



Bishop Vaughan Catholic School Ysgol Gatholig Esgob Vaughan

Parents' Newsletter December 2021
Cylchlythyr Rhieni Rhagfyr 2021

WISHING ALL OF THE FAMILIES IN OUR SCHOOL
COMMUNITY A HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS



AND THE BLESSINGS OF GOOD HEALTH AND
HAPPINESS IN THE NEW YEAR

Headteacher's Message

Welcome to this term's newsletter! We hope that you will enjoy reading the news of some of the activities and the achievements of our pupils in this characteristically busy first term of the academic year. As ever, this newsletter can only provide a (very!) distilled version and a snapshot of school life. More detail and a wider range of news can, of course, be found on our school website and via our social media accounts.

Our pupils have very good reasons to be proud of all that they have achieved over the past term, as you will see within these pages. They have of course done all of this against a backdrop of many changes to school life - our Year 11 pupils and Sixth Formers, for example, embarking on courses for which there have been numerous changes to the content, and our new Year 7 pupils joining us without having had the usual visits to the school throughout their Year 6 experience. Despite all of this, we are delighted to see that our pupils are truly thriving! Our Year 7s have forged new friendships and settled exceptionally well, joining lots of new clubs to supplement the already-busy school day. We currently have the largest choir that we have had in some years and our sports clubs are extremely well-attended, as is the daily after-school Learning Zone!

The term has, of course, had its challenges, not least for us as a closely-knit school community learning of the loss of two former teachers - Mr. Kevin Widlake, former Head of Technology, and Mr. Joe Blackburn, our former Headteacher and a serving Governor of the school. We begin this newsletter, therefore, with a tribute to them on page six and we continue to hold both them and their families in our prayers.

For information, and prior to the main content of the newsletter, term dates and parish details are included on pages four and five, as usual. Should we be informed of any changes to the planned return to school for all pupils on Wednesday 5th January, we will let all pupils and their families know at the earliest possible opportunity. Parish details are included this year instead of the usual publication of times for Masses over Christmas in each of the parishes, as these are of course subject to change and possibly to the need for booking this year.

We very much hope that all in the school community will enjoy the Annual Carol Service, which will be streamed on Thursday 16th December. This will be accessible via our website and our social media accounts. You can read more about the preparations for this on pages seven and twelve, and we are grateful to His Grace Archbishop George Stack for his involvement in this, in giving the introductory message and the final blessing.

Also detailed within this newsletter are some really exceptional sporting achievements. As mentioned above, these represent just a very small selection of the impressive successes of some very dedicated and determined young sportspeople. We commend them on these achievements and we have no doubt that they will continue to excel.



Headteacher's Message

We hope that you will enjoy reading too of our pupils' academic successes, from interviews for Oxford and Cambridge places (page eleven) to the exciting activities undertaken by the Year 10 Strive pupils (page sixteen), the exciting partnership work between the Science department and Swansea University (page twenty), the Welsh department's activities (page twenty four onwards) and the exceptional achievements of our pupils in the national astrophysics competition, Astro Challenge (page twenty seven).

As always, all that goes on in school life is centred on Christ. We have ensured that, in what often becomes an overwhelmingly busy term for all schools, we have taken the time to pause and reflect together, praying the Examen at the end of each week throughout the whole school (see page ten), and we are grateful to our School Chaplain and to the Liturgy Team for ensuring that we can continue to celebrate Mass together and participate in Advent assemblies.

You will recall from previous newsletters that the last liturgical year was designated as the Year of St. Joseph, and we hope that you will enjoy reading, on page eight, about one of the many ways in which that has been significant for us here in Bishop Vaughan. It has also been a special year as it is the centenary year for the Legion of Mary, an association with groups all over the world that meet to pray together and to commit to acts of service and kindness to others. As detailed on page nine, we are very pleased to have been able to establish a group here at the school, this being, we believe, the only junior group in Wales, set up with the support of Canon Jason Jones, Mrs. Anne Lear and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, whose convent is nearby in Morriston.

The focus on the Gospel values is, of course, evident in the pupils' work on behalf of so many charities, notably *Missio*, as detailed on page fifteen, with our work for this being supported by Canon Paul Watson, whom we are fortunate to have as one of our school Governors. This focus on our values also underpins our eco work, about which more you can read more on page fourteen, with our aim being to ensure that we truly take good care of 'Our Common Home.' Our Eco Team are excited to have been selected to represent Welsh schools in the Historic Royal Palaces project for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and we look forward to sharing pictures of our 'Superbloom' garden and our forthcoming trip to London for this project.

As you can glean, therefore, it has truly been the busy term that I described at the beginning of this message! Consequently, we hope that our pupils and their families take the opportunity for a very well-earned rest over the Christmas holidays. To them, and to all of those reading this newsletter in our primary schools and in the parishes across Swansea, we wish you a happy and holy Christmas, filled with the peace and joy of Christ, and a New Year blessed with happiness and with good health.

Mrs. Pole
Headteacher

On behalf of the staff and Governors of Bishop Vaughan



School Term and Holiday Dates 2021-2022

		HALF TERM HOLIDAYS		
Term	Term begins	Begins	Ends	Term ends
Autumn 2021	Thursday 2nd September	Monday 25th October	Friday 29th October	Friday 17th December
Spring 2022	Tuesday 4th January	Monday 21st February	Friday 25th February	Friday 8th April
Summer 2022	Monday 25th April	Monday 30th May	Friday 3rd June	Friday 22nd July



The staff and governors wish all parents, carers and pupils a happy and holy Christmas and a successful New Year.

Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.

Dates for your Diary

The last day of term is Thursday 16th December 2021; school closes at 3.00pm. (Friday 17th December 2021 and Tuesday 4th January 2022 are INSET days). All pupils return to school on Wednesday 5th January 2022. This will be week one on the timetable.



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



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

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

Christmas Services

A list of the Parishes and their contact details are below.

Please note Christmas services may differ this year due to the current circumstances; please check with the parish in question before attending. Booking a place is required in most cases.



Blessed Sacrament (Father J P Thomas)
Tel: 01792 892722
www.parishofgorseinon.org

Our Lady of Lourdes (Father Clement OP)
Tel: 01792 655336
www.facebook.com/swanseatownhill

Sacred Heart Morriston (Canon Jason)
Tel: 01792 771053
www.sacredheartmorriston.org.uk

St. Benedict's Sketty (Father Carlito)
Tel: 01792 202447
www.stbenedictsketty.org

**Our Lady Star of the Sea
(Rev Michael Akpoghiran OP)**
Tel: 01792 367283
www.ourladystaroftheseamumbles.org.uk

Sacred Heart Ystradgynlais (Father Henry)
Tel: 01792 842244
www.sacredheartystradgynlais.org.uk

St. Benedict's Clydach (Father Henry)
Tel: 01792 842244

Holy Cross (Father Cyril)
Tel: 01792 586454
www.holycrossmenevia.com

St. David's (Canon Watson and Father Robert)
Tel: 01792 653343
www.stdavids.wix.com/website

St. Peter's (Father Saji Matthew)
Tel: 424107

St. Illtyd's (Father Saji Matthew)
Tel: 01792 424107

Cathedral Church of St. Joseph (Canon Benedict)
Tel: 01792 652683
www.meneviacathedral.org

St Bride's Pontarddulais (Father J P Thomas)
Tel: 01792 892722

St Joachim's (Father John Browne)
Tel: 01792 201046
www.gowercatholic.com

In Memoriam

It is with the greatest sadness that we acknowledge here the loss of Mr. Joe Blackburn, former Headteacher, and a serving Governor of our school, who died on Friday 5th November at Ty Olwen.



All of our pupils were informed of the loss of Mr. Blackburn in a special assembly, and our choir attended his funeral to pay tribute to him outside his parish church of Our Lady Star of the Sea in Mumbles. With limitations on numbers due to Covid mitigation measures, and so many people wishing to attend, many were gathered in the parish hall and outside. In addition, his funeral Mass was streamed by the parish via their website. We continue to hold Mr. Blackburn and his family in our prayers.

With the many thousands of hours that Mr. Blackburn dedicated to shaping our school community, he leaves behind an incredible legacy in the form of the school itself, the lives and work of the many people he appointed and above all in the life chances and paths of the countless young people who, over the years, have been a part of our school.

We also learned, in early September, of the death of Mr. Kevin Widlake, former Head of Technology. Mr. Widlake is remembered fondly by colleagues and pupils, both past and present. He retired just over three years ago and it has been a testament to the work that he undertook here that we have heard from so many former pupils expressing their sadness at the news of his death.

We keep both of these members of our school community in our prayers and we pray too for their families, on this first Christmas after their loss.



Annual Carol Service



Due to the continuing risks presented by large gatherings, and especially in light of recent news regarding the new Covid variant, the difficult decision was made to offer our annual service of Nine Lessons and Carols virtually.

Our pupils attended St. Joseph's Cathedral to record the service and this will be streamed on Thursday 16th December. We are most grateful to His Grace Archbishop George Stack for introducing this service and for offering the final blessing.

We hope that you will enjoy participating in this service, albeit virtually, as this has always been an integral part of our school year. Familiar favourite carols intersperse the readings, from the much-loved 'O Holy Night' with its soloist supported by a choir of eighty to items by the staff choir and by the orchestra.

This service will be accessible via the school website and links will be posted from all of the school's social media accounts. We look forward to 'gathering' with you at this time and hope to do so in person very soon.



Year of St. Joseph

As our pupils are aware, the last liturgical year was dedicated as the Year of St. Joseph. In his Apostolic Letter '*Patris corde*' - "With a Father's Heart", Pope Francis describes St Joseph as a beloved, tender and loving father; and as a man who is **creatively courageous**. The Holy Father also describes St Joseph as: "the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence" and he states that he was "**an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.**" We know well also that Joseph was a **carpenter**, earning an honest living in order to provide for his family.

We have looked carefully at ways to draw together the strands of what we know about St. Joseph to create a garden at Bishop Vaughan that commemorates the Year of St. Joseph. Looking at the words that are above in bold, you can discern why we have chosen to make this garden:

- One which our pupils have designed, using their *creativity*.
- One which can be used by pupils seeking a *quiet* space: somewhere they can reflect; somewhere where our *wellbeing ambassadors* and *prefects* will be available, should any pupils want the support and friendship that they can offer
- One which has a *wooden structure* at its centre. This will be a large wooden gazebo with seating all around the inside.



The pupils in the newly-formed prayer group referenced on the next page have worked hard to craft the design for this garden and have considered further ways too of ensuring that the purpose of the garden is reflected in their design - as a place for both **commemorating St. Joseph** and for **promoting wellbeing**. The pupils have looked to the design of the existing Rosary Garden for inspiration, with it being structured in a cross layout and with its statue of Our Lady at the centre, as this reflects the holy rosary. It has flowers in each of the four beds in colours linked to the rosary mysteries: the glorious, luminous, sorrowful and joyful mysteries. There are benches for reflection and it has flowers around the statue of Our Lady that are appropriate: forget-me-nots (which are also known as *Eyes of Mary*, reminding us that Mary has her eyes upon us and salvation in her heart) and marigolds (originally known as *Mary's Gold*).

We look forward to sharing our pictures of the completed garden with you in the Spring.



Legion of Mary

We are most grateful to Canon Jason Jones, Mrs. Anne Lear and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart for enabling us to establish a Junior Legion of Mary group here in the school.

This group meets weekly for prayer and to make a commitment to an act of charity for the week ahead, and this group has already been instrumental in many meaningful acts of kindness and support that have benefited others.

The group typically meets to pray the Rosary, to reflect on the week that has passed, to make a commitment for the week ahead and to listen to a talk offered by one of the leaders. Canon Jason has offered several talks, Mrs. Lear has led the Rosary and Sister Mini Thomas has also offered a talk. The pupils have enjoyed listening to these and focusing on the acts of charity each week.

On 7th December, the group participated in a beautiful Vigil Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which brought together several different Legion groups from neighbouring parishes. This was held in the Sacred Heart parish church. Pupils offered the readings and participated in the Mass, after which a reception was held in the Sacred Heart Centre, with refreshments provided by the Legion groups and entertainment offered by the pupils of the Junior Legion. This was a very special evening and the pupils extend their thanks to the members of the groups across Swansea and across Wales for supporting them both practically and spiritually in what is thought to be the only Junior Legion in Wales.

Pupils interested in joining this group, which meets on Tuesdays in the Main Hall from 3.15-4.15, are welcome to speak with Mrs. Pole, Miss Mainwaring or Mrs. Thomas.



Each Legion group chooses a name from one of the epithets, or titles, of Our Lady.

Bishop Vaughan's is:

'Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom',

as the group is based in our school, our place of learning. We are delighted to have been able to start this group as this year is the centenary year of the founding of the Legion of Mary.



Legio Mariae
Bishop Vaughan
Catholic School



Advent

Advent Mass

This was offered on 7th December by our School Chaplain, Father John Browne. Father John kindly recorded the Mass which was then streamed to all pupils throughout the school. Many thanks to Father John for his steadfast support of the school and for finding new ways, throughout the course of the pandemic, to provide spiritual support to all of our pupils.



Advent Assemblies

During Advent, we have special assemblies. These are put together by our Liturgy Ambassadors, with the support of Mrs. Thomas, our Liturgy Co-ordinator. This year's theme was light in the darkness.

With thanks to the Liturgy Team for their hard work in producing such a beautiful assembly to guide us in our Advent reflections.



Examen

Throughout Advent, we set aside the last quarter of an hour of each Friday to engage in the Examen, a reflective and meditative prayer that encourages us to reflect on the week that has passed with gratitude, and to look to the week ahead with hope and commitment. We also carry out this practice during Lent each year, as these are both important times of preparation in the church year.

Advent Rewards

Each week throughout Advent, tutors nominate pupils from their tutorial group who have demonstrated the school's values through their actions. We focus on the Gospel values throughout all areas of our school life and endeavour to nurture character development. At Bishop Vaughan, we try to focus on becoming people who demonstrate the qualities shown here →

Those pupils recognised as trying particularly hard to do so attend the Main Hall each Thursday to receive a commendation and a small token of reward from the Headteacher.

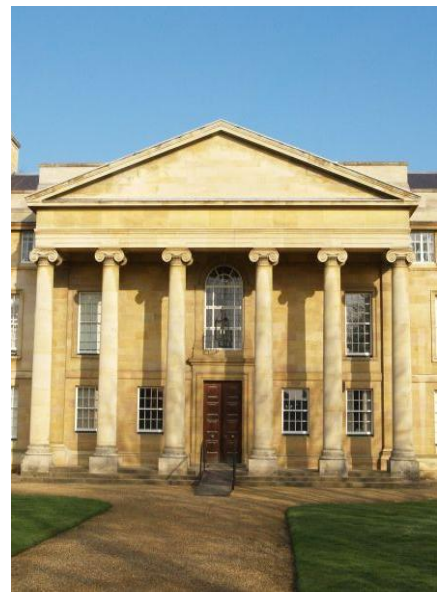


Oxbridge Successes

We are delighted to report that five of our Year 13 students have been invited to interview for places at Oxford or Cambridge. Having succeeded in reaching this point in an extremely competitive applications process, and having withstood some tough mock interviews with Mrs. Pole, Miss Siddika, Mr. McKay and two external interviewers, Dr. Charlotte James and Mr. Daniel Minister, the following pupils were interviewed in early December by the colleges shown below:

- Sam McCarthy - Theology, Regent's Park College, Oxford
- Nirmal De Britto - Medicine, Clare College, Cambridge
- Ceiara Caparas - Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, Trinity College, Cambridge
- Ashwin Sibi - Law, New College, Oxford
- Aoife Maddock - English Literature, Downing College, Cambridge

We wish them every success in gaining these places.



Performing Arts

Since September the Performing Arts Department has been thriving once again with all the usual extra-curricular activities running as normal after eighteen months of disruption due to the pandemic. We are thankful to the pupils who have been attending rehearsals once more and taking part with enthusiasm which has lifted spirits around the school.

Towards the end of November, the school choir had the privilege and honour of singing at the funeral of previous Headmaster, Mr. Joe Blackburn. The pupils sang 'The Lord Bless You and Keep You' most beautifully and were a credit to us as a school.

Over the past term, the various extra-curricular groups and instrumentalists have been working towards our 'A Night at the Oscars' event. However, due to the restrictions with regards to audiences it was decided to postpone this until next term at which point we can hopefully have a live audience. If restrictions are still in place this concert will be published virtually just before the Easter holidays.

This term many Year 7 classes have been taking part in whole class instrumental lessons in 'Toots' (a flute equivalent) and 'P-Buzz' (a brass equivalent). They have been developing really well in these sessions, and any pupils who have enjoyed this can take up the opportunity to have lessons in woodwind and brass. Please see Mr. Eynon-Davies for more information about lessons. Other classes will be starting 'String Along' in January to have a go at learning the violin.



In the new year will be starting to audition and rehearse for our school production 'Matilda - The Musical Jr.'. We hope that we will be able to perform our school production in the main hall with an audience but specific details for this will be published in due course, in line with any guidance and restrictions nearer the time.



On Friday 10th of December, we attended the beautiful setting of St. Joseph's Cathedral to film our Annual Carol Service, which this year will be streamed in order to reduce the risks to those who would normally attend this event in person. It was lovely to be back singing in the Cathedral at this time of Advent and this takes us, of course, one step closer to 'normality', to times in which we can all attend this in person as we have for so many years. So many attendees over the

years have commented, upon leaving the Cathedral and stepping out into the cold December air, that they really feel that the closeness of Christmas once the Bishop Vaughan Carol Service has taken place. We could not be prouder of our students who read, sang and played in the service, and we hope that you will enjoy watching it. As stated on page 7 of this newsletter, it will be accessible via our website and social media from Thursday 16th December onwards.

Public Services

BTEC Public Services Level 2

This term we have been looking at volunteering opportunities in the community public services.

We have been very fortunate to have a talk from Mr. Boucher-Hamon who is an experienced and highly skilled volunteer for the RNLI. Mr. Boucher explained his role and responsibilities and the many skills he has developed as a volunteer, saving lives at sea. He talked about the value of volunteering himself as a person in terms of improving his self-esteem, his confidence and pride in making an important contribution to his community. He also spoke in depth about the hours of training he has undertaken and the valuable personal qualities he has developed, whilst committing his time to the demands of this role.



We were also extremely grateful to South Wales Police who offered to visit the school to talk to us about volunteering opportunities in the Swansea area. PC David and PC Mathew are our local community police officers and they spent two hours with our class explaining the many volunteering roles available to young people in Swansea. The officers echoed Mr. Boucher's thoughts on the importance of volunteering, explaining how this experience can increase a young person's job prospects, develop their skills and their confidence, whilst also enabling them to make lots of new friends. The officers also acknowledged the benefits of volunteers to the community in terms of improving community cohesion and creating a safer place to live.



After listening to both of these talks, we all agreed that volunteering certainly allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place. Volunteering is a two-way street: It can benefit you and your family as much as the organisation you choose to help. Dedicating your time as a volunteer helps you make new friends, increase your self esteem and confidence, and boost your social skills.

If anyone is interested in volunteering, there are links below:-

<https://swansea.volunteering-wales.net/>

<https://www.south-wales.police.uk/police-forces/south-wales-police/areas/careers/careers/volunteers-and-special-constables/police-support-volunteers-useful-information/>



Eco Schools

Our wonderful Eco Team meet fortnightly to discuss environmental issues linked to our school lives.



As the governments of the world make pledges and set targets during COP26, we have set our own BVS targets:

1. **Begin to recycle on the yard**
2. **Improve recycling in classrooms**
3. **Increase biodiversity by creating a garden space and a 'Superbloom' of wild flowers**

COMPETITION TIME! The Eco Team have challenged pupils to design signs for the bins on the yard. Three signs were needed:

- General Waste
- Plastic Recycling
- Paper & Cardboard Recycling

All entries were passed onto Mrs Davies by the end of November. The Eco Team will choose the winners, and these will be displayed on the bins on the yard.



Superbloom – Mrs Davies visited the Tower of London during the half term break to represent our school in an exciting project lead by Historical Royal Palaces.

As more information is released into the media, we will be able to reveal more

but you may be interested to know that we are the only Welsh school to be taking part in this national 'Superbloom' project. We are therefore very proud to have been selected for this!



More information on this wildflower extravaganza will be shared shortly!



Eco-Schools Green Flag Award – we current have 'Silver' Eco-Schools status but this week we have sent in our application for the first 'Green Flag Award'. We will be assessed on this early in the new year.

Thank you to all the staff and pupils who have contributed to our eco developments! I am so proud of the work we are all doing. Mrs L. Davies.

Charity Group



Missio 2021

To support the annual Missio Campaign members of the charity team prepared and delivered a recorded assembly for all year groups in October. This year the theme selected was: 'Go and Make Disciples!'

As part of the campaign, pupils completed #MyMission Cards. The cards included prayers, pledges and activities for completion throughout the month of October. In addition to raising awareness, fundraising through a non-uniform day also took place. Thank you to all who supported these events!

The Missio work continues to support and enhance the parish links we are developing through our activities and events. Special thanks to Canon Paul for his support with this.

Children In Need

Pupils and staff showed their support (and spots) for Pudsey with a non-uniform day to celebrate Children In Need. Across the whole school community, spotty patterns and bright splashes of yellow could be seen. We raised over £700 – diolch to all for your continued support!



Additionally, pupils took part in a special Pudsey-themed tutorial quiz. Congratulations to the winners: 10A! Enjoy your prize and bragging rights as winners this year! Safe to say, BVS harnessed its competitive spirit to have a bit of fun, all in the name of Pudsey!



CAFOD – Eyes of the World Campaign

To support COP26 pupils & staff joined CAFOD’s “Eyes of the World” Campaign. Through assemblies and PSE activities, pupils made a stand and prepared a mini campaign. The focus was on highlighting the need for change, protection of our planet and the actions we can take to make a difference.

Linking the appeal to Pope Francis’ Laudato Si Encyclical, pupils wrote prayers and explored what it means to protect our common home.



Year 10 Strive Pupils

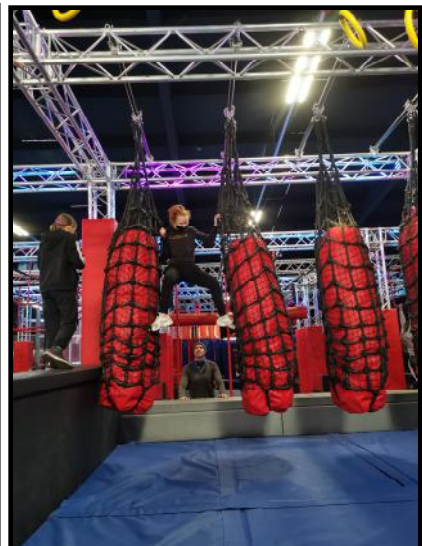


Year 10 Strive pupils have this term started work on a BTEC Health and Fitness qualification with Inspire Training. Every Wednesday pupils complete written coursework at the Inspire Centre in Swansea and then in the afternoon have to chance to take part in an exciting activity.

This term's activities have seen pupils:

- hiking in the Lliw Valley
- playing water polo at Llandysul Pool
- completing fitness circuits and boxing at Funky Pump
- participating in Ninja Warrior UK in Cardiff

Pupils have really enjoyed their Wednesdays and the activities they have experienced. They are very excited and looking to the spring term activities which include gorge walking, beach volleyball, rock climbing and paddle boarding. We will make sure we get plenty of photos from these activities to share with you in the next newsletter.



PE Department

We are delighted to have been able to resume fixtures and sporting events, these being an integral part of school life here in Bishop Vaughan! Our pupils have, as they always do, represented the school most impressively and had some exceptional individual and collective successes. We are pleased to report on a selection of these here:



Sporting Success



Cameron has been offered a scholarship with Swansea City Football for the next two years.



Megan has been selected for the Afan Nedd Tawe netball squad. She will represent them in the inter-county tournament in March 2022.

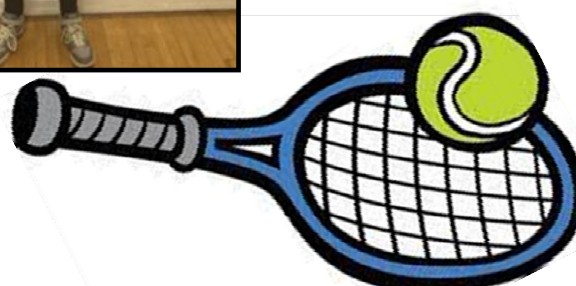
Megan also represented Wales at the British School Championships.

She achieved her personal best in the 80m hurdles with a time of 11.92 seconds, which secured her fourth place.



Max won the u12 Welsh Tennis Championships in August.

He has also recently won the Torquay Open.



PE Department



Brogan Popham has been offered a scholarship with Swansea City Football Club two years early.



Ewan Griffiths represented the Welsh u16 Football team where they won the Victory Shield.



Chloe Jones represented Wales in the British School's Championships in the javelin. She won a silver medal with a throw of 42.5M.



Sebastian Dabrowski represented the Welsh u17 Football team in Portugal this month in the European qualifiers.

PE Department



Kyle was chosen for Wales u16s training camp and played a friendly match.



Julia won a tennis tournament for u18s in Warwick.



Albie represented Wales in Rugby league in September vs Yorkshire.

A huge well done to all of you on your achievements. We are incredibly proud of you!

WLCOW Award



Ayoub Ghattas, our Head Boy from 2020-2021, has been presented with the WLCOW Schools Award that recognises outstanding students. We are extremely proud of Ayoub who joined us in Year 7 back in 2014. During his time at Bishop Vaughan, Ayoub has always been a highly motivated and well-respected student. He is polite, hardworking, caring, courteous, respectful, and reliable. He shows an exceptionally mature attitude towards his learning and is keen to develop his knowledge and understanding in any way that he can.

He has now begun studying Pharmacy at Swansea University. During his time in Bishop Vaughan Sixth Form, Ayoub achieved A* in Mathematics, A* in Chemistry and A* in Biology, so his award was certainly well-deserved. Ayoub is always willing and keen to participate fully in whatever he throws himself into and we have no doubt that he will thrive on his chosen degree course and on his career path.

Every teacher who knows Ayoub wishes every success in his next steps and congratulates him on this award.

Science at Home

Swansea University delivered 264 home experiment boxes for learners linked to the S4 partnership project. We gave each learner in Year 7 a box and any remaining boxes were offered to Year 10 pupils. They contained the necessary practical equipment to complete nine experiments at home, including making edible drinks pods (to reduce plastic use), home-made lava lamps and looking at Chemistry, Biology and Physics experiments that are tailored to the curriculum.

They also had access to the S4 digital platform where they could watch videos and follow online instructions from the via S4 portal.

Pupils have been uploading images and videos onto Teams to show them completing these activities at home and the feedback from the pupils has been really positive. Many thanks to our partners in Swansea University for this great opportunity!



Botanical Gardens of Wales



Year 7 learners have recently been to the British Birds of Prey Centre at the Botanic Gardens of Wales as part of the S4 partnership. They were able to see a wide range of owls, hawks and eagles up close and were able to be part of the show itself by interacting with the birds. The learners really enjoyed to the opportunity to see these birds and discuss the welfare and conservation of our native species of birds of prey as some of them are rare in the UK.



History and Politics Department News

Proposed History trip to Normandy

The History department is in the early stages of planning a visit to Normandy in July 2022 to visit battlefields, museums and memorials linked to the Second World War. This visit will provide a valuable opportunity for students to develop their knowledge of the Second World War, as well as pay their respects to the fallen soldiers of this conflict. There will also be opportunities to participate in French culture and enjoy free time after a busy school year.

This trip is currently only in the proposal stage and will only go ahead if Welsh Covid regulations change to allow residential trips abroad. It is open to students in Years 10 and 11. Any pupils interested in attending can collect a letter from Miss Siddika in B4 with more details on the date and cost to help with parental planning and budgeting. We are very hopeful that we will be able to resume the department's regular trips to Europe, which have always been successful and enjoyable.

The History department trip to Normandy in July 2019



Super-Curricular Enrichment at BVS

The Masterclass Programme

Bishop Vaughan's pioneering programme of masterclasses has returned for its seventh year. Lecturers from Swansea University have been delivering mini-lectures workshops to students in Years 9 to 13 on a wide variety of topics, including Commercial Law, Zoology, History and Criminology. These masterclasses provide a unique opportunity for students to discover the latest research in these fields and to develop their wider knowledge.



9A Visit to Swansea University

Students from 9A were able to visit Swansea University before the summer holidays to participate in a day to develop their knowledge of higher education. Students learned more about student life, enjoyed a campus tour and worked in groups to create study aids for university. It was a hugely enjoyable day for all. Unfortunately, changes in Swansea University's Covid rules on campus visits have prevented the remainder of Year 9 tutorials taking part in this activity but it is hoped that these activity days will be able to resume in 2022 for the rest of the year group.

Super-Curricular Enrichment at BVS

Sixth Form Super-curricular Activities

Sixth Form students have participated in a number of super-curricular activities over the last few months. Students applying for Medicine have taken part in mock interviews to prepare them for their upcoming university interviews. Seven students have applied for Medicine and Dentistry this year and are awaiting their interview dates.

Sixteen students in the current Year 13 cohort completed the Step Up to Swansea Summer School. This took place over the summer and offered students masterclasses, university application support and academic skills development. The students are now able to receive a reduced grade offer from the university, as well as benefitting from stronger academic and personal skills. Bishop Vaughan Sixth Formers also completed Nuffield Research Placements this year. This competitive scheme offers research placements and work experience opportunities in universities and research laboratories. Students completed four week placements working alongside researchers and contributing to real projects.

Seren Foundation

Selected students in Years 8 and 9 have been invited to take part in the Seren Foundation. This is a Welsh Government scheme that provides additional academic challenges for students to fully stretch and challenge them. Invited students have been given details on how to access the online programme and take part in masterclasses and academic tasks.

Congratulations!

Finally, a huge congratulations to Hollie Wright who graduated from Cambridge University this summer with a First Class degree in History. Hollie was a regular attendee of the Masterclass Programme and participated in many of the super-curricular activities available in school. She is now completing her Masters degree at Cambridge – we wish her continued success in her academic career!

University Students at BVS

This academic year we are fortunate to have students from two universities join us at Bishop Vaughan in order to train as teachers. We have two mathematics students and a Biology student from Swansea University and students in History and Performing Arts joining us from UWTSD. We will be working in conjunction with the universities to provide bespoke intense provision for the students covering all aspects of the profession from behaviour management to introduction of the new curriculum. We wish all the student's good luck with their training.

Welsh Department

Decorate your Welsh book competition



- In September, the Welsh department ran a book competition for pupils in Years 7 and 8.
- Pupils were invited to decorate their Welsh books with any Welsh images.
- Welsh staff decided on 1st, 2nd and 3rd place from each class.
- All 1st place winners were then put forward to the Head of Department to decide an overall winner for each year.

Some examples of Year 7 winning entries



Welsh Department

Some examples of Year 8 winning entries



Diwrnod Shw'mae Su'mae 2021

- The Welsh Department celebrated 'Shw'mae Su'mae Day' on October 15th with the help of the Sixth Form prefect assigned to the Welsh Department.
- All tutorials in the school took part in a Welsh quiz, enjoyed watching a Welsh song video and voted on their favourite Welsh word.
- All pupils were encouraged to use Welsh on the day and all staff were encouraged to give out Tocyn Iaith (Welsh merits) to pupils.
- Some pupils enjoyed having a picture with friends in our Welsh selfie frame.
- Staff were asked about their favourite Welsh word, reminding all of us just how frequently we use these throughout our daily lives.

UK Junior Mathematical Challenge

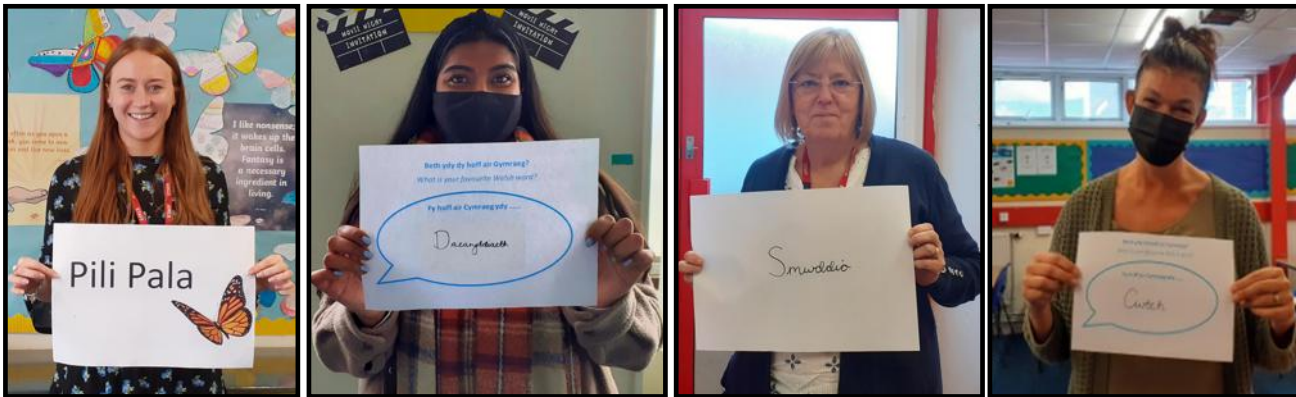
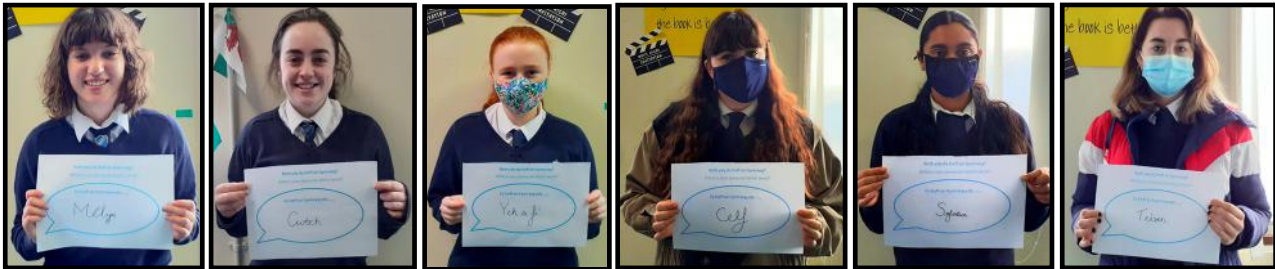
A group of 42 children all play tennis or football or both sports. The same number play tennis as play football. Twice as many play both tennis and football as play just tennis. How many children play football?

A: 7 B: 14 C: 21 D: 28 E: 35

Solution can be found on page 27.

Welsh Department

Some examples of 'Shw'mae Day' fun



Astrophysics Challenge Competition

Once again Bishop Vaughan has secured its position in this year's Astro Challenge Competition. We are one of the top scoring participating schools (many of which are top private schools). Of the fourteen students who participated, eight have achieved a Gold award, which this year has been given only to the top 15%. The remainder have all secured Silver awards, which is still an amazing achievement!



Efren	Sabastian	Gold
Mateusz	Lesiak	Gold
Arunmoli	Vamanan	Gold
Christy	Jojoy	Gold
Remiel	Jino	Gold
Timophey	Vorona	Gold
Rhys	Kuriakose	Gold
Joel	Abraham	Gold
Hannah	Iduyan	Silver
Nia	Bibi	Silver
vanessa	williams	Silver
Alona	Jaimon	Silver
Delta	Isaac	Silver
Ann	Punnoose	Silver



UK Junior Mathematical Challenge

Answer is E 35.

Let the number of children who play only football be f , the number of children who play only tennis be t and the number of children who play both sports be b . Since there are 42 children, $f + t + b = 42$. Also, since the number of children who play tennis is equal to the number of children who play only football, $t + b = f$. Therefore $f + f = 42$. So $f = 21$ and $t + b = 21$. Finally, twice as many play both tennis and football as play just tennis. Therefore $b = 2t$. Substituting for b , gives $t + 2t = 21$. Hence $t = 7$. Therefore the number of children who play football is $42 - t = 42 - 7 = 35$

Thank You!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our pupils and their families for the way in which they have adapted so readily to all of the challenges and changes with which they have been faced not only over the course of the past term but throughout the course of the pandemic.

Whether adapting to remote learning last year, reintegrating into a school divided into year group zones, engaging in school-based assessments rather than external exams, or accepting limitations on group, social and extra-curricular activities, our pupils have been truly exceptional.

We know that the last year and a half has been tremendously challenging for our parent and carer community also, and we recognise the pressures placed upon you by the above and in addition by the pressures that many families may have faced due to uncertainty regarding the health or employment of family members.

Despite all of the above, there has been a strong sense of pupils supporting one another, of their families responding to pressures with strength and determination, and of members of the school community continuing - despite those pressures - to show resilience in finding ways to support one another.

I would also like to thank our committed and caring staff - the teachers who have endeavoured to ensure that our pupils receive the qualifications they deserve and who have adapted their 'craft' - their teaching - to delivery on remote platforms. Our pastoral, support and administrative staff have similarly all undertaken roles well outside the scope of anything for which they trained when embarking on their careers!

We are all well aware that the pandemic continues to pose challenges for young people, their families and their schools, and none of us yet know whether there will be restrictions in January. Should there be any changes by Welsh Government to the planned return to school for all of our pupils on **Wednesday 5th January**, we will notify all parents and carers at the earliest opportunity.

In the meantime, we hope that all pupils and their families have a thoroughly restful holiday. We commend our pupils once more on the maturity and resilience that they have shown yet again this term and we pray for a return to school and a New Year that take us ever closer to 'normality' and in which all are blessed with good health.

Mrs. Pole



Learning Zone

Learning Zone

Come along and access support after school!

**Monday
to
Thursday**



**3.00pm
to
4.00pm**

**Free tuition with subject teachers every day.
Support with independent learning.**

**Access to computers to complete
SAM Learning and Mathswatch.**

**Opportunities for collaborative learning.
Rewards for attending.**

Learning Zone Co-ordinator — Mrs A Jones

Location: The Library

School Uniform

September 2021-August 2022

Three of our suppliers are:

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

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

Years 7-11

- Blazer:** With school logo (navy) - compulsory garment
- Jumper:** Fine knit jumper with school logo (navy) - non-compulsory
- Tie:** Years 7-11 official school tie
- Socks:** With trousers: dark coloured, or white
With skirts, standard grey or white
- Tights:** Should be flesh-coloured, medium grey or black, plain and seamless.
NB socks or tights **MUST** be worn.
- Blouse/Shirt:** Plain white shirt
- Skirt:** Grey knee-length skirt
- Trousers:** Grey trouser, **NOT** fashion or jeans. No denim, leather, flares, leggings, skinny style etc.
- Shoes:** Black formal school shoes (leather/artificial leather) with flat or low heels. Ankle boots may be worn in winter provided they conform to the above regulations (not with skirts). Trainers are not permitted. Felt/fabric or canvas shoes are not permitted. Heavy boots (military, Ugg etc.) are not permitted. No forms of logo.
- Outer Garments:** Pupils may wear standard length coats, anoraks or cagoules. However, all outer garments, of whatever type, must be plain, navy blue/black and single coloured. Pupils may not wear denim, hoodies, leather look jacket, no faux fur, tracksuit tops or cardigans.

No logos, writing, patterns or stripes of any description should be present. Hats e.g. beanies, baseball caps are not permitted in any circumstances. Head bands must be plain and dark. There is no necessity for anorak hoods to be worn at school.
- Jewellery:** A single sleeper or a single metal stud of minimum size in the lobe. No other piercings are permitted e.g. stretchers, spacers, glass, nose or tongue piercing. A medallion or chain may be worn if discreet. It must be removed for PE/Games. All other jewellery is forbidden. It should be noted that tattoos are not permitted.
- Make-up/Hair:** Make-up is not allowed. If hair dye/highlights are used they should be a single natural colour with no extreme contrasts (i.e. purples, reds, dip dyes etc. are not permitted), no 'designs' to be shaved into the hair. No 'skin head' type haircuts or shaved patches (not shorter than grade 2). No braiding with a mixture of hair colours. No artificial plaits or braids. No painted nails or nail extensions.

Games Kit

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

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

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

Sixth Form Uniform

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

Members of Sixth Form are expected to wear the uniform throughout the school day. A single sleeper or a single stud of minimum size may be worn in the lobe. No other piercings are permitted e.g. stretchers, spacers, nose or tongue piercing. If hair dye/highlights are used they should be a natural colour with no extreme contrasts (i.e. greens etc. are not permitted), no 'designs' to be shaved into the hair. No 'skin head' type haircuts. Baseball caps are not permitted in any circumstances.

Any jewellery must be removed if in the judgement of any staff, instructors or technicians it constitutes a health and safety hazard, especially in laboratories, workshops and PE areas.

Attendance



Dear Parents and carers,

We want to take this opportunity to say thank you to those that have continued to ensure that their child has attended school regularly throughout this difficult period. We understand some parents may have ongoing concerns around safety, however, we are following Welsh Government and Public Health Guidance for the safety of all pupils, staff and the community.

The expectation was set by Welsh Government that from the 12th April 2021 all schools were open, and ALL children were expected to attend.

Regular school attendance is essential in order to support children in achieving their full educational potential and supporting their wellbeing. The Education Welfare Service and schools are concerned that not all children have attended and have missed the opportunity to meet up with their friends and fully engage in their education.

As a Service we need to inform you that Fixed Penalty Notices and court proceedings will be re-instated in the near future. Attendance during this period will be monitored and if children have a high number of unauthorised absences, as well as a pattern of irregular attendance, including missing days each week and poor punctuality: there is a possibility that fixed penalty notices and court procedures may be issued.

The Education Welfare Service and school staff will continue to support children and families through this difficult period. It is now more important than ever that you as parents and carers establish positive, consistent routines with your children. If you need any support, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Let us work together so that our children can make the most of their education and experiences at school.

GWASANAETH LLES ADDYSG/EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE
UNED CEFNOGI YSGOLION/SCHOOL SUPPORT UNIT
CANOLFAN DDINESIG, HEOL YSTUMLLWYNARTH, ABERTAWA SA1 3SN
CIVIC CENTRE, OYSTERMOUTH ROAD, SWANSEA SA1 3SN

RHIF FFON/TELEPHONE: (01792) 637648, EMAIL: EducationWelfareService@Swansea.gov.uk

*Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymdrin â gohebiaeth Gymraeg a Saesneg i'r un safonau ac amserlenni.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and will deal with Welsh and English correspondence to the same standards and timescales.*

Attendance



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

95-100% attendance	Best chance of success	Your child is taking full advantage of every learning opportunity.
90-95% attendance	At least 2 weeks of learning missed	Satisfactory. Your child may have to spend time catching up with work.
85-90% attendance	At least 4 weeks of learning missed	Your child may be at risk of underachieving and may need extra support from you to catch up with work.
80-85% attendance	At least 5 ½ weeks of learning missed	Your child's poor attendance has a significant impact on learning.
Below 80% attendance	At least 7½ weeks of learning missed	Your child is missing out on a broad and balanced education. You are at risk of prosecution.

Absence requests from school during term time

We ask Parents/Carers that absences from school during term time should be kept to a minimum so that pupils are not missing vital lessons and examinations.

All absence requests within term time will be viewed as individual cases by the Headteacher.

Please download a **Request for Absence form** from our website; alternatively forms are available for collection from Student Services.

If you have any queries please feel free to our Attendance Manager Mrs. E-J Gwyther on extension 2219 or via email GwytherE3@hwb.cymru.net who will assist you further.



Please download our free school app MyEd. The app gives you direct access to your child's attendance and are you are able to send us messages directly free of charge regarding your child's absence from school. You are required to report your child's absence on a daily basis.

Parents' Information

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure their children receive a full time education – THIS IS THE LAW.

Parents must ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time.

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

Attendance telephone number (local rate): 0844 239 3548
Attendance text number: 07624 816695
Email: bishopvaughanA@hwbcymru.net

Alternatively, the school's Attendance Manager is Mrs E-J Gwyther and she is available via the school's telephone number 01792 772006 Ext 2219.

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

- Medical related absences
- Religious day of observance

The School Can Help

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

- Bullying
- Exclusions
- Child Protection
- Advice and Support

If you want any help and advice about your child's attendance, please contact

Mr S Richards (Education Welfare Officer) on 01792 772006 Ext 2218 or Mrs E-J Gwyther on 01792 772006 Ext 2219.

Pupil Information

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

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



Bus Passes



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



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

Getting to School

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

Parking Outside Bishop Vaughan



A letter has been received from the School Community Police Officer asking us to pass on the concerns of local residents in relation to parking and vehicles causing obstructions outside the school from 3.00 pm every afternoon.

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

Mobile Telephones

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

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



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

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



School Website

The school website can be found at: www.bishopvaughan.co.uk

Lost Property

We still have a number of items in 'lost property', which is located in Student Services.

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

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

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

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



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