



Ton Yr Ywen Primary School

Maes-y-Coed Road
Cardiff
CF4 4HG

Dear Families of Ton Yr Ywen Primary School

As we reach the end of the first half term, I have enjoyed spending time with your children across the school, talking about their learning and the experiences that have made this term memorable. Their enthusiasm, confidence and pride in their achievements are a reminder of the rich learning opportunities that take place every day at Ton-Yr-Ywen.

This term, all classes have been exploring our whole-school context of **Peace and Conflict**. While learning has been carefully adapted to match the age and stage of pupils, children have explored important themes including fairness, belonging, cooperation, resilience, human rights and peaceful resolution. Through engaging, authentic learning experiences, pupils have developed their understanding of historical and contemporary events while reflecting on how they can make a positive contribution to their own communities and the wider world.

The snapshots below provide a flavour of what pupils have particularly enjoyed this term. Parents and carers who would like a more detailed overview of what their child has been learning can view the curriculum storyboards for each year group on our school website: see: [Curriculum Overviews](#):

By signing into the Seesaw App you are able to see your children busy learning, creating, exploring and challenging themselves in a wide range of ways.

Nursery

Our Nursery children have been exploring their feelings, whilst also looking at taking turns and fairness. Through their play and learning, children have also enjoyed designing and building houses using a range of construction materials. As they built, they developed their early mathematical vocabulary, using language such as *tall, short, wide, narrow, bigger* and *smaller* to describe and compare their structures.

Children have also enjoyed discussing whether things were fair within the context of the story Goldilocks. Staff have been particularly impressed by the rich conversations children have initiated as they explored family life, fairness, and belonging. The opportunity to share their ideas with their new friends has been a particular highlight of the first term of this school year along with the visit from the Birds of Prey.

Reception

The Reception children report a fantastic start to full time school life. Children talked enthusiastically about learning aboard the pirate ship and developing their early reading skills through Monster Phonics. They have explored important questions such as “Should we listen to others if we don’t agree?” and “Should we always agree with our friends.”

The nature reserve continues to be a favourite learning space, with children particularly proud of making pumpkin soup outdoors. More importantly, they were delighted to report that it was "very tasty!"

The children also spoke about how much they enjoyed construction and role play activities within their friendship cafe.

Years 1 and 2

The children have thoroughly enjoyed exploring our whole-school theme of *Peace and Conflict* through the exciting context involving dragons and knights.

Highlights for the children have included:

- Writing persuasive letters linked to their learning.
- Visiting Caerphilly Castle.
- Taking part in the Sponsored Scoot and Cycle event.

Children were particularly pleased to see the impact of their fundraising efforts. The money raised through the Sponsored Scoot and Cycle, organised jointly by the Friends of Ton-Yr-Ywen and Mr Welch, has funded new playground markings which are already being enjoyed by pupils throughout the school. Thank you to everyone who generously donated to this cause.

The children were also keen to mention **Dojo Days**, where consistently positive behaviour is celebrated through special rewards chosen by pupils, including wearing pyjamas to school, bringing in a favourite toy or even ringing the school bell.

Year 3

Year 3 have loved stepping back in time to learn about the conflict between the Celts and the Romans. Children spoke enthusiastically about:

- Building Celtic roundhouses in the nature reserve.
- Undertaking experiments using natural materials.
- Learning how people such as Queen Boudicca lived during Celtic times through practical experiences.

The opportunity to learn outdoors has helped bring history to life and has been a particular highlight for many pupils. Next half term the children are looking forward to exploring why Owain Glyndwr rebelled.

Year 4

Year 4 have undertaken some thoughtful and powerful learning linked to the experiences of children affected by the Second World War.

Children reported that they have particularly enjoyed:

- Writing stories and newspaper reports.
- Learning about life during wartime.
- Visiting Heath Park to explore where aircraft landed during the war.

Pupils spoke passionately about how these experiences helped them develop a deeper understanding of historical events and the importance of remembering lessons from the past. Year 4 also have super star Welsh speakers who like to challenge me by asking complex sentences every-time I visit their classrooms.

Year 5

Year 5 have explored a range of significant movements that have helped shape the modern world. Their studies have included looking at:

- The Civil Rights Movement.
- The Suffragette Movement.
- The Merthyr Riots.

Children report that they have enjoyed comparing what each movement was campaigning for and examining how individuals worked together to bring about positive change.

A particular highlight was creating Peace Flags, allowing pupils to reflect upon what peace means to them and how they can contribute positively to their own communities.

Year 6

Year 6 have enjoyed learning about people such as Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks who have shown courage during conflict. As part of expressive arts, pupils used dance and movement to explore emotions and themes of conflict from the class novel *Refugee*, helping them develop a deeper understanding of the experiences of displaced children.

The overwhelming highlight of the term was the residential visit to Storey Arms. Pupils showed tremendous resilience, teamwork and determination while taking part in activities including:

- Gorge walking
- Caving
- Canoeing

The children also wanted to express their sincere thanks to everyone who supported this week's bake sale. Funds raised will contribute towards their end-of-year Leavers' Party kindly organised by year 6 parents.

Proud to Be Part of Ton-Yr-Ywen

One message came through clearly from pupils of all ages: This is that they value the broad range of opportunities available to them both inside and beyond the classroom. The development of our Nature Reserve, made possible through the continued support, fundraising and commitment of our families and the Friends of Ton-Yr-Ywen, has enhanced learning experiences across the school and provides an inspiring environment in which children can explore, investigate and learn.

Whether building homes, exploring history, creating peace flags, developing dance performances, cooking outdoors or taking on residential challenges, our pupils continue to demonstrate curiosity, creativity and resilience. Across the school, children speak positively about their learning, take pride in their achievements and show a genuine enthusiasm for coming to school each day.

What is particularly pleasing is the way pupils are developing as ethical, informed citizens who understand how their actions can have a positive impact on others. Through their learning and participation in school life, they continue to embody the values of kindness, respect, inclusion and community that are central to life at Ton-Yr-Ywen.

School Updates

Staffing News - We are delighted to welcome several new members of staff to the Ton-Yr-Ywen team:

Kerry Stone will join us after the half-term break as our new **Estates Manager**. Kerry will play an important role in helping us maintain and develop our school environment for the benefit of all pupils and staff. Kerry has worked in schools for many years but is new to this role and I am sure you will all make her feel very welcome next term.

Thank you to Mr O'Donovan who has undertaken the Estates Manager role in a relief capacity this term. Although he finishes with us this Friday, we would like to wish him well in his next role.

Farrah McCarthy will be joining our office team later in November and will be job-sharing with Mrs Hopkins undertaking HR/Finance responsibilities. Farrah McCarthy will work on **Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday mornings**, supporting our busy front office and helping ensure a warm welcome for all visitors and families.

We are also pleased to welcome **Lauren Kinsella**, who has recently joined our Reception team as a Teaching Assistant. As part of this change, **Mrs Ahmed** has moved into our Year 1/2 team, where she is already making a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and wellbeing.

We are sure families will join us in making all of our new colleagues feel very welcome.

Attendance Update:

Our **school target is for everyone to end the school year with at least 93% attendance**. I am pleased to announce that we end this term with a whole school overall attendance percentage of **94.9%**. The biggest well done goes to class Hazel (Year 3) who end this term with 98% followed closely by Beech who have achieved 97.2% (Year 4) and Chestnut who are closely behind at 97% (Year 5).

If anyone is struggling with anything attendance related please contact Miss Ridley in the office Or Mrs Antoniazzi who are happy to help or connect you with our supportive Attendance Officer Deborah Jenkins.

Building Works and Safeguarding Update

Following the successful installation of the new roof and upgraded fire alarm system in the Years 3-6 building during the summer holidays, we are pleased to confirm that further improvement works are scheduled to take place over the half-term break.

These works will see the extension of the school's upgraded **fire alarm and lockdown systems**, ensuring that all areas of the school are covered by the same modern safeguarding and emergency response arrangements. This investment forms part of our ongoing work with the Local Authority to maintain a safe, secure and effective learning environment for all pupils, staff and visitors. Works are scheduled to begin on Friday's Inset day so as not to impact on teaching and learning.

Important Dates and Reminders

INSET Day

Friday 23rd October - School will be closed to pupils as staff undertake professional learning and school improvement activities.

Half-Term Holiday - School closes at the end of the day on **Thursday 22nd October**.

Next non-school uniform day – 13th November – where children can wear spots for Children in Need Day.

***All school dates can be viewed on the website on the school calendar which is regularly updated.**

Year 6 Secondary School Applications

A reminder to all Year 6 families that applications for secondary school places close during the half-term break. **The closing date is 30th October**.

We strongly encourage parents and carers to complete applications as early as possible and not wait until the final day. If you require support with your application, please contact the Admissions Team in the Council who are happy to help. Parents are encouraged to choose more than 1 school option.

Poppy Appeal

As a school community, we are proud to support this year's **Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal**.

From the first week back after half term, pupils who wish to support the appeal may bring £1 to school to purchase a Poppy Appeal item, subject to availability. Sales will be organised and led by members of our Assembly Squad, providing them with a valuable opportunity to develop their leadership skills while supporting an important charitable cause.

Through taking part in the appeal, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the values of remembrance, service, peace and community. Choir members from Ton Yr Ywen will be joining a small group of pupils from Birchgrove Primary School for a Remembrance Service in Llanfedwr Gardens on 11th November.

All monies raised will be donated directly to the charity in support of veterans, serving personnel and their families. We thank families in advance for their support of this worthwhile cause.

Thank You

As always, thank you for your continued support. The partnership between home and school plays a vital role in ensuring that our children continue to thrive, achieve and enjoy their learning. I am aware that many of you have taken the time to meet with staff for Parents Evening this week.

On behalf of all the staff and governors at Ton-yr-Ywen Primary School, I wish you and your families a safe, restful and enjoyable half-term break and to thank staff for their hard work and efforts this term.

We look forward to welcoming pupils back on **Monday 2nd November**.

Mrs A. James-Griffiths
Headteacher
Ton-Yr-Ywen Primary School