



SPRING/GWANWYN 2025

The New Illtydian

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

GCSE Maths Numeracy Results Day

A huge well done to all our Year 11 pupils who received their GCSE Maths Numeracy results at the beginning of January. There were smiles all around in the canteen when the results were handed out. Congratulations to you all and we wish you all the very best for the Summer 2025 exam season!



HEAD'S MESSAGE | NEGES Y PENNAETH

As we welcome the joyful season of Easter, we take a moment to reflect on the spirit of renewal, hope, and love that this time of year brings. Easter is not only a celebration of faith and new beginnings but also a reminder of the boundless love, sacrifice, and devotion that shape our lives.

At our school we recognize and appreciate the unwavering support, guidance, and encouragement that parents and staff provide to our children every day. The dedication of parents and staff lays the foundation for their growth, learning, and success. Easter reminds us that through patience, perseverance, and faith, great things are possible.

This is never more evident than when we enter into the exam season to come.

It is a time of worry and nerves for pupils and parents alike, but it is also a time where great things are possible and where great things are achieved. All that hard work of pupils, parents and staff really does pay off. We are fortunate to witness it every year as our children grow and strive to achieve all that they can thanks to their dedication and that of all those supporting them.

As we embrace this season of joy and gratitude, we extend our heartfelt wishes to all our families and staff. May your Easter be filled with love and the warmth of togetherness. May it bring renewed hope, peace, and blessings to your homes.

Thank you all for your support of our school community - have a great Easter!

DB THOMAS, HEAD TEACHER





A Ski Adventure to Grandvalira, Andorra

This February half-term, a group of adventurous pupils set off on an unforgettable ski trip to Grandvalira, Andorra. Over the course of five days, students went from complete beginners to confidently skiing down blue and red slopes, conquering lifts, and building lasting memories.

Here's a recap of our exciting journey! The journey to the slopes began at Bristol Airport, where we set off bright and early for a flight to Barcelona. After a smooth journey, we boarded a coach through picturesque Spanish countryside and up to mountains of Andorra. As we neared the ski resort, anticipation built, and the excitement was palpable. After a few hours, we finally arrived at our home for the week, nestled in the heart of the Pyrenees.

Skiing at Grandvalira, one of the largest ski resorts in Europe, offered the perfect setting for our adventure. The first day on the slopes was a learning experience for most of us, with many pupils taking their first steps on skis, putting boots on for the first time and learning basics like "PIZZA" and "CHIPS." The snow was perfect, and the instructors were friendly and encouraging, helping everyone adjust to the basics, from balancing on skis to gliding along the beginner slopes.

By mid-week, the improvements were noticeable! Pupils who had struggled on their first day were now confidently skiing on their own, riding lifts, and navigating the slopes with ease. For many, it was a proud moment to ski down a blue or red run for the first time. It was inspiring to see how far everyone had come in just a few days.

Our trip wasn't all about skiing! One afternoon, we had the chance to explore Andorra La Vella, the capital city of Andorra. Nestled in the valley, this charming town is known for its vibrant shopping scene and unique blend of Spanish and French culture. Many pupils took the opportunity to browse the local shops, buy souvenirs, and enjoy the stunning views of the surrounding mountains. It was a refreshing break from skiing and a great way to experience the local culture.

Every evening the group gathered for a fun-filled awards ceremony. The "Skier of the Day" award was given to the top male and female skier

who showed the most improvement or skill on the slopes. Meanwhile, the "Dumbo of the Day" award went to the pupil who had the most spectacular (or funniest) wipeout! The friendly competition added an extra element of fun and laughter to the trip.

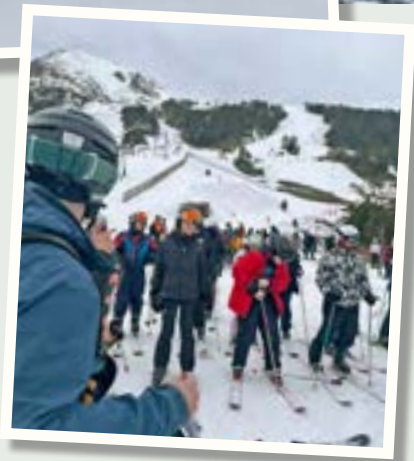
After five days of skiing, two exceptional pupils were awarded the coveted "Skier of the Week" award: **Sunshine Baker** and **Jacob Stiles**. Their dedication, skill, and team spirit throughout the trip truly stood out, and they were celebrated by the whole group.

This amazing trip wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our incredible staff members. They gave up their time to help organize and supervise the trip, ensuring that everyone was safe, having fun, and making the most of the experience. Another mention must go to Frankie, our rep from Halsbury Travel who helped make the trip run so smoothly.

It was incredible to see how much everyone improved over the week, and the friendships made on the slopes will last long after the snow has melted. Whether it was carving down a red run or laughing at a wipeout, this trip was a highlight of our school year.

We can't wait to hit the slopes again! Thanks to everyone involved for making this trip a success, and a special congratulations to all the pupils who took part in this fantastic adventure.

HENRY TAY, HEAD OF YEAR 9 AND TEACHER OF MUSIC



CyberFirst Girls Competition – Late nights and new languages!



In November, ten Year 8 girls participated in the CyberFirst Girls Competition, an annual cybersecurity contest for schools organised by the NCSC in the UK. This competition is designed to introduce 12/13-year-old girls to the field of cybersecurity, encouraging them to explore potential careers in the industry. The girls tackled a variety of challenging tasks, including password analysis, logic gates, binary analysis, and cyber awareness.

Throughout the competition, the participants showcased exceptional problem-solving and critical thinking and teamwork skills. Their dedication to the team was evident as they sacrificed ten days of breaks, lunches and late nights learning new skills in programming languages alien to them to work on the competition tasks, demonstrating a united front. It was a close race to the wire between team 2 and 3. Commiserations to Team 1 and 2, who also embraced the challenge and, in the process, increased their cyber awareness. Overall, the girls' commitment and achievements in the competition are truly commendable and to the victors in Team 3!

MELANIE HOPKIN, SUBJECT LEADER OF ICT AND BUSINESS

STEM Education Roadshow



This term, we were lucky enough to welcome back the STEM Education Roadshow to St Illtyd's. The theme of this year's roadshow was "Artificial Intelligence". The roadshow demonstrated some useful applications of AI and stressed how important human skills are to ensure that we can maximise the effect of AI in our lives.

Pupils thoroughly engaged with the performance and enjoyed learning about AI through a robotic dog named Lexi and by creating their own song and video using AI.

We would like to say a huge thank you to Zoe Keddie and Megan Ambrose from the roadshow team for an engaging show. We would also like to thank the sponsors of the roadshow - BAE Systems, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy.

LUISA MAY, COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS COORDINATOR



Scribblers Tour 2025

On the 6th February 2025, a group of 15 Year 7 and Year 8 pupils were given a wonderful opportunity to attend the Scribblers Tour event which takes place at Cardiff Metropolitan University. The pupils had two creative writing workshops delivered by two amazing and gifted writers. The first session was delivered by Steve Camden who covered the concept of creativity should have no limits and allowed the pupils to create their own world. The second session was delivered by Liz Hyder who got pupils to give a backstory to a certain item she gave out and it allowed the pupils to explore their imagination. Both sessions were immensely engaging, and the pupils really enjoyed their day out. **Olivia Beavis** in Year 8 commented on the day saying 'The Scribblers trip was very fun and inspiring to see. One of my favourite parts was when we looked at a stone with a hole all the way through it and we had to use our creative minds to think of a story if we found the stone.'

On the 13th February 2025, a group of 15 Year 9s also had the incredible opportunity to attend the Scribblers Tour event. Their sessions were presented by two different but still immensely talented authors. The first session was delivered by Jenny Valentine who taught the pupils how to create a character and gave them some great advice on how to break down characterisation. The second session was delivered by Ashley Hickson-Lovence who read the opening to his book 'Wild East' which is inspired by a tragic loss of his best friend. His session allowed the pupils to open up regarding people they cherish and want to acknowledge, as well as, showing them that not all poems have to rhyme. Again, both sessions were brilliant, and our pupils thoroughly appreciated the day out at Cardiff Metropolitan University. **Kadi Oscar** in Year 9



commented about the day saying 'The Scribblers Tour was such an inspiring and encouraging experience to write poems and tales using our imagination. The author of 'Wild East' had presented his book to us using very emotive language and a tone of voice which I think triggered us all somehow. The tour helped us gain knowledge about how different authors have different paths to writing the amazing books they publish. Even though it was educational, it was such a fun and once in a lifetime event to be a part of.'

Thank you to Mrs May who organised the trip for our KS3 pupils to relish in creativity for the day. Also, a big thank you to the pupils who attended the trip as they were well behaved and respectful to the university staff and authors. Lastly, a massive thank you to Cardiff Metropolitan University for inviting us to Scribblers and the Hay Festival for organising the event, the pupils absolutely loved receiving their free book and the opportunity to have it signed made it extra special.

LEAH MUMFORD, LITERACY COORDINATOR AND TEACHER OF ENGLISH & MEDIA STUDIES



"...IT WAS SUCH A FUN AND ONCE IN A LIFETIME EVENT TO BE A PART OF..."





Gavin and Stacey Tour

The Year 11 GCSE Media Studies class had a wonderful opportunity to go on a tour around Barry Island and visit the locations used in filming "Gavin and Stacey". The trip was extremely helpful to the students who are studying Media Studies; as part of their examination, they need to analyse the representation of Wales through the sitcom Gavin and Stacey.

The tour included visiting the 'The Dolphin Pub,' the church where Neil the Baby was christened, the road where the finale chase scene was filmed, Gwen's house, Nessa's place of employment down the arcade and ended with Marco's café. What made it more special was the tour's use of transportation on the one and only original Dave's coaches which has been used whilst filming all series of Gavin and Stacey.

All of the students, as well as Mrs Mumford and Mrs May enjoyed the tour immensely. It was great to embrace Welsh culture and celebrate the success of Welsh television. The highlight of the tour was definitely our lively tour guide, Carrie from Barry who provided wonderful commentary throughout and a lively atmosphere whilst driving around Barry.

Comments from our Year 11 pupils:

Mason Hill said, "it was so exciting to actually step inside into Gwen's house, in particularly seeing Stacey's bedroom."

Diamond Kone stated "I had the opportunity to sign the guest book when visiting Gwen's house and I wrote: 'thank you for inviting us into your house. It is cracking'".

Ellodie Mae Hill-Jenkins commented "I was fascinated by how small the locations were, and it made me realise how much work and effort goes into to creating this sitcom."

A big thank you to Mrs May for taking our Year 11 pupils and Mrs Mumford to Barry for this amazing trip. The Year 11 pupils were outstanding and incredibly respectful throughout the trip.

Winter Wonderland 2024



At the end of the Autumn term, 58 pupils enjoyed a day out at Cardiff's Winter Wonderland as part of our Wellbeing Rewards programme. Pupils started the day with an ice skating session at Winter Wonderland at Cardiff Castle. For many it was the first time they had ever tried ice skating, but despite some initial nerves, everyone gave it a go. Pupils and staff then walked to Cardiff's second Winter Wonderland site on the City Hall lawns where pupils had free time to go on the fairground rides, have food and enjoy time with their friends. The trip was hugely enjoyed by all that attended.

LUISA MAY, COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS CO-ORDINATOR



An Inspector Calls Theatre Trip



In February, Year 11 pupils and Year 10 GCSE Drama pupils went on an evening trip to the Wales Millennium Centre to explore the wonder world of theatre by watching a production of J. B. Priestley's 'An Inspector Calls.' This trip was to help students revise for the upcoming English Literature exam and help them develop their understanding of the play. Directed by Stephen Daldry, the cast of 'An Inspector Calls' added their own spins on these classic characters in order to bring the classic to life adding sarcasm and different accents. The students found the night enjoyable and a great way of bringing what they are studying to life. The set design of the play also helped to add to this adaptation of Priestley's work and develop the story line by using a set that mainly used outdoor decorations and a small upstage dining room to maximise character interaction and overall helped keep the audience interested thoroughly throughout the process. Overall, the creative team and cast of the 2025 production of 'An Inspector Calls' created an entertaining night for all and got these GCSE students another step closer to developing knowledge for their exams.

ISABELLE HAINES, HEAD GIRL

St Illtyd's Christmas Market 2024

At the beginning of December, we welcomed back the St Illtyd's Christmas Market after a five-year absence. The event was a great success with over 200 people attending. Santa's Grotto was open for visitors, our very own Rock Band provided festive music, and a hall packed with stalls sold a variety of Christmas gifts and decorations. There was a wonderful, festive atmosphere in the hall throughout. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone that came along and supported the event. Thanks to your support we raised a fantastic £445 which will be used towards our new minibus.

LUISA MAY, COMMUNITY FOCUSED SCHOOLS CO-ORDINATOR

Thank you to the following who donated raffle prizes or items for our tombola:
 • Iceland staff and customers • Tesco • Morrisons • Lucia Hair • Danielle • Pip Aesthetics • Relax & Reset • Better Eastern Leisure Centre • All our stallholders and parents/carers that donated prizes





World Book Day 2025

At the beginning of March, we celebrated World Book Day 2025 at St Illtyd's. Pupils took part in a World Book Day quiz during form time, staff dressed up in literary costumes and form classes decorated their doors. Congratulations to the following winners:

World Book Day Quiz	Best Staff Costume	Best Decorated Doors
7DCB	Rachel Jones Hungry Caterpillar	10BS Romeo and Juliet
8JB	Beverley Sharp William Shakespeare	10VD Horrible Histories
9AWE	Victoria Dennis- Catherine of Aragon	ALN Staff Harry Potter

and **Ayaan Mangla** in the first session and **Ruweida Issa** and **Baran Omidi** in the second session. **Miss Rees** also hosted a Hunger Games creative writing competition in which pupils were challenged to write their own dystopian 50-word story. The winners were:

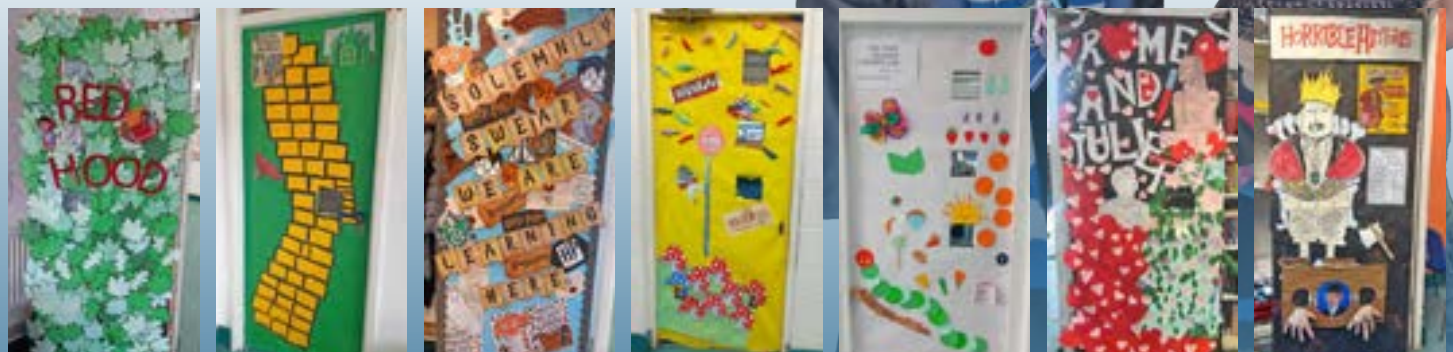
- 1st place: Melisa Ozkan (8MH)**
- 2nd place: Harvey Edmunds (7MRE)**
- 3rd place: Tia Robinson (9CD)**

A big thank you to **Leah Mumford**, Literacy Coordinator and Teacher of English & Media Studies and **Megan Rees**, Teacher of English, for all their work in organising World Book Day.

Well done to everyone that took part in all of our World Book Day activities! We hope they have inspired everyone to read more and to get creative with their writing!

To celebrate World Book Day, 15 Year 7s, Year 8s and Year 9s had the privilege to participate in a poetry workshop with poet Emilie Lauren Jones. Each year group had a different poem to read, discuss and was set the task to create their own poems inspired by what they have read. Year 7 had to write a poem about where they would love to live, Year 8 had to write a poem about people who they felt do not get acknowledged enough and Year 9 had to write a poem about who they love or appreciate in our lives. Our pupils were wonderful and engaged throughout the workshops. Our special guest, Emilie was so impressed with their creativity and confidence as some pupils wanted to read their work out to everyone.

Miss Rees hosted a Hunger Games Escape Room activity as part of the World Book Day celebrations. The winners were **Shane Tettey, Jaiden Slack**



Spirituality & chaplaincy at St Illtyd's

This term has seen a fantastic amount of Catholic Life and Mission and Collective Worship in St Illtyd's. Thanks to our School Chaplain, Mrs Wonnacott, collective worship and Catholicity is going from strength to strength at St Illtyd's.

- We launched the Jubilee Year at the end of January and have continued celebrating through Masses, liturgies and RE lessons focusing on the theme of 'Pilgrims of Hope.'
 - It was great to see St Illtyd's represented at two unique events at St David's Metropolitan Cathedral.
- In December there was a reading of a Papal Bull from the Pope celebrating the joining of the Diocese of Cardiff and Menevia. Also, in February the relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis visited the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia.
- As a caring and loving Catholic community we have been involved in a variety of fundraising events as well as supporting those in need. Our Catholic mission has meant those who are less fortunate have been supported with food and household items.
 - Our links with our primary schools and parishes continues to flourish with joint collective worship and social action.

Please follow us on social media to keep you up to date with the excellent work our Chaplain and pupil chaplaincy teams are doing.

TWITTER / X - @CHS_ILLTYDS

PAUL MORIARTY, DEPUTY HEADTEACHER



A Year of Hope



As many of you may know, Pope Francis has named 2025 a Jubilee Year, the pilgrimage of Hope. As a school we will celebrate this year through RE activities, worship, collaborations with both our feeder primary schools and local catholic high schools and pilgrimages.

We launched the year with a Jubilee Liturgy led by members of the Year 10 Emerald Greens. We held a whole school liturgy, inviting each year group to the school hall. Pupils from each year group took part in a procession, reflection and gospel understanding. Every pupil was then tasked to complete their own door of hope, writing a message to display upon the year group doors of hope. It was the first-time pupils have led liturgies on this scale, here is what some of the members had to say:

"I took part in the Jubilee assembly; it was really educational and informative. It was also a good opportunity to see what it was like to experience leading a liturgy. It was a great opportunity, and I'd love to do something similar again." – Lena, Year 10

"I took part in the Jubilee liturgy, which highlighted the importance of the Jubilee year. It was a good opportunity to lead a liturgy, growing my knowledge on the special church year." – Lily, Year 10

"When I took part in the Jubilee liturgy, I really enjoyed it. It was a great opportunity to grow my knowledge and understanding of the importance of the year." – Hollie, Year 10.

From the Head of RE, Mr Brown



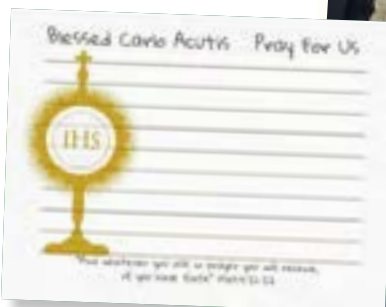
The Jubilee Year marks an important event in the history of the Catholic Church. In the Catholic Church, a Jubilee or Holy Year is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation. As a RE Department and as a school we feel it is important to raise awareness for our students and the wider community of the importance of this year for all of us. By carrying out various activities throughout the year we hope to give our students a sense of belonging to the wider worldwide Church and to develop their own journey towards God as a Pilgrim of Hope during these times.

DAVID BROWN, HEAD OF RE

Cathedral Mass – Papal Bull & Carlos Acutis

On 2nd December 2024, a new chapter began as the Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Diocese of Menevia officially became the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia.

At a special event, Monsignor Ante Vidović, Deputy of the Apostolic Nunciature, read the Papal Bull from Pope Francis that decreed this unification. Clergy, bishops, schoolchildren, parishioners, and local dignitaries gathered to witness this moment of unity and renewal.



Carlos Acutis

St Illtyd's pupils and staff were invited to attend the Relic Tour of Blessed Carlo Acutis in February at The Metropolitan Cathedral Church of St David. We enjoyed a beautiful Welcome Mass led by Archbishop George Stack, accompanied by the choir of St John's College. After the Mass we were able to explore the Cathedral, taking the time to read all the information about Carlo Acutis and see the venerated relic. Following on from this, pupils enjoyed a presentation in the Cornerstone from the team who had travelled from Assisi. After an informative presentation the team gave us the opportunity to bless our prayer cards and deliver the intentions from our staff and pupils to them, in order for them to go back to Assisi and place them in the tomb of Carlo Acutis.

VICTORIA WONNACOTT, SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

The Power of Community



“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”
– Coretta Scott King

As the colder months drew in last term, pupils from St Illtyd’s and St Peter’s Catholic Primary School met together to assess how they could help the vulnerable within our communities. After some wonderful ideas, pupils decided to repeat a previous successful collaboration, where each school would fundraise to buy supplies to fill bags with winter essentials for those who are street homeless. St Peter’s kindly hosted the homeless bag workshop, providing some lovely refreshments for our hard-working pupils. We were blessed to be visited by Naomi from the SVP Centre, who took the time to speak to the pupils about homelessness in Cardiff and all the work that they have been doing to help those in need. The giftbags were filled with winter essentials, a festive treat and a handwritten Christmas card to spread joy and hope through the Christmas season. Once completed, Naomi took the giftbags back to the SVP Centre ready to deliver to the street homeless within the city centre.

During Advent, we invited pupils from both St John Lloyd and St Albans RC Primary Schools up to take part in some crafting activities. Members of the Year 9 Chaplaincy team helped St Albans pupils craft advent wreaths out of card while chatting about their day and Christmas plans. Fr Alexander joined us and led us in a final prayer in the Chapel. The festive events continued with our very own Christingle workshop with children from St John Lloyd RC Primary School. The Head Girl, Isabelle Haines, helped lead the workshop and assist the younger pupils with the more challenging parts. It was a lovely opportunity for some of our Year 7 pupils, who were past pupils of St John Lloyd, to join the workshop and catch up with old friends and teachers.

As well as working with our primary school community, pupils have been working with members of our local community. St Cadoc’s Church Care Group very kindly donated food to St Illtyd’s foodbank to help fill hampers for struggling families over Christmas. Members of the Year 8 Chaplaincy team worked hard to wrap and fill hamper boxes with food donated by the care group as well as our own pupils. They managed to fill 20 large hampers with food, small gifts and toiletries. Hampers went out to families in our local community as well as to Rumney Forum and St Vincent de Paul Centre.

It is important for our pupils to support the community but also to see that there are organisations out there that are keen to help. A lot of donations of shirts, polo shirts, oranges (Christingle) prizes and gifts were kindly donated by Tesco. Thanks to their generosity we were able to donate items to our primary schools and local organisations.

VICTORIA WONNACOTT, SCHOOL CHAPLAIN



Raising awareness about childhood obesity in schools and what St Illtyd's could do

Childhood obesity within Wales has seen a rise these past years, where children living in a sedentary lifestyle is increasingly becoming more common. According to official percentages, 26% of adults in Wales are classed as obese, but the innovation charity Nesta says the true figure is 34%, equivalent to an extra 200,000 people. In Wales, the percentage of childhood obesity is 'over one quarter of children in Wales aged four to five are overweight or obese.'

St Illtyd's achieves in preventing childhood obesity in certain aspects; there are plenty of sports, after school clubs, PE, educating pupils of healthy eating in PSE and Food Technology. However, my research has shown that some of the food and drink available in the canteen can be classed as unhealthy. Some options that are considered unhealthy, being high in sugar and fat content, for example are Radnor Fizz drinks and sugary snacks. Research says that unhealthy meals contribute to causes of obesity, Children are failing to meet the nutritional standards by eating foods that are high in calories, fat and sugar. Cardiff Council uses the secondary high school FFRES menu, many agree that the meals present themselves as appetising however, one person commented that the chicken salad had cheese, coleslaw and mayonnaise, which are products high in fat.



In contrast, the average primary school meal consists of choosing a main meal, a carbohydrate and a vegetable of the day; for example, a pupil can choose pizza, sweetcorn and potato for their dinner which contains a varied and balanced set of nutrients. There is also a distinct lack of sugary drinks. All pupils in primary school are now entitled to free school meals. Secondary school pupils are at a disadvantage, as they are not served meals, instead they are served snacks that do not cover a wide range of nutritional bases. For example, pupils in schools often buy a calzone, cookie and a fizzy drink. This is not an ideal meal and does not meet the standards of nutrition for a growing teenager.

Preventing childhood obesity in school is a key principle as schools are responsible for taking care of children's wellbeing. By cutting down unhealthy food and maintaining daily exercise, childhood obesity can be easily prevented.

As a school, we acknowledge the prevalent issue that food can impact on students. The Eco Club completed an Eco Schools Environmental Review 2024-2025 and found that there were both positives and negatives to the food served, such as not having enough healthy options, for example there are few options for vegans or vegetarians.

The Eco Club also mentioned in their findings that they do not have any opportunity to make suggestions due to not having a school nutrition group. This has been addressed recently as members of the Eco Club along with other pupils have been involved in the tender process for a new catering contract in the canteen. Pupils were able to sample food and provide feedback on what they wanted to see in the canteen in the future. Our pupils are looking to the future and are excited about our new catering contract and the new food options that will bring.

Cited Sources: Bone, J. (2024). A third of adults in Wales live with obesity, according to new analysis. [online]

ELLIE JONES, 11LG



Monthly Attendance Winners

Congratulations to our monthly attendance winners for November 2024:

- Year 7 – 7MRE
- Year 8 – 8CP
- Year 9 – 9AK
- Year 10 – 10SE
- Year 11 – 11NW



Adran y Gymraeg

Dydd Santes Dwynwen

The Welsh Department has been busy with a variety of activities throughout the year. On 24th January, we celebrated Dydd Santes Dwynwen — the Welsh Patron Saint of Love. To mark the occasion, we held a card-making session where pupils designed their own cards and wrote messages and poems on red hearts. These heartfelt creations were then displayed on the doors for everyone to enjoy.



Criw Cymraeg

We are thrilled to announce that a Criw Cymraeg has now been established in our school! The members are: **Isabelle Haines & Logan Collis** (Year 11), **Kiera Acton** (Year 10), **Izzy Sobey & Hunnie Hargadon** (Year 9), **Lexie Ewers, Hope Davey & Estrella Lopes da Silva** (Year 8), and **Evie Sage-Phillips, Taleah Campbell, and Lexi Archer** (Year 7).

The Criw Cymraeg will play an important role in encouraging and promoting the use of Welsh throughout the school. Recently, they led assemblies for all year groups, highlighting the importance of speaking Welsh — not only for future opportunities but also to help preserve our language and culture. They also shared ways pupils can support Welsh language development across the school, and even included a fun, interactive quiz to get everyone involved!

At the end of a successful week, the Criw Cymraeg were proudly presented with their new badges. If you see them around school, please stop and have a chat in Welsh!

As part of their efforts, they've reminded all staff and pupils to use the Welsh phrases of the week:

- “**Syniad da**” – A good idea (pronounced: Sun-yad dah)
- “**Dw i ddim yn siŵr**” – I’m not sure (pronounced: Doo-ee thim un shoor)
- “**Mae’n flin ‘da fi**” – I’m sorry (pronounced: Mine vleen da vee)

And during Dydd Santes Dwynwen, we focused on the word “Cariad”, which means love, but is also used to refer to a boyfriend or girlfriend.

****Da iawn, Criw**

Clwb Cymraeg

The Clwb Cymraeg continues to thrive and takes place every Wednesday afternoon after school. Pupils have the opportunity to engage with the Welsh language through a variety of games, arts and crafts, and quizzes. The club is led by the Welsh department and Menter Caerdydd, an organisation that promotes and encourages the social use of Welsh across Cardiff.

Promoting Welsh

As Welsh continues to be an important part of education in Wales, many children are learning the language in school. However, learning Welsh at home can make a huge difference in building confidence and fluency. If you would like the opportunity to learn a bit of Welsh at home to support your child with his or her studies, why not use Duolingo, a free and accessible tool to help you do this. Duolingo is a free app that parents can access on smartphones, tablets, or computers.



Eisteddfod 2025

This year, our School Eisteddfod was a great celebration of Welsh culture and talent, with a variety of competitions and activities that engaged both Year 7 and Year 8 pupils.

Pupils took part in a range of competitions designed to highlight their creativity, language skills, and artistic talents. Events included recitation, creative writing, art, music, dancing and singing, giving pupils the opportunity to participate and contribute to the spirit of the Eisteddfod.

It was wonderful to see pupils embracing the Welsh language and culture with enthusiasm. The recitation and singing competitions were particular highlights, showing the dedication and confidence of our pupils when performing in front of an audience. The art and creative writing entries displayed an impressive level of imagination and effort, and judges were very impressed with the quality of work submitted.

Pupils competed for points to earn awards for their house teams, and it was encouraging to see friendly competition throughout the event.

Logan Dudley was the overall winner of Year 7 competitions and **Daniel Adeoye** was the winner for Year 8. Both pupils entered a variety of competitions both off stage and on stage and were the worthy winners of Dewi the Dragon and an Amazon gift card. A special commendation also to **Jacob Woodward** who won first prize in Welsh for creating a Welsh shield and to **Ibrahima Sano** and **Aishafode Sano** for creating wonderful models of geographical features in Geography.

We are proud of all pupils who took part in the Eisteddfod this year. It was a valuable opportunity for them to engage with Welsh heritage, practise their performing skills, and gain confidence in performing and presenting their work.

Thank you to all the staff who helped organise and run the competitions. A special thank you to the Music Department for all their help. We look forward to seeing the Eisteddfod continue to grow in future years!

MEGAN GWYNNE CARROLL, HEAD OF WELSH

Bore Coffi Cymraeg / Welsh Coffee Morning

The Welsh Department recently hosted its first Welsh Coffee Morning, designed to give staff the chance to drop in and enjoy a chat in Welsh — whatever their level of fluency. Our Criw Cymraeg were on hand to offer support, helping to start conversations and encourage everyone to get involved. It was a lovely opportunity to promote the use of Welsh in a relaxed and friendly setting.

We're already looking forward to the next session!

Daffodils

During Maths lessons, pupils from 7E and 7G made paper daffodils to celebrate the Eisteddfod. They had to calculate measurements and quantities to make their beautiful creations. Well done to all!

AGNIESZKA KACZMARSKA, TEACHER OF SCIENCE AND MATHS





RYA Keelboat Level 1 – Start Sailing course with Cardiff Sailing Centre

The sailing trip was a lovely experience to learn how to sail and socialize with your friends, but mostly it was really educational, we learnt the basics of sailing and had a great understanding on how to sail

First, we got to the Cardiff Sailing Centre with the school minibus, then when we got there, we sat down and the two teachers, Tom and Anthony, talked through what we would be doing during these two days of learning. Then we put on our kit- a life jacket and water-resistant trousers. Then we started the practical part. We went outside and saw the keelboat in the waters. We started by uncovering the main sail, it was covered with a black thick leather, then we raised it up by dragging a thick rope which was really hard and required loads of strength to complete, then the teacher untied the fender away from the side of the boat. There were four fenders and these fenders protect the boat from the pontoon. In my own definition, the pontoon is like a wooden flat-bottomed structure or float typically used to hold the boat in place in order for the boat not to float away due to how strong the wind can be. The boat is held to the pontoon with a very thick rope and is knotted in a specific way, with an "OXO" knot so it won't become loose easily. Then we began sailing, we moved quite slowly as we prepped the boat. We achieved this by putting the Jib up, which is the smaller sail. We learnt a lot about sailing, the wind directions and how to know the wind directions. All crew members had a job to do, one had to control the mainsail with a rope, the other two had to control the Jib, the smaller sail, then the last person (captain) had to control the tiller. The tiller is considered as the boat's steering wheel, it controls the movement of the boat. So we were not idle and bored while sailing, we all swapped and had a turn at all jobs.



We sailed across the wind, called the "Beam Reach", then we learnt how to sail towards the wind called the "Broad Reach". To turn, the captain in control of the tiller shouts "ready about" to his or her crew members, this is to ask them to check for any obstacle closeby that could cause wreckage while turning, if there isn't any obstacle they say "yes" and the captain shouts "lee hoo" to inform them that he or she is about to turn the boat and make them prepared to drag or release the ropes controlling the main sails and Jib. To turn, you need to push the tiller away from you and towards the mainsail, then when the mainsail comes to the middle of the boat you swap sides to control the tiller better and also watch your head because the main sail comes quickly. This turning is called tacking because when you turn, pushing the tiller away from you, it pushes the boat to the wind.

We learnt how to gybe as well. To gybe, the sailor says "stand by to gybe" then the crew members check for any obstacle and if there is none, they say "yes" then he or she says "gybe hoo" and pulls the tiller towards them and switches sides when the mainsail is in the middle. Gybing pushes the boat away from the wind while tacking pushes the boat to the wind.

Theoretically, we learnt some basic things to know in sailing, like Onshore and Offshore wind. Onshore wind is when the boat is harder to leave the pontoon to sail and easier to come back to the pontoon, this is known by the direction of the wind. While Offshore is opposite, meaning it is easier for the boat to leave the pontoon to sail and harder to come back on the pontoon, this still depends on the direction of the wind. To know the direction of the wind you can feel it on your face. You can know by the direction of the waves in the water, you can also tell by the wind vane at the top of the Keelboat or by looking at a flag. In the classrooms we learnt about the rules of sailing, they are;

1. If two boats are almost in collision, and one of the boats is a starboard and the other a port, the port should move away. This is because the port has a better chance of moving quicker because of the wind direction.
 - To know which is the starboard or the port, if the wind direction is hitting the right side of the boat, it is a starboard.
 - While a port is identified if the wind direction is hitting the left side of the boat
2. If it is a starboard and another starboard about to crash or a port and another port, the boat closer to the wind is the one responsible to move.
3. If a boat is speeding, it is obliged to avoid other boats.
4. Avoid collisions in total.
5. Always check the forecast and check the chart to know if the weather is safe for sailing.



We were later taught how to tie different ropes in the boats which was really easy and engaging. Overall this trip was a great experience and an unforgettable experience. This opportunity was made possible by generous funding from the Reardon Smith Nautical Trust, we are extremely grateful to them for this opportunity. Thank you!! Thank you also to Anthony Chappin and Tom from Cardiff Sailing Centre for a fantastic course.

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Welcome to the

EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Faculty

News from the

Department of Performing Arts

A Festival of Readings, Poems, and Carols: Celebrating Christmas in Tradition

As the Advent season unfolded, our school once again embraced the beauty and joy of Christmas with our traditional Carol Service, A Festival of Readings, Poems, and Carols. This festive occasion, deeply rooted in history, was inspired by the original form devised by the Bishop of Truro and later modified for use in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, in 1918.

The service followed the traditional pattern of Bible readings, beginning with the fall of mankind and our need for salvation. Each passage traced the story of hope and redemption, culminating in the powerful promise of salvation through the birth of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and God Incarnate. These readings beautifully set the tone for a reflective and joyous celebration of the season.

Our talented students truly brought the service to life. The school choir and orchestra performed a moving selection of carols and musical pieces, enhancing the spiritual atmosphere of the service. The choir's harmonies and the orchestra's music filled the air with warmth and reverence, helping to remind us of the true meaning of Christmas.

After the service, the community gathered to share in the festive cheer with delicious mince pies and enjoyed entertainment provided by our very own rock band. Their lively performance added a lighthearted touch to an evening filled with both solemn reflection and festive spirit.

The Carol Service remains a cherished tradition for our school, allowing students, staff, and families to come together in celebration of the season.





School's Upcoming Production of Fame Jr. Promises to Be a Showstopper!

A Night of Glitz, Glamour, and Talent at St Illtyd's School Hall – 2nd-4th July 2025

Get ready for an unforgettable evening of music, dance, and drama as our talented students take the stage for the school's highly anticipated production of Fame Jr. this summer! The show will run from 2nd-4th July 2025 in the school hall, and tickets will go on sale from 15th May, with prices set at £10 for general admission and £7 for concessions.

Based on the iconic 1980s film and TV series, Fame Jr. follows the lives of a group of passionate young students at a performing arts high school, as they navigate their dreams of fame while dealing with the pressures of growing up. With infectious energy, catchy tunes, and stunning choreography, this is a production you won't want to miss!

Our talented cast has been working tirelessly to bring this show to life. Students have been busy learning their lines, perfecting their performances, and attending intensive Saturday dance rehearsals to ensure every moment on stage is as spectacular as

possible. From the vibrant group numbers to the powerful solos, this production showcases the incredible dedication and talent of our young performers.

"We're so excited to share the hard work and passion of our cast with the community, everyone has been giving 100% to make sure this show is something special. We can't wait for the audience to see how much effort and heart they've put into their performances."

Tickets will be available for purchase starting 15th May, and we encourage you to book early to secure your seats for this highly anticipated event. Don't miss your chance to witness the magic of Fame Jr. right here in our school hall!

Come and support the next generation of stars. Mark your calendars, get your tickets, and join us for a truly spectacular show!

Show Dates: 2nd-4th July 2025 **Location:** School Hall **Ticket Prices:** £10 (General Admission), £7 (Concession) **Tickets on Sale From:** 15th May 2025

We look forward to seeing you there!

Performing Arts Educational Visit – Mean Girls at the Savoy Theatre, London

In December, our students had the exciting opportunity to attend a truly memorable educational visit to London's West End to watch the hit production of Mean Girls at the Savoy Theatre. This musical adaptation of the beloved movie offers an engaging storyline that resonates with many of our pupils, addressing themes of friendship, identity, and the challenges of adolescence.

For some of our students, this was their very first visit to London, making it a very special occasion. Before the show, we explored the vibrant Covent Garden area, where students had the chance to take in the sights and sounds of one of the city's most iconic locations. From street performances to shopping, it was a perfect introduction to the energy and culture of London.

The performance itself was a huge hit, with many pupils expressing how much they enjoyed the catchy songs, lively choreography, and relevant themes. For those who had already seen the movie, it was fascinating to experience the story brought to life on stage. For others, it was a brand-new experience that sparked thoughtful discussions about the messages conveyed through the characters and their interactions.

This trip was not only a fantastic way to experience world-class theatre, but it also helped our students connect with themes that are relevant to their own lives in a meaningful and enjoyable way. We hope to continue offering opportunities like this, blending education with unforgettable experiences.

We look forward to more exciting adventures in the future!

JULIE SMITH, HEAD OF PERFORMING ARTS



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

Sports/Chwaraeon

Rugby news



Year 7 Rugby Team

Year 7 Rugby - Cardiff, Seven-a-Side Tournament

With most of the squad having never played seven-a-side rugby previously and many of them non-club players, we travelled to the Year 7 annual rugby sevens with quiet confidence. Our first game against Bishop of Llandaff was an exciting game with both teams scoring tries in the wider areas. St Illtyd's scored two nice tries in the second half to secure a 28-14 win. Next up were St Teilo's. This game was a close encounter with both teams scoring after each other. Going into the final few minutes St Illtyd's scored a well-earned try through some gutsy defending to secure a 21-14 win. In our final pool game, we played a talented Plasmawr team. The boys started slowly, conceding three tries in the first half. With a galvanising team talk at half time about staying focused off kick offs and playing to our strengths, the boys bounced back. St Illtyd's scored three fantastic tries and converted each kick to take a narrow 21-19 win, winning the group and placing them in the plate final against Radyr. Off the kick off, Radyr scored first and then quickly added a second try to their total. However, St Illtyd's responded with two good tries making it a competitive second half. Unfortunately, Radyr eventually pulled away and ran out deserved winners. Well done to all involved!

Year 8 Rugby

The Year 8 rugby team have had a mixed season so far this year but have peaked at the right time. The boys played a gritty Mary Immaculate team at home, in the quarter finals of the Cardiff Schools plate competition. The game was played in very heavy conditions with both packs of forwards looking to gain parity up front. The St Illtyd's forwards managed to produce some quick ball for their backs, who scored some eye-catching tries out wide. The boys ran out comfortable winners in the end, securing an away, semi-final against Corpus Christi.



Year 9 Rugby Team

St Illtyd's started the game positively. Our much smaller, more mobile pack worked hard at scrum time, ensuring that they provided a good platform from which the backs could attack from. The backline really shone, evading defenders through some elusive running and strong carries to gain an early lead. However, Corpus worked hard to get back into the game and managed to score with only a minute left on the clock, bringing St Illtyd's lead to just four points. Corpus attacked aggressively at the St Illtyd's try line. St Illtyd's defended bravely, tackling ferociously to protect their try line. With the match into injury time, Corpus' last carry was held up over the try line and the ball kicked clear. St Illtyd's had done it! The boys will now play Radyr in the finals at Cardiff Arms Park on Wednesday, 2nd April.

Year 9 Rugby, Seven-a-Side Tournament

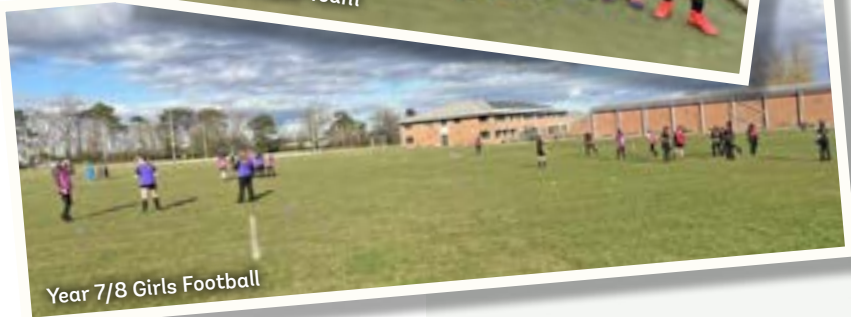
The Year 9 rugby sevens team played exceptionally well to be crowned overall tournament champions, twice in a row!

The squad started well against Glantaf but missed a few tackles late into the second half, losing narrowly 17-14. However, the boys bounced back with an impressive 33-7 win over Whitchurch scoring some well-constructed tries. Next up was Cardiff High. This match was a very close game, with both teams cancelling each other out. St Illtyd's eventually broke free to score a well-earned try under the posts, sealing a 22-19 victory. Llanishen were next up. This match really could have gone either way. Both teams scoring tries from deep inside their own half. However, it was St Illtyd's that took a convincing win, making the most of their powerful backline who raced over to secure a 35-26 win. Finally, St Illtyd's played Radyr. Radyr still had a chance to win the tournament going into this game, but it was the resilience and grit of St Illtyd's that proved too much for them. St Illtyd's ran out 31-10 winners. Well done to all involved!

Football news



Year 9 Football Team



Year 7/8 Girls Football

Year 11 Rugby

The Year 11 rugby team have waited a long time since their sevens tournament in the Autumn to play their Cardiff Plate games. However, the wait proved beneficial as the boys started with a bang against St Teilo's. The team has changed significantly this year, due to injuries and players unavailable. In their quarter final, the boys were too organised and skilful for a resilient St Teilo's team. They ran out comfortable winners, scoring some cracking tries through good inter-play between forwards and backs. Next up, the boys played St John's (away) on a Friday afternoon. Again, lots of players were injured, meaning the boys played with only one substitute. The game was quite a scrappy affair, with both sides making some early errors. St Illtyd's eventually broke the deadlock, scoring some nice tries when carrying the ball close off scrums and lineouts. However, St John's came back into the game late on, making the score-line much more respectable in the second half. The boys held on to secure their fourth final at Cardiff Arms Park. We are all hoping to go one better this year and bring the Plate back to St Illtyd's. It is no less than they deserve. They play Radyr in the finals at Cardiff Arms Park on Wednesday, 2nd April.

Year 7/8 Girls Football

The girls football club has been a massive success so far this year with over 30 pupils attending recently. The Year 8 girls have their first tournament at Howells school on the 25th March which is themed as 'Road to the Euros' celebrating the recent success of the Welsh women's side.

Year 9 Football

Year 9 boys beat Glantaf 3-2 in a friendly game earlier this month. Goals scored by **Callum Russell** and **Joel Carmody**. A great display from all the boys and looking forward to playing more fixtures before the end of the football season.

The Year 9 boys attended a 7-a-side tournament earlier this month and had a fantastic day. They played some brilliant football winning two games, drawing two games and losing one. Unfortunately, they didn't make it through to the knockouts, but a great day to be involved in.



Netball Leaders visit to Cardiff Metropolitan University

Earlier this year, a group of pupils at our school took part in a Netball Leaders course run by Wales Netball. Following this course, **Lilia Blood**, Physical Activity and Inclusion Officer for Cardiff Met Sport organized for the group to visit Cardiff Metropolitan University's Cyncoed campus. During the visit pupils watched a friendly match between Cardiff Met and Swansea University and observed the coaching that took place during the match. After the match, pupils led a question-and-answer session with some of the coaches and players about their journeys in the sport. The session was filmed by Cardiff Met to form part of their ArcHERS portfolio of films, designed to encourage more females into sport. All in all, this was a very valuable visit for our pupils.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2025

Please note the following dates for the academic year:

TERM DATES

SPRING TERM 2025

Ends: Friday 11/04/25

SUMMER TERM 2025

Starts: Monday 28/04/2025

Half term:

Monday 26/05/2025 –

Friday 30/05/2025

Ends: Monday 21/07/2025

May Day: Monday 5th May

FURTHER INSET DAY

Monday 21st July

Sports/Chwaraeon



Welsh Athletics Indoor Championships

Aliyah Afolabi and Ava Placide continue to produce outstanding performances on the track this indoor season. Both have moved up to the U17 women's category, despite only being 14 years old. A big jump for both girls, but neither of them let them hold them back in the recent Welsh Indoor Championships.

Congratulations to **Aliyah** on becoming a double Welsh U17 champion in the 60m and 200m sprints. **Aliyah** broke records in both by setting a new Championship Best in both the 60m and 200m.

Congratulations to **Ava** on becoming the U17 Welsh Champion in the 60m hurdles and a silver medalist in the 60m sprint.

Both girls are now working hard to prepare for the summer season ahead!



British Indoor Athletics Championships 2025

Aliyah Afolabi went on to further success in the indoor season at the British Championships, competing in the 200m sprint.

Aliyah who is just 14, clocked the fastest time by a British U-17 in 14 years, as well as setting a new Welsh U-17 Record in Sheffield.

She came home in 23.91s. Only three British U-17 women have ever gone faster than Aliyah, including Olympic Medalist **Desiree Henry**.

Aliyah continues to make a name for herself on the track at major events and continues to stay humble, working hard to improve. We look forward to seeing her perform in the summer season.



Cardiff & Vale Schools Athletics

At the recent annual awards evening for the Cardiff & Vale Schools Athletics, our pupils were awarded their County vests.

Congratulations to **Aliyah Afolabi**, **Ava Placide** and **Millie Gold** who all represented Cardiff & Vale in the Welsh Schools competition in July 2024.

Two of our pupils won a special award on the evening. This was a shared award for the most outstanding girl across all of the Cardiff and Vale Schools. The Ray James Cup – for the Outstanding Girl went to **Millie Gold** and **Aliyah Afolabi**.

NATHAN WALSH/MORGAN JONES/RUTH FRY/STEPH MACLENNAN - ST ILLTYD'S PE DEPARTMENT