



Lower School  
Nursery - Year 4



Middle School  
Year 5 - Year 8



Senior School  
Year 9 - Year 11



Sixth Form  
Year 12 - Year 13

Education, Inspiration,  
Opportunities for Life



# Cowbridge School NEWSLETTER

Teaching & Learning, Standards, and Progress

July 2024

## Summer Term at Cowbridge School

Welcome to the first edition of the School's Teaching & Learning, Standards, and Progress newsletter. This has been developed to share the successes of our School community and also some of the School's current priorities. Additionally, we hope you will find our 'Spotlight on Skills' section useful in providing information about how the development of your child's skills can be supported at home.

The Summer Term is always a busy one with GCSE and A Level examinations a focus for many students. Examinations aside, there is much to celebrate, including:

- Lower School's Beach Visit and First Birthday Party
- Middle School's Sports Day
- Senior School's Careers Insight Event
- Sixth Form's Appointment of the Senior Student Team; Careers Term; and, Inter-Form Competitions
- The Restaurant Evening and The Summer Concert
- Cowbridge Orchestra being named as Heart FM's Orchestra of the Summer

Of course, none of these successes would be possible if we did not have the highest possible standards and expectations. We are proud of each and every member of our school community who exemplifies these standards and meets the expectations. For a reminder about how you can support your child in doing so, please see pages 2-3 where our expectations around uniform, attendance and punctuality, and mobile phones are summarised.

The new academic year begins for Nursery, Reception, Year 7 and Year 12 on Tuesday, 3 September 2024, and for all other students on Wednesday, 4 September 2024. We look forward to seeing current and new students then. In the meantime, we wish you an enjoyable summer.



At Cowbridge School,  
we ...

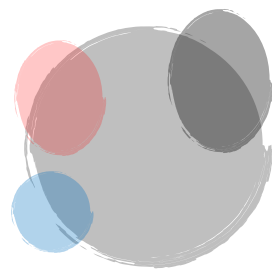
develop **Confident,**  
**Successful** young people

through ...

**Collaborative,** **Skilful**  
teaching

with ...

outstanding **Care,**  
**Support** and provision.



## STANDARDS and EXPECTATIONS

### Attendance and Punctuality

In order to ensure that young people achieve their **full** potential, excellent attendance is necessary. Please refer to previous communication, including your child's school report, to familiarise yourself with the law surrounding attendance at school; our expectations; and, your child's current attendance percentage. It is important to remember that:

- Each day of school missed by a child will reduce their attendance by 0.5%, and will mean they miss five lessons.
- Ten whole days of school will have been missed if a pupil has 95% attendance – that's 50 lessons.
- Twenty whole days of school will have been missed if a pupil's attendance is 90%.
- Catching up on missed lessons impacts on the pupil, the teacher and other pupils in that class.
- If a pupil is persistently absent (85% attendance) they have missed 6 weeks or half a term of schooling.

However, being punctual is equally important. Punctuality is a life skill and, at Cowbridge School, we aim to ensure that students develop all the skills necessary to benefit them in the wider world and their future workplace. It is vital that students are on time for school, and for every lesson, because:

If, in an academic year, a child is late everyday by...	the child, over the course of an academic year, will lose approximately ...	or, the child, over the course of an academic year, will miss approximately...
5 minutes	3 days of school	16 lessons
10 minutes	5 days of school	32 lessons
15 minutes	10 days of school	50 lessons
20 minutes	12 days of school	65 lessons
30 minutes	16 days of school	95 lessons

### School Uniform

Cowbridge School believes that the school uniform promotes a sense of **belonging, identity, community** and **cohesion** within the school and, as such, we insist that all students who attend the School adhere to the School Uniform Policy. **The policy is non-negotiable and should be carefully considered when uniform is being purchased** for the new academic year. We are very aware that various outlets will sell items of clothing within their 'Uniform' section which do not meet the requirements of our policy. Parents and students are asked to **make responsible choices** in line with the guidance within our policy. **Failure to comply with the uniform code will result in your child being asked to change or being sent home to remedy the non-adherence.** No student will be

# Ready, Respectful & Safe



required to leave school without parental/carer contact and permission but, should staff be unable to contact parents/carers, students will be educated away from their timetabled lessons.

Student voice is an important aspect of the School's ethos and the overwhelming majority of students who attend Cowbridge School support the requirement to wear a uniform. A list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' has been prepared by representatives of the student body and can be found [here](#).

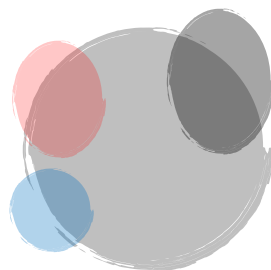
## **Mobile Phone Use**

In September of 2023, Cowbridge School took the decision to ban the use of mobile phones within the School during the school day. Whilst we recognise that parents/carers may feel the need for their child/ren to have access to a mobile phone for communication with home, for example, to inform a parent that an afterschool fixture/club has been cancelled, the detrimental effect of excessive mobile phone use, on young people, was a key driver for the decision to implement the ban. Extensive research has proven that, "The arrival of the smartphone has radically changed every aspect of teenagers' lives, from the nature of their social interactions to their mental health." This upsurge in use has "coincided with the moment in time when the 'Like' button was added to social media apps. As a result, social media use has become far more compulsive and users far more dependent." (*Doug Lemov, Hilary Lewis, Darryl Williams and Denarius Frazier*)

The success of implementing this ban during the 2023-24 academic year cannot be overstated. Not only has there been a noticeable decrease in behaviour incidents related to the distractions posed by mobile phones, but the increased buzz of conversation within the School's canteen and around the School during breaktime and lunchtime is a delight to witness! Consequently, the ban will remain in place and all students are expected to adhere to the protocol outlined below.

# MOBILE PHONE PROTOCOL

- Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to and from school to ensure their personal safety at all times.
- If a student brings a phone to school, then, on arrival at the school site, the phone is to be switched off and placed immediately in the student's school bag **before** accessing the school grounds. This also applies to earpods/earphones.
- **The phone must remain in the school bag whilst the student is on the school grounds and may not be accessed, including during any period of social time (break or lunch).**
- Any student found to be non-compliant with the above points whilst on site, during the school day, will have the phone confiscated and a message will be sent home to inform parents. Confiscated items will be labelled and stored in a locked cabinet.
- Any refusal to hand a phone over to members of staff will result in an immediate sanction.
- The phone will be handed back to the student by the appropriate pastoral staff at the end of the school day.
- Any requirement for a parent/carer to contact a student (or a student to contact a parent/carer) can be done through the School Reception or through the relevant Achievement Team Office. If a student breaches the policy and the phone is confiscated three times, we will expect the parent/carer to collect the phone from school.
- Should a student have his/her mobile phone confiscated three times, the phone will not be returned to the student at the end of the school day and a parent/carer will be required to collect the phone.





## Spotlight on Skills: Oracy

Oracy (or speaking and listening) skills are not only important for English, Welsh and Languages lessons, but for every lesson, every day, and for everything we do. At Cowbridge School, we offer many opportunities for students to develop their oracy skills and **we expect all students to participate in speaking and listening activities**. Research proves that other literacy skills develop more quickly when children are willing and able to use their oracy skills effectively.

Talking with your child, and actively listening, will help to develop his/her ability to listen, respond, and to speak for different purposes. Asking your child to share his/her views on topics of interest; to discuss points for and against a certain idea; or to sum up what you have just said, will all help with the development of oracy skills. The sentence starters and questions below are just some of those which can be used to help develop your child's oracy skills.

In the new academic year, we will be hosting an event for parents which will provide information about how the development of a wide range of your child's skills can be supported at home. Further information will be shared in September.

Building on  
your idea about  
... I think ...

Couldn't it be  
the case that  
...

I agree with  
your view about  
... because ...

I'm going to  
have to  
disagree with  
... because ...

In your own  
words, can you  
tell me ... ?

What do you  
think about ... ?

Ready, **Respectful** & **Safe**



## Celebrating Success

### **Congratulations to the new Senior Student Team of Cowbridge School!**



Following a rigorous application, campaign and interview process, Cowbridge School has appointed the new Team of Senior Students. Many congratulations to all involved!

### **Cowbridge School Orchestra Success**

Cowbridge School Orchestra were very privileged to be announced as Heart FM's official Band of the Summer! Working in partnership with Heart FM, the Music Department arranged a day to record pieces by some of the big artists that who played in Cardiff during the summer months, including Pink, Taylor Swift, Avril Lavigne and Shania Twain. Their orchestral covers were aired on Jagger and Woody's afternoon show (Heart Wales 4pm to 7pm). The pupils were thoroughly professional in their approach to recording, and were extremely excited to be making their radio debut! Performances were broadcast between 4-5pm on the following dates:

Tuesday, 11 June 2024

Tuesday, 18 June 2024

Tuesday, 2 July 2024

Friday, 5 July 2024

If you missed them live, you may be able to listen on catch-up. Huge congratulations to all involved!



## Lower School News

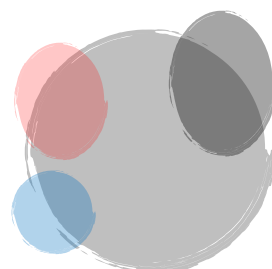
### Rest Bay Beach Day

Cowbridge School's Lower School had their first school trip to Rest Bay where they had the opportunity to work with Beach Academy Wales and learn all about rockpools. The children found crabs, sea snails and even a starfish! They learnt how to rock pool safely to ensure the animals were not hurt and all were safely returned to the rockpools at the end of the session.



### A Birthday Party to Remember

The 5 July 2024 marked one full year of the Lower School building being opened. Parents, grandparents and siblings were all invited to join the party with staff and students. The children planned all the activities and a great day was had by all!



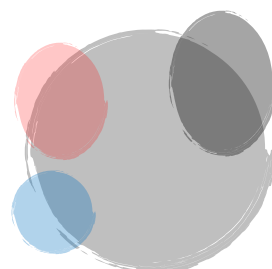
## Restaurant Evening: A Taste of Wales

Year 10 Food and Nutrition students took part in the annual DT Restaurant on the 10 July 2024, with the theme of Wales acting as inspiration for their dishes. The three-course meal was prepared, cooked and served by pupils to a number of parents, staff, and governors. The evening was a huge success with wonderful feedback received about the flavour of the food; the presentation; and, how polite and professional the pupils were. Da iawn pawb!



## Cowbridge School's Summer Concert

Cowbridge School's Music Department was thrilled to present the annual Summer Concert on Tuesday, 2 July 2024. The evening was filled with music performed by a range of ensembles, including Senior Jazz, Junior Jazz, Orchestra, Big Band, Vocal Group, and many more! It was also fantastic to see so many student-led ensembles, such as String Group led by Annie Wright (Y13) and Isabel Harris (Y12), and a joint performance from Year 8 and Year 13, organised by Felicity Clewer (Y8). Each performance was met with a rousing applause from the audience, and the concert ended with the announcement of the next school musical production ... *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*!



## Music Night

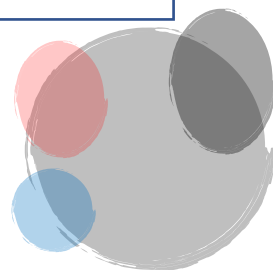
Students from Cowbridge School's Junior Vocal Group performed in 'Music Night' at the prestigious Dora Stoutzker Hall at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff. Pupils sang a range of pieces in the concert which was organised by Cardiff and Vale Music Service (CAVMS), including the audience favourite 'Walking on Sunshine'. The choir was conducted by Year 12 pupils Lilli Bendall and Zac Corkhill, with Mrs Pritchard on piano. Pupils were commended for their excellent musical contributions and outstanding behaviour throughout the evening. Thank you to CAVMS for the invitation and for the continued support of peripatetic teachers from CAVMS who provide instrumental and vocal lessons at Cowbridge School. More information and the link to enrol for lessons can be found here: <https://cavms.co.uk/>



## Middle School Sports Day



Summer sunshine made an appearance for Sports Day on Thursday, 18 July. Congratulations to all pupils who took part!





## Careers Events

### Year 12 Careers Term

Since the return of Year 12 students following their AS Level examinations, the Sixth Form has been privileged to host a range of speakers who generously gave their time to engage with our students and speak to them about their various careers and institutions. Our goal was to provide students with a broad perspective on potential career paths and to inspire them to think about their futures. Most of the speakers visited subject lessons where their expertise was directly relevant to the subject matter being taught as part of the A Level course. However, we ensured that all students had the opportunity to attend any session that captured their interest. Speakers such as the representatives from Cardiff University, Network75 (specialising in degree apprenticeships) and the Royal Navy presented to the whole of Year 12 during assemblies, allowing us to reach a broader audience and provide valuable insights into higher education and vocational opportunities. Feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive and they have expressed appreciation for the diverse range of careers presented to them and the practical advice shared by our speakers. It is our hope that this term has broadened students' horizons and sparked enthusiasm for their future career paths. Our sincere thanks goes to all visiting speakers and we look forward to working with them again in the future.

### Insight into Careers

On Wednesday, 10 and Thursday, 11 July, Cowbridge School hosted an 'Insight into Careers' event for students in Year 10. We would like to place on record our sincere thanks to all providers for their participation in this event. Many of the providers are parents of students at the school but also presenting throughout both days were past students; members of the governing body; relatives and friends of staff, as well as other providers from within our local community and beyond.

Students were able to opt in to a series of informative talks about different professions and pathways in a range of different industries. They gained a good insight into a 'day in the life of ...', and were able to ask relevant questions about the varied professions represented.

This was the first time the School has embarked on such intensive insight days and feedback from both students and providers has been overwhelmingly positive. We look forward to expanding our Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) provision across all year groups.

### Thanks to...

<b>Mallows Beauty</b>	<b>Cardiff and Vale UHB</b>	<b>University of South Wales</b>	
<b>Past pupil: Seren Burgum (Medic, Queens University Belfast)</b>	<b>Infinite Renewables</b>		
<b>RPA Quantity Surveyors</b>	<b>Westgate Sports Agency</b>	<b>APEM Ltd</b>	
<b>Genesis Bio-Sciences</b>	<b>ROCK</b>	<b>NHS Wales</b>	<b>Public Health Wales</b>
<b>Barcud Shared Services</b>			
<b>Careers Wales</b>	<b>Educators Wales</b>	<b>Summit Venture</b>	<b>Cardiff University</b>
<b>Bridgend College</b>		<b>The RAF</b>	
<b>Mr M Blamey (Governor)</b>	<b>Mr D Farrel (Governor)</b>	<b>Dr Alan Ng</b>	

## Sixth Form News

### Year 12 Inter-Form Activities

During the final weeks of the school years, Year 12 students have been taking part in a number of inter-form competitions, including football, rounders and human chess!



Congratulations to 12.5 who won the inter-form football tournament in a nail-biting final against 12.1, with a goal by Ben Stephenson.



The inter-form rounders competition was also won by 12.5 in a tight game against 12.2. Will it be a hat trick for 12.5? At the time of writing, 12.1, 12.5 and 12.6 won their first-round human chess games and the winners of the tournament are yet to be decided. Congratulations to all teams and especially the tacticians for working under such time pressures.

### Physics Olympiad and Ser Mathemateg

This term we celebrated the achievements of a number of our Year 12 physics and mathematics students.

Four of our physics students competed in the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO) programme – a series of nationwide physics challenges – and were awarded gold, silver or bronze certificates at the end of the programme. Additionally, six students took part in the Ser Mathemateg Cymru exam through the Seren Academy programme.

A charitable trust run by volunteer physics teachers and academics from across the country, the BPhO is designed to support UK learners with an interest in physics to develop their skills, as well as recognise excellence in young physicists.



The BPhO competition attracts thousands of entrants every year and is open to learners in Year 12 from schools and further education institutions across the UK. The programme gives learners the opportunity to develop their problem-solving skills by testing their knowledge of physics with stimulating, university-level questions. It also gives them an insight into university-style learning as well as an experience to strengthen their future applications.

Congratulations to Nicholas Adams, Oliver Bosworth, Benjamin Browne, Kevin Chen, Tim Freeman and Eira Price.