

**Believe, Enrich, Succeed Together**



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## **December 2019 2nd Half Term Newsletter**

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

It has been good to catch up with many of you over the past few weeks to express my thanks and my goodbyes. Thank you for your ongoing support for the school and for the work we do here. It has been an absolute honour to lead this school, to serve this community and to have been in the lives of your children. I will never forget them, nor my time here.

Thank you to the wonderful team of staff at St Illtyd's, the teachers, teaching assistants, administrative staff, cleaners, midday supervisors, kitchen staff and the caretaker, who make all of this possible day to day.

Thank you to the Governors for their commitment to the school and for the support and challenge that they bring in their governance.

I hope that you will all continue to support the school and maintain good relationships with the staff, who work so hard and always strive for the very best for your children. There will be times when you may need to question, challenge or raise an issue, and we welcome this, but ask always, that communication is mutually respectful.

As the end of term approaches, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the children on their fantastic Christmas performances and their community spirit. All of the concerts were wonderful and the choir has been very active, taking part in the lights switch on at Brynithel, 'Carols on the Square' in Llanhilleth, as well as performing for the Luncheon Club at the Institute and at St Mark's Church. Thank you to Miss Speed for leading the choir to such high standards of performance.

Finally thank you to the children, just for being you; the best that you can be.

**I wish you all a very 'Merry Christmas' and a happy, healthy new year!**

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### **Staffing Information and Update**

From January 2020, Mrs MacKay will take up the post of Acting Headteacher, until July 2020. A permanent Headteacher appointment will be made by the Governing body, to commence September 2020. Mrs Ceri Evans (Y2) and Mrs Samantha Davies (Y1) will jointly share the Acting Deputy Headteacher role until July 2020. Mrs Ceri Hughes is shadowing Mrs MacKay in the ALNCo role. Miss Kath Issacs will take up the post of Nursery teacher in January 2020.



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**Updated Staffing Structure for January 2020**

Year Group	Teachers	Teaching Assistants
N	Miss Kath Issacs (Nursery Cover Teacher)	Mrs Marcia Lewis Mrs Elaine Maggs
YR	Mrs Kirsty Banks <b>*Leader of Learning for More Able and Talented (MAT)</b>	Miss Kayleigh Meek
Y1	Mrs Samantha Davies <b>*Leader of Learning for Collaboration and Wider Learning</b>	Mrs Carly Southall (Mon-Thu) /Mrs Victoria Barnes (Fri)
Y2	Miss Ceri Evans <b>*Leader of Learning for Curriculum, Language Literacy and Communication</b>	Mrs Jayne Warfield
Y3	Mrs Ceri Hughes <b>*(Shadow ALNco)</b>	
Y4	Miss Rachel Speed	Mrs Genna Price (Wellbeing and ALN Support)
Y5	Mr Latimer Williams	<b>TA Support for ALN, Emotional Wellbeing and Nurture</b> Mrs Deb Davies (ELSA) Mrs Maria Williams (ELSA) Mrs Jakki Wayne
Y6	Mr Thomas Senior <b>*Leader of Learning for Innovation, Effective Pedagogy and Learning</b>	
<b>Mrs Kelly Forrest-MacKay - Acting Headteacher (Inclusion and Wellbeing Lead)</b>		
<b>Miss Ceri Evans /Mrs Samantha Davies - Joint Acting Deputy Headteachers</b>		
<b>PPA Teacher - Mrs Rachel Powell</b>		
<b>Chair of Governors - Mrs Lucy Allsopp</b>		

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### **St Illtyd's Helping out in the Community**

We made four charitable donations this term, £343.05 for Children in Need and approximately £80 for the Poppy Appeal. We were overwhelmed by the generosity shown in our collection for donations to the Foodbank at Harvest time. We will be making a donation to Latch Cymru and have raised just over £40 to date. Thank you once again for your kind community spirit.

### **Criw Cymraeg Good News**

Criw Cymraeg is now a very active pupil voice group within the school and this week they achieved the Bronze Cymraeg Campus Award! We are very proud of them and of everyone in the school team for their commitment to raising the profile of the Welsh language across the school. Special thanks to Mrs Hughes who leads the Criw Cymraeg.

### **STEM**

STEM Club has been very popular and Mr Williams and the gang have been very busy all term creating, designing, making (and breaking!), engineering and having so much fun. Thank you Mr Williams for your endless enthusiasm for all things STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Thank you to those families who have donated Lego to the school.

### **Senedd SIPS**

Senedd SIPS is our new and improved method of involving all Y2-Y6 children in pupil voice groups across the school. Younger pupils will join groups in the summer term. The children chose the groups, many of which link to our school improvement priorities, and have created an action plan for the year. They meet twice per term.

The groups are:

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics)

Eco Warriors

School Council

Health and Happiness Ambassadors

Outdoor Learning (Gardening, Play Squad, Sports Squad)

### **Summary of School Improvement Priorities 2019-2020**

Our four overarching school improvement areas of focus for this year are in line with the National Mission for Education in Wales:

- **Inspirational Leadership**
- **Excellence, Equity and Wellbeing**
- **Assessment & Evaluation**
- **High Quality Education Profession**



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1. Inspirational Leadership	What we have done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Further develop and enhance the learning environments</li> <li>● Continue to develop effective governance</li> <li>● Widely distribute leadership across the school, to include pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Created Foundation Phase Play Garden</li> <li>● Created KS2 Loose Parts Play Area</li> <li>● Created a Kitchen Space</li> <li>● Created a Lego / STEM Area</li> <li>● All staff are responsible for an individual school improvement plan, which feeds into the overall school improvement plan - distributing leadership widely across the school</li> <li>● Introduced Senedd SIPS</li> <li>● Criw Cymraeg is now a very active pupil voice group within the school and this week they achieved the Bronze Cymraeg Campus Award!</li> <li>● Appointed two Community Governors</li> </ul>
2. Excellence, Equity and Wellbeing	What we have done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Embed Metacognition</li> <li>● Improve opportunities for pupil voice across the whole school: Senedd SIPS</li> <li>● Build upon improved levels of Family and Community engagement, including Intergenerational Linking</li> <li>● Improve attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism. (Linked to Blaenau Gwent Priority)</li> <li>● Increase opportunities for Physical Literacy / Participation in Sports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Senedd SIPS have met twice</li> <li>● The Metacognition PLC have entered Phase 2 of their work and in the Spring term will be involving pupils more in their work in making Metacognition come alive in all classes and for parents! <b>Their aim is to develop learners who are:</b></li> <li>● <b>Self-aware</b> - <i>knowing yourself, your strengths and areas to develop, being reflective and able to manage and regulate your own learning behaviour</i></li> <li>● <b>Resilient</b> - <i>being confident to approach challenges, being able to persevere and 'bounce back' from setbacks. Seeing mistakes as a learning process.</i></li> <li>● <b>Resourceful</b> - <i>being able to make a plan, be ready and prepared to learn. Being able to use resources and approaches to help with learning.</i></li> <li>● <b>Able to Connect</b> - <i>being able to make links in learning and with others, communicating effectively, supporting and collaborating with others.</i></li> <li>● <b>Able to Enquire</b> - <i>being able to question and wonder, think and reflect, predict and investigate.</i></li> </ul>



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	<p>Thank you to Mr Senior who leads this important work across the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Phase 1 of Clwb Llan Project commenced in December</li> </ul>
<b>3. Assessment &amp; Evaluation</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deepen understanding across the school community, of the 4 purposes, 6 Areas of Learning and Experience and the use of the new Curriculum for Wales in planning learning experiences.</li> <li>● Improve provision for Mathematical Reasoning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● X 2 INSET days 02.09.19 and 03.09.19 focussing on planning for and implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales</li> <li>● Mathematics training for all staff provided by Summit Learning and the EAS</li> <li>● All staff have attended Mathematics training at other EAS schools to view best practice</li> <li>● As a QI (Quality Improvement) school for the Welsh Government, we remain in what was known as the 'Pioneer Schools' process. Our role in this now, is trying out and testing aspects of the new Health and Wellbeing strand of the new Curriculum for Wales and providing feedback</li> </ul>
<b>4. High Quality Education Profession</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Embed improvements in teaching and learning in line with the new Curriculum for Wales</li> <li>● Enhance the pupil offer to include more meaningful Cwricwlwm Cymreig links.</li> <li>● Improve Outdoor Teaching and Learning</li> <li>● Further develop staff competency in Welsh</li> <li>● Improve provision for More Able and Talented learners</li> <li>● Provide additional training and support in managing pupil behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As an EAS (Education Achievement Service) Regional Professional Learning School, a number of our staff have been trained to facilitate professional learning for other staff. This will benefit our staff and we will also train other teachers across the EAS, such as Middle Leaders and NQTS (Newly Qualified Teachers). This in turn continually assists us in reflecting upon and refining our own practice</li> <li>● Outdoor Learning training provided by Outdoor Coaching 14.11.19 - further dates planned for 2020</li> <li>● Cluster MAT (More Able and Talented) Professional Learning Community established with ALC 3-16 and Sofrydd Primary. Mrs Banks is leading provision for this across the school</li> <li>● Mrs Hughes is about to embark upon</li> </ul>



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	<p>EAS Middle Leader training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mrs MacKay has commenced EAS Aspiring Headteacher training</li> <li>● Mrs Banks and Mr Senior are due to complete their PGCert Studies this academic year in curriculum design</li> <li>● In liaison with external agencies such as the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Service, Educational Psychology Service and the CAMHS In Reach Pilot Project, we have had a professional learning focus for all staff in understanding and managing pupil behaviour</li> </ul> <p><b>For example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduced Nurture provision</li> <li>● Thrive Induction Training for all staff</li> <li>● Trained x 5 Thrive Practitioners</li> <li>● Training for all staff in positive behaviour management - Team Teach (Assertive Discipline and Positive Handling)</li> <li>● 'Attachment Awareness' training</li> <li>● 'Responding to Distress' training</li> </ul>
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**Upcoming dates for your diary (PLEASE KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE)**

The Welsh Government have announced that there will be an extra INSET day for all schools, in order to prepare for the new curriculum. Schools can now take 6 INSET days in a school year, (previously 5). Please see details of planned **INSET days below**. We took 3 INSET days in September. We have one planned in February 2020. We have one further provisional date in the Summer term - date TBC, pending Welsh Government approval.

**Spring Term 2020**

**January**

06.01.20	Start of term for all pupils
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**February**

14.02.20	Last day of half term
17.02.20-21.02.20	<b>SCHOOL CLOSED - HALF TERM</b>
24.02.20	<b>SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY 4</b>

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25.02.20	School starts back after half term
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#### March

02.03.20	School Eisteddfod
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**Summer Term 2020** We have one further provisional INSET (Day 5) day this term. Date TBC, pending Welsh Government approval.

#### April

National Test Dates Y2 - Y6	Tuesday 28.04.2020 – Tuesday 05.05.2020
03.04.20	End of term
06.04.20 - 17.04.20	School Closed EASTER HOLIDAYS
20.04.20	Start of Summer term

#### May

<b>May Bank Holiday 2020</b> has changed for the VE Day anniversary. Next year's early May bank holiday will be moved back by four days for the whole of the UK, to coincide with the 75th anniversary of VE Day. May Day is traditionally held on a Monday but will be put back to Friday 8 May 2020. <b>School will be open as normal on Monday May 4th and be closed (Bank Holiday) on Friday 8th May</b>	
National Test Dates Y2 - Y6	Tuesday 28.04.2020 – Tuesday 05.05.2020
22.05.20	Last day of half term
25.05.20-29.05.20	SCHOOL CLOSED - HALF TERM

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**June**

01.06.20	Start of second half term
08.06.20-09.06.20	Y3 & Y4 Overnight Residential Hilston Park
25.06.20	ALC Year 6 Transition day St Illtyd's Transition Day
29.06.20-01.07.20	Y5 & Y6 Gilwern Residential

**July**

06.07.20	INSET DAY 5 TBC - pending approval from Welsh Government
20.07.20	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET Day 6

**Blaenau Gwent School Term dates (Please see diary dates above for INSET days)**

School Term Dates 2019/2020

Date	Start	Half Term Starts	Half Term Ends	Term Ends
Autumn	02/09/2019	28/10/2019	01/11/2019	20/12/2019
Spring	06/01/2020	17/02/2020	21/02/2020	03/04/2020
Summer	20/04/2020	25/05/2020	29/05/2020	20/07/2020