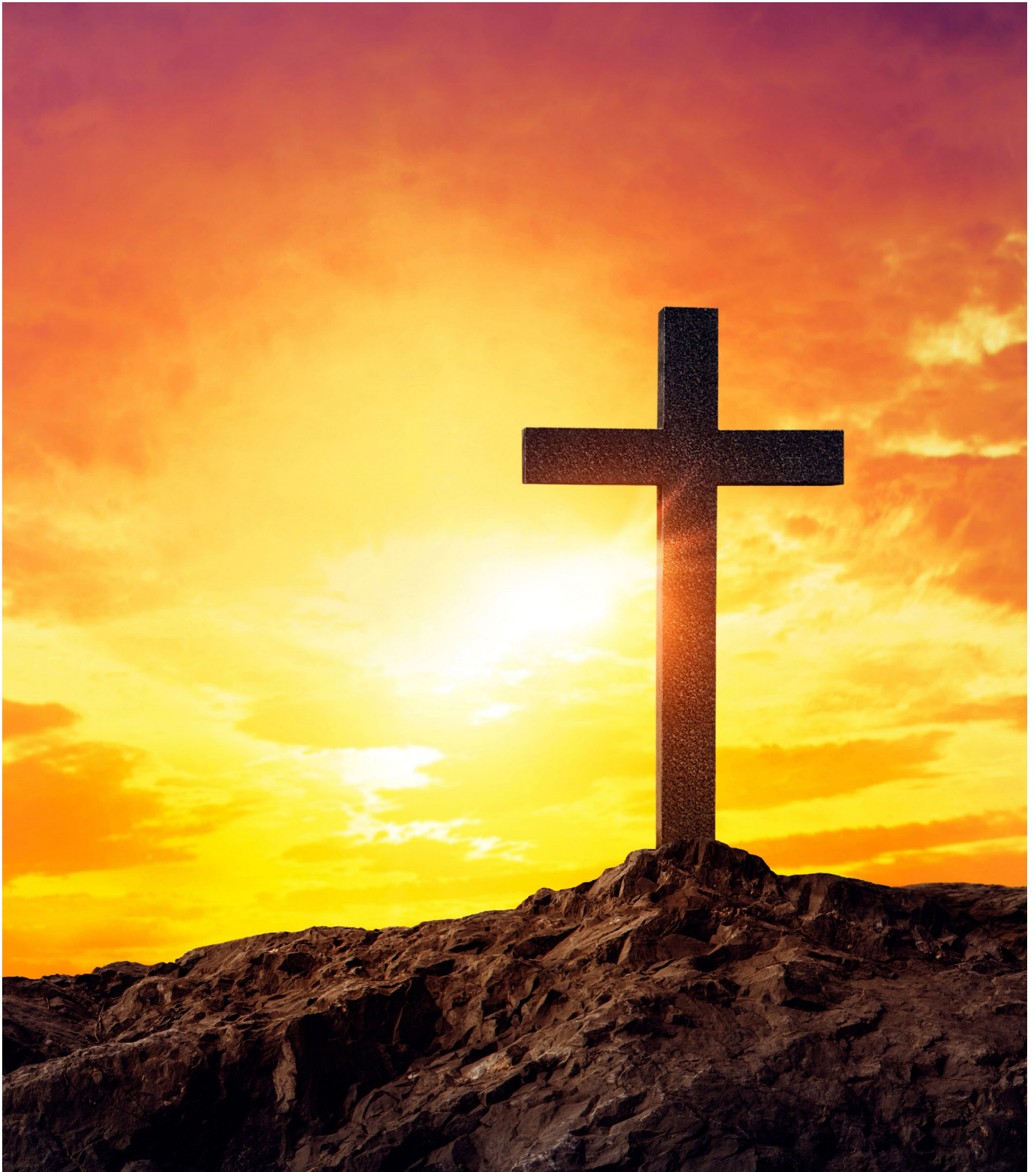




Bishop Vaughan Catholic School
Ysgol Gatholig Esgob Vaughan

Parents' Newsletter Easter 2025
Cylchlythyr Rhieni Pasg 2025



Headteacher's Message

From spiritual growth and our Lenten preparations to focused academic studies and celebratory events, this term has truly encapsulated Bishop Vaughan's identity as a community – one grounded in faith and in which our pupils strive for excellence in all that they do. We are incredibly proud of their achievements, attitudes to learning and the values they exhibit daily, as we hope all readers of this newsletter will see!



At the heart of this term has been the Catholic Church's Jubilee Year theme, Pilgrims of Hope, which our pupils have truly embraced. This theme has guided our assemblies, daily reflections and wider school life. Our chaplaincy and Faith Council have provided inspiring leadership, ensuring pupils are not just learning about hope but actively living it - through both prayer and action. Particularly exciting has been our preparation for the upcoming pilgrimage to Rome for the canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis. Pupils have engaged in learning about Carlo's life, and our Junior Legion of Mary members have shown tremendous dedication in fundraising for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, demonstrating a mature commitment to their faith.

The term began with great energy and purpose: pupils returned from the Christmas break ready to embrace both academic challenges and extracurricular pursuits. Our Year 11 and Sixth Form students, in particular, have shown commendable focus as they prepare for upcoming exams. Our Spring Revision Workshop was very well-attended by parents and carers. The sessions offered information and guidance on evidence-based strategies, such as retrieval practice and spaced repetition, along with free revision packs to ensure our learners feel well-equipped for the months ahead.

Our Estyn inspection in January - our first since 2018 - was another significant event of the past term. The visit provided an opportunity both to celebrate achievements and to identify areas for further growth. While we waited until March to share the official findings, we were incredibly proud of how our pupils had represented the school. Their warmth, values and enthusiasm shone through, and the inspectors praised both the exceptional character of our young people and the distinctive spirit of Bishop Vaughan.

The final report, published at the end of March, affirmed those two areas, and in addition it recognised the strong sense of community, the commitment to excellence and achievement, the quality of teaching and learning and the positive relationships that underpin our school environment. We thank all members of our community - staff, pupils, parents and carers - for the ongoing support which contributed to this recognition. Further information on the report is shared later on in this newsletter.

Our commitment to Welsh heritage and language was deepened yet further during February and March with the build-up to, and the celebration of, our annual Eisteddfod. Pupils across the school contributed exceptional work, from poetry and prose to performance and art. The Criw Cymraeg and Welsh Ambassadors played key roles in both the Eisteddfod and in our ongoing Siarter Iaith journey, which is focused on fostering a vibrant Welsh-speaking environment within the school. The Eisteddfod competitions culminated in a spectacular day of performances, showcasing the talents and patriotism of our pupils. Their enthusiasm reflected a deep appreciation for our Welsh culture and language, reinforcing our school's identity .



Headteacher's Message

February also saw the return of one of our particularly cherished traditions: the school musical. This year's production of 'Beauty and the Beast Jr' was a triumph, featuring pupils aged 11 to 18, alongside our cluster primary schools. Under the expert direction of Mr. Eynon-Davies - who will, in July, direct Les Misérables in the only production of the show to be staged in Wales (hence our bringing forward the school production this year!) - our students delivered an unforgettable performance. Many in the audience described it as the best BVS musical yet! Additionally, our postponed Christmas talent show finally took place in February, led by our Sixth Form Leadership Team. It was a joyous event, full of creativity and fun, and it successfully raised funds for charity.

Bishop Vaughan's pupils have continued this term to engage in a wide range of learning experiences outside the classroom. February's trip to Poland, which included a visit to Auschwitz, provided a particularly poignant example of this. It was a profoundly moving experience for those involved, offering important lessons in history, remembrance and the values of compassion and respect. Our students approached the visit with great maturity and reflected thoughtfully on the importance of standing against hatred in all forms.

Our Ash Wednesday service at the beginning of March, which marked the start of Lent, was led by the Faith Council and it focused on the messages of repentance and spiritual growth. The pupils involved led prayers, distributed ashes and encouraged the wider school community to engage in acts of kindness and charity throughout the Lenten season.

World Book Day also brought colour and creativity to the school, with costumes ranging from dinosaurs (a giant inflatable costume, in case you were curious!) to Dr. Seuss and Harry Potter characters, and a whole host of classic literary figures besides! Cruella De Vil also made an appearance with dozens of 'supporting cast' Dalmatians, albeit not quite the full one hundred and one! Events like these highlight the joy of learning and help build the culture of reading that our inspectors chose to 'spotlight' in their report, spotlights being a means of highlighting particular areas of strength in the schools that they visit.

Excitement has also been growing around plans for our new school building. Meetings with the project team have moved into a more detailed phase, and departments have begun submitting their "wishlists" for the design. A pupil reference group will soon meet with the architects to help shape a learning environment that reflects our needs and aspirations. This is a thrilling step forward, and we look forward to keeping our community informed as the project develops.

In the period since our last newsletter, then, our pupils have truly exemplified what it means to be young people guided by faith, committed to excellence and inspired by hope. Whether through service or scholarship, they continue to rise to every challenge and opportunity placed before them. As we look ahead to Easter and the summer term beyond, we look forward to seeing the further ways in which they will – both individually and collectively – live out our mission statement: living "life to the full" through Christ.

I hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter as much as we have enjoyed all of the events and experiences detailed within its pages, and I wish all in the Bishop Vaughan community a blessed remainder of Lent and a joyful Easter season –

Mrs. E. Pole
Headteacher



School Term and Holiday Dates 2024 -2025

		HALF TERM HOLIDAYS		
Term	Term begins	Begins	Ends	Term ends
Autumn 2024	Monday 2nd September	Monday 28th October	Friday 1st November	Friday 20th December
Spring 2025	Monday 6th January	Monday 24th February	Friday 28th February	Friday 11th April
Summer 2025	Monday 28th April	Monday 26th May	Friday 30th May	Monday 21st July

**The staff and governors wish
all parents, carers and pupils
a happy and holy Easter.**

Gan ddymuno Pasg hapus a sanctaidd ichi.

Bank Holidays

Friday 18th April - Good Friday
Monday 21st April - Easter Monday
Monday 5th May - May Day
Monday 26th May - Spring Bank Holiday

Dates for your Diary

The last day of term for pupils is Friday 11th April; school closes at 3.00pm.
All pupils return to school on Monday 28th April 2025. This will be week one of the timetable.
Monday 21st July - INSET Day



The full academic year school calendar is available to view on our website.



PLEASE NOTE

The decision was taken by our regional consortium, that no absences due to holidays during term times will be authorised by Headteachers. This means absences that are due to pupils being taken on holidays during term time will be recorded as unauthorised.

As a school we actively encourage parents not to take holidays during term time so that children can fully benefit from the opportunities their school provides. If children are not in school, they cannot learn.

Easter Services

Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter are the central focus of the Church's year. The liturgical rites for each of the days are an essential support to understanding the Christian message. A list of the Parishes and their contact details are below.

We wish you a happy and Holy Easter.



Blessed Sacrament (Father J P Thomas)

Tel: 01792 892722

www.parishofgorseinon.org

**Cathedral Church of St. Joseph
(Canon Benedict Koledoye)**

Tel: 01792 652683

www.meneviacathedral.org

Holy Cross (Father Cyril Thadathiyil)

Tel: 01792 586454

www.holycrossmenevia.com

Our Lady of Lourdes (Father Clement Oloruntoba OP)

Tel: 01792 655336

www.facebook.com/swanseatownhill

Our Lady Star of the Sea (Rev Michael Akpoghiran OP)

Tel: 01792 367283

www.ourladystaroftheseamumbles.org.uk

Sacred Heart Morriston (Canon Jason Jones)

Tel: 01792 771053

www.sacredheartmorriston.org.uk

Sacred Heart Ystradgynlais (Fr Saji Matthew)

Tel: 01792 842244

www.sacredheartystradgynlais.org.uk

St. Benedict's Clydach (Fr Saji Matthew)

Tel: 01792 842244

St. Benedict's Sketty (Father Carlito Reyes)

Tel: 01792 202447

www.stbenedictsketty.org

St Bride's Pontarddulais (Father J P Thomas)

Tel: 01792 892722

St. David's (Canon Paul Watson and Father Robert Davies)

Tel: 01792 653343

www.stdavids.wix.com/website

St. Illtyd's (Canon Paul Watson and Father Robert Davies)

Tel: 01792 424107

St Joachim's (Father John Browne)

Tel: 01792 201046

www.gowercatholic.com

St. Peter's (Father Cyril Thadathiyil)

Tel: 01792 586454

Estyn Inspection News

As our parents and carers are aware, Estyn inspections play a vital role in maintaining and improving the quality of education in Welsh schools. Estyn, the education and training inspectorate for Wales, provides independent evaluations of school performance, offering valuable insights for parents, governors, staff and the wider community.

Estyn inspections look at many aspects of school life, from teaching and learning to pupil wellbeing, leadership and the school's contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Our last inspection in 2018 commented very positively on each of these areas and when, in early January this year, we received a notification call to let us know that we would be inspected two weeks later, we were looking forward to sharing the progress made since the last visit and to letting the inspection team see the incredibly committed, diligent, kind and faith-filled young people that make up the Bishop Vaughan pupil body.

A team of inspectors joined us for nearly a week, and in that time they met with countless pupils, viewed books, observed lessons, met with staff and governors and analysed hundreds of questionnaire responses from parents, carers, pupils, governors, teachers and support staff. Inspections like these are therefore thorough and detailed, offering a comprehensive picture of how well a school is performing and where it can grow even further. The team commented from the outset on the warmth of our pupils in welcoming them and on the qualities and values that shone from them.

We have recently received the published report for this inspection and we are delighted to share that the report reflects the heart and soul of our school. To receive such a positive report is a cause for genuine celebration. The inspectors recognised that our school "strives for quality, excellence and achievement in all it does"—a testament to the hard work, commitment and care shown by staff and students alike. These words affirm the shared dedication of our entire community to continually raising standards and providing the best possible education for the young people we serve.



Some of our pupils are pictured holding copies of the Estyn report published at the end of March

From Our Estyn Inspection Report:

Strong Catholic values underpin all aspects of the school's work.

The culture of Bishop Vaughan Catholic School includes celebrating diversity, ensuring equity and striving for excellence.

The school's provision meets the needs of all pupils, including those of its most vulnerable pupils, well. This contributes significantly to pupils' well-being and their enjoyment in learning.

Leaders have high expectations, know the school well and build strong links with the wider community.

... a strong sense of belonging where all members of the school community feel safe, valued and supported.

The well-being and personal development of all pupils is a high priority within the school.

Bishop Vaughan Catholic School strives for quality, excellence and achievement in all it does.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding.

Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress against their personal targets.

Thoughtful planning of provision and effective teaching have a positive impact on the achievement and progress of pupils.

The school is especially effective at raising the aspirations of pupils from all backgrounds to help them fulfil their potential.

The school provides strong support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through formal lessons, liturgical celebrations and **the kindness members of the school community regularly display to each other.**

... teachers have high expectations of their pupils and deliver engaging, well-structured lessons that build effectively on prior learning.

Pupils at Bishop Vaughan Catholic School say that they feel safe, secure and valued.

From Our Estyn Inspection Report:

The school has made strong progress in developing its approach to Curriculum for Wales based on **Catholic values and virtues, which permeate all aspects of school life.**

[Pupils] co-operate with each other maturely in pairs and small groups, and show respect for the contribution of others.

... enthusiastic and curious learners.

Sixth form pupils engage well with their learning, listen attentively and respond effectively to the teacher and each other. They ask questions and display humility about themselves seeking support for their independent learning as required.

The principles and teaching of the Catholic faith are at the heart of the school's mission, which contributes to the welcoming and inclusive ethos.

A broad programme of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to develop their interests beyond the classroom...

[Pupils] have positive attitudes to learning and take pride in their work arriving promptly to lessons and settling quickly to their tasks.

The school's caring and highly inclusive ethos reflects the vision that every pupil should flourish.

Pupils say their teachers are supportive, approachable and caring.

The school places a strong emphasis on the well-being, care, support and guidance of its pupils.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding underpinned by an ethos of mutual support reflecting **gospel values**.

Leaders, staff, and pupils work diligently

There is a strong sense of **community** and **staff build positive relationships with pupils, modelling the behaviours that they wish to inspire.**

The courtesy, politeness and respectfulness of pupils to each other, staff and visitors is a notable strength of the school, reflecting strong Catholic values and attributes.

The school celebrates the diversity of its school population through the curriculum and whole-school events. This is a major strength of the school and is central to its ethos and culture.

From Our Estyn Inspection Report:

SPOTLIGHT: The importance of a reading culture

The school recognises clearly the importance of reading to boost pupils' attainment, support improvements to their well-being and to help them develop as well-rounded, ethical and informed individuals. Consequently, the development of a reading culture that celebrates the joys of reading has been prioritised by the school and underpinned by well-resourced provision including writers in residence, book groups, reading recommendations and the annual Festival Culture. This initiative benefits and is appreciated by many members of the school community.

SPOTLIGHT: Celebrating cultural heritage

The school celebrates its cultural heritage and diversity through a series of festivals on the themes of Peace, Culture, Family and Health. These focus on different aspects of social, moral and creative development. The Festival of Peace is designed to develop pupils' understanding of themselves and the different cultures within the community.

This festival is designed and led by the school's diversity group. They have also focused on 'decolonising' the curriculum in history curriculum. This is highly successful in promoting pupils' understanding of each other, as well as equality and diversity.

Pupils at Bishop Vaughan Catholic School value and appreciate the Welsh heritage and language within the school's culturally diverse environment.

Pupils with ALN make strong progress.

... calm, reflective and assured leadership, underpinned by a clear vision for raising aspirations and broadening horizons ... Staff understand and share this vision, ensuring that it permeates all aspects of school life.

Leaders have developed strong partnerships with parents and stakeholders, establishing effective communication through newsletters and the school website. These opportunities allow parents to engage easily with the school and contribute their views.

Staff well-being is ... a key priority, and leaders foster an open and supportive culture. Regular dialogue ensures that staff feel valued, and contribute to a collaborative, supportive working environment.

The Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator provides clear and effective leadership.

Senior leaders ensure that professional learning aligns closely with school improvement priorities, and they evaluate training well to ensure that it has a clear impact on classroom practice.

The school is successful in addressing national priorities such as reducing the impact of poverty on attainment.

Jubilee Year Updates

Many of our Faith Council's activities and those of the Junior Legion of Mary are centred around the Jubilee Year theme, 'Pilgrims of Hope.' Similarly, our assemblies, Lenten Services and charity activities have been linked to the beautiful message underpinning this celebratory year.

In our Lenten Services, pupils were given prayer cards with the special Jubilee Year prayer, shown on the right, which we prayed together during the Act of Worship.

We look forward to the Jubilee Year Pledge Day, which will take place in the summer term, in which our pupils can pledge to look outwards and walk in solidarity with the world's poorest communities.

We also have the Jubilee Celebration Day in November to prepare for, and around which to shape all of the activities which precede it.

A prayer of hope

God, our loving Father,
in this Jubilee Year,
you remind us of our call to love creation.
Help us to work together
to replant, repair, and renew.

**Guide us on our journey
as pilgrims of hope.**

Jesus, our light,
In this Jubilee Year,
you remind us of our call to love
our neighbours
and to set free those who suffer.
Help us to treat everyone with dignity;
to be fair, forgiving and kind.

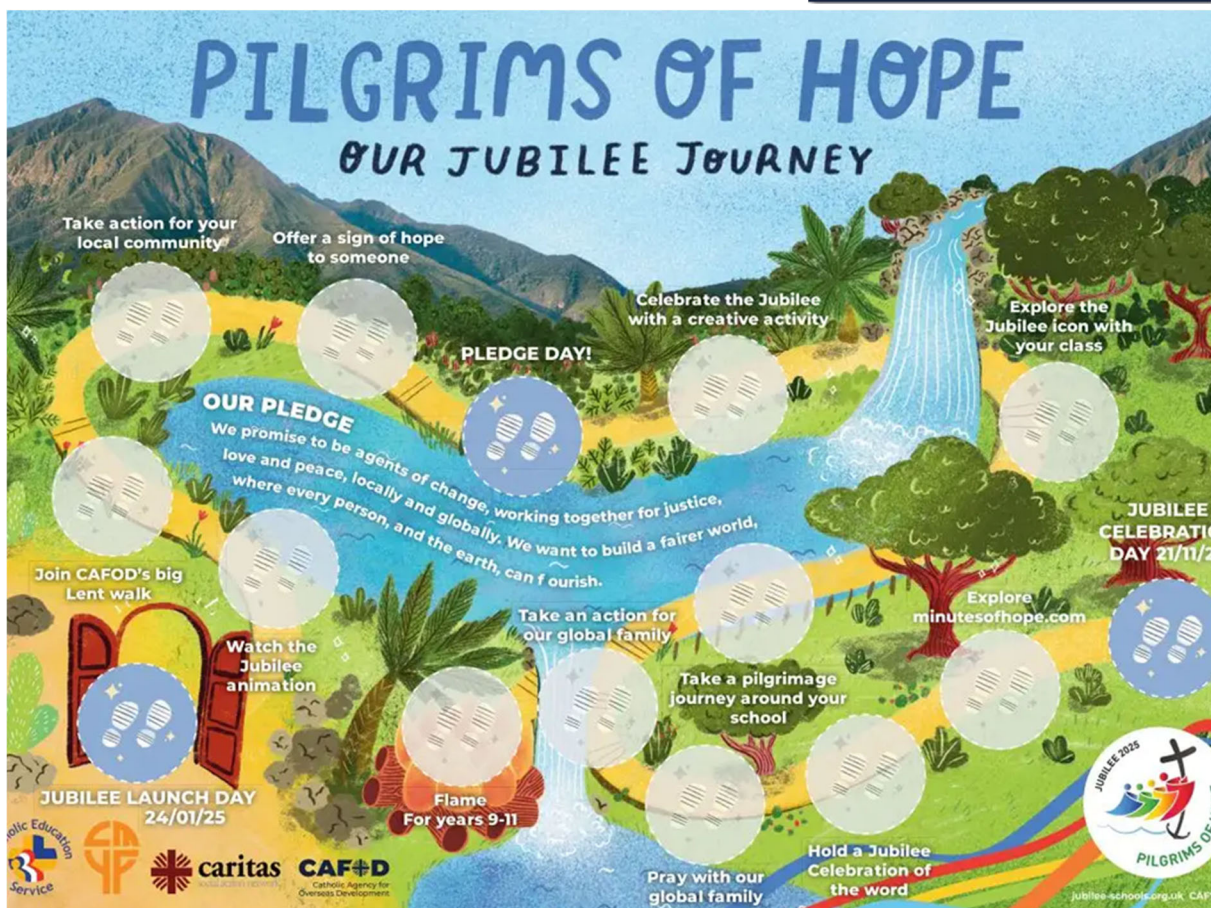
**Guide us on our journey
as pilgrims of hope.**

Holy Spirit, our inspiration,
in this Jubilee Year, you remind us of our
call to grow in faith and love.
Help us to hear you in scripture, to see
Jesus in others,
and to be united as God's global family.

**Guide us on our journey
as pilgrims of hope.**

Amen

Written in
collaboration with Missio.

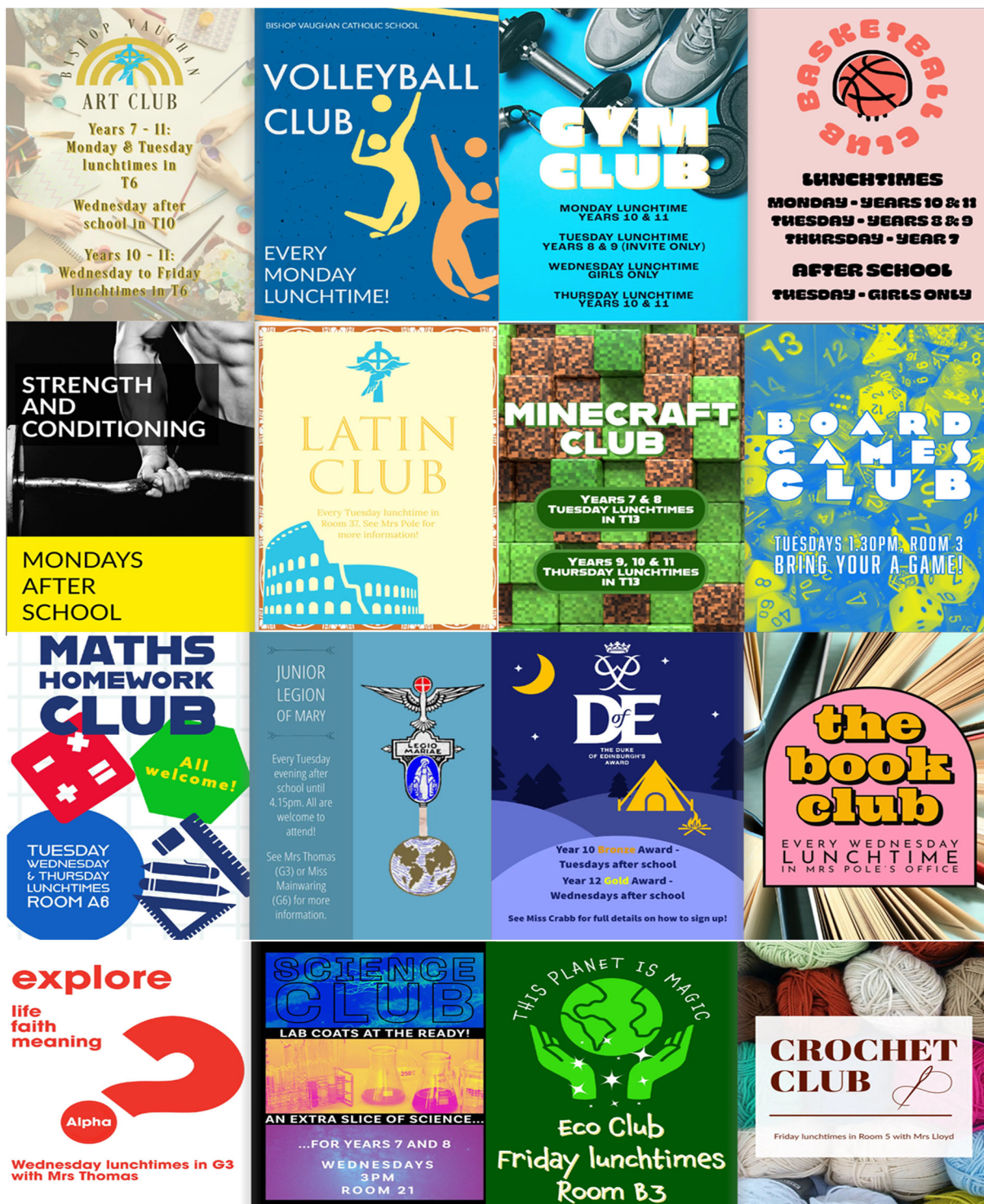


Enrichment — Clubs and Activities

There is an exceptionally wide offering of lunchtime and after-school clubs, teams and activities available to pupils throughout the school.

The timetable for activities and an extra-curricular prospectus can be found online on our website.

For those of you accessing this newsletter online, it is hyperlinked [here!](#)



Sixth Form Prefect Leadership Team and School Council News



Our current Sixth Form Prefect Leadership Team is led by Aaron and Justine, who oversee Deputy Head Prefects. They in turn lead teams of School Councillors working across a broad range of areas. We have dozens and dozens of School Councillors, all working energetically to make our school the very best that it can be!

The Prefect Team and School Council share the following updates on their work:

Sixth Form Fundraising: As a Prefect Leadership Team, we have recently raised £696.66 from the talent show event and a grand total of £2541.93 so far this academic year! We are currently using some of the money to improve the Common Room by purchasing a new pool table and decorating the Common Room, making the environment more appealing.

Further ideas for events include frequent bake sales, summer-themed activities and foosball and pool tournaments to raise money to reach our goal of £5000 by the end of the academic year.



Sixth Form Prefect Leadership Team and School Council News

We are also pleased to share news from some of our teams and School Council Sub-Committees:

Teaching and Learning

Student-led revision groups have been delivered for Year 10/11/12/13 students in preparation for exam season. These have taken place in the Learning Zone after school. As well as this, we have implemented a scheme in which pupils donate their revision notes for previous exams and topics to students who may be able to use and adapt them as they prepare for their own exams.



Eco and Sustainability

Our team enjoyed selling homemade baked goods and Fairtrade coffee to staff members, and in doing so we raised around £70.00. We have also participated in the RSPB Birdwatch Survey to track biodiversity around school, and have given assemblies on how the Eco Team works towards exhibiting Catholic values. We are also currently planning what plants we will grow this year, and preparing to weed the gardens with a view to planting some fruits and vegetables this term.

Chaplaincy and Ethos

We've recently attended the Flame concert in Wembley, which was fantastic, and in the final week of the term, we delivered the Lenten assemblies. Our plans and activities for Lent have included—

- Prayers on the theme of 'Journeying Together', written in different languages and beautifully written & decorated.
- Blogs: One minute recordings on the theme of 'Minutes of Hope' - what we are hopeful for / how can we spread hope and joy and love with those around us (this links to Jubilee Year's theme - Pilgrims of Hope)
- Photobooth Props: images and symbols to show what we have "fasted from" this Lent.
- CAFOD's Big Walk, which took place on 19th March, 26th March, 2nd April and 9th April.
- Lenten Lunch for Sixth Formers and staff on 28th March, with a raffle.

Wellbeing

Students have enrolled and completed courses in mental health and wellbeing enabling students within this team to provide accurate guidance and counseling to pupils in the HWB, our Health and Wellbeing Base.

Religious Studies Department News

Prayer and Worship

Weekly Mass

We offer our sincere thanks to Fr John Browne, our School Chaplain, who continues to support our spiritual development in celebrating morning Mass each Friday in our Chapel. Our Mass is very well attended, and is a wonderful way to start the day!



Ash Wednesday

We marked the start of Lent this year with a voluntary Service of Ashes in the Main Hall. The service was very well attended, with over 100 pupils receiving ashes on their foreheads as a sign of sorrow for their wrongdoings. We are grateful to our wonderful Faith Council, who worked hard to prepare and deliver the service.



Blessed Carlo Acutis



In Year 8, students have been learning about Blessed Carlo Acutis, a modern role model of faith.

Pupils have explored Blessed Carlo's deep devotion to the Eucharist, his kindness towards others and how he used technology to spread the message of Christianity.

Through discussions and activities, students have reflected on how they can apply his values of faith, generosity, and service in their own lives.

Religious Studies Department News

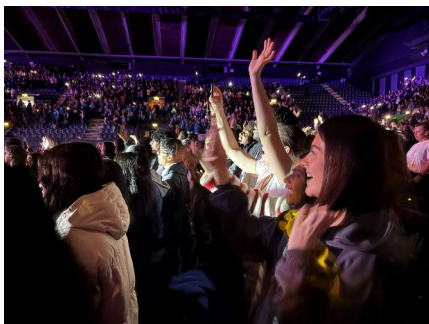


Flame 2025

On Saturday 15th March, a group of our pupils attended the Flame Congress in Wembley Arena. After a very early start, we travelled to Wembley as representatives of the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia.

Flame is the largest Catholic youth event in England and Wales. Filled with inspiring speakers, incredible live music, prayer and adoration, it's an event like no other! Our pupils thoroughly enjoyed listening to speakers such as Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Bear Grylls OBE, along with music from Adenike, Guvna B and the One Hope Project.

We were thrilled to receive a copy each of Bear Grylls' new book, 'The Greatest Story Ever Told', which is a re-telling of the Gospel story of Jesus. It was a fantastic day and we can't wait to go again in March 2027!



Religious Studies Department News

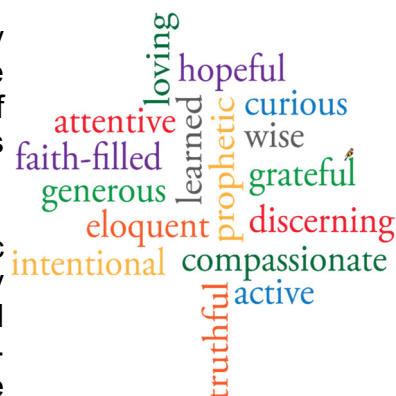
Eisteddfod 2025

In preparation for our school Eisteddfod this year, pupils in Years 7,8 and 9 were given a choice of tasks to do. They could either research the life and work of Saint David, or they could create a beautiful stained-glass window to reflect Wales and the Welsh culture. We were thrilled to see the standard of entries this year, and congratulate all pupils that took part. Some of our winning pieces of work are pictured below.



The Catholic Pupil Profile

The Catholic Pupil Profile is an approach adopted by many Catholic schools to celebrate and encourage virtues or positive character traits. The profile consists of eight statements, each containing two key virtues as depicted in this diagram:



These virtues come from the gospels and from Catholic tradition, but are fundamentally human virtues shared by all human beings. They express what it is to be a good person living a virtuous life. We think this is what a well-educated and good person who can make a difference to the world looks like.

Therefore, pupils at Bishop Vaughan School are growing to be:

Grateful for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and **generous** with their gifts, becoming men and women for others.

Attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and **discerning** about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.

Compassionate towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and **loving** by their just actions and forgiving words.

Faith-filled in their beliefs and **hopeful** for the future.

Eloquent and **truthful** in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.

Learned, finding God in all things; and **wise** in the ways they use their learning for the common good.

Curious about everything; and **active** in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.

Intentional in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and **prophetic** in the example they set to others.

While we promote all of the virtues throughout school life, each half term we focus on one pair of virtues in order to really explore what these virtues are and how we can cultivate them in our everyday behaviours. During this term, we have looked closely at being attentive and discerning.

Pupils have investigated what it means to be attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and discerning about the choices they make and the effects of those choices. This term, we have promoted the practice of attentive reflection and discerning decision making. We have encouraged the practice of reflection through the Examen, and we have also looked at role models who have been attentive and discerning. For example, pupils in Year 7 have studied the life and work of St David, the Patron Saint of Wales. Pupils in Year 8 have examined the powerful example of Saint Josephine Bakhita, while pupils in Year 9 have studied Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

Welsh Department News

Welsh Dimension

Yr Eisteddfod – The Eisteddfod

The Welsh Department organised the annual school Eisteddfod, which was held on Friday 7th March. Pupils throughout KS3 submitted various pieces of work from each department to compete in the event, with winning entries being revealed on-screen throughout the duration of the performances.

A wealth of talent filled the stage, celebrating our Welsh culture and heritage.

Both pupils and staff thoroughly enjoyed the event, many commenting that it was the best Eisteddfod to date!

Members of the newly established Criw Cymraeg hosted the event and distributed certificates to winning competitors.



Welsh Department News

Arholiadau Llafar - Oracy Exams

March is a busy month for Years 10 & 11 with the Year 10 Unit 1 speaking exams running from 18th to 20th March, and Year 11 Unit 2 speaking exams from 25th to 27th March. We were thrilled with the effort put in by Year 10 on the run up to the exam, with many attending revision sessions on the lead up to the exam. Well done, Year 10 – we're sure that the hard work will have paid dividends and wish Year 11 all the best of luck for the upcoming Unit 2 exams! Pob Lwc!



Adolygu - Revision

Here are QR codes which take you directly to revision material on the WJEC website to practise Unit 3 & 4 exam style questions (Year 11).

Unit 3 & 4 Translation Tasks



Unit 3 & 4 Error Correction Tasks



Apiau Ddefnyddiol – Useful Apps

Why not join your child on their language learning journey by downloading the following apps?



English Welsh Best Dictionary – A free App! Brilliant for anyone studying GCSE Welsh, providing help with vocabulary on all GCSE topics.



Duolingo – A brilliant free App! The world's most downloaded educational App designed. Fun and effective and designed by language experts.



LearnBots Verbs & Conjugations – A free App! Learn completely natural spoken Welsh quickly and easily. Learn to speak the verbs & conjugations like a local person.

Maths Department News

UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge Results

On the 29th January 2025, 40 pupils from Years 9, 10 and 11 were invited to take part in the UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge.

In the test, the pupils had to answer 25 multiple choice Maths questions. The pupils achieved some excellent results this year with 20 of them gaining a certificate – 3 more than last year.

Special mention to **Erin Coble** in Year 9 who achieved the highest mark in the school together with a GOLD certificate. This was her first year doing the intermediate challenge so it was a very impressive result! Erin was invited to do the Kangaroo extension paper and we're eagerly awaiting her result. Good luck, Erin!

The following were the highest achieving pupils in Bishop Vaughan:

Year 11

Jt1 st	Steve Mathew	Silver Award
Jt1 st	Aleena Sajeevan	Silver Award
3 rd	Esther Joji	Silver Award
4 th	Ubong Udo Akpan	Silver Award
5 th	Reymiele Osorio	Silver Award
6 th	Oritsemisan Awala	Bronze Award
7 th	Eldhose Saji	Bronze Award
8 th	Eryn Thomas	Bronze Award
9 th	Milan Stankevic	Bronze Award
10 th	Julia Szewczyk	Bronze Award

Year 10

1 st	Nathan Colarina	Silver Award
2 nd	Joshua Lock	Silver Award
3 rd	Najmul Hudha Riyas	Bronze Award
4 th	Logan Bevan	Bronze Award

Year 9

1 st	Erin Coble	Gold Award
2 nd	Jeremiah Joji	Silver Award
3 rd	Rhys Casey	Silver Award
4 th	Debbie Bekomson	Bronze Award
5 th	Denis Lucasievici	Bronze Award
6 th	Mathew Minko	Bronze Award

There were some very challenging problem-solving questions and only the top 40% in the country receive awards. Well done to everybody that took part!

The next challenge is on 1st May 2025 and this is open to Year 7 and 8 students.

For more information on this competition or for a copy of the questions visit <http://www.ukmt.org.uk/>

Maths Department News

Year 11 Maths Challenge 2025 Participants and Winners



Year 10 Maths Challenge 2025 Participants and Winners



Year 9 Maths Challenge 2025 Participants and Winners



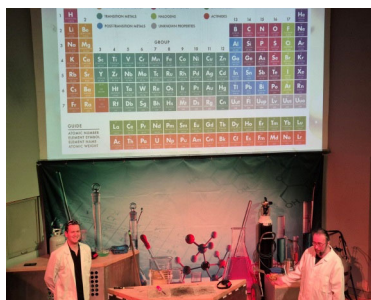
Creative Technology Department News

Techniquiest Visit for Year 7 Pupils

We were thrilled to announce a fantastic funded opportunity for our Year 7 students to visit Techniquiest on 17th January, 2025. This visit provided students with access to the exhibition floor, where they explored various interactive exhibits. They also had the option to choose between a planetarium experience or a lab session, both designed to ignite their curiosity and enhance their understanding of science.



Additionally, students enjoyed a free 'Elementary' session in the Live Science Theatre. This engaging show introduced them to the elements present in our surroundings. They explored the properties of common elements, observed their interactions, and investigated how temperature affects states of matter. It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to learn in a fun and interactive environment.



Operation Enigma Workshop



We had an exciting opportunity for our Year 7 pupils, thanks to Technocamps. We offered a free workshop called Operation Enigma, which introduced learners to the history and techniques of codebreaking. This workshop provided students with a taste of the critical thinking and problem-solving skills used by cybersecurity professionals.

During the workshop, students entered an immersive space that transported them to a hut at Bletchley Park. They used their cipher skills to break Morse code, find and plot coordinates of U-boats and submarines, and learned about the lives of the Welsh women who worked at Bletchley Park. It was an excellent chance for our students to develop their analytical skills and learn about an important part of history.

Creative Technology Department News

Engineering Education Scheme (EESW) Competition

Our Year 12 Engineering class recently participated in the Engineering Education Scheme (EESW) Competition at Swansea Arena on March 21st as part of their BTEC Engineering qualification.

Two groups of pupils were involved in the EESW Project, where they had to create a prototype design for the National Grid. Both groups worked diligently and showcased their work to a high standard at their stands on the day. Although they were nominated for several awards, they were unfortunately unsuccessful. Nevertheless, their hard work and dedication were evident, and we were incredibly proud of their achievements.

Geography Department News

The Geography department has had another busy term!

KS3 pupils contributed to the Eisteddfod focusing on the three National Parks of Wales. Pupils created a fact file on the park highlighting key geographical features. Some pupils chose to look at globalisation and how Wales is interconnected with other countries through ideas such as the media, sport, food, culture and trade.

- Year 7 have focused on a decision making exercise on National Parks. They have learned about how we use them and the conflicts that may arise between different users. Pupils have focused on issues at Pen y Fan where there has been conflict over parking.
- Years 8 and 9 have continued to work on their oracy and decision-making skills.
- Year 8 have been debating whether the rainforest should be developed and have considered different viewpoints whilst suggesting a sustainable solution.
- Year 9 have been debating whether the High Speed 2 railway should have gone ahead. They have written a formal letter to the Prime Minister to support their literacy skills in Geography.
- Years 10-13 Geographers are really getting into their GCSE and A-Level Geography courses. Year 10 have been studying Population and cities with a focus on retail changes in Swansea. Year 11 have been focusing on finishing the course ready for their exam in May. Year 12 have been learning about Changing Places and Year 13 are learning about Global Systems and Global Governance.
- Year 10 and some Year 9 pupils have enjoyed a residential trip to Borth during April.

Health and Social Care Department News

Our Year 11 Health and Social Care classes have delivered a wonderful Health and Wellbeing event for Year 7 pupils.

The whole year group were able to visit over 25 stations each with a campaign designed by pupils as part of their GCSE NEA work. Topics included nutrition, exercise, sleep and mental health. Our younger pupils were eager to engage with the interactive activities, enjoying peer-to-peer health education from our hugely enthusiastic and inspiring older pupils. Well done, Year 11!



Our trained Health and Wellbeing ambassadors also joined us for the morning. It was a pleasure to welcome former health care pupils, now as Sixth Formers, to see them taking on these important roles in school.

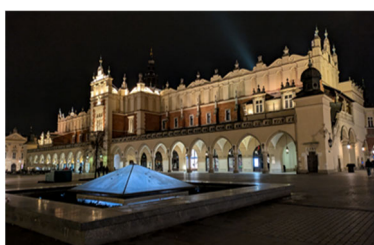
Our school ambassadors have received training on safeguarding and peer mentoring and can often be seen around the school, easily identified by their yellow lanyards and badges. They provide valuable support and are fantastic role models for our younger pupils.

History Department News

This term has been a particularly busy and enriching time for the History department, with a range of activities and events that have deepened our pupils' understanding of key historical events and themes.



One of the most significant experiences this term was the History trip to Krakow, Poland, for pupils from Years 10, 11, 12, and 13. This educational visit included a deeply moving tour of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum, where students and staff were able to reflect on the atrocities of the Holocaust.



The visit provided an invaluable opportunity to learn about the personal stories of those who suffered during this devastating period, offering a powerful and emotional connection to their studies. Pupils also visited the Oskar Schindler Museum, which gave further insight into the story of Schindler and the many lives he helped to save during the Second World War.

The trip also included a guided tour of Krakow's former Jewish quarter, developing pupils' understanding of the rich cultural history of the Jewish community before the war. Additionally, we visited the Salt Mines, offering students a chance to see a unique and historical side of Polish industry. Overall, this trip was a profound and eye-opening experience for both pupils and staff, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended.



In addition to our trip to Poland, we hosted Dr Luca Trenta from Swansea University, who delivered a fascinating masterclass on the topic of state-sponsored assassinations as a tool of foreign policy. This session was particularly valuable for our A Level History students, as it directly linked to their course content. Dr Trenta's lecture sparked great interest and led to lively discussions, allowing students to engage with complex issues surrounding the use of power and diplomacy in international relations.

We also participated in the Testimony 360 project, run by the Holocaust Education Trust. This initiative used cutting-edge virtual reality technology to explore the Holocaust through the eyes of a survivor, providing a unique and immersive way for our students to engage with the testimonies of those who lived through this dark chapter of history. The use of VR helped bring history to life in a way that was both powerful and poignant, leaving a strong impact on all participants.

We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and engagement shown by our pupils throughout these activities, and we look forward to continuing to offer enriching and thought-provoking experiences in the coming months.

PE Department News

Sporting Success



The Year 7 & 8 girls' and boys' basketball teams won the Swansea tournament, then went on to win the Mid and West Wales tournament. They will play next month in the National finals in Bangor.



The Year 11-13 boys' basketball team finished 2nd in Swansea



The Year 11-13 girls' basketball team finished 2nd in the Mid and West Regional finals.



The Year 9 & 10 boys' basketball teams finished 3rd in Swansea



The Sports Ambassadors 2024-25 are playing a pivotal role in promoting sport within the school.



Erin and Michelle (Y9) have been selected to represent their county netball team.

PE Department News

Sporting Success



Leia, Fflori and Angelynnne have all been selected to play for the Welsh basketball team.



The Year 9 and 10 boys' badminton team won the Swansea tournament and qualified for the South Wales tournament, where they took silver.



**Max Cichon -
Tennis U18
County Cup Wirral
Max played with his team and won their division and got promoted to Division 1 in the country, something no Welsh team has ever yet achieved!**



This year's Year 7 football team has had a great first season!

Performing Arts Department News

Bishop Vaughan's Performing Arts Stars Shine Brightly!

Just before February half-term, our school came alive with the magic of theatre as we staged our annual school production – Beauty and the Beast Jr. This year's production saw over 80 students take to the stage, making it our largest cast in recent years!

With stunning hired costumes from 'Behind the Seams', incredible set design and outstanding performances, our talented pupils and dedicated staff produced a high-energy, breathtaking show that wowed audiences.

Each night, we were also joined by a different feeder primary school, whose pupils formed a wonderful 'Ensemble' choir—adding an extra layer of charm to an already spectacular production. Many who attended agreed it was our 'best show yet'!

In the final week of the Spring term, we held our much-anticipated Spring Concert, showcasing the amazing musical talents of our students. The evening featured performances from our choir, Production Project, Wind Ensemble, String Ensemble, bands and a range of vocal and instrumental soloists. It was a fantastic celebration of the hard work and dedication of our young musicians and performers.

Exciting news for our school choir! We have been invited to perform in the Phoenix Choir of Wales' Annual Concert at the Taliesin Arts Centre on Friday, 27th June. After a wonderful collaboration at Christmas, we were delighted to be asked to join them once again.

The concert will feature a mixed repertoire spanning multiple decades, with our choir performing both individually and alongside the Phoenix Choir for some special joint pieces. Tickets are available now from the Taliesin Arts Centre website—we would love to see you there supporting our talented singers!



Stay tuned for more updates, and congratulations to all our students for their fantastic achievements in music and drama this term!

Supercurricular News

This term has been filled with exciting opportunities for our pupils to engage in a wide range of supercurricular activities, helping to expand their learning beyond the classroom and develop key skills for the future. From workshops with inspiring leaders to competitive debates and creative writing festivals, our pupils have truly excelled in making the most of these experiences.

One of the standout events was when a group of our pupils had the incredible opportunity to participate in a digital workshop with Eluned Morgan, the First Minister of Wales. Pupils asked thoughtful questions on important topics such as the NHS, the rise of vaping and her experience as the first female First Minister. This was a valuable chance for our pupils to engage with current issues and gain insight from a prominent leader.

Our Year 9 pupils also shone in the Seren Debate Competition, securing an impressive third place in a highly competitive round against other schools in Swansea. Their dedication, critical thinking and confidence in presenting arguments were a credit to the school, and we are immensely proud of their achievement.



For our Year 8 and 9 pupils, attending the Hay Scribblers Festival was a highlight of the term. They participated in engaging writing workshops and had the chance to meet authors Jenny Valentine and Ashley Hickson-Lovence. This festival was a fantastic opportunity for our aspiring writers to be inspired and develop their creative writing skills.



Pupils in Year 9 and 10 took part in a series of events organised by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD), including a STEM Careers Taster Day. During this day, pupils explored workshops on animation, VFX and motorsport engineering, which provided a glimpse into the exciting career opportunities available in these fields.

In addition, UWTSD visited our school to deliver a day of team-building workshops. One of the most popular activities involved Year 9 pupils working together to design the slowest possible marble run. This fun and challenging task required pupils to use their teamwork, communication and resilience—skills that will serve them well in the future!

We are delighted by the enthusiasm and achievements of our pupils in all these activities, and we look forward to even more supercurricular adventures in the coming months.

Well done to everyone involved!

Charity Team

Advent Focus: Reverse Advent Calendar

Instead of receiving a gift, those taking part in the reverse Advent calendar donated an item each week of Advent to the chosen appeals. Our activities focused on:

- Small Change Makes a Big Difference (SVP Appeal)
- Cards for the Community
- Children's Selection Boxes

The Reverse Advent Calendar was a brilliant and beautifully reflective way to support the chosen appeals while remembering the true meaning of Christmas and sharing love and joy across our school and wider community. We are looking forward to developing the idea further next year!

SVP Christmas Hampers

The annual collection of food donations continued this year, in support of both the local SVP campaigns and the Faith in Families Centres and food banks in the local community. Significant donations of essential food items, cash donations and children's selection boxes were collected.

From all donations received, hampers were provided to families in our local communities, including selection boxes for over 50 families. We are truly humbled by the generosity of our pupils and their families.

Cards for the Community

Once again, pupils made, decorated and wrote cards to send to key workers, local parishes and groups across our local community. Pupils wanted an opportunity to say thank you to all who work tirelessly in the support of others.

Additionally, this year pupils sent cards to fellow pupils and staff as a way of expressing kindness and compassion to those across the school community.

Save the Children – Christmas Jumper Day

The annual Christmas Jumper Day provided another opportunity for pupils to have a little fun, embrace the festiveness and raise awareness, while fundraising for Save the Children.

Through a festive themed non-uniform day, Christmas Jumpers, tinsel and festive headwear decorated the halls of Bishop Vaughan! The term finished with a festive Christmas quiz, with prizes once again awarded to winning tutorials.

As always, very many thanks to all who support the appeals, campaigns and events with such generosity and enthusiasm – we couldn't do it without you! Diolch!

February Focus

In support of Valentines Day and International Languages Day in February pupils enjoyed a tutorial quiz and bake sale.

Additionally, a coffee morning for the Sixth Form was organised, providing time for the Sixth Form to come together as a community.

Charity Team

Lenten Programme of Activities: Once again this year, the Lenten Programme of Activities provided opportunities for pupils and staff to pause, reflect and engage in a range of meaningful activities as part of our preparations through Lent in readiness for Easter.

Lenten Programme of Activities: How can we get involved?

Throughout Lent:

- ▶ Pray: Journal – Journeying Together
- ▶ Fast: #GIVEITUP Photobooth
- ▶ Give: Big Lent Walk 2025 (CAFOD)
- ▶ Pray: Pilgrims of Hope Activities
- ▶ Fast: Lenten Lunch
- ▶ Give: Easter Raffle



#LivingLent

Fast from **hurting** words and say kind words.
Fast from **sadness** and be filled with **gratitude**.
Fast from **anger** and be filled with **patience**.
Fast from **pessimism** and be filled with **hope**.
Fast from **worries** and **trust in God**.
Fast from **complaints** and **contemplate** simplicity.
Fast from **pressures** and be **prayerful**.
Fast from **bitterness** and fill your heart with **joy**.
Fast from **selfishness** and be **compassionate** to others.
Fast from **grudges** and be **reconciled**.
Fast from **words** and be silent so you can **listen**.

#LivingLent

"Journeying together means.....walking side by side without shoving or stepping on others, without envy or hypocrisy, without letting anyone be left behind or excluded."
Pope Francis 2025

How can we journey together this Lent?

Pray: Journal – Journeying Together

Come and join us during the Friday Lunchtimes of Lent.

Pause and reflect.

Consider how we can journey together during this time and follow the words of Pope Francis.

For prayer is nothing else than being in communion with God



CAFOD
Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

Give: Big Lent Walk

Dates:
19th March
26th March
2nd April
9th April

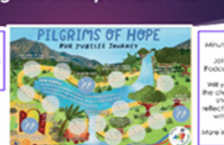
Come and join us during the Wednesday Lunchtimes of Lent.
Sign up: 12th March in C4 at lunchtime!

£10
£26
£300



Pray: Pilgrims of Hope Activities

Take part in the PILGRIMS OF HOPE activities and complete the journey journey with your family or group of friends.



With a prayer book and a prayer card, you can pray with the pilgrims of hope.

Give: Easter Raffle

25th March to 9th April:
Easter Raffle

11th April: Non uniform
Day & Tutorial Quiz

Fast: #GIVEITUP Photobooth



Fast: Lenten Lunch



Through both action and reflection, the school community supported CAFOD, MISSIO and the local community while engaging in a little fun and community spirit too! The programme of activities saw pupils plan and deliver whole school assemblies, reflections and activities. The #GiveitUp photobooth was highly successful while the raffle and quiz saw much competitive spirit as pupils engaged across all year groups.

Additionally, a Lenten Lunch was organised for Sixth Form pupils and staff. It provided a moment of calm in the business of the term, while acting as the perfect way to bring together different groups across the school community.

Legion of Mary: The Junior Legion of Mary, a charity and prayer-based group, is growing from strength to strength, thanks to the support of Canon Jason, Fr Rod, the Sisters at the Sacred Heart and Mrs. Lear. Each week we average 25-30 pupils in our meetings, with many more involved in the activities.

As part of their work to demonstrate faith in action and the many different ways the pupils actively live out the Gospel Values and paired virtues, pupils have been involved in a plethora of activities and events. These activities and events included pupils forming a choir and visiting a local nursing home, leading the annual Prayer and Carol Service in Morriston Hospital, making crafts for fairs held in school and the parish, organising activities and speaking eloquently about their faith during the activities with local dignitaries during our recent festivals.

This term events have also included preparing for the Relics visit of Blessed Carlo Acutis, a St David's Day celebration in the Sacred Heart Church and a visit to the Flame Congress in London. Additionally, pupils have been fundraising for their upcoming visit of Rome, for the Canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis. Fundraising activities have included organising raffles, craft stalls and a beautifully-prepared Indian Lunch in the Sacred Heart. We give thanks for all the support received and look forward to sharing more about our pilgrimage and activities more information on these activities in the next report.

Eco Club

Eco Schools have been raising awareness of Fairtrade by having a coffee morning. Pupils were on hand to serve cake and Fairtrade coffee to staff and even offered some Fairtrade advice and information. The morning was a success and raised £77 for the Eco Club to use on developing the garden.

The success of the Christmas Fair was mentioned in the last newsletter, but we can now reveal that £145.40 was raised. The pupils involved have worked very hard on making these events happen. Diolch yn fawr pawb!

Morgan Rees 10E is pictured below providing staff with information about Fairtrade.



Para Sports Festival

Pupils in 7E were given the opportunity to attend Swansea Sport and Health's Annual Para Sports Festival this term. They took part in a range of different sports and activities, including Tennis, Boccia, Wheelchair Basketball and Rock Climbing. All the pupil thoroughly enjoyed their day and took the opportunity to try new sports and skills.



Duke of Edinburgh's Award News

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Year 10 pupils participating in the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award this year have been taking advantage of the dry weather to practice putting up tents, and learning how to safely use the camping stoves, before expedition season starts next term.



We have received funding from DofE Wales this year to be able to purchase a range of new tents to use on Bronze expeditions. Much fun was had trying these out on the field!



Once the pupils had successfully made a cup of hot chocolate on the stoves, in a later meeting they were given a selection of items and had to cook a suitable meal to have after a long day of walking. They enjoyed experimenting with the foods available, making some tasty dishes – the pesto chicken and mashed potato being a particular hit!

Reading Recommendations Newsletter



Spring

Welcome to our reading recommendations newsletter!

Each term, we will share with you reviews and information about books our pupils are currently enjoying.

We encourage our pupils and their families to look through these to see if any may be of interest to them. In addition, we have reading lists by year group and genre on our website.

Happy reading!
The BVS Book Group

Book Group Recommendations

Benaiah in Year 7 states that '**Geek Girl: From Geek to Chic**' by Holly Smale is "a truly wonderful book that I highly recommend because it's really relatable for girls that feel like they don't fit, etc., and it's also an inspiring book for girls. It shows that you can do anything, that you are loved and that you are unique."

Benaiah also praises '**The Fault in our Stars**', stating that "it is a touching and meaningful book.... It's a story about love, emotions and facing challenges. It centres on Augustus and Hazel's adventures and friendship. It is truly amazing and I recommend that you read it! It is a beautiful and unforgettable book!"

Harrison in Year 12 is currently reading books in the horror genre (though perhaps these are not suitable for some of our younger pupils!). Our members across the year groups enjoy a wide range of genres, and they are always receptive to others' recommendations and ideas!

Spring Reading Suggestions

Our Book Group pupils need no encouragement whatsoever to read, whether in the sunshine or curled up on a cold Winter's day, however as the days grow longer and the promise of warmer weather approaches, they advise that Spring is the perfect time to pick up a great book—whether for relaxation, inspiration or escapism. Here are a few engaging reads to enjoy this season:

- For those who love mystery and suspense, '**A Good Girl's Guide to Murder**' by Holly Jackson is a gripping page-turner that will keep readers guessing to the very end. This novel has been popular with our Book Group members of all ages!
- If fantasy is more your style, '**A Curse So Dark and Lonely**' by Brigid Kemmerer offers a thrilling, modern retelling of Beauty and the Beast with strong characters and epic world-building.
- Readers seeking powerful stories grounded in real-life experiences might enjoy '**The Hate U Give**' by Angie Thomas, a thought-provoking novel that explores identity, activism and justice.
- '**Scythe**' by Neal Shusterman offers a gripping dystopian narrative full of moral dilemmas and action.

Whatever your interest, there's definitely, always, without doubt, a book for everyone — so find a quiet corner, get comfortable, and let a good book take you somewhere new.

Happy reading!

Reading Recommendations Newsletter

2025



Suggestions for Reluctant Readers: Free Podcasts and Audiobooks

Podcasts and audiobooks are a brilliant way to spark curiosity, improve listening skills and nurture a love of stories. Best of all—many excellent options are completely free!

Podcasts to Try:

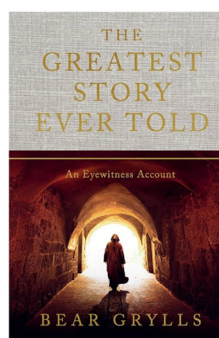
1. **Smash Boom Best** – A fun, fast-paced debate podcast where two topics (like dragons vs. unicorns!) go head-to-head. Great for developing reasoning and critical thinking skills in a playful way.
2. **Brains On!** – A science podcast that answers fascinating questions, such as “Why do we dream?” or “What’s the loudest sound in the world?” Hosted by a rotating cast of young people co-hosts, it’s both informative and entertaining.
3. **The Unexplainable Disappearance of Mars Patel** – A gripping audio drama that’s part *Stranger Things*, part mystery adventure. Told from the perspective of middle school students, it’s ideal for listeners who enjoy suspenseful storytelling.

Free Audiobooks:

- **Loyal Books** (www.loyalbooks.com) and **LibriVox** (www.librivox.org) offer hundreds of classic novels as free audiobooks, including *The Secret Garden*, *Treasure Island*, and *Anne of Green Gables*—all narrated by volunteers.
- **BBC Sounds** often features free, high-quality radio dramas and stories for younger audiences, such as *His Dark Materials*, *The Jungle Book*, and more.
- **Spotify** and **YouTube** also host selected audiobooks and podcast-style series—just make sure content is age-appropriate and accessed under supervision where needed.

With so many great free options available, now’s a perfect time to explore the world of stories and ideas—no screen required!

A Spotlight On: ‘The Greatest Story Ever Told’ by Bear Grylls



Those of our pupils who attended the Flame Conference in Wembley were delighted to receive free copies of this book!

In ‘The Greatest Story Ever Told’, adventurer and survival expert Bear Grylls shares a deeply personal and accessible retelling of the life of Jesus, bringing the message of Christianity to life in a fresh and relatable way for young people.

Written in Bear’s signature honest and down-to-earth style, this book explores themes of courage, forgiveness, faith and kindness, offering readers both a story and a guide on how to live with purpose and compassion. The book is ideal for young people looking to explore or deepen their understanding of faith; it is full of real-life wisdom, encouragement and hope. Bear draws on his own life experiences to reflect on what it means to follow Jesus in the modern world, making it a powerful read. Inspiring, thought-provoking and heartfelt, this book is a brilliant companion for life’s journey!

Wise Words:

“Today a reader,
tomorrow a leader.”

Margaret Fuller



School Development Plan

As our parents and carers are aware, all schools have in place a school improvement plan to shape their work across the year and in the longer term also. This should encompass the key areas of its work.

Our plan was re-shaped last year, as we saw the potential for our existing priorities to be organised under the acronym 'PEACE'. We feel that this brings together the key strands of our work in a way that can be readily referenced by staff, pupils, Governors, parents and carers, as well as genuinely reflecting the principles that underpin our work.

The key components of our three-year plan remain unchanged, therefore, but they are grouped into five areas under this particularly apt word for us as a community, because peace – in all its forms – is entirely central to all that we do in Bishop Vaughan. This may be through promoting and celebrating our extremely diverse cultural heritages, through exploring the conditions for peace as we do in our annual festival, through living in accord with our principles in terms of the peaceful and ethical stewardship of creation or through holding the words of the scriptures at the heart of our work, such as those in Colossians 3: 14-15 –

*“Above all, clothe yourselves with love,
which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.”*

Our 'at-a-glance guide' to our existing improvement plan is therefore shown as follows:

P	Prayer and worship Keeping Christ at the centre of all that we do. Increasing levels of engagement in the prayer life of the school and building upon our provision in this area for our pupils and our staff. Ensuring consistency in prayer and worship in every classroom throughout the school.
E	Equity Ensuring that all of our pupils are supported to achieve their potential regardless of any barriers to attainment they face. This is in line with our mission statement. Focusing on the standards achieved by our pupils and on qualifications as a passport to opportunity and social mobility. Ensuring equitable learning conditions.
A	Ambition and Attitudes to Learning Shaping and delivering an ambitious and aspirational curriculum. Encouraging our pupils to aspire and to recognise that attendance is central to developing a positive attitude to learning and realising ambitions. Utilising links with external partners to ensure that our learners are supported to achieve their ambitions.
C	Curriculum and cultural enrichment Curriculum for Wales development, with cultural enrichment and linked learning opportunities in every phase of education. Ensuring access to culturally enriching experiences: music, reading, trips. Developing our Entitlement Charter.
E	Engagement Ensuring high levels of engagement in the classroom. Relentless promotion of extra-curricular engagement. Engaging our pupils in leadership activities and engaging ourselves in leadership programmes, research and practitioner development – accessing varied and high-quality opportunities to achieve our ambition of offering an excellent education for all.

This by no means covers all of our priorities, but we hope that this distilled summary of some of our key focus areas is of interest to parents and carers.

Entitlement Charter

As explained in previous newsletters, our Entitlement Charter is a set of commitments that Bishop Vaughan makes to its learners, setting out experiences and opportunities we commit to offering the pupils in our care during their time with us in the school. The Pupil Voice group collaborated on putting these commitments together, and staff throughout the school contributed similarly. Parents and carers have also been invited to contribute ideas.

In order to shape the Charter, pupils reflected on the experiences that the school has offered them that they have valued and then they worked together to shape the Entitlement Charter to ensure that all future pupils of the school are offered the same opportunities.

Ultimately, the commitments made are intended to ensure that our pupils have access to a wide range of activities, extending their exposure to the arts and to cultural experiences, giving them opportunities to develop interests and skills that will enhance their lives long after they have left school. They are intended to build cultural capital and to develop their knowledge of the local area, of Wales more widely and of the world.

The entitlement charter now commits to ensuring that pupils of Bishop Vaughan will, during the time from Years 7 to 11, have opportunities to become:

Ambitious, capable	Healthy, confident	Ethical, informed	Enterprising, creative
Curious and active Faith-filled and hopeful Learned and wise Attentive and discerning Intentional and prophetic	Faith-filled and hopeful Compassionate and loving Curious and active Eloquent and truthful	Learned and wise Intentional and prophetic Eloquent and truthful Attentive and discerning Curious and active Faith-filled and hopeful Compassionate and loving	Curious and active Grateful and generous Faith-filled and hopeful Intentional and prophetic

And to do so through the charter commitments that they will, in their time with us, have the opportunity to:

Attend a workshop or masterclass in an area of interest	Take part in a residential trip or sports tour	Participate in Acts of Worship, including Mass, regularly at school	Attend a music concert and hear music performed live
Access a very wide range of clubs and societies to develop our skills and interests	Keep fit and healthy by accessing extra-curricular sports and the school gym, as well as through participating in PE lessons	Visit a local beach and a local castle (or other Welsh heritage site)	Learn to play a musical instrument
Learn a new language	Represent the school, whether in sports, in a team such as the debating team or as a member of a pupil group such as the School Council	Meet authors and read books of our choice, and have ready access every day to both borrowing and buying books in their time at the school	Take part in a school production
Learn poetry by heart	Try healthy foods and develop healthy lifestyles	Be involved in charitable events	Sing as part of a choir
Celebrate diversity, our cultural heritage and cynefin	Celebrate the end of our time at BVS together	Implement our own ideas to develop our surroundings and engage in eco-work	Create artwork in a variety of mediums

Congratulations to the pupils on their work to draw together this charter, with the support of our Pupil Voice Lead, Mrs. Thomas.

Bishop Vaughan Society

CALLING ALL:

Parents, carers and grandparents of both current and former pupils ...

Former pupils ...

Former staff of Bishop Vaughan ...

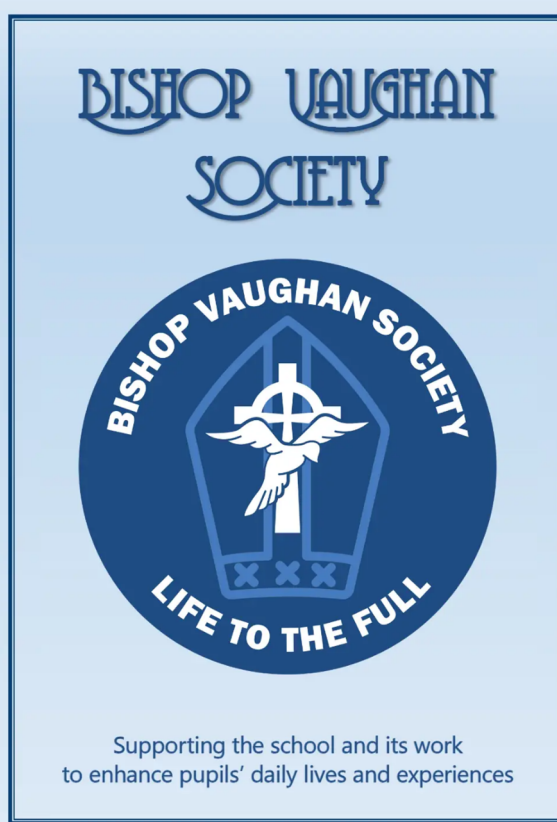
Former staff of our cluster primaries...

Are you interested in joining the Bishop Vaughan Society?

This group raises funds for current and future pupils through social events that connect our school community and in particular school alumni.

A leaflet on the work of the group and further details can be found here:

<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/bishop-vaughan-society>



Transition Newsletter

Bishop Vaughan Primary Cluster Transition Bulletin

Information for Parents and Carers September 2023

The following information is provided to support pupils and their families during the process of transition from primary to secondary school. You will receive two bulletins this year: this one, plus an additional bulletin in May 2024, as your child embarks on the first half term in primary school and prepares to join Bishop Vaughan the following September.

Welcome to the Bishop Vaughan community!

We are delighted to be working with your child's school on ensuring that the process of moving to secondary school is enjoyable, positive and managed supportively. This is a very big step for your child—and for you as a family—and Bishop Vaughan aims to support the whole family through its transition work, providing information, contacts, support and opportunities to visit as needed.

This edition of the transition bulletin is intended to provide an overview of the year ahead. We will follow this in May, by which point your child is likely to have visited us several times and we will have collaborated on a number of projects with their current school. May's bulletin will therefore focus on providing information about the summer term activities and on preparation for September.

It truly is a pleasure, then, to welcome you on this journey, in which your whole family become a part of our school community. As many former pupils will attest to, once a part of this community, you will always remain so.

With our best wishes and our prayers for you and your family in the academic year ahead,

Mrs. Pole
Headteacher

On behalf of the staff and Governors of Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

Transition Team

That's right! We have a whole team of staff here at BVS dedicated to ensuring that your child enjoys the process of preparing for the move to comp1! The key staff within this team are:

Mr. McKnight
Assistant Headteacher and Transition Lead

Mrs. Dorell
Transition Co-ordinator

Miss Smith
Assistant Headteacher and Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator

Mr. Eynon-Davies
Head of Music and 'Production Project' Lead

Mrs. Pole
Headteacher

Should you have any queries, please contact the school office on bishopvaughan@bvcymr.net. They will ensure that your query is passed to the member(s) of staff best placed to support you.



Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

Our Transition Bulletin is provided to parents and carers of pupils in Years 5 and 6 of our cluster primary schools. It can also be accessed here:

<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/transition>

Key Dates for Families:

Thursday September 28th
Year 6 Open Evening
Come along to meet the transition team, your teachers, other pupils and see a tour of the school

Thursday 30th November
Christmas Fair
All primary pupils and their families are warmly welcomed to an evening of stalls, Christmas music, festive treats and fun in the Main Hall here at BVS

Thursday 7th December
Patriot Card Service
A reflective, holy eucharist service in the parish church in which our school is situated. This incorporates Benediction and Cards.

Monday 18th December
Annual Card Service
Join us in St. Joseph's Cathedral for a traditional card service. This is a long-established event and an integral part of Advent for families, whether they are currently connected with the school or whether they are former pupils or staff. Many primary school pupils will be performing in the Card Service this year alongside Bishop Vaughan students.

Thursday 21st March
Spring Concert
An evening of entertainment provided by pupils throughout the year groups and in a range of genres—classical, musical theatre, jazz, rock, etc.

Friday 22nd March
Family Cantic Evening
A traditional cantic band will lead an evening of singing and fun! Refreshments available. A great way to meet other BVS families!

Thursday 6th July
Year 6 Transition Mass
The culmination of the summer transition days. This Mass will be the first one in which the new Year 6 group for September will have Mass together, celebrated by our School Chaplain.

Week Commencing 19th July
Annual School Musical: 'Oliver'
Whether your child is performing in the Project Production seasons offered in the primaries or whether you would just like to attend for an evening of great entertainment, the annual musicals are always of a high-quality and 'Oliver' promises to be no exception!

We look forward to welcoming you to these events!

Activities for Your Child:

Autumn Term Overview: Your child's current school may have opted to collaborate with BVS in any or all of the following activities, and you can earn more about these through the newsletters and blogs on the school site (mentioned earlier).

- The Annual Festival of Peace
- Preparing for the Annual Card Service (our Head of Music will visit schools regularly throughout the term to help pupils prepare for performing in this)
- A Humanities link project
- The Christmas Fair—primary schools are offered stalls to support their own fundraising and all pupils and families are warmly invited to this evening of festive fun!
- Card Services: there are two, as mentioned in the previous column, and your family and friends are welcome to attend either or both!

In addition, planned activities include:

28th and 29th October 2023
Year 6 Transition Days
Your child will have the opportunity to attend BVS on one of these dates, according to which primary school they are currently in.

Week Commencing 22nd October
Music Fundraising Week
Bishop Vaughan's Charity and Faith Ambassadors offer to visit each school to support with this important work that unites our schools.

22nd and 24th November
Year 5 Transition Days
Your child will have the opportunity to attend BVS on one of these dates, according to which primary school they are currently in.

Spring and Early Summer Term Overview:
Optional collaboration projects for primaries in these terms include:

- Arts and Crafts
- Design and Technology
- Day retreats led by BVS Faith Ambassadors
- English
- Science
- May Celebrations of Our Lady
- Transition days for Year 5 pupils

The May bulletin will provide further updates.

About Bishop Vaughan

Bishop Vaughan Catholic School opened in September 1999 and has provided a faith-based education for many thousands of students since that time.

BVS's values are now scattered across the globe, working in many exciting capacities—in particular in healthcare and medicine, towards which many of our pupils are traditionally drawn, but also in just about every other field you can think of! They include a world-famous opera singer, a national football manager, countless sportspeople who have played for their country, authors, academics, musicians, leading scientists, artists and highly influential leaders in technology, education and business. The school's aim is to ensure that every one of its pupils is supported to 'live life to the full', offering their God-given gifts and talents to fulfil their potential.

Bishop Vaughan is proud to be Swansea's most diverse secondary school. It welcomes pupils of all faiths and of none, and it provides an environment which promotes mutual respect, courtesy to others, tolerance, kindness and care. There are over fifty nationalities within the school and this certainly makes us a truly international school!

Bishop Vaughan's pupils were proud that the school was named as one of the top ten schools in Wales this year in the Sunday Times Parent Power Guide. This was on the basis of the pupils' results, for which they worked incredibly hard. It is always a privilege to support them in doing so.

Last year's leavers are now pursuing exciting career paths or apprenticeships, or are studying in universities throughout the UK, including two in Oxford, two in Cambridge and many having gained places at other highly selective universities.

While Bishop Vaughan is committed to ensuring its pupils' academic success, this being the passport to our pupils being able to fulfil their hopes and ambitions, this is by no means the most important part of our work. Our primary aim is to provide excellent character education, nurturing the attributes for the young people in our care to flourish as happy, safe, kind, resilient and

thoughtful individuals. The character traits we try to nurture in our leavers are shown in the Catholic pupil profile below:

hopeful
curious
wise
grateful
discerning
compassionate
active
unfailing
generous
eloquent
faith-filled
attentive
kind
resilient
tolerant

The school grows and changes with each new pupil that we welcome, and we know that your child will shape our school community further, and also that it will be our privilege to guide your child into becoming the person that they are meant to be. We look forward to our school 'growing and changing' physically too, as we are currently in the process of working towards a brand new school building. It will be exciting to see how this takes shape.

There is far more to say about BVS than can be distilled into this newsletter or indeed any other, but we hope that some of the sources of information listed below begin to give you a flavour of school life and all of the family as new members of the BVS community, and please be in touch at any time should you have any questions.

How to Find Out More About BVS:

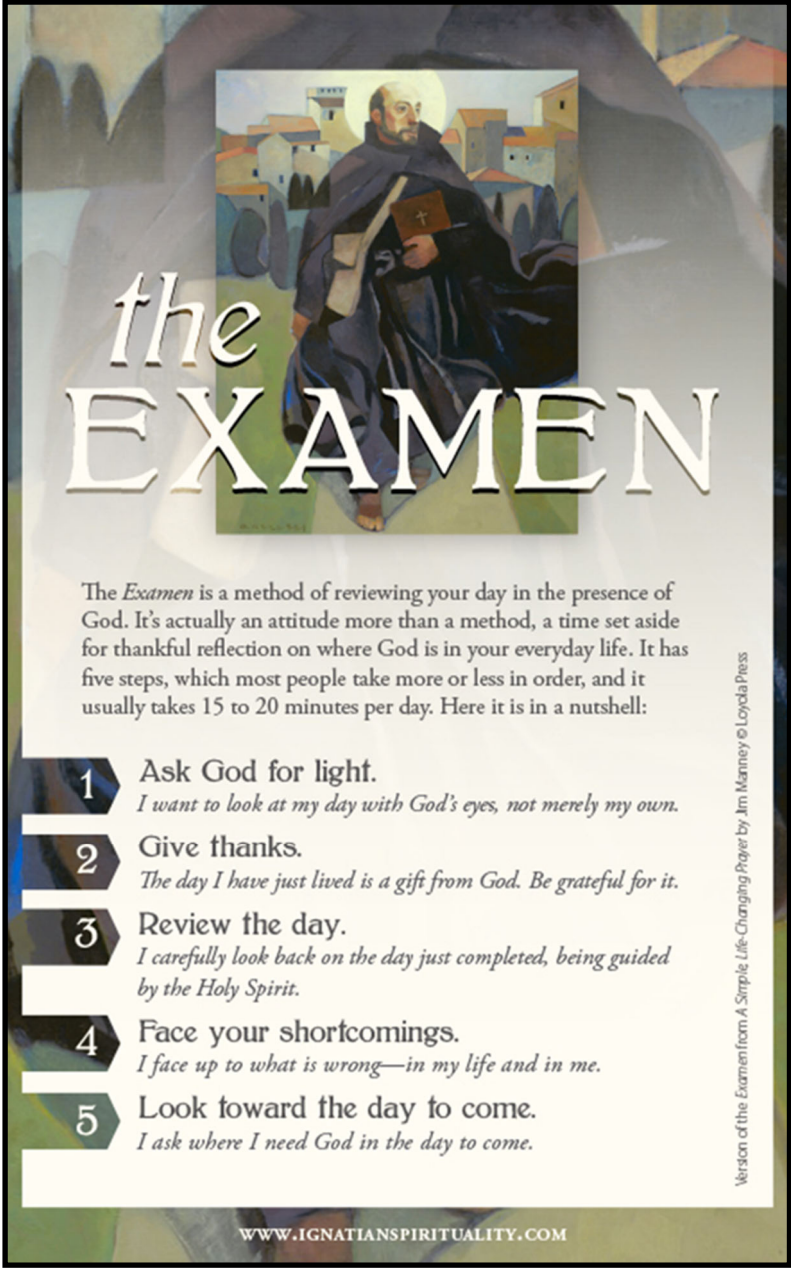
There are lots of ways to find out more about the school. These include:

- Editions of our family newsletters: bishopvaughan@bvcymr.net
- The school website: www.bishopvaughan.co.uk
- The Headteacher's monthly blog: bishopvaughan.co.uk/headteacher-a-blog
- Our social media accounts: Facebook: [bishopvaughanbvcatholicschool](https://www.facebook.com/bishopvaughanbvcatholicschool), Twitter: [bishopvaughanbvc](https://twitter.com/bishopvaughanbvc), Instagram: [officialbishopvaughan](https://www.instagram.com/officialbishopvaughan)



Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

The Examen



the
EXAMEN

The *Examen* is a method of reviewing your day in the presence of God. It's actually an attitude more than a method, a time set aside for thankful reflection on where God is in your everyday life. It has five steps, which most people take more or less in order, and it usually takes 15 to 20 minutes per day. Here it is in a nutshell:

- 1** Ask God for light.
I want to look at my day with God's eyes, not merely my own.
- 2** Give thanks.
The day I have just lived is a gift from God. Be grateful for it.
- 3** Review the day.
I carefully look back on the day just completed, being guided by the Holy Spirit.
- 4** Face your shortcomings.
I face up to what is wrong—in my life and in me.
- 5** Look toward the day to come.
I ask where I need God in the day to come.

Version of the Examen from *A Simple Life-Changing Prayer* by Jim Manney © Loyola Press

WWW.IGNATIANSPIRITUALITY.COM

During every Advent and Lenten season, we observe a form of prayer called the Examen. This is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day or week in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. The Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience. The Examen is taking place in every classroom each Friday afternoon, and pupils (and staff) are invited to spend a few minutes reflecting on their week. It is an opportunity to identify the positives and negatives, and to feel a sense of gratitude for our gifts and blessings. We are continuing this practice throughout this season of Lent, in order to stop, reflect and make the changes that will help us to be the person God calls us to be.

Class Charts



We are using Class Charts as our primary vehicle for communicating on a daily basis with parents and carers. It is being used to keep you up to date with attendance, absence, school announcements, achievements, behaviour and much more.

Over 96% of parents and carers have installed the app on their mobile devices. If you haven't already, we request that you download the 'Class Charts Parents' app from your app store. It is available for iPhone and Android devices. QR codes for both the Apple App Store and Google Play can be found below.

If you need a reminder of your parental code to access the app for the first time, please email our Data Manager, Mr Mark Jones (JonesM1728@hwbcymru.net), who will send your code again to you and instructions on how to sign up.

We hope that you will find the app easy to navigate and use. Please be in touch with us with any questions or feedback.



iPhone QR code:



Android QR code:



Learning Zone

Learning Zone

Come along and access support after school!



**Monday
to
Thursday**

**3.00pm
to
4.00pm**

Free tuition with subject teachers each day.

Support with independent learning.

**Access to computers to complete
Mathswatch.**

Opportunities for collaborative learning.

Rewards for attending.

Learning Zone Co-ordinator — Mrs A Jones

Location: The Library

Keep Up-To-Date With School News ...

‘First Educators’ Parent Newsletter



FIRST EDUCATORS

The Catholic faith and Catholic social teaching place parents as being of central importance in the education of children. Their role is respected and supported by Catholic schools.

Parents are described, in Catholic social teaching as 'the first educators' of their children. We know that many of our parents and carers are keen to support their children in their learning and may find it helpful to access reminders for some of the most commonly used skills.

We are pleased to be able to offer a range of resources here for parents and carers to access whenever needed, these resources are short, video explanations offered by our teachers and are intended to aid parents and carers in supporting their children when completing homework or consolidating their learning.

ADDITIONAL
FAMILY PRAYER
LITERACY

Our parent and carer newsletter focused on curriculum updates and supporting learning can be found online here:

<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/first-educators>

Headteacher's Blog



The Headteacher's blog rounds up school news monthly, and this can be found online here:

<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/headteacher-s-blog>

ClassCharts



The ClassCharts app, details of which are provided earlier in this newsletter, allows daily home-school communication to be maintained. You can download this using the QR codes provided on page 40.

School Website and Social Media

The school's website: <https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/> and its social media accounts (Twitter, Instagram and Facebook) also provide regular news for all in our school community.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

Outside each examination room will be a copy of the regulations which have been agreed by all the examination boards. This sheet gives you further guidance to help you through your examinations so that you are quite clear as to what is expected of you.

Make sure you read both documents carefully and if there is anything you are unsure about, please ask.

Some important points:-

- Follow your personal examination timetable closely. Keep it in a safe place.
- Make sure you know your personal candidate number. It is shown as 'Exam Number' on your timetable.
- Morning examinations start at 9.00am and afternoon examinations start at 13.00 (1.00pm) unless otherwise indicated.
- Aim to arrive at the examination room at least 10 minutes before the scheduled start time. If you are late it will cause you unnecessary anxiety, and if you are very late you may not be allowed in.
- You are expected to attend examinations in correct school uniform. **You will not be allowed into the examination room if you are not correctly dressed.**
- If you attend with unsatisfactory uniform, **entry in to the examination will only be allowed after your parents have been contacted and asked to deliver the correct uniform to the school. Hoodies are not allowed in an exam room.**
- Wait outside the examination room until you are called in. Remember to visit the toilet before you enter the exam – you could have a long desperate wait otherwise!
- Bags, coats and blazers must be left at the back of the exam room. You will be allowed to take in **only what you need.**
- Pencil cases are not allowed unless they are clear. Pencil tins, boxes and 'solid colour' cases are not acceptable. A clear plastic 'sandwich-type' bag is just as good as a clear pencil case.
- Make sure you have the appropriate equipment for each exam – black pen (plus spare), pencil, rubber, ruler, sharpener are essential. For certain exams e.g. Geography, Science, and Maths you may need to add compass, protractor, calculator, coloured pencils to your list. Check with your teacher.
- As soon as you enter the examination room you must not communicate in any way with anyone other than an invigilator (supervisor) until you leave the room after the exam.
- If you become unwell during the examination, raise your hand and inform an invigilator. If you have a specific medical condition, e.g. diabetes, make sure you bring the appropriate drink and snack which should be placed on the floor alongside your desk.
- You must remain in the examination room for the time allocated to the paper. If you have any time remaining use it wisely to check your work – you will not have another opportunity, and a correction made may result in a better final grade.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

- If you are too ill to come to school you must let the school know by telephone at the earliest opportunity. You must also obtain a medical note from your doctor and send it to Mr Slater as soon as possible. It may then be possible to apply to the Examination board for special consideration so that you are awarded a grade.
- If you feel that something beyond your control has affected your performance in an examination, inform Mr Slater and bring a letter from home.
- You may be entitled to special arrangements in your examinations such as extra time or help with reading. You will be informed of these arrangements before the examinations affected.
- **Mobile phones, iPods or MP3/4 players and watches are not allowed in the exam room.**
- **If you have an examination clash you must report to the main hall at 8.40AM on the day of the clash.**

Certificates

Certificates gained during Summer 2025 examinations are available for collection at the school from December 2025. It is important that you collect your certificates as they will be returned to the examination board after 12 months. The examination boards charge £50 for a replacement certificate.

Procedure to collect Certificates

Students that have left Bishop Vaughan need to phone the school giving their name and the date they sat their examination. Your certificate will be ready for collection from the school the next day.

Finally, plan your examination preparation carefully and thoroughly, but most of all **GOOD LUCK!**

Examinations Information for Candidates Sitting External Examinations

It is important that both parents and pupils familiarise themselves with the rules and regulations of external examinations prior to the Summer 2025 examination series.

These sheets can also be found on the school's website at <https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/examinations-and-assessment> and also on the JCQ website at <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/>

School Uniform

September 2024 - August 2025

Three of our suppliers are:

- Bergoni, Tower Court, Unit 8, St. Davids Road, Swansea Enterprise Park, SA6 8RU Tel: 01792 796880
- J&S Products, 74 Tycoch Road, Swansea, SA2 9EQ Tel: 01792 206658
- Teamz Sportswear, 4 Shoppers Walk, Swansea, SA1 3AZ Tel: 01792 655281

Parents who have any doubts about what is acceptable should contact the school for guidance. The final arbitration of what constitutes school uniform lies with the Headteacher and Governors of the school. Please do not rely on information obtained from elsewhere.

Years 7-11

Blazer: With school logo (navy) - compulsory garment

Jumper: Fine knit jumper with school logo (navy) - non-compulsory

Tie: Years 7-11 official school tie

Socks: With trousers: dark coloured, or white
With skirts, standard grey or white

Tights: Should be flesh-coloured, medium grey or black, plain and seamless.
NB socks or tights **MUST** be worn.

Blouse/Shirt: Plain white

Skirt: Grey knee-length skirt

Trousers: Grey trouser, **NOT** fashion or jeans. No denim, leather, flares, leggings, skinny style etc.

Shoes: Black formal school shoes (leather/artificial leather) with flat or low heels. Ankle boots may be worn in winter provided they conform to the above regulations (not with skirts). Trainers are not permitted. Felt/fabric or canvas shoes are not permitted. Heavy boots (military, Ugg etc.) are not permitted. No forms of logo.

Outerwear: Pupils may wear standard length coats, anoraks or cagoules. However, all outer garments, of whatever type, must be plain, navy blue/black and single coloured. Pupils may not wear denim, hoodies, leather look jacket, no faux fur, tracksuit tops or cardigans.

No logos, writing, patterns or stripes of any description should be present. Hats e.g. beanies, baseball caps are not permitted in any circumstances. Head bands must be plain and dark. There is no necessity for anorak hoods to be worn at school.

School Uniform

Games Kit

Rugby Shirt:	Navy with blue/white side panels
T-Shirt (unisex):	Navy with blue/white side panels
Outdoor PE top (unisex)	Navy with blue/white side panels
Shorts (rugby):	Navy with blue/white side panels
Shorts (light wear):	Navy with white trim
Leggings:	Navy with white trim
Footwear:	Soccer and rugby appropriate studded boots and training shoes as applicable

Shin pads are to be worn for all hockey and football lessons. Gum shields are strongly recommended for hockey and rugby.

All Items of clothing should be clearly marked with the pupil's name.

Sixth Form Uniform

Blazer:	Pupils may wear the new blazer if they wish, however this is not compulsory for Years 12 and 13.
Jumper:	Navy, V-necked with official school logo
Tie:	Sixth Form official school tie
Shirt/Blouse:	Plain white, standard school style (not fashion) <i>NB During the summer term only navy blue polo shirt with Sixth Form logo may be worn.</i>
Skirt:	Navy blue, knee length
Trousers:	Navy blue, black, dark grey, standard design. No denim, leather, flares, leggings, corduroy, etc.
Socks:	With trousers: dark coloured, or white With skirts: navy blue or white
Tights:	Plain, seamless, navy tights may be worn
Shoes:	Dark coloured with flat or low heels. Ankle boots may be worn in winter and sandals in the summer. Trainers and canvas shoes are not permitted
Topcoat:	Dark blue/black/grey – single coloured only

Members of Sixth Form are expected to wear the uniform throughout the school day. A single sleeper or a single stud of minimum size may be worn in the lobe. No other piercings are permitted e.g. stretchers, spacers, nose or tongue piercing. If hair dye/highlights are used they should be a natural colour with no extreme contrasts (i.e. greens etc. are not permitted), no 'designs' to be shaved into the hair. No 'skin head' type haircuts. Baseball caps are not permitted in any circumstances. Any jewellery must be removed if in the judgement of any staff, instructors or technicians it constitutes a health and safety hazard, especially in laboratories, workshops and PE areas.

Attendance



The Education (School Day School Year) (Wales) Regulations 2006 states pupils are expected to attend school for 190 days a year. Moreover, there is a strong correlation between good attendance and high achievement as set out below:

95-100% attendance	Best chance of success	Your child is taking full advantage of every learning opportunity.
90-95% attendance	At least 2 weeks of learning missed	Satisfactory. Your child may have to spend time catching up with work.
85-90% attendance	At least 4 weeks of learning missed	Your child may be at risk of underachieving and may need extra support from you to catch up with work.
80-85% attendance	At least 5 ½ weeks of learning missed	Your child's poor attendance has a significant impact on learning.
Below 80% attendance	At least 7 ½ weeks of learning missed	Your child is missing out on a broad and balanced education. You are at risk of prosecution.

Absence requests from school during term time

We have been closely monitoring absences from school, particularly where attendance falls below 90%. We have written to parents/carers to advise if your child's absence was below 90% in academic year 2023/2024 and that we may require medical evidence for absences this year.

All absence requests within term time will be viewed as individual cases. We kindly ask parents/carers to complete the online form available under the Attendance section of our website. Alternatively please email BishopvaughanA@Hwbcymru.net to request the link to be sent directly.

We will not authorise absence during September or during examination periods.

Headteachers have a margin of discretion to approve holidays and will have regard to a number of factors which include the impact on the continuity of learning. If the Headteacher does not give permission and a parent takes a pupil on holiday the absence will be marked as "unauthorised." We would encourage parents to prioritise excellent attendance and to discuss any proposed holidays with the school well in advance.

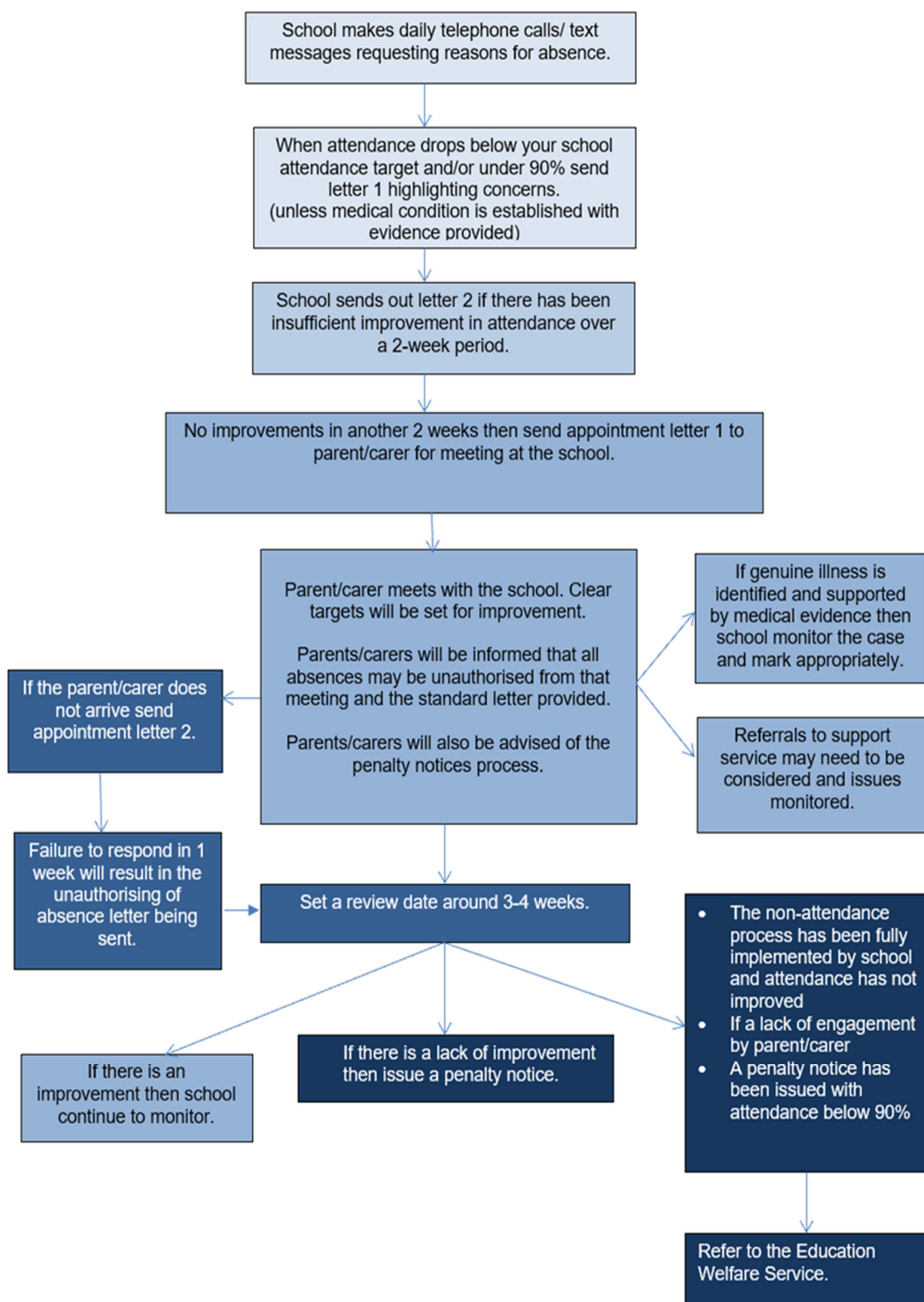
If the holiday is not authorised then you may receive a penalty notice if the holiday means your child misses 10 school sessions and your child's attendance falls below 90% in the school year to date.

The local code of conduct, which explains how penalty notices will operate, is available via this link: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/educationpenalty>

Our Attendance Policy is available on the school website:

<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/policies-and-documents>

The flowchart below gives parents and carers information of the attendance process if a pupil's attendance falls below 90%.



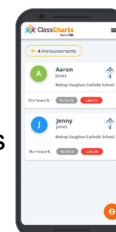
Parents' Information

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure their children receive a full time education – THIS IS THE LAW. Parents must ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time.

It is a parent's responsibility to let the school know if their child is going to be absent by contacting the school using any one of the following methods:

School telephone number: 01792 772006
Email: BishopvaughanA@Hwbcymru.net

Please also download our 'Class Charts Parents' app from your app store. Links can be found here: <https://www.classcharts.com/parent/login>



Remember the **only legally acceptable reasons** for not being in school are:

- Medical related absences
- Religious day of observance

The School Can Help

If you are worried or feel there is a problem with your child's attendance, it is always best to talk to the school first, however, the school can help with a variety of issues such as:

- Bullying
- Exclusions
- Child Protection
- Advice and Support

If you want any help and advice about your child's attendance, please contact our Family Engagement Team:

Mrs E-J Gwyther (Family Engagement Manager): 01792 772006 extension 2239
Mrs K North (Family Engagement Officer): 01792 772006 extension 2219

Pupil Information Details

If any of your details have changed, please write or email the school so that our records may be updated. This includes any change to address, contact telephone numbers (especially mobile telephone and emergency contacts), place of work, doctor, or any new medical conditions of which we should be aware.

Please note that it is the policy of the Local Authority that we receive evidence of any change of address.

Could you please pass on to the school any relevant email address that we could use to contact you? Thank you.



**Education Directorate**

The Guildhall, St Helen's Road
Swansea, SA1 4PE
www.swansea.gov.uk

September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Please take time to read this letter about school attendance. As your children settle back into school, I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of regular attendance at school. As a local authority, we prioritise and support high attendance at school. We believe that **Attendance is Everyone's Business** and this belief underpins our attendance policy and our day-to-day practice.

In the last full year before the pandemic, attendance in Swansea's secondary schools was **93.7%** and attendance in primary pupils was **94.9%** (2018-2019). At the end of academic year 2023-2024, attendance in Swansea's secondary schools was **88.4%** and attendance in primary pupils was **91.1%**.

As you can see, the disruption of the pandemic has had a significant impact on school attendance figures. To give a practical example, a pupil with **80%** attendance is missing one day of school every week. We know that poor attendance at school can impact on progress and well-being.

Overall Attendance	Number of Days Missed	Number of Weeks Missed (approx.)
90%	19 days	4 weeks
80%	38 days	8 weeks
70%	57 days	12 weeks

As parents and carers, you play a critical role in helping your child develop good attendance habits. We also appreciate that sometimes young people have difficulty attending school, whether through illness, emotional worries, family emergencies or even a failure to see the importance in regular school attendance. We understand and we would like to help.

Getting in touch is the first step. Your child's school will have a staff member who will be able to support you if you have any concerns about attendance. Your child's school also has a dedicated Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who is available to help support your child and your family when attendance to school falls below expected levels. We are available to give advice and support in all aspects of attendance.

If you have any questions, please get in touch via the school or by using our email address, located at the bottom of this letter. The Education Welfare Service (EWS) also has a website that offer frequently asked questions (FAQs), including advice on legal responsibilities and penalty notices; the address is also at the bottom of this letter.

We want to work with families to ensure that attendance to Swansea schools returns to the level we saw pre-pandemic. We want our children to have the best possible experiences by ensuring they are in the classroom, learning new skills, building good habits, and developing lifelong bonds with their peers. As I said, **Attendance is**

To receive this information in alternative format, or in Welsh please contact the above.

I dderbyn yr wybodaeth hon mewn fformat arall neu yn Gymraeg, cysylltwch â'r person uchod.



INVESTORS | BUDDSODDYWR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL

Everyone's Business and every school day matters for the life chances of children and young people. The local authority, your child's school and the EWS is here to work with you and your family to ensure high levels of attendance and the support you need when things get more challenging. Please speak with us and we will do what we can to help.

We wish you a happy new term.

Regards

Education Welfare Service

EWS e-mail: educationwelfareservice@swansea.gov.uk

EWS website: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/educationwelfareservice>

Bus Passes



Both parents and pupils should be aware that the children should carry their bus pass with them at all times. Pupils could be asked at any time whilst travelling on a school bus, to produce their bus pass as evidence that they are allocated a seat. If pupils have misplaced their bus pass please contact the school office who will organise a replacement.

Also pupils are not allowed to travel on any other bus other than the one that is printed on their bus pass. On several occasions lately pupils have tried to travel on different buses, e.g. to go over to a friend's place after school. This is not allowed and the drivers have the right to refuse entry to pupils who are not allocated to their bus. It is parents' responsibility to collect their children and take them to alternative venues after school.

Getting to School

Parents are politely reminded that pupils who cycle to school **must** wear a helmet and dismount once they enter the school site. Students must not come to school by scooter as this is dangerous to both the user and to pedestrians. We would very much appreciate your co-operation in this matter.

Parking Outside Bishop Vaughan

A letter has been received from the School Community Police Officer asking us to pass on the concerns of local residents in relation to parking and vehicles causing obstructions outside the school from 2.45pm every afternoon.

Police Officers will be patrolling regularly outside the school to take positive action regarding any vehicles which are parked in contravention of road traffic legislation.

Please park legally, safely and with consideration for our neighbours in our area. Thank you.



Mobile Telephones

If pupils have mobile phones they should note that they are **not** to be switched on or in use inside the school. This includes the buildings, playground and playing field areas, before, during and after the school day.

Mobile phones are to be kept out of sight, either on the person or in the school bag. The school can take no responsibility for any loss or theft of mobile phones.



Parents and guardians are asked **not** to contact their children by phone or text during the school day. If an emergency message needs to be conveyed the school office will take the call and pass the message on. Similarly if a pupil needs to make an emergency call home they just need to go to Student Services.

Failure to comply with these rules will result in the phone being confiscated and kept in the school office for collection by a responsible adult.

Bishop Vaughan Online

www.bishopvaughan.co.uk

https://twitter.com/Bishop_Vaughan

<https://www.instagram.com/officialbishopvaughan/>

<https://www.facebook.com/bishopvaughancatholicschool>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/BishopVaughanCatholicSchool>

Lost Property

We still have a number of lost property items in the Student Services office.

None of the articles are labelled and cannot, therefore, be returned to their owner. If your child has lost any item, please tell them to come and check with Mrs Gwyther or Mrs North in Student Services. After a period of time items not claimed will be given to a charity shop as there is no room to store them.

Lost property is available for checking at break and lunch-time.



PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS OF SCHOOL UNIFORM SO THAT THEY CAN BE EASILY RETURNED IF HANDED IN TO LOST PROPERTY.

Please can all parents and guardians be aware that the school cannot supervise pupils arriving before 8.40am.



Bishop Vaughan Catholic School
Mynydd Garnllwyd Road
Morrison, Swansea
SA6 7QG
Phone: 01792 772006
Fax: 01792 790565
email: bishopvaughan@hwbcymru.net
www.bishopvaughan.co.uk