



# MAESTEG SCHOOL

# Newsletter

Spring 2018



## Headteacher's Message

Welcome to this, our second newsletter, to keep our school community informed of our successes and developments and also to give our pupils the recognition they deserve for their outstanding achievements.

This term saw our Creative Arts department out on their annual school show which this year was 'We Will Rock You'. I was in awe at our talented pupils' ability to inspire an audience and have them singing along to Queen's songs willing the show not to end. It was definitely our best yet and has inspired even more pupils and staff to want to participate in next year's extravaganza.

Our English team has recently established Maesteg's very own 'BBC School Report' team under the guidance of Miss Hannah Jenkins; this team has gone from strength to strength in the last two years. The pupils' coverage of topical news items such as the danger of fake news gained the attention of BBC News presenter,

Sian Lloyd and as a result, Maesteg School appeared on BBC National news presenting their coverage of this story. Further details of their experiences this year are included in the newsletter.

We have continued to develop as a Pioneer school and are continually refining our year 7 'Challenge Curriculum' to provide our pupils with a more engaging, exciting and relevant learning experience. Maesteg School is proud to be part of developing the educational diet that aspires to develop pupils' skills and engender in them a love of learning that prompts them to want to learn, ask the 'big questions' and solve problems.

These are exciting times for Maesteg School and Wales and we are proud to be a part of these developments.

We hope you enjoy our Spring newsletter!

## A Kind of Magic!

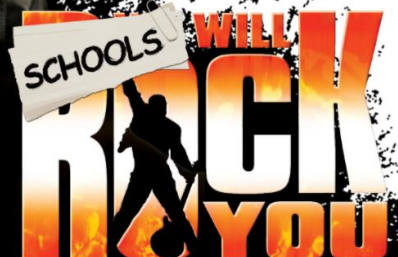
This term we were whisked away to Planet Mall where *Galileo Figaro* (Thomas Mines) and *Scaramouche* (Sophie Thomas) led us on a journey through Queen's greatest hits in search of the lost guitar of Brian May. Audiences were thrilled by the performances of all the cast, singing along to classics like *Under Pressure* and *Somebody to Love*. On Planet Mall, the *Killer Queen* (Megan Hill) and her 'Chief Stooage' *Khasboggi* (Owain Davies) have banished all musical instruments and composers.

*Galileo* and *Scaramouche* team up with a group of Rebels called *The Bobemians* who are led by the evasive duo of *Britney Spears* (Harly Videan) and *Meatloaf* (Eryn Rees.)



The live band and chorus really brought the story to life, as our rebel heroes fought to save 'Rock and Roll' to the sound of the electric guitar and crashing drums. *Head of Drama* and *Director* Miss Hillier was very impressed with both shows. "This year's production of *We Will Rock You* was truly excellent," said Miss Hillier. "The cast and crew should be extremely proud of the professional standard of work they created – despite the *Beast from The East's* best efforts! The audience were enthralled from the outset and it really was the talk of the town. Well done to all!"

If you enjoyed *We Will Rock You* then please look out for our upcoming Music Concert this May. Keep your eyes on our School website and Twitter feed for dates and times. Huge congratulations to everyone involved with *WWRY*, it truly was a triumph!





BBC

SCHOOL  
REPORT

Newsletter

Maesteg School's **BBC School Report** team have been very busy again this term. Led by Miss Jenkins, their efforts have not gone unnoticed and the **BBC** took great interest in what our young reporters have been up too...



### Digital Cities 2018

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, our year 10 pupils went on a trip to the famous Millennium Centre in Cardiff to take part in a *Fake News Workshop*. Our pupils took part in a variety of activities about *Fake News* including a virtual reality opera experience, producing a news report on an iPad, real news and career advice.

The *Digital Cities* event, hosted by the BBC, was to provide people in Cardiff with the opportunity to expand their technology skills and we were thrilled to be invited to take part in the event. At the start of the day we created a news report explaining the pressures of being a teenager in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We had one hour to produce a film and edit it. Once we had finished, we showed the report to the rest of the schools that were there.

The virtual reality experience was our favourite part of the day as lots of us hadn't tried it before, including Miss Jenkins! *The Magic Butterfly*, run by *Welsh National Opera*, is a touring attraction that aims to attract a wider audience to experience opera. Set up in a bright red shipping container were Virtual Reality headsets dangling from the ceiling for us to try. We got to explore a magical forest where animals came out from behind the trees to greet us whilst listening to beautiful operatic music. It was a truly immersive experience!

Our final activity of the day was a workshop all about helping us to identify *Fake News*. Taught by a BBC expert and journalist, we were given examples and tips to help us spot real and fake news.

### Making an Impression

As a result of the fantastic work our *BBC School Report* team have been doing on the topic of *Fake News*, the *BBC News at 6* team paid us a visit to find out more. Most pupils and staff will have seen our *Fake News* assembly that we presented to all houses in the beginning of January. Well, after posting pictures on our Twitter page, we received a phone call from the *BBC News at 6* filming team asking if they could film our presentation!

On the 13<sup>th</sup> March, Sian Lloyd and her BBC filming crew came into the school and met with our enthusiastic team. She showed us how to work with a news camera and shared her top tips for conducting an interview. Sian interviewed Emily, Natisha, Emily (yr 10), Olivia and Lucy. She asked them about their thoughts on *Fake News* and how we could address it. She then watched us give our presentation to a year 8 class and was extremely impressed. She called us trail-blazers!



The feature aired on Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm and it is still featured on the BBC news website. We were so grateful to have had this opportunity and to have experienced the work that goes in to creating a news broadcast. Miss Jenkins said "it was a fantastic and unique opportunity for our pupils. To have such a high profile reporting opportunity offered to our pupils is testament to the hard work and dedication they have put in to developing and sharing their knowledge of digital literacy."

The pupils included in this day were Lucy, Lowri, Nerys, Aimee, Olivia, Lola, Chloe, Isobel, Ellie, Emily, Evie, Emily, Lydia, Ellie Thomas, Alysha Jones, Adam and Natisha.

### News Day 2018

On 15<sup>th</sup> March, our pupils set up camp in the conference room and spent the whole day interviewing, filming and editing their stories as part of *BBC News Day*.

The *BBC School Report* team at *Maesteg School* worked in groups to create a professional and polished report. Our report included a range of topics including *International Women's day* and mental health. The team interviewed a range of pupils and teachers and asked thought-provoking questions.

You can see the full report on our school website under the *BBC School Report* tab.

**A huge thank you to our *BBC School Report*\* team for all their hard work in bringing us the latest news.**

### Premier League Enterprise

This term a selection of Year 7 pupils have been working with *Swansea City AFC* team as part of the *Swansea City Enterprise programme*. The programme aims to help pupils with their self-esteem, confidence, literacy, and numeracy skills by taking part in activities based on budget, sponsorship and advertising. The pupils have been lucky enough to visit the stadium, attend tours and win merchandise, rewarding them on their efforts. Year 7 have worked exceptionally hard throughout the programme and represented the school brilliantly, they approached each task with maturity and respect, working amazingly as a team. Pupils have used digital aids such as iMovie to create and present adverts selling certain branded products - Congratulations to all pupils involved. A huge thank you to Graham from the *Swansea City Enterprise programme* for providing the children with such an amazing experience, for which they are hugely grateful.



\*As part of BBC Report guidelines, pupils are printed with first names only.



## Master Chefs!

Year 11 have been busy creating culinary masterpieces for their GCSE Food & Nutrition examinations. Pupils had to research Breakfast dishes and produce a 3-course menu for their exam. The dishes required great skill and application and ranged from *Eggs Benedict* to *Meringue*. Miss Williams was proud of the pupils' efforts that included *Belgian Waffles* and a full cooked breakfast. "They have all done extremely well," she said.

## Melody Makers

The following pupils have all passed their recent examinations; Leona Terzic **Grade 3 Violin**, Niamh O'Brien **Grade 3 Violin**, Shannon Roache **Grade 3 Flute**, Tegan McNamara **Grade 3 Flute & Emily Jones Grade 2 Flute**. Congratulations to them all!

## Remembering the Holocaust

Year 13 pupil Megan Hill is *The Welsh Ambassador* for the *Holocaust Educational Trust* after successfully completing the *Ambassador Training* in London last year. Megan has been working alongside other ambassadors from across the United Kingdom to promote the *Defend the Truth Appeal* that will be featuring heavily across social media to combat Holocaust denial that is sadly still prominent online. Keep an eye on our school website for the campaign video coming soon, which features Megan and interviews from Holocaust survivors.

## Out of this World!

Year 7 pupils have taken part in the *Lead Creative Schools Programme* this term. The programme, supported by the *Arts Council of Wales* has included lessons on *Space Travel* and Alien life forms! Miss Pearson and Mr Davies have been working closely with our *Creative Practitioner*, Ms Karen Dellarmi delivering lessons on designing and launching rockets, interviewing an alien and

designing a menu for the *Space Programme*.

The pupils have also used our outside space to study how gravity affects our bodies. The pupils are soon to competing in an entrepreneurial pitch presentation competition to find the best rocket. The winners, of which, will then have a 3D print out of their winning design.

Mr Dan Allen from *Arts Council of Wales*, credited our creative and critical thinking pupils, after he visited *Maesteg School*, Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March:

"I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed my visit to *Maesteg School* to see your *Lead Creative Schools project*. I was really blown away by the learning that was taking place during the session and more importantly how the project had been structured to fit into the *Challenge Curriculum*. Learners were being very inquisitive, creating questions but also disciplined, refining their questions based on what was happening in the classroom."



"It was really refreshing to see a classroom being used in such an engaging way and I believe the learning environment really reflects the direction of the new curriculum and the *High Functioning Classroom* model. I was excited to hear from Miss Pearson how learners were encouraged to write on desks etc... and for their work to be captured on camera and out into books via QR codes."

Look out for our *Celebration Event*, which will be taking place after the Easter Holidays.

## MAC Branch Out

Pupils supported by our alternative curriculum have been busy out and about the borough this term. Pupils enjoyed their sessions at *Bryngarn Park* with Rangers Dan & Beth, learning about woodland management. Our *MAC* pupils cleared large areas of forest floor to encourage the new growth of native bluebells as well as practicing the art of coppicing.

Maesteg is now a safer place after our *MAC* pupils have taken part in a *Personal Survival Course* run at *Maesteg Pool*. It was very

rewarding to see pupils face challenges and persevere to overcome them whilst learning skills to help save lives. We are very proud of the progress pupils are making as individuals, engaging in their bespoke curriculum and learning new life skills.



*Tyler & Roy planting Tomatoes*

Pupils have been inspired by recent *21<sup>st</sup> Century Gardening* workshops delivered by Roy Clark, Mike & Tristan Miles. The pupils want to redevelop the school's allotment area after learning about how *Ultrapods* and *Smartplants* can make the growing process more efficient and productive. Follow [@MaestegMAC](#) on *Twitter* to see how our pupils are creating a gardening enterprise!

## Italian Adventures

*Maesteg School Geography Department* recently embarked on a fantastic trip to Italy, stopping off at *Naples, Capri, Sorrento, Vesuvius* and *Pompeii* to see the sights! Pupils and staff had an amazing time experiencing Italian culture, the dramatic coastlines and volcanic landforms. The behaviour of Years 11,12 & 13 was exemplary which helped to make it such a fantastic trip. Pupils want to say a huge thank you to Miss Ford for organising such a wonderful trip!





# SPORTS REPORT

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## Captain's Run!

Maesteg School were fortunate enough to be chosen by the WRU to receive a

'Once in a lifetime' opportunity, due to our participation and achievements in rugby the past year. As a school, we boast the best statistics nationally for girl's participation in rugby; alongside this, we have

experienced fantastic success throughout the year groups; *Ospreys Cup* Finalists last year with Year 9, *Ospreys East Champions* with Year 8 and impressive National competition runs with Year 8 and our Senior Team.

In regards to our Senior Team, this is the first time Maesteg School have had a team compete in the Senior League in over a decade. We have also gone one better and managed to not only run a Boys Senior Team but a Girls Senior Team too!

Our Physical Education department has also decided to flip the traditional sports that pupils experience in KS3. We now have boys playing netball and hockey whilst our girls are experiencing rugby in their PE lessons. This has allowed us to deliver rugby to the whole of Key Stage 3 prior to Christmas!

These achievements combined with the fantastic determination and dedication of our pupils has not gone unnoticed. As a result of this, we were chosen from every school in Wales to experience the 'Captains Run' from the Royal Box prior to the *Wales v Scotland* game. This included a very special tour of the *Principality Stadium* whilst meeting some players! It just so happened that this special day would include having an assembly 'gatecrashed' by Ex-Welsh and *British Lions* captain Gareth Thomas, only for him to then chaperon eight lucky pupils (who had no idea about this surprise) and accompany them for the day.



"This surprise is deserved recognition for the fantastic children we have at Maesteg School." Said Mr Davies, Rugby Development Officer at Maesteg School.

"Their dedication, enthusiasm and love for rugby make our jobs a lot easier! If we provide them with opportunities, they evidently attend in their droves and excel!"

The only downside was that we were not able to take the hundreds of pupils who have helped to create such a great opportunity for our school."

"We'd also like to point out the fantastic performance of the *Welsh* team against *Scotland* the following day and say that we're more than happy to attend all Captain Runs in the future as a good luck charm!" exclaimed Mr Davies.

## Dallas Delight

Ysgol Maesteg pupils Kayla Smith (Yr.13), Freya Davies (Yr.10) & Leah O'Connor (Yr.9) recently competed in the *Dallas Trampoline & Tumbling 2018 Cup*. The girls competed in *The Level 10 15+ Female* category against gymnasts from all over America. In the *Prelims* Kayla finished 1<sup>st</sup>, Freya finished 6<sup>th</sup> & Leah came 2<sup>nd</sup> place which meant they all qualified for the *Finals*.

The girls continued to impress in the *Finals*, where Kayla finished 1<sup>st</sup>, becoming *The Level 10 15+ Female Champion*, Leah finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> and Freya placed in 7<sup>th</sup>. The girls, who were also competing for *Team Wales*, dominated every category in *Level 10*, taking 1<sup>st</sup> place in the team competition!

"Visiting America was incredible!" exclaimed Freya. "We trained at *Eagles Gymnastic Academy* before the competition which created a good atmosphere amongst *Team Wales*."

"We did not expect to win overall," said Leah. "We beat everyone in *Level 10*, including the boys, so talk about girl power!"

"We had such a lush time. We are all so grateful for this amazing experience and it puts us all in a great frame of mind for the *British qualifiers*," added Kayla. "We want to thank our coach Sue for everything she has done for us and for Mrs Jones for supporting us all. It was a trip of a lifetime!"



## Level 10 - 1<sup>st</sup> Place

Congratulations girls, a wonderful achievement that did Maesteg School and Wales proud!

## Connect with us...

Keep up to date with our latest news and look out for upcoming events at Maesteg School by checking our website and following our School Twitter community.

maestegschool.co.uk  
@maestegschool  
#maesteg18 #motivatedtostrive