



ACHIEVEMENT
CHALLENGE
EXCELLENCE



CHRISTMAS/ NEW YEAR NEWSLETTER



ST CLARE'S SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents,

Sometimes at Christmas the Headteacher can feel a little Scrooge-like. I am wiping my brow thanking my lucky stars St. Clare's has avoided the dreaded "damned if you do / damned if you don't" situation when it snows. Both my wife and I dread snow falling during term time as you have to spend the early hours every morning agonising whether to shut the school or not. Don't get me wrong I **LOVE** the snow and what it does to draw the child out in all of us. I like the fact that the world stops for just a day or two and everyone can enjoy family time, sledges, snowballing etc. As long as it snows in the holidays!

Now the sun is shining and in between writing reports I get to do the great stuff about being a Headteacher – watching children enjoy the last few days of school, watching them perform in pantos and shows and nativities and the like. Even the teenagers seem to forget to be grumpy for a few days!

The end of the Autumn term finds children at their most tired compared to any other term. It is dark and cold and they have completed a 17 week half term which is effectively half of the 35-week year. Recuperation and family time is important for children to reset their biological clocks, reconnect with those that they love and recover from the hard slog of Autumn term.

Unfortunately, they will be back all too soon and Year 11, Year 12 & Year 13 have mock exams to return to. Some pupils may dismiss these exams as

unimportant. They could not be more wrong. The school uses the data from these exams to plan interventions and support for the next few months before the real thing. So if your son or daughter want to stay off the radar, then a good mock exam performance is key. We also use these results if a child should miss an actual A-level or GCSE through illness. Exam boards and universities ask schools to send through mock results to back up our predictions of what they should have got in the actual exam. It is hard to convince an exam board that Candidate A should be getting A grades when they achieved only a D grade in the mock!

Anyway, enough of exams – let me end on a positive. There are lots of memories from any term in the life of a school. However, every so often something special comes along that stands out. An event that creates memories that last for a lifetime. I can vouch for this because I recently attended my first Old Harveians' Dinner for ex-pupils at my old school in Kent. Memories came flooding back when I got to walk around the school before eating. A particularly strong and fond memory was playing the hapless Mr. Purdue in *Habeas Corpus* brilliantly directed by my English teacher, Mr. Jones. We even had to build some huge gallows as one of our biggest props!

One such memory for our pupils occurred last week – The Seussical musical. It was simply stunning and I enjoyed every minute of both the performances I saw. It too had a huge prop – a full size bath with shower! All the children will

remember this experience for the rest of their lives as I have with my special moment. What makes this extra special and therefore St. Clare's extra special is that it uniquely involved pupils from Year 2 to Year 13. This is what an all through education can offer the children and the school.

We say goodbye to Mrs. Rosser and her daughter Ava at the end of this term. The Rosser family are emigrating to Australia. We are very sorry to see both Ava and her mum leave St. Clare's. I appointed Mrs Rosser 3 ½ years ago as a PE teacher. She made an immediate positive impact with the girls and resurrected girls' sport at the school. She was a role model and a fine teacher. She also became PSE coordinator for KS3 and revolutionised the way PSE is delivered at the school. Her legacy will be long lasting and she will be hard to replace. I know she worked well with Mr. Martin and he will miss her too. We wish her and her family the very best in their new adventure. Mrs. Barnard will take over the reins of girls' PE and Games for the remainder of the academic year and a permanent replacement will be recruited in the Spring term ready to start in September 2018. I will teach Year 8 Maths until the end of the academic year.

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas (with or without snow) and here's to more memory-making next term and beyond.

Kind regards

Simon Antwis, Headteacher





**Nursery trip to
see Santa at
Abbot's Kitchen**





Nursery pupils re-enact Goldilocks and the Three Bears



Since autumn half-term our Nursery theme has been "Families" and the children have been looking at their own family tree.



Nursery pupils performed a traditional Nativity Play on the stage for proud parents and grandparents!



Infant Christmas Concert



Junior Christmas Concert



The Seussical

"Oh, the Thinks you can Think, when you think about Seuss!" These were some of the first lyrics heard in St Clare's production of SEUSSICAL THE MUSICAL. And boy, what thinks were brought to life on the stage in this fresh, fun, and family friendly musical.

You'd have to be living on another planet not to at least be somewhat familiar with the source material for this show, a collection of some of Dr. Seuss's most iconic stories. It was truly a thrill to see these beloved characters come to life on the stage. For those not familiar with the musical, it is a mash-up, of sorts, of the stories of Horton the Elephant, Gertrude McFuzz, Jojo the little Who with big thinks and all those that they encounter in their crazy Seuss-fuelled adventures. The show included favourites like the Grinch and Mayzie La Bird and was narrated by the most iconic of Seuss' creations, The Cat in The Hat. It's a story about being different, believing in yourself, and relying on your imagination to take you to wonderful places.

Theatrical Director, Hayley Corthine, created the most fantastic opening for the school's production of the popular musical with pupils as young as Year 2 right up to the Sixth Form, performing as animals and Whos. There was real skill employed in the production and the talent of the cast performing it.

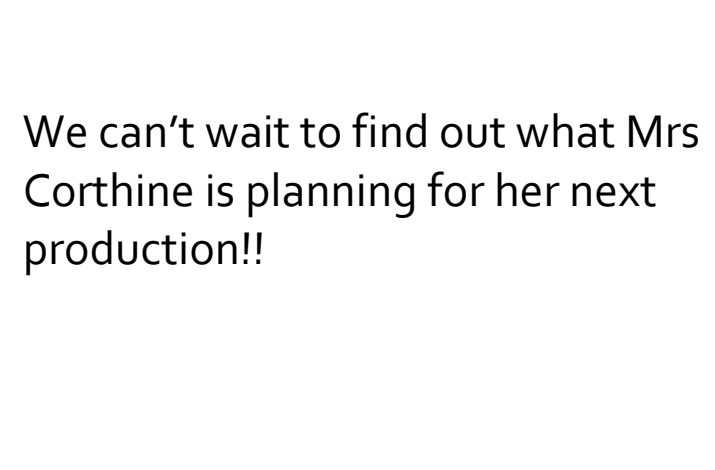


What filled the stage with colour, texture and Dr Seuss magic though were the costumes. Children in the audience excitedly pointed out The Cat in the Hat (Kate Layland), Gertrude McFuzz (Emily Smith), Horton the Elephant (Theo Quantick), Mayzie La Bird (Lili Smith), Sour Kangaroo (Molly Jones) and JoJo (Jack Olding), each character with a recognisable and well-designed outfit.

The Seussical's Producer was Mary Layland. The costumes and props, (Louise Williams, Diane Trenoweth, Paula Williams & Kathy Phillips) hair and make-up were visually stunning. The acting was brilliant and the music, of course, was truly magical, thanks to Musical Director, Jason Staddon.

It was a really fun, uplifting, and exciting show, full of loveable characters, upbeat songs, colourful costumes and a talented cast. It was a show for the whole family, even the grinchiest of Grinches!





We can't wait to find out what Mrs Cortchine is planning for her next production!!

Thank you so much to Y9 student Agnes for playing the piano so beautifully as parents arrived for the Prep School Christmas concerts.



Thank you Eamon!



St. Clare's Garden Club

We've been busy making sure that our polytunnel, allotment and flower beds are ready for winter and preparing for Spring. We are delighted with our new shed which was kindly donated by the **Friends of St. Clare's**. It is perfect for our garden tools and wellies and coats and we can also store pots and our packets of seeds. Thank you to the Friends – we are very grateful.

Before October half term we held a fund-raising 'brownies and hot chocolate' sale which proved very popular and enabled us to buy lots of spring bulbs to plant in the various beds around the school. We are looking forward to lots of daffodils popping up around St. David's day, along with crocuses, tulips and alliums.

We are already planning for next year's 'garden expansion' and we are especially grateful to Eamon, our wonderful, twice weekly gardener, who does so much of the hard work so we can concentrate on the good bits. We couldn't do without his digging and wheelbarrow skills! Thank you Eamon.

Year 6 celebrate the best attendance this term. Well done!

A-level English lecture

Mrs Burns took her Year 12 A-level students to an English lecture run by Sovereign Education at the Park Inn Hotel, Cardiff on "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte. The lecturers-were Prof John McRae and Dr Ruth Hazel

Pupils had the opportunity to sample university life with a full day of lectures and a Q&A session at the end. "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte is an A level text and the lecture is geared towards the requirements of the WJEC examination board for A level English.

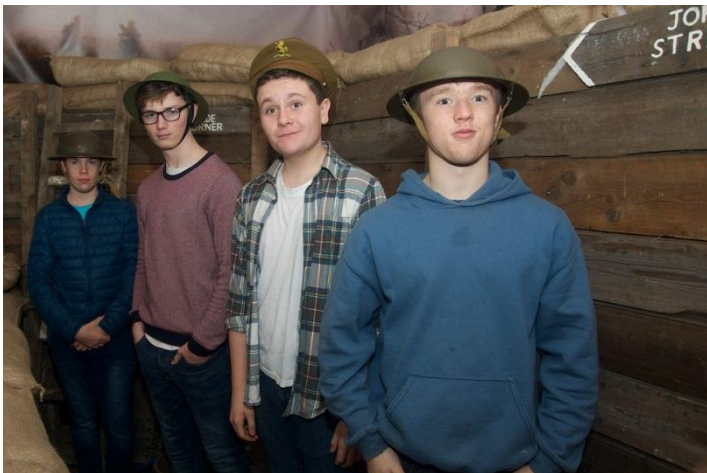
Sam Chumley had the question of the day and a "gold star" from the charismatic and ever popular lecturer Prof John McRae. Sam's question was:

"If Jane, as an educator (a teacher and a governess) guides and teaches the degraded and blind Mr Rochester at the end of the novel, surely she is now representative of the oppressive patriarchal Victorian system she fights against? Her inherited wealth (gained by a capitalist uncle) empowers her. Surely this is ironic?"

Other topics covered were:

- The history of first person narratives
- Landscape and setting in the novel
- The gothic and the bildungsroman

Our GCSE History students take over Porthcawl Museum



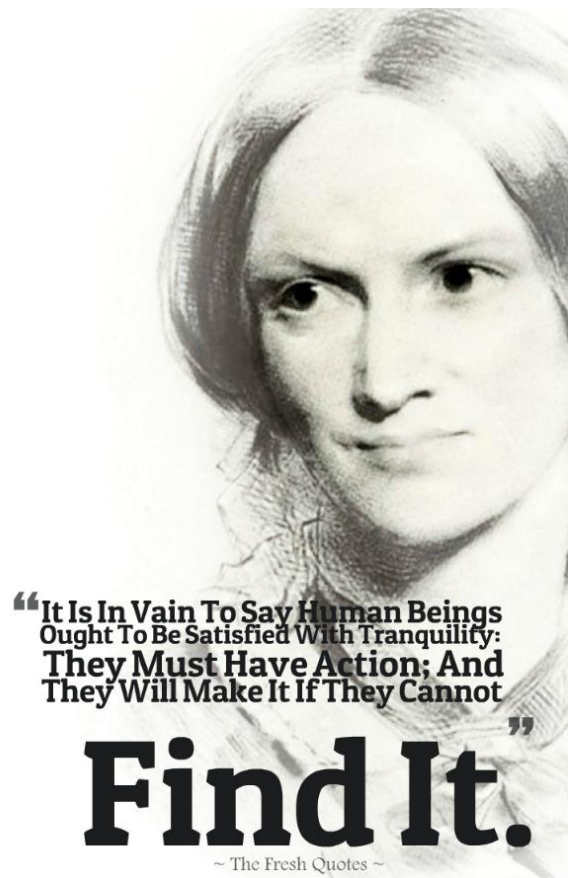
Porthcawl museum took part in Takeover Day last week when four students from St Clare's School, Porthcawl joined the museum volunteers for the day.

Working with the museums recorder Elaine Newman they were guided through the process of how the museum collection is recorded, prepared and stored correctly. They also experienced the role of a museum steward providing a warm welcome to all the museum visitors and maintaining accurate day to day records.

Takeover Day is a celebration of children's and young people's contribution to museums, galleries and historic homes. It's a day on which they are given meaningful roles, working alongside staff and volunteers to participate in the life of the museum.

Actor Michael Sheen, Kids in Museums Patron, says,

"Takeover Day gives hundreds of young people the chance not only to do something new and experience museums for the first time, but for their voices to be heard. It provides an opportunity for young people throughout Wales to talk about their heritage – to share concerns and imagine new futures. In challenging times, museums can act as the cement in our communities, bringing young people together to tell their stories. Put museums at the centre of our communities and young people at their heart, and we will all experience a richer, more vibrant culture which excites and enthalls everyone."



No pain - no gain for Pudsey

Senior and Sixth Form boys bravely volunteered to have their legs waxed to raise money for the BBC Children in Need Appeal.

"We've all been trying to think of suggestions and this was something a bit different that we could do," said the boys who put their hairy legs in the not-so expert hands of eager pupils who made a £5 donation to be allowed the satisfaction of pulling off a wax strip. Not to be outdone, the brave boys were joined by ICT Teacher, Mr Yemm.

At St Clare's we always support Children in Need from the smallest in the Nursery to the tallest in the Sixth Form. Apart from the leg-waxing we held raffles, quizzes, wore fancy dress, cake sales and lots of stalls including a **Pudsey Photo Booth** which was very popular. We had a lot of fun and raised £1,393.23."



Millie Jenkins Y10

Amelia (Millie) Jenkins, Y10, has just finished a hugely successful run of Tiger Bay the Musical in Wales Millennium Centre. It was a thrilling experience for Millie to be working with West End Stars.



Millie was excited that the St Clare's Y10 GCSE Drama class were able to go and experience 'Tiger Bay' with teacher Mrs Corthine.

Currently Millie is performing in Imagine Theatres Cinderella at the Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl. She will appear in 19 shows over the Christmas period. Tiring but fun!

It's been a very successful year performing for Millie and she is looking forward to starting rehearsals with the Wales Millennium Centre's Performance Platform in January, to work with world-renowned choreographer Matthew Bourne's company, New Adventures, preparing a curtain-raiser performance of contemporary ballet based on the main show, for the opening night of Matthew Bourne's Cinderella at WMC as part of the 30th year anniversary celebrations of Matthew Bourne's New Adventures with Lez Brotherston's sumptuous costumes and sets, which won an Olivier Award for his original designs.

Lili Smith Y12

Congratulations to Sixth Form student, Lili, who has been cast in a film for Crime Stoppers. "Fearless" is a film which will be shown to young people in schools to encourage them to speak up about reporting crimes e.g. cyberbullying.

Lili has also just recently sung with Welsh National Opera in "A Christmas Celebration" at the Exchange Hotel in Cardiff.

Many of you will recognize Lili as Mayzie La Bird from our recent production of The Seussical!



After School Club

We offer an After School Club for all pupils at the school. This means that your child can be supervised in a safe and secure environment every day of the school week until 5:30pm.

To enhance the enjoyment of the extended school day, various multicultural and play-based activities are provided by the staff to create a relaxed yet stimulating environment for holistic development.

For **Infants** these include; table top and floor games which develop the imagination and helps the children to communicate with one another; creative activities which help to develop their manipulative and design skills; role play opportunities which enable them to re-enact familiar stories and practise their social and imaginative skills. The children sometimes also relax by watching a DVD on the large flat screen TV.



"I work full-time. It's such a godsend picking the children up from After School Club, knowing that their homework has been completed properly." [Prep parent]

For **Juniors** these include; board games such as 'Monopoly', 'Snakes and Ladders' and Connect 4 which enable the pupils to develop their understanding of number, tactics and co-operative play; socio-dramatic opportunities in which the pupils select from an assortment of props to enhance their play and interaction with one another; quiet areas where they can complete homework, read books or just relax.



All pupils can play outside, weather permitting, and enjoy the school grounds. On special occasions during the school year, there are additional activities such as cookery and clay.

We endeavor to meet the pupil's individual needs and to promote their welfare and enjoyment through the opportunities provided.

We greatly value our links with parents, and the staff are very pleased to discuss the activities. For more information about After School Club charges or if you would like to register your child for After School Club, please contact the School Office on 01656 782509.

Christmas Lunch at St Clare's

The Thomas Franks team pulled out all the stops for St Clare's Christmas Lunch and gave us a full FROZEN theme! Dressed as elves, the team served us all the most delicious Christmas feast and everyone had a fabulous time. **WE LOVED IT – THANK YOU!**



Christmas Fayre at St Clare's Prep

Our Prep pupils loved the mini Christmas Fayre on the last day of term. Thank you so much to everyone who generously sent in donations for the raffle, tombola and all the stalls



Junior Cross Country

Despite the freezing weather and cold toes everyone gave 100% and did remarkably well! Three runners in the top ten within their age categories – brother and sister Lucas and Jess Crawley along with Grace James.



Chloe Collett even delayed her trip to France to run in her race. Great commitment.

Race report by Mr M Gatt

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	
Monday, 8 th January	First day of Spring Term
Wednesday, 24 th January	Open Morning (please book in advance)
Thursday, 25 th January	GCSE Options/Careers/Year 9 Parents Evening 4:00-6:15pm
Friday, 26 th January	Senior School Transition Day for Year 6 pupils
Monday, 5 th February	Year 7 Parents Evening 4:00-6:15pm
Monday, 12 th February	Year 11, 12 and 13 Concerns Evening
Friday, 16 th February	INSET day
Monday, 19 th February to Friday, 23 rd February	Spring half-term holiday
Wednesday, 28 th February	Open Morning (please book in advance)
Monday, 5 th March	Year 11 Parents Evening 4:00-6:15pm
Wednesday, 14 th March	A-level Options and Careers Evening
Wednesday, 28 th March	Break up for Easter holiday

REMINDERS

- *If you change your details, please inform the School Secretary immediately.*
- *If your child suffers from sickness and/or diarrhoea, they must be kept off school for 48 hours after the last bout of illness.*
- *Don't forget to tell us your news from outside of school. Whether it's on or off the sports field, we want to hear about it! Please email holly.fowlkes@stclares-school.co.uk so that we can give our talented pupils the recognition they deserve.*

For the latest news and photos from school, don't forget to follow us on Twitter @stclares_school and 'Like' our Facebook page: St. Clare's School, Porthcawl.