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*Ysgol Gyfun*  
**PORTHCRAWL**  
*Comprehensive School*

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**Headteacher/Pennaeth: M. J. Stephens NPQH, P Dip Ed, BA (Hons)**

**Deputy Headteacher/Dirprwy Bennaeth: D.W.A Beard BA (Hons)**

**Deputy Headteacher/Dirprwy Bennaeth: C-A. Painter BA (Hons)**

16<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Dear parents/carers,

As the autumn term draws to a close and we near the Christmas break, as I did last year, I would like to offer a few words to reflect on 2024. It really has been another 'excellent' year at PCS - filled with new developments, exceptional achievement, and moments that have enriched the lives of the students at Porthcawl Comprehensive School. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all families for entrusting us with the education and development of your son/daughter. Your support, dedication and involvement has played a significant part in making 2024 another successful year.

There have been notable successes this term with the school being awarded the Carnegie Mental Health Gold Award in recognition of our excellent whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing provision. In addition, we achieved the Cyber First Gold Award for recognition in delivering 'excellence' in cyber security education. The school has been an incredibly busy place over the last 15 weeks with several activities, trips, guest speakers and residential events taking place. To name a few, these include, the Lille Christmas Market trip, the U13 South Wales Tennis Championships, the Young Playwrights' Festival, a Future Chef Event, the Year 9 First Give Project, a Year 7 Welsh Theatre Trip and most recently our Annual Carol Service at All Saints Church. There have also been numerous charity events including Children in Need, a Foodbank collection, and a Community Christmas Celebration coordinated by our Wellbeing Ambassadors for members of the local community.

In October we received an Interim Visit from Estyn. This visit focussed on the two of the recommendations from our last Core Inspection. We enjoyed sharing the work we have completed to date, and we were particularly pleased that the inspection team noted:

- The substantial amount of work undertaken by senior leaders to revise our processes for self-evaluation and planning for improvement;
- How senior leaders have collaborated with staff to develop a set of pedagogical principles to improve consistency and create a culture of high-quality teaching and learning;
- How our team of teaching and learning champions have developed useful resources, such as the teaching and learning toolkit, to support teachers in developing their practice;
- How leaders support departments helpfully to provide pupils with opportunities to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum;

- That our self-evaluation and planning for improvement work has a stronger focus on learning and teaching;
- That teachers are supported to improve their practice with a helpful professional learning offer, which includes useful support material for developing teaching; and
- How the 'Porthcawl Pedagogical Principles' provides a beneficial framework for evaluation and is helping teachers to develop a shared understanding of the school's strategic approach to teaching and learning.

We will continue to develop and improve all that we do, to ensure the very best for the students at Porthcawl Comprehensive School. I am very proud of our work and achievements to date.

As shared in our Autumn Term 2024 Edition of the Porthcawl Post, through school events and activities, we have achieved so much! Our pupils have excelled in competitions, showcased their talents in music, science and mathematics. They have participated in drama productions and demonstrated excellence in sport – to name a few! Across the curriculum, we have celebrated their progress, their community work and their overall efforts that embody the 'Curriculum for Porthcawl' and 'The Porthcawl Pupil'. I have thoroughly enjoyed celebrating success and achievement via the Porthcawl Pupil of the Week – it is the highlight of my week!

I look forward to more celebration and recognition in 2025.

To read the Autumn Term 2024 Edition of the Porthcawl Post please follow:

<https://www.porthcawlschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/PCS-Porthcawl-Post-Winter-2024.pdf>

As we reach the Christmas period and the end of another calendar year, I would like to thank all parents/carers, students and staff for their continued support and efforts. Your involvement in school events, engagement in meetings and attendance at various initiatives has been invaluable. Parents/carers, your encouragement and support at home has undoubtedly played a significant role in your child's progress and achievements. I would also like to thank our staff for contributing and delivering all that is underpinned by the characteristics of the 'Porthcawl Pupil'. Our school is a happy and positive place because all members of our community are polite and respectful, make good choices and work hard, and Christmas is the time of year where being part of a positive community is even more special and significant.

It was a difficult end to the term as we experienced damage to our school site following Storm Darragh. I apologise for the disruption the two-day partial closure caused, and I thank you for your support over this time. This decision was made with health, safety and control measures at the forefront of my decision making. This partial closure ensured that we could complete and commence with all the required works promptly and return to full operations as soon as possible. I would like to thank our Premises Team and colleagues from BCBC for working very hard to get the site back up and running.

We are really pleased that work has started on our Forest Schools outdoor classroom / learning facility. The foundations have been set, ground works have been completed, and the classroom will be finished in January/February 2025. In addition, we are really pleased with the recent refurbishment of our Sixth Form study area. To improve this facility, we have decorated and installed new carpets. This work has very much improved this area of the school! There are approximately 275 students in our sixth form, and we aim to provide the very best facilities that we can for our Post 16 learners.

To end, I would like to extend a thank you to our school Governors who have had another busy year under the Chairmanship of Allison Thomas and Vice Chair, Anna Morgan. I thank you all for your continued work with the school. Everyone at PCS is looking forward to 2025 and all that we will achieve. We will continue to innovate and refine our teaching, learning and curriculum. We will continue strive for excellence in all that we do, to ensure that strong foundations are built for your children in the future.

I wish you all a safe and memorable Christmas break and I look forward to another successful year in 2025. The festive period is clearly a time for family and friends, and I wish all our students, parents, carers and families a Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous New Year. We welcome all students back to school on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Please note, the autumn term ends on **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 3:00pm.**

Cofion cynnes / Kind regards,

*M. Stephens*

Headteacher/Pennaeth

#### **Important Dates – January / February 2025**

- 8<sup>th</sup> January - GCSE English Literature Unit 1 Examination (Year 10)
- 9<sup>th</sup> January - GCSE Mathematics results (November Entry) issued
- 9<sup>th</sup> January - GCSE English Language results (November Entry) issued
- 13<sup>th</sup> January - Year 11 Options Fortnight Starts
- 15<sup>th</sup> January - Sixth Form Options & Open Evening (for students and parents/carers)
- 27<sup>th</sup> January - Year 9 Options Fortnight Starts
- 5<sup>th</sup> February - Year 9 Progress Evening
- 17<sup>th</sup> February - INSET day (school closed to pupils)
- 19<sup>th</sup> February - Year 12 Progress Evening