



Spring Term 2026

# Newsletter

## Key dates:

- Last date of Spring Term – 27/03/26
- Easter Fun Day – 02/04/26
- INSET Day – 13/04/26
- Pupils back to school – 14/04/2026
- INSET DAY – 20/07/26

## Staffing updates:

We say farewell temporarily to Shona Roberts-Morgan who has started her secondment working for the Local Authority as a habilitation specialist and to Nicola Clark who has started her role as Head of School at Ysgol Cambrian. We also say goodbye to Natalie Powell and our Physical Therapies coordinator, Ciaran Davies, and wish them both well in their new roles.

## Summer Term Topics:

- **Foundation Phase** – 'Once Upon a Time'
- **Key Stage 2** – 'Act It Out'
- **Key Stage 3** – 'See Your Name in Lights'
- **14-19 Department** – 'Dance & Drama'

## Safeguarding:

We all have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. If you have any concerns about the health or safety of a child at school—or feel something may be troubling them—you should share this information with a member of staff straight away. Our safeguarding officers are Mr. Aron Bradley, Mr Nigel Hendy, Mrs Layla Stanton & Mrs Rhianon Mellor.



## Taiko Performance

Our Ysgol Hen Felin Taiko Drummers recently performed at the RCT Learner Resilience Awards at The Muni, Pontypridd, after their impressive community performances caught the organisers' attention. Blending traditional Taiko with upbeat modern music, they delivered a lively and memorable performance that was praised as "absolutely fantastic" and "a credit to the school." The group is also recording their very first Taiko album—a brilliant milestone for our talented young musicians.



## Parental Engagement

This Spring Term has been a busy and positive one at our Wellbeing Centre. Families have taken part in a range of support sessions, including our Nurturing Programme, Mindfulness activities, coffee mornings, toileting workshops, and menstrual cycle workshops. Therapeutic Tuesdays have continued to offer valuable wellbeing support, and we were pleased to welcome Citizen's Advice, MENCAP, and Careers Wales to guide families and older pupils with next-step planning.

Follow us on 'X' [formerly Twitter]: @YsgolHenFelin



# Rotterdam

Some of our pupils were fortunate to take part in a wonderful trip to Rotterdam—our first abroad visit in many years. The trip was designed to give pupils the valuable experience of travelling overseas, exploring a new environment, and building confidence in unfamiliar surroundings. It offered meaningful real-life learning opportunities far beyond the classroom, including travelling by aeroplane for the first time for some of our pupils. During the visit, pupils spent time at VSO De Hoge Brug, a specialist school in Rotterdam, where they learned about education in another country and took part in activities such as boxing lessons. They also enjoyed a water-taxi ride and visits to key attractions, including the Markthal, Rotterdam Zoo, and other local sights. These experiences gave pupils the chance to immerse themselves in a different culture and create lasting memories. Both pupils and staff thoroughly enjoyed the trip and are excited for future opportunities that continue to broaden horizons and enrich learning.



## International Languages

During International Languages Week, our pupils enjoyed a wonderful journey around the world through language and culture.

Foundation Phase learners explored Spanish and Chinese through simple greetings, counting activities, songs, games, and even tasting traditional treats. In Key Stage 2, pupils discovered German, learning phrases such as “hallo” and “guten Tag,” while also exploring music, food, and famous cultural figures. Key Stage 3 and our 14–19 department focused on Ukrainian, practising greetings like “pryvit” and “dobryi den,” and engaging in art, songs, and food-based activities inspired by Ukrainian traditions.

We were also delighted to welcome members of the Local Authority, who carried out a learning walk across the school during the week. This visit was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the rich language experiences and cultural learning opportunities that our pupils access across the school.



## Communication:

As usual, we shall continue to contact you by telephone, school text service, school website and through 'X' [formerly Twitter] with any updates. So, we kindly ask you to ensure that we have your up-to-date contact telephone number and follow the school on 'X'. Also, let your friends know when there has been some form of communication and that way, nobody should miss anything!



# Colour Run

This term, we hosted our second school Colour Run at Gelligaled Park which was a fantastic celebration of ASD and neurodiversity, bringing our whole community together. All pupils took part, including our Tonyrefail Early Years pupils, in ways that suited them best—running, walking, wheeling, or moving through the course at their own pace—making the event truly inclusive for all. Face paints, mascots, and lively music added to the excitement, creating a full festival-style experience! We were delighted to welcome pupils, staff, parents, carers, governors, members of the local community, and our partner integration schools. Generous donations raised on the day will go directly toward developing the outdoor area at our Wellbeing Centre, helping us create a warm, inclusive space that supports wellbeing, play, and family engagement for all.



# Curriculum Update

This term we have placed a strong focus on developing reading across the school—supporting early reading skills for our younger pupils and promoting reading for pleasure among our older learners. Classes have explored a range of stories linked to our Spring Term topic, and reading has continued to play an important role within our life-skills curriculum. Teachers have also been exploring creative ways to make reading engaging, including developing personalised stories for pupils using Artificial Intelligence. To support a consistent approach across the school, all teaching staff have taken part in leamer-progression meetings with the Senior Leadership Team to strengthen our shared understanding of what reading means for our learners. We are excited to introduce and trial 'Reading Eggs' throughout the Summer Term, which is an online platform that will help pupils develop their reading skills both at school and at home—so keep an eye out for more information on this!





# ALN School Sports

Ysgol Hen Felin recently hosted an action-packed Basketball Festival, welcoming more than sixty pupils from over eight ALN schools for a fantastic day of sport, teamwork, and fun. The atmosphere was brilliant, with pupils fully engaging in the activities and showing great enthusiasm throughout. Staff and visitors shared extremely positive feedback about how much everyone enjoyed the event. A huge congratulations to the Ysgol Hen Felin team, who worked brilliantly together and went on to win the festival! The winning group proudly toured the school afterwards, sharing their achievement with classmates and staff. It was a wonderful day celebrating sport and we are excited to host more events like this next term.

We are also incredibly proud of our KS2 group, who represented the school at the Pentathlon South Wales Special School Ten-Pin Bowling Championship—bringing home another fantastic win!

## Comic Relief

This year's Red Nose Day saw pupils and staff arrive with imaginative, vibrant hairstyles, adding colour and excitement to the day. Pupils took part in a variety of activities, including a cake sale, a "Soak the Teacher" challenge, movement games, red-themed crafts, and science experiments. It was an enjoyable event supporting a worthy cause. Thank you to all families for their support and for the generous cake donations.



## Upcoming Dates for Your Diary at the Wellbeing Centre:

- Easter Fun Day – 2nd April 2026
- Reading Rhondda sessions – pupil and family reading workshop every Wednesday afternoon.
- Therapeutic Thursdays - Activities for parents/carers focusing on wellbeing and emotional regulation.
- 'Little Rainbows' Pre-diagnosis Toddler Group continues every Thursday from 1:30pm–2:50pm.
- Post-16 Meeting – 27th April 2026
- Confidence-Building & Resilience Training (A three-day programme) - date to be confirmed.
- Nurturing Programme - Running for six weeks on Mondays (PM).
- Hairdresser Visit – May (exact date to be confirmed).
- 'Teen Life' Programme coming in the Summer Term - keep an eye out for booking details.

To book a session or learn more, please contact Laura Deans. Further workshops and parental-engagement opportunities will be announced via text, letters and the school's social media [X] soon.





Our School Council has had a busy and successful Spring term. Pupils worked closely with local ALN School, Ysgol Ty Coch to support the development of the new 3-19 ALN School, Ysgol Cambrian, helping to choose a final school-uniform design after exploring and voting on different options. A particular highlight was their role in the staff-recruitment process for Ysgol Cambrian, where they interviewed candidates, shared thoughtful feedback and represented Ysgol Hen Felin with maturity and confidence.

If you'd like to see more of what we've been up to, take a look at our School Council playlist on the school's YouTube channel.

