



Newsletter



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Issue 05

Friday 22nd May 2026

A message from Vickie

As we reach the middle of the summer term, I would like to thank you for your continued support and take this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful experiences taking place across Chestnut Hill School. It has been a pleasure to see our pupils continue to thrive, enjoy their learning, and grow in confidence each day. I would also like to thank our dedicated staff team, whose care and commitment help make Chestnut Hill such a warm, nurturing, and special place for our young people.

This half term has been full of exciting opportunities, including our first residential visit to the Peak District and a memorable trip to the animal rescue centre, where many of us fell in love with a cat called Meg! Our lunchtime clubs continue to flourish, and we have been focusing on pupil voice through surveys to help shape future activities and provision. We have also been delighted to welcome new pupils to our school community and are already preparing carefully to support further transitions ahead of September. Enjoy!

A message from Ben

Earlier in the year, we mentioned rolling out the EFL Family App, for sharing with you some of the photos and videos we collect in school. We are grateful to a couple of families for trialling this, and following their feedback, I am pleased to let you know we will launch this after half-term. Attached to this email is a how-to guide, the privacy policy, and a consent form that we require you to complete. We will not be sending out any access codes until after half-term- please feel free to download the app, but please do not worry if nothing comes through at this stage. Hopefully it will all be very simple, however if there are any technical hitches getting set up, we will offer a 'drop-in' session to resolve any issues. We are very much looking forward to sharing with you some of the amazing learning that goes on every day at Chestnut Hill.

Clinical Update

We have been busy enjoying lots of Lego Therapy sessions this term!



Highlight of the Term



Taking part in our first ever Chestnut Hill School residential trip!

Reminders



If you intend to take your child out of school during term, including medical appointments or holidays, please complete the [Absence Request Form](#).



As the weather is changing with the seasons, please remember to send your child into school with sun cream applied, a hat, and water bottle.



If your child is unable to attend school, please notify us directly before 7.45am. Please do not pass messages through the taxi drivers or escorts.

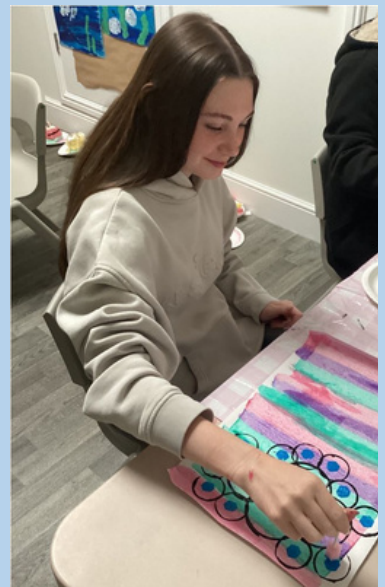
Food Technology

It has been another busy term in Food Technology over Summer Term 2 with learners making some great looking dishes ranging from garlic breads to my specialty apple tart. Pupils have been working really hard towards their theory workbooks with another group of pupils completing their Stage 1 and moving onto Stage 2. We even had time to fit in some biscuit decorating for Treat Yourself Friday. Learners have also began the exciting job of going through all the different recipes we have been making over the year and starting to put together our very own Chestnut Hill recipe book.

I hope you all have a great half term break and look forward to seeing everyone for our final half term before the summer holidays.



Enrichment



Outdoor Education

This term in Outdoor Education, we have been completing our Wild Passport Beginner Level, with most pupils well on their way to achieving their first certificate. The weather has improved, and pupils are thoroughly enjoying spending more time outside as the seasons change and temperatures rise. This month also saw our Bronze DofE group complete Chestnut Hill's first-ever expedition and residential activity. The pupils gave it their all, even in extremely challenging weather conditions. Their resilience and determination truly shone through, giving them the confidence to keep going even when they were tired and sore. I am incredibly proud of them and look forward to seeing future pupils build their confidence in the same way. Huge congratulations to everyone involved.



Pastoral

This term we held our first Parent Networking Group, bringing together families of our pupils for a coffee, cake and a chat. During the session, Laura Hollie was invited to share an overview of the developing Careers Programme at Chestnut Hill School.

By the time this newsletter reaches you, we will also have held another Parent Network session, where parents enjoyed an art session with Katie Sheen.

We look forward to welcoming parents again in the Summer Term as we continue to build our parent community.

Please see below our upcoming events, and feel free to share any ideas of workshops you would like to see, in the new academic year.

26th June - 9am to 10am - Parent Networking Session with Sarah-Jayne in Cherry Tree Garden.

10th July - 9am to 11am - Parent Networking Walk along the Coastal Path, followed by coffee and cake at Abakhan Cafe.



Dates for your Diary

Last day of term - 22nd May

School reopens for pupils - 1st June

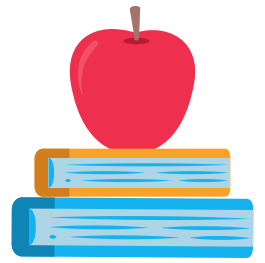
Sports Day (more details to follow) - 18th June

Careers and Aspirations Fayre (more details to follow) - 8th July

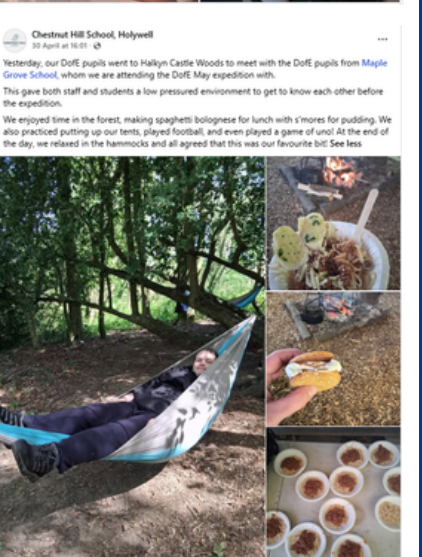
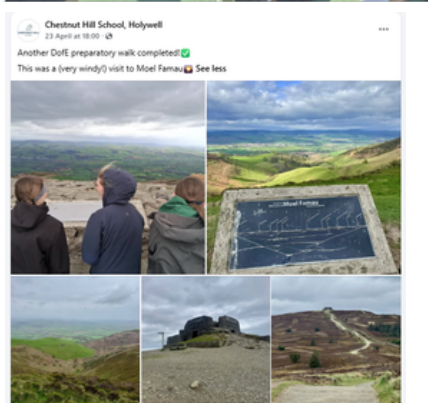
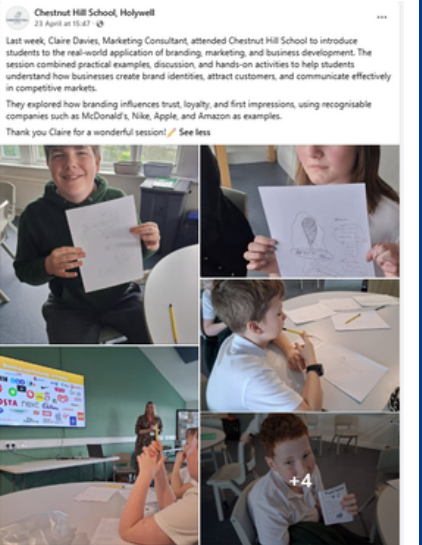
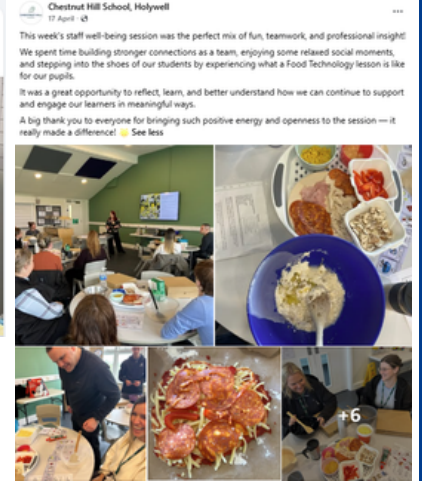
Summer Fayre and last day of term - 17th July



Highlights



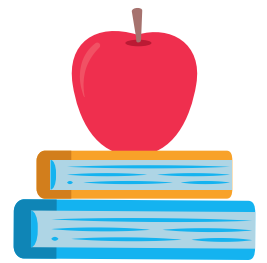
In case you are not on our Facebook, here are some of our highlights from the half-term!



Check out our Facebook [here!](#)



School Moments



Careers

Our School Leader School Council representatives had the wonderful opportunity to visit Mayor Matt Sprake and Deputy Mayor Pat Corbett at Holywell Town Council. During the visit, students were welcomed into the Council Chamber, where key decisions for the community are made.

A thoughtful discussion took place about the opportunities available for young people in the local area. Our students spoke confidently about the value of youth provision and shared their own experiences in groups such as the Scouts, Army Cadets, Firefighting programmes, and local youth clubs. Their contributions highlighted just how important these activities are in developing skills, confidence, and community spirit.

The group also enjoyed learning about the history of Holywell Town Council, gaining insight into how local democracy works and how decisions shape the town. The visit was especially meaningful as it took place on voting day, 7th May, offering a timely reminder of the importance of civic participation.

We extend our thanks to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for welcoming us and providing such a valuable experience for our students.



What an incredible day at North Clwyd Animal Rescue! 🐾 Pupils from Dosbarth Copa visited NCAR at the kind invitation of Nicky Owens, who manages the centre.

The visit gave valuable career readiness experience as they met members of the team and learned about the different roles involved in animal care. They spent time with a variety of animals, including a selection of cats (with Meg quickly becoming a favourite!) and several dogs, especially Tiger, who proudly posed on his podium for photos.

Pupils also visited the veterinary team, where they met a tiny puppy and learned from a veterinary nurse about the care provided and the pathway to becoming a vet. It was a fantastic experience from start to finish, and the students enjoyed every minute. Thank you to everyone at North Clwyd Animal Rescue for such a memorable visit!

Earlier this month, Alex, teacher of Menai Class and ambassador for Giddo's Gift, delivered a presentation to our pupils. Pupils had the opportunity to learn all about the charity, including how and why it was established, the important work they do within the community, the events they organise, and where donations are directed.

The session also helped pupils understand the real impact that donations can have on individuals and families who receive support from the charity. Pupils also learnt more about Alex's role as an ambassador and how she helps to raise awareness and support for the fantastic work of Giddo's Gift. It was an engaging and informative visit that inspired many thoughtful discussions amongst our pupils.





Classroom Moments



Afon

From fierce Viking warriors to budding shopkeepers and confident climbers, Afon pupils have had an action-packed and inspiring half term!

We were delighted to welcome Afon pupils back after the Easter break, and they jumped straight into our exciting new topic – Vikings! This theme has truly brought their creativity and imagination to life. The children have loved designing and making their own shields, hairstyles and helmets, while also learning about how Vikings lived, what they ate, and what life was like for Viking children. They even followed an online tutorial to create their own impressive longboat pictures.

In maths, we have continued exploring coins—recognising different values and adding them together to find totals. Our popular Afon shop has been a fantastic way to bring this learning to life. Pupils took turns being the shopkeeper, setting prices, giving change, and building social connections with their peers. The shop even went mobile, ensuring everyone in Afon class could take part.

PE sessions in the sports hall have been a huge success, giving pupils the chance to challenge themselves and build confidence. We've seen fantastic progress in balancing, climbing, movement skills, and turn-taking. We've also been working hard on handwriting, focusing on letter formation (both lower and upper case), finger spacing between words, and sentence building and structure. This has taken place through both 1:1 and group activities, with pupils showing great engagement and enthusiasm.

Our class story this half term is *The Three Little Pigs*, and the children have thoroughly enjoyed bringing it to life. They've been sequencing the story using storyboards and engaging in role play through a themed tough tray. There has been lots of enthusiastic "huffing and puffing" along the way!

Although the weather hasn't always been on our side, we've made the most of every sunny moment. Outdoor learning has included music club in the sunshine, where pupils explored different instruments, as well as picnic lunches in the garden and even a fun game of tug of war at the park.

Outdoor education has continued to be a highlight, with pupils planting seeds, enjoying the mud kitchen, and taking part in bird watching. We also celebrated Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday by exploring his life and watching clips from his wildlife documentaries—everyone was especially captivated by the dramatic lizard and snake scene!

The celebrations continued with Autism Acceptance Month, ending with a wonderful own clothes day full of bright, colourful outfits.

We were proud to support a fundraiser for North Clwyd Animal Rescue, where pupils decorated cakes for this fantastic cause. Yoga and BSL sessions have continued, with whole-class yoga proving especially valuable for strengthening relationships and creating a calm, shared experience. Building relationships has been a key focus this half term, particularly as we welcomed a new pupil to Afon class—it has been lovely to see friendships grow through imaginative play and shared activities.

One of our biggest highlights was a special visit from QT Robot, which brought lots of excitement, laughter, and excellent turn-taking skills from everyone involved.

We are incredibly proud of all the progress the pupils have made this half term and look forward to even more fun and learning after the break. Well done, Afon Class!





Classroom Moments



Copa

This half term has been incredibly busy, rewarding, and full of exciting opportunities for our class. We are so proud of the progress everyone has made, not only academically but also personally, as we continue to grow in confidence, teamwork, and independence.

One of the highlights of the term was our visit to North Clwyd Animal Rescue, where pupils showed kindness, empathy, and curiosity while learning about animal care, welfare, and the important work involved in rescuing and rehoming animals. We also enjoyed an exciting STEM workshop with Airbus, where pupils explored aerodynamics by designing and building their own wings. The workshop encouraged creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, and it was wonderful to see so many fantastic ideas being shared.

This term we also began our twice-weekly gym sessions, which have already had a really positive impact on the class. Pupils have shown determination, resilience, and encouragement towards one another as they continue to build confidence and enjoy new physical challenges together.

In literacy, we have been focusing on counter arguments and developing our ability to express opinions clearly and thoughtfully. It has been fantastic to see pupils growing in confidence, sharing their ideas respectfully, and really getting their voices heard.

We are incredibly proud of everything the class has achieved this half term and look forward to all of the exciting opportunities still to come. Thank you for your continued support, and we hope everyone has a wonderful and restful break.





Classroom Moments



Glyndwr

Glyndwr have had another amazing term. We have also changed classrooms, and this has been a positive move. The young people are settling in well and becoming a little team in this space- which has been fantastic to see. It has also been commented by other members of the school, how polite and well-mannered the class are – well done Glyndwr!

The young people in Glyndwr have also continued to participate in a wide range of activities including: British Sign Language, yoga, music club; it has been wonderful to see the young people advance skills in all areas of learning- well done! It has also been amazing to see the young people join in with the activities that have been set by the guest speakers from the wider community. They had the upmost respect during these sessions and took a vast amount away from them. This has included: NCAR, Royal Marines and the police.

The young people in Glyndwr have received a multitude of rewards for following the school's ethos consisting of being: ready, safe and respectful. In addition, they always work hard and show motivation and enthusiasm whilst they are in school.

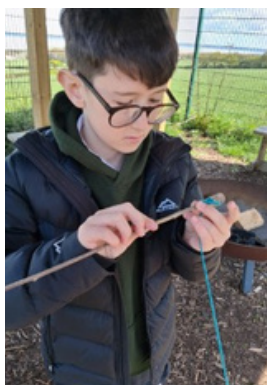
During our literacy lessons this term, we have been studying newspaper reports. We have looked at the features including the grammar and the layout. From this, we have created our own newspaper about a natural disaster- this was very creative. In our grammar sessions, we have linked our lessons to our literacy content. Therefore, we have studied: verbs, adverbs, adjectives, common nouns, concrete nouns and abstract nouns.

This Spring Term One, during our reading sessions, we have been consolidating our retrieval skills by extracting the information from a text at hand independently. During our reading lessons, we have been using: 'Jump In Method', whereby the young people read the word that the adult has not said, as well as 'My Turn Your Turn', whereby the young people repeat the important information that can help them understand the text at hand.

In our maths lesson this term, we have focused on 'money'. We have covered: place value, recognising money, adding up money, subtracting money, estimation and rounding of money. They have enjoyed this topic and excelled in it as they have linked it to everyday life scenarios.

During this Spring Term, Glyndwr have begun to use the 'Zones of Regulation' to identify how they are feeling throughout the day and strategies that they can use to help them feel regulated. It has also been great to see the young people participate in our morning check in, where we have a daily question and check in to how we are feeling. At the end of the school day, the young people have also participated in Check Out and they state a negative and a positive of the day. This also helps to develop their cognitive ability as they are using their prefrontal cortex of the brain.

As a team, we are really looking forward to Summer Term Two, to have the opportunity to continue to see the young people grow and develop!





Classroom Moments



Merlin

We have had a fantastic start to the summer term in Dosbarth Merlin and the pupils have worked incredibly hard across all areas of learning.

Our topic this term has been Dinosaurs, Fossils and Extinction. Pupils have explored different types of dinosaurs, learnt about how fossils are formed and discovered theories about why dinosaurs became extinct. We have enjoyed lots of exciting discussions, research activities and creative tasks linked to this.

In Literacy, pupils have been developing their presentation skills. They planned, designed and created their own presentations all about dinosaurs. The class showed great confidence when sharing their ideas and worked hard on speaking clearly, organising information and using interesting facts to engage their audience.

In Maths, we have focused on fractions and decimals. Pupils have been learning to recognise fractions, find fractions of amounts and understand decimals using practical activities and problem-solving challenges. We are very proud of the progress everyone has made.

Throughout the term, pupils have also had lots of positive interactions with peers and staff. We have seen excellent teamwork, communication and social skills developing both inside and outside the classroom. It has been wonderful to watch friendships grow and confidence increase.

We are extremely proud of all the hard work, enthusiasm and effort shown by Dosbarth Merlin this term and look forward to continuing our learning journey together next term.





Classroom Moments



Menai

It has been a vibrant and enriching start to the summer term for Dosbarth Menai, with pupils demonstrating enthusiasm, curiosity, and a strong commitment to their learning across all areas of the curriculum.

A key focus this term has been developing presentation skills. Pupils explored what makes an effective presentation, identifying important features such as clear speaking, engaging content, confident delivery, and thoughtful organisation. They applied these skills by researching a dinosaur of their choice, carefully selecting relevant information before creating and delivering their own presentations. It has been wonderful to see the perseverance and growing confidence of pupils as they presented their work to their peers, showing both dedication and pride in their achievements.

Our cross-curricular topic of 'Dinosaurs' has taken pupils on an exciting journey back in time in Humanities and Science. They have explored different prehistoric time periods, as well as learning about dinosaur diets, habitats, physical features and exploring our own theories about what happened to the dinosaurs. This learning was brought to life creatively in Expressive Arts where pupils designed their own imaginative dinosaurs and crafted their own fossils. This has allowed the opportunity of showcasing their enterprising ideas and creativity.

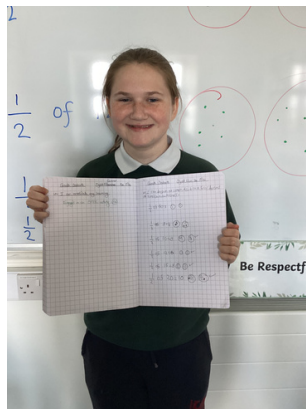
We have been incredibly busy in Health and Wellbeing this half term. In Physical Education, pupils have engaged in skill-based learning, focusing on shot put techniques and developing agility. These sessions have encouraged resilience, coordination, and teamwork. Meanwhile, in PSHE (Jigsaw) pupils have been learning about rights and responsibilities within online communities, promoting mindfulness, kindness, and respectful behaviour in digital spaces.

Dosbarth Menai have continued to embrace a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including BSL, yoga, food technology, and outdoor learning. We have also explored our enterprising skills with some of our pupils engaging in Phoenix Pitch Project, and attending Living Dreams Club to learn about different charities and organisations. Our pupils have shown themselves to be ambitious learners, particularly in their additional learning provision activities, where they have made meaningful links to their class topics and the wider curriculum. Their willingness to challenge themselves and explore new ideas has been a pleasure to see.

We have also been proud to take part in whole-school events, including Autism Acceptance Month 'Show Your Colours Day' and an NCAR fundraising event. Menai have further enriched their school experience by participating in lunchtime clubs such as dance and music, continuing to develop their interests and talents.

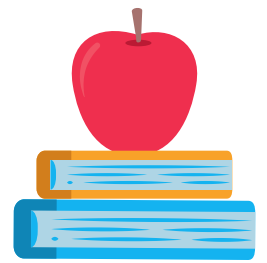
Dosbarth Menai enjoyed a special walk and litter pick to mark Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday and to celebrate 'National Walking Month'. They spent time outdoors, appreciating nature while helping to care for their local environment. It was a meaningful way to honour Sir David's lifelong love of the natural world and to remind everyone how small actions can make a big difference.

As we approach the milestone of completing our first full year at Chestnut Hill School, we are incredibly proud of the progress Dosbarth Menai have made. Their perseverance, collaboration and kindness shine through in everything they do. They continue to grow as confident, caring, and dedicated learners, and we look forward to seeing their continued success in the term ahead.





Classroom Moments



Tryfan

Tryfan Class has had an excellent half term filled with imagination, creativity, learning and celebration. We have welcomed new members of staff to our class, as well as a new student who has brought an extra ray of sunshine to our already bright and happy classroom community.

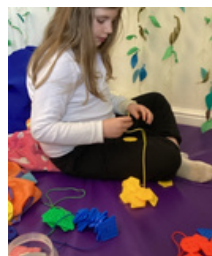
With the arrival of some beautiful weather this half term, we have made the most of our time outdoors by enjoying more Golden Mile walks and spending time in the fresh air at the play park, moving our bodies to help us get ready for learning. We have even taken some of our learning outside, creating art in the sensory garden, collecting flowers for pressing, and using our problem-solving and team-work skills to rescue a high-vis vest that had become stuck high up in a tree!

This half term, much of our learning has focused on recycling and caring for the environment. Inspired by the books *Clean Up!* and *Clem and Crab*, we explored how littering on beaches can affect wildlife and the beauty of the local area. Along the way, we developed new vocabulary and gained a greater understanding of recycling and environmental responsibility.

In Maths, we focused on data collection, learning how to gather information and present it using tally charts and bar graphs. We also explored 2D and 3D shapes and identified how these shapes appear in the world around us.

During Autism Awareness Month, we celebrated individuality by learning about famous artists and celebrities with autism, while also recognising our own strengths and the qualities that make each of us special.

Overall, it has been a busy and exciting half term for Tryfan Class. We have learned so much, welcomed new faces, celebrated ourselves and continued to grow in confidence and creativity. We are looking forward to the final half term and all the fun and valuable experiences still to come.





Classroom Moments



Yr Wyddfa

This half term, Yr Wyddfa have been working incredibly hard across all areas of school life. Alongside their classwork, pupils have continued to develop their independence in learning, teamwork skills, social skills, and their understanding of mental health and well-being.

We have also welcomed a new pupil into our class, who has settled in extremely well. Although he has only been with us for six weeks, it already feels as though he has always been part of Yr Wyddfa. Da iawn!

In Health and Well-being, pupils have been learning about peer pressure and how to recognise unsafe choices. They have taken part in thoughtful discussions about staying true to themselves, and knowing when to ask for help.

In Physical Education, pupils have been completing circuit training in the sports hall. They have been learning about the importance of warming up and cooling down, as well as building their stamina and resilience. Pupils have done very well, especially as we increased the challenge from one round of circuits to three rounds. It has also been wonderful to see one of our pupils begin to engage more confidently in PE lessons. This is fantastic progress and shows growing confidence and comfort within the sessions. You know who you are — Da iawn!

In Topic, we have linked our learning closely with our literacy work. Pupils have been learning about interdependence, food chains and food webs. They have researched different food chains and food webs, and have created their own examples to show their understanding of how living things depend on one another.

In Language, Literacy and Communication, pupils have focused on developing key skills through our theme of 'Plants and Animals'. They have particularly enjoyed our project, 'Future Evolution'. Through this project, pupils have practised using observation and inference to generate descriptive ideas from images. They have also worked on writing clear explanation paragraphs using cause, effect and evidence, as well as developing coherent writing about relationships between organisms in a habitat.

The pupils really enjoyed this project and came up with many thoughtful scientific ideas, which they explained well in their written work.

This term, pupils have also completed online assessments and practised NCFE papers. In literacy, they have continued to develop their text-based comprehension skills using texts linked to plants and animals. Pupils have been working hard to answer in full sentences and interpret information from the text.

In Mathematics and Numeracy, pupils have been completing a research project based on budgeting. They were given a monthly wage and have been learning how to add and subtract money, compare costs, work with running balances, check affordability and explain their choices. They have also developed their understanding of what a budget is and have practised simplifying fractions using common factors. All pupils have worked very hard, and with some visual support, many have shown increasing independence.

Last week, we also began practising NCFE Numeracy exam papers in class. Pupils have engaged very well with this and have shown a positive attitude towards identifying areas where they need further practice.

Pupils who are enrolled in the Duke of Edinburgh Award recently took part in their first overnight stay. This was a very positive experience, as pupils stepped outside their comfort zones and faced new challenges, including setting up tents, cooking their own meals and taking part in a hike. Our school joined our sister school, Maple Grove, for the experience. According to Sarah Jayne, the pupils were amazing. Pupils from both schools made new friends and even exchanged phone numbers to stay in touch.

Overall, it has been a busy, positive and successful half term for Yr Wyddfa. The pupils should be very proud of their hard work, progress and growing confidence.

