UNICEF Rights Respecting School has begun! St Illtyd's Catholic High School has been awarded the Bronze "Rights Committed" stage of the award, meaning that we have made a commitment to becoming a Rights Respecting School. A RRSA notice board is now on display on the top corridor and a set of

posters has been put up on the bottom corridor to raise awareness of children's rights. Pupils will learn about children's rights and why these are important during PSE lessons. A Steering Group made up of pupils and staff has been set up to drive this initiative forward.

Earlier this term, Year 7 and 8 members of the RRSA Steering Group took part in a workshop about play run by Children's Play Services. Pupils were able to express their views about play in regard to their local area. With their feedback, more facilities and activities can be created in the local area for children. This workshop supported article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child- "Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities".

In the first week of December, RRSA Teaching Lead Steph MacLennan led a week of assemblies teaching all year groups about Article 28- "Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must

be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this".



Follow our RRSA journey in future issues of The New Illtydian and on our school X account – @StilltydsCHS.  
**LUISA MAY, COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS CO-ORDINATOR AND RRSA ADMIN SUPPORT LEAD**

# Dydd Shwmae/Shwmae Day 2024



Earlier this term we celebrated Shwmae Day. Head of Welsh Megan Gwynne Carroll and Teacher of Welsh, Amber Forsey ran a number of activities for Year 7 pupils designed to increase use of and awareness of the Welsh language. Activities included "Pin the Tail on the Dragon," interviewing members of staff in Welsh and a quiz to test knowledge of different areas of the school through the Welsh language. It was wonderful to see the pupils participating so enthusiastically and really using their Welsh. Pupils enjoyed Welsh cakes and sweets. Da iawn!

**MEGAN GWYNNE CARROLL,  
HEAD OF WELSH**



## Year 7 First Aid

As part of our mission at St Illtyd's Catholic High School, our aim is that by the time our pupils leave us, they will be equipped with basic life skills. There is no greater basic life skill than being able to save someone's life. With this in mind, this term we invited Lesa Williams from St John Cymru to deliver a "First Aid Awareness Course" to all our new pupils in Year 7.

In the highly interactive session, pupils learnt about the Primary Survey, what to do if someone was choking, how to deliver CPR and how to use a defibrillator. We would like to thank Lesa Williams for her engaging delivery of the sessions and Eloisa Payne at St John Cymru for arranging these sessions for us. We would also like to thank National Grid for supporting these sessions and thank you

to Les Kenny-Green from National Grid who explained the dangers of electricity to our pupils.

**LUISA MAY,  
COMMUNITY  
FOCUSED  
SCHOOLS CO-  
ORDINATOR**





# The Great St Illtyd's Clean Up

At the start of term, Assistant Head of Year 7 Rebecca Kaye identified that there were several areas of the school that could do with a good clean up. Our Year 7 pupils are enthusiastic, and many of them are happy to help regularly at break times with litter picking. From this group of volunteers, Mrs Kaye recruited a "Clean Up Crew." Pupils were nominated based on how many times they had helped out at break times.

On the day, the "Clean Up Crew" tackled three areas around the school. Firstly they swept away leaves, cut back bushes and litter picked in the

Year 7 yard. Secondly they jet-washed, weeded and tidied up the quiet area outside the canteen. Finally they swept, weeded and litter picked around the steps area outside the sports barn.

All of the pupils had a great day and did a fantastic job in cleaning up the school. It is wonderful to witness pupils taking such pride in their school. A huge well done to Mrs Kaye and all of the "Clean Up Crew"!

**REBECCA KAYE, ASSISTANT HEAD OF YEAR 7**



## Learning to tell the time in a fun way

In maths this half term Year 7 pupils have been learning how to tell the time and have created their own analogue clocks. They were very creative, and some were even in the Christmas spirit!

**AGNIESZKA KACZMARSKA, TEACHER OF SCIENCE & MATHS**

# Attendance is up – again!

We are proud, once again, that attendance has risen this year. Since coming out of the COVID lock down attendance has risen by 3.8% up to last summer. This academic year has seen a further 1.3% rise which is excellent. Thank you to all involved in improving attendance at St Illtyd's.

The Attendance Team includes:

- Our two family engagement officers Mrs Hadley and Miss Jama
- Assistant Heads of Year
- Admin support
- Form tutors and Heads of Year who promote attendance

The team work closely with parents/carers and pupils to support and encourage good attendance at school. All educational research shows a clear link between good attendance and achievement in schools. Good attendance and punctuality are employability skills for life.

## 95% attendance is the minimum expectation for all pupils.

PAUL MORIARTY, DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER



We are delighted to announce the winning form classes:

### September:

Year 7 – 7RL (99%)

Year 8 – 8BWH/8MGC (93.8%)

Year 9 – 9CD (91%)

Year 10 – 10MJO (94.8%)

Year 11 – 11AGO (93.2%)

### October:

Year 7 – 7DNE (95.5%)

Year 8 – 8JH (93.6%)

Year 9 – 9AWE (92.7%)

Year 10 – 10BS (97.1%)

Year 11 – 11TC (93.1%)



SEPTEMBER (left to right) Year 8 – 8BWH | Year 9 – 9CD | Year 10 – 10MJO | Year 11 – 11AGO



OCTOBER (left to right) Year 9 – 9AWE | Year 11 – 11TC

## We have a new school minibus!

You may recall that back in May, seven of our dedicated staff members (and one from our feeder primary school) ran a 50km ultramarathon to help raise funds for a much-needed new minibus. They raised an impressive £5,862. Together with donations received into the Governors Fund, we are delighted to announce that we have bought a brand new minibus!

On top of this fund-raising, all proceeds from our Christmas Market covered the signage on our new minibus. There will be a full write up on the Christmas Market in our Spring issue.

We would like to say a HUGE well done and thank you again to all our legendary Ultra runners pictured with our minibus.

L to R: Mrs Mumford, Miss Bowering, Mrs Gwynne Carroll, Mr Tay, Mrs Hobbs, Mr Jones and Miss Berryman.



## Taith Scribblers Cymraeg

Year 7 had the privilege of attending the Scribblers Cymraeg workshop for Second Language Welsh learners at Cardiff University on November 8th. This event offered pupils a chance to engage with literature and creativity through the Welsh language.

The students participated in a day filled with dynamic and interactive workshops celebrating the Welsh language, led by prominent Welsh writers, poets, and performers.

Bilingual presenter, caricaturist, author, and illustrator Siôn Tomos Owen hosted a workshop that delved into creating imaginative worlds and crafting stories inspired by the people we encounter daily. Meanwhile, writer, producer, and stand-up comedian Leila Navabi encouraged students to explore what makes them laugh. She guided them through the process of writing a TV-quality comedy sketch from start to finish.

Attending Scribblers Cymraeg inspired pupils to think creatively and demonstrated that they understand and use Welsh far more than they may realise. It was fantastic to see the students so engaged.

MEGAN GWYNNE CARROLL, HEAD OF WELSH

## Thank you to St Cadoc's Care Group!

We would like to say a huge thank you to St Cadoc's Care Group for their kind donation of over £1,200 towards our Breakfast Club. Breakfast Club is open daily for pupils before school starts. Pupils can enjoy a hot chocolate and a snack before school starts. We are very grateful for this support.



# Spirituality & chaplaincy at St Illtyd's

## Celebrating 50 years of Kintbury

**P**aschal, Dani, Giovanni, Oscar, Dom and I travelled with Mr Thomas and Mrs Wonnacott on a Saturday to Kintbury, the St Cassian's Centre. The visit allowed us to access a range of activities giving us time to connect with others and learn about God. First, we were put into small groups with other schools and created leaves out of wool which we hung up on a tree during the celebration liturgy, to remind us of our journey with the community. We then came together with the other groups, took a walk together around the fields and stopped to play a game called 'red light green light'. After, we gathered in the marquee to sing hymns together; Paschal, Dani, Giovanni, Oscar, Dom and I gathered in the stables to plan a small presentation to present to the rest of the schools. Our La Sallian team leader then told us we could have a break, so we decided to make use of the facilities and played sports such as tennis, football and basketball.

We later sat down in the dining hall with the other schools, staff and volunteers to eat before heading back into the marquee to watch all the other schools present about their Kintbury experience through the use of songs, videos, drawings and speeches. We took to the stage and presented our speech, talking about our experience at St Cassian's and gratitude for the friendships we made that day and the guidance enriching our faith. The trip ended with a wide range of cakes that we enjoyed on the journey home. We are thankful and feel fortunate that we were able to go to the St Cassian's Centre.

I think it is so inspiring and incredible for the people who make places like St Cassian's possible thanks to their work and effort to make it the best retreat possible for people in our age group.

**HONEY (YEAR 11)**



My experience in Kintbury is one to be remembered. I, as a student, knew about the De La Salle Brothers but I never realised that there was such a huge community that gathers at St. Cassian's Centre. They meet frequently in order to make friends, share experiences and opinions, learn about our faith and be welcomed at home as members of a great community. The De La Salle brothers have been kind enough to create something so wonderful for the younger generation to experience and enjoy. I want to personally say thank you to all the members of the De La Salle community as they were so kind to welcome us as a school to their group and the volunteers that we met and talked to. Diolch yn fawr De La Salle.

**PASCHAL (YEAR 11)**



The Kintbury Experience was a very interesting personal experience for me. Upon arriving at St Cassian's, I was immediately mesmerised by the grounds and beautiful environment. We were quickly introduced to everyone and delved into a wholesome and exciting environment. The happy atmosphere, fun tasks and chance to meet new people and make new friends. I particularly enjoyed hanging the leaves we made on the Cassian tree to signify unity within our community. I would like to give special thanks to St. Cassian's, The De La Salle brothers, the volunteers, the De La Salle schools, and everyone involved in providing such a perfect experience. Diolch yn fawr!!!

**DANI (YEAR 11)**

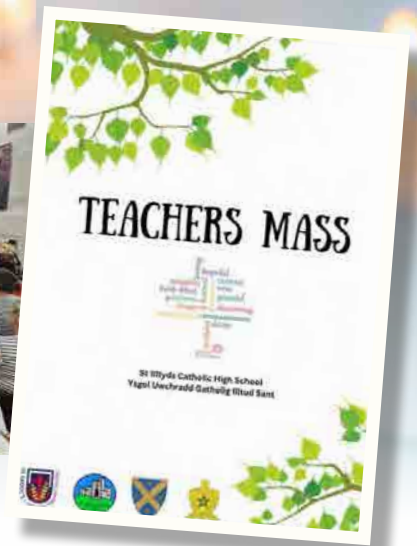
## Virtues Logo

**C**ongratulations to the winner of the School Virtues Logo Competition, Nazneen in Year 10, for designing the logo for Active and Curious. Nazneen chose to represent active by drawing "muscles and weights to represent strength, tree for nature and to be healthy and the headphones for music for when anyone is doing something active." For curious, "there is a brain representing to think, and a lightbulb for ideas. There is also a heart to show love, so they have a healthy brain."





## Collective worship

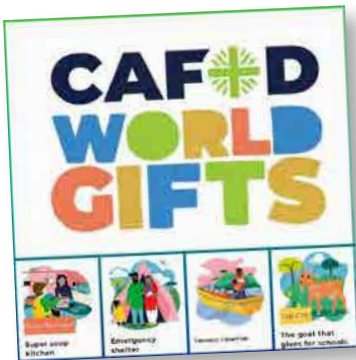


**W**e were blessed to be able to hold a Teacher's Mass for our school community again this year. It is always a pleasure to come together and celebrate Mass at the start of the year, preparing us for the journey ahead. Thank you to all those who attended the Mass and assisted throughout.

Our goal last year was to establish and maintain regular Mass and for the most part we have been successful. We are grateful to Fr Brian, Fr Alexander, Fr Sebastian and Fr Laurence who generously give their time to us where possible. Thanks to the support of our priests we have been able to hold a Year 7 Welcome Mass, St Illtyd's Day Mass and Chapel Mass for Years 7 and 8.

As a school we had a wonderful time celebrating our Patron Saint, St Illtyd. The Feast of St Illtyd is celebrated on November 6th, and we marked the occasion by

inviting pupils across the school to celebrate Mass with Fr Laurence in the Chapel. As well as Mass, pupils took part in the St Illtyd's Day Quiz during form time and received FREE DONUTS during break time. Needless to say, the donuts were a hit!



## CAFOD Escape Room

**M**embers of the YAG helped to promote as well as take part in the CAFOD: Escape Poverty Fundraiser. Tickets to the escape room were sold during break by members of the RE department and all year groups were invited. The escape room was made up of four tasks: Quiz, Memory, Puzzle and Obstacle course. Pupils needed to work together as a team to escape each room, in order to win each task which needed to be completed as quickly and correctly as possible! The goal was to raise £150 for CAFOD World Gifts in order to enable St Illtyd's to start building a CAFOD Village and we are happy to say we achieved that goal. With the money raised we have purchased:

1. Super Soup Kitchen
2. The goat that gives for schools
3. Emergency Shelter
4. Fantastic Fisherfolk





## Chaplaincy team

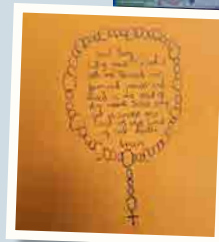
The chaplaincy team have had a busy year so far. Outside of all the work they do in their weekly meetings they have also taken part in fundraising, collaborating with our feeder primary schools, volunteering at Rumney Forum and visiting the local Cenotaph for Remembrance Day.

Pupils visited Rumney Forum to help organise their costume selection and prepare the venue for a Halloween half term event. They thoroughly enjoyed painting the window with glass paints and making the room look Spooktacular, by organising the costumes it meant that members of the community were able to obtain a full costume with ease. We look forward to coming back to help set up for Christmas.

We have a very active chaplaincy group, their enthusiasm for social action doesn't go un-noticed. We were recently invited to an SVP Family Day

in Bridgend; it is a day dedicated to gathering schools across South Wales who are part of the SVP 'family'. We started the morning by attending a Mass in St Mary's Church, Bridgend, which was a great opportunity to look at how their newer church differed to that of our chapel. In the church hall there was a mix of high school and primary school pupils in attendance, SVP staff and volunteers led the pupils through team activities and written tasks, celebrating the SVP community.

Some of the newer members of the Year 8 chaplaincy team visited the local Cenotaph on Remembrance Day, to lay a wreath on behalf of the school and to pay their respects to all those who have fallen due to war. It was an opportunity to pray for all those who are impacted by wars across the world, both past and current and to see all the wreaths from the local community.



## The Holy Rosary

We dedicated form time across school to the devotion of the Holy Rosary during October. Pupils across the school explored what a rosary is made up of and how to pray it. One task was to draw and design their own rosaries as a form, it was wonderful to see the effort everyone made. One form went as far as to make their own classroom rosary, with each pupil decorating a bead and it looked fantastic!

We enjoyed creating rosaries so much so that we invited St Albans Primary School up to join us in making a collaborative one. Members of the Year 8 chaplaincy team worked well with the younger pupils to help them cut and create their designs and transfer them to the board so we could enjoy the result. Our pupils always enjoy working with the primary schools and look forward to future activities.

## Year 7 Enrichment – All Saints Day

This November, Year 7 took part in a curriculum enrichment session in RE to celebrate All Saints Day. Year 7 learnt about what it means to be a saint and investigated some of the 'coolest' saints in Catholic canon. Learners used their investigations to create 'Top Trump' cards about their chosen saints, from the heroic St. Joan of Arc to former bandit St. Moses the Black and battled it out against their friends to see who would win the title of 'Top Saint!' An enjoyable experience for all involved, where all were able to expand their knowledge and deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith.

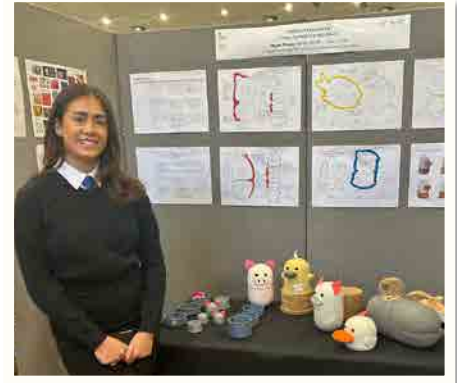
VICTORIA WONNACOTT, SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

## Year 10 Enrichment – Our Lady

Year 10 took part in a Curriculum Enrichment Activity in October based on the study of Our Lady. October is a month dedicated to Mary and pupils studied how she is a Role Model for Catholics. They looked at three events in Mary's life that show her as a role model – The Annunciation, the Wedding at Cana and the Crucifixion. Mary is seen as a role model of Faith, Discipleship and Charity. In groups the pupils discussed how they could be role models for younger students and those in the wider community and wrote their ideas down on a special sheet. To finish their experience, each pupil was given a set of rosary beads and were given the opportunity to reflect in the Chapel.

# WJEC Innovation Awards 2024

At the end of September, Year 11 pupils studying GCSE Product Design and/or Textiles visited the WJEC Innovation Awards at the All Nations Centre. Working with the Welsh Government, the WJEC Innovation Awards encourage young people in Wales to be technologically innovative and appreciate the importance of Design and Technology. Ex-pupil Aliyah Pooley, now attending sixth form college at Bassaleg School, had her work presented at the exhibition. Aliyah has been placed in the finals of the awards being selected alongside twenty-five other GCSE learners from across the country. Aliyah's "children's first aid product" gained a lot of attention for its creativity and quality of its manufacture. Since the restarting of the Innovation Awards, due to a break because of COVID, learners from St. Illtyds have had work displayed at each show. This is a significant achievement of the department and our learners. **LLOYD GRIFFITHS, HEAD OF DESIGN TECHNOLOGY AND DCF CO-ORDINATOR**



## Transition at St Illtyd's

### Year 6 PE Transition Sessions

Over four days in October, a small group of Year 10 pupils visited each of our feeder Catholic primary schools to deliver a PE session to Year 6 pupils. Following each session, Year 6 pupils could ask questions about anything they wanted to know about St Illtyd's.



### Open Evening 2024

On 17th October, St Illtyd's Catholic High School held our annual Open Evening. Our Open Evening gives families the opportunity to tour the various departments and facilities around the school and to see what the school has to offer. Each department ran a variety of activities, showcased pupils' work, displayed resources and held demonstrations of equipment. Pupils, parents and carers were able to ask questions and find out information about the school. We had an excellent turn out and everyone commended all the pupils, Emerald Greens and Senior Prefects that helped out.



# Eco Club Update



The Autumn term has been another busy term for St Illtyd's Eco Club. We have welcomed new members from Year 7 and have started planning what actions we would like to implement following our most recent Environmental Review in the Summer term. We have decided to focus on the topic of energy and on finding ways to reduce energy usage in school. Here are some of the other activities we have been involved in this term.

## SuDS Project

This term Eco Club members have been taking part in a project called SuDS. SuDS is a Feasibility Study exploring Sustainable Urban Drainage Solutions for schools. The study will identify and develop plans for small-scale nature-based solutions in school playgrounds in the East of Cardiff. The project is run by Trees for Cities. In early September, Thomas Steven, Design Manager and Kate Prosser, Schools Development Coordinator (Wales) from Trees for Cities visited St Illtyd's to carry out a site survey and identify areas at the school prone to flooding.

This was followed up with two workshops for Eco Club members in November. Pupils learnt about different types of flooding and why flooding is worse now (global warming and urbanisation). Pupils also learnt how trees can help protect us from floods. Pupils then followed this up with an activity in which they identified areas at the school that were prone to flooding and then produced some solutions for these issues. We would like to thank Alan Gregan, Schools and Youth Engagement Coordinator with Trees for Cities for delivering these two informative workshops.

We would like to thank Trees for Cities for delivering the project and Natural Resources Wales for funding the project. We will provide further updates on this project in future issues of The New Illtydian.



## Encouraging Active Travel – ReCYCLE Bike Scheme

Five pupils from St Illtyd's have received vouchers from Active Travel as part of the ReCYCLE bike scheme that will allow them to receive a bike, helmet and lock. These bikes will give them independence and encourage a more active way to travel. Alongside this, fitness levels will be improved. It is hoped that in time pupils will become confident enough to ride their bikes to school and back. We would like to thank Gemma Hughes, Principal Officer (Road Safety and Training) of Cardiff Council's Planning Transport and Environment Department and Lilia Blood, Physical Activity and Inclusion Officer at Cardiff Met Sport for putting us in touch with this opportunity.





## YouthCOP Cymru

In November, myself and seven members of Eco Club attended our first ever climate change conference- YouthCOP Cymru at the Temple of Peace in Cardiff. Planned to coincide with COP29 in Azerbaijan, the event was organised by Sige of Wales. In preparation for the event, Eco Club members spent several sessions learning about what COP is, what happens at COP, all about the Wampís Nation of the Peruvian Amazon and about deforestation.

At the event, which was attended by over 320 school pupils, we were able to hear from several speakers. These included Huw Irranca-Davies MS, the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs who answered questions from the audience. The second speakers were Teófilo Kukush Pati, Leader (Pamuk) of the Wampís Nation of the Peruvian Amazon and Tsanim Evaristo Wajai Asamat, a young leader from the Wampís Nation. They shared their experiences and insights of protecting one of the world's most critical ecosystems. We learnt that the Peruvian Amazon rainforest absorbs 57 million tons of carbon and that this is important as trees and forests capturing carbon are essential in the fight against climate change. We also learnt that growing your own food encourages biodiversity, reduces carbon emissions, reduces food waste and uses fewer or no pesticides. From the Wampís, we learnt how to live in harmony with nature and be more connected to nature.

The final speakers were the Deforestation Free Champions from Monmouthshire who told us about their journey to become Deforestation Free Champions. Pupils learnt about the devastating effects of deforestation and decided to do something about it by changing a meal on their school menu. They tackled chicken korma and by working with their local community, local businesses and decision makers, they created an alternative meal for their school menu- chickpea curry- a meal that is completely deforestation free. The passion and enthusiasm of these pupils shone through, and they were an inspiration to everyone attending YouthCOP Cymru.

The day ended with us learning more about deforestation, particularly palm oil, in a workshop. We learnt how we can all do our own little bit to help combat the problems of deforestation and climate change.

Our Eco Club members thoroughly enjoyed the event, learnt a lot and have brought back a wealth of ideas that we can try implementing in school. Thank you to Sige of Wales for inviting us to be a part of this fantastic event.

**LUISA MAY, COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS COORDINATOR AND ECO CLUB LEAD**





## Year 10 sailing day

Our sailing programme at St Illtyd's has continued this term with a sailing day onboard Challenge Wales. A group of ten Year 10 pupils who had previously completed the two-day keelboat sailing course in March with Cardiff Sailing Centre were selected to go on this sailing day.

Pupils began the day in Penarth Marina with a safety briefing before venturing off for a day of sailing. Not only did pupils learn how to sail, but pupils also learnt essential skills such as teamwork and communication skills throughout the day. Pupils had a fantastic day with one pupil even saying it was "the best trip he had ever been on!"

We would like to thank Mrs Shanahan and Mrs Farmer for accompanying the trip and all the staff and volunteers at Challenge Wales for a fantastic day. Finally we would like to thank the Reardon Smith Nautical Trust who funded this wonderful opportunity.

**LUISA MAY, COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS CO-ORDINATOR**



### HERE IS A RECOUNT OF THE DAY FROM TWO OF OUR PUPILS:

"The sailing day was a fun way to continue the nautical experiences we started in Year 7 (dinghy sailing) all the way to Year 10. At first when we got on board we had to get accustomed to the boat and learn how things such as the winch worked and how to open the hatch. We also learnt that we had to make people aware when we were doing those things. We started pulling out all the necessary equipment and in next to no time we were off. Once we were sailing, we had to use communication skills between us to keep the boat sailing. We sailed for a while then had lunch. After lunch, all of us had the chance to have a go at steering the boat. It was a great day and the best trip I've ever been on!" **KALEB-JAY LOCKING AND SCOTT EVANS, 10MJ0**





## Year 10 mock interviews

In June, all our then Year 10 cohort had the opportunity to take part in mock job interviews, which were supported by 13 local employers. Prior to this, all pupils took part in a CV workshop and had the opportunity to learn about what employers look for when reading through applicant's CVs.

Each pupil sat through a ten-minute interview with one of the employers and then received both verbal and written feedback on how they performed in the interview. Pupil Meiline Lopes said "It was very informative and a valuable experience. I was able to point out my strengths and weaknesses in the interview. Employers were very friendly and made us feel at ease during the interview".

Despite appearing nervous beforehand, all pupils demonstrated great resilience, and all came out smiling having enjoyed the experience. The employers were very impressed with our pupils and commented on how mature and well prepared they were. Some of the employers said they would have hired some of the pupils on the spot if it were a real interview!

One employer from Companies House, shared the following feedback "It was a pleasure to meet some of the Year 10 pupils this week. They were all bold just participating in the interviews, it takes guts to walk into a room of strangers, and I saw some great potential they can build on for their future college or job interviews. Some of you performed better than some adults I have interviewed. Good luck Year 10!"

**RUTH FRY, HEAD OF YEAR 11 AND TEACHER OF PE**



**PUPIL CYBIL USIALELE SAID:**

"I found the mock job interview to be really informative and helpful in the aspect of preparation. The way in which it was carried out was sensible and really helpful as it replicated the atmosphere of an actual job interview. The questions asked were relevant and made me believe that I was being genuinely considered for a job. All in all, the mock interview was really helpful to educate me on what to expect in an actual interview."

Welcome to the

# EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Faculty

News from the

Department of Performing Arts

## Outstanding Performance of We Will Rock You

The school hall was alive with energy and excitement as students delivered an electrifying performance of Queen's We Will Rock You in July. The production showcased the incredible talents of the students in music, drama, and dance, proving once again the power of teamwork and dedication.

Every pupil involved excelled themselves, delivering a show that left the audience spellbound. From powerful vocals and dynamic choreography to heartfelt acting, the production was a true testament to their hard work and passion.

Particularly poignant was the participation of Year 11 pupils, many of whom are moving on to pursue further studies in musical theatre or dance. Their outstanding contributions to the show served as a fitting farewell to their time at school. With such talent, it is clear that some of them are destined for great things, and we hope they will remember where their journey began when they achieve fame!

A huge thank you goes to the Head Teacher Mr. Thomas for his unwavering support throughout the production. Looking ahead, excitement is already building for next year's production, Fame Junior, which will run from 2nd-4th July 2025. Tickets will be available for purchase after Easter, so mark your calendars! Congratulations to all the staff and pupils involved for a phenomenal show—this is one production the school will never forget.



## St. Cecilia's Musical Showcase: A Triumph of Talent

St. Cecilia's annual musical showcase brought together an eclectic mix of talent, including the school rock band, choir, orchestra, and soloists, in a dazzling celebration of music. The event demonstrated the broad range of musical abilities within the school community and left the audience enthralled.

Each group shone, with the choir delivering harmonies that lifted spirits, the orchestra displaying technical brilliance, and the rock band energizing the hall with their dynamic performance. Soloists captivated the crowd with stunning displays of individual talent.

The showcase was not only a testament to the performers' hard work but also a reflection of the school's dedication to fostering artistic excellence. The atmosphere was one of joy and shared success, as attendees marvelled at the richness of the program.

For those who missed this remarkable evening, mark your calendars for Thursday 19th December, when you will be able to join the talented pupils for the traditional nine readings and carol service starting at 7.00pm in the school hall. The rock band will rock you into your Christmas festivities whilst you enjoy a cup of tea and mince pie following the service. It promises to be another memorable event to close out the year.

Don't miss it! **JULIE SMITH, HEAD OF PERFORMING ARTS**





## Spotlight on past pupil Gabin Kongolo



Have you ever had a moment that changed everything? For me, it was playing Lumière in St. Illtyd's production of *Beauty and the Beast*. Directed by the incredible Mr. John and Mrs. Smith, that experience opened my eyes to the magic of acting. Delivering lines, and hearing the audience's laughter—it was the spark that lit a fire in me. Looking back, I can see how that role was the beginning of an amazing adventure.



In drama class, I found a space where I could express myself. Acting allowed me to explore different characters and step into new worlds, and it felt like magic. During GCSE Drama and every school play I could, I would pour my energy into learning scripts, rehearsing with friends, and putting on performances that made my teachers, classmates and St Illtyd's community proud.



That passion stayed with me beyond school. I began working on small projects, determined to build my experience and grow as an actor. My first big breakthrough came with *Bariau*, a show on BBC that resonated with audiences and even earned a BAFTA Cymru nomination. From there, I starred in *Mr Loverman* on the BBC, a project that gave me the chance to connect with a wider audience. Winning a BAFTA Cymru for my role in the film *Smile* was a moment that felt like a culmination of years of hard work and determination.

This year brought one of the most surreal experiences of my career so far—performing as Pompey in *Antony & Cleopatra* at Shakespeare's Globe. For any actor, stepping onto that historic stage is a dream come true. The energy of the audience, the weight of the stories being told, and the legacy of the venue all made it a performance I'll never forget.



But my journey hasn't just been about the classics. I've also had the privilege of working on modern and diverse projects that push boundaries and tell new kinds of stories. On ITV's *The Suspect*, I acted alongside Aidan Turner, an opportunity that gave me insight into working on high-profile productions. I also appeared in *Bulletproof* Season 2 on Sky One, which was another chance to hone my craft while collaborating with an incredible team.

Acting isn't the only creative avenue I've explored. As a recipient of Chelsea FC's Blue Creator Fund, I was given the opportunity to produce my own film project coming out in 2025. This initiative supports creatives by giving them a platform to bring their ideas to life, with the added excitement of premiering the work at Stamford Bridge—the home of Chelsea FC. Seeing my project celebrated in such an iconic setting was a reminder of how far I've come and the possibilities that lie ahead.



My journey has had its challenges, too. Acting requires resilience, patience, and the ability to face rejection while staying focused on your goals. Between auditions, I've taken on other roles to learn more about the creative industry. Working as a project assistant for a creative company and as a day-to-day assistant at a music label taught me valuable lessons about collaboration, time management, and the importance of persistence.

For anyone at school who dreams of acting—or any creative career—my advice is simple: start where you are, and keep saying yes to opportunities. Every school play, audition, or performance is a stepping stone. The skills you build now, like teamwork and dedication, will take you far no matter where your journey leads.

Looking back, I can see how every moment, from practicing lines in the school hall to performing at Shakespeare's Globe, has shaped me as an actor. Acting isn't just about being in the spotlight; it's about connecting with people, telling meaningful stories, and constantly learning.

So, whether you're in the drama club or simply dreaming about a creative future, don't underestimate the power of starting small. Who knows? The stage you're on today could lead to the biggest stages in the world tomorrow. Your stories matter, and the world is waiting to hear them.

**GABIN KONGOLO, ST ILLTYD'S ALUMNI**



Netball, rugby & football news... and more!

# Sports/Chwaraeon

## Rugby news

### Year 7 Rugby

The Year 7 rugby team has gotten off to a flying start this season. With a mixture of powerful carrying and tackling by the forwards and some fast and agile running from the backs, the team has picked up two solid wins. They played against St John's in their first match and St Teilo's in their second match. Lots of players haven't played the game before so are new to the sport. However, they are quickly developing their skills and turning into well rounded players. Both performances demonstrated the team's resilience and belief in each other. We now look forward to playing Cathedral School in the first round of the Cardiff Schools Plate competition, at St Illtyd's. Good luck to all involved!

### Year 8 Rugby

The Year 8 rugby team has had mixed success this season. The team started with an away game at Whitchurch, losing a high scoring game of good quality. Next up was Bro Edern. The boys played a wide expansive game that showcased their best qualities of moving the ball quickly and playing to the edges. The boys ran out comfortable winners in the end. The next game against Llanishen was a tough fixture and one which the opposition played exceptionally well to take the win. Finally, our latest game against St Teilo's was a real back and forth encounter and one which we could have won. However, St Teilo's edged the game and ran out narrow winners in the end.

### Year 9 Rugby

The Year 9 rugby team has played Whitchurch on many occasions over the last few years. The games are always played at a high level of both physicality and skill. The boys have played them both at home and away this season. Whitchurch narrowly won on both occasions but the gap between the teams is very close considering the size and number of players in the respective schools. The boys have also played Corpus Christi this year in the Welsh Cup. They were convincing winners, away from home. There were some excellent tries scored by both forwards and backs and with only a very small squad of players available, this was no mean feat. Well done to all involved! The team look forward to playing Glantaf in a 'double-header' of both the Welsh Cup and Cardiff Schools Cup. Good luck to all involved!



### Year 10 Rugby

The Year 10 rugby team has had a mixed season so far. The boys started well. They won the Cardiff Schools Rugby Sevens Bowl competition at Trelai Park. They have then gone on to play Corpus Christi in the Welsh Cup who edged us in a very fast and physical game, before welcoming Eastern High in the next stage. This was a very close game in which both teams took the lead right up until the last few minutes. Unfortunately, Eastern High held on to gain a narrow win. The team now look forward to playing Cathedral School in the first round of the Cardiff Schools Plate.

### Year 11 Rugby

The Year 11 rugby team played exceptionally well at the Cardiff Schools Rugby Sevens competition, winning the bowl. The team had several players missing through illness and injury. They showed resilience to bounce back from an early loss to the overall tournament winners and win the bowl competition. They are now building nicely towards their first Cardiff Schools Plate game against St Teilo's. The team are hoping to make it back down the Arms Parks for the third year in a row.

**NATHAN WALSH, TEACHER OF PE**

# CARDIFF CITY FC ACADEMY



## Football news



Year 7 football team

### Year 7

The Year 7 football team started their time at St Illtyd's with an exciting game against Whitmore. It finished in a 2-2 draw with St Illtyd's unfortunately going on to lose on pens. They also put on another positive display against a strong Llanishen team, showing a lot of resilience but this sadly ended in defeat. They are out of the cup and the plate but excited to play more fixtures after Christmas.

### Year 8

The Year 8 team are out of the cup after losing against St Richard Gywn. They showed great determination to work well as a team and great perseverance to keep going in a tough game. They are still in the plate and are eagerly preparing to play St Telios in their next game.

### Year 9

The Year 9 team started the year with a thrilling game against Llantwit Major in the first round of the cup, with St Illtyd's coming out on top after a tense penalty shootout. They then went on to lose in the next round 1-0 to Eastern High, in a close and very competitive game. They are looking forward to playing more fixtures over the coming months.

### Year 10

The Year 10 team played a strong Stanwell side in the first round of the cup, unfortunately coming out second best, despite some great performances and shows of determination and resilience from all involved. They are excited to be playing Mary Immaculate in the next round of the plate.

### Year 11

The Year 11 team began this year with a good performance against a tough Bro Morgannwg side and unfortunately ended up on the wrong side of a thrilling 3-2 loss. But they can take lots of positives away from that performance and into the first round of the plate, where we take on Cathays High School.

## Cardiff City Academy visit

In October, Mr Jones took 20 Year 9 boys from the football team to the Cardiff City Academy as part of a coaching visit. The players met the Cardiff City Scholars and asked to be part of their sessions to help with their coaching badges. The pupils had a great day asking lots of questions of the players and showing off their skills to the academy coaches and players. Cardiff City were very welcoming and gave the boys a great experience that they will never forget. We are in constant contact with them and hope to do another trip like this again soon.

**MORGAN JONES, TEACHER OF PE**



Year 9 football team



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

# 2024/5

Please note the following dates for the academic year:

## TERM DATES

### AUTUMN TERM 2024

**Ends:** Friday 20/12/24

### SPRING TERM 2025

**Starts:** Monday 06/01/2025

#### Half term:

Monday 24/02/2025 –  
Friday 28/02/2025

**Ends:** Friday 11/04/2025

### SUMMER TERM 2025

**Starts:** Monday 28/04/2025

#### Half term:

Monday 26/5/2025 –  
Friday 30/05/2025

**Ends:** Monday 21/07/2025

May Day – Monday 5th  
May 2025

### FURTHER INSET DAYS

Friday 31/01/25

Monday 10/03/25

Monday 21/0725

# Sports/Chwaraeon



## Welsh Kick Boxing Championships

On the 1st December, three of our Year 11 boys took part in the Welsh Kick Boxing Championships. Harry Lewis and James Tinker were in action in the 70kg light contact category and Jacob Crosbie was in action in the K1 full contact category. All boys fought incredibly well and all gained a podium place. In the 70kg category, James Tinker took Gold to become Welsh Champion and Harry Lewis took the Bronze medal. In the K1 category, Jacob Crosbie claimed Gold to become Welsh Champion. Well done boys, a fantastic achievement all round!

## Congratulations Sophie!

Congratulations to Sophie Harris (Year 11) who has won the Pony Club Regional eventing championships this summer. Sophie has now qualified for two years in a row for the Pony Club Spring festival championships and has been victorious in various disciplines. Sophie has developed a successful partnership with her horse Pride. During their partnership, they've won numerous competitions and have competed at some prestigious venues such as Arena UK in Lincoln, Hartpury College in Gloucester and David Broome Centre in Chepstow to name a few. Often competing against 50+ competitors which usually includes older children and adults. Well done Sophie, a great achievement!

RUTH FRY, HEAD OF YEAR 11 AND TEACHER OF PE

