

School Support & Improvement Education & Lifelong Learning



OCTOBER 07

Steve Lamb Service Director School Support & Improvement

Celebration, as we all know, is an essential part of learning. Without motivation progress will always be limited. Visible evidence of the way achievement can be an inspiration will always help to create momentum. This term is often the time when celebrations of last academic year's successes are enjoyed. School and community ceremonies of achievement, the Student of the Year event, NPQH graduation, the official recognition for retiring headteachers, GCSE and A level celebrations as our students achieve best ever grades, the LEA officer award: these are evidence that our work is effective and appropriate. Let us hope that this celebration will be the springboard for much that will bring pride to children, young people, families, staff and governors in our valley communities.

Student of the Year 2007—Griffin Mill Gareth Rees—Post 16 Manager

TREORCHY COMPREHENSIVE School's Bethan John drove away in a fully insured Peugeot 206 from the Mercure Holland House Hotel in September 2007.

The 18 year old now studying medicine in Cardiff was the fourth annual winner of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Griffin Mill Student of the Year Award.

The awards dinner recognised the outstanding students in each of the RCT secondary schools as nominated by their teachers and peers. All eighteen had met previously at an outdoor adventure day where they met the decision maker, Griffin Mill managing director Anthony Griffin.

He said: "It was not easy choosing the winner, the calibre of students is so high again this year."

There were three regional awards: Emma Cope from Tonypany Community College for the Rhondda region; Luke Robbins Ross of Y Pant Comprehensive took the Taff Ely prize and Matthew Williams of Aberdare

Boys walked away with the Cynon Valley trophy.

There were also spot prizes for Aberdare Boys' Matthew Barnes for his unofficial community work dressed as Santa on a bicycle; Mountain Ash's Samantha Williams for encouraging the girls contingent to have a go at off road driving on the activity day; Garth Olwg's Bethan Ross for her representation of RCT in Borneo, Katie Foster from St John CIW school for her 'off road' driving skills.

Bethan receives her keys!



Meeting the Challenge Sue Kibby, Co-ordinator, Learning Support Service

Treorchy Comprehensive has achieved the Challenge Award, an accreditation awarded by the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE). The award recognises quality whole school provision for more able and talented pupils.

This is a tremendous achievement; Treorchy Comprehensive is the **only Secondary school in Wales** to obtain the award to date.

The Headteacher, More Able and Talented (MAT) Co-ordinators and all staff in Treorchy Comprehensive have worked extremely hard and consistently to gain this external accreditation. Governors, parents and pupils can be proud of this achievement for Treorchy and for Rhondda Cynon Taf as a whole.

See www.nace.co.uk for more details on the Challenge Award.

Contact: School Support & Improvement Teams:

School Improvement
01443 744035/6
(Primary & Secondary)

Access & Inclusion
01443 744015

ESIS
01443 827500

Get Sorted
01443 744386

Governance & Liaison
01443 744180

Music Service
01443 744017

School Improvement Group: Headteacher Reps.

Gill Coleman—

Williamstown Primary

Lisa Bailey—

Tonysguboriau Primary

Andrew Manley—

Hirwaun Primary

Marian Roberts—

Y.G.G. Bodringallt

Pat O'Malley—

Darran Park Primary

David Davies—

Cefn Primary

Gareth Evans—

Dolau Primary

Philippa Thomas—Comin Inf

Ann Morris—Y.G. Llanhari

Elaine Keeble—Tonyrefail

David Murphy—

Susan Mitchell - St. Johns

Stephen Parry—Tonypany

Ian Machin—Aberdare Boys

New Extra Curricular Groups

- ◇ Children's Choir
- ◇ Theory Class
- ◇ Junior Samba
- ◇ Senior Samba
- ◇ Junior Guitar
- ◇ Transition Orchestra
- ◇ Cynon Valley Brass

The focus of the Samba groups is to attract pupils that we would not normally attract, rather than just an add-on for those pupils who already take part in everything that is going. We will consult with schools to develop this.

All extra curricular groups on Thurs, Fri and Sat will now be held at Pontypridd High except for Cynon Valley Brass, which will be held at Aberdare Girls' School. Llantrisant Wind Band and Beginner Brass will continue to be held in Llantrisant on a Monday.

RCT MUSIC SERVICE *Rachel Kilby, Head of Music Services*



Workshops and Projects

The **Yehudi Menuin Prize** is coming to Cardiff in April and we have already signed up for potential masterclasses, workshops and a schools' concert to be held in the Muni. The Music Service is working with Cultural Services to develop a series of **Traditional Music Workshops** to be funded by TRAC. We are currently in discussion with **Llandaff Cathedral School** on developing a singing strategy and possible festival in the Cathedral. There is also some development work being done with **WNO**. This is in early stages.

Instrumental Projects

The Taf Ely Brass Project has introduced Brass teaching to some 20 primary schools in the Taf Ely area. This is following the success seen in the Cynon Valley with high uptake. Secondary schools should soon see this feeding through. A Double Reed initiative in Y.G.G.G. Llantrisant has started off 2 oboists and 2 mini-bassoonists who are all now taking Grade 1. The Mini-bassoon has also been introduced in Pontyclun Primary School with success. We are hoping to repeat this elsewhere.

Courses

We are planning a series of **one-day courses** for instrumentalists and vocalists. There will be another residential **Brass Course** and we are planning a new **Rock Course**. In addition to this there will be **Jazz day** in the summer term and a series of **Traditional Music** workshops.

Welsh Heritage Awards 2006-07 **RCT Schools Achievements**

INFANTS Category

YSGOL GYNRADD GYMRAEG BODRINGALLT won the Sir Julian Hodge (Jane Hodge Foundation) Prize: £500
Title of Project: "Where is the crocodile?"

MAERDY INFANTS SCHOOL won the Royal Mail (Prize: £250)
Title of Project: "A day at the seaside"

PRIMARY Category

PARC PRIMARY SCHOOL won the Legal and General (Prize: £1,000)
Title: "Cwmparc Bombings Memorial"

YSGOL GYNRADD BODRINGALLT won the Admiral Group plc (Prize: £500)
Title of Project: "Tŷ Bodringallt"

YSGOL GYNRADD GYMRAEG BRONLLWYN won the Llantrisant & District Local History Society Trefor Rees Memorial Prize £200
Title of Project: "The History of the School 1912 - 2007"

PENTRE PRIMARY SCHOOL won the HSBC Bank plc (Prize: £100)
Title: "Rhondda from Forest to Fossil Fuel"

SECONDARY Category

PORTH COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL won the Eustory, Körber Foundation (Prize: in Kind)
Title of Project: "Selaw – A Reflection of Wales"

TONYPANDY COMMUNITY COLLEGE won the Admiral Group plc (Prize: £1,000)
Title of Project: "Our Rhondda"

BLAENGWAWR COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL won the Barclays Bank plc (Prize: £500)
Title of project: "Italians in South Wales"

TONYREFAIL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL won the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (Prize: £250)
Title of Project: "The History of the Industrial Valleys of South Wales"

SPECIAL Category

BLAENGWAWR COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SPECIAL NEEDS UNIT were awarded the BAE Prize (in Kind) & the **David Maddox prize** £50
Title of Project: "Italians in South Wales"

TEACHING TALK

Selwyn Jones,
School Improvement.

The successful programme **Teaching Talk** is currently being rolled out across the authority. Mrs Paula Johnson has been employed to facilitate the training and delivery of this successful programme on Speaking and Listening, especially to our Early Years and KS1 pupils. It involves screening all pupils and identifying those that would benefit most from an intervention strategy delivered in small groups. It also aids the referral process to Speech & Language professionals much earlier than would normally be the case.

The training model is delivered through a cluster approach and Paula works with individual schools within the cluster for a half term, i.e. six sessions.

Paula trains staff to screen, assess and deliver strategies to improve the speaking and listening skills in identified pupils.

The authority's programme began in April 2007 with the Ferndale cluster; Tonyrefail and Pencoed clusters followed during the second half of the summer term. This autumn term has seen Paula working with the Tonypandy cluster followed by the Treorchy cluster up to Christmas. The spring term 2008 will see Paula working with the Hawthorn and Pontypridd High clusters.

All clusters will be visited during Paula's 2-year appointment.

Read A Million Words

Please inform the organisers of all Read a Million Words in Wales of all school new millionaires. We need to be able to show the effectiveness of this superb scheme and its impact in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

If you would like to make a contribution to the next edition of the Newsletter, to update on a project or to give any information you would like highlighted - please contact Kris Oakey 01443-744036 at Tŷ Trevithick.