



PENDARREN HOUSE NEWSLETTER

www.pendarren.org

No. 12 July / August 2013

News

The second half of the Summer Term has been very busy at Pendarren! After a quick count, we were amazed to find that from May half term onwards we'd had 378 pupils from 21 of Haringey's schools visit the Centre. This year everybody could appreciate the area fully as the fantastic weather finally reached South Wales and Pendarren basked in sunshine for almost all of July. Waterproofs and wellingtons were only brought out for wet adventurous activities as everybody turned instead to sunhats and sun cream. Visiting groups were eager to fall in the river during canoe sessions and the swimming pool reached an all time high – both in popularity and temperature!

The warm weather has encouraged the wildlife at Pendarren and, as well as a multitude of flowers, birds, rabbits and squirrels, there has been an unusual type of visitor to our bird table. Whilst gardening, Dave, our maintenance officer, found a swarm of bumble bees! As the bird table is close to the seating area where everyone eats lunch, we had to ask an apiarist (a bee specialist) to come and remove the swarm. He removed the whole bird table and took it down the drive where he released the bumble bees. They flew off in to the trees and were left to search for a more suitable place for their hive.



Trees

The Friends have purchased some tree labels so that we can label our trees to help teach the students about the variety of life. The marked trees will be used as part of a new orienteering session. The labels will also be used to mark the school plots in the Nicky Harrison Sensory Garden.



Scavenger hunt

As part of our development of the evening activities we have created a Scavenger Hunt. Students will work in teams to search the grounds to see who can find the most items that fit the criteria, which, for example, could be things that fit in a matchbox, different colours, textures, shapes or smells. The aim is to get the students looking more closely at their natural environment.



Art

Also new for the Autumn Term, Pendarren will be offering art as an evening activity. Occasionally visiting school groups bring their own resources and run art sessions in the evening, which have proved very successful. We would like to offer it as one of our standard evening activities. There will be a teacher's resource pack with suggestions and ideas plus boxes of materials. Various art/craft resources will be available together with natural and recyclable materials. If you or your students would like to do some artwork in the evening, see you in the new term!

Refurbishment of heating / plumbing systems

This autumn work is expected to begin to refurbish the heating and plumbing systems in the House and Annexe. As well as making the Annexe warmer this will reduce our fuel bill, allowing more money to be spent on resources for students.

Campsbourne School
3-7 June 2013

Campsbourne pupils were a pleasure to host this week as they undertook an adventurous week at Pendarren House. They hiked up mountains, explored caves, searched out the creatures of the sea and canoed on the Brecon and Monmouthshire canal. They also requested a falconry display and the falconer and his birds came to Pendarren. Some pupils had the opportunity to wear big thick gauntlets to hold the birds whilst they waited for the bird to set off on the next display. They saw a barn owl, peregrine falcon and Harris hawk.

Very well done for the great enthusiasm shown by the pupils and staff alike, we hope to see you again soon.



West Green Primary School
3-7 June 2013

On the day they arrived, West Green Primary pupils visited Abergavenny, the nearest town to Pendarren House, which was built up around the animal market. Students were interested in exploring the castle ruins and were intrigued by the animal pens in the animal market. Laughter could be heard for miles around during the canoeing session as some got rather wet. During Wednesday lunch time, between mountain walk and horse riding, the pupils spent some time with the Parachute Challenge; they really enjoyed it -especially the cat and mouse game. The last full day was spent at the coast, the students enjoying being in the sea so much it was hard work to get them out. That night, just before the evening meal, there was a falconry display in the back garden with the Campsbourne pupils. The group were surprised how big the birds were.



Haringey Sixth Form Education
3 – 7 June 2013

Students and staff from Haringey Sixth Form Education arrived looking forward to a busy week. After settling in to The Firs, their week started with orienteering at Pendarren House. On Tuesday morning, they visited Big Pit Mining Museum and learnt about the industrial heritage of the South Wales valleys. Students took on the various challenges offered by Pendarren's climbing tower and high ropes facility. By way of contrast a local walk enjoying the peaceful aspect of the village of Llangenny and its surroundings was enjoyed by the group. A day at the seaside was probably the highlight of the week with proper beach weather – very sunny, rock pools, beach football and ice cream. There was also time for a camp fire in the tipi one evening with the students providing fine entertainment – songs and dances of all descriptions! And finally canoeing a busy week!



Tiverton Primary School
10 – 14 June 2013

The Tiverton Primary School Year 6 pupils had a fantastic week celebrating the end of their primary education.

"During Pendarren I have encountered a whole variety of emotions; anxiety, joy and exhilaration. The towering terror (the rock wall) has oozed every ounce of my energy. However, touching the top was very rewarding! With our final day swiftly approaching the thought of leaving saddens me."

- James



Fortismere School
10 - 14 June 2013

The Fortismere Year 7 trip was a great success with the groups caving, canoeing on the river and walking up Pen y Fan.

I loved going in the washing machine after going in the toilet (names of challenges in the cave!) All the activities were great. - Toby

We had a great time at Pendarren. We enjoyed every part of it from the tightest gaps in the caves to the highest tips of the mountains. It was a great experience and we will never forget it. - Rosa & Millie

The view on the way down the mountain was extraordinarily beautiful. I wish I could climb it every day. It has made being an instructor a valid and possible career prospect for my future. My favourite moment was when we went down into the caves and slid down into a puddle as I enjoyed getting wet and crawling through the cave tunnels.- Joe

PGL is more manmade whereas Pendarren is real, out in the open and natural. - Jess

Real Fun - Theo



St Francis de Sales Junior School
17-21 June 2013

Pendarren received lots of letters from St Francis de Sales – sorry we could not include them all.

The independence I learnt in Pendarren is that I need to tidy my room my self, do much more on my own without my mum or dad. Also I have loads of responsibilities because I'm not a little girl anymore - Annie

My favourite activity was caving even though it was quite messy - Vince

I learnt that when you be nice to a horse or something or someone they be nice to you back - Yanet

Whilst I was enjoying myself I built my independence between my family and friends and also have confidence now - Abikail

I know at points we misbehaved but you continued to support us - Bello

My favourite activity was horse riding which was enjoyable, terrifying and funny all rolled into one - Oluria



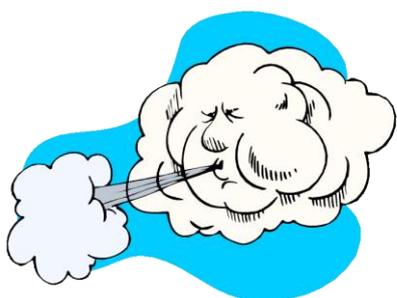
The Vale Primary School
17 – 21 June 2013 AND
The Vale Secondary School
1-5 July 2013

The Vale School visited on two occasions during the summer term. The Primary Resource Base visited in June and the Secondary Resource Base in July. They made full use of The Firs, which is our well appointed, accessible, self-contained accommodation. A variety of activities and adventures were on the programme for each group. There was canoeing, climbing and abseiling as well as a fantastic trip to the beach to discover sea creatures, try beach games and swim or splash in the waves. Richard and Tony did sterling work in the Sensory Garden, weeding, replanting and getting ready for the year ahead.



Harris Primary Academy – Philip Lane
24 – 28 June 2013

It was a great week here at Pendarren House as we were joined by HPA Phillip Lane. The staff and children all helped to make the week very enjoyable for all. The trip to the seaside was a great success as we enjoyed the sunshine and rockpooling. A special well done to the brave mountaineers who climbed to the summit of Table Mountain on the Friday morning in what could well be described as a more than a fresh breeze.

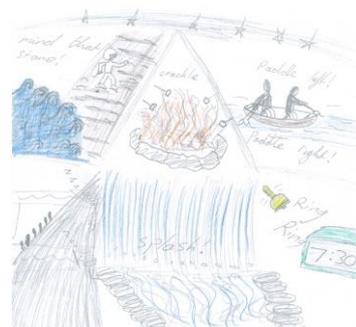


Heartlands High School
24 – 28 June 2013

Visiting Pendarren was a whole new experience for most of Heartlands Year 7s. We did lots of fun things like rock climbing, (REAL rock climbing!), climbing the tallest mountain in Southern Britain and going down waterfalls to mention but a few. Everyone overcame lots of their fears like heights, lack of confidence, lack of determination, mice phobias etc. Personally I learnt how to communicate in a way that helps my friends and not just myself and having everyone by my side boosted my confidence when I came to obstacles that made my heart race out of pulse. - Mariam

Friday - sadly we had to go home but breakfast was extremely delicious. - Reece

It has made me more confident with sports and heights. I was happy with the challenges I bonded better with people I didn't know. - Marti



By Hannah

Allways Community Centre
24-28 June 2013

Allways Community Centre had a very busy week at Pendarren. Ian and Melvin arrived with an enthusiastic group of staff and clients ready to enjoy The Firs bungalow and the local attractions. It was great to see them back in Llangenny. On the menu this year was horse riding and canoeing, there was a speed boat trip in Cardiff Bay, visits to Big Pit Mining Museum and other places of interest. And, talking about menus, they had a BBQ, curry night and a lovely meal in the

local inn just a short walk from Pendarren (the staff and regulars there are always pleased to see them).



**PARK VIEW
Work Placement
24 -28 June 2013**

I'd like to say a big thank you for dealing with me for 5 days – must have been exhausting! Furthermore Pendarren taught me about team work, maturity and why Wales is awesomely beautiful. Overall I have learnt that sometimes - most of the time – you just have to count to ten and be patient.

P.S. I believe you should double my wages: Apple Crumble x 2.

Alexa

I would like to thank you for the memorable week at Pendarren. I've learnt that I don't want to work with primary kids as they drive you crazy all the time!
Farhiya



**FORTISMERE SCHOOL
1-5 July 2013**

Pendarren is a great activity centre with well trained instructors and nice food. The bell is a great way to start your day. You do amazing mountain walks in the clouds, and original orienteering. The pool is nice and warm and the showers are always hot. The drying room doesn't make your cloths crusty, it is also quick drying. Overall Pendarren gives you a great sense of achievement and welly juice, you must go!!!!

I really liked Pendarren. One of my favourite parts was caving. I was scared at first but I managed to achieve my goal to go through the toothpaste tube. It was really hard trying to get through the damp, small hole with about 10 other kids trying to squeeze through all at once. I was terrified but I felt really good and proud of myself when I came out at the

other end.



At Pendarren I have learnt new things and met new people. I got to do things I wouldn't normally do. I've got to see a new side of me as I would normally be cautious. During this week I have pushed myself and have reached new levels. I would recommend Pendarren to shy, timid people so they can come out of their shell.



**Fortismere School
Gold Duke of Edinburgh Expedition
1-5 July 2013**

Fortismere students walked all over the highest peaks in the Brecon Beacons in order to complete their training and practice expedition for the Gold Award. Some long days were put in but undeterred they were back in record time to ensure they could have a shower before leaving.

**Woodside High School
Work Placement
1-5 July 2013**

Two students from Woodside High School worked alongside Fortismere students. We usually place work placement students with primary schools but, on this occasion, Larry and Nasser rose to the challenge of working with a group who were only a couple of years younger.

St Thomas More School
Duke of Edinburgh Camping
4/5 July 2013

It was nice to see some students from St Thomas More School who passed through Pendarren during their D of E expedition training. Their staff sneaked in for a cooked breakfast!



Highgate Wood School
8-12 July 2013

An excellent week of activities with the group enjoying the heat wave whilst still managing to climb Pen y Fan the hard way! Another day was spent cooling off underground and another paddling down the River Wye.

The students said that they were able to get to know other students from the year really well, especially the ones they would not normally talk to in school! They faced their fears and increased their confidence.



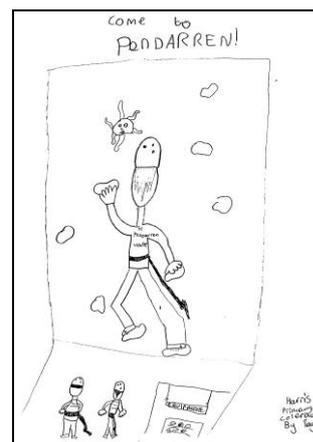
Harris Primary Academy - Coleraine Park
8-12 July 2013

As HPA Coleraine Park brought a small number of students on their visit to Pendarren House this time round, they stayed in The Firs. The children were enthusiastic about their chores in the morning; so much so there was a queue to use the vacuum cleaner! They were willing to walk through a field with pooh without a fuss, looking and asking question about animals and plants. They were

even brave enough to trust their instructor in trying wild strawberries, wood sorrel (tastes like apples), mint and lemon balm. The group barely had time to sleep, they were kept so busy - even managing to fit in orienteering one evening. The river study day was a success and the group enjoyed cooling down in the river. At the coast a variety of creatures were found.



By: Josie



By: Taylor

Alexandra Park School
11-14 July 2013

To try something new, the students started the visit by camping out at Llanthony Priory in the heart of the Black Mountains. They were well organised as they were all ready and waiting for the pick up to bring them back to Pendarren for breakfast and the first full days activity.

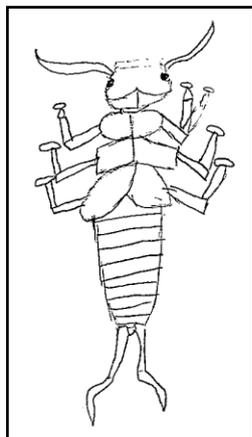
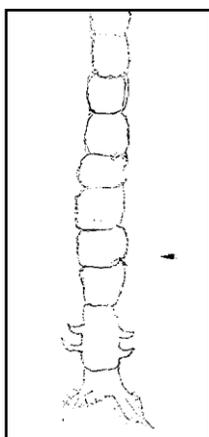
The weather forecast was for 'hot and sunny' weather - and it was! Canoeing on the River Wye from Monmouth to Redbrook was excellent with fantastic scenery, clear waters and the occasional refreshing splash or swim (some intentional, some not!) The

adventure journey - exploring streams, gorges, waterfalls and plunge pools was even more refreshing! There was also time to visit a local cave - the geology of South Wales lends itself to a variety of landscapes and, as limestone is very prominent it gives rise to numerous caves to explore. Limestone passageways were investigated, and many challenges tackled.



**St Pauls & All Hallows School
15 - 19 July 2013**

During the stream study session at St. Mary's Vale, the children from St. Pauls & All Hallows had excellent knowledge of food webs and food chains. They thoroughly enjoyed searching for the small stream creatures and used the keys to identify and find out information about their creatures. Please find below some of the pictures draw by the children: Bloodworm (left) and Stonefly Nymph (right).



"We think that if you put your mind to it you can do anything. We both found the high ropes enjoyable and terrifying. We are proud of ourselves for doing everything especially the high ropes as we were scared that we were going to fall. We co-operated well and everyone was really supportive." Kimberley and Ruby

"The activity highlight was caving because I wouldn't really do caving if it was my decision, but I really enjoyed it. It was an experience I wouldn't do in Tottenham. Teah and DeShawn

"We all learnt that we can live away from our electrical gadgets such as DS's and phones, for a week." Tysha, Khaliyl and Ohemaa

"We are surprised that we managed to live without a TV and we didn't really miss it because we had our own TV show at Pendarren. We had a bit of comedy, drama and sadness so we had our own reality TV opera." Brianna and Teah

"I really enjoyed socialising with Park View School and doing sports with them. Teah

"We learnt how to make friends with Park View School and I loved working together with the other school." Jada

"Pendarren is an opportunity we may never have again. Our social highlight is getting to know people more and working out who snores and makes funny noises in their sleep." Marvellous, Latrell, Ryan, Louis and Buchi

"Thanks once again; Pendarren is an unparalleled resource for Haringey children" Mr Vowles



**Park View
15-19 July 2013**

Park View had the most fantastic weather of the summer so far, the mountain views were spectacular, the cave day was a refreshingly cool experience and during the canoe trips nobody could resist the temptation to take a dip in the water. The group showed great team spirit and all the staff at the centre were impressed by the good manners and courtesy shown by all.

"I liked that I got to try new things that I had not tried before like rock climbing and canoeing"

"Caves are wet!"

"Limestone is made from dead sea creatures."

"I learnt how to dry my own clothes."



Hornsey School for Girls
Work Placement
15-19 July 2013

Two students from Hornsey School for Girls worked mainly with St Pauls and All Hallows Primary School but also helped on several occasions with the Year 8 course from Park View.

“Due to the work placement here, we gained confidence to go into the world of work as we gained a real understanding of how the working environment is laid out and run. By assisting the Pendarren staff, we were able to work alongside two different schools of different age groups – which allowed us to develop various qualities and skills; for example, communication was the skill that we were able to really excel at as it was essential when working with the young people.

- Leila and Shannon.



National Citizenship Service (NCS)
Charlton Athletic Community Trust
20 July – 1 August

The **National Citizenship Service** is a nationwide programme involving thousands of young people aged 16-17 drawn from a cross section of society. The programme allows young people to develop new skills in teamwork, coordination and communication with others. It helps young people to give back to the community they have grown up in.

As part of the scheme the students have to participate in a residential outdoor adventurous activity course, and so for a few days the participants came to Pendarren. This week has been about getting to know team members and bonding through challenges where support and understanding were necessities.

I have enjoyed trying new things I rarely get to try like canoeing, caving and climbing. Similarly the time spent in the evenings was very entertaining while the conversations

between teammates have given me new knowledge and new points of view to think on. Most of all I have enjoyed meeting new people, who are different to myself and learning to be around them comfortably. – Louise.

Being away at Pendarren has been the best experience of my life. It has helped me think about my life and I want to stop getting in trouble and change my life. It has made me think about my family and how I can change to help them. - Karl

I got over my fears by my team mates supporting me and encouraging me to do activities, and because of this I have gained many new friends and I am looking forward to spending more time with them. - Jamie-Lee



Park View and John Loughborough
Team Bonding Course
3 – 7 August 2013

Pendarren was approached at the last minute about the possibility of a residential adventurous activity course for students of Park View and John Loughborough schools to build on new and existing relationships. The aim, as well as developing these relationships, was to challenge the group both individually and as a team in unfamiliar circumstances. The expertise of the Pendarren staff was called on to provide activities which were both stimulating and challenging but which were highly supported. As one student explained:

“The activities range from a simple walk up a steep mountain to the complexities of rope work and the infamous climbing wall. The fantastic, well structured activities are led by professionals. All in all, Pendarren is a fantastic experience and all of the staff, including the wonderful ladies in the kitchen, need to be commended”.

Friends of Pendarren

The Friends continue to support the work of the centre. In the last few weeks they have purchased two additional waterproof / shock proof cameras for use by visiting schools and groups. They also continue to subsidise the cost of the storytelling sessions delivered by Daniel Morden to our visiting pupils.



Pendarren House and The Friends are hoping to arrange an Open Day in 2015 to mark the 40th anniversary of the official opening of the Centre. Watch this space for further information.

Events in the area

The Big Black Mountain Challenge took place in May 2013. This involves long sponsored walks around the Black Mountains. The event is organised by Longtown Mountain Rescue Team and the funds raised support their work. For more information, see the website www.longtownmrt.org.uk/bbmc

The annual bike festival took place in Abergavenny over the week of 8-12 July 2013. The event, consisting of several challenges, was spread across the week and included the town carnival. The challenges are open to all – for information, see the website www.abergavennyfestivalofcycling.co.uk

Upcoming events include

The Green Man Festival takes place at Glanusk Park, near Crickhowell between the 15 and 18 August 2013. Artists include Kings of Convenience, Band of Horses and Ben Howard. www.greenman.net

The annual Brecon Jazz Festival takes place in Brecon on the 9, 10 and 11 August 2013. Artists this year include Courtney Pine, Jools Holland and his Rhythm and Blues Orchestra and Mr Acker Bilk and his Paramount Jazz Band. www.breconjazz.com

The Brecon Beast mountain bike enduro event takes place on 8 September 2013. The event takes in “the toughest, highest and most scenic tracks and trails in the Brecon Beacons”. There is both a short and long course – distances vary each year. www.breconbeast.co.uk



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