

Gorwel Addysg Gwybodaeth



Ysgol Gyfun

**PORTHCAWL**

*Comprehensive School*

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3<sup>rd</sup> February

Dear Parents / Carers,

Last week we were able to watch our annual school show at the Grand Pavilion and there was certainly lots of dancing as we staged "Footloose." It was the 44<sup>th</sup> production in our school history and it goes without saying - we are already looking forward to next year! Our annual school show allows us to showcase our school in the local community. It is true community event, and it was lovely to see so many of you there. So, where do I start? How do I summarise? I am sure you all agree when I say this - it was quite simply outstanding! I am in complete awe of the talent and commitment demonstrated by the students at our school. There have been performances for our feeder primary schools, three evening performances and a final matinee performance on the afternoon Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January. To the cast, crew, all staff, and parents involved, your work ethic, talent and commitment is something to behold – thank you for everything that you do! I speak on behalf of our whole school community when I say this – Thank You! I am certainly looking forward to our 45<sup>th</sup> school production.

Over the last two weeks, Year 11 have been busily working through a number of their examinations and assessments which contribute to their final GCSEs in summer 2023. They have completed their English Language Oracy exam, whilst also working through their Science Practical exams. I would like to praise all pupils for their effort and preparation and pass on my thanks to our English and Science Faculties. The Year 11 Options Fortnight has now concluded at Porthcawl Comprehensive School, and it is great to learn that over 75% of our Year 11 students have chosen the Sixth Form at our school as their intended destination – keep up the effort and commitment everyone!

Last Week, Mr Aldridge delivered important assemblies to Key Stage 3 about our plans for the new curriculum. As mentioned in my previous letter, under the strategic lead of our Assistant Headteacher Mr Aldridge all teachers are working tirelessly to prepare for the launch of Curriculum for Wales at Porthcawl Comprehensive School in September 2023. We are developing the 'Curriculum for Porthcawl' – a curriculum designed by us for us! Staff and pupils have recently developed our Curriculum Vision and developed the core purposes of the new curriculum into the 'Porthcawl Purposes'. Mr Aldridge will share more information in our spring term edition of the Porthcawl Post.

The Year 9 Options Fortnight has started this week, with all Year 9 students making important decisions about their future GCSE subjects. Please can I remind all pupils and parents/carers to read the options information provided. To provide additional support, subject assemblies delivered by Heads of Faculty and Heads of Department will continue next week and we will be holding our Year 9 Progress Evening on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February. This evening will take place in person and it will be an opportunity to speak to your child's teachers. I look forward to seeing you there.

I would also like to take this opportunity to raise the importance of regular attendance at school. Quite simply, it is the access to learning, it is the building of confidence and skills, it is the proven foundation of success. Attending school on a

regular, punctual basis is one of the most important ways of making sure young people get the best possible start in life. We encourage all students to attend school on time, every day, and aim for 100% attendance. I ask for your consideration when booking appointments and holidays during school time. I shall be sending an attendance update letter next week to highlight the importance of regular attendance.

As you will be aware, this week the school was closed because of planned industrial action by the National Education Union (NEU). For information, national industrial action continues and future strike dates by the NEU look likely. These are:

- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023;
- Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023; and
- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023

To date, I am unable to provide confirmation as to whether Porthcawl Comprehensive School will be open or closed on the above dates. When more information is available, in consultation with the Chair of Governors I will undertake a risk assessment of the staffing levels available and make a final decision. As this is a national dispute, the landscape can change quickly and with this in mind, it makes sense to wait until next in case anything changes. Thank you for your support with this.

I apologise in advance if you have to make alternative arrangements for your child on the dates above. It is important that I share these dates so that you can plan ahead. Please be reassured that I continue to work closely with the local authority, HR advisors, professional associations and other Headteachers via the Bridgend Association of Secondary Headteachers. I will write to you when I know more information.

As I write, I have just enjoyed one of the highlights of my week – my Friday lunchtime meeting with our Year 13 Head Team, Head of Sixth Form Mrs Crook and Deputy Headteacher Mrs O’Brien. The Head Team’s contribution and discussion about all things school is always appreciated. It is true to say that they really are role models to the whole school community. It was lovely to learn about the university offers already received – Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial, Bath, Bristol, this list goes on. Well done - my sincere congratulations to all Year 13!

Advanced notice: Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February is an INSET Day at Porthcawl Comprehensive School.

Best wishes,

Mike Stephens

M Stephens  
Headteacher