



The Western Learning Federation

MAGAZINE

Spring edition



Edition 3.



UPDATE ON OUR BRANDING JOURNEY

Read more on
page 3



HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR FEDERATED SCHOOLS

Read more on
pages 4, 6 & 8



FEATURE

A Pupil interview with one of our Governors

Read more from
page 9



Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your feedback regarding the festive edition of our magazine.

As you know we started the year with the announcement of our Estyn inspection reports for each of the schools. I was delighted to inform you that these reports were published on the 27th January 2023.

Each of the reports are available on the Western Learning Federation website saved under Estyn inspection reports.

I hope you enjoyed reading the documents and celebrating all the hard work that has been undertaken by everyone involved. As we have stated many times, we are incredibly proud of all your efforts in what you do to support our pupils and each other in ensuring and creating the most amazing learning experiences and environments. Your commitment, dedication, patience and kindness that you demonstrate on a daily basis is helping move the Western Learning Federation, Riverbank, Ty Gwyn and Woodlands forward. We have celebrated these reports, building on the strengths and reflecting on the areas for development to strengthen our organisation as a whole. Please be proud of what you do, and the difference that you make to our pupils across the organisation and within our schools and reflect on how well you look after one another.

Recruitment

It's again been a very busy few weeks as we look to continue to strengthen our workforce and appoint Higher Level Teaching Assistants, Senior Teaching Assistants, Teaching Assistants, Mid-day Supervisors and Breakfast Club Assistants.

The quality and the number of applications we received were outstanding and I'd like to thank our dedicated governors and leaders who have supported our recruitment over the last few weeks. I would like to congratulate Amie Lucas who has been successful in being appointed as Head of School for Riverbank.



Wayne Murphy –
Western Learning Federation,
Executive Headteacher



Rachel Faulkner – Western
Learning Federation, Deputy
Executive Headteacher

Building Works

I provided an update on all building works across the Federation in my letter to you a few weeks ago, with progress continuing at a pace over the last few weeks.

The Riverbank School double demountable portacabin continues to make progress and ground works and cutting back of the trees have begun and will continue to progress outside of school hours. The Ty Gwyn School building extension, which will provide 3 additional classroom spaces continues to progress well. Thank you to those families who we have been in conversations with about class relocations to support this building work. Our pupils have settled well and are enjoying their new class environments.

The Fairwater Campus for Riverbank and Woodlands continues to be an exciting project for us as we work closely with the Local Authority, Cantonian High School and wider partners supporting the project. We're currently in a number of key meetings to look at the design and further updates will be provided as soon as I am able to.

From the governing body and staff at the Western Learning Federation we wish you all well.

Mr Wayne Murphy

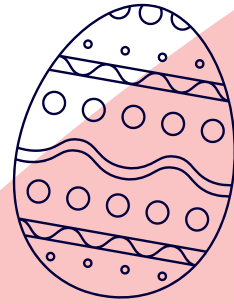
Executive Headteacher,
Western Learning Federation

Update on Our Branding Journey

A preview of a few of our great new photos to go with our new branding



Highlights of *Riverbank*



Amie Lucas -
Riverbank,
Head of School

We have had a really exciting term leading up to Easter which has been jam packed with fabulous celebrations, mystical, exploratory topics and working hard for accreditation to create a fulfilling and purposeful environment for all of our pupils to the best version of themselves and to access the curriculum in way which best suits their needs.

We started the spring term with our topic Myths and Legends which gave pupils an opportunity to look at different tales and fables especially those related to the Welsh folklore. The pupils immersed themselves in a variety of different stories like the legend of Gelert the Dog, they

explored and recreated their very own castles and immersing themselves in the Welsh culture to create songs, arts, crafts for our Eisteddfod and St David's Day celebration at the end of this term. Alongside this a group of children in the school were lucky enough to be invited to St David's Hall to perform in a dance show by the Rubicon Dance Company we can't wait to tell you more about this in our good news stories!

We have been working hard towards a number of initiatives in school to ensure pupils are at the heart of accessing a broad, inclusive and purposeful curriculum. This has included our Rainbow Reading initiatives which is really gathering momentum in the class. All pupils are really fostering a love of reading and absolutely love the sound of twinkling bells to signal the start of their reading sessions. It has been amazing to invite parents to share these reading skills and for them to share those special reading times with their children.

Our second spring term topic was changes which was linked to the Science and Technology Area of Learning and Experience. We were really pleased to welcome Sparkle Lab Cymru to school who created bespoke sessions for our pupils. This included lots of fun and engaging science experiments which really help the pupils develop their exploratory skills and to look for changes that occurred in the experiment. The pupils took these skills back to classroom to create a number of experiments with wizz, pops and bangs! At the end of this term we had a visit from the Easter bunny, the children followed the footprints to find their magical chocolate egg!

Food Bank

We had a wonderful donation of money to buy a big order of food from Asda. This food was distributed and sent to ten families over Easter. We know how hard the cost-of-living crisis is at the moment, so we were thrilled to be able to provide some much needed food to our lovely families. We hope this was enjoyed by all!



Rubicon Dance

A selection of pupils who have been taking part in dance class in school were asked to perform one of their dances in the Rubicon Dance Show in St David's hall. The dancers performed in front of a large crowd including their parents and staff from the school. The dance was absolutely sensational and the group got the biggest cheer of the evening!



German Students

The school council completed a learning walk in September and developed their own School Development Plan for the year. As you can imagine they were very clear on their priorities for improvement! We have already taken steps to address some of the issues raised and will be working on meeting other targets throughout the year. We will ensure that our children then evaluate how well we have done at the end of the academic year to feed into our self-evaluation process to ensure further school improvement.

The School Development Plan is available to view on our website.



Federation Pupil Parliament assembly

Our Federation Pupil Parliament have been busy this term. Riverbank set a Rights Respecting challenge and the pupils had to think about what it means to be a rights holder. It was great to see and hear what it means to our wonderful pupils through singing, making posters and in person as we celebrated together.



Calon Hearts Tea Party

Every year we raise money for Calon Hearts on valentine's day. The pupils love getting dressed up in pink or red. This year we made jam sandwiches and had a wonderful tea party in classes to raise money for this wonderful cause!



Riverbank
SCHOOL

Learning together to be the best we can



Highlights of *Ty Gwyn*



During the spring term we received our school inspection report from Estyn (which can be viewed on our website). We were extremely pleased the report highlighted the dedication of staff within the school as well as the key role played by families and the health, therapy and wider teams that support our pupils. Estyn also invited us to prepare two case-studies for publication on their website, firstly for the partnership work with families and secondly for the use of drama to prepare pupils for life experiences.

The spring term saw pupils enjoy a number of whole school events including world book day, the Easter Bonnet Parade and a number of events linked to Welsh Month, hopefully this page will give you a flavour of the activities and fun which spread across the school.

Welsh Month

During the Spring term, Ty Gwyn celebrated our annual 'Welsh Month' with a focus on our 'Cynefin (Habitat)'. Throughout the term we held whole school events including a sensory story session by Dave from Keycreate, a disco with Chris, a Welsh Fayre and an internal Eisteddfod.

All classes created posters to represent 'Cynefin' and what it means to them in class demonstrating they were ethically informed citizens learning about their community and the Welsh heritage.

Pupils were encouraged to be enterprising, creative contributors through creating, making and designing produce to share at our school Welsh Fayre. The Welsh Fayre showcased pupils as ambitious, capable learners, creating unique and creative produce that was multisensory and inclusive for all pupils across the school.

To end our Welsh Month, we held a school Eisteddfod where we celebrated pupils' achievements throughout the month. We also had a performance from our Criw Cymraeg singing 'Pen, Ygswyddau, Coesau, Traed' and 'Clap, Clap, Un, Dau, Tri' and from Dosbarth Rhymini singing 'Lliwiau's Enfys' and 'Mr Hapus'.



Another exciting term with great music projects taking place at Ty Gwyn

In early stages of development every Thursday we hold one to one music sessions with Open Orchestras led by Phil and Emma where pupils are learning to develop positive relationships with the music leaders and grow their musical potential.

Open Orchestras supports schools to create orchestras that are accessible to young disabled people. This is an inclusive music project with the vision for pupils to form an orchestra and grow musically together.

Simultaneously, another residency project continues to take place with Live Music. This project gives us access to additional live music provision led by an experienced professional musician Tom, who is delivering multisensory music lessons using his French horn.



World Book Day

This year for World Book Day classes created their favourite character from a book. Classes used a range of recycled materials to make their characters, which were so good they have been on display ever since! Pupils really enjoyed exploring around the school to see which characters and books had been chosen by other classes.



Easter Bonnet Parade

We were really impressed by the diversity and creativity of the bonnets on display this year. We were also lucky enough to have a visit from the Easter Bunny who helped us with the really tough decisions for the prizes. For those that didn't win a prize there was still lots of dancing and fun as well as an Easter egg or gift thanks to The Friends of Ty Gwyn (our parents and staff charity group).



Highlights of Woodlands



Siân Thomas -
Woodlands,
Head of School

With a spring in our step, we certainly embraced this term. Our parent café went from strength to strength with more parents joining every week, they are certainly an asset to our school. Once again, our opening and closing curriculum events, where the pupils were able to share what they have learnt this term, was very well attended. I continue to be proud of all our pupils, staff, and parents for working so hard together as a team so we can do the best for everyone.



Key Stage Three - 123 BLAST OFF

We were fortunate enough to have a visit from a pop-up planetarium as our opening event in January. This was a magical experience for all our students who had the chance to gaze up at the stars, ask questions and learn some new facts from the experts. Our primary focus has been Science and Technology with a secondary focus on Humanities. We have been doing lots of exciting experiments to understand how things work. We have developed our numeracy skills by collecting, representing and analysing data. Our closing event to showcase our learning was a great success and enjoyed by all.



Key Stage 4 And 5 Opening Event

Students are currently working towards qualifications based on personal development and choices for the future, so for our opening event we invited two inspirational people to talk about their journeys to success. Gavin Clifton is a disabled author and songwriter who communicates using a communication aid and James Ledger is a visually impaired para-athlete. We enjoyed listening to their stories and asked lots of interesting questions.



Work Experience

Many students have had the opportunity to gain work skills this term at a range of employers such as The Range, PeterLea Primary School kitchen, Walnut Tree Farm, Bute Park Nurseries, Riverbank School, Gedrys Farm dog kennels and iTeach. We have received positive feedback from all employers. Well done all!

Now in a minute Cafe

A small group of our Post 16 young people have embarked on setting up a coffee shop, whose events are growing from strength to strength. All are working towards their NVQ Level 2 Food Hygiene, with the aim of completing it by the end of the year. Through the process of the project, each has discovered how to bake, played their part in the promotion of their products and all while renovating the environment, which is still an ongoing project. Through this term they have provided several pop-up cafes, selling a variety of dairy, egg, and gluten free baked goods, coffee, tea and their sell-out bacon sandwiches, made with freshly baked baps. Next steps, set a date for barista training, then say goodbye to the cafetière as we look to extend our catering services and opening times.



St David's Day

Woodlands celebrated St David's Day with their first in person Eisteddfod in three years! We had lots of fun performing Welsh songs, folk dancing, reading Welsh poems and reenacting Welsh stories. Our Eisteddfod's were lucky enough to have some special judges and one of our performances even got the golden buzzer! The judges had such a difficult time judging the winners as the standard of all the work was so high. It was a fantastic day celebrated by all. Da iawn pawb!



School Council

The School Council has been busy this term discussing ways to make Woodlands even better! They helped to organise fundraising events including Comic Relief and Wear Red for Velindre. As a school we have raised a whopping £598.87 for different charities this year! They also joined students from Riverbank and Ty Gwyn at a meeting with Cardiff Council to talk about their experiences at school.



Woodlands
SCHOOL
Learning for Living



A pupil interview with one of *our Governors*

Binki Rees - Acting chair of Governors

Ethan - Woodlands, Sycamore

Christopher - Riverbank, Seren

Asha - Ty Gwyn, Rhosyn



Ethan: What do you like best about being a Governor?

Binki: I love coming into school. Activities like today's Coronation parade. All the pupils coming into the school make me happy and I like seeing all your work.

Christopher: We are a rights respecting school. We have the right to relax and play. What do you like to do to relax?

Binki: I like to do Yoga. I like riding my bike in the park and the river. I like looking at all the pretty scenery with the trees.

Asha: Who is your favourite superhero?

Binki: I like Wonder woman. She has an amazing tiara and gold boots.

Asha: What is your favourite colour?

Binki: Purple I love this colour

Asha: Do you like bubbles?

Binki: I like very large bubbles that pop. Asha loves bubbles.

Ethan: When you visit our Woodlands café. What should we make you? What is your favourite cake?

Binki: I like an Oat milk coffee and a vegan cake. My favourite cake would be a lemon drizzle cake.

Christopher: We have been learning about dinosaurs in class, they roar! What is your favourite dinosaur?

Binki: Pterodactyl because it can fly....



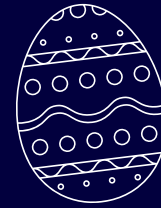
King Charles III *Coronation*



Federation Coronation parade

The pupils decided to organise a Federation parade. Pupils wanted to have flags, bunting and music. Pupils had prizes such as chocolate and balloons for participating in the parade and making fantastic crowns. Woodlands staff band played for us and all pupils and staff had a fantastic morning and we were very lucky with the weather.





Western Learning Federation
Executive Headteacher - Mr Wayne Murphy
Deputy Executive Headteacher - Ms Rachel Faulkner
Tel: 029 2083 8560
E-mail: westernlearningfederation@cardiff.gov.uk

Riverbank School
Head of School - Mrs Amie Lucas
Tel: 0292 0563 860
E-mail address: riverbanksp@Cardiff.gov.uk

Ty Gwyn School
Head of School - Mr Jamie Brotherton
Tel: 0292 0838 560
E-mail address: tygwynsp@cardiff.gov.uk

Woodlands School
Head of School - Mrs Siân Thomas
Tel: 0292 0838 560
E-mail address: 8817006_woodlandshighschool



Vincent Road, Cardiff, CF5 5AQ