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Headteacher – Mrs C Orford

December 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

There is so much to celebrate at Castle Park at the end of this term. The children's Christmas performances really were a fitting end to the term - they were FAB-U-LOUS! When I reflect on the term the thing I am most proud of is the opening of our SRB class. Apple Tree Class (which is what we call our SRB class) is a thriving, happy hive of calm activity. Our newest pupils are settled and love their days at school. It is really pleasing to see our school grow and become even more inclusive. I'm also extremely proud of our new STAR team - a group of pupils committed to anti-racism. Their impact is already seen around the school and will continue to be seen as we review our curriculum, policies and environment to support our anti-racist mission.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year. We will see you all back at school on Monday 5th January.

Nadollig Llawen!

Mrs. Wadsworth

Reception update:

Cherry tree class has had a busy half term learning all about Celebrations. We have been thinking about how people celebrate special occasions. We found out about Guy Fawkes and why we celebrate bonfire night. We learned about remembrance and painted beautiful poppy pictures. We had birthdays in our class and thought about how we celebrate birthdays and enjoyed the story Winnie's Birthday. We had a lovely visit to Caldicot library, where we listened to stories and joined in with craft activities. We learned about how Christians celebrate Christmas and how Jews celebrate Hanukkah. We had fun spinning dreidels and lighting candles. We read the story Stickman and used sticks as toys in forest school. The last few weeks we have been busy with lots of Christmas crafts. We have made decorations, cards and calendars, there has been glitter everywhere! The children were fantastic during the Christmas concert and have taken on lots of challenges during this first long term in school. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing you in January. Next term we will be learning about Winter and thinking about how British birds and animals survive during the cold winter months!





Year 1 update:

Willow Class have had an amazing first term in the plaza and have loved sharing the space with the Reception class setting a good example to their peers and helping them settle into their first year in school. We have enjoyed our topic 'Marvellous me' where we have been answering the question 'How do we keep our bodies and minds healthy?'. We loved our trip to Techniquest to launch our topic where we took part in a science show exploring the human body and senses by completing challenges and puzzles. In class we have been exploring our bones; learning the names of the bones and what they do. We have been thinking about how we can keep our bodies and minds healthy in school and at home, through the food we eat and the activities we take part in. In Literacy we wrote a set of instructions of how to make a fruit salad and loved making and eating it! We have been exploring the outdoors in our Forest school sessions where we have been looking at the signs of Autumn and getting creative with the natural materials available to us and we picked apples from the trees and made puppets out of them. We have been getting very excited in the lead up to Christmas and had a great time at the pantomime, have been busy making christmas cards and decorations and loved performing our Christmas play to our friends and families. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you and we look forward to seeing all of the children back in school in the New Year.





Year 2 update:

Ash Class have had a busy Autumn Term. We have been learning all about 'Where we belong.' We started with our local area and Caldicot Castle. That led us to Paul Klee's Artwork Castle and Sun, which the children threw themselves into, finding out about his life, the wonderful places he visited while learning his craft and then making our own amazing pieces of art. After that we looked in detail at Caldicot Castle, did you know that Caldicot Castle was once just a motte and bailey castle and was added to in later years to become a Stone Keep Castle. The children enjoyed learning about the different parts of the castle. To learn more about life in Wales we visited St Fagans to learn about other buildings from our history. We joined a workshop to find out what the children of Wales used to play with, we loved hearing about how they made them. We even came back to school and created some of our own peg dolls in the craft area. We then headed for Christmas, practising hard for our Christmas concert which I think we can all agree the pupils did wonderfully, an exciting trip to the theatre to watch Rapunzel the pantomime. We visited Bethany Baptist Church to enjoy a christmas nativity, make our own mince pies and create some christmas crafts. We also took a trip to the Council Offices to perform some songs for members of our community. It has been a very busy term and we look forward to what next term will bring.






Year 3 Update:

Year 3 have had a wonderful first term. We have been learning all about Wales and thinking about our big question ‘What makes Wales so special?’. The children came up with fantastic questions about Wales which led us to learning about castles. Year 3 have had lovely experiences this term such as our cooking and stories sessions where they heard Welsh folktales and stories whilst learning how to cook meals from our school menu. Year 3 have also taken part in pennywhistle and rugby sessions this term. It was a pleasure to watch them improve their skills and become more confident as the weeks went on. We enjoyed a trip to St Fagans, where the children learned about the difference between toys now and then and had the opportunity to play with some too. We were incredibly proud of the children during our Christmas production. They worked hard to learn their lines, songs and stage directions. They supported each other throughout and really worked together as a team. I can say with confidence that Year 3 have put their all into everything they have done this term - we are so proud of them.






Y4/5 Hazel and Holly Class update:

Hazel and Holly classes have continued to learn about the Victorians this term. We studied inventions such as the Christmas card, the bicycle and the telephone. Did you know that they also invented an ice-cream maker? The pupils were delighted to hear about this. We compared and contrasted our Christmas traditions with that of Victorian traditions and found out that their mince pies actually contained meat. Christmas cards were delivered on Christmas Day by postmen known as robins, hence our design this year. Fitting in with our Victorian topic, it seemed only right to read A Christmas Carol and delve into the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future. The pupils did a Body Biography of Scrooge and turned one of the scenes into a playscript. Clever stuff!

Science wise we have turned our hand to Tinkercad and designed some amazing Christmas decorations that we printed on the 3D printer. You probably have one hanging on your tree as we speak. With the development of the STEAM Room in school we hope to enhance our use of digital technologies with Lego Spike and Microbits in the new year.

We all went to St Fagan’s National Museum of History on 24th November. The children had the opportunity to see some of the homes and buildings from different periods of Welsh history, including Maestir School from the Victorian period. The children learnt about some harsh and yet monotonous learning there (by rote); Welsh education was once deemed one of the best in Europe. The history of the *Welsh No*t discouraged the children from speaking Welsh, something we are trying to rectify now. Left-handed children were often humiliated and again, resources were put in place to dissuade them from using this hand. The children came back from the trip more appreciative of Castle Park school and the choices and freedom they have.









We started Forest Schools at the end of this term with Miss Hutchinson and have been learning about the importance of wearing the right clothing when outdoors (waterproof jacket / trousers, wellies or boots or old trainers). With the colder weather due in the new year, hats and gloves are highly recommended. Be flexible yet warm and dry. This is part of the lesson - teacher guidance for pupils to keep safe and manage risks (including the wearing of appropriate clothing). As we have only had two sessions so far, the children have used the outdoor areas to play group and class games, made use of the mud kitchen and made crafts using sticks via the skill of knot tying.

Year 6 update:

It has been a busy half term in Year 6. We continued with our topic of Victorians, where we answered many of the pupil voice questions, including What was invented in the Victorian Eira and were they successful? How does the money system compare to the Victorian one? And what was fashion like in the Victorian Eira? We then concluded our topic by comparing Victorian Christmas traditions with our own Christmas traditions, to which they definitely preferred traditions today! In Literacy the children have enjoyed looking at Playscripts and creating programmes for their very own performance of 'A Pudding For The Chimney Sweep,' which I am sure you will agree that they gave an excellent performance and we definitely have some budding future actors amongst us!

In PE, the children finished off their block of swimming sessions, where they learned about water safety and life saving skills and have now started Rugby sessions with Dragons Rugby. We are hoping to attend a rugby festival in the Spring term.

This term Year 6 have had several outside visitors to talk to them about varying topics. PC Mike came and spoke about knife crime during knife prevention week and PSCO came and spoke with the children about online safety as part of cyberbullying. Mrs Humber from Caldicot Comprehensive School visited and taught the children the song ' Somewhere In My Memory,' ready for pupils to perform with other Year 6 classes. Those that attended represented the school well and we are extremely proud of them.






Apple Tree Class

In November, the SRB officially opened and we were so excited to welcome our new learners to the school. We have had a wonderful time getting to know each other, learning new routines and sharing lots of brand-new experiences!

In December, we went on our first school trip to see Rapunzel at the Riverfront theatre. We had a fantastic time and the children were captivated by the performance (the journey on the mini bus was also lots of fun!!).

This term we have been learning about the Gruffalo and even created our own monsters! We prepared our own 'Owl on toast' and delicious 'knobbly knees' cakes.

In preparation for Christmas, we made decorations and learnt some Christmas songs. We celebrated the end of term by inviting our parents to a Christmas stay and play afternoon. We performed our Christmas songs for our parents and decorated yummy Christmas biscuits!





Criw Cymraeg

We may be few in number but we remain positive about our input to promoting learning of Welsh, as well as the aspects of our rich cultural history. This includes how Cardiff was the area where we first were introduced to Sidoli's Italian ice-cream. Vernester Cyril was from the Caribbean. She became a nurse and then a midwife - in nearby Newport. She faced racial abuse in many ways, yet helped contribute to the delivery of about 2,000 babies. Her story was very inspiring - which we helped highlight in our regular Welsh assemblies. We also learnt about the tradition of making toffee, or *taffi* in Welsh, as a family in Wales. We had an extra session after school in making our own version and then gave out mini samples to KS2 children. We loved it! *Rydyn ni'n caru gwneud taffi achos mae'n flasus.* Long live this tradition!

Dates for your Diary:

- ☐ **Monday 5th January - back to school**
- ☐ 14th January 1st of 4 Cricket Wales sessions for pupils in Y3 - Y6 (always on Wednesdays)
- ☐ 29th January - Anti-Racism workshops Y3 - Y6
- ☐ Thursday 12th February - Y6 to Round Robins Cluster Netball and Football tournament
- ☐ Friday 13th February - INSET
- ☐ **Monday 16th Feb - Friday 20th Feb Half Term**

Training Days

Friday 13th February
Friday 1st May
Monday 20th July