



January 2026
Janawr 2026

St Francis R.C. Primary School



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A message from our Headteacher,

Miss Langsdale



Hello 2026

New Year's Message from the Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year, and welcome back to a new term at St Francis! I hope you all enjoyed a peaceful and joyful Christmas break with your families. It certainly seems a long time ago now! The children have returned with wonderful enthusiasm, and it has been lovely to see them settling back into routines so quickly.

January is always a time for fresh starts and renewed energy. As a school, we are looking forward to the opportunities this term will bring—new learning, new challenges, and plenty of moments to celebrate the achievements of our children.

Please keep up to date with all that is happening on GroupEd which is our main form of communication.

Over the coming weeks, we will be focusing on 'Art form the Heart', a topic designed to enable children to develop creativity.

This term brings World Book Day, St David's day and the start of Lent with Ash Wednesday falling during the February half term.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership with us. Working together makes such a difference, and we are truly grateful for the positivity and encouragement you bring to our school community.

Wishing you all a healthy, happy, and hopeful start to 2026.

Warm regards,
Miss M. Langsdale
Headteacher





Religious Education Directory

Prayer of the Month



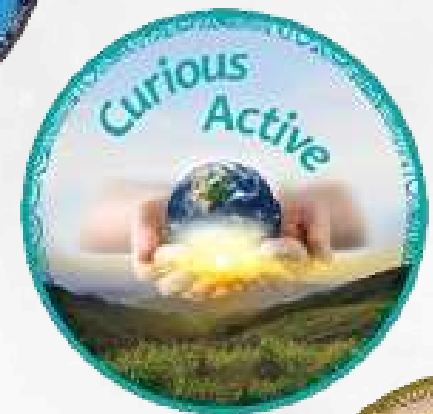
Gweddi'r Mis

Lord Jesus,
You received special gifts from the
Three Wise Men,
which confirm your divine kingship.
This Epiphany help us to appreciate
what a special gift you are for us.
Amen





Religious Education Directory



Virtues

Curious and Active

Zacchaeus is curious about Jesus
(Luke 19:1-6)

Jesus entered Jericho and was going through the town when a man whose name was Zacchaeus made his appearance; he was one of the senior tax collectors and a wealthy man. He was anxious to see what kind of man Jesus was, but he was too short and could not see him for the crowd; so he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus who was to pass that way.

When Jesus reached the spot he looked up and spoke to him: "Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry, because I must stay at your house today."; And he hurried down and welcomed him joyfully.



Religious Education Directory

Assemblies

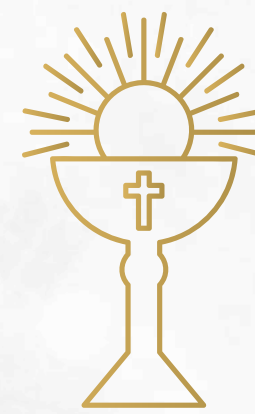


The Epiphany

Mrs McHugh and the children in Year 6 led a lovely Worship Assembly on the Feast of the Epiphany. Mrs McHugh read a lovely story called *When the Stars Shone Bright - A Christmas Tale*.



by Madeleine Carroll. The children researched facts on the Epiphany and shared them with all the children.



First Holy Communion

The children of our parish of St Francis of Assisi have begun their preparation for First Holy Communion in our school with the help of Miss Langsdale, Mrs Murphy (from our church) and Mrs Humphreys. They will make this on **Sunday 14th June**. Please keep these young people in your prayers as they prepare to receive the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament for the first time. The children's names are Leo-John, Owyn-Rhys, Erkidjo, Jozef, David, Faye and Indie.



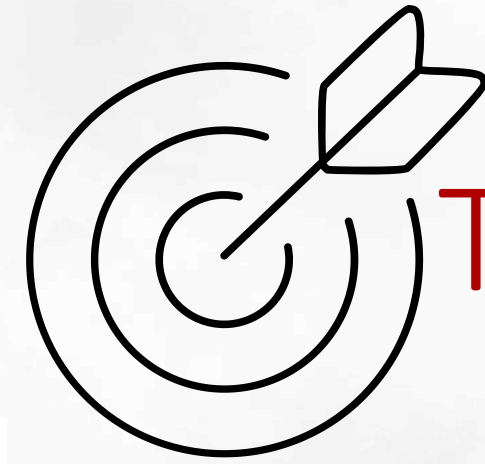
Jesus and the Fishermen

Mr. McConkey had the opportunity to deliver an assembly focused on a Gospel story from the book of Matthew, exploring how Jesus called the fishermen to become his first disciples. He discussed what it meant for them to leave their nets behind and follow Jesus, and how this story teaches us about trust and answering a call to help others. The children listened thoughtfully and engaged well with the message.





Attendance & Punctuality



Target:
100%



Every student. Every day.

**Your child's
attendance needs
to be above
95%**



At St Francis we monitor attendance **regularly.**

Our attendance is also monitored by school governors and the Local Authority.

Attendance at school is extremely important for all pupils so that they can achieve as well as possible, and is now part of safeguarding procedures.



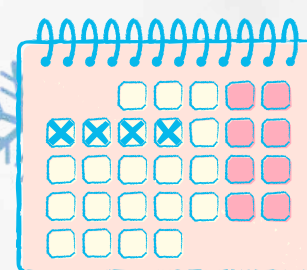
If your child is unwell please contact the office otherwise the absence cannot be authorized.

Please ensure your children are in to avoid potential fines.



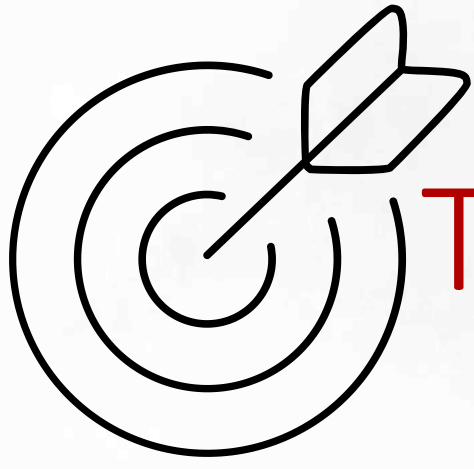
Every moment in school counts.

Days soon add up and the more children are in school the more they are likely to learn. Please do all you can to bring you child to school.





Attendance & Punctuality



Target:
100%

Overall
Attendance

89.68%

Slightly up from last month!

Your child's
attendance needs
to be above
95%

Nursery
AM

88.17%

Nursery
PM

81.01%

Reception-
D

92.94%

Reception-
H

89.06%

Year 1

89.38%

Year 1/2

89.35%

Year 2

86.98%

Year 3

89.47%

Year 3/4

90.39%

Year 4

93.94%

Year 5M

90.87%

Year 5J

93.42%

Year 6C

86.57%

Year 6M

89.46%

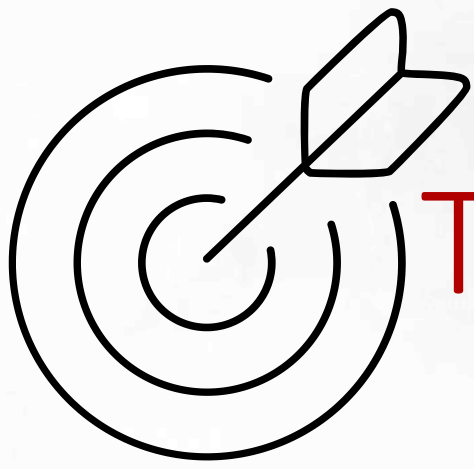


Attendance Rewards

Our new Senedd group will meet and decide on the rewards for our good attendance winners!



Attendance & Punctuality



Target: 100%

EVERY School Day COUNTS

Your child's attendance needs to be above **95%**

0 days off school

100%

Perfection!

Equal to 2 days off school each year

99%

Excellent

Equal to 5 days off school each year

97%

Good

Equal to 10 days off school each

95%

Slight Concern

Equal to 20 days off school each

90%

Concerned

Equal to 30 days off school each year

85%

Very Concerned



EVERY Minute COUNTS

- 5 Minutes late each day
- 10 Minutes late each day
- 15 Minutes late each day
- 20 Minutes late each day
- 30 Minutes late each day

IS APPROXIMATELY

- 3 days lost!
- 6.5 days lost!
- 10 days lost!
- 13 days lost!
- 19 days lost!

Lateness = Lost Learning





Our 25-26 Topics

Spring Term



Tymor yr Gwanwyn

Celf O'r Galon

Art From The Heart

Creating combines skills and knowledge, drawing on the senses, inspiration and imagination.

By engaging with this Area, learners will be given opportunities to be innovative and bold, to create individual work and to develop their own identity as artists in Wales. This learning and experience can foster resilience and flexibility to overcome challenges.

Creating in the expressive arts embraces a range of activities including planning, drafting, designing, making, choreographing, shaping, composing and editing. Creating requires learners to develop and demonstrate control of a range of skills and an application of knowledge.

During the creative process learners communicate through a variety of art forms or disciplines. Communication includes performing, presenting, sharing, exhibiting and producing with consideration of the audience.

In this Area, learners' engagement with the creative process can enable them to recognise opportunities to transform their ideas safely and ethically into work which has cultural and commercial value, and to use their creative skills to realise ambitions.

Exploring the expressive arts is essential to developing artistic skills and knowledge and it enables learners to become curious and creative individuals.

Exploring this Area, both through their own creative work and other people's, engages learners with genres, techniques, tools, materials and practices and enables them to become curious and creative individuals.

By exploring forms and disciplines in the expressive arts, whether through experimentation, play or formal research and inquiry, learners can develop an understanding of how the expressive arts communicate through visual, physical, verbal, musical and technological means. This exploration can also progress their understanding of how the expressive arts shape ideas and feelings. It can encourage them to develop their imagination and draw upon their own experiences, skills and talents to become creative artists themselves.

The expressive arts are also a powerful medium through which learners can explore Wales and its unique and diverse traditions, history and cultures. They can provide opportunities for learners to explore their own cultural heritage and that of other people, places and times, and through this discover how the expressive arts can be used to shape and express personal, social and cultural identities. Learners will be exposed to and explore work from diverse cultures and societies and learn about these influences, histories and impact. Learners can also explore how the expressive arts can be used to question and challenge viewpoints and be a force for personal and societal change.

Responding and reflecting, both as artist and audience, is a fundamental part of learning in the expressive arts.

Responding within the expressive arts engages the emotions and the intellect. Response may be a simple sensory reaction to artistic stimulus or a critical analysis of creative work. The ability to reflect is deepened as learners increase their knowledge and understanding of how and why creative work is developed and produced.

Adopting the skills and critical vocabulary encountered in this Area can equip learners to consider creative work in a range of media, forms, genres and styles.

Learning the important skills of refinement and analysis can contribute to their creative development.

Learners' resilience can also be developed when they are encouraged to identify how they can improve their work and respond to feedback from others.

The act of responding encouraged by engagement in this Area challenges learners to reflect on the effectiveness of their own work and that of others, including the work of diverse artists from Wales and beyond.



Our Learning Journey

Nursery



This term we have been joined by our new starters! They are doing a fantastic job of settling in, learning the routine and making friends!



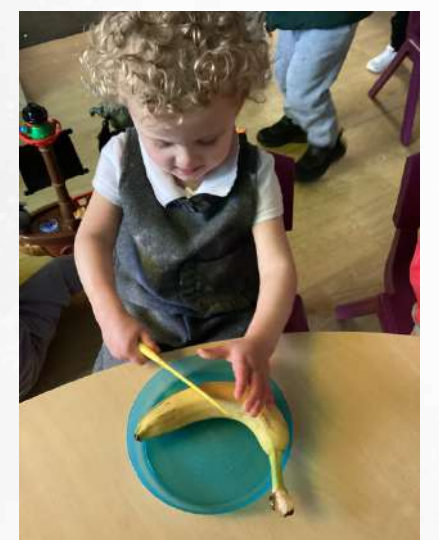
We have all been practising our colour, shape and number recognition. As well as helping our Numberblocks get themselves into the right order!.



buttering toast



We have been developing our independent life skills:



Putting our own shoes and coats on



cutting fruit

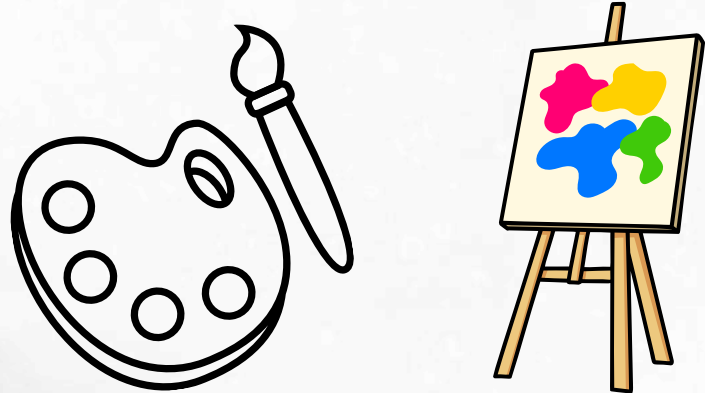




Our Learning Journey Reception



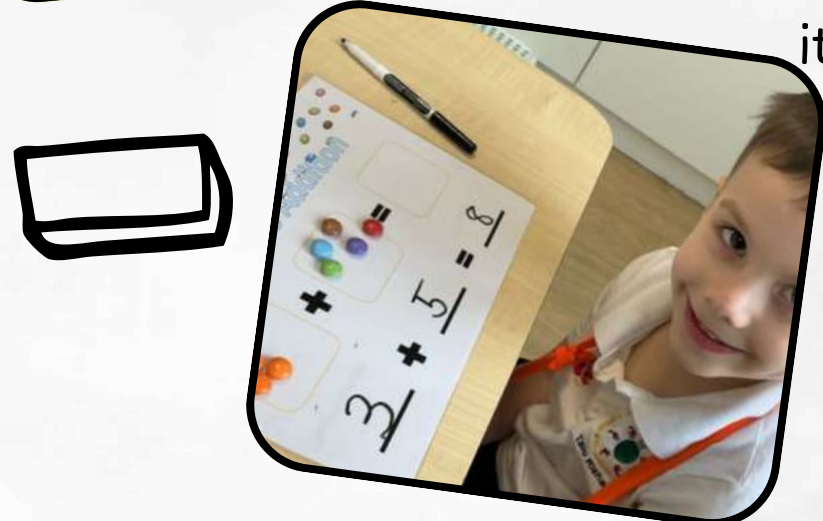
Our new topic is called "Celf O'r Galon," which means "Art from the Heart." We have begun our new topic by exploring how different colours can make us feel different emotions. To introduce our learning, we read 'Colour Me Happy, Colour Me Sad' and thought carefully about our own experiences and the colours we would link to those feelings. We discussed how colours can make each of us feel different ways and enjoyed sharing our ideas as a class.



The children also created their own expressive artwork inspired by a piece of music, using lines and shapes that matched the emotions the music made them feel. It has been a creative and thoughtful start to our topic!



In maths, we have been learning all about addition and subtraction through fun and practical activities. The children have enjoyed using Smarties to help with their adding, carefully counting and combining groups to find the total. We also tried "subtraction bowling," where knocking down skittles helped us understand taking away in a hands-on way. Alongside this, we have been learning what the mathematical signs mean, such as equals and minus, and how to use them correctly in number sentences. The children have been enthusiastic and engaged, and it's been wonderful to see their confidence grow.



In RE, we have been learning all about the Epiphany. We explored the story of the three kings and the special gifts they brought to Jesus. To help bring the story to life, the children created artwork to recreate the scene, thinking carefully about the characters and symbols in the story.



We also made our own 'King Cakes' to celebrate. This special cake is enjoyed in many countries around the world—including France, Spain, Portugal, and across Latin America—where it is traditionally linked to the visit of the Three Kings. The children loved discovering this tradition and had great fun decorating their cakes with colourful toppings.





Our Learning Journey Year 1

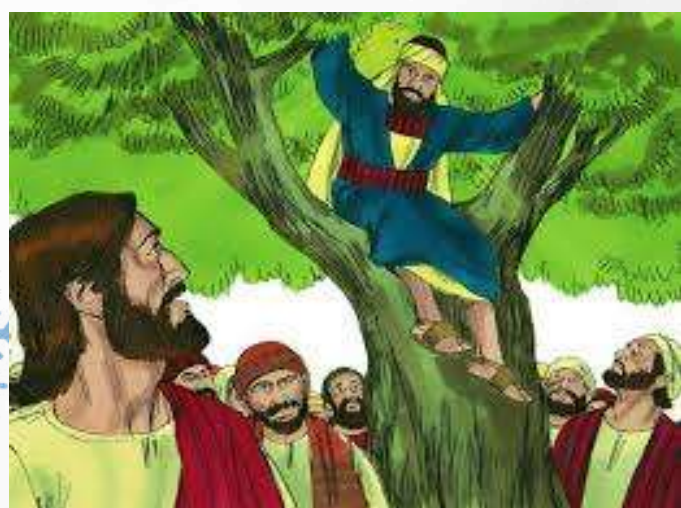


Our new topic is called "Celf O'r Galon," which means "Art from the Heart." We have started our topic by exploring the use of colour and shape to explore emotions. We have looked at how we can creatively use the use of line to make creative pictures. Our work learning has developed into looking at observational drawings and how to incorporate colour, perspective and finer details into our work.

We have also started to learn about a famous Bristonian artist Richard Long - which we are starting to write a biography on. His work centres on the use of natural materials and this is something we will be developing in our artistic work moving forward



In RE, we have been learning all how some people who met Jesus recognised that he was special and how this changed them.



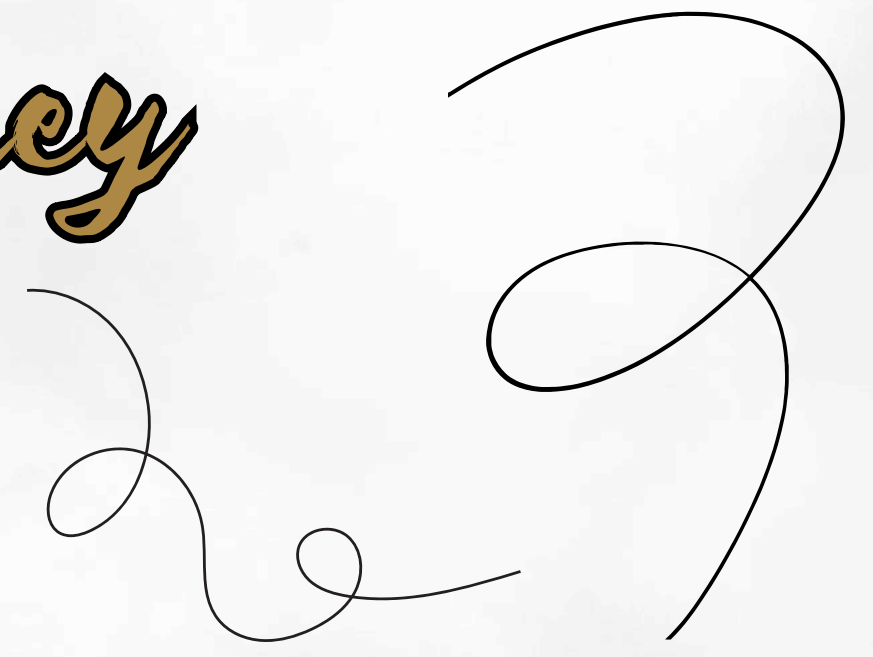
In Maths we have been developing our fluency of number through the use of the amazing Numbots programme which the children have absolutely loved! We are now moving onto time and reading clocks.



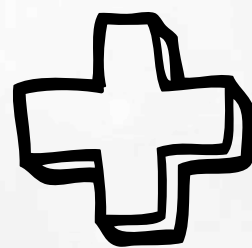
Our Learning Journey

Year 1/2

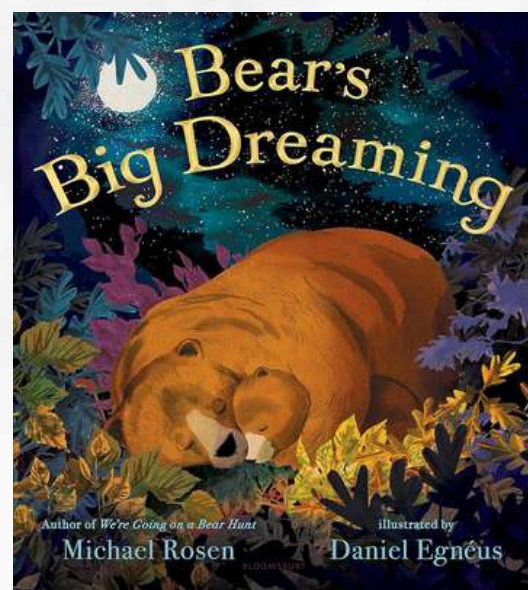
Miss Wong's class



Our new topic is called 'Celf O'r Calon' which means 'Art from the heart'. We have started our topic by exploring lines and shapes through paint, pencil and pens. So far we have traced shapes, printed paints and practised lines. We have also practised our colouring mixing with primary and secondary colours.



In Maths, we have been practising adding and subtracting. We have had a go in different ways - counting on and back, using number lines and using manipulatives. We have been using TopMarks games to support us with our learning. We have also been working on our number bonds to 10 and looking at patterns to help us solve them and counting in 2's, 5's and 10's with the help of songs.



In Literacy, we have been using the book 'Bear's Big Dreaming' as our story. We have read the story a few times over and so far we have sequenced our night routines, made a list of what Little Bear would need to sleep and discussed how Little Bear would feel throughout the story and why. We have also enjoyed small world play about 'Bear's Big Dreaming'.

In RE, we started the term learning about Epiphany and made Epiphany gifts for Year 2. We have continued learning about Jesus and his followers and learned about how these people knew Jesus was special.





Our Learning Journey Year 3

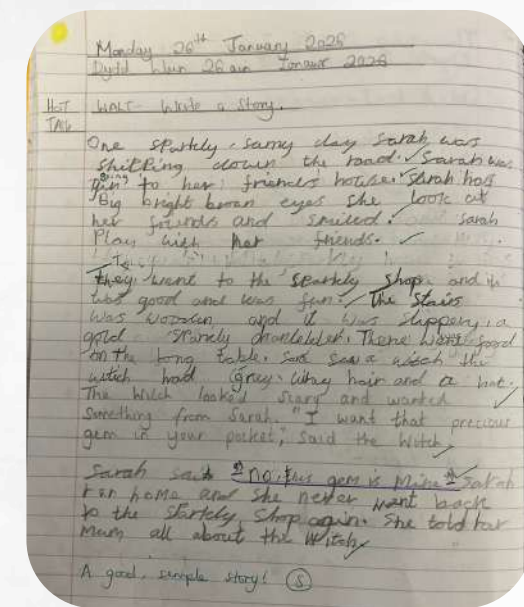
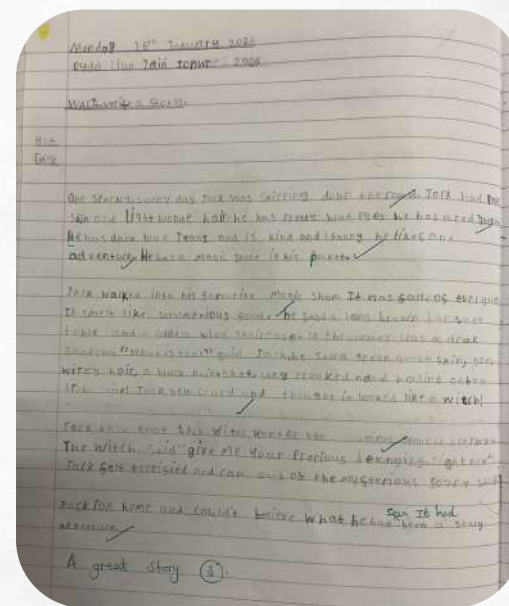
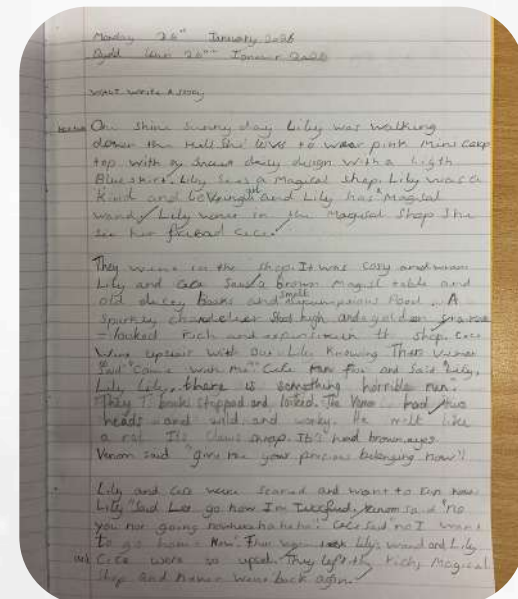
Mrs Humphreys' class



LLC - Creative Story Writing.

The children have come back with an excellent attitude to learning after the Christmas holidays.

In LLC we have chosen to stay focused on creative writing and write a story! The children have looked at setting a scene, good and bad character descriptions, expanded nouns, similes and alliteration. The work they have achieved leading up to their stories has been great fun and I'm so proud of their stories! Here are a few for you to read...

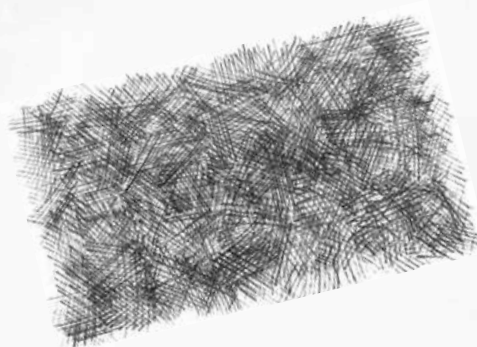
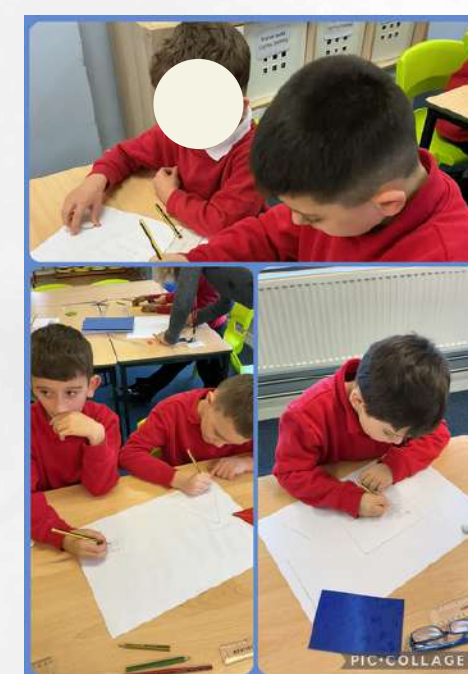
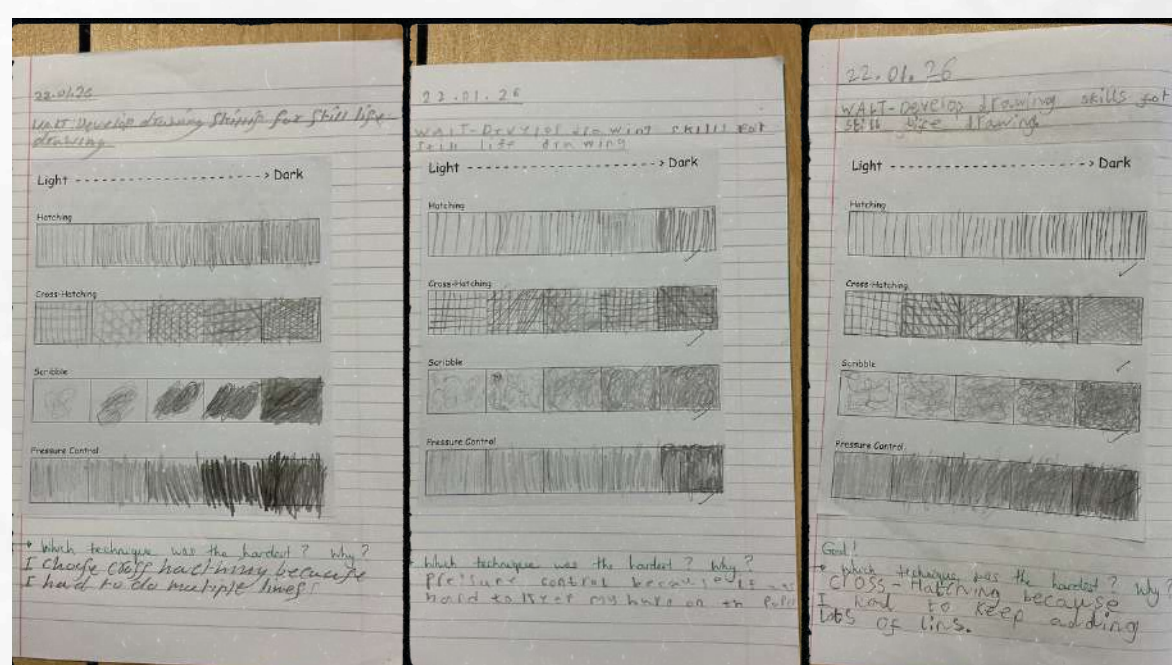


Maths - Shape and Symmetry

In our daily Maths lessons we have loved investigating 2d shapes and symmetry.

Expressive Arts

Our new topic is called Celf O'r Calon - Art from the heart. Our lesson focus to begin with is drawing skills for still life natural objects. Using shading and toning we have developed ways to showcase cross-hatching, hatching and blending. This was one of our introductory lessons and we loved it! Here is some of our work...

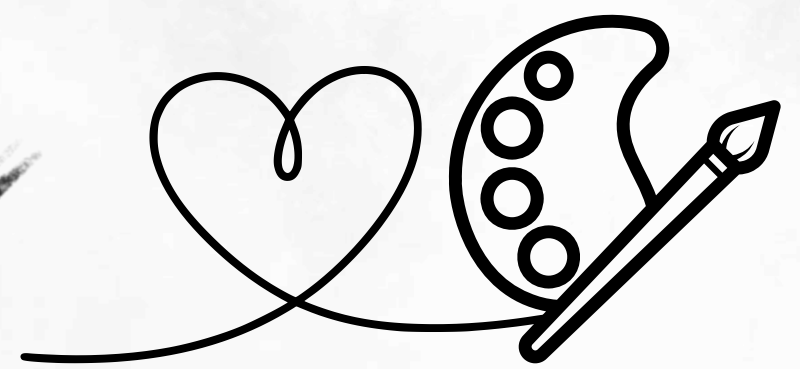




Our Learning Journey

HAPPY Year 3/4 Mr McConkey's Class
New Year 2026

Welcome back and Happy New Year! We hope you all had a lovely Christmas break and were able to enjoy some special time with family and friends. The children have settled back into school life really well, and we are looking forward to an exciting term ahead filled with lots of learning and creativity (especially with our new topic). Thank you, as always, for your continued support.



In our LLC lessons, the children have been busy developing their storytelling skills through a range of creative writing activities. They have learned how to build a strong sense of place, describe characters in detail, and enhance their writing using expanded noun phrases, similes, and alliteration. The journey towards completing their stories has been engaging and enjoyable, and the final pieces show just how much progress they have made.

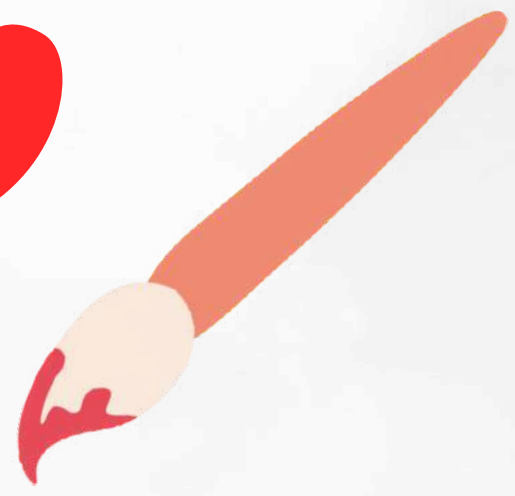
This term, our new topic is 'Celf O'r Galon', which means Art from the Heart. The children have been exploring different types of lines and experimenting with shading techniques such as hatching, cross-hatching, and scribbling. They have absolutely loved this topic, and their creativity is really beginning to shine! Soon, we will be moving on to collage and learning about the work of Pablo Picasso, which we are all very much looking forward to.





Our Learning Journey Year 5

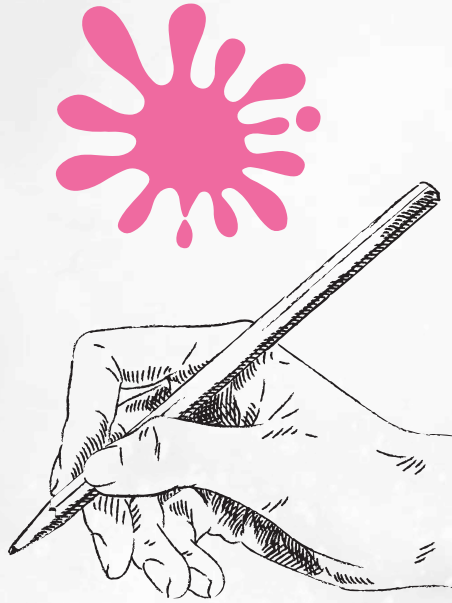
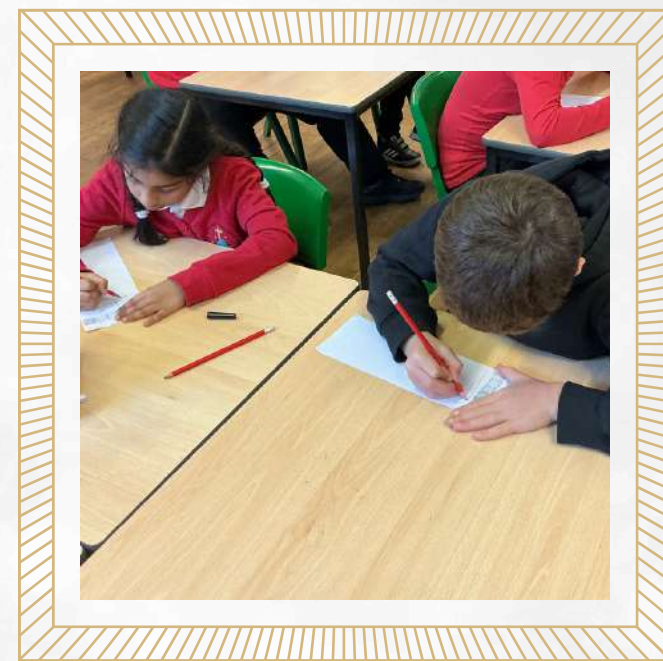
Miss Mathias' Class



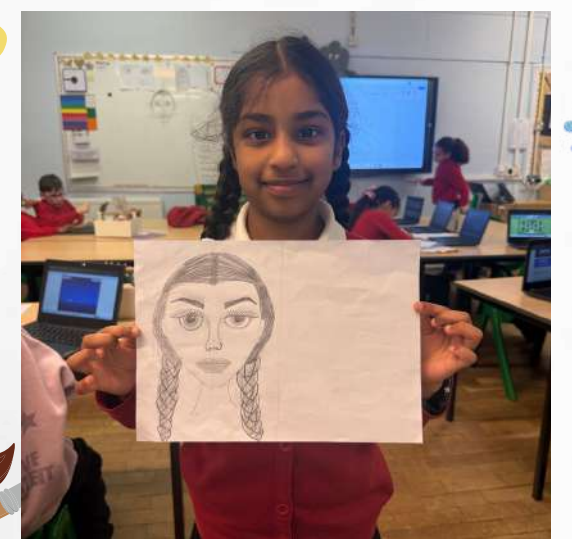
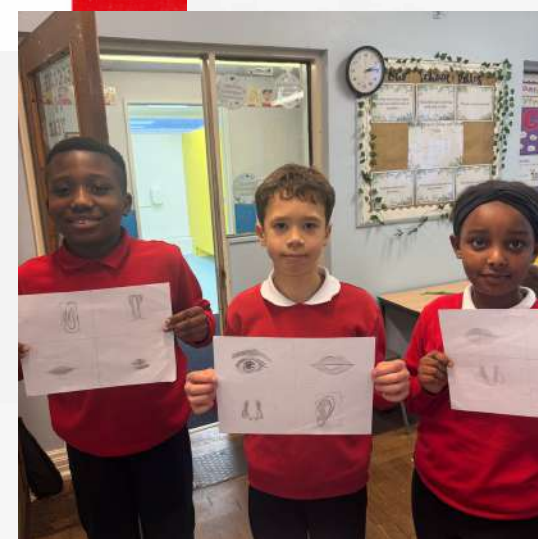
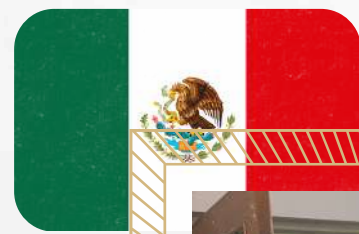
Our new topic is called "Celf O'r Galon," which means "Art from the Heart." We have started our topic by looking at how art can show artists' values and identity. We studied a variety of self portraits and analysed them using "I see, I think, I wonder, I feel."

Happy New Year! I hope you had a lovely Christmas.

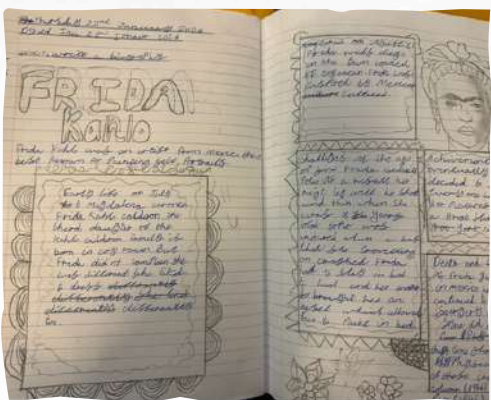
Year 5 have returned to school with lots of ambitions and resolutions for the new year. We shared these by completing our New Year's Bingo Cards.



We have also learnt some drawing skills, starting with sketching techniques. We are working towards creating self portraits to show our Cynefin!



In English lessons we have written a biography of the famous Mexican portrait artist, Frida Kahlo. We used four different sources to research information to include in our biography. She is a very interesting and inspiration figure!



In RE we have started our topic "Galilee to Jerusalem." We have learn about the 8 Beatitudes and worked resiliently to create animations to explain the meaning of the Beatitudes.

We've started gymnastics in PE and have worked on shapes, balances and jumps! It's lovely to see some of our talented class members showing their gymnastic skills.



We are looking forward to our next transition day at Mary Immaculate! Remember to return your letters for Frozen.





Year 6

Our Learning Journey



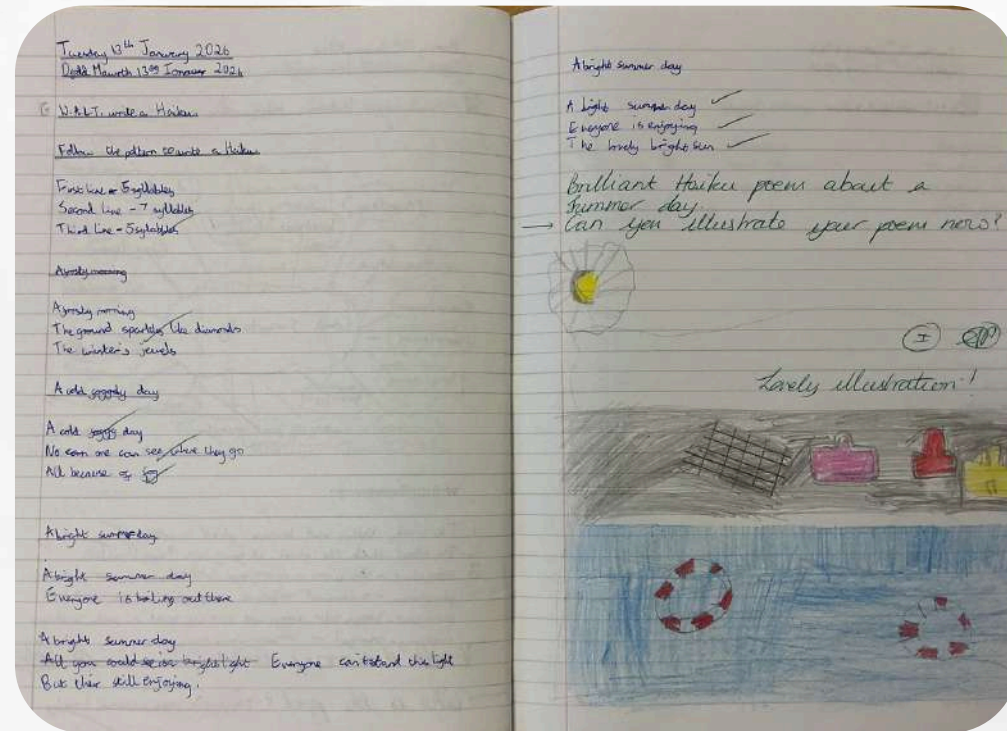
Mrs McHugh and Mrs Coray



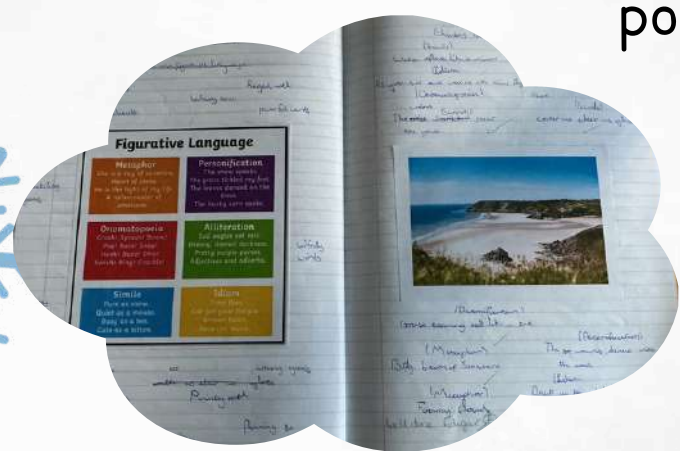
Passport to Graduation

Yr 6 were involved in a problem solving workshop delivered by university staff and supported by students from Treforest Campus. The children were set a problem on a make believe island to calculate the cost of an obelisk structure. They had to sort and prioritise information and then choose the correct operation to calculate various times and amounts to determine the final solution. This involved a lot of conversation and co-operation and was challenging but all children were engaged and interested.

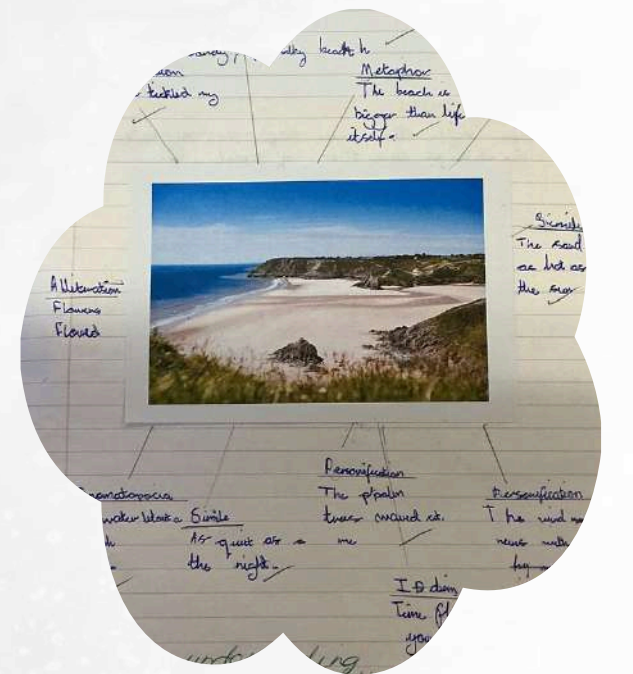
Figurative Language	
Metaphor She is a ray of sunshine. Heart of stone. He is the light of my life. A rollercoaster of emotions.	Personification The snow speaks. The grass tickled my feet. The leaves danced on the trees. The husky corn spoke.
Onomatopoeia Crash! Splash! Boom! Pop! Bam! Snap! Honk! Buzz! Drip! Swish! Ring! Crackle!	Alliteration Evil eagles eat eels. Dreary, dismal darkness. Pretty purple purses. Adjectives and adverbs.
Simile Pure as snow. Quiet as a mouse. Busy as a bee. Cute as a kitten.	Idiom Time flies. Cat got your tongue. Broken heart. Face the music.



In our literacy sessions we have been studying Poetry and investigating figurative language. The children took part in a carousel activity which accumulated to a group performance a chosen poem.



The children have created a variety of poems and these include a Haiku



The children had an opportunity to take part in an AI workshop. The children were reminded of the benefits and disadvantages of using AI. The children were shown how to enter descriptive words to create pictures to accompany a poem.





Stars of the Month!

Seren y Mis!

Seren Yr Wythnos
Star of the Week

Name _____

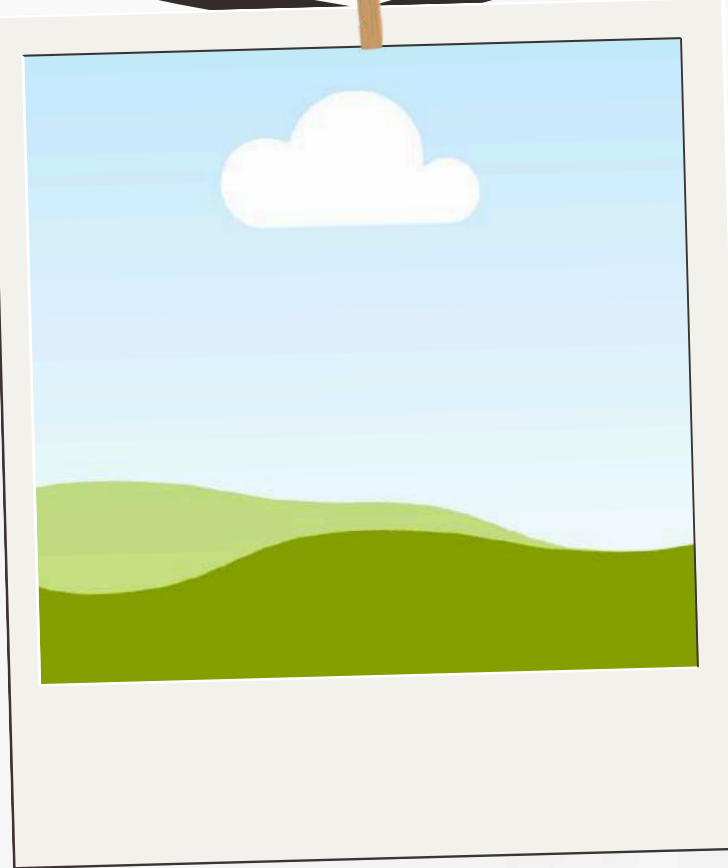
Um _____
For _____

Dosbarth _____ Dyddiad _____
Class Date

Pennaeth Gwybodaol Miss Langdale

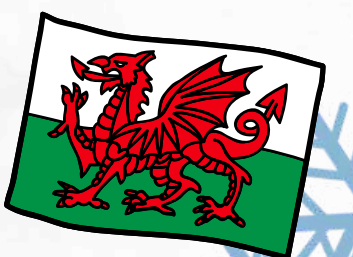
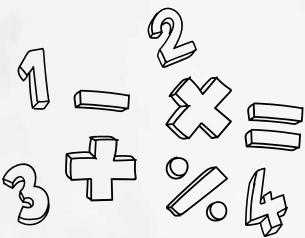


Some of our Stars of the Week from this month!



Congratulations to all the recipients!

Moving up in Big Maths!



Great resilience!



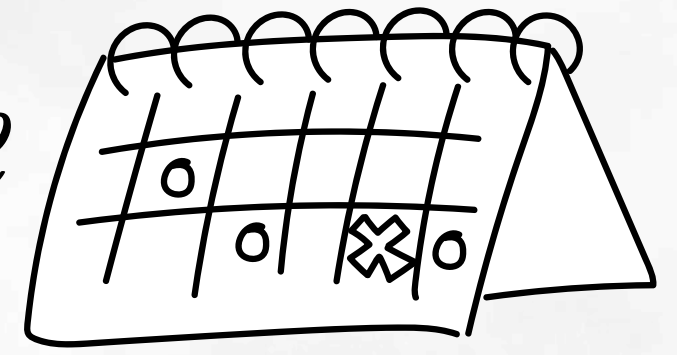
Let your child's teacher know if they have achieved something outside of school and we will celebrate them here!





After School Clubs

Spring Term Timetable



MONDAY



Gymnastics
Year 1 & 2
3pm - 4pm
Mrs Coray

Football
Years 5 & 6
3pm - 4pm
Mr Windross



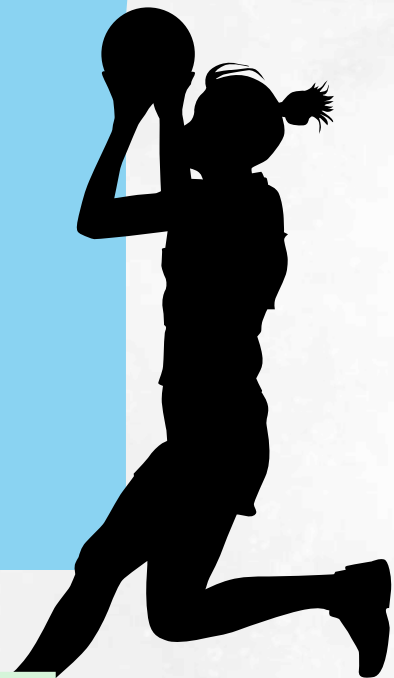
TUESDAY



Dance
Year 5 & 6
3pm - 4pm
Miss Mathias

THURSDAY

Netball
Year 5 & 6
3pm - 4pm
Miss Kennett &
Miss Harding



Football
Years 3 & 4
3pm - 4pm
Mr McConkey



Choir
Years 4,5 and 6
3pm - 4pm
Mr Philp





St Francis Senedd Senedd St Francis

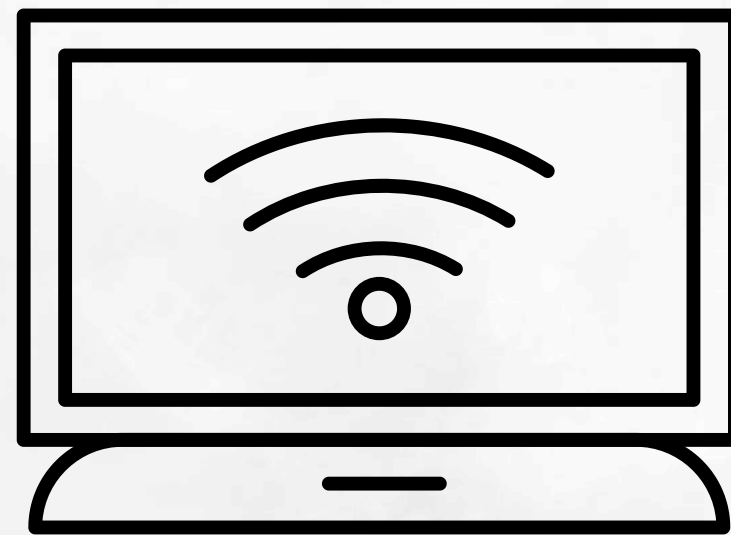
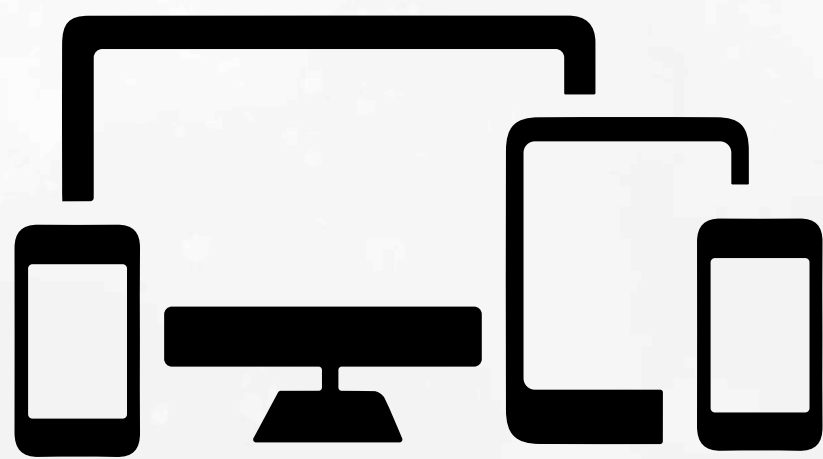
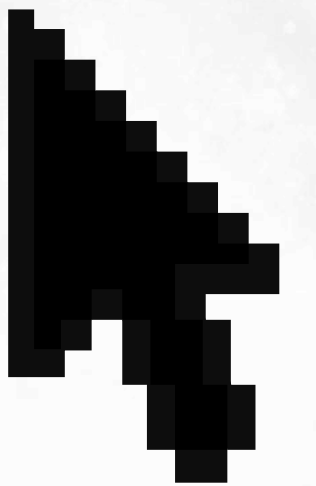
Digital Leaders

Our Digital Leaders Senedd group recently met to discuss ways we can further incorporate technology into our everyday learning. The pupils shared some fantastic ideas and showed great enthusiasm when talking about how technology supports their learning in class. Our Chair and Vice Chair took two

key points from the discussion to Miss Langsdale:

- classes would love access to more Chromebooks
- an iPad charging stand to support the new iPads each class has.

It was wonderful to see the pupils' voices being heard and valued.



Outdoor Adventurers

Our Senedd group has been working on how we can incorporate more Outdoor Learning into our lessons.

We had ideas to include it in our topic lessons and planning and our new topic 'Celf O'r Galon.' leaves plenty of opportunities to get outside, admire the beauty of nature and inspire our artwork.

Year 1 are going to be studying Richard Long and creating natural artwork inspired by him. We are excited to see what they come up with!





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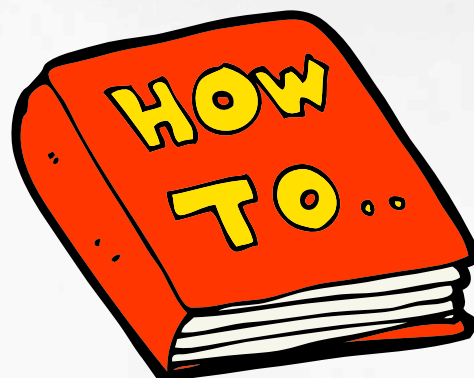
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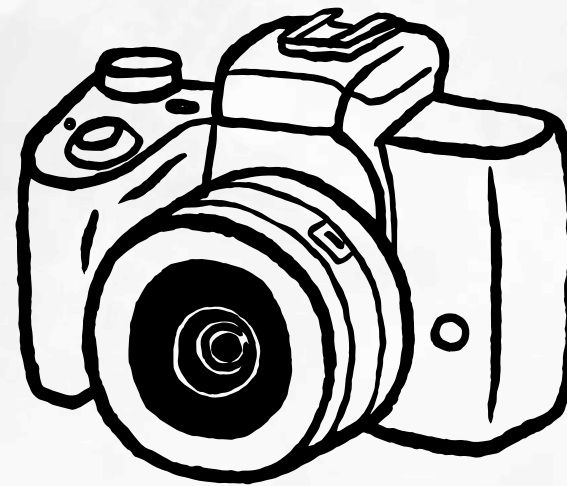


Year on a Page Blwyddyn ar Dudalen



	Term Starts	Half Term	Term Ends
Autumn Term	01.09.25	27.10.25 - 31.10.25	19.12.25
Spring Term	05.01.26	16.02.26 - 20.02.26	27.03.26
Summer Term	13.04.26	25.05.26 - 29.05.26	20.07.26

School Photos



Thursday 6th November
Individual Photographs

Thursday -- May (Date TBC)
Class Photographs

Inset Days

1. Monday 1st September
2. Tuesday 2nd September
3. Friday 24th October
4. Friday 19th December
5. Monday 1st June
6. Monday 20th July

Pupil Progress Meetings

Wednesday 17th November
 Wednesday 18th March
 Thursday 19th March
 End of Year Report in July

Important Dates in the Catholic Calendar

- Friday 4th October - The Feast of St Francis
- Sunday 30th November - Advent Starts
- Thursday 25th December - Christmas Day
- Wednesday 18th February - Ash Wednesday
- Sunday 29th March - Holy Week Starts
- Sunday 5th April - Easter Sunday
- Thursday 14th May - Ascension
- Sunday 24th May - Pentacost





Dates for your Diary



February



Tuesday 10th February - Safer Internet Day



Tuesday 11th February - Y 5 & 6 visit to Mary Immaculate - Frozen



Friday 14th February - Valentine's Day



Monday 16th February - Half term



Tuesday 17th February - First day of Ramadan



Tuesday 17th February - Chinese New Year



Tuesday 17th February - Shrove Tuesday



Wednesday 18th February - Ash Wednesday





Dates for your Diary



March



Sunday 1st March - St David's Day



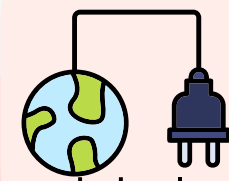
Tuesday 3rd March - World Wildlife Day



Thursday 5th March - World Book Day



Friday 6 & Saturday 7th March - Global Day of Unplugging



Have a 24-hour respite from technology, to inspire you to have a more healthy life/tech balance. Take an hour or a full day away from technology.



Sunday 8th March - International Women's Day



Sunday 15th March - Mother's Day



Tuesday 17th March - St Patrick's Day



Friday 20th March - First Day of Spring



Friday 20th March - Eid al-Fitr



Sunday 29th March - Palm Sunday



Sunday 29th March - Daylight Savings Starts

Clocks go forward one hour

