

THE HERON

Together We Can



Sustainability • Well-being • Independence • Opportunity

Celebrations and Announcements

Farewells

Farewells

Karen D
Emma P
Cerian W
Emma Dowling
Wayne D (retirement)
Julie (class 10)
Lauren (class 10)
Charlotte (TS)

Farewells CFA

Our lovely Lea who's been with us since 2011!



Wedding Bells

Congratulations to staff on their wedding days, wishing you love and happiness...

Marriages for Primary department

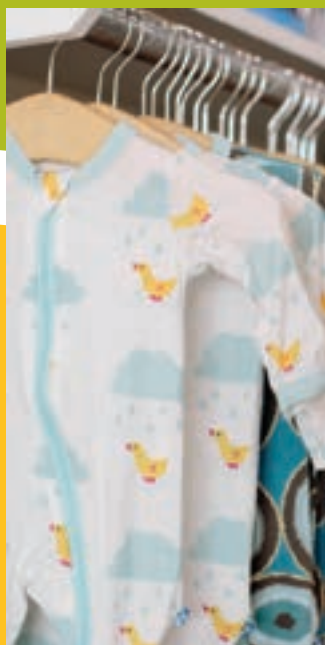
Lydia and Jenna

Marriages for Secondary department

Lucy & Lloyd

Marriages for CFA

Rachel & Tom
Julie & Martin
Annie & Jordan



New Additions

Congratulations to staff who have welcomed new additions to their families

Births for Primary

Jas and Tom baby Seb

Births for Secondary department

Kristiana & Sam baby Jasmine
Sam M & Lewis baby Osian
Kate & Jordan baby Dewi

Births for CFA

Emily & Ieuan baby boy Iago
Dayton & Daniel baby girl Lyla
Chloe & Simon baby girl Lola
Births for Leavers Dept
Rhiannon and James baby Delilah

Words from Jeremy

Welcome to the 2023 edition of 'The Heron' magazine. I hope that you will find it an enjoyable and informative read this year - as always, it is inspiring to see our pupils' achievements and experiences in one publication.

Plans for the new state-of-the-art Heronsbridge have really gathered pace this year. AECOM have been working with us to design a school and grounds which will fully meet the needs of up to 300 pupils. Through a whole year of project and engagement meetings 'high level conceptual design drawings and plans' have been presented to our Governors, Welsh Government and Bridgend County Borough Council. We eagerly await the outcome of government and cabinet meetings, as we march nearer to a proposed 2026 opening, just across the roundabout on the Island Farm site.

Interestingly enough, I have been looking through back copies of our Heron magazine and I came across the very first Heron, written in 1994 by Chris Major, the headteacher of Heronsbrook School. In the article, Mr Major writes of his excitement about the proposed move of Heronsbrook from Aberkenfig to our current site on Ewenny Road - bringing about the end of Heronsbrook and Ysgol Pen-y-Bont School for the Blind. This move saw the birth of a brand-new special school - Heronsbridge! (He also stated that pupil number would grow to a maximum of 110!!!)

In the meantime, Heronsbridge continues to grow, evolve and adapt with our learners, this year saw the addition of a new teaching block for our pupils. As demand for places continues to grow, Bridgend County Borough Council refurbished the vacant Block R in Bridgend College, creating a fantastic bespoke new facility to accommodate us. Initially, the Centre for Autism took advantage of the new facilities, and they will make way for the Leavers department next year, due to the creation of yet another class - A10.

I am pleased to report that it has been another year of continued success for pupils and staff, and I cannot believe how quickly the time has flown by. The year saw the welcome end of the global COVID pandemic, and the Heronsbridge team got straight back into the swing of providing incredible experiences and opportunities. We were so happy to return to a sense of normality, as we resumed all our whole school activities, celebrations and festivities. Some things that stood out for me

were the amazing talents of our primary pupils in their Christmas concert, the return of the residential trip to Llangrannog, and Leavers completing their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze expedition - including an overnight camp in the orchard! Secondary department pupils also showcased their acting skills onstage at The Riverfront Theatre, Newport, in the return of the Shakespeare Schools Festival. We cannot wait for Christmas 2023, with more singing, dancing and acting in our live Senior Christmas show - this will be their first live Christmas show since 2019!

Heronsbridge achieved some remarkable accolades again this year. We were thrilled to be awarded the reaccreditation of both the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme and the eco-schools platinum award. We also maintained our UNCRC Rights Respecting Schools Gold award and the Investors in Families Diamond accreditation. These awards reflect our school values, help our pupils to become ethical, informed citizens and demonstrate the commitment and effort of everyone working at Heronsbridge - past and present. In addition to this, we continued our twenty-five-year Investors in People journey, maintaining the highest platinum award and will look towards reaccreditation next year.

The year sees us wish a fond farewell to one of our most experienced and long-serving members of staff - Karen Davies, as she heads off into retirement after dedicating 23 years to our pupils. Following many happy years in the classroom, Karen was our very first Family Liaison Officer, establishing the role with support from Siarlot Hall and making it the success it is today. Karen can be rightly proud of the monumental contribution she made to supporting families and making things better for our pupils. As one door closes another opens, and we are looking forward to welcoming a team of staff to continue her great work.

As I always say, The Heron magazine is just a snapshot of some of the experiences and achievements of our pupils and I would like to personally congratulate & thank everyone, not only associated with the production, but also highlighted in the content.

Enjoy the read

Jeremy Evans

Meet the Governors!

Meet our school governors who help look after our school so that it is the best it can be! The governors are there to make sure Mr. Evans is doing a good job and is making great decisions! Our school governors regularly come into school on learning walks to see the wonderful things that are going, help out in staff interviews and attend teacher meetings to keep up to date on the latest things! Our lovely governors volunteer their time and we are very lucky to have people who care so much about Heronsbridge.



David Carr
Parent Governor



Cllr David White
LEA Governor



David Bassett
LEA Governor



Claire Price
Teacher Governor



Del Owen
Parent Governor



Edith Hughes
LEA Governor



Cllr Freya Bletsoe
Community Governor



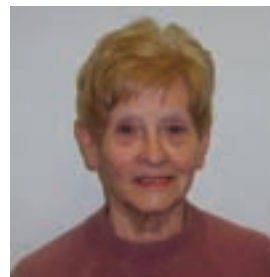
Hannah Jones
Parent Governor



Jeremy Evans
Headteacher



Lisa Williams
Support Staff Governor



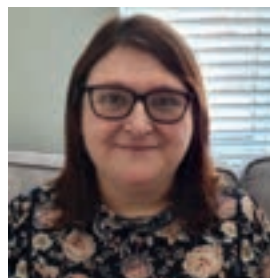
Mari Major MBE
Chair of Governors



Marjorie Nash
Vice Chair of Governors



Peter Williams
Acting Vice Chair of Governors



Rebecca Owens
Parent Governor



Richard Howe
Teacher Governor



Samantha Lambert-Worgan
Parent Governor



Stewart Richards
Community Governor

Fun Facts about our Headteachers!

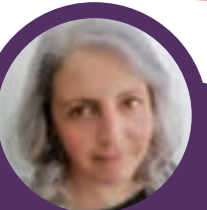
Time for us to ask the questions!!! We asked the pupils what they wanted to know about our lovely senior leadership team, and here is what they came up with!

Mr. Evans:



Pets: Mali the beagle
Favourite film: Field of dreams
Favourite chocolate bar: Star bar
Favourite hobby: Cricket
McDonalds order: Double cheeseburger and banana shake
Describe yourself in 3 words: Happy, fun, positive
Bravest thing you've ever done: Swimming with sharks!
What do you love the most about working at Heronsbridge: The amazing pupils, they put a smile on my face every single day.

Mrs. Smith:



Pets: 2 grey cats called Winnie and Willow
Favourite film: Lord of the Rings
Favourite chocolate bar: Cadburys fruit and nut
Favourite hobby: Recently gardening
McDonalds order: Spicy chicken strips and fries
Describe yourself in 3 words: Grateful for everything
Bravest thing you've ever done: Chased after someone who stole my friends bag
What do you love the most about working at Heronsbridge: Heronsbridge is a very special place made so by the wonderful pupils and staff. How lucky am I to work here!

Dr. Fowler:



Pets: 2 gorgeous border collie dogs
Favourite film: Pride and Prejudice
Favourite chocolate bar: Fruit and nut
Favourite hobby: Paddle boarding
McDonalds order: Chicken selects with BBQ sauces, fries and water
Describe yourself in 3 words: Loyal, optimist, risktaker.
Bravest thing you've ever done: Got married!!!!
What do you love the most about working at Heronsbridge: Being able to help staff and pupils be the best they can be.

Mrs. Harries:



Pets: Doggies Amber & Archie and ponies Willow & Tilly
Favourite film: The Holiday
Favourite chocolate bar: Boost
Favourite hobby: Horse riding
McDonalds order: Chicken selects
Describe yourself in 3 words: Caring, funny, passionate
Bravest thing you've ever done: Be the first person ever to sit on my baby horse!
What do you love the most about working at Heronsbridge: I love the rich relationships that enable our learners to reach their goals.

Another fun fact: Our Leadership Team have part time jobs dressing up as herons



Eco-Schools

Demonstrating our school value of 'Sustainability', our pupils have been working hard this year to improve our local environment.

Having taken part in litter picks around our school grounds, at Newbridge Fields in Bridgend and Sandy Bay in Porthcawl, our pupils were shocked at how much litter could be collected in a short period of time, emphasising how important it is to dispose of our waste correctly.

Da iawn to all of our Sustainable Sams!



Sustainable Sam



RSS

Families come in all shapes, colours and sizes but all are connected by love.

This year's Rights Respecting Week was based on a book called "Part of the Party". The equality story centres around Karri Koala who wants to go to the Mummy and Daughter Disco in town but lives with her two dads. After Karri realises that she's not the only one who feels left out, she decides to call a meeting, and is amazed at how many of her friends turn up! Some of them don't have mums, some of them have two mums, and some of them have been adopted. Karri makes it her mission to make sure all of her friends and their families can be part of the party. We had great fun doing some artwork about our families and comparing their similarities and differences. We used our maths skills to complete data about them and used our creativity to design a piece of artwork that represented our class family. Pupils planned, wrote invites and took part in our "Part of the Party Disco" that ended the week on a high, where of course, everyone was included!!



Staff Wellbeing

Staff Breakfast Club

After a successful trial during Mental Health Matters week in February we have rolled out some additional staff wellbeing options including a Breakfast Club held first thing every Thursday in R Block and Friday in Heron Hall providing staff with a free cuppa, toast and occasionally a slice of cake! It's a great opportunity for staff to meet up with different colleagues from across the school to have a natter, and share and care together. A great way to start the day!



Staff Drop in

Twice a week all staff have the opportunity to take some time away from the hustle and bustle of school life to relax, refocus and share at the staff drop ins held in Ty Cwtch. It's a calm and safe space to chill out and share anonymously any concerns or worries, and to feel nurtured in a calm space that is comfortable with relaxing music in the background, the gentle sound of a water feature and the aroma of essential oils.

By hearing and supporting our staff we hope to keep them emotionally and mentally well, thereby maintaining positive staff morale which creates a positive atmosphere for our pupils. Creating those important connections is a great way of promoting our ethos of 'together we can'.



Professional Learning @ Heronsbridge

Héronsbridge School is currently an Investors in People platinum school, achieved in 2020 and an award achieved by only 2% of organisations. As you can imagine we are very proud of this award which we hold for 3 years before we have to reapply, this is the year to do just that.



The reward recognises the training and development achievements of staff. We invest constantly in upskilling the knowledge of our staff to support the learning, emotional and social needs of our pupils not forgetting specific medical and manual handling needs of our pupils. This investment in our staff helps support our school vision, 'We give them wings, our herons will fly'.

We are extremely lucky to work in a school where staff are committed to life long learning and passionate about meeting the needs of each pupil within their class- making each and every day in school fun filled and exciting.

Training occurs during INSET days, Twilights and weekends, many staff give up their own time to learn new skills to bring back to school for the benefit of our learners, as well as preparing us to meet the requirements of Curriculum for Wales.

A taste of what we covered this year:

- Signalong
- Attention Autism Programme
- 'Self injury behaviours and trauma'
- Floortime training
- Understanding Anger
- Emotional age V chronological age

Within school we also have our own specific training programme run by our staff to develop the skills of staff, new to posts or new to school, called 'The Heronsbridge Development Programme'



Trauma Informed Practitioner conference in Cardiff City Hall learning from the best.
Dr Dan Hughes and Dr Jon Baylin

As a school we recognise the importance of supporting the learning needs of professionals from a range of organisations to develop their experience and knowledge of ALN. We offer student placements to Higher Education Institutions like Cardiff Met, University of Wales Trinity St David for psychology, music therapists, art psychotherapists at degree and masters level. Furthermore we support trainee teachers and students from Bridgend college on childcare and health and social care courses. Such professional collaborative relationships are beneficial for school and our professional guests.

Parent Feedback

In Heronsbridge we really care what you think! It's great getting to hear wonderful feedback in home/school books, when you come to collect your children, in annual reviews and parents evenings. Here's some lovely feedback we have had from you!



Thankyou to Heronsbridge school and Alfie's class 2 you are all amazing and help my little boy so much and adores you all, your always understanding and reach Alfie's need! I cant thank you

I cant thank the school and staff enough for everything you have done for Cullie regarding her education and her personal needs, she has progressed very well since being in Heronsbridge.

Thankyou so much for your hard work, dedication, empathy, commitment and total professionalism. My son has come on heaps and bounds again this year due to the Heronsbridge TS team. You've overcome his reluctance to swim within weeks. Amazing progress! He's one happy boy. Thank you for everything

Dash has had an amazing time at school, he is very happy and is learning so much, he has a lovely group of friends and adores his teachers. His independence and confidence is growing and so is his speech. He is very luck to have had a

Its lovely to see how much she enjoys going to school everyday! Teachers are really passionate and do care about our kids. We couldn't ask for any more! Thanks for all your hard work.

Poppy has flourished at Heronsbridge. She has learned so many new skills. She loves all the staff and pupils and it has been great to keep up to date with Poppy's daily progress. Thank you everyone.

Being more involved in your child's education and ensuring that Insights that may otherwise go unnoticed are heard.

Kyle has excelled in sports this year, starting with the swimming gala, overall 2nd, becoming a part of the Herons football team, getting the fair play trophy at the William Ridout memorial match and most valuable player at the school tournament. Kyles continued sports outside of school enjoying boxing and even did a sponsored swim for charity! Kyles highlight of the year was having the opportunity to watch the welsh football players train, a meet and greet,

Heronsbridge continues to be a fantastic school, a place where pupils flourish and grow. We are so thankful for you all. Parents of Ezra Cronje

Jays confidence has grown since being in class 11, it has been lovely to watch him take part in so many different sporting activities and with support of the staff he has overcome many fears.

Family Matters

STORY CAFÉ - Thrilled that Primary classes and their parents have been able to access Story Café, our topics this year have been Around the World in 80 days and Superheroes. Thank you to all the parents, grandparents and family members who attended.



PARENT DROP IN - Don't forget to pop along on a Tuesday morning between 9.15 - 12, enjoy a coffee / tea and chat to other parents. A great opportunity to meet other like minded parents, swap ideas and problem solve.

BRING & BUY Our popular bring and buy sale will be held again in NOVEMBER 2023, we accept good quality adult and children's clothes, bags, shoes, scarves and accessories.

MEET THE PARENTS A great opportunity to meet other parents in your child's class and build friendships. Look out for letters in the Autumn Term.

SCHOOL UNIFORM If you are looking for spares, we upcycle school uniform. Please put the size you require on your child's home school book.

HOME SCHOOL COMMUNICATION We encourage all parents and carers to communicate regularly with the school via Home School Books, Text messaging service, Telephone. Letters, Newsletters, Emails. Website, Family Matters events. Parent Drop In.



ATTENDANCE It is vital that children attend school regularly to gain the greatest benefit from their education, allowing all students to access the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school. We have an electronic system for registration enabling us to monitor attendance on a daily basis. Rewards are given to the classes achieving the best attendance. PUPILS WHO ATTEND THE MOST ACHIEVE THE MOST!

Pupil Support Team

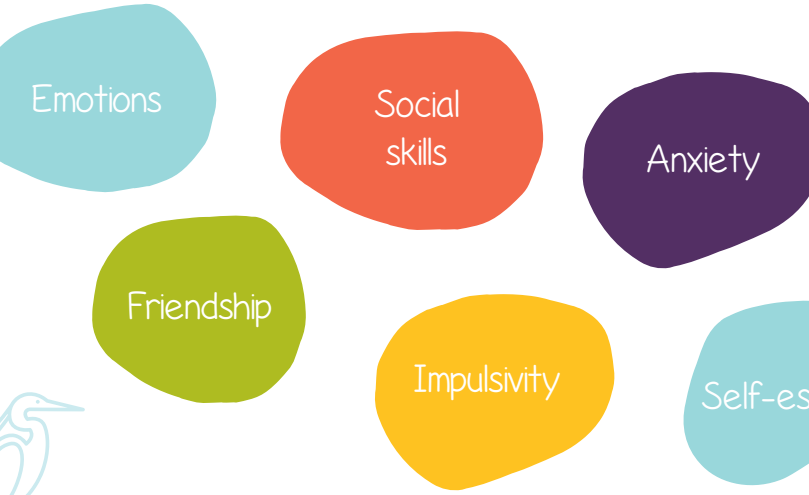
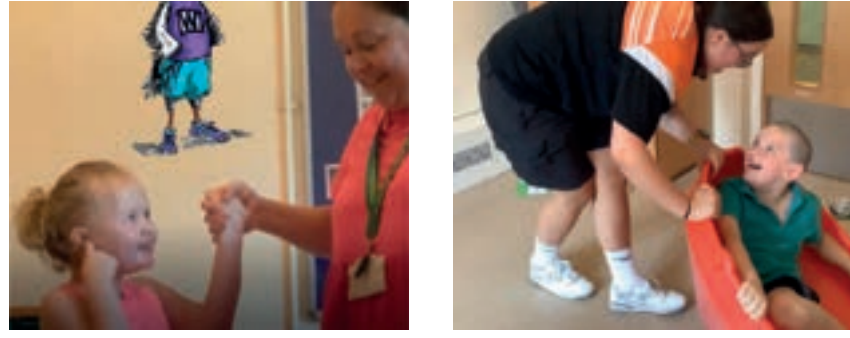
The Pupil Support Team was established in 2014 to provide additional support for pupils who are having specific or general difficulties at home or school. The team is led by our Assistant Head for Pupil Wellbeing Dr Fowler, who is also a PROACT-SCIPr-UK® Instructor, and she is supported by a team with a whole range of experience, knowledge and specialisms. Each year the team is also joined by two 3rd year psychology students from Cardiff University.

A pupil may be referred to the team by their class teacher, parents, social worker or anyone who feels a pupil needs more targeted support. Referrals are discussed at weekly team meetings where the group decide on the provision they feel will be of most benefit for the pupil. This may take the form of Counselling, Drawing and Talking, DIR/ Floortime, Relationship based play, Emotional Literacy (ELSA), Trauma-Informed Schools interventions, Music Therapy or psychological support. These specialist provisions help support difficulties such as relationships, bereavement, self-esteem, bullying and struggling to cope with powerful emotions. Progress is monitored and discussed by the team to ensure pupils receive the support they need.



DIR Floortime

Pupils have benefitted from DIR Floortime with Frie Heyndrickx coaching staff to deliver 1:1 sessions to build on relationships, support emotional regulation and engagement. We have had great fun with balloons, soapy foam, trampoline and building assault courses. Pupils have developed relationships with staff, built on attention, anticipation, interaction and exploring new things.



The Dog Mentors

The Dog Mentor
Affiliated School



We have been lucky enough to welcome 4 new furry friends to our Dog Mentor Team: Ruby, Luna, Charlie and Amber join up with Bernie and Fiona to support our pupils' wellbeing, bringing smiles all round and making their day paws - itively fun!

All of our Dog Mentors love being stroked, having tummy tickles, getting lots of treats and going for walks! They form an integral part of our community here at Heronsbridge School and will be part of the ongoing provision for wellbeing, mental health and curriculum support.

Have a look at some of the lovely quotes from our pupils!



Luna helped me to talk through my feelings.



I feel so calm and relaxed spending time in the Kitchen Garden with Amber.



Amber supports staff wellbeing too!



I love teaching Charlie new tricks, look at her ears, she's doing some really good listening!



Amber makes me feel happy inside.



Ruby enjoys it when I read stories to her.



Charlie has moved on from giving high 5's she can now give high 10's! too!



I love it when Charlie joins us for our mile walk!

TOGETHER
WE CAN

People Who Help Us

Heronbridge may look like it runs like a very well oiled machine but there are many hands that keep the cogs turning! Summer term we had the opportunity to explore our topic Superheroes and through this many of us learnt about People Who Help Us. This provided us with many opportunities to look at our unsung heroes in our own communities, and in fact in our very own school! Now this list is endless as you can imagine so here's a little snippet of some of the crew!

As Welsh legend Bonnie Tyler once declared "I need a hero" and we'd like to give a little shout out to our unsung heroes of Heronsbridge!





Friendship Festival

Love is like a tree, it never stops growing

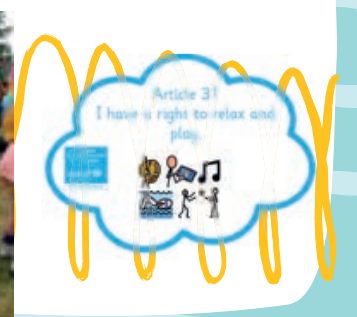
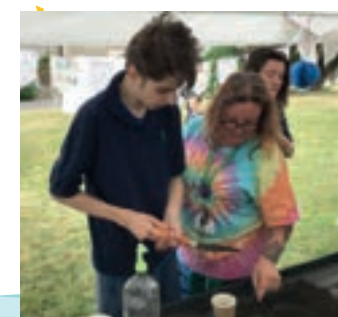
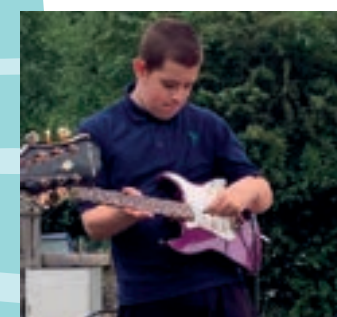
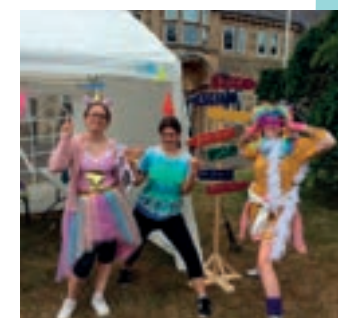
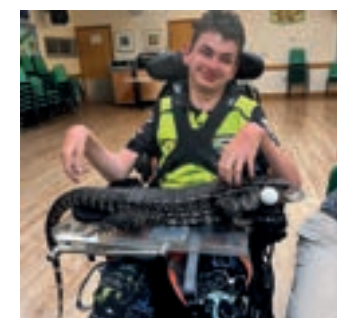
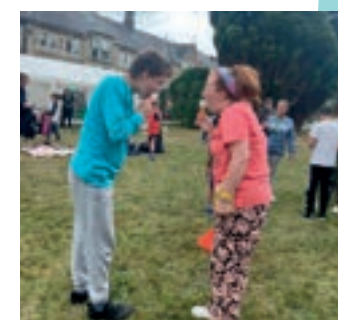
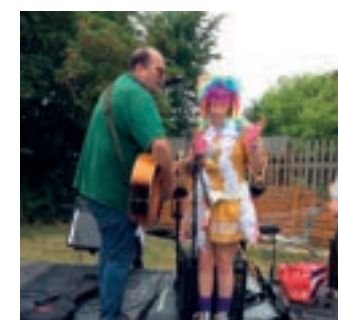
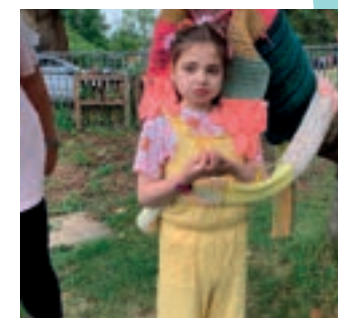
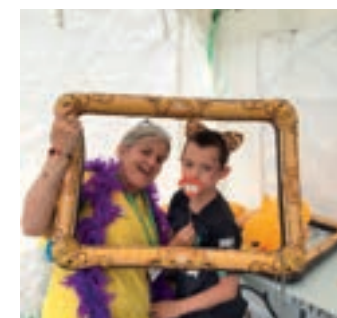
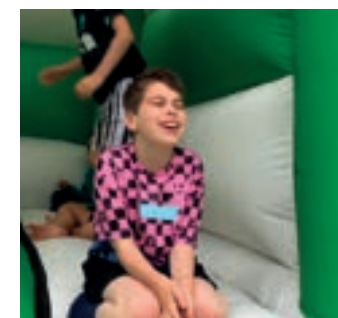
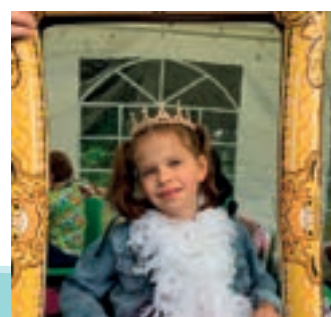
On 27th June we held our third Friendship Day celebration. We decorated the school grounds with colourful bunting and flags, we had festival face glitter and an MC on the stage bringing us some cool tunes which really created a fun festival vibe.

The pupils loved the bouncy castle and a few even jumped onto the stage to join in the singing or play the guitars and drums. There were lots of exciting activities including making friendship bracelets, memory jars, a selfie station, seed planting, tie dye bandanas and African drumming. Story time on the lawn with the senior leadership team was fun and Bridgend Library getting their best story telling voices on had the students giggling and joining in.

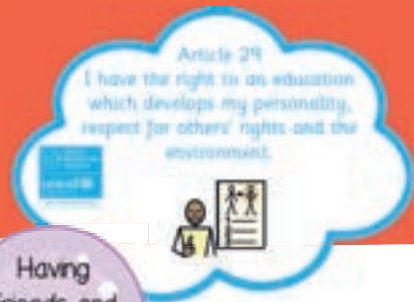
Some pupils enjoyed a visit from the Bridgend Reptile Centre in Heron Hall. We met Snowy the giant albino snake, who weighed a massive 25 stone! He was so ssssssserious and sooo long! Snowy brought some of his friends too including Maisie the lizard, geckos, chameleons and corn snakes.

All the pupils and staff had the opportunity to enjoy a sweet treat from the ice cream van and towards the end of the day we were joined by our Heron Squad Mascots bringing smiles all round!

Our friendship celebration trees are such a beautiful way to remember our friends who are no longer with us.



DYB - Shine

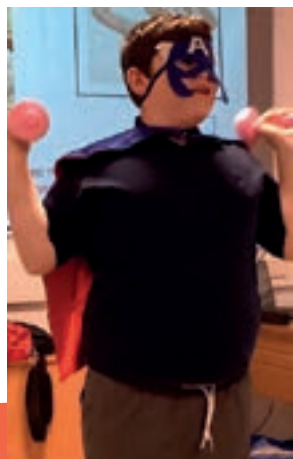
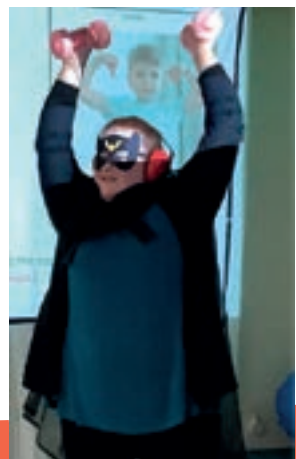
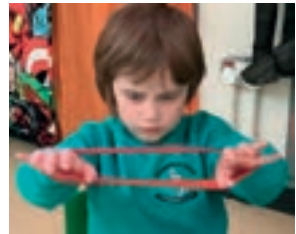


Having friends and being kind

Learning about our feelings and emotions



Our Shine programme has run successfully for another year, working on our health and wellbeing. We have explored our feelings through body tapping, music and movement. Children have also experienced Dramarama themed to our topics, Heronsbridge has real Superheroes.



Pupil Voice

The school council have had an extremely busy and productive year. Here are just a few of their achievements. It is a privilege and honour to be part of the school council. Their voice, opinions and enthusiasm are making a real difference to pupil opportunities at school as well as providing pupils with the confidence and knowledge that their voice is being heard and does matter!

Mental health Matters Week

Pupils worked with staff to organise and promote the Mental health matters week in February, to raise awareness and development of strategies to support mental health and wellbeing.



Keep learner's safe

Pupils spent several meetings discussing the best way to inform pupils of ways of keeping safe. This culminated in the creation of a poster using the acronym 'Stay Safer'. All classes were given the poster to decorate and display in class. A stay safer song has been created with the help of Mr Jones, which pupils have been learning during school assemblies and music lessons.



Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional partnerships board

In May, members of the school council and pupils from the leavers department represented the school at the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Co-production Film launch event. 'Our voice matters'. This event was the culmination of network meetings in which pupils from Heronsbridge voiced their opinion on things that matter, such as having a safe space to meet friends in the community. The regional partnerships board exists to improve the health, social care and well-being of people living in RCT, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil. Our pupils were a credit to Heronsbridge and I was proud to be seen with them.



Meeting with PC Matt McDonald-School beat

The school council led on the re-introduction of the school beat program and subsequent visits by PC Matt to talk about important issues such as staying safer online and the dangers of sex-ting.



Mental Health Matters

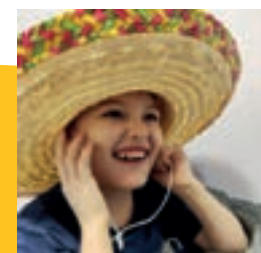
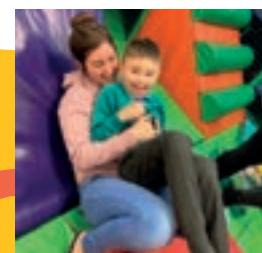
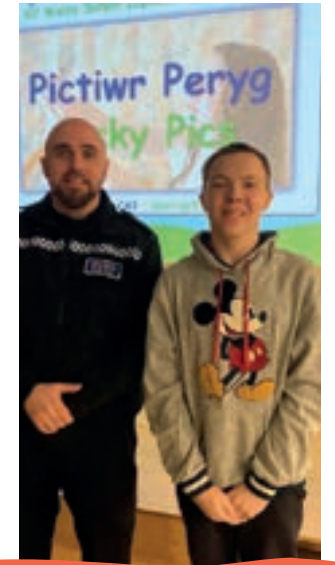
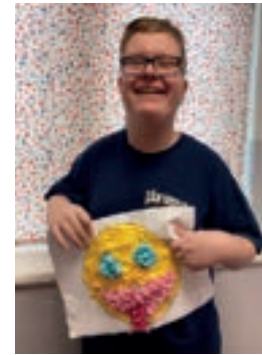
#Hello Yellow

During the Autumn term we celebrated #Hello Yellow day. Staff and students wore yellow, the international colour of friendship and the colour of smiles and sunshine. There were certainly a lot of smiles around the school as friends came together.

The pupils enjoyed lots of activities around the theme of caring and good mental health, and had fun playing with dressing up props creating lots of photo memories with their friends. They finished the day celebrating together with a disco dressed in bright sunshine yellow!



Mental Health Matters



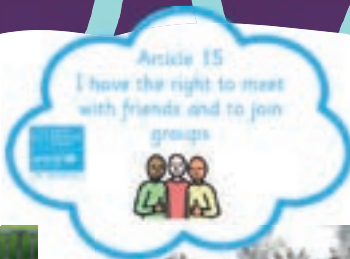
In February, we again celebrated Children's Mental Health awareness week, which we renamed 'Mental Health Matters week' to include staff wellbeing too. The theme for the week was 'let's connect', which was all about making meaningful connections with nature, friends, an emotionally available adult, or just having time to connect with yourself!

The pupils enjoyed a range of activities focussing on relaxation, play and exercise, and learning different ways to help reduce stress levels, which can sometimes impact upon the way we think and feel about ourselves and others.

Other activities included a visit from PC Matt who spoke to our Leavers department about internet safety, our School Council designed and displayed a poster about keeping learners safe, and the music team wrote the 'Safe in our School' song which we all enjoyed singing together. The week ended with a 'Dress to Express day' where pupils and staff were encouraged to dress to express their individuality. It was a fun-filled and exciting week!



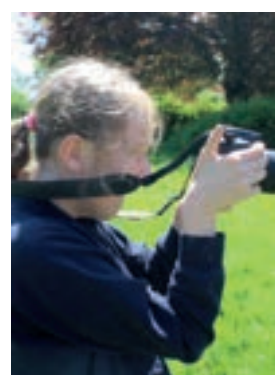
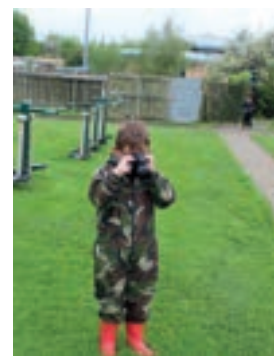
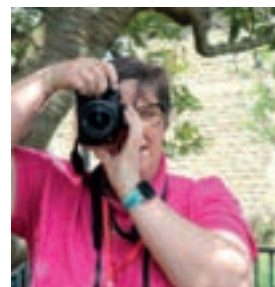
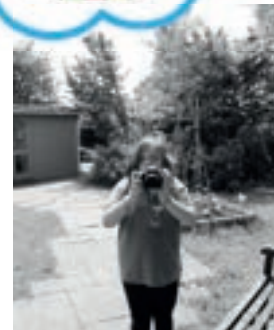
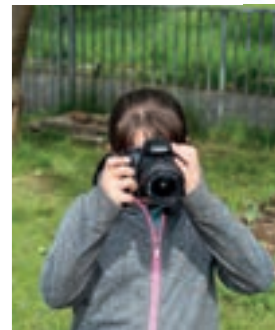
Unique You



Unique You comes to Heronsbridge! What a fabulous opportunity our pupils had as part of our Children's Mental Health Week as well as supporting one of our key priorities at the school of improving Well-being!

The brief, to take pictures of colourful things to make you smile. The outcome, Heronsbridge Student Rainbow 2023, an array of photographs that created a true masterpiece!

The pupils had the opportunity to take photos with SLR and compact digital cameras, the excitement, smiles, fun and enjoyment was clear to see! The pupils had an opportunity to explore different digital technology to explore the world around them as well as demonstrating how to safely use a range of different equipment. A big thank you to Sarah Jones who ran these fantastic and expertly guided workshops for all our pupils, and a big well done to everyone who took part! Diolch a da iawn pawb!



Digital Skills: Immersive Learning

We have been using our virtual reality headsets across the school to develop new and exciting digital skills and to enhance our learning experiences.

We have been to the bottom of the ocean and to outer space. We've visited different cultures and famous landmarks in our topic 'Around the World in 80 Days'. We've even experienced what it would feel like to have Superpowers like superman and Spiderman! The headsets allow us to experience, explore, make choices, as well as building our confidence, giving us regulation strategies and improving our communication.



Attention Autism Programme

We have had great fun participating in our Attention Autism Programme, working on building our attention skills through lots of exciting messy activities. There are 4 stages to the programme, Stage 1-Attention Grabber, Stage 2-Attention Builder, Stage 3-Turn Taking and Stage 4-Independence

Well-being Winnie



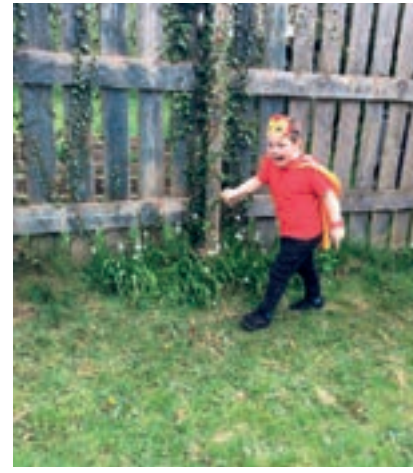
Independent Izzy



I need a hero! Luckily in A1 we were spoilt for choice with our little superheroes! We thoroughly enjoyed diving into our topic this term where we explored some of our favourites as well as looking at our local heroes in People Who Help Us. Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No it's A1 ready for action!

A1 Assemble

Opportunity Ollie



We have loved using our codapillar this year. We may be little learners but we have been big thinkers and have developed our computational thinking skills by exploring coding and computer programming. We followed and gave instructions to make our codapillar move! We were all so engaged in the activity and really enjoyed the results!

A2 Codapillar

Opportunity
Ollie



Article 13
I have the right to find out and share information.



We love our Science lessons. We take part building many skills that we need for our cookery lessons! Very handy in building our fine motor skills too! We are beginning to follow instructions and use different tools and equipment to create our masterpieces. Who's hungry?



A3



Article 6
I should be supported to live and grow

Independent
Izzy



Sustainable Sam



Article 23
If I have a disability, I have the right to special care and education.



Independent Izzy

A4

Forces In Our Universe

Some may say we are our very own forces of nature and we have been exploring lots of forces in our Science sessions! During our topic this term we investigated different forms of energy and how this can be transferred. We flew gliders, pumped rockets, pushed and pulled rocket launchers and blew up balloons (of course the best part was letting them go to fly across the classroom!)



We have all enjoyed sensology sessions this year as part of our RSE curriculum. We have explored our senses and which parts of our body we use for each one. We had experienced different items based on our themes of 'Around the world in 80 Days' and 'Superheroes' and can communicate if we liked or disliked the experiences. We have now started working on how new experiences make us feel.

A5



Opportunity Ollie

Article 29
I have the right to an education which develops my personality, respect for other's rights and the environment.

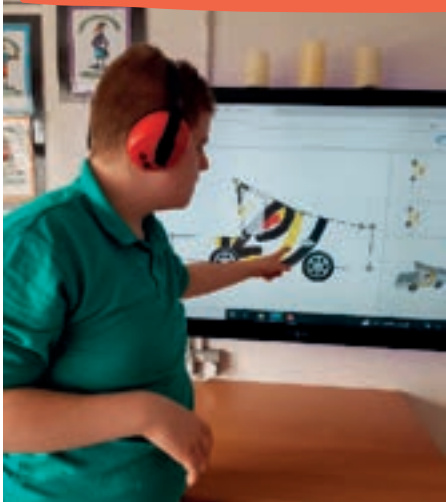
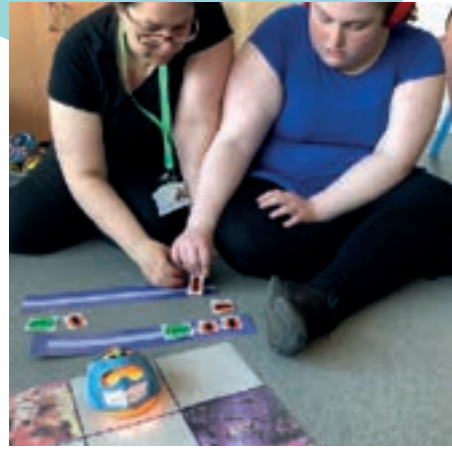


Opportunity
Ollie



A6 Digital Skills

Bill Gates are you looking for any apprentices? You may find some in A6 after this year. We have been developing our Digital Skills exploring lots of new opportunities. We have enjoyed building Lego and Duplo veg around our topic Fun, Food and Fitness. Using our VR Headsets to enhance our experiences of visiting countries for 'Around the World in 80 days' and using our beebots to find 'Superheroes'. We've also enjoyed using programmes like Purple Mash where we made 3D emergency vehicles.

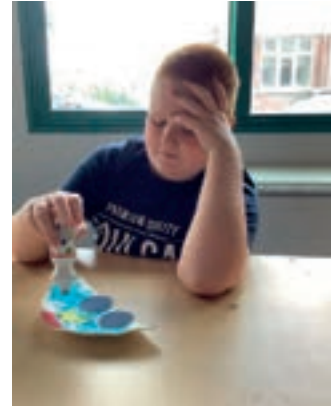


This year has been full of many opportunities and experiences that we have shared with our peers. We have had a busy year exploring our topics Fun Food and Fitness, Around the World in 80 days, Superheroes and People Who Help Us.

We took part in lots of whole school events including Sports Day, Friendship Day and Movement Week to name a few. In A7 "You have to be unique and different, and shine in your own way".



Uniquely me in A7



Experiencing
whole school
events



Well-being
Winnie

Opportunity
Ollie



Sustainable
Sam



Independent
Izzy





Life skills in A8

Where did that year go! As always we have been busy busy working, developing and honing many skills. With our brand new facilities in R block we have had the opportunity to utilise our Life Skills room where we have had the opportunity to take part in many activities that will help us nurture our independent skills. We have also transferred our independent skills to many areas of our school environment!

We carry out tasks, follow instructions and explore new experiences with our best efforts. We look at using everyday household items and have the opportunity to learn and experience how to use different items safely. Get the pocket money out guys, we're getting ready to earn our keep!

Independent Izzy

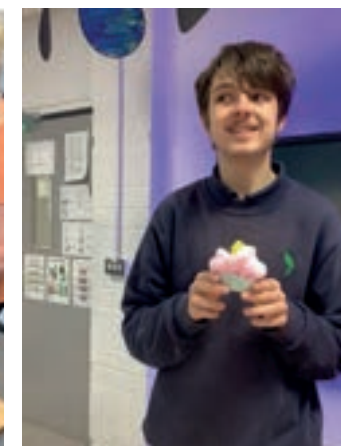
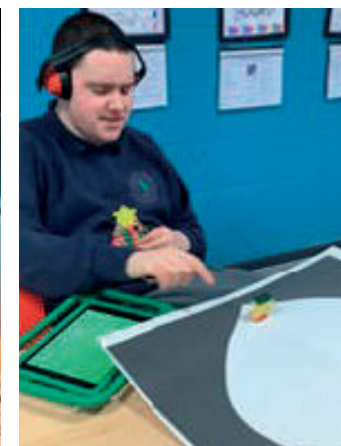
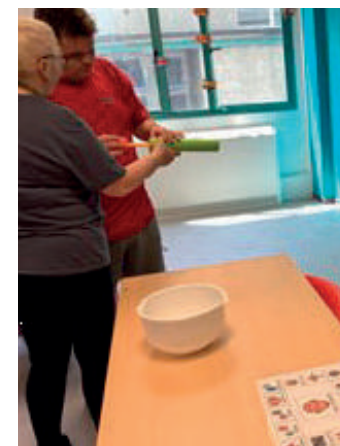
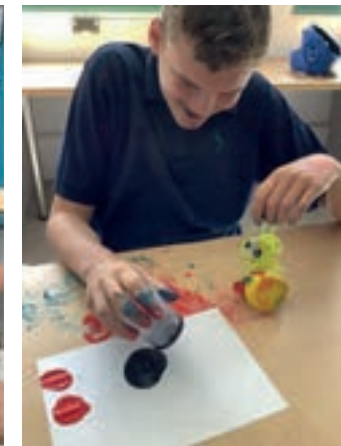
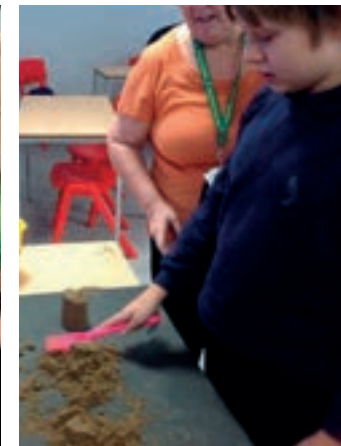
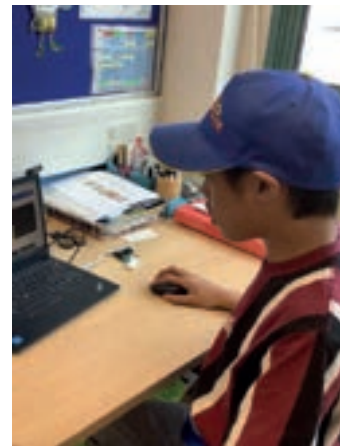


Independent Izzy



Attention Bucket in A9

We have continued to develop our Attention Autism programme and taken part in activities in our classrooms! We love our Attention Bucket activity where we aim to develop and enhance our natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually based and highly motivated activities. Take a look at what has grabbed our attention this year!



Expressive Arts: Music



Another year passes and the pupils continue to show their passion for music and their music Lessons! We have explored countries of the world, Superheroes and our favourite foods through song. We have also seen our budding musicians blossom in their competency with the Drums, Bass and Guitar. Culminating with an impromptu performance in our Friday assembly of the 'stay safe in school' song which was devised by the pupils. It is always a pleasure to teach the pupils and see the learning and joy they get from their music sessions. A picture paints a thousand words so hopefully the pictures convey what a busy musical year the pupils have.



Early Years are super Superheroes

We are all super superheroes in Early Years, saving the world day after day. We have been super fast, super strong, super stretchy in order to save everyone from the baddies. We have also been real life heroes, putting out fires, making people better and catching the bad guys. We all have our very own special superpowers too

Rupert's is making everyone laugh. Wonder Willow makes everything clean and shiny. Jaicob and Toby have infectious laughs that make everyone else want to laugh along with them. Daf's super quiff is his source of super strength. Harlen is a super smiler and so is Franci, with lots of "wuv wuvs" as well. Ollie's superpower is being extra cute. Jensen is a super jumper and Seth can bounce and bounce on the trampoline.

We are superheroes,
we are superheroes
Baddies look out,
baddies look out
We're not scared,
we're not scared
Bant a ni-off we go!



Well-being
Winnie

Opportunity
Ollie

Sustainable
Sam

Independent
Izzy



Class 1

Fun Outdoors

Every week Class One visit our wonderful orchard for our Forest School sessions. We all dress appropriately for the weather, whether its wellies and waterproofs or sun cream! We are all really good at following the routine and have our own bucket to independently collect materials such as sticks, stones and leaves. We use what we have collected to make something topic related, such as a pretend bonfire when we were learning about the Fire service. We loved getting soaked when Mrs Smithson put the fire out! We also practice our maths skills by collecting the correct number of items or completing a bar chart of our findings.

Sustainable Sam

Well-being Winnie



In class 2, we enjoy a Cookery session every week. During these sessions we use PECS to make choices. We've made a range of healthy and not so healthy snacks; veggie muffins, ham salad wraps, welshcakes, fudge, rocky road and fruit skewers to name a few.

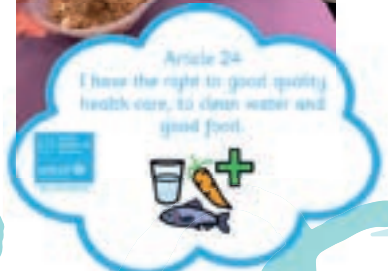
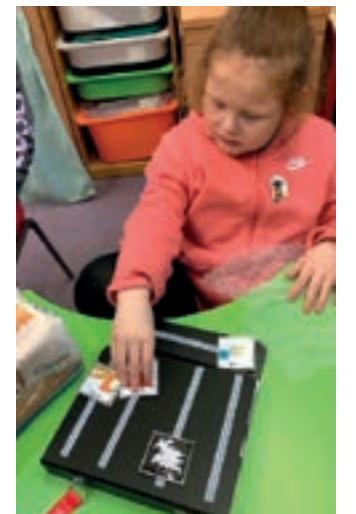
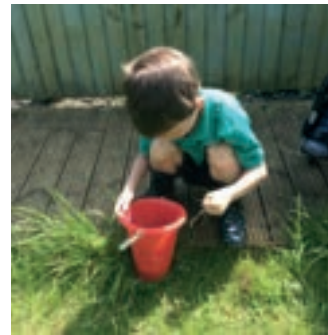
We've practised many different skills over the year, including chopping, mashing, weighing, measuring, grating and blending. We've also used different equipment including a microwave, blender, portable oven and a weighing scales, with supervision.

All the children enjoy and engage within these sessions - but their favourite part is usually tasting the finished product!

Cookery in Class 2

Well-being Winnie

Independent Izzy



Class 3

Well-being
Winnie



We are wonderful Wellbeing Wynnie's in Class 3. We all enjoy weekly sessions in the swimming pool and hydro pool. We have been developing our water confidence and water skills. We have practiced floating and moving our body in the water. Through the incorporation of music and song we anticipate the movements we are going to practice. The skills developed in the water have also been invaluable to promoting our independence outside of the pool, such as walking skills, body awareness, relaxation and following instructions. Most importantly we always have lots of fun and enjoy splashing the staff!



Well-being
Winnie



Independent
Izzy

Class 4

In class 4 we have enjoyed weekly Expressive Arts sessions. We love expressing ourselves through art, making choices and celebrating each others artwork. This year we have explored foods by creating crème fraîche artwork and spaghetti portraits. Travelled around the world and made recycled paper monkeys, vibrant and colourful coral from the Great Barrier Reef, foam tigers and jellyfish to hang in the classroom. We then learnt all about superheroes, their powers and people who help us. We used salad spinners to create superhero shields, painted spaghetti to create flying artwork and made police shields and radio's using recycled materials.

We have practiced lots of different skills, explored textures and had lots of fun. We love every session but our favourite ones are where we get messy! Some of us like that more than others!



Class 5

This year we had a wonderful time going on class trips exploring the outdoors, learning about money and gaining new experiences. Every week we have accessed outdoor learning, learning about BBQ's and safety around one when cooking. We have cooked a variety of food from sausages to beans on toast. We had lots of fun tasting the food, it was Yummy every time! We had a Korean visitor come to class to teach us all about Korea. We learned about the colours and shapes on the flag, what they eat and how to dress. This was very interesting. We have also been having lots of fun in music dancing to Superhero songs and learning new songs. We loved getting our dancing shoes on.



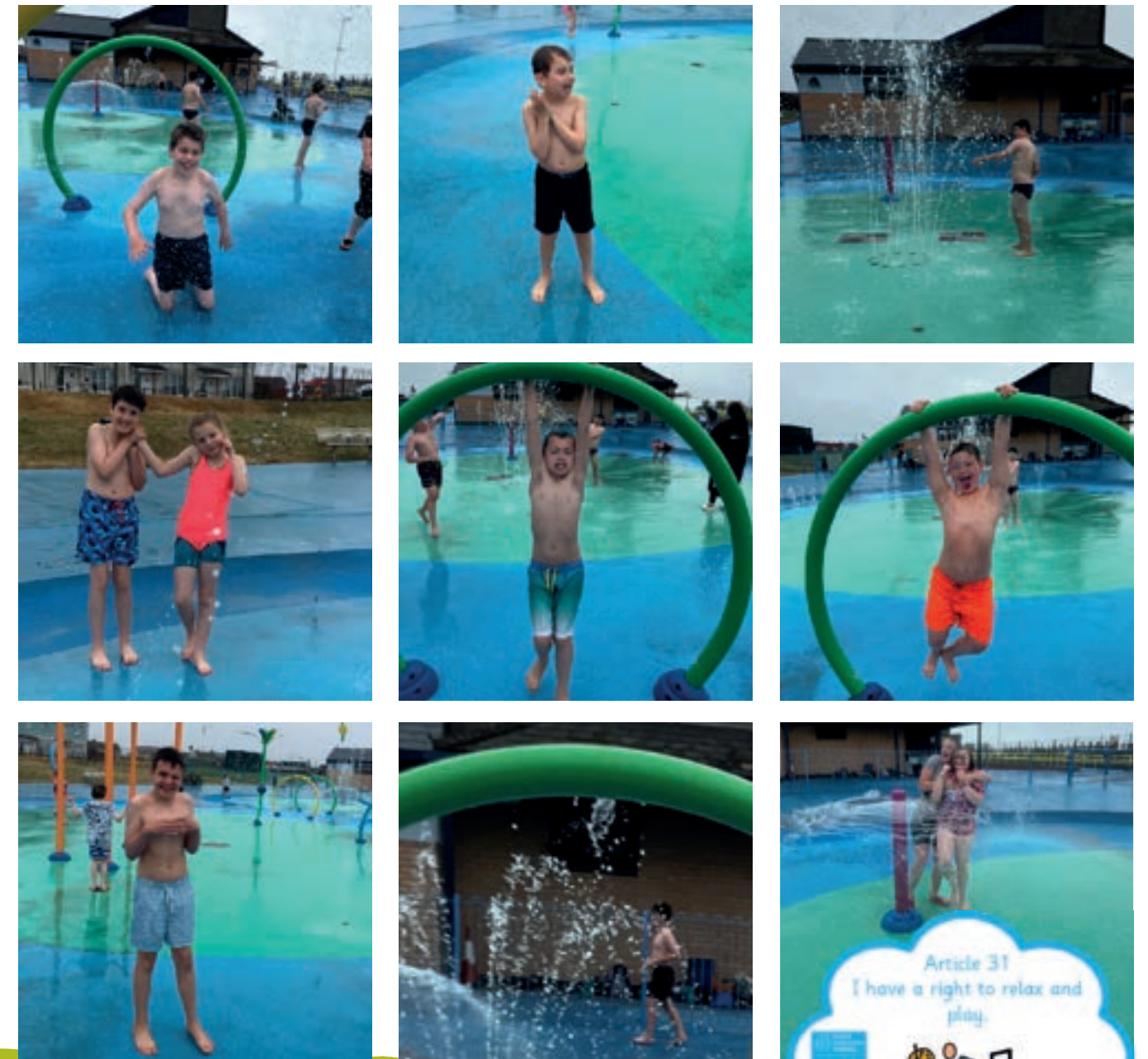
Class 6

Aberavon Splash Park Trip

Class 6 had an amazing time at Aberavon Splash park for our Summer Term Trip. The weather was not the best, but we didn't let it dampen our spirits and all had lots of fun splashing about and soaking our friends and staff!! The whole class enjoyed a chip shop treat from Franco's. A day well spent making memories and being Opportunity Ollies and Wellbeing Wynnies!!!

Opportunity Ollie

Well-being Winnie





Class TP

Visits To Harvester And Bowling!



This year TP have been on many bus trips within the community, but the most memorable ones were our visits to the Harvester and bowling in Cardiff. The pupils' outstanding and exemplary behaviour meant we were able to revisit the Harvester three times over the year! The pupils have gained confidence to help themselves independently to the salad bar and also say what they wanted to eat from the menu. On one occasion we had breakfast in the Harvester followed by bowling in the Cardiff Red Dragon Centre. Everyone was very competitive and thoroughly enjoyed the day!



Coronation 2023 Let them eat cake



Sustainable Sam



His Majesty King Charles III was crowned alongside the Queen Consort this year on Saturday 6th May 2023. Making him the 40th reigning monarch to be crowned in Westminster Abbey since 1066.

We couldn't let the occasion pass without our very own celebrations of course! Pupils throughout the whole school got into the party spirit by creating crowns, flags and bunting. In Heron Hall we came together in our departments and celebrated with a high tea of our own, lots of music and some tattoos (very royal I know!)

We took part in the patriotic theme of planting seeds in our kitchen garden to mark the occasion (His Majesty must of heard about our Sustainable Sam!). We also took seeds home that were donated by Bridgend Town Council to help our local butterflies and bees.



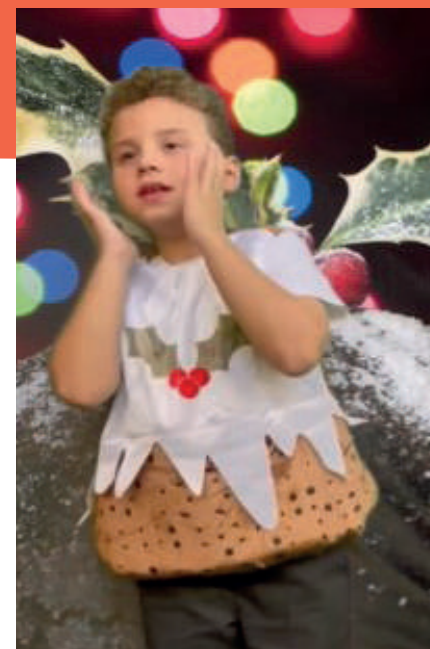
Primary Christmas concert

The Primary Department and Primary Centre For Autism are proud to present their Christmas production of 'The Gingerbread Man'. Addienna led the way as the gingerbread person with her rendition of I have an important job to do, job to do, job to do. So cheerio, toodle oo, toodle oo.

Lots of hard work was put in by all to make the production a roaring success, and you would have seen the Elves, Teddies and Reindeers moving along as well as those grumpy sheep that turn up every year. The animal band arrived and noodle drummer got us all on our feet, with the Strictly Dancers scoring a massive 10 out of 10. Ant and Dec took a break from the Jungle, with a shout of "I'M A HERON, GET ME OUT OF HERE!!" You may remember seeing the footballers scoring a goal - no hooligans here. Even the Bake Off team showed up with lovely Xmas puds.

A big thank you also goes to Alf from the Leavers Dept for stepping in at the last minute to narrate the show. It was lovely to have him involved and he certainly got the audience in the mood.

See you for the next production!



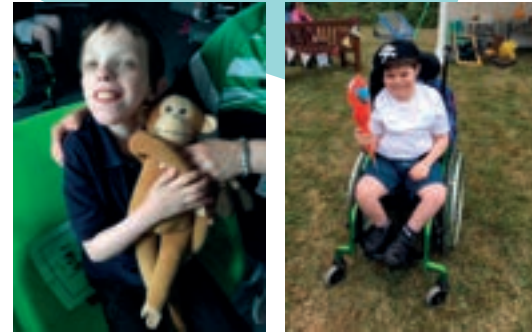
Class 7



Surfs up and
Friendship
Day Festival!

This year, Class 7 have had the amazing opportunity of going surfing in Caswell Bay. We were all very brave and took it in turns to go on the surf board. There were some very big waves and even some jellyfish!

We have also participated in Friendship Day. We enjoyed using the 'Sensory Garden' where we explored the yellow objects such as custard and lemons. We especially loved the smell of the lemons in the water and the bubbles blowing across the garden. Some of us even dressed up!



Class 8 have had an action-packed year filled with fun, laughter (and of course, a lot of learning). We've enjoyed going on numerous trips, exploring new topics and taking part in weekly Forest School sessions! toasting marshmallows was the best!

We've thoroughly enjoyed our topics this year, especially the theme of Superheroes; we read the books 'A Superhero like you' and 'A Superpower like mine' written by Dr Ranj and thought about how we are all superheroes with superpowers.

In Class 8 we are ***Kind*** ***Caring*** ***Funny*** ***Smart***
Strong ***Thoughtful*** **SUPERSTARS!**

Class 8

Super 8!



Class 9

Around the World In 80 Days.

Our topic for the Spring Term was called Around The World In 80 Days. Following a class discussion and reading the book by Jules Vern We all chose a country to visit and find some interesting information about that country.

India has many beautiful gardens, parks and buildings . The Taj Mahal is a famous building. It is one of the seven wonders of the World.

Wales is famous for its coastline, mountains, castles and the Welsh Language and sheep.

I would like to go to the USA and go to California and cross the Golden Gate Bridge. I like the Stars and Stripes on the flag and they have the best cartoons ever

I wanted to go to Australia to find out about Australian cricket, tennis and rugby.

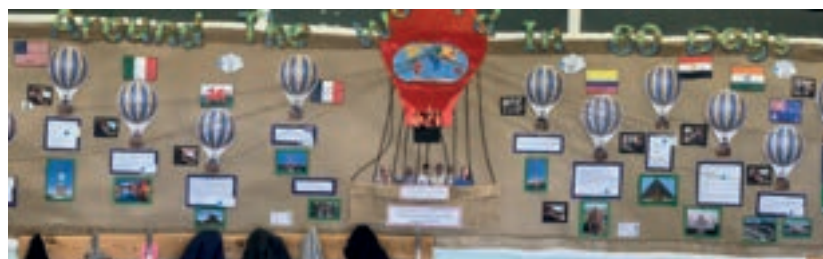
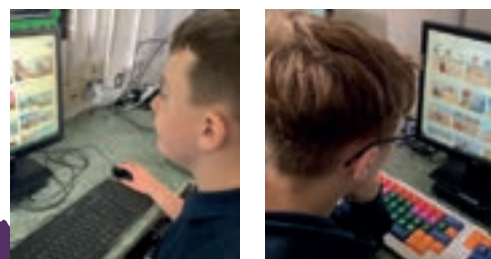
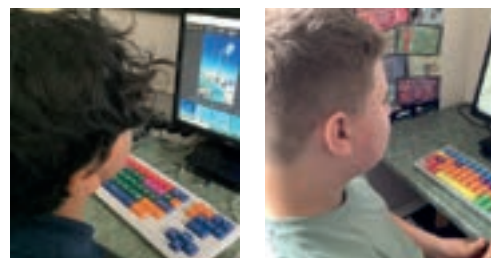
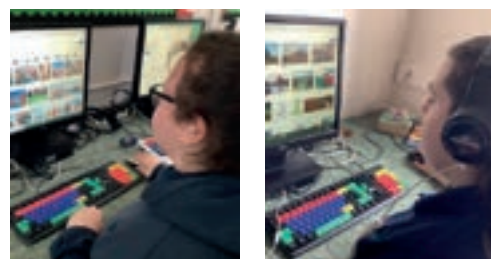
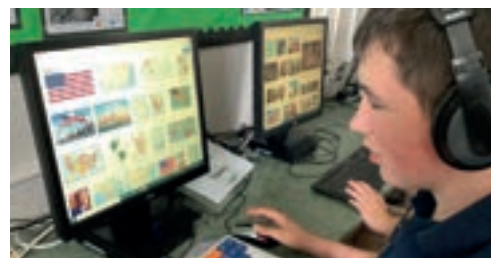
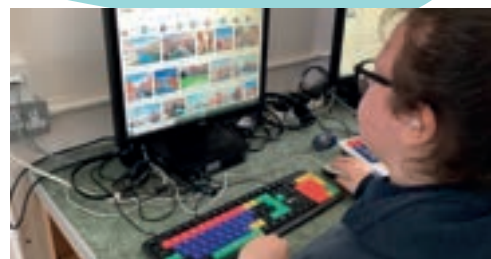
Miraculous is my favourite film it is set in France I would really like to go there and see the Eiffel Tower and go to a French bread sh Boulangerie

Not only is the Burj Khalifa the tallest building in Dubai it is the tallest building in the world.

I went to Venice in Italy. Venice is the capital of Northern Italy and is made up of 100 small islands.

I wanted to find out about the pyramids. They are ancient masonry structures located in Giza.

The currency of Japan is the Yen. Japan is famous for the beautiful cherry blossom trees. Mount Fuji is the highest mountain in Japan



Class 10

Fact file for our fabulous phenomenal friends!

There is so much that class 10 would like to share, their celebrations and successes, there are too many to choose from. So, meet our tal-ented lot and learn a little bit about them all!



Name: Sophie
Fav color: Blue
Fav food: Biscuit
Best friend: Mum & Dad
Talent: Artist



Name: James
Fav color: Red
Fav food: Meatballs
Best friend: Kai
Talent: Entertainer



Name: Maisie
Fav color: Green
Fav food: Pizza
Best friend: Caleb
Talent: Athlete



Name: Tyler
Fav color: Brown
Fav food: Pizza
Best friend: Kai
Talent: Friendly



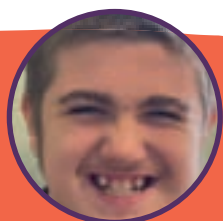
Name: Reka
Fav color: Orange
Fav food: Sausage
Best friend: Miss Lauren
Talent: Artist



Name: Dashiell
Fav color: Blue
Fav food: Sausage
Best friend: Miss Sam
Talent: Reliable



Name: Caleb
Fav color: Yellow
Fav food: Chocolate sandwich
Best friend: Damian
Talent: Charismatic



Name: Kai
Fav color: Red
Fav food: Chicken
Best friend: Tyler
Talent: Proud



Name: Poppy
Fav color: Pink
Fav food: Jam sandwich
Best friend: Sophie
Talent: Performer



Name: Ayham
Fav color: Blue
Fav food: Pizza
Best friend: Reka
Talent: Comedian



Class 11

Our Year of Fitness and Fun

Throughout the year class 11 have been learning all about healthy living. We have worked hard on our accreditation Food and health and learnt a lot of new skills and understanding on how to create a healthy and balanced meal. We have enjoyed taking part in a daily walks, class yoga and our weekly games sessions. We had the opportunity to access surfing in Porthcawl were some of our pupils had the time of their lives riding the waves. In May some of our class pupils had the opportunity to enjoy a residential trip to Llangrannog which consisted of a lot of fun filled activities that kept us fit and healthy. We have also had plenty of other great opportunities in class 11 to get our bodies moving and our hearts racing by taking part in a zumbathon and a sports festival in Merthyr. It has been a year full of learning, trying and achieving new goals to keep us fit and healthy. Well done class 11 for always giving your best at everything!



During the year class 12 were lucky enough to experience new activities and gained new skills by accessing the community.

We have visited Margam Parc , Porthcawl and Swansea Marina and got the opportunity to perform in Newport and Bridgend College.

Class 12 have had the best year together !!

Class 12

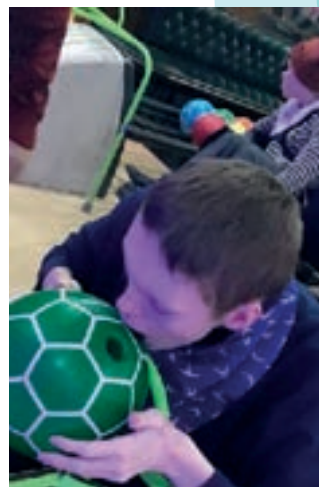
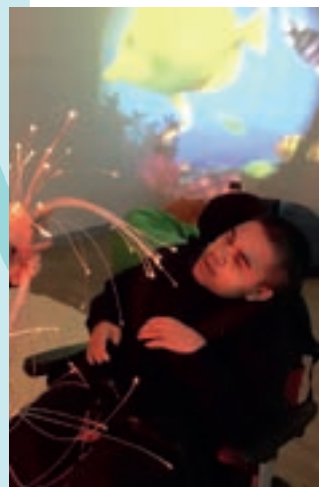
A Year of FUN!



Class 13

Out and about in the community!

In C13 we have been working towards accessing our local community and have been on a variety of trips throughout the year. We have visited Aberavon for a windy sea front walk, Swansea Waterfront Museum, Margam Park and Bryngarw Park. We have also had fun on trips to Hollywood Bowl in Cardiff Bay and regular visits to our local leisure centre, town centre and Library. The highlight of our year has been an adaptive surfing session and day on the beach. We have had a great time exploring the world around us and learning about the world we are apart of.



Independent Izzy

Well-being Winnie

Opportunity Ollie

Class TS

Health and Wellbeing



Within Class TS we have been focusing heavily on our Health and Wellbeing. We have been developing our social skills, creating stronger relationships with our peers and experiencing the wider community.

We have had the opportunity to visit Bridgend college for breakfast, we ordered and paid for our own food and drink, and enjoyed the atmosphere of the busy, social canteen.

Recently we had our class trip to Aberavon, sadly it was raining, but we didn't let that deter us! We had a relaxing trip on the bus, took a walk along the beach top in the rain, all the way to the chip shop. We ordered and collected our own food, making sure we had the correct money and change. Luckily it dried up after food and we were able to pop to the shop for some treats.

Within our class based sessions we have been reflecting, relaxing and learning to regulate ourselves during an Atmospherics session. These sessions give us opportunity to think of how our body and mind feels, we can make choices that are right for us, we are learning to turn take. And respect our peers choices.

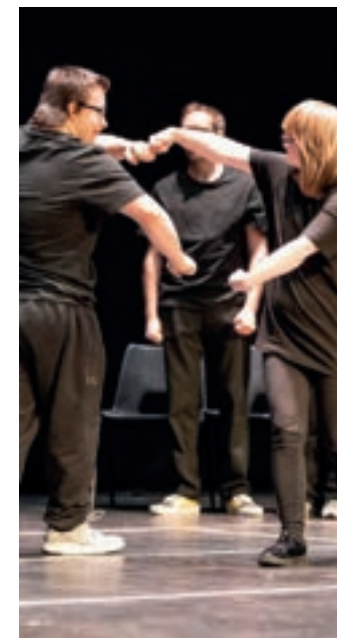
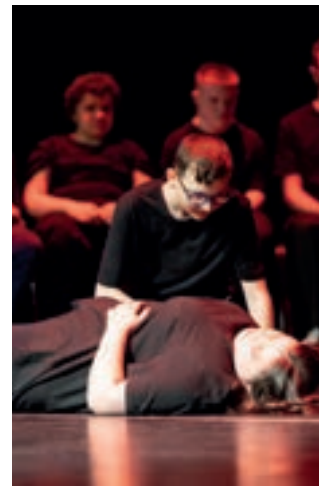
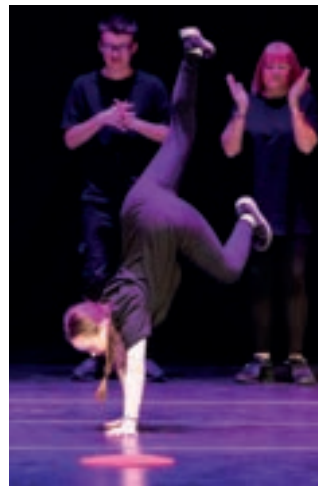
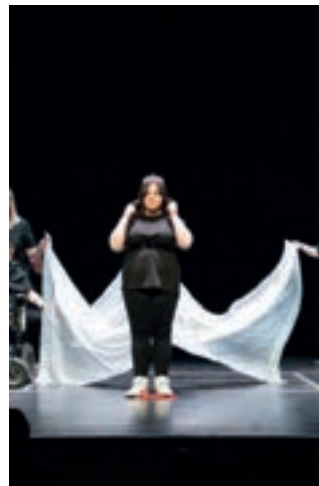
We have made massive leaps during our swimming sessions, We have been gaining confidence in the water, learning new skills and moving on to the next level. Swimming has given us the opportunity to develop relationships with our peers and most importantly have FUN!



Romeo and Juliet



Key Stage 4 took part in the Shakespeare Schools Festival in March 2023. A company of pupils performed the play 'Romeo and Juliet', alongside others schools, to a sold out audience at the Riverfront Theatre in Newport. What a fantastic achievement this was for the pupils, with many overcoming fears and really showing that true Heronsbridge spirit of being the best they can be! Taking part in the festival allowed pupils to work with industry professionals and take part in fun workshops whilst gaining confidence of performing on a professional stage. The pupils really did the school proud - we even had members of the audience email to say how wonderful they were, and how privileged they felt to watch our show. Da iawn Key Stage 4!



Eisteddfod

'Together we can be Welsh'

Well-being
Winnie

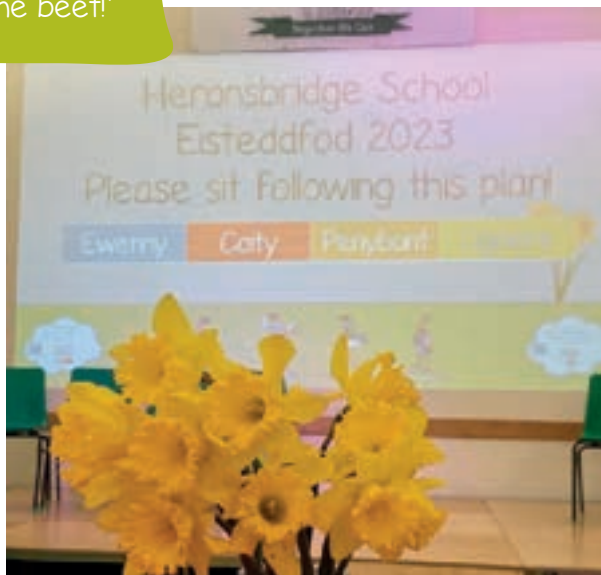


Opportunity
Ollie



Leek eating competition

What did one leek say to the other leek at the vegetable party?
"Lettuce turnip the beet!"



Promoting Welsh Culture through Eisteddfod celebrations is an extremely important part of Welsh tradition and culture. Heronsbridge school uses Eisteddfod celebrations as a means to teach our students about Welsh cultural heritage and this encourages a sense of pride in our school and community.

Boosting Confidence and wellbeing of pupils and performing in front of an audience of friends, staff and governors, has impacted and increased the confidence of students within their community. It was a significant achievement for pupils, and it contributed to their self-esteem and self-worth.

Heronsbridge Eisteddfod provided an annual inclusive platform for our children's needs to showcase their talents and abilities. Singing, dancing, poetry, artwork and much more, has enabled our children, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, to contribute in these celebrations.



Llangrannog 2023

Llangrannog 2023 - we had a blast!

Our Secondary Department trip to Llangrannog 2023 was absolutely fantastic! A fun filled, action packed adventure where memories were made to last a lifetime. From swimming to go karting, abseiling to skiing, we had a chance to experience so many activities! It's hard to pick our favourite! We really took the opportunity to live our 'Heron Squad' values.

A big 'THANK YOU' to the Friends of Heronsbridge for their contribution to our residential; your support means so much to us!



Leavers 1

The Great British Menu

As part of our Fun, Food and Fitness AoLE topic the Leavers 1 students were tasked with creating a Great British Menu. First of all, they learnt that foods from Britain have higher welfare and production standards than most of the rest of the world. Then, they have to come up with ideas for recipes featuring British foods, research British foods on the Tesco website and go shopping for the ingredients. Finally, they had to cook a three course meal! After all their hard work, the students were able to eat the dishes on their menu - they all agreed the food was delicious.

The Leavers 1 students had to use their independent living skills to complete the task. They had to think about healthy eating, find recipes, compile a shopping list, think about a budget, go shopping for ingredients in a supermarket and then cook a simple meal. They worked really hard, learnt a lot and hopefully had a lot of fun. Well done Leavers 1!



Independent Izzy

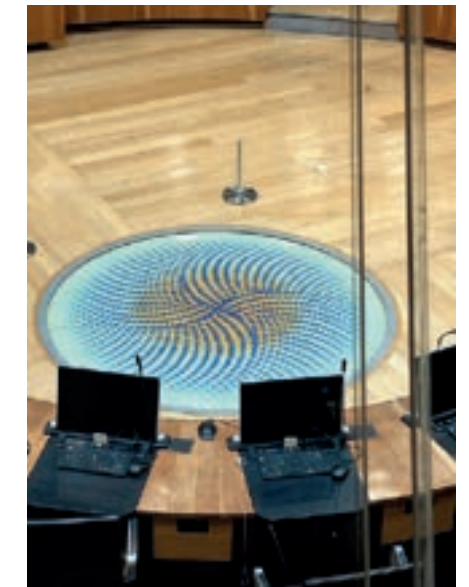


Leavers 2 students went to the Senedd which is the Cardiff home of the Welsh Government. This was part of our work learning about young people's rights and responsibilities.

Richard from the Senedd gave us a tour of the building. We also met with Sarah Murphy, our local Welsh Labour Member of the Senedd (MS). We asked her questions such as how voting happens. We learnt all about the chamber: why it is circular in shape, how the ceremonial mace was donated to the Senedd by the people of New South Wales in Australia and about the designer of the special glass installation in the floor of the debating chamber, called 'The Heart of Wales'. It was created by Swansea-based artist Alexander Beleschenko. Everyone had a great day!

Leavers 2

Visit to the Senedd



Leavers 3

Independent Izzy

Well-being Winnie



We have loved our days out in Leavers 3 this year. At Christmas, we spread some festive cheer and visited a local care home to chat to the residents and make some Christmas crafts to brighten up their rooms. During the Summer term, some of us did Travel Training and used public transport to visit Cardiff, McArthur Glen and Porthcawl. We were able to find a Greggs in each place for our break! As an end of year treat, we all went to Folly Farm. We enjoyed a tractor ride, eating our packed lunches and seeing the animals. Our favourite were definitely the penguins. What a busy year!



Leavers 4

Leavers 4 have been exploring different climate zones as part of our 'Around the World in 80 Days' topic. We decided to visit Plantasia in Swansea to experience some of these places for ourselves. Everybody enjoyed travelling through the different biomes and learning about the animals and plants that live there.



Work Based Learning

Car Valeting and Horticulture



Opportunity Ollie



As part of the Leavers Careers and Work Related Experiences the students have a range of work based learning opportunities to choose from our year 14 students access one of the projects two days a week as part of their timetable.

Car Valeting-Blas da Enterprise.

During the time the students access the car valeting they gain a wealth of knowledge and skills, and build their confidence and independence preparing them for life and work. They also complete accreditation. They work as part of a car valeting team in which they learn about health and safety, and cleaning the exterior and interior of a car to a showroom standard. Also, they learn about the running of the business and customer service skills.

Market garden-Blas da Enterprise

During the time the students access the market garden they gain a wealth of knowledge and skills, and build their confidence and independence preparing them for life and work. They also complete accreditation. They work as part of horticulture team in which they learn about health and safety, and all aspects of plant propagation including planting seeds and taking cuttings to increase plant stock. They learn how to grow and harvest vegetables and how to get plants ready for sale, and make attractive planters for different occasion's. They learn about marketing and gain skills in customer service.

As part of the Leavers Careers and the World of Work the students have a range of work based learning opportunities to choose from. Our year 14 students access one of the projects two days a week as part of the timetable.



Hospitality-Blas Da Enterprise

During the time the students access the coffee shop they gain a wealth of knowledge and skills. They build their confidence and independence, preparing them for life and work. They also complete accreditation, working as part of a hospitality team, they learn about health and safety, food safety, food preparation, cooking, barista skills, customer service skills and cleaning. The coffee shop is open daily for our staff to access. The team supply hospitality for the following: interviews, courses, fete, Macmillan coffee morning, students Christmas fair, the Coronation celebrations, Friendship Festival, sports day, ROA evening and many more. The coffee shop is a bustling sustainable business which provides seasonal hot and cold foods utilizing produce grown by our horticulture students. It is a business which is in constant use. It gives true to life work experience opportunities to our students.

AoLE- Carrie planned and delivered AoLE sessions to all the Leavers classes to incorporate all of the termly topics. The students chose a variety of sweet and savoury dishes and prepared and cooked them.



Opportunity Ollie



Blas Da Coffee Shop

Work Experience

Opportunity
Ollie

Independent
Izzy



As part of the Leavers Careers and Work Related Experiences year 13 and 14 students have the opportunity to choose work experience options. We are fortunate to work in collaboration with local businesses and charities to give our students choices and new opportunities. During their time on placement they gain new knowledge and skills, health and safety awareness, food safety awareness and independence, and we see a marked improvement in their confidence.

Our students have chosen the following placements:
The Bridged community hub, Bridgend Foodbank, Y bont Nursery and Boots.

Two of our year 13 students have extended their work experience into working within Heronsbridge. Chloe joins the Early years team every Tuesday and works part of the team to support our youngest students, it has been a wonderful opportunity for her. Jesse works with our IT technician every Wednesday morning, building up his knowledge and confidence.



The year has seen a full programme of link courses at Bridgend College and here at school via our 'Vocational Pathways' options.

The school were recently invited to the Sony Theatre to watch performances by the two Performing Arts groups as well as a group from Key Stage 4. The audience were wowed with three very different, but equally exciting performances: 'Romeo and Juliet', 'An Invitation for Alice' and 'James and the Giant Peach'. It was a real treat and so wonderful to watch young people really come out of their shells and shine on such a big stage.

The Year 13 catering group have again impressed with their enthusiasm for the task. They have produced various sweet and savoury dishes over the year, including macaroni cheese and a cheesecake, all whilst learning new basic cooking skills. Best of all, they take home what they cook, so families get to share!

Year 14 have again enjoyed their weekly transition link, experiencing different tutors and different areas of the College in readiness for their move on from school this summer. With links to Art, Fitness, Music and Horticulture across both the Bridgend and Pencoed campuses, every week is a treat.

As well as developing specific skills within their courses, students also experience other opportunities like using money and developing their communication, as well as catching up with old friends.

College Links



Duke of Edinburgh

Sustainable Sam



We have had another busy year in the Leavers' department, preparing for our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh expedition. This year, we had a record number of 22 students taking part!

Before completing their expedition, students spent time learning basic map reading skills, first aid, camp craft and how to cook using a Trangia. During their expedition, students worked with peers to navigate some challenging routes. They supported each other and had great fun along the way. After their long day of walking, students set up tents in our school orchard and cooked their evening meal.

We are extremely proud of all of our Duke of Edinburgh students!



College Links

The end of the academic year is particularly bitter sweet as we say goodbye to our Year 14 students at Heronsbridge. This year, 11 students left us for pastures new: seven from the Leavers department and four from the Centre for Autism.

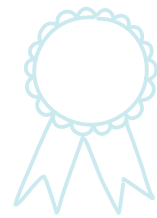
As always, we gave our leavers the best send off we could. An emotional ROA ceremony was an opportunity to see just how far our students had progressed throughout their Heronsbridge journey and each student demonstrated in their video clip how much Heronsbridge meant to them. The ceremony was followed by a fun-filled Prom, with some of our Year 13 students joining the celebrations. Heron Hall was festooned in beautiful decorations and our coffee shop staff Carrie-Ann, Gabi and Pam laid on a delicious buffet.

The students looked so grown up dressed in their best clothes and it was lovely to see so many parents and carers supporting them.

Pob lwc to our leavers - we will miss you but you're ready for your next adventure. Keep in touch and remember: once a Heron, always a Heron!



Mostyn Hills Awards



The Mostyn Hills Awards were created in the memory of Mostyn Hills who was the Swimming Instructor in Heronsbridge for many years who taught and inspired hundreds of pupils in his time at Heronsbridge.

Swimmer of the Year Harriet Harwood

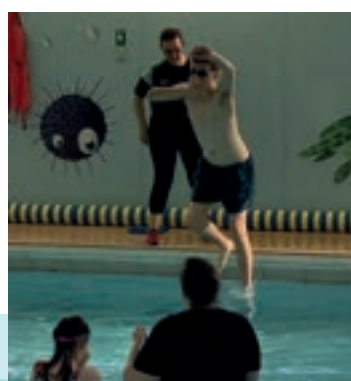
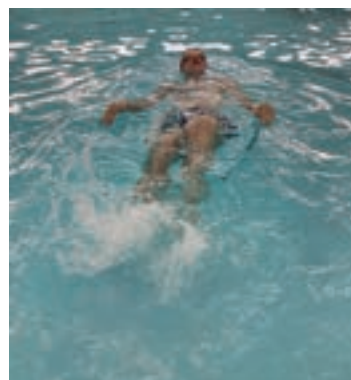
Harriet has always been a keen swimmer, and taken part in the swimming Gala. Last year Harriet took home a medal for girls over 17 25m freestyle and girls over 17 50m freestyle. Harriet also took part in surfing and with Karma Seas and always brings a keen love of swimming to every session. Harriet Harwood has achieved a lot this year in the pool and is this year's winner of the Mostyn Hills Award for Swimmer of the year.

Most Improved Swimmer Sion Duggan

Sion has made great waves in the pool this year. He has progressed from a being a nervous, non-swimmer to swimming in the shallow end without support. He has also been taking part in swimming sessions at with Special Families Maesteg. Sion's dream is to swim with dolphins, which has driven his determination. Sion has worked very hard this year to win the Mostyn Hills Award for. Most Improved Swimmer.

Confidence in the water Ris Hutchinson

Ris has made tremendous strides in becoming more confident in the water. Ris was nervous about getting his face wet and initially found it challenging kicking on his front and back. Since coming to Heronsbridge Ris worked really hard progressing from a swimming with a noodle to swimming independently. We are all so incredibly proud of the massive stride in water confidence Ris has made and is the 2022-2023 Heronsbridge award recipient for Confidence in the water.



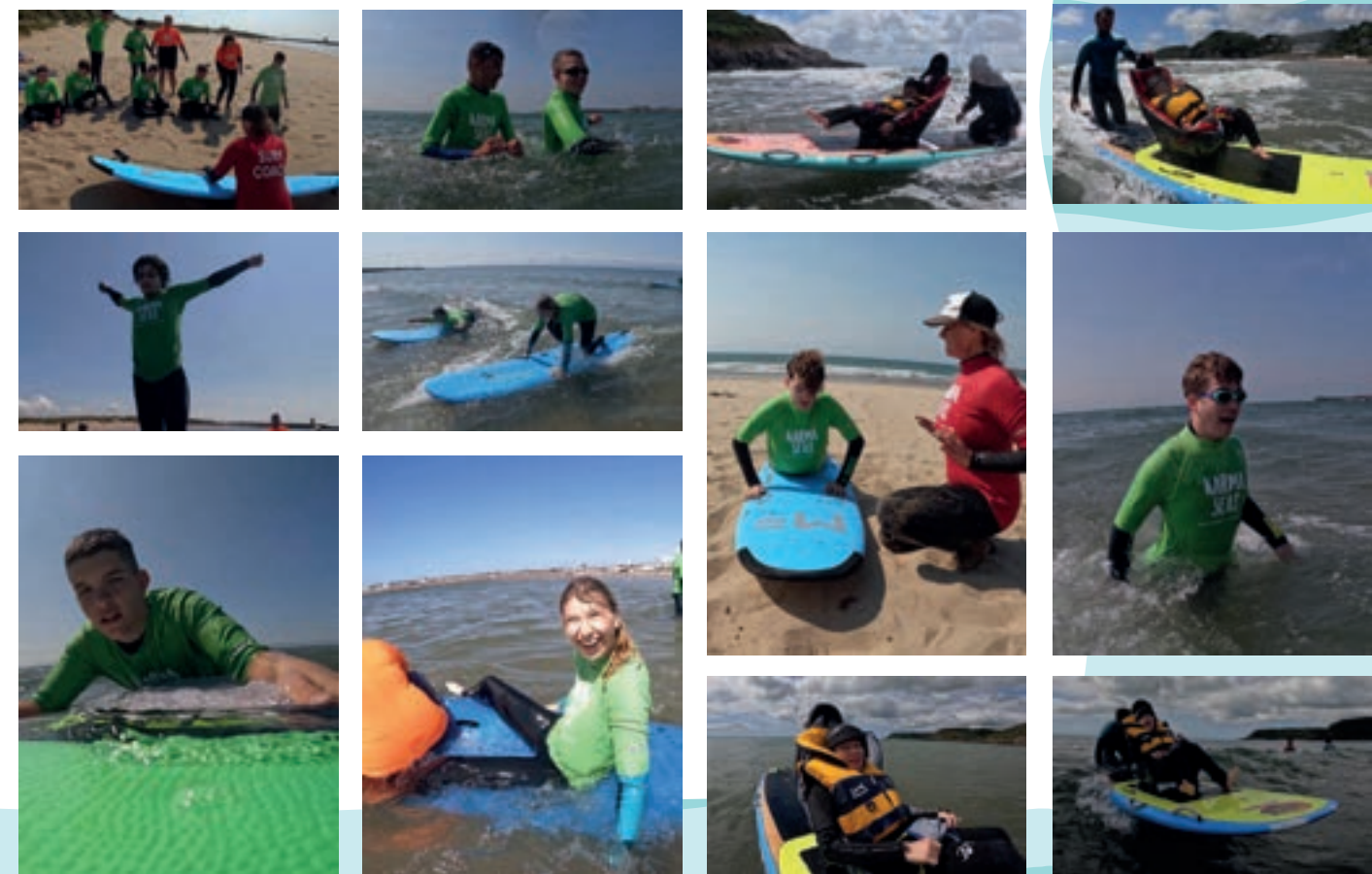
Surfing

In June two groups of learners from KS4 & 5 attended a surfing session with Julia and her team at Karma seas in Porthcawl.

Both days started with yoga and surf skills on the beach to warm up followed by surfing and fun in the sea. Perfect weather conditions with a small wave to learn on. The pupils had an amazing time catching the waves and having fun in the surf.

In July another two groups of learners attended an adaptive surf session in Caswell Bay with Ben and the team at Surfability, the weather was kind to us and we again had perfect weather and sea conditions.

The pupils participated in a one hour seated tandem surf session. A big thank you to our facilitators, it was such a wonderful experience for those attended!

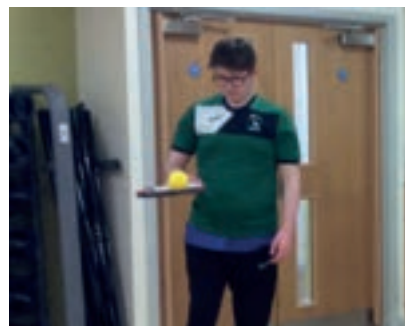


Rhondda sports festival

Sports Day 2022

Some pupils from the secondary department had the opportunity to attend a sporting festival full of inclusive activities. We attended a sports centre in the Rhondda with other special need schools and took part in a variety of sporting activities. We took part in tennis, dancing, rugby, wheelchair sporting skills, the climbing wall and riding bikes and trikes. We met lots of different people and worked on our team building, listening and gross motor skills. It was so much fun learning new skills and trying out new activities!

Well what a beautiful and eventful sports day we had; we were very lucky to have the weather on our side - maybe a bit too warm! We all stayed hydrated and got to cheer everyone on in their races. A big thank you to the parents who took part in our first parents race...lets just say we think they were more competitive than the pupils!



Cymru am byth Bridgend Herons Inclusive FC

Some of the Heron football team had the amazing opportunity to attend a meet and greet with the Welsh football team. There was a chance to watch the players train, get some merchandised signed and have a chat and ask some questions to the players. Each pupil got to keep a signed shirt or ball and they each received a goodie bag from Nathaniel Cars! What a great experience and one they will never forget! Diolch or galon - Yma o Hyd!!



Yorkshire 2023 Mencap Home Internationals

In Yorkshire in July, Mencap staged a Home Internationals football tournament. We are naturally very proud of students Rebecca Wikes, Ryan Evans, Iwan Johns Pugh who lined up with 6 of our ex-students in a 17-strong Herons squad representing Wales. The Pontefract based event, which marked our 18 year association with Mencap's National Football Team as a school, also included squads representative of England, Northern Ireland and Scotland.



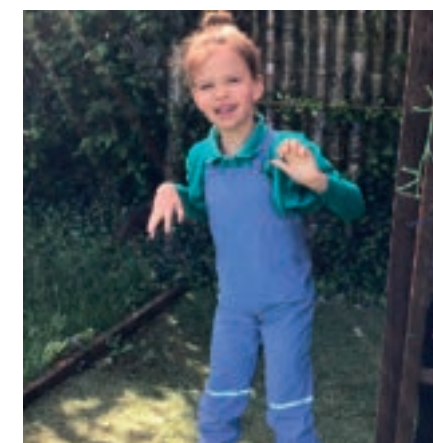
Opportunity
Ollie



I like to MOVE it, MOVE it!

Some of our pupils have had opportunities to take part in the MOVE programme, which stands for Movement Opportunities Via Education. Collaborative working has ensured that parents, staff and other professionals have liaised to set purposeful goals to promote physical development and independence. Our pupils have developed sitting unaided for longer periods, sitting independently, standing holding a rail and walking using walking aides or independently. The progress the pupils have made has been overwhelming! We held a whole school MOVE fest week to raise awareness of the MOVE programme and the importance of movement. We kicked off the week with a whole school walk around the school grounds while Mr Jones sang and played guitar. The pupils then enjoyed a range of movement activities such as Zumba dancing, games on the gym pitch, a chill out day, ending the week with a MOVE celebration. The pupils were all awarded with certificates for their achievements. It was lots of fun and raised the awareness that "Movement is the foundation of learning".

Our learners certainly like to Move it, Move it! and we couldn't be prouder of their personal achievements.





Residential

Exley House and Hewitt House

I hop and jump by all accounts but it's very clear I love to bounce



Cody

When the working school day is done it's very clear we're having fun



This is really my favourite scene - jumping on the trampoline



Sensory play is no trouble- especially love blowing bubbles



Sustainable Sam



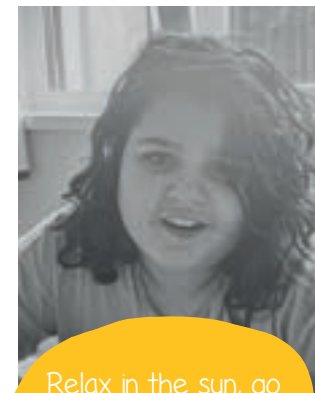
Independent Izzy



Well-being Winnie



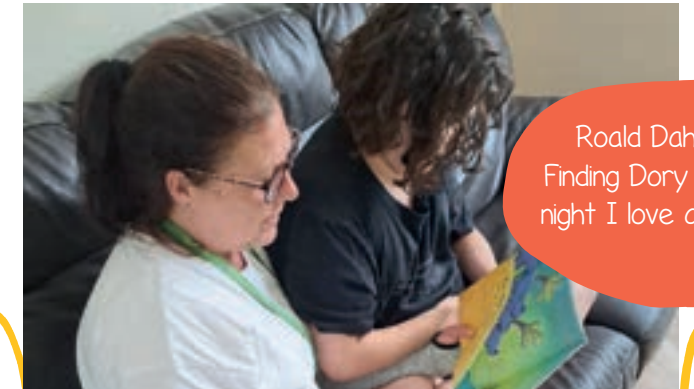
Opportunity Ollie



Relax in the sun, go with the flow-but I love to chalk on the patio



ELERI



Roald Dahl or Finding Dory every night I love a story

Tallyho Tuesday Swimming Here We Go

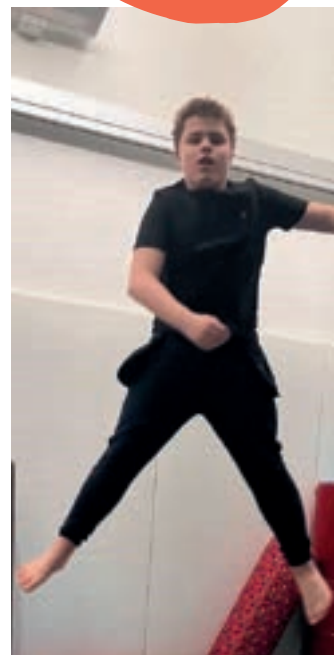


Gethyn

It's not 'feet up and rest' it's Thursday night and I'm the 'Chef de Maison'



Wednesdays I enjoy flying high in rebound



Take the bus to get out - there's so much I can learn about



Pile it high! My building blocks-it all comes down with just a knock



I have loads of toys to make me jolly - but I really enjoy feeding dolly



Dressing up after my classes. I love my favourite play glasses



Friends of Heronsbridge

Who are the Friends of Heronsbridge?

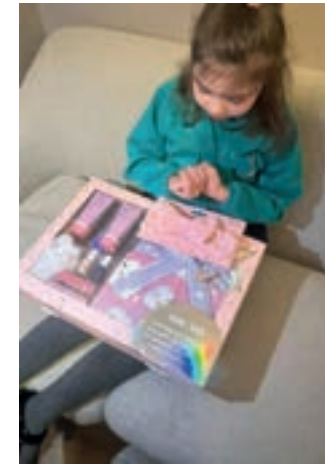
The Friends of Heronsbridge are a small but dedicated group of volunteers, comprising parents, staff, governors and just 'friends', who share Heronsbridge's 'Together we Can' ethos. A registered charity, we have worked alongside staff since 1994, raising money to help provide equipment, facilities, services and those 'little extras' the school budget is unable to meet.

Most of our income comes as a result of our various fundraising events or donations from individuals and companies. We also hold annual events, such as our Summer Fête (which raised over £4000) and our Christmas Concert and Christmas raffle. The Heronsbridge Ball in June added £4500 to our funds and, in March, Hollie Evans, one of our senior pupils, had her hair cut (by Mr Evans) during assembly. Hollie's efforts enabled us to add £400 to Friends' funds and she donated the cut hair to a charity who make wigs for children who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment. We like to keep the 'fun' in our fundraising so, often, the amount we raise is secondary to the enjoyment of the event itself.

We have extended our range of activities to include fun sessions for pupils and their siblings such as play sessions at Soft Landings Play Zone, (with visits from the Easter bunny and Santa) various animal encounters including meerkats, alpacas and reptiles, trips to the miniature railway, a pizza Party and discos.

Every penny received by the Friends is used to directly benefit the pupils of Heronsbridge School. This includes provision of resources and equipment, sporting activities, hoodies for pupils that went to Llangrannog and days out, photography workshops with 'unique you' as well as gifts to the pupils each year, from 'Santa'

Thank you to all those who support the Friends of Heronsbridge, either through their time, hosting or attending events. We could not do it without you!



Our Curriculum

This year we have covered three whole school topics including: Fun, Food and Fitness, Around The World in 80 days and Superheroes.



Fun, food & fitness

The Big Wow for this topic was a giant inflatable fun run for bigger pupils and a super fun sensory version for our other pupils. We tasted fruits and learned how to look after our bodies and our minds. We were incredible Well Being Winnie's!



Around the world in 80 days

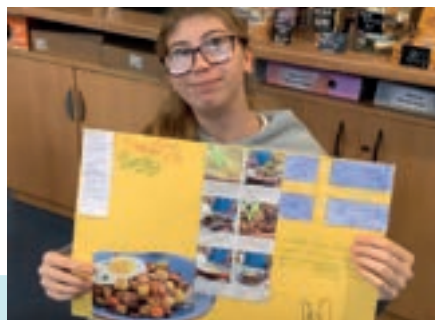
For this topic we explored different cultures around the world, prepared and tasted foods from around the world and role played some traditions. Some of us worked on the story itself. Look at us exploring our world being awesome Sustainable Sam's!



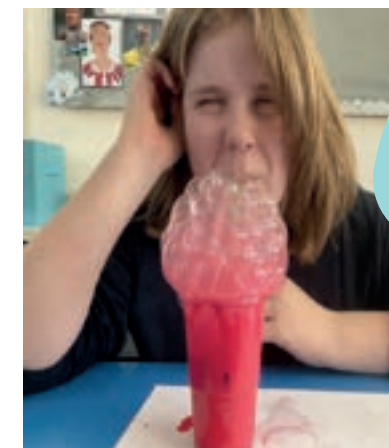
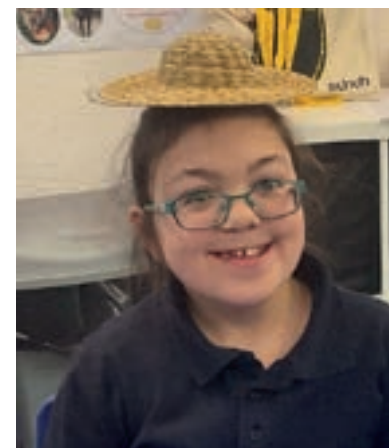
Superheroes

Superheroes need veg power. We challenged our pupils to "eat them to defeat them" by trying 3 fruit or veg a day for a whole week! We decorated the dining hall with a vegetable focus each day and made a huge fuss when they achieved their goal! We are extremely proud of their efforts in trying new healthy foods and for being fantastic Opportunity Ollie's!

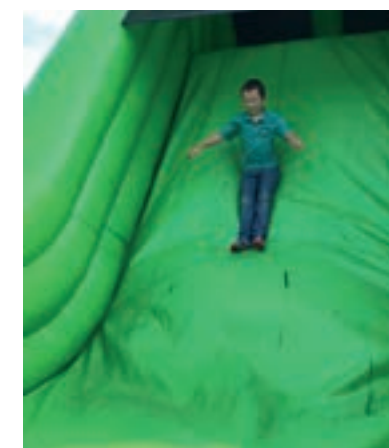
In addition to our work on Progression and Assessment we have also developed Cross Curricular groups who are working on how we appropriately and meaningfully include Careers; Religion, Values & Ethics; Relationships & Sexuality Education; Local, National, International; Human Rights and Diversity into our curriculum as per Welsh Government guidance. Enhancing our pupils understanding of the wider world and enabling them to meet the four purposes of the curriculum and our school values.



Well-being Winnie



Opportunity Ollie



Sustainable Sam



Independent Izzy

