



Friday 11 July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

**Leadership Team:**

Barry Doherty (Headteacher)  
Natalie Hancock (DSL)  
Alan Trainer  
Daniel Gent  
Yvette Armistead

I understand the priorities and so I shall begin with confirming our lunchtime (1:35pm till 2:15pm) ice cream arrangements for next week as follows:

- Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July: Year 7s only at lunchtime (cash only)
- Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July: Year 8s only (exact cash and card accepted)
- Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July: Year 9s only (exact cash and card accepted)
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July: Year 10s only (exact cash and card accepted)

Year 12 students (and staff) may choose a day(s) to suit them but are asked to turn up before or after the other year groups. We have negotiated a price which we hope will help budget for this end of term treat:

- £2.00 for a cone
- £2.50 for a 99 flake



### *Year 12 Sports Leaders Awards*

On Wednesday, Mr Ward and I were honoured to praise and present certificates to 77 Year 12s who have successfully completed their Community Sports Leader Awards. It is clear that there was something particularly special about this year's young leaders. Not only are they a very popular group with their tutors and teachers but the external assessor commented on their striking leadership skills in terms of being particularly engaged with the primary school pupils and being far less reliant on adult supervision and suggestions than typical cohorts in other schools. Mr Ward and I emphasised the feeling they have received from being 'looked up to' by the little ones

and there was a cyclical element to all of it because the vast majority enjoyed being on the other end of the programme when they were in our partner primary schools. We are even more proud of them this week!



Over 2000 sports-based experiences of primary aged children were provided by this group, and I have also been asked to pass on the praise and admiration of our partner primary headteachers.

### *PTA Fundraising Updates*

**(1) THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN:** Fabulous news... work on converting K1 into our Community Kitchen begins on Monday. It will be ready in September and extend opportunities for your children to study cooking, catering and food technology. We also plan for it to be used as an intervention base and take advantage of the eagerness of our students to cook and be together. Big developments of this nature are fairly rare and only happen because of committed partners working together: This could not take place without the RLT's support (thank you, Malv!).



This could not take place without additional funding by our amazing PTA (thank you Teresa and Ali, and all of the gang!). This could not take place without Mrs Trimmer, our School Business Partner, steering the site-development-ship in the right direction. Just before writing this letter to you, she and I furiously debated the colour schemes for the walls, flooring, base units, and work surfaces. We decided she was right all along (it's easier that way). And then there is the design & technology department, led by Mr Newton, who has pushed, expanded and demanded on behalf of his team and the students who really do love their subject and opt to study 'tech' in greater numbers at both GCSE and A level.



**(2) YEAR 7 SCREEN SWAP:** Last week, our Year 7 students embraced a powerful initiative called *Screen Swap*, encouraging students to disconnect from their devices and reconnect with the world around them. The response was inspiring. From kayaking and frog hunting to singing with a choir and attending music festivals, our students



threw themselves into real-life experiences with enthusiasm. Many helped at home—cooking meals, picking fruit, and lent a hand with younger siblings' homework. One student impressively avoided screens for twenty-three hours straight! The creativity and kindness shown were incredible. Winners of the PTA prizes had enjoyed water balloon cricket and helped by watering a neighbour's plants for the whole week! In a shining example of community spirit, one student has already raised an amazing £135 for the PTA's Raise the Roof Appeal. It's been a joyful reminder that real connections, adventure, and making a difference don't need a screen. Well done to every student who took part! This will run again next year and include both years 7 and 8.

### **(3) BANNAU BRYCHEINIOG NATIONAL PARK**

**(Brecon Beacons):** Thirteen of us found the only spot in Europe that was definitely not experiencing a heat wave over the weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> June. As we have shared with other colleagues, we walked up a hill and came down a mountain, facing heavy clouds, mist, limited views (!) but great company and camaraderie in aid of our goal to raise the roof on the outdoor area. Our thanks to 'Papa White' for getting us match-fit and back down safely. Plans are afoot for a second adventure in The Malvern's (aka 'The Birmingham Alps') and we look forward to widening the invitation still further... Over £1000 raised btw!



### **Biometrics Update**

Close to 800 students are now ready for September. We are doing some 'mopping-up' of years 7 to 10 and Year 12 before the break, and then the rest in September. More details on this appear in [my previous letter to families](#). Registration can be completed in the MCAS app by clicking on parent approval from the dashboard and then choosing biometric approval.

### *Work Experience*

155 students in Year 10 participated in a work experience placement during the entire week beginning 30<sup>th</sup> June. I do not wish to steal the headlines from Mr Parker's imminent write-up in the forthcoming CNS-Newsletter, except to say a big thank you to him and to Mrs Matthews, for her direct support in ensuring all of the administration that lies behind these experiences was completed fully and on time. But all of that effort is worth it because that who take part almost always have either an exciting or clarifying experience. We always see a clearer focus after work experience and a greater sense of the opportunities that lie ahead - but also the need to secure the keys to unlock those doors first. Knowing what you do not want to do can often be as helpful as confirming what we do want to do with our lives.

### *End of Term Arrangements*

Whilst it is still some time away, it is worth reminding families that it's our sports day next Friday (weather permitting) with a backup sports day pencilled in for Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July. Our final day of term will be Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July with school closing to all students at 12:30pm.

The new school term begins for Year 7s on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025. All other year groups return on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September at the normal time.

### *And finally...*

Some more sweltering weather to come of course and we shall continue to provide shaded spaces at break and lunch, alongside ample cold water in and around the canteen areas.

I look forward to writing to you in the final week of term.

Yours faithfully



Barry Doherty  
Headteacher