

WINTER 2024

THE EIRIAS CHRONICLE



In the Chronicle this term:

FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN
PLAN FOR THE NEW YEAR

READ ABOUT THE DRAMA & MUSIC
TRIP TO WATCH DEAR EVAN HANSEN

LEARN HOW TO MAKE THE
PERFECT MINCE PIES

LOOK AT THE COSTUMES FROM THE 6TH
FORM'S CHILDREN IN NEED DRESS-UP

SEE WHAT DIFFERENCE YOUR OWN-
CLOTHES DAY DONATIONS HAVE MADE

& MORE INSIDE





CHILDREN IN NEED DRESS UP 2024

To mark the BBC's annual Children in Need, students of Eirias Sixth Form continued the tradition of dressing up in order to donate money to the charity. From ABBA to The Simpsons to The Inbetweeners to Friends, everyone came perfectly on theme.

Unfortunately Dr Greenslade did not dress up to mark the occasion, but was our in house photographer, so can be forgiven.

Children in need has been going since 1980 and since then, the charity has raised a total of over £1 billion to provide essential funding to over 1000 individual children's charities and projects across the UK. This year, The Sixth Form collected an impressive £312 to add to the grand total of £39.2 million raised nationally.

Take a look at some of the costumes this year...





DR WILLIAMS - THE WONDERS OF INSECT PHOTOGRAPHY

Dr Williams bought a new camera two years ago to take nature photos, learning how to take very close photos of all kinds of insects, moths and spiders. Since then, Dr Williams explains that he has benefited from the experience by improving as a photographer - as is clear from this gallery of his work - learning about the natural world and having a break from the busyness of life.

Dr William's first 'model' - a spider in the kitchen - was content enough to let him get used to his new equipment. "Insects are almost like people - you get a few who are more chilled out than others," he said. "This creature was completely still, so I was able to use a tripod and take my time working the camera. I must have been there for an hour taking this and when I looked at the picture, I couldn't believe the detail the camera had revealed. It opened up a whole new world for me - I didn't expect that"

The second picture reflects how photography has changed Dr Williams' attitude towards nature.

He used to mow the lawn and cut the bushes in his garden regularly - but to encourage growth he did nothing last year, he just let all the plants grow so as to attract insects... and it has worked.

"Last summer, for the first time, I saw a grasshopper in the garden, and I loved it - and I've chosen this picture because it was taken in my garden. It's a real pleasure to photograph something that lives with you and it's here because I've simply stopped cutting the grass."





Dr Williams says that his knowledge of the natural world around him has increased thanks to his new hobby.

This fly was warming up on a piece of wood in the sun, but the macro lens was able to photograph a bubble of water coming out of its mouth.

"The water particle is so small that I didn't see it until I got back home." said Dr Williams. "After doing a bit of research I understood that this is a common method used by flies on hot days to stop them overheating - they blow the water out to create a ball, and then suck it back in to cool themselves down."



Since he first started, Dr Williams' photography techniques have developed hugely and now instead of taking a picture with the focus on one small part of the spider - usually the eyes - he has a new technique in which he takes a number of pictures with the focus on different parts of the animal before combining all the images together to create one picture with the whole animal in sharp focus.



This article was originally published on the BBC website and has since been translated from Welsh by Dr Williams.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cymrufyw/68471369>





ASTONISHING GENEROSITY: 1459 TINS DONATED FOR FOODSHARE

MR P JONES

In an incredible display of kindness, students and staff have come together to donate a staggering total of 1459 food items to the Foodshare charity. Unlike a food bank, Foodshare offers food for a reduced rate, so people can maintain their choice and their dignity – a hand up, not a hand out! Starting in 2020, the programme now feeds over 150 families every week in the local area.

This remarkable effort was met with heartfelt gratitude from Sian Jenkinson, the Operations Manager of Foodshare, saying that this was ‘The biggest collection in one place ever!! Thank you so much, on behalf of Foodshare, that is mind blowing! Well done to all the amazing pupils and staff for bringing in a tin!!’



The collection drive, which took place as part of the December Non-Uniform Day, saw an overwhelming response from the school community, showcasing the spirit of unity and compassion that defines our school. It also served as a reminder that acts of kindness can have a significant impact on others.

Donated items will be distributed before Christmas to families and individuals in need within the Conwy area, providing much-needed support during these challenging times. Food Share has been a lifeline for many, and this donation drive will help to sustain its vital work.



**A HUGE THANK YOU TO PUPILS, PARENTS AND
STAFF ALIKE FOR GIVING SO GENEROUSLY.**





THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS ATTENDANCE PRIZE DRAW

Over the past few years, it has been noted that attendance tends to slip when it gets to the end of the year and so the deputy heads and members of the senior leadership team decided to get the whole school involved to show the pupils the importance of good attendance.

Here at Eirias, it is important to encourage all pupils to take advantage of every learning opportunity available to them and to continue to promote and reward attendance. The senior leadership team chose to run a festive attendance incentive.

Between the 5th and 20th of December, all pupils that were present in school had the chance to win some fantastic prizes. The daily winners from each year group were drawn at random from pupils that attended all lessons in school during the last 12 days of Christmas in school. There was a prize given per year group, per day and to be eligible for the grand prize (a Christmas hamper) on the 20th of December, pupils must have attended for every day of the 12 days of Christmas.

Undeniably, it is essential that pupils are in school every day of the school term, but in order to encourage students to work on their attendance, this festive prize draw was the perfect way to allow pupils to recognise the true importance of attendance and punctuality. Some of the prizes included: a christmas selection box, a christmas mug, gift cards and on the 12th day, a christmas hamper.

The prizes were really well received by the students and there has been a positive impact upon attendance figures.

A special thank you to Truck Parts North Wales, Colwyn Bay RFC, & Gwyn Evans Commercial Vehicle Repair for their support with this campaign.





The History of the Mince Pie

Have you ever wondered why mince pies are called mince pies? Mince pies were first served in the early Middle Ages, they were quite big and filled with minced meat, chopped fruit and a liquid to preserve it.

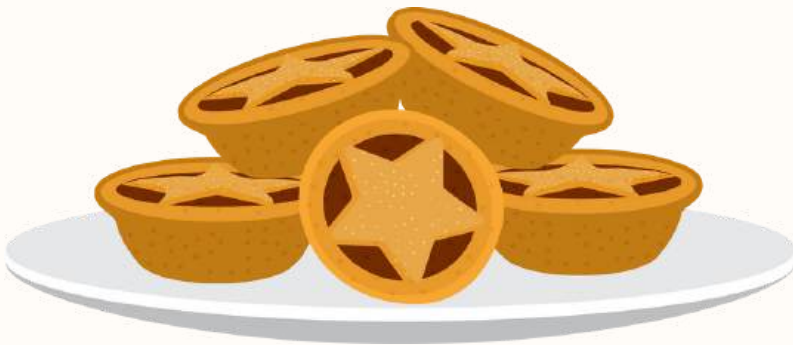
In 1413, King Henry V served mince pies at his coronation and Henry the VII liked the Christmasy meat treat. Going forward in time, in the Victorian era they still used minced beef with fruit and spices. In the late Victorian period and early 20th century mince pies dropped meat and just had fruit fillings. Today, Brits eat approximately 175 million mince pies over Christmas.

My Nan's mince pie recipe:
My nan makes the tastiest mince pies!

INGREDIENTS

- 200 grams of plain flour
- 50 grams of lard
- 50 grams of margarine
- 4tbsp of water

Before you begin, preheat the oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5.



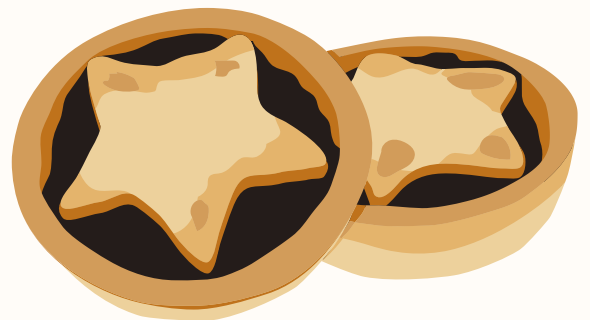


METHOD

1. Firstly, rub the lard and margarine into the flour.
2. Next, add about 4 tbsp water to mix to stiff dough. (Add a little more water if needed.)
3. Turn out onto a floured board and knead lightly.
4. Chill the pastry in the fridge whilst you grease a 6 or 12 hole bun tin.
5. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and roll out about 4mm thick - use a round cutter to cut out 6 or 12 discs of pastry that are about 6mm bigger than the size of the bun tin holes.
6. Once complete, bring the scraps of pastry together lightly and re-roll as necessary.
7. Fill each pastry case with a level tablespoon of mincemeat. (Don't overfill them as they will leak and make your mince pies stick to the tray.)
8. Finally, cut out lids with a smaller pastry cutter, re-rolling the pastry as needed. Use a sharp knife to make a small hole in the middle of the pie, or several decorative holes, to let out the steam as they bake.
9. Bake in the pre-heated oven 20-25 minutes, or until golden-brown and crisp.
10. Set the tray on a wire rack to cool for five minutes and then turn the mince pies out.



Enjoy – Merry Christmas!





THE CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT

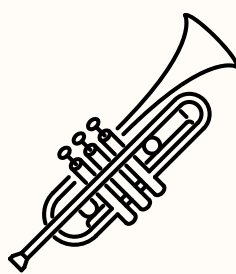
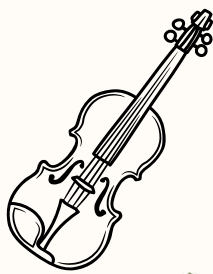
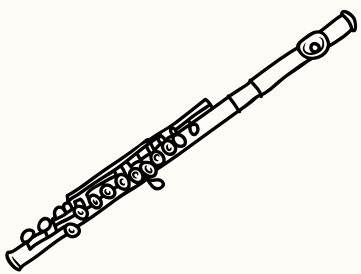
On the evening of the 17th of December 2024, the yearly Ysgol Eirias carol concert began at 6:30 in the school hall. Over 160 pupils, parents and teachers were in attendance to watch the soloists, ensembles, choir and orchestra perform for the end of year Christmas concert.

This year, the orchestra opened the show with Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas', followed by acts including the senior choir singing 'Winter Wonderland', and a flute duet from Layla Strydom and Jennifer Roberts playing 'Merry-Go-Round of Life' from the animation 'Howl's Moving Castle'.

We also had a solo of 'It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas' from William Heyworth, a performance of 'Stockings All Over the World' from the rock band and The Eirias Chronicle's very own Emma Lidgett wrote and performed her own Christmas song. The main choir finished the night with 'One More Sleep Til Christmas' from The Muppet Christmas Carol.

With refreshments served after the show and a festive raffle, the curtain fell on yet another Christmas spectacular.

The whole choir and orchestra would like to thank Ms Hammerton, the head of music for arranging, coordinating and organising the event.





DRAMA & MUSIC TRIP TO WATCH DEAR EVAN HANSEN

AN ACCOUNT BY JENNIFER ROBERTS

‘Emotional’, ‘Otherworldly’ and ‘Like nothing I have seen before’ are just some of the words used to describe the hugely impactful, world-renowned musical ‘Dear Evan Hansen’ watched by music and drama pupils in Years 10-13 on Wednesday, November 13th at the Liverpool Empire Theatre.



The musical delicately handles topics such as suicide, mental health, and the impacts of social media, so there is no wonder that it resonates so deeply with teenagers worldwide. Pupils in Eirias felt no different, with many moved and with a greater understanding of today's problems.

Whilst the entire musical was hilarious, emotional, and exquisitely done, some of the standout numbers included ‘You will be found’, which closes Act 1. It is an immensely powerful number, centered around the importance of human connectedness, and reinforces to audiences that despite how isolating having a mental illness can feel, you are never alone, and you will most certainly be found.

Another fan favorite is the second number of the musical, ‘Waving Through a Window’, a commentary on the impacts of social anxiety and the longing for connection and friendship. While these themes seem negative at first, the song, and the whole musical, is a beacon of hope for anyone who has ever felt bothered, and a reminder that it is okay and accepted to be the most authentic version of yourself.





DRAMA & MUSIC TRIP TO WATCH DEAR EVAN HANSEN

Furthermore, the students on the trip who study GCSE or A-level music or drama had the excellent opportunity to immerse themselves in the content they are studying, which provided them with a deeper understanding of staging choices, acting, musical orchestration, and atmosphere.



The musical serves as a reminder to all of us to take care of ourselves and to be more attentive to our family and friends. This message remains as important as ever as Sixth Form students approach their mocks in January and the start of exam revision begins for Years 10 and above.

Experiencing such a moving performance in such an imposing and beautiful theatre was an experience truly like no other, and all of the students who attended are grateful to Mrs. Howell for organising the trip and to all of the staff who came along to ensure everyone was safe and accommodated.





HOW TO PLAN AHEAD FOR THE NEW YEAR



With a new year just on the horizon, now is the perfect time to start thinking about 2025. It's always so useful to plan for the upcoming year once Christmas is over as it is the perfect opportunity to start something new.

Here are a few ways in which you can get ready for the new year:

SETTING RESOLUTIONS/YEARLY GOALS

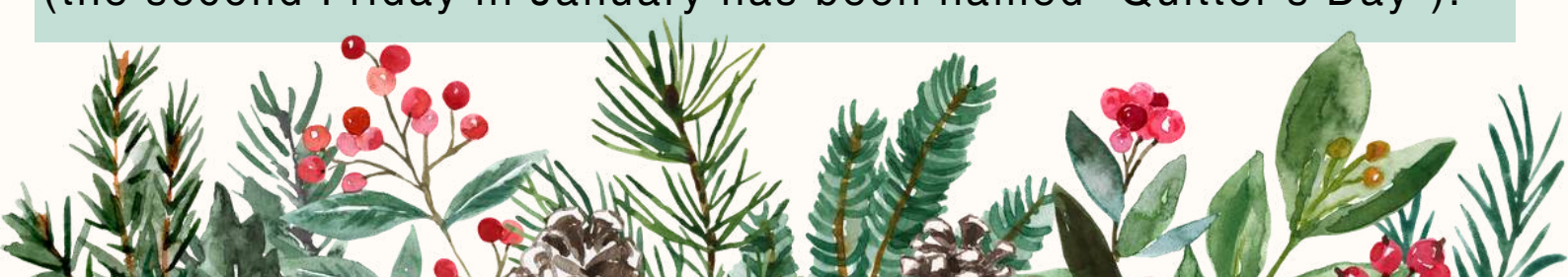
Setting new year's resolutions creates a fun way to try new things, drop old habits or they can simply help you to figure out what you want out of the year. If resolutions aren't for you, just simply writing a list of things that you want to achieve this year can really help you to enter the year with the right frame of mind. Here is some advice from a couple of teachers regarding resolutions for 2025:

MR BARONS

In my opinion New year's resolutions are a great thing to do. I think that they give you a bit of extra motivation to make positive changes, because there is a clear starting point. The difficulty as ever is keeping these things up once the momentum of the new year has passed. (At least that's what many failed past New year's resolutions about exercising tell me!). I think that this year I will be aiming to reduce my screen time in order to spend more time enjoying the outdoors!

MRS BLACKWELL

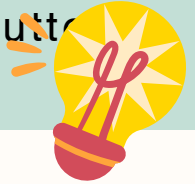
I never used to make any New Year's Resolutions - probably ever since I realised that I make unrealistic and unhelpful resolutions that I know deep down that I won't commit to. I read once that the data around resolutions was that most are lost during January (the second Friday in January has been named "Quitter's Day").





HOW TO PLAN AHEAD FOR THE NEW YEAR

This is because they are unrealistic and generally centre around weight loss or fitness. However, I read a brilliant quote this year and I am going to use it as a resolution in life: William Morris — ‘Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.’ I am going to use that quote to declutter my home... and then I am going to declutter my office!



ATTITUDES + MINDSET

It is so important to enter the new year with the right mentality. Sometimes, we can get swept away with the idea that everything needs to change when entering the new year. It's perfectly fine if nothing changes, but one thing that can easily be altered is your mindset. See the new year as a fresh opportunity to meet new people, learn new things and have new adventures. Thinking positively about the year is such a great start. Maybe you could write a bucket list of what you want to do with friends or family?



ORGANISATION

As the 6th form have mocks coming up right after the Christmas holidays, being prepared is extremely important. Even if you don't have exams, organisation is a key skill that every pupil needs. Maybe you could buy a 2025 planner, clear out your bedroom or organise your notes or folders - even small actions can make a huge difference! If you do have exams or tests coming up, the half term is the perfect time to start revising and get prepared for the school year ahead.

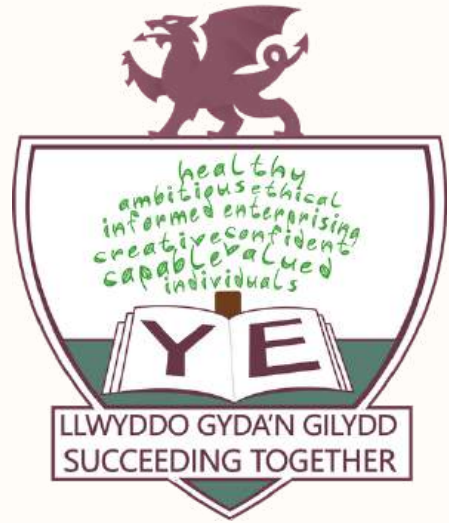
If you are revising, remember to take a few days off - squeezing revision into every hour of the day is not going to make all the information go into your head, no matter how hard you try! Instead, try to revise for a few hours each day after Christmas Day - take the first few days of the holidays off to rest!





THE EIRIAS CHRONICLE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE
EIRIAS PUBLICITY TEAM



WITH A SPECIAL THANKS
TO ALL OF OUR
CONTRIBUTORS THIS
TERM:

**MRS BLACKWELL
MR BARONS
JEN ROBERTS
EMMA LIDGETT
DR WILLIAMS
MR JONES
MR MCKENZIE**

EDITED BY LUCY ROTHNIE

**If you would like to get involved with
The Eirias Chronicle or Publicity Team,
please email rothniel@hwbcymru.net**

