



# Newsletter

## 17th October 2025

### LATEST NEWS

Progress in refurbishing our new building has been rapid - we are almost there with only a few snags left to complete. We will definitely be ready for pupils on Monday 3rd November!!!

As a quick reminder - I have spoken with the Local Authority and our Chair of Governors (Ceri Prosser) and have agreed to have 3 of our INSET days at the end of this half term - we will be **closed to pupils on Wednesday 22nd, Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th October**. INSET days usually have to be used for essential staff training, we have definitely stretched that definition! Welsh Government have given all schools an allocation of 6 INSET days this academic year.

- 22nd - 24th October = INSET days 2, 3 & 4, unpacking and setting the school up, setting up new routines and procedures
- 22nd May = INSET day 5, training linked to the School Development Plan
- 20th July = INSET day 6, training linked to the School Development Plan

Our last day in Ysgol Groes-wen (the last day for coming to school by coach) will be Tuesday 21st October. I would like to record here my profound thanks to the Head teacher - Mr Carbis, and all of the staff and pupils in Ysgol Groes-wen for their welcome and support to everyone in our St Monica's family.

### Phonics - Support for Parents



#### Everything you need to support your child

We know helping with reading at home can sometimes feel tricky.  
That's why we've created a series of short, bite-sized videos to explain phonics simply.

We use Monster Phonics to teach children how to recognise sounds and learn how to read and spell. This is a new scheme for us, we started using it only in July and have been really pleased with your children's engagement and progress. Here are some tools which parents find helpful as we work together to help your child grow a real love for reading and literacy.

#### Recorded Parent Information Webinar

<https://vimeo.com/1119061289/9ec0a72ffe?ts=0&share=copy>

#### Monster Phonics - Website link for parents

[Phonics For Parents | Free Videos & Resources](#)



Gwasanaethau  
Chwarae Plant  
Children's  
Play Services



STRONGER  
FAIRER  
GREENER



Age  
5-14

# October Half Term Play Sessions Maitland park

CF14 3DH

Wed 29<sup>th</sup> 11:00–12:55

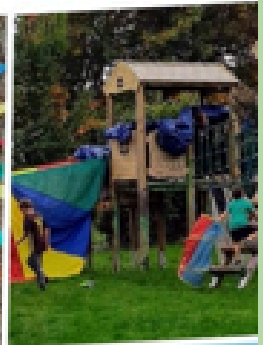
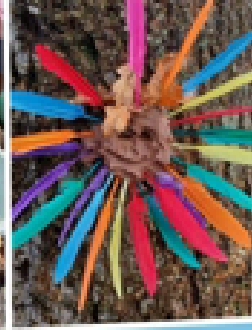
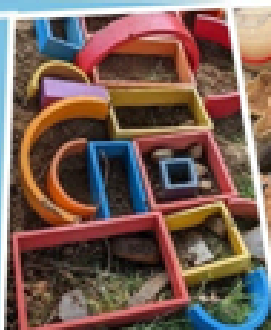


Scan the QR code to register your child.

<https://cardiffchildrensplayservices.co.uk/register>

\*This document is available in Welsh\*

\*All of the open access play sessions are designed with children aged 5-14 in mind.\*



[Play sessions – Cardiff Children's Play Services](#)

## Monday 3rd November

We will open the school playground gates at **8.30am on Monday 3rd November**. There will be no Breakfast Club for pupils that day as teaching staff will be ensuring all classrooms are ready and I will be running through our fire evacuation and lockdown procedures with Breakfast Club staff.

Once the **Pupil Entrance** (on **Canada Road**) is opened you may drop your child off. Parents may come onto the playground to have a look if they wish. When breakfast club is fully operational it will not be possible to look around the playground in the morning. Parents are encouraged to come onto the playground to pick their children up at the end of each day.

I have been so pleased with the hugely positive response from parents about us becoming a smart phone free school. At present, no children bring phones to school at all. A gentle reminder - **please do not use your phone whilst you are on school premises**. You will be respectfully asked to put it away. All staff will be refraining from using phones unless in the staffroom, on school trips or in meeting rooms. As adults we feel it is important to lead the change we wish to see for the benefit of all of our children.

Children are encouraged to scoot or cycle to school - we have suitable storage on the main school playground.

Nursery children should come to the **Nursery Entrance** (on **New Zealand Road**) for **9am**, Miss Watts will meet you at the gate. Children need to be collected from that gate at **11.30am**.

## The New Half Term - returning to 'normal'!

### Breakfast Club

The times for children to attend Breakfast Club: 8.10 - 8.40, the doors close at 8.40am and will only reopen at 8.50am in readiness for the school day to begin at 8.55am. **You must book a place**, you need to do this only once this year [Breakfast Club Form](#) If you do not book a place I cannot guarantee there will be enough supervising staff for your child to attend and they may be turned away.

### Timings of the School Day

Nursery	9am - 11.30am
Reception - Year 3	8.55am - 3.15pm
Years 4 - 6	8.55am - 3.20pm

### After School Clubs

These will re-start after Christmas, all staff need time to get used to the new building and we are starting to prepare all of our wonderful Christmas productions - details about when performances will take place will come home in early November.

### Lunches

Please book your child's meals via Parent Pay [ParentPay](#), if you wish your child to bring in food from home, this should be in a small (preferably insulated) lunch bag, there will be a red trolley by the school hall for all lunch bags to be placed on. Children will not be allowed to take lunch bags to the cloakrooms or classrooms to ensure all food is stored safely. We cannot heat up food for children.

### Water

Please ensure your child comes to school each day with a water bottle. They will be able to refill their bottle during the day but it should be cleaned at home, we do not have the facilities to clean water bottles in school.

### **Bags**

Only school issued tote bags are to be brought to school. The pegs are very small in cloakrooms and our cloakrooms form part of our emergency evacuation route. Large bags will be turned away - we do not have room for them and they pose a significant danger to the accessibility of our building. Children who may require a change of clothes should bring this in a plastic carrier bag, that will be stored on your child's peg.

### **PE Kit**

All children will need to bring PE kit into school for the start of the new term. As the weather is turning colder, they should bring in jogging trousers (sweatpants), a clean T-Shirt (any colour but no logos/slogans please) and for children in Steps 2 and 3, a pair of trainers. Children in Nursery and Step 1 do not need to bring in trainers. Please could these items be brought into school in either a plastic carrier bag or a small fabric drawstring gym bag. This bag will go onto your child's peg and will stay in school - we promise to return it to you if it starts to get dirty or smelly. Rucksacks will be returned home, there just won't be room for them.

### **Footwear**

School shoes please for each day, trainers are to be reserved for PE lessons. If your child has wellies can be stored in school, please ensure your child has their name on them. Wellies should not be worn every day, they can harm the development of the tendons and bones in the foot.

## **Year 6 High School Applications**

All parents of children in Year 6 must make applications to high schools by 17th November. Applications received after this date will be considered after all the on time applications have been assessed. Many schools fill up in this first round of allocations so it greatly increases your chance of being allocated one of your preferences if you apply on time. [Citizen Portal - Sign in](#)

- We strongly recommend that you apply for 5 different schools and that you include the school that you live nearest to
- Whilst living in a catchment area can help your child's chances of receiving an offer of a place at the school (if applied for), there is no guarantee this will be possible. You can check your catchment area Community Schools for your address at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/onlinemaps](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/onlinemaps)
- The Local Authority will allocate you the highest preference that they can. Some schools will be oversubscribed in which case they will use the published oversubscription criteria to allocate places up to the number of places available at that school. If you fall outside this number they will look at your next preference. Therefore it is important to express as many preferences as you can (up to the maximum of 5) as you may be able to secure a school in the first round that will not be available in subsequent rounds.
- Be sure to answer all the questions in the application process fully. These answers (such as details of older siblings, or medical/social issues your child may have) can influence your eligibility for a school place. If you don't tell them they don't know.
- Cardiff community schools do not operate a feeder system. Attendance at a particular primary has no bearing on how likely they are to be able to offer a particular secondary school. This may not be the case for co-ordinated admissions partner schools (see below) please check their oversubscription criteria as they differ from the Council's.
- Whitchurch High (Foundation) School, Bishop of Llandaff CW High School, Corpus Christi RC High School, Mary Immaculate RC High School and St Teilo's CW High School are part of the

co-ordinated admissions scheme. If you are applying to Bishop Llandaff CW High School, Corpus Christi RC High School, Mary Immaculate RC High School or St Teilo's CW High School, you will need to apply online AND complete and return their supporting form, otherwise it will not be possible to accept preferences for those schools. Please note: St Illtyd's RC High School are not part of this scheme. If you would like for your child to attend this school, you will need to apply directly to the school.

- You can make changes to your application up to the closing date, but if you do be sure to press 'Submit' on the final page when you are happy with your application. Applications left unsubmitted at the point the system closes cannot be accepted.
- If your child is the subject of a statement of special educational needs or is undergoing a formal assessment you are still required to submit an application for your preferred school places. You will be notified of your child's proposed school place by the Achievement and Inclusion Service as soon as possible.
- If you would like support with your application, assistance is available at Council Hubs or via your Primary School. You can find the locations and opening hours of the hubs at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/hubs](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/hubs) or contact Mrs Cuthbert in school

### **What happens next?**

- You will receive the outcome of your application on Monday, 2 March 2026. You will need to accept or reject an offer of a place by Monday, 16 March 2026. If they have been unable to offer you a place at one of your preferred schools, you may submit a new application for one of the alternatives proposed by Monday, 16 March 2026.
- Should you not receive an offer for your highest preference school on March 2, you will remain on a waiting list and will be contacted if there is a change of circumstances.
- Any places that parents reject in the first round will be reallocated in subsequent rounds. If you are on a waiting list for a place, your application will be reconsidered if places become available.
- You must tell the Local Authority if you move house between receiving your offer and the beginning of term in September 2026. A change of address might affect your entitlement to your school place and / or your position on a waiting list, hence you should tell the Local Authority as soon as possible so that they can discuss your options. More information can be found in the 'School admissions booklet 2026/27' which is available at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

### **Private (fee paying) Schools**

- Some fee paying schools offer bursaries or scholarships. We have had considerable success with St Monica's pupils receiving these over the years, enabling children to attend with reduced fees.
- Please see Mrs Cuthbert if you would like any information about this, in particular regarding Howell's Girls School, The Cathedral School, St John's College or Kings Monkton School.

## **Welsh Veg in Schools**

We're delighted that our school has been selected to take part in the [Welsh Veg in Schools](#) initiative, a Wales-wide programme coordinated by Food Sense Wales that's bringing more organically grown Welsh vegetables into primary school meals across the country.

### **What Is Welsh Veg in Schools?**

This initiative is all about getting fresh, local, organic produce into school lunches. Working with partners and a network of passionate Welsh growers, the programme is helping schools like ours serve up local, organic vegetables as part of our school meals.

### **Why It Matters**

By participating, our school is contributing to:

- Improved access to local, organic food for children
- Support for Welsh farmers and growers
- Stronger, more resilient local food systems
- Climate action and increased biodiversity
- Reduced reliance on imported produce

In 2022, only 6% of vegetables bought for the public sector in Wales were sourced locally. This initiative is helping to change that - one plate at a time.

### What This Means for Our School

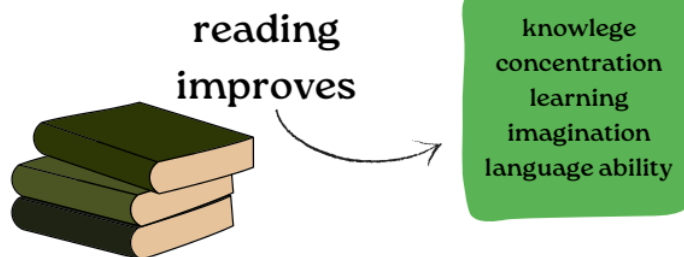
During the autumn term, our school is receiving seasonal Welsh vegetables like carrots, broccoli, tomatoes, and cucumbers. These will replace conventional produce - at no extra cost - thanks to funding from the Welsh Veg in Schools pilot.

Our local authority catering team is working closely with our school kitchen to make the transition.



Greyhound Rescue Wales  
believes ALL children  
deserve access to books

## Introducing... FREE Children's Books Starting 1<sup>st</sup> October



Available in our shops  
while stocks last!

Abergavenny, Blackwood, Cardiff,  
Merthyr, Neath, Swansea



**Our nearest shop is on Albany Road, Roath**



FEATURED

## School Essentials Grants

Eligible families can apply for a grant of £125 per child per year. Families with children entering year 7 can apply for £200 to help with increased costs associated with starting secondary school. All looked after children qualify for the grant. Schools also receive additional funding as a result of claiming this grant.

### £1 bus fares for young people from September

Young people aged 16 to 21 will be able to ride on buses across Wales for just £1 from September. The Welsh Government will extend the scheme to 5 to 15-year-olds from November. Existing reduced fares for children will apply until then.

### Dates for your diary

I am not able to authorise any absence for term time holiday or any extended time away from school. Please do not be tempted to take your child out of school during term time.

### School term dates

<https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/resident/Schools-and-learning/Schools/School-term-dates/Pages/default.aspx>

Monday 20th October Coaches to/from Ysgol Groes-wen	Tuesday 21st October Coaches to/from Ysgol Groes-wen	Wednesday 22nd October <b>INSET Day - no school for children</b>	Thursday 23rd October <b>INSET Day - no school for children</b>	Friday 24th October <b>INSET Day - no school for children</b>
Monday 27th October Half Term Break - no school	Tuesday 28th October Half Term Break - no school	Wednesday 29th October Half Term Break - no school	Thursday 30th October Half Term Break - no school	Friday 31st October Half Term Break - no school
Monday 3rd November Start in our new building!	Tuesday 4th November	Wednesday 5th November Rev. Marcus - worship	Thursday 6th November	Friday 7th November <b>2.30pm Praise &amp; Celebration Assembly - all welcome to join us</b>
Monday 10th November Music lessons (CAVMS) presentation	Tuesday 11th November Dog Mentor assessment for Bella, Mrs Cuthbert & Mrs Meakins	Wednesday 12th November	Thursday 13th November 4pm Full Governing Body Meeting	Friday 14th November <b>School Photo Day</b>
Monday 17th November Mr Akrill - worship	Tuesday 18th November	Wednesday 19th November	Thursday 20th November <b>9.15am Rock Steady Concert - all welcome to join us</b>	Friday 21st November <b>2.30pm Praise &amp; Celebration Assembly - all welcome to join us</b>
Monday 24th November	Tuesday 25th November	Wednesday 26th November	Thursday 27th November	Friday 28th November

		Rev. Caroline - worship	Becky Harris - worship	
Monday 1st December	Tuesday 2nd December	Wednesday 3rd December	Thursday 4th December	Friday 5th December <b>2.30pm Praise &amp; Celebration Assembly - all welcome to join us</b>
Monday 8th December	Tuesday 9th December	Wednesday 10th December Rev. Caroline - worship	Thursday 11th December	Friday 12th December <b>9.15am Rock Steady Christmas Concert - all welcome to join us</b>
Monday 15th December	Tuesday 16th December	Wednesday 17th December	Thursday 18th December	Friday 19th December Last day of term