



PENDARREN HOUSE NEWSLETTER

www.pendarren.org

No. 23 June 2016

NEWS

NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Greenhouse and sensory garden

The greenhouse now has a new roof and is a useable space for groups. It is hoped the greenhouse will be used to teach students about sustainability and allow them to participate in the growing of food for the Pendarren kitchen. It will also be a useful group space for lunch once we sort out the seating.



Before



After



Tent store

The tents have finally all been housed in bags, and in one room – the old safe room in the basement (which is probably where the butler used to keep his wine). If you would like a camping experience when you come, let us know. It could vary from camping on the lawn to an expedition camp in the mountains. Years ago, when outdoor centres ran 7 day courses, everyone used to undertake a mountain camp; when the courses became shorter this activity was one of the casualties. We have refurbished and upgraded our camping equipment as it is currently used by National Citizen Scheme courses and DofE groups.

GCSE PE

The GCSE syllabus continues to change with regard to outdoor provision. For September 2017 the activities offered are rock climbing, canoeing and kayaking.



Time travellers history day

This is a new KS2 activity to help students understand the bits of history that are difficult to teach in London – the Stone Age to the Romans. A walk around the hills and valleys of the Black Mountains shows just how much evidence there is that this rural area was once a hive of industry. Neolithic tombs, iron age forts, roman roads – they all left their mark on the landscape.

DofE Gold open courses

We are running Open Gold courses during this summer holiday in:

Training and Practice expedition
Qualifying expedition
Residential.

Open courses do not involve the school so are ideal for students whose school does not offer DofE or students who, for whatever reason, have been unable to join their school group on one of the above courses. If you know anyone who may be interested please ask them to get in touch.

INSET & NGB awards - Mountain Leader Award, Lowland Leader Award, Single Pitch Award

Any teachers out there looking for a qualification to lead groups on school trips to the countryside or to the mountains? Pendarren runs the nationally recognised courses: Mountain Leader Award, Lowland Leader Award, Expedition module as well as the Single Pitch Award and Local Cave Leader Awards. The next available course is the Mountain Leader Training course in the summer holidays which is based in the Brecon Beacons and Snowdonia. For more details see <http://pendarren.org/courses/ngb/>



Tipi

The old tipi had been repaired once but had started to rot so a replacement was required. An 8 metre Tipi is not light and it was struggle to erect, but the new Tipi is now in use.



Pond

Those who have visited will know that it has been beautiful sunny weather here for weeks now. In spite of the lack of rain our pond is maintaining it's level so all the hard work in sorting out the drainage has paid off. We are looking to see if any locals are willing to donate a few plants to help us create a variety of pond habitats; the creatures will make their own way there. We will be making some information boards for the pond and some seating. It will be used a part of a number of activities including Croeso, bushcraft and, of course, minibeasts and ecological studies.

VISITORS

Chestnuts Primary School

11 to 15 April 2016

The first week back after the Easter break and Chestnuts Primary School wanted to have a week building self confidence, self esteem and to have fun. This would help them prepare themselves for the weeks of hard work before their SATs.

I was quite nervous about the caving activity but I faced my fear and I feel so proud of myself. - Cicely

I had lots of fun climbing Sugar Loaf Mountain. It was a big challenge. - Kai

The three best things about Pendarren: the staff and local people, the food and the surrounding area. Pendarren is an amazing experience; I would definitely recommend it to others and come back if I could. - Maggie

I was scared of heights so I didn't want to do the activities on the high ropes, but then my team leader and my friends encouraged me to do it. Thanks to them, I achieved something I thought I could never do. - Harmony

By doing things that I thought I could never do, it will help when I am in secondary school because it will be so different and like nothing I have experienced before. - Zynab



When I have to go to secondary school I learnt that I have to be able to work as a team to solve problems and listen to other

people because they might have better ideas than you. - Tatiana

I liked spending time with my friends. It made me feel closer to them. I felt upset that we had to leave. - Simeon

When we went canoeing I learnt that you have to co-operate with other people and understand each other to be able to stay dry and not fall into the water. I think this will help me when I go to secondary school to make new friends. - Valentina

I found all of the activities totally helpful for teamwork and learning how to get on with other people who you don't know too well. Teamwork will help me do well in partner work at school and to not be shy when I go to secondary school. Personally I believe that Pendarren has been a fantastic experience and I just loved it! - Darsha

I learnt that I have to work as a team because when I go to secondary school I have to solve problems which are tricky and really hard to solve and you have to be friendly so you could make new friends and you don't want to be alone and if you listen to other people they would listen to you. - Erdal



St Mary's CE Primary School

18 to 22 April 2016

The Pendarren SATs Booster

St Mary's CE visited us again after coming only a few months earlier in January. They brought a targeted group of year 6 students on an intensive SATs maths and English revision course. The dedicated school staff ran maths and English sessions in the mornings and the

Pendarren staff ran activity sessions in the afternoons to build confidence and give the students a well earned, structured and fun break from their academic endeavours.

Coming to Pendarren, I talked to people that I never really talk to and I got a chance to talk to my teachers and I found out they're really funny. Gradie

The food was amazing and Pendarren helped me find my confidence, this was one of the times that I'm really happy. Thank you, Pendarren, hope this would help me a lot in the future and hope to come again. Jackie

Fun, scary and full of food. Kallia

I learnt that walking up mountains is better with your friends encouraging you, better than giving up. Thank you this was another wonderful stay. Kacey

Food was 9.9 out of 10. This was again an amazing stay thank you. Alexis

I loved the cosy bedrooms and the mixture of learning and activities. I have enjoyed my stay at Pendarren and hope to come back. Eunice

Teachers are easier to talk to here than at school. Reuel

I liked your food and thanks for taking care of me :- > Sharzad

It was fun and I could understand and concentrate much more better than I did at school. I did some things I've never done before. I thank the Pendarren staff so much. Deboarh

Pendarren makes good bacon, thank you cooks. Halim

The food was nice and I learnt a lot. Gloria



St Ignatius Primary School

25 to 29 April 2016

Year 5

It may be weird when you're working with different kind of people because you may never get to work with them again. Jacque

I loved the Pendarren Experience because I did things I had never done such as the High Ropes, Canoeing and much more. In general, it was one of the best things I had EVER done. Eli

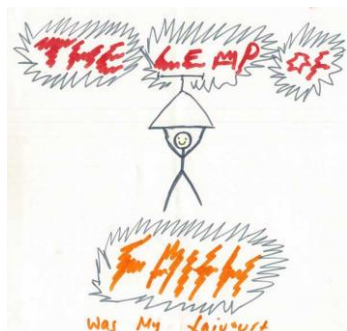
In this week of Pendarren I experienced things that I thought I couldn't do! For example going canoeing was very exciting, because we learned to communicate with our partners and tell each other how to paddle and which way. If you never give up life would become much easier and you will learn that your body is suitable for any challenge, adding on today while we were doing our adventure journey I liked being brave and going into dirty situations which made me feel proud. My suggestion for those kids who are scared is be brave and say to yourself "I can do this and afterwards I can declare that I have completed a challenge!" Andrew



It was quite hard with some of the activities climbing, balancing and using pedals but I learned to never give up. My fear was the canoeing, I was scared if I was going to fall out of the boat but I did it and it wasn't as bad as I thought. Madison

This experience was incredible and joyful, because we never gave up at any challenge thrown at us. We learnt to sleep and tackle the cold rivers and see beautiful locations. It was also very interesting with the author Daniel Morden with his stories. Thank you. Kacper

During Pendarren, I could learn how to work independently and also with my friends. The staff and teachers also helped me to face my fears by showing me how to canoe and use high ropes. My favourite part of this week at Wales was when we went to the beach and I had a crab on my head pinching me. This can help me in year 6 and also at secondary school because this gradually helped me face challenges I've never done in my life. This life skill can be done after you are happy enough to do this. Abner



Rhodes Avenue Primary School
11 to 13 May 2016

Thank you to pupils at Rhodes Avenue for their letters and pictures (which are presented through the news letter).

The food was great. We had scrumptious lunches and divine dining. I tried counting the numbers of animals at Pendarren but there were so many I couldn't count them. Fred B

.. we headed to the caves. The awesome, and cool thing was there were droplets of water on the ceiling. Sometimes I touched them and they trickled down my arm. Luan



Crate stacking ... it felt like we were floating in the sky. Caving was fun but very scary with all the small spaces, the scariest space was the hole at the top of the wall. It was so

small that when I crawled through on my tummy my head was running across the top of the cave. It was so dark that when we turned our lights off we could not see our hands. Canoeing was amazing. The best part was when we pretended to have a race but actually we splashed group 4. Lila

Whenever you had an itch you wouldn't want to scratch it because you had mud on your hands! Ocean

Wednesday, the final day, breakfast was amazing yet again. I loved the garden because it was so big and had so many things to do in it. My favourite thing was bamboo wars because we made sound effects in the war. Felix

The crate stacking was fun too. I liked going higher and higher. The more I went the more it wobbled. The garden was ENORMOUS. Tilda



I am writing to you for giving me the best 2 days of my life. It was absolutely brilliant and I loved every part of it. Kamran

We went on a zipwire, I zoomed down like lightning and everyone pulled me back up, I felt like a queen! The last activity was canoeing, the boats were heavy but we had great fun splashing and I realised that if we worked a steam we could go much quicker. Lucie

It was my birthday so everyone sang happy birthday to me and my twin, Louie, even in Welsh too! When we got into the cave we had a debate on how to get out. The winning vote was for the wetter route so we got soaked! Dardan



Holy Trinity CE Primary School 16 to 20 May 2016

Pendarren is a lovely place to stay and a great place to recommend to others. Nykeda

I loved Pendarren it was fun. I don't want to leave! Daniel

Pendarren is a very good place to learn how to be independent and learn how to face your fears. You can really learn about other people, how they feel and how they act. Shahim

I don't think there is anything to change apart from getting wet and cold, I didn't enjoy that but apart from that I think it was awesome. Ikenna

Pendarren was a lifetime experience and I had a very good time.

I found it fun in Pendarren. Zuriel



North Haringey Primary School 16 to 20 May 2016

Why did we have to do mountain walk? So we can get fit and healthy! Ayten

Thank you so much for having us! We had so much fun! Thank you also for all of the lovely Pendarren staff, we all had such a good time thanks again for our stay!!! Twiny

It was much better waking up in the morning to the sound of birds singing than traffic. Lucy

It is better to wake up in the morning when breakfast is made for you than doing it for yourself. Erica

It was very cool doing things your mum does. Vlad

I enjoyed my visit it was amazing. Kaloyan

I really loved Pendarren. I did things I never done before! It was really nice to finally get away from the busy streets! Thank you Pendarren staff! Stacy!

Coming to Pendarren really helps you to learn new things that you never have done

I think Pendarren is a great place to be because we get to do activities that could be once in a life time. Miki

Pendarren helped me make more friends, get more experience without my parents and I felt confident also gave me a chance to have a BIG sleepover with some girls in my class and the other class. Wiktoria



St Francis de Sales RC Junior School
23 to 27 May 2016

Thank you to pupils at St Francis de Sales for their letters.

I have become more resilient. I have become a man. Anon

I learnt that I can have more fun outside than on my electrical gadgets. James

Every day something scary happens but at the end I wanted to stay more. Jahub

I learnt that I was more confident than I thought. I went caving, slid down a mini waterfall, canoed down a river and jumped in, rode on a zip wire, rode horses and solved a murder mystery. I had a lot of fun. Edson

I loved when we done horse riding and caving as even though it was scary I never gave up. Kelvin

Pendarren made me explore different activities and that is what I'm happy about Godwin

In Pendarren I learnt how to be independent and never stop when you're stuck. In canoeing I thought the water was deep but I trusted my friends and I jumped in! Gyan

I had a really good time; doing caving, high ropes and canoeing changed my life. Gabriel



Lordship Lane Primary School
23 to 27 May 2016

Pendarren is a great experience and it is crazy fun for everyone. Hasan

I had a great time at Pendarren. I like caving I like rock climbing I like waterfall I like swimming. Kashiem

I had a great time here it was awesome. Hiwa I like rock climbing, caving, waterfall and canoeing. Zak

Pendarren is fun and cool. I enjoyed caving the most and rock climbing because I learned to trust my friends more and face my fear of heights I had fun tried my best in all activities and there food is really nice. Ryan

I really like Pendarren and I want to come back to here. I HAVE learnt that I can trust myself doing a lot of stuff. Alexia

I loved the story teller, climbing and caving. Maira

I really liked all the activities and I will come again with my family. Jessica

I learned new things and never thought I would ever go to Wales; trying new challenges, trying my best. All sorts of things that I would never ever do in my whole entire life. It has impacted my life in many ways. Jeane-Marie

I have had a great time at Pendarren and conquered great fears. I have learnt a lot, this has helped me have wonderful experiences Joseph

I had fun doing caving and rock climbing, I like doing both because I love climbing trees and going into small spaces. I also enjoy the food too so if I had a family trip I will come to Pendarren. Taliyah M

I love Pendarren. It has been a dream for me to come here and I really appreciate it. Bailey



Nancy Reuben Primary School

31 May to 3 June 2016

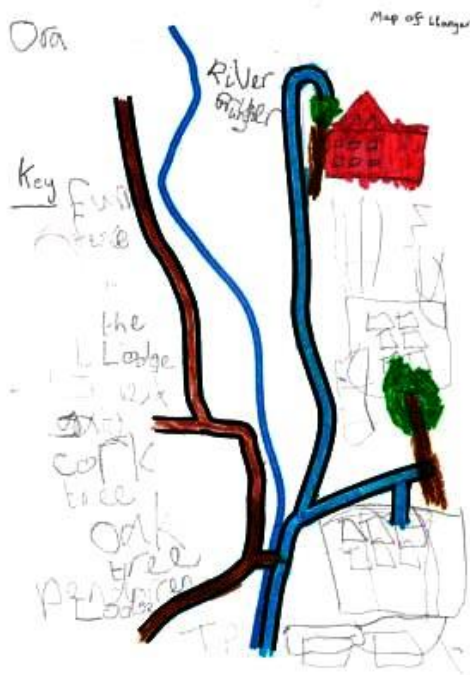
We learnt a lot about ourselves. Joseph

It was really fun when we went caving and canoeing. When we go away we like to have midnight feasts this was not aloud! Overall I really loved the activities and our instructor is really kind to us! :) Eleanor

It was really fun and we did amazing activities. We also had an amazing instructor. The beds were comfortable and the food was good however it would have been a good idea to have food in our room as some people were complaining they wanted their sweets. I thought it was a good idea to have room inspections as if we didn't have it we would lose things. Yasmin

I enjoyed all of the activities especially the caving and canoeing. The food was very nice, the lunch, the breakfast and the dinner. To sum up: the whole trip was the best time of my life. Thank you. Natalia

I enjoyed rock climbing and canoeing. Ora



The food was fantastic and the staff members were extremely kind to us. And I learnt to understand other people. Leila

I liked rock climbing, canoeing and caving best and they are the things which include the most teamwork. I liked working as a team. We had arguments but that only helped us move further. Nadav

I really liked Pendarren I got to know my friends a lot better even if I don't live close to my friends I keep in touch a lot and one of my teachers I really liked the food even if I don't eat anything Thank you a lot Nb: I live in Israel but I used to live in England Eyal

Pendarren is a place I do not want to leave. I managed to overcome my fear of claustrophobia. I also learnt how to make a fire which I longed to do. Therefore I say thank you Pendarren. Solomon

We all enjoyed the rock climbing even though my legs are tiny. Personally my favourite was the Caving. Noah

I really enjoyed myself and got to know so much more about the country, the teachers and myself by going to Pendarren I can do so many more things with out being scared Pendarren is an amazing place and I enjoyed swimming, caving canoeing zip wiring and so much more. This by far is the best place I have ever been. Avidan

The activities were so much fun and I would never be able to go caving, canoeing and rock climbing in London. To sum up Pendarren is a great place. Sarah

I learnt to never give up and to listen to teachers and instructions better. Eli

I really enjoyed my experience in Pendarren, I learnt how to cooperate with my friends. I also liked the food and especially the yummy desserts. I definitely would love this experience to never end. Hannah



Nadav

Local News

The Flying Scotsman came through Abergavenny en route to Paddington in June. The crowds were out in force but had to wait a bit longer than expected as a few overenthusiastic watchers were on the track further up the line.

Other events coming up in the area include:

The Abergavenny Festival of Cycling has four sportives on Saturday 16 July 2016.

The National Eisteddfod is being held on Castle Meadows, Abergavenny this year between 29 July and 6 August 2016.

The Usk Summer Festival is being held over the weekend of 2 and 3 July 2016.

The Abergavenny Food Festival is on over the weekend of 17 and 18 September 2016.

Coach Travel

Please check with the driver before allowing your group to eat food and ensure the coach is left as you wish to find it. Pendarren will provide rubbish bags for you.

Bookings at Pendarren

Pendarren has confirmed bookings up to the end of the Autumn Term 2016. From January 2017 onwards prices are not yet available, but provisional bookings are being taken. Please see the availability chart on our website if you are interested in a booking. There are some vacancies in all the terms still.

national
museum
wales
amgueddfa
cymru



Big Pit

Visits to Big Pit visits have been disrupted recently due to strike action; we hope it will open again soon.

And finally

Thank you to the pupils of Rhodes Avenue Primary School for their drawings, many of which feature in this newsletter. There are more to come in the next issue!



Spring colours at Pendarren