



Penyrheol

Summer Newsletter

AMAZING
ART

&
More

SPORTING
SUCCESSSES

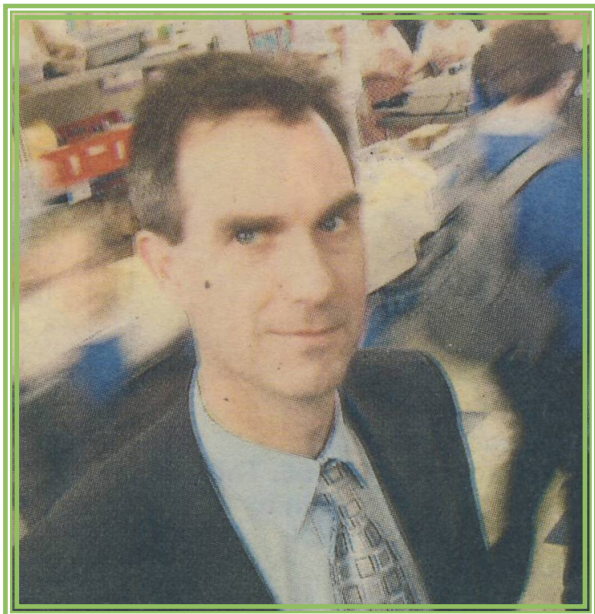
PRIDE
at
Penyrheol!

Mr Tootill
leaves Penyrheol
after 24 years!



Cover artwork by Niamh Thomas Y11

www.penyrheol-comp.net Summer Newsletter 2021



A Message from the HeadTeacher

Dear Parents and Pupils

Having spent all of my working life in a suit and tie, I certainly didn't expect the final sixteen months at Penyrheol to be without those items. But that is one of the many measures that we have had to implement as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, because clothes we wear to work have to be washable rather than being dry cleaned!

Just as happened last summer, we go into the holidays very unclear about what requirements there may be for schools at the start of next academic year. We will let you know this information as soon as we can and I very much hope that all the additional safety restrictions in schools will have been lifted because of the outstanding success of the Covid-19 vaccination process.

This is the last time that I will be writing a letter to front one of our termly newsletters. I have worked at Penyrheol Comprehensive school for the last 24 years, the last 19 years as Headteacher. I would like to thank so many parents and pupils for their support over those years. At times it has been very tangible.

It is impossible to please everybody all of the time when running a complex organisation like a school. Some of you, I am sure, will be very glad to see me go and will be thinking 'about time too'! Whatever you think of me and the work I have done here, I hope I have always been honest, fair, consistent and hard-working. Our pupils are why we work in schools and so many of them are a credit to themselves, their families and us. Thank you for allowing us to help educate them.

I would like to wish Mr Benney all the very best as he takes over as Headteacher in September 2021 and all the rest of our wonderful staff. Keep supporting our school, because when we work together in the best interests of your children we are a powerful force for good.

Next term starts with an INSET day on Thursday 2nd September and a Year 7 Transition day on Friday 3rd September. So, our new Year 7 pupils are in school on Friday 3rd September and all other pupils return on Monday 6th September. I wish every friend of Penyrheol Comprehensive School an enjoyable and peaceful summer. Farewell!

Yours faithfully



ALAN TOOTILL
Headteacher

Important Dates

AUTUMN TERM 2021	TERM DATES		HOLIDAY DATES		TERM DATES	
	Thu 2nd September	Fri 22nd October	Mon 25th October	Fri 29th October	Mon 1st November	Fri 17th December

SPRING TERM 2022	TERM DATES		HOLIDAY DATES		TERM DATES	
	Tue 4th January	Fri 18th February	Mon 21st February	Fri 25th February	Mon 28th February	Fri 8th April

SUMMER TERM 2022	TERM DATES		HOLIDAY DATES		TERM DATES	
	Mon 25th April	Fri 27th May	Mon 30th May	Fri 3rd Jun	Mon 6th June	Fri 22nd July

Bank Holidays

Friday 29th April 2022 - Extra Bank Holiday (Provisional)
Monday 2nd May 2022 - May Bank Holiday

Inset Days

Thursday 2nd September 2021
Friday 22nd October 2021
Tuesday 4th January 2022
Friday 18th February 2022
Friday 8th April 2022
Friday 1st July 2022

Year 7 Transition Day

Friday 3rd September 2021





The Duke of Edinburgh Award

Another successful year with the 2021 pupils achieving their bronze award. Such an amazing achievement due to the difficult year we've had with covid and training expeditions having to be cancelled. Congratulations go to:

Alice Austin
William Davies
Laith Hazell
Samuel Howells
Holly Isaac
Jie Liu
Tom Lok
Uthman Mohammed

On Saturday 12th of June, pupils were dropped off at Llanmadoc at 9am by parents.

After stretching and dusting ourselves off. Mrs. Steel and her trusted volunteers, Mrs. Fussell in charge of the mini bus, but with Miss. J. Evans at the helm giving directions, we made some amazing rally manoeuvres and got so close to one driver in a van we could have eaten his sandwiches!

Mrs. Steel and Mrs. L. Thomas were tracking hot on our heels and monitoring the pupil's progression and this was to be one of the hottest days since records began!

With pupil's rucksacks checked, and first aid training completed, they were off for the final expedition and for some of them, the last time they would be together at school colleagues, as school finished for them officially, on Friday 11th June.

The mission was to walk to Rhossili following the route map, using a compass and a little bit (not too much) common sense. Arriving there, they had to

pitch their tents and cook a meal. Unfortunately, we were unable to have an overnight stay due to covid restrictions, so parents had to collect their children afterwards.

On Sunday, parents once again, dropped pupils off at Rhossili, so they could walk to Port Eynon where they would be assessed.

Whilst debriefing, and to the amusement of the pupils, Mrs. Steel and her trusted 'volunteers' went to the assistance of a vehicle, which was stuck in the sand.

It was a great weekend and we are always amazed by the transformation, confidence and skills the pupils achieve from their first expedition, where they are guided like untrained puppies to the final expedition where they are left to their own initiative to survive the Gower elements. The skills learnt, the friends made and the memories will stay with them for life.

A massive well done to them all!

We have 16 further Year 10 pupils, who are looking to complete their expedition section next academic year, so here's to doing it all over again!



An Interview With

After 24 years, we bid farewell to Mr. Alan Tootill, who is leaving Penyrheol Comprehensive to explore pastures new!

Alan, who joined the school as a deputy headteacher in 1997, took over as headteacher just 5 years later. However, he has actually been in the teaching profession for 34 years!

Mr Tootill, leaves us as we come to the end of the recent COVID 19 pandemic, which has certainly provided many challenges, such as the introduction of online learning, socially distancing etc., but it was the major fire in 2006 that was his biggest challenge and you can read about that [here](#).

As you will find out in this interview, Alan will not be putting his feet up quite yet, as he has other plans for the future, including a new job that starts in September. We wish him the best of luck in his new role.

In September 2021, we welcome our new headteacher Mr. D. Benney.

Mr. Benney, if you are reading this, Mr Tootill has left you a little note on your new desk!

Can you recall your very first

My first memory is arriving early for my interview already here. They all said how happy they were to have me.

Was taking over as Head, in a

I think taking charge anywhere is daunting, but at Penyrheol because I didn't need a lot of time to get used to the school.

What has been the greatest challenge and who or what helped you through it?

The fire of March 2006 and the recovery period was the greatest challenge. It helped enormously to have the support of the staff and the community. This. We were also very well supported by the parents.

Did you ever consider an alternative career path?

When I was in school and university, I don't think I ever considered an alternative career path. I got into the media, particularly newspaper journalism, at university. It offered the chance to continue to learn and grow.

What part of your job do you enjoy most?

The teaching has always been the most enjoyable part of my job. I enjoy working with the children, particularly in English and then, more recently, Welsh Baccara (for the parents), which is both the most rewarding and challenging.

A Headteacher can be a very stressful job, can it not?

I'm fortunate to be married to someone who understands the pressures of the job. I have lots of interests outside of my job, which helps to keep me balanced. I enjoy the church, watching films etc. When I reach my birthday, I have been learning to play the saxophone for my birthday. I have been learning to play the saxophone with the Llanelli Community Wind Band.

We always have a good time.

h Mr. Alan Tootill

at day at Penyrheol and if so, who or what comes to mind?

Interview and having a wander around outside, chatting to various pupils who were here and that has been an important part of what I have tried to maintain at Penyrheol.

a school that you already taught in, a daunting challenge?

Whether you know the school or not. Knowing the school gave me an advantage 'getting to know' period and could hit the ground running.

e biggest challenge during your time as Head, what gave you the strength to get through it?

Period up to the opening of the new building in September 2009 were undoubtedly that the whole community of pupils, staff and parents pulled together to overcome by the other secondary schools in Swansea and by the Local Authority.

ernative career to teaching or was this always your plan?

I recall there ever being any careers advice. If I had had some, I might have tried to be a writer, as I love writing. I think I decided that I would like to teach while I was at university doing what I loved: studying English literature and language and sharing that passion with young people.

at Penyrheol have you enjoyed the most, and why?

Probably the most enjoyable part of the job. I have taught in all but two of my years as a Headteacher, firstly at Penyrheol. Apart from the teaching, it is interacting with people (pupils, staff and parents) and the most challenging aspect of the job, depending upon the circumstances.

ful job - How have you managed to balance home and work life?

I would never allow my job to take over my life! Family comes first. However, I also try to keep me sane: reading, gardening, travelling, listening to music, cooking, going to the gym. In 2005 I decided I needed a new challenge and so I asked my wife to buy me a guitar. I have been playing that ever since, reaching Grade 5 in practical and theory so far and practising every day. I absolutely love travelling and have visited many countries around the world. I try to holiday somewhere new each year.

An Interview With

Have you managed to continue playing saxophone during lockdown?

When lockdown came around, I hoped that I could spend more time practising, but I ended up practising on my own by myself because the Community Windband practices stopped. So I understand the difficulties I have faced in being self-motivated during the lockdowns. I have just started practising again and will be sitting my Grade 6 exam during the next academic year, if I can begin having lessons again with my teacher to help me to improve.

Do you have any regret or wish you had handled a situation differently?

After all we all learn by our mistakes!

I have made many mistakes, but I don't have any regrets. Hopefully, I have learnt from them. One piece of advice my Headteacher is that you can never please everyone all of the time and sometimes you have to disappoint some people. But it's not a popularity contest. It is about trying to do what you believe is in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

'To Achieve you Need to Believe' is the school motto, but do you think it works?

It spurs you on, when you need it.

My personal motto has always been '*excellence in a caring environment*'. Trying to be kind and show kindness can be difficult, especially when dealing with hormonal teenagers! It has helped me to become a better person of my own.

If you could speak to your 16 year old self, what advice would you give?

Don't let your life be taken over by social media. It has some positives, but it can be a distraction.

Work hard. Have fun. Be kind.

Who has been the biggest influence in your life?

My parents first of all. I also had one superb primary school teacher who fired up my love for learning. Since 1987, my wife and children have been the biggest influence on me. I am also a practising musician and my music is a big influence.

What does your retirement/new venture look like?

I am joining the Welsh inspection service, Estyn, on 1st September. I believe that my experience as a headteacher will be very useful to that organisation. But I'm also looking forward to starting a new chapter in my life.

If I asked you to leave a 'post it note' on the desk for the new Headteacher, what would it say?

h...Mr. Alan Tootill

ing the pandemic?

found it quite difficult to motivate my-
ulties that children and young people
again properly and will hope to take the
ny tutor. Those are essential for pushing

ation differently?

m mistakes. One thing about being a
ve to take decisions which upset a lot of
e long-term best interests of our pupils

I have one of your own that

alance high expectations with genuine
d very much to have had three children

e would you give?

t an awful lot of negatives.

r life?

ve of learning. Since getting married in
g Christian, so my faith and my church

ok like?

recent, long experience working in a
rting again from the very bottom!

dteacher, what would it say?

DID YOU KNOW?

Mr. Tootill's favourite country to
visit is: **THAILAND**

He is a **VIRGO**

His favourite food is:
THAI CURRY & RICE

Favourite Book?
TESS of the D'URBERVILLES
by **THOMAS HARDY**

Favourite lesson at school
ENGLISH

Least favourite?
GERMAN

Favourite School Production so far
GREASE

Most admired person in History?
JESUS, GANDHI & NELSON MANDELA



Good luck
& enjoy the
ride!

BATTY Mr. Evans is in touch with Nature!

Mr. H. Evans has been busy this year, not only as deputy head-teacher, but in keeping in touch with nature!

If you were watching 'Weather Man Walking' when Derek was in Wales, you may have seen the episode about bats and if you did, you would have seen that the video footage used, was actually from our very own Mr. Evans!



The pippastralle bats were seen flying near his home during our first lockdown in 2020, and he managed to get some great footage of them which he sent to the BBC for their programme.



Just a few weeks ago Mr. Evans noticed two flowering orchids in the school grounds close to our only 'dismountable' and amazingly, the flowering spikes have remained despite the 900 or so pupils on site.

However...recently, the grounds at Penyrheol were mowed, and one would have thought that these wonderful flowers would have disappeared until next year. Imagine his surprise and delight to see that amongst all the acres mowed and strimmed, someone was clearly aware of the orchids and mowed around them.

Thank goodness for the mindful mower - whoever they were!



Mr. Heaher Rides the Waves

Our fingers are crossed for Mr. Isaac Heaher, who is a Teaching Assistant here at Penyrheol. He is taking part in The English Adaptive Surfing Open in Bristol this month and is hoping to get placed in the top 3! The competition is taking place at 'The Wave' in Bristol and is a major event for adaptive surfers.

Isaac will be using a special knee board which he bought using a generous donation from 'The Douglas Barder Foundation', and he is also hoping to get a new wet suit!

Mr. Heaher was born without a right leg and wears a prosthetic limb, but he will remove this for the competition for extra stability and comfort. It's his first time using a knee board, but he didn't seem to be too phased by this when interviewed!



The judges of this special event will be looking for speed and control, so Isaac has been busy practising at Llangennith where the waves are widely known to be excellent.

An ex-competitive swimmer and lifeguard, Isaac loves the water and we wish him every success at the competition.



Penyrheol Young Designers Teach Professors!

Mrs O'Sullivan's pupils in 7ME have been part of an incredibly exciting project where they have been documenting their project and creative work in Fashion and Textiles.

Pupils have been creating new containers such as bags and pencil cases using old denim jeans and scraps from our local Barnardo's charity shop in Gorseinon, saving them from landfill sites.



**Part 1 of the short-film is now on YouTube for everyone to watch.
(scan the QR code to watch it now).**



It was super exciting to preview the video to a GLOBAL audience including university lecturers, teachers and designers through Cardiff University on 16th June!

The pupils have had some amazing feedback from people all around the world including a Fashion Professor in San Francisco, USA!

This young designer showed us all how amazing tie-dye is, especially for giving a new life to old clothes! She brought in a top to show the class, which was "covered in stains", so she tie-dyed it at home with her mum during lockdown and now it looks AWESOME!



The pupils are still working on finishing the touches to their designs and there will be an updated video to show the finished products over the summer holidays!

Mrs O'Sullivan would like to say a huge congratulations to all of her 7ME but in particular, the following who were brave enough to speak on camera:

Sammy Benney, Lizzie Howell, Mari Jones, Caitlin Rohman, Jodie Swistun and Jaydon Taylor. Well done all!



Wendy Ward
I teach adults how to make clothes and write books about it!
Sheffield, U.K

"Wow, your work was soooooo awesome. You've all obviously worked really hard and learned a lot about where clothes come from and why we need to look after them better. Your hand sewing looked brilliant - keep practising, I'm sure Miss O'Sullivan has told you that the more you do it, the better you will get at it so keep going. Congratulations!!"

Stianne Gordon-Wilson
Senior Lecturer in Marketing
London, U.K.

"Well done guys, that was totally inspiring!! You should be so proud of yourself. I also loved the tops and the graffiti! Inspired logos was totally awesome. You are all stars!!!!"

Greg Climer
Professor of Fashion Design
San Francisco, California, USA

"You are all so awesome! Seeing the careful and beautiful sewing was inspiring. Hearing you talk about the ways you can help the environment is wonderful. It's important that we all work together in big and small ways to keep this planet beautiful."





HARRI HOUSTON JOINS THE OSPREYS

After leaving Penyrheol just a year ago, former pupil, Harri Houston has signed a four year professional contract with The Ospreys.



Harri has been rugby mad since the day he was born. He was playing for Loughor RFC at the age of 7 and was vice captain of the SSRU when they got to the Dewar Cup Final in 2019.

Well done, Harri! We wish you all the best, and fingers crossed one day, you will play in Cardiff again but this time representing your country!

JAKE DENNIS JOINS CARDIFF CITY



Jake has just moved to Cardiff to start a two-year scholarship with Cardiff City, playing for the Under 18s



Jake has been playing football since he was six years old, starting off at Garden Village FC, before moving to the Cardiff Academy to train with the Under 8s. It is Jake's intention to become a professional footballer at the top level and from where we're standing, it looks as though he will achieve his 'goal'!

Jake tells us that "to succeed in football, you have to work hard and be committed, and not just in training sessions. You have to have a good mindset, learn from mistakes and keep going".

Wise words from such a young man and we wish him every success...he deserves it!

Y6 Taster Event

We were delighted to welcome back some of our Year 11 pupils, who returned to Penyrheol to help with our Year 6 Taster Event.

Pupils from Year 6 were guided around the school by our ex-pupils, who came in especially to help out. They have been superb role models during their time at school, displaying all the necessary qualities needed to have these special roles in school

Special thanks go to:

Charlotte Benney - Head Girl
Harri John - Head Boy,
Jasmine McLean - Deputy Head Girl
Laith Hazell - Deputy Head Boy
Millie Everest - Senior Prefect
Josh Griffiths - Senior Prefect
Katlyn Williams - Senior Prefect



Looking Forward with Year 9

It's been a busy year for Year 9. Lots of end of Key Stage 3 assessments via remote learning, and choosing their options! We are extremely proud of the maturity most pupils have shown throughout this very tough year.

As we move into Year 10, we want all pupils to put themselves in the strongest position possible to reach their full potential. They can do this by ensuring they return in September with a positive, focussed attitude to their work and ensuring they have the correct equipment for each lesson.

The start of Year 10 is an extremely exciting time, where pupils are studying subjects that they have chosen. They will also be with pupils who share similar interests, and this brings an opportunity to make new friends. They will also meet teachers who they may not know already. This brings fresh opportunities to create a positive impression from the start!

We are extremely proud of our year group. We know they have the potential to achieve great things and will therefore, encourage them to be the best versions of themselves.

We wish you all a relaxing summer!

Mrs Fox and Mrs Harries

SPORTING S

We asked three pupils who excel in sport, what their aspirations were and what advice they would give to someone with the same ambition pursuing a similar hobby.

Alfie Smith - Motorcross



Alfie began Motorcross at the age of 11 and is now in his 5th season. He is currently competing in F1 sidecare racing at European Championship level! Alfie now competes in the 125cc class. *"I have had to move up a class this year due to my age so it's sort of a challenge."*

What are your future aspirations?

I'm hoping to finish in the top ten at British level this year and to get a good boost and a great achievement.

What advice would you give to someone with the same ambition?

Motorcross is a great sport to be involved in, and there are loads of things to do. Spectating is a must, if it's something you think you would like to do.

Ffion Johns - Swimmer



Ffion has been swimming for ten long years (Her words not ours!), has competed at national level and already has many successes under her belt! We asked her:

What are your future aspirations?

I would love to compete at a major sporting event like the Commonwealth Games.

What advice would you give to someone with the same ambition?

If you put the work in, you **will** succeed! Believe in yourself and in your abilities.

Corey Gay - Motorcross



Corey has been partaking in Motorcross since the age of three, but only started as soon as he was able to. Corey now competes at a high level.

What are your future aspirations?

To continue racing, to get faster than I am now, and most importantly to win.

What advice would you give to someone with the same ambition?

Do what you want to do and have fun doing it!

SUCCESSSES

What advice they would give to other pupils who might be interested in
hobby or ambition.

Racing has always been a big part of his life, having grown up with a father who took part in
competes at National British level, finishing 6th in Britain last year and tells us
starting again. The class I'm in is extremely fast and very nearly expert level."

up five at club level. If I can achieve this in my first year of moving up, it will be a massive

ambitions?

tracks in Wales now. If you love riding a BMX or mountain bike you should definitely give it a
start.

having always loved the water since she was a baby. Ffion is currently competing at National

wealth Games or even the Olympics!

ambitions?

your goal, and you are bound to get there!

only started racing about ten years ago. He grew up watching his father and brothers take part,
level. We asked him:

any, to keep enjoying it!

ambitions?

Our Uniform Swap Shop is still operating and you don't even need anything to swap!

With current COVID restriction still in place, we cannot display the uniform in our foyer, but pupils may collect an order form from reception or their form tutor office and return to reception or email to:

FussellT1@hwbcymru.net

EX-PUPILS!

If you have just left Penyrheol and have branded uniform, school coats, shoes, kit bags etc. that could be donated, we would be thrilled to receive them! – Please drop them off at school reception.

We even accept Prom dresses and suits!



Penyrheol Comprehensive School



UNIFORM SWAP SHOP!

Swap or Not - The Choice is Yours!

FREE! - Please take what you need. Our donated and sometimes brand new items are here waiting for you. You don't have to have items to swap.

FREE! - Perhaps you have out-grown your uniform or coat...Swap it here, for a new size.

And please don't forget to **donate** your 'good as new' uniform when you have finished with it and help our school re-cycle, re-use and re-educate!

**POLO SHIRTS * TROUSERS * SKIRTS * SWEAT SHIRTS * SHORTS *
P.E. KIT * COATS * KIT BAGS * SHOES**

(All uniform MUST have school crest and/or logo)

Re-Use



Re-Cycle

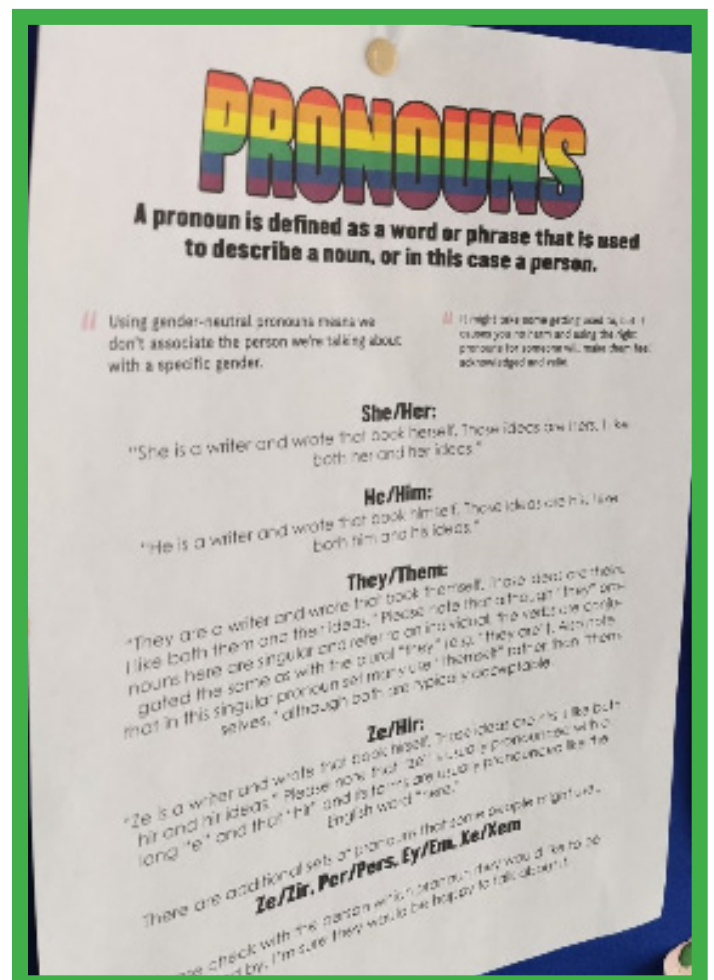
Re-Educate

Penyrheol Celebrate PRIDE

On the 28th June Mrs O'Sullivan and her LGBTQ+ lunch club members marked Pride month on what would have been 52 years since the Stonewall Riots, which is the reason why we celebrate Pride during June.

Year 8 pupils created a beautiful display for the foyer with lots of information and positive messages. Plus we gave out over 100 badges for both members of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies to wear with pride! It was a fantastic day of celebration and acceptance.

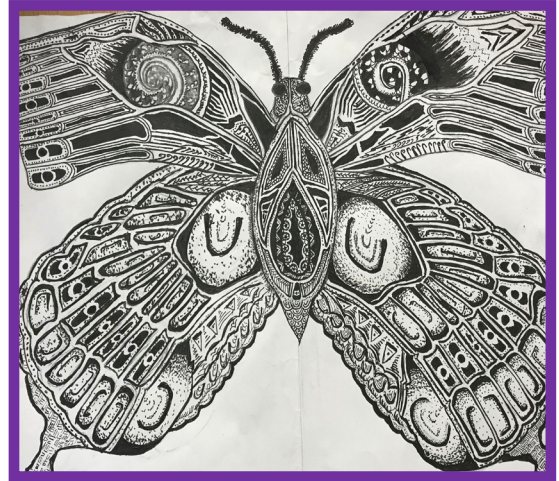
We really hope (in the not-too-distant future) to re-start a the club for all year groups when restrictions end.



IT'S A BUG'S LIFE!



Sarayah Maybank



Oliver Young



Jack Parslow



Isabelle Carey



Jaden Thomas



Evelyn Popham

Look at some of the fabulous art work, produced by pupils in 8H this term. The topic was 'Bugs' and the designs and colours used are wonderful!

Great job Year 8!

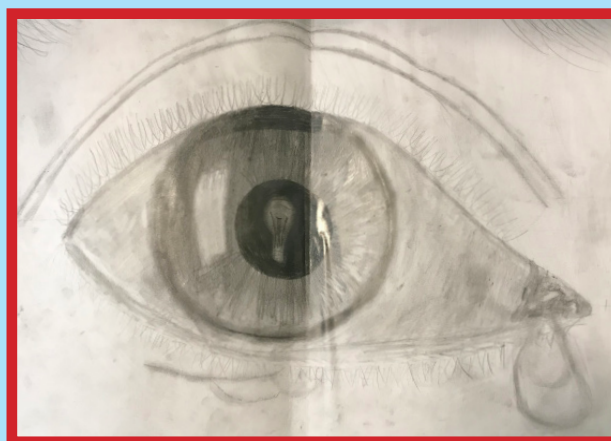
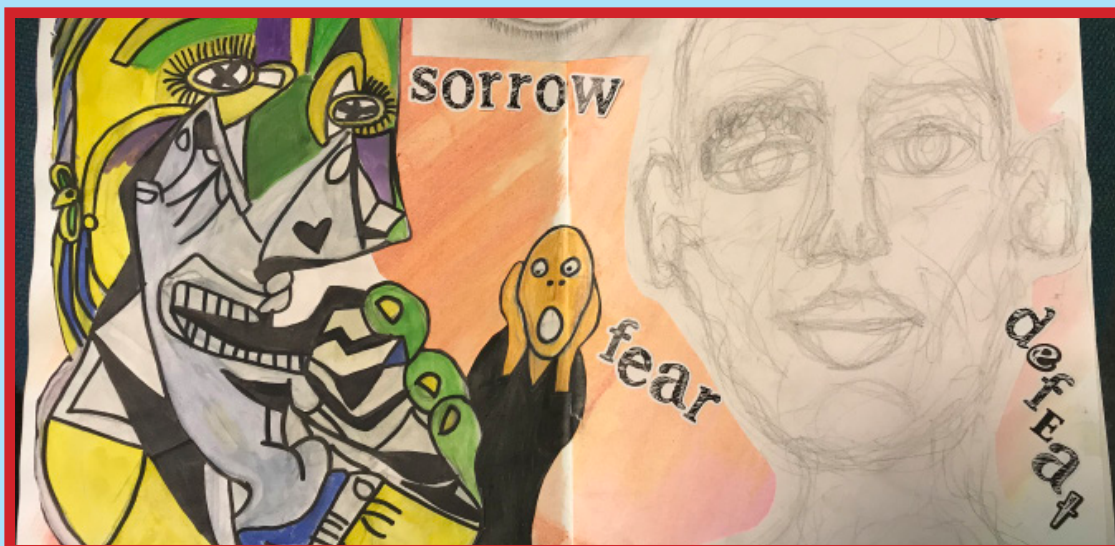
ABORIGINAL ART



Aboriginal Art was the theme for Year 9 in art classes this term, where most of the pupils produced lovely colorful boomerangs, as pictured above.

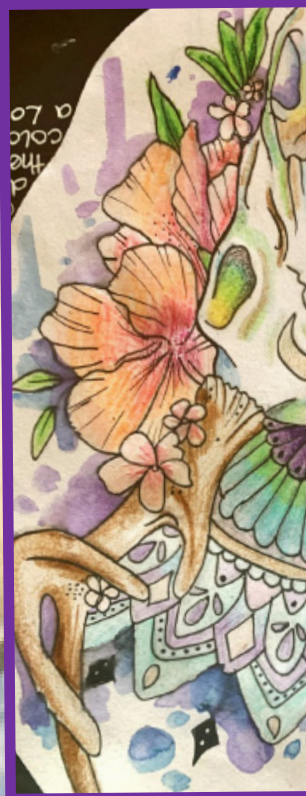
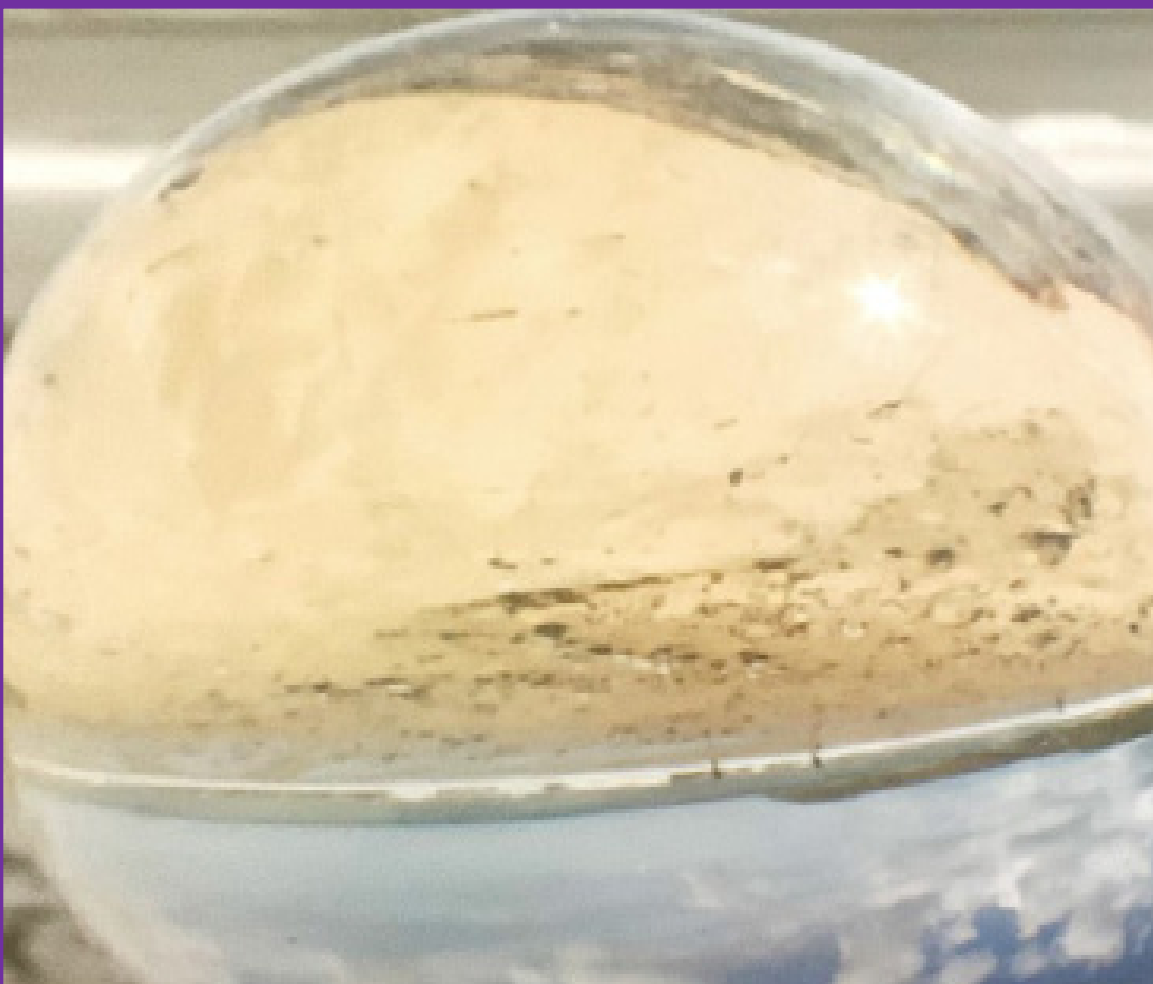
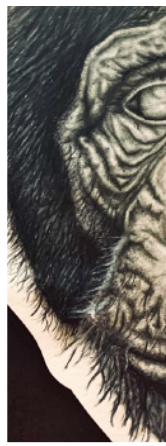
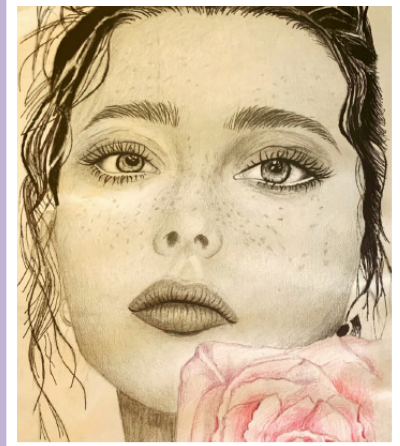
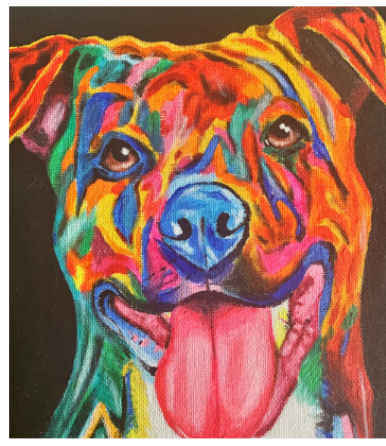
GREAT JOB YEAR 9!

PORTRAITS & EMOTIONS



Believe it or not, this work has been done by pupils in Year 7! Picasso, Munch, Emotions and Conflict!

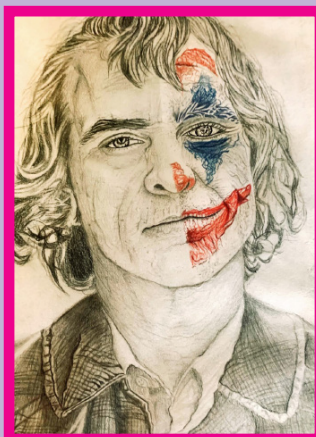
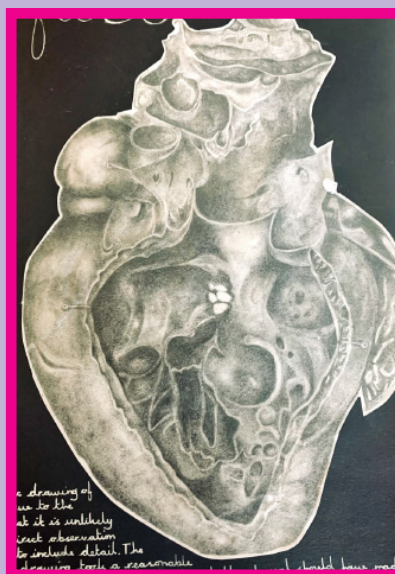
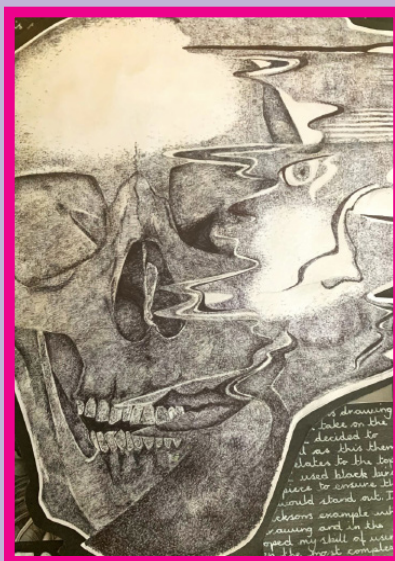
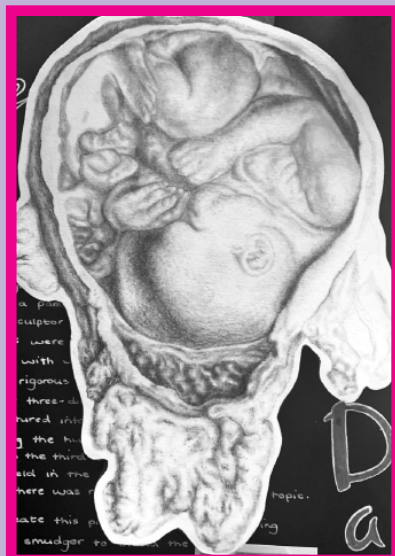
GCSE ARTWORK



This amazing artwork was produced by pupils on the GCSE art and photography course, so impressed by the standard and wouldn't be at all surprised to see some of these pupils progressing professionally as artists or photographers eventually!

The beautiful picture on the front cover of this term's newsletter was painted by Niamh, a Year 11 GCSE student - We think it's wonderful. **Congratulations to all of**

WORK 2021



orses. We are
oils working

nh Thomas,
f you!