October 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Governors,

Welcome back to school

What a wonderful start to our academic year! We were happy to welcome so many of you into school for our 'Longtown Parent Information Session' and are looking forward to our parent consultations tomorrow. We have tried something new this year, opening up appointments for during the school day (where translation is available for those who require some additional language support) and holding consultations over 1 evening after school. The booking links were sent out last week. Please contact either of us (Abigail.cuthbert@cardiff.gov.uk or Hannah.lakin2@cardiff.gov.uk) if you have had difficulties making an appointment.

Home Learning Success – Hot Chocolate Friday

We are very proud of the children in St Mary the Virgin. They have taken on board the home learning tasks with real gusto! The weekly 'Hot Chocolate Friday' sessions are very well attended, children have the opportunity to (very eloquently) discuss their learning with us. They have impressed us with their enthusiasm and zest for learning. It is fast becoming one of our favourite parts of the week! All home learning grids have been sent home as both a hard copy and in a Schoop message.

Year 6 Parents

Please be aware that the application period for secondary school places 2027/2028 will be from September 4th - 30th October. This is much earlier than usual and is a Wales wide change. Many secondary schools are now advertising open evening events - it is worth taking every opportunity to visit schools as you decide which 5 schools you will apply for. Please contact us if you would like any support with the application process.



With our kindest regards,
Abi Cuthbert (Executive Head Teacher) and Hannah Lakin (Acting Deputy Head / Acting Head)

If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, please contact either Mrs Cuthbert, Mrs Lakin or Mrs Howe. We are the Designated Safeguarding People for the school.

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

Half Term Break = Monday26th October – Friday 30th October

Our remaining INSET days (training days where children are not in school) this academic year

- 4th January = INSET day 3, training linked to the School Development Plan
- 30th April = INSET day 4, observing good practice in other schools
- 19th July = INSET day 5, training linked to the School Development Plan
- 20th July = INSET day 6, training linked to the School Development Plan

The last day of term for children will be Friday 16th July.

Nyrsio Ysgol | School Nursing
BIP Caerdydd a'r Fro ı Cardiff & Vale UHB

GIG CYMRU NHS WALES
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

This link takes you to the Cardiff & Vale School Nursing Team. It contains information about LOTS of support services for families to use. The pages can all be translated into multiple languages. You can find:

- School Nursing - health information
- Immunisations - when to expect an invite for which immunisation and what they are for
- Parental support - Parent Line, Early Help Services, Parenting Smart - practical tips to support a child's wellbeing and behaviour, Keeping Me Well website, Family Lives helpline, Neurodevelopmental Service
- Emotional support for young people - including The Hangout (mental health support for young people aged 11-18), Self Harm Support for 10-17 year olds, Stepiau (primary mental health support service)
- Additional Needs - AP Cymru (neurodiversity charity), Behaviour Support Hub, ADHD, ASD, Autism Toolbox
- Additional sections including those about anger, anxiety, bedwetting and soiling, bullying, sleep, diet and exercise, eating disorders, health conditions (including menstrual health, head lice, threadworms, asthma, eczema, allergies) and leaving school (Click here for a useful link for Y6 children leaving St Mary the Virgin)

Financial Support for Families

Some parents may be entitled to School Essentials Grants from the Welsh Government. Please speak with Mrs Harris in the School office for more information:

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.

You are invited to join our free virtual swap shop:

FREE SCHOOL CLOTHES.com

Join our growing community. Easy to adopt with significant benefits for schools and families:

FreeSchoolClothes.com is a free, not-for-profit "virtual swap shop" helping families share and reuse school clothes and other essentials locally within your school community, for free.

- Help families to save money.
- Protecting our planet by reducing waste.
- Strengthening our communities.

Founded in 2022 at Ysgol Treganna, Cardiff. **Now covering all UK schools.**

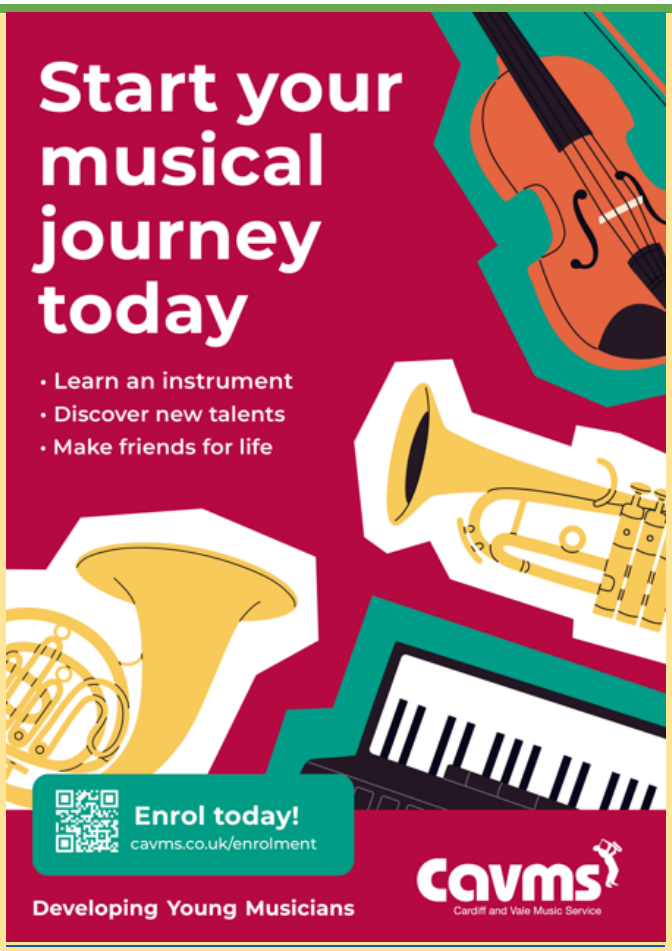
It's easy to get started. *Simply share this message and QR code with your families.*

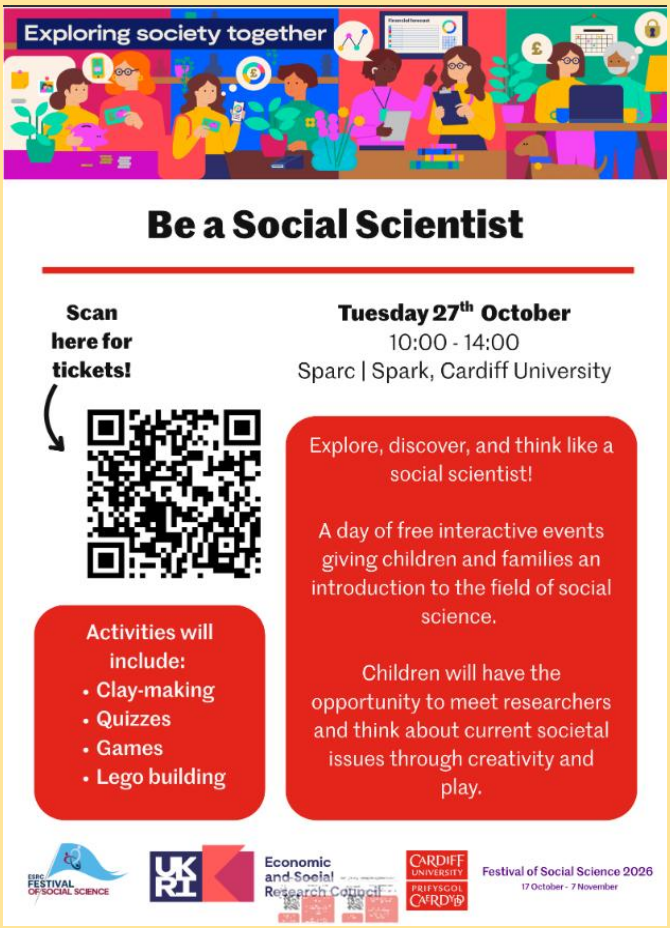
- **Your school is already live** on the platform and ready to go.
- **Free** to join and use. Not-for-profit.
- **No storage or handling** of clothes, redistribution happens directly between families.
- **Sustainability goals:** live impact data show money saved and carbon offset for your school.
- **Always open:** when families need it most, evenings, weekends and school holidays.
- **Compliments existing physical swap shop initiatives,** if you have one.

Please visit FreeSchoolClothes.com to join our new virtual swap shop.

Offer outgrown school clothes to other families in our school community. Browse and request things that you need, for free. Save money and protect the planet.

For support or to volunteer as a school champion please contact:
support@freeschoolclothes.com


Start your musical journey today
• Learn an instrument
• Discover new talents
• Make friends for life
Enrol today!
cavms.co.uk/enrolment
Developing Young Musicians
cavms
Cardiff and Vale Music Service


Exploring society together
Be a Social Scientist
Scan here for tickets!
Tuesday 27th October
10:00 - 14:00
Sparc | Spark, Cardiff University
Explore, discover, and think like a social scientist!
A day of free interactive events giving children and families an introduction to the field of social science.
Children will have the opportunity to meet researchers and think about current societal issues through creativity and play.
Activities will include:
• Clay-making
• Quizzes
• Games
• Lego building
Festival of Social Science 2026
17 October - 7 November