

17th July 2018

Dear Parent / Carer

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support you have given both to your child and to the school, as we reach the end of the academic year. There is much to celebrate and **highlights** include:

- Our year 10 Silver Lining team reaching the finals of the Young Enterprise competition at Cardiff
- Twelve year 9 learners achieved the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award
- Learners from our alternative Engage curriculum completed the Phoenix project with the South Wales Fire Brigade
- A team of key stage 3 learners won the Best Speaker award in the Rotary Club debating competition
- Twelve year 8 learners have had their work published in a book entitled "The Poetry Games" by winning a national poetry competition
- Following A* success last year in year 10, three year 11 learners completed their Additional Maths GCSE which will stand them in excellent stead as they continue their studies in the subject
- Our Science STEM team won a local authority competition at the Eden Centre
- Hundreds of visitors provided outstanding feedback following an eight day art exhibition held by our talented GSCE learners at the local Kickplate Gallery
- 200 learners have represented the school in sports this academic year
- The year 8 hockey team won seven out of eight matches and the year 8 football team reached the semi-finals of the Gwent Cup
- Libby Bishop and Ellie Gough have represented the county at netball this season
- Ben Connor, Ieuan Taylor, Ieuan Harris and Finley Rutherford-Banks represented Blaenau Gwent in rugby
- Tom Stokes has had an impressive first season at Swansea City FC
- Jack Hayes has represented Wales in judo
- Learners held a fantastic Christmas Carol Concert and there were performances at St. David's Hall which was at full capacity
- The Summer Concert took place this week and performances were outstanding
- The school has been accredited by Welsh Government and the NHS for "Learning with Autism" and have gained the Eco Flag

It was fantastic to see the sports hall at full capacity with year 11 learners and parents who invested their time during a **revision evening** in March, which was sponsored by Dominos. I am confident that this evening will prove to be pivotal in supporting year 11 learners to secure strong results in the summer, following extremely encouraging feedback from parents. Year 11 celebrated their time at Abertillery Learning Community in a stunning **leavers' prom** at the Maes Manor Hotel and it was wonderful to see all of these learners conduct themselves impeccably as young adults.

The school would like to thank Ffion Martin (Head Girl), Anthony Burch (Head Boy), Lowri Seymour (Deputy Head Girl) and Dafydd Pitman (Deputy Head Boy) for their commitment to the school's development. I would also like to congratulate Rae-Marie Clark (Head Girl), Ben Connor (Head Boy), Ashley Pickford (Deputy Head Girl) and Luke Mitchell (Deputy Head Boy) in their election for 2018-19. The new team will be supported by the

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student council, in addition to fourteen learners in years 9 and 10 who took part in peer mentor training provided by the anti-bullying charity, Bullies Out. The **peer mentors** will be supporting year 7 tutor groups and will provide a drop-in service at break times for all year groups from September.

The Secondary Campus says goodbye and good luck to a number of staff this year! These include Mrs Cairns (Deputy Headteacher), Mrs Woodroffe (Assistant Headteacher), Mrs Nash (PE teacher), Mrs Molloy (RE teacher), Miss Bird (English teacher), Miss Hughes (English teacher), Mrs Jones (drama teacher) and Ms Sheen (geography teacher). You have been a credit to the school! I would also like to wish good luck to Mr Price (moving to Roseheyworth Campus), Miss Lloyd (getting married) and Miss Welch (maternity).

In my letter dated 15th January 2018, I commented on the necessity of working together to ensure that all learners fulfil their potential. Following consultation with parents, learners and staff, there have been a number of changes made since that time. **Tutor time** now takes place in the morning so learners have the opportunity to speak with their tutor to discuss pastoral matters as the first point of contact. We will also increase this time from fifteen to twenty minutes to allow adequate time to mentor all of our learners. Tutor groups will be organised by year groups from September, rather than the current year 7 to year 11 vertical system. This is to ensure that the support and provision is meaningful according to learners' age. Each year group will have a dedicated **Progress Leader** to monitor their progress and provide pastoral care. We have invested in **Class Charts** for 2018-19, which will improve communication between parents and the school, as you will receive notifications via apps on your child's homework, progress and engagement. We are launching refined **engagement procedures** in September, which include a positive referral system that will recognise and **reward** all learners for their achievements. More information regarding Class Charts and our engagement procedures will follow soon! We will also publish our **extra-curricular** offer every term to ensure that learners and parents are fully aware of the additional opportunities that are available.

I am proud of the work that the teachers, support staff and learners have accomplished during this academic year. I encourage you to work with your child over the summer with an appropriate mix of fun, family time, new experiences and studying to reinforce the skills learned this year through reading every day, writing, discussion, mental maths and hands-on learning. Finally, I would like to remind parents and carers that this term ends on Friday 20th July at 2.50pm and reopens for all learners on Tuesday 4th September. I hope you have a wonderful summer!

Yours faithfully



Mr R. Thomas

Head of Secondary Campus