



Summer Term 2026

Newsletter

Key dates:

- Last date of Summer Term – 17th July 2026
- Pupil's return: 3rd September 2026
- Next Year's INSET Days: 1st & 2nd September 2026, 4th & 5th January 2027, 19th March 2027 and 5th April 2027

Staffing updates:

At the end of this academic year, we say farewell to a number of valued members of staff. Many will play an important role in establishing the new ALN special school for Rhondda Cynon Taf, Ysgol Cambrian, where they will utilise the knowledge, skills and expertise developed during their time at Ysgol Hen Felin to help shape and strengthen its future provision. Others have secured new positions and promotions in schools and local authorities across the region.

We would like to thank all departing staff for their dedication, commitment and contribution to our school community, and we wish them every success and happiness in the next stage of their careers.

Alongside these changes, Mr Robert Hemming has taken up the role of Assistant Headteacher for Whole-School Wellbeing, while Miss Stephanie Lewis has been appointed Assistant Headteacher for Curriculum and Provision. Miss Kirsty Harris will oversee the temporary role of Foundation Phase Lead, Mrs Amy Sprague has been appointed Key Stage 2 Lead, and Mrs Sarah Swain has taken on the role of Key Stage 3 Lead.

We congratulate all colleagues on their new appointments and look forward to the continued positive impact they will have across the school.



End of Year Celebrations

Celebrating the achievements of our pupils is always one of the highlights of the Summer Term for our entire school community. This term, we were delighted to host our Work Experience Celebration, recognising the accomplishments of pupils within the 14-19 Department. The event showcased the valuable contributions pupils have made through their work experience placements, with certificates presented to acknowledge their hard work, commitment and positive impact within the local community.

We also held our annual End-of-Year Celebration Event, where we recognised our Pupils of the Year from across the school. This special occasion provided an opportunity for pupils, families and staff to come together and celebrate the dedication, resilience and achievements demonstrated by our pupils throughout the year as they continue to develop their individual strengths, skills and independence.

In addition, we marked an important milestone by celebrating our leavers. At the end of this academic year, we say farewell to nine pupils from our 14-19 Department. We are incredibly proud of all they have achieved during their time at Ysgol Hen Felin and wish them every success and happiness as they move on to their new provisions and the next stage of their journey.

Autumn Term's Topics:

- **Foundation Phase** – 'Guess How Much I Love You?'
- **Key Stage 2** – 'Me and My Family'
- **Key Stage 3** – 'Family Tree'
- **14-19 Department** – 'Relationships'

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YHF Progression Step Documents



Curriculum Updates

At Ysgol Hen Felin, we are committed to providing teaching and learning opportunities that are tailored to the individual needs of every learner, regardless of age, additional learning needs, or stage of development. Our Curriculum Development Team works continuously to refine and enhance our curriculum, ensuring that staff have effective frameworks to monitor progress and plan meaningful next steps for learning.

Throughout the year, the team has further developed our curriculum offer to ensure it remains learner-centred, reflecting our belief that the curriculum should adapt to the learner, rather than the learner adapting to the curriculum. This approach ensures that learning experiences are purposeful, personalised and relevant to every pupil.

As part of this work, we have developed our bespoke Journey to Progression Step 3 curriculum, designed to provide an inclusive and flexible pathway that meets the needs of both current and future learners. We are excited to begin rolling out this new curriculum from September 2026, further strengthening our commitment to ensuring that every pupil can make meaningful progress through appropriate challenge and support as part of their individual learning journey.

Celebrating one year at Tonyrefail Early Years Centre

This term, we proudly celebrated the first anniversary of our satellite provision, Tonyrefail Early Years Centre, which has been led by our Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Rhiannon Mellor. Over the past year, the provision has gone from strength to strength, providing a nurturing and bespoke learning environment for our youngest pupils.

As a school, we are delighted to be able to offer this specialist provision and further strengthen our wider school community. Pupils attending the Centre have embraced opportunities to participate in whole-school events and experiences and have become a valued part of the Ysgol Hen Felin community.

Some of the highlights of the year have included welcoming families to many of our pupils' first Christmas concert performances, hosting family learning workshops and enjoying a successful Sensory Sports Day. These events have provided valuable opportunities for pupils and families to engage with the wider school community and celebrate important milestones together.

Throughout the year, the Centre has achieved many successes, including hosting visits from Local Authority representatives and receiving highly positive feedback during a visit from members of the Welsh Government. We look forward to building on these achievements as the provision continues to grow and thrive in the years ahead.



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!



Cynefin Fest 2026

This term, we hosted our annual Cynefin Fest, a much-anticipated event that was enjoyed by pupils and staff alike. Designed as an immersive experience within the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE), the festival brought together music, performance, creativity and celebration, providing pupils with a memorable opportunity to engage in the expressive arts in a fun and meaningful way.

Pupils enjoyed a wide range of festival experiences, including a BBQ, mocktail bar, live music, an ice cream van, Domino's Pizza and a candy floss stall. Festival-goers also enjoyed face and glitter painting, festival wristbands, bouncy castles, soft play and circus activities, creating an authentic festival atmosphere across the school.

Dressed in their festival-themed attire, complete with bucket hats, sunglasses and matching t-shirts, pupils sang, danced and celebrated alongside their friends and staff throughout the day.

A particular highlight was the fantastic musical entertainment on offer. We were delighted to welcome performers from the Rhondda Cynon Taf Music Service, while our own talented pupils and staff showcased their musical abilities through memorable vocal performances and energetic Taiko drumming displays. Hearing pupils perform some of their favourite songs was a proud moment for everyone involved – including Michael Jackson and Tom Jones tributes!

Blessed with beautiful sunshine, Cynefin Fest provided a wonderful opportunity for our school community to come together, celebrate creativity and self-expression, and create lasting memories. It was a fitting way to end the Summer Term and has undoubtedly been one of the highlights of the school year.



Sports Days

A huge well done to all of our pupils for participating in this year's Sensory and Sports Days, and a big thank you to all the parents and carers who attended to support and encourage their children throughout these special events.

These days provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate resilience, teamwork and determination while having fun and celebrating success together. They also showcase the strong relationships, sense of belonging and supportive team ethos that are evident throughout our school every day.

Pupils enthusiastically took part in a wide range of activities tailored to meet their individual needs and abilities. For some, the focus was on engaging in sensory experiences and developing confidence, while others embraced the opportunity to demonstrate their sporting talents and competitive spirit. It was wonderful to see pupils cheering on their peers, encouraging one another and giving their very best to earn valuable points for their house teams. Pupils were a credit to both themselves and the school community.





The Wellbeing Centre:

The Wellbeing Centre continues to be a valuable hub for both our pupils and their families. Throughout the Summer Term, we have delivered a wide range of support groups, workshops and information sessions, including toileting workshops, The Nurturing Programme, confidence-building sessions, Behaviour Hub, communication support, and Post-16 Pathways to Adulthood, alongside many other opportunities for families to access advice, guidance and support.

We are also delighted to announce the return of our **after-school clubs**, which will take place every Thursday in the 2026-2027 academic year. For further information, please contact Laura Deans.

Dates for the Diary:

- **Summer Fun Days** at Ysgol Hen Felin, Ystrad:
 - 30th July (1:00pm to 5:00pm)
 - 4th August (1:00pm to 4:00pm)
 - 11th August (1:00pm to 4:00pm)
- **18th August 2026** - Family Bus Trip to Barry Island (advance booking required)
- **Reading Rhondda** - Family reading sessions every Wednesday afternoon
- **Therapeutic Thursdays** - Wellbeing and emotional regulation activities for parents and carers
- **Little Rainbows** Pre-Diagnosis Toddler Group - Every Thursday, 1:30pm to 2:50pm
- **Hairdresser Visit** - September (date to be confirmed)
- **EarlyBird Plus** and **Teen Life Programme** - Commencing week beginning 7th September 2026
- **Behaviour Hub Workshop** - 25th September 2026

Coming Soon:

We are also planning a range of additional support and information sessions, including:

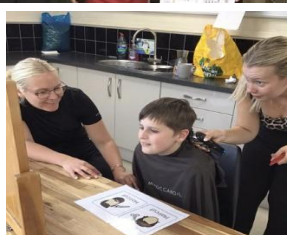
- Toileting & Sleep Clinics
- Careers Workshops & Post-16 Coffee Morning
- Citizens Advice Sessions
- Health and Wellbeing Workshops
- Menstrual Health and Period Dignity Support
- Additional Family Fun Days

*To book a place or find out more about any of the opportunities available through the Wellbeing Centre, please contact **Laura Deans**. Further workshops, events and family engagement opportunities will be shared via text message, letters and the school's social media.*

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 Rhiannon Mellor.





Pupil Wellbeing Groups

Throughout the year, we have established a range of targeted wellbeing groups to support the needs of our learners. Led by our Wellbeing Officer, Laura Deans, and supported by non-teaching staff across the school, these groups provide pupils with opportunities to express themselves, develop confidence and enhance their emotional wellbeing.

Delivered weekly within our Safe Space Wellbeing Centre, the groups focus on a range of themes. These include our Key Stage 2 Girls' Group, which promotes positive social interaction and friendship-building; our E-Safety Group, which supports pupils in developing safe and responsible online behaviours; and our Key Stage 3 Girls' Group, which provides guidance and support around topics such as body changes, period dignity and personal development. This work has been further enriched through support from Local Authority colleagues, helping our pupils develop the skills, confidence and independence they need to thrive.

Immersive Room Opening

This term marked the official opening of our state-of-the-art Immersive Room, made possible through the generous sponsorship of Morgan Sindall Construction and a donation from the family of our much-loved former pupil, Deacon Owen.

The room provides pupils with engaging, interactive and multi-sensory learning experiences that support communication, wellbeing, emotional regulation and curriculum access. It has already become a valuable resource within the school, enhancing learning opportunities and enriching the experiences of our pupils.

We are extremely grateful to Morgan Sindall Construction and Deacon's family for their generosity in helping make this exciting facility a reality.



End of Year Message

As another successful year at Ysgol Hen Felin comes to a close, we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to the life of our school. We extend our sincere thanks to the Governing Body for their continued support and commitment to ensuring the school is well led and staffed by the very best professionals. We are also grateful to our dedicated staff, whose hard work, care and expertise enable our pupils to thrive and reach their full potential.

We would like to thank our parents, carers and families for their ongoing support, not only in ensuring excellent attendance for your child, but also in engaging fully with school life and working in partnership with us throughout the year.

Most importantly, we would like to thank our pupils. Their determination, resilience, enthusiasm and individuality make Ysgol Hen Felin such a special place to learn and work. No two days are ever the same, and our pupils continue to amaze and inspire us every day.

Finally, we wish all pupils and their families a happy, safe and enjoyable summer break. We hope you have the opportunity to relax, spend quality time together and create many special memories. We look forward to welcoming pupils back to school on **Thursday 3rd September 2026**.

