



Newsletter: December 2025

Dear Howardian Families,

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Howardian staff, to thank you for all your support this term. Through working closely together, we are able to ensure that our children make the best possible progress in terms of their wellbeing and academic achievements. If you ever have concerns about your child/ren, please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher to discuss these.



Our children have had a very busy term and I am sure that they are ready for a much-needed and well-deserved break – as are our staff! I would also like to thank our fantastic team of staff for the amazing work that they do for our children. The Howardian team is truly second-to-none!

I would like to wish you all a very peaceful and relaxing break over this festive season and I hope that you are able to enjoy spending some quality time with your families. We will welcome the children back to school on **Tuesday January 6th**. (Monday the 5th is a staff INSET day).

I hope you find the content of this newsletter informative and of interest.

Kind Regards,

Mrs Sian Burt (Headteacher)

Key Events since the last newsletter:

Friday November 14th : Children in Need

The children enjoyed a carousel of Pudsey-themed activities. Thank you to Miss Taylor and our school Senedd who organised a 25 Hoop Challenge which the children enjoyed throughout the week. They also held a cake sale which raised nearly £200. Along with non-uniform donations, the school community raised nearly £600 for this very worthwhile cause. This encourages our children to become *ethically informed citizens*, one of the four core purposes of the Curriculum for Wales.

Thursday November 20th: Year 4 Egyptian Day – led by The Egyptian Centre from Swansea University.

The children had a fantastic day where they dressed up as Egyptian characters, they learnt all about the mummification process and built pyramids!



Friday November 21st

We marked Diabetes Awareness Month by wearing blue to school. Two of our pupils who have Type 1 diabetes very confidently spoke about their condition and how they manage it. Two diabetes nurses came in to lead a very informative assembly about Type 1 diabetes to our Key Stage 2 classes. They were taught about the 4 Ts which are symptoms of the condition.

Friday November 21st



Well done to some of our Netball team who represented the school so admirably at the Girls Netball Festival at the Cardiff Netball Arena. I think you'll agree from this photo that they enjoyed their experience very much and were encouraged to be *Healthy, Confident Individuals*, one of the four core purposes in the Curriculum for Wales. Thank you to Mrs Martin for arranging this.



Rugby Team

The rugby team have had a very enjoyable and successful term. They played at a rugby festival at The Cathedral School and played games against Llandaff City Church-in-Wales Primary School and Radyr Primary. Thanks to Mr Brind and Mr Gareth Evans (parent) for coaching the team. Thanks also to all of the parents and carers who help with transport and attend the events to support the children.

Thursday December 4th

Thanks to one of our grandparents, the school choir was able to sing at Sainsburys after school. They sang beautifully and we were very proud of them. Thanks to Mrs Murphy and Miss Bradley for teaching them and to Miss Griffiths, Mr Brind and Mrs Atkins for their support. £65 was raised for the Cardiff

Food Bank through a bucket collection.



Friday December 5th: Year 5 visited the Gurdwara

As part of their studies on Sikhism, the Year 5 pupils visited the Gurdwara in Pearl Street, Splott. Mr Brind and Mrs Leonard accompanied them and reported that the children behaved and listened very well. It was a lovely opportunity for them to consolidate their term's learning through a real-life experience.

Friday December 5th: Annual Donkey and Puppet Show visit

Thanks to Mrs Bruncker for organising this donkey and puppet show visit for all pupils again this year. The children always enjoy this magical event.

Thursday December 11th

Year 2 visited Rumney Chapel

Our Year 2 children had a lovely morning where they made Christmas cards, mince pies and re-enacted the Christmas story with the help of puppets!



Friday December 12th: Christmas Jumper Day in aid of Save the Children

It was lovely to see the children, staff and parents entering the festive spirit by supporting this very worthy cause. Thanks to your generosity nearly £534.50 was raised.



Saturday December 13th**Jenny Rathbone Christmas card competition.**

Huge congratulations to Summer, Divya and Evan who were runners up in this competition, organised by Member of the Senedd, Jenny Rathbone's team. The children were invited to Albany Gallery to an awards event.

**PTA**

Thank you to those families who supported the recent PTA Winter Fundraiser and Winter Celebration on Friday November 28th and, as always, a huge Howardian thank you to our hard-working, dedicated and committed PTA team who always manage to bring things together with seemingly such ease! £410 was raised at the Winter Celebration. We are yet to find out how much has been raised from the Winter Fundraiser and the Elfridges pop-up shop which will take place on Wednesday December 17th. In addition, the Autumn discos raised £885 and £153 has been raised through donations from JustGiving, donated as a one off or through setting up regular payments. Thank you if you have contributed to this. We hope to spend a considerable amount of the money raised by the PTA on outdoor learning resources and facilities for the children. I would urge you to support the organisation of future events if you can. The money raised by the PTA benefits all children across the school and, with ever-challenging school budgets, is so needed to enhance the educational experiences of your children.

Panto trips

As usual, these were hugely enjoyed by all who attended – children, staff and parent volunteers alike! I was incredibly proud of the behaviour of our pupils – they were a credit to our school. A massive thank you to the PTA who paid for the transport and to those of you who made voluntary contributions via ParentPay. Without these kind donations, our trips would not be able to happen which would be a huge

disappointment to the children. As you know, all trips depend on these contributions and, whilst voluntary, as is stated in our Charging and Remissions Policy: *'where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, the activity will be cancelled.'*

Christmas Concerts



Yet again, the Foundation Phase classes performed first-class Christmas concerts. The children's enthusiasm and confidence was an absolute heart-warming delight to see. I would like to thank all the staff for their hard work in organising these lovely experiences and to you for supporting your children with learning their

lines, practising the songs and helping with costumes. Thank you also for your generous donations in the bucket collections. An incredible £609 was raised. These funds will be used to upgrade our sound system.

Healthy Schools and playtime snacks

As you know, we offer a healthy snack for our pupils from Nursery to Year 2. The cost of this is £8 per half term. If you do not wish your child to have this snack, please let the class staff know so that we can amend our order accordingly.

In Years 3-6, children are welcome to bring in a healthy snack from home. For the reason of simplicity, we request that this be either fruit or vegetables. Whilst there are other healthy choices out there, this could become a 'grey area.' If children have medical reasons and need to bring an alternative, please make the relevant school staff aware of this.

Miss Britton recently sent out an email with suggestions for healthy snacking.

Family Thrive sessions

We will be running a Family Thrive Course – 'Empowering Parents & Carers' in January. This will be on a Friday afternoon (1.30-3pm) starting on January 9th for 6 weeks – you must be able to commit to the full 6-week course. The course will offer an introduction to The Thrive Approach and brain development, along with strategies and ideas to support you and your child at home and explore why play and creativity

are so important. The course is open to all parents and carers in our school community – please get in touch if you would like to know more. Thanks. Miss Britton.

Behaviour and Relationships Priority

Thank you to all parents and carers who attended Mr Wheeler's presentation on our Behaviour and Relationships priority. I hope you found it to be informative and useful. We hope to be in a position next term to share our draft revised Positive Behaviour and Relationships policy with you. Key words that are important to our approach to Behavior in school are *consistency* and *calm*.



Mobile Phones in School

Only pupils in Years 5 and 6 are allowed to bring mobile phones into school and **this is only when they are leaving the school site without an adult – i.e. walking home or part of the way home without an adult.** We have strict procedures around this. If children bring a phone to school for the above reason, they are to be handed in to the class teacher as soon as they arrive in class, and the teacher will ensure that it is stored safely for the duration of the school day. At home time, the phones are returned to the pupils and are not permitted to be used until the children are off school site. Please can you make your children aware of e-safety and speak with them about not taking photos of other children without their permission and especially not putting these photos onto social media. There are potential significant safeguarding concerns should this happen.

Safe and Considerate Parking

Parking close to the school at drop-off and pick-up times is very challenging. Unfortunately this term, I have been informed of a few situations from both families and residents where families are driving or parking irresponsibly in the streets surrounding our school and some of these are using inappropriate language in front of our children. This compromises the safety and wellbeing of our families and of neighbouring residents. I am also aware that residents can at times be unpleasant towards families. It is of great importance that we work together as positive relationships within the local community are so important. If grandparents or other adults drop off or pick up children, please inform them of the importance of not

blocking driveways and driving safely in the neighbouring streets. Thank you for your support with this very important matter.

Pupil Voice Groups

We have a number of pupil voice groups across the school: Our Senedd, led by Miss Taylor; the Criw Cymraeg led by Mrs Steele; the Eco-Council led by Mrs Turner; the Rights Respecting Steering Group led by Mrs Reeves; and Miss Bradley will start to work with a Digital Leaders pupil voice group in the Spring Term.

Here are some updates from these pupil voice groups:

Senedd: This term, the Howardian Senedd have shown excellent commitment and leadership through a range of impactful initiatives. They have met weekly to discuss and action key projects, including gathering pupil voice to decide how best to spend the funds raised by last year's Senedd. Their efforts led to the purchase of new playground equipment, which they are currently auditing and preparing guidance for, ensuring it will be ready for use during break times after the Christmas holidays. Additionally, they successfully organised the school's Children in Need Day, creating the engaging 'Hoops for Hope' challenge that involved every class, as well as running a popular cake sale. Their dedication and teamwork have made a real difference, and they continue to be excellent ambassadors for pupil voice at Howardian.

The Rights Respecting Steering group have been working hard this term and have renamed our Rights Respecting Mascots to represent the diversity in our school community. They led a whole school assembly and have gone on to launch a school-wide competition to redesign the Rights Mascots. The winners will be selected and announced early in 2026.

Eco Council: This term, the Eco Council recruited new members through an application process. They decided on our new members who were bursting with ideas of how to make our school more eco-friendly. To celebrate Wales Climate Week, the Eco-council presented their powerpoint during class assemblies to share the importance of how our actions as humans can positively (and negatively) affect the climate. The Eco council decided to hold a Climate Action poster competition - to design a poster showing ways you can help make Wales greener (winner to be announced in the new year).

We have continued all the good work since receiving the Green Flag Award, we have continued with promoting the importance of reducing litter and improving how we recycle. We collected 156 crisp packets in the first half of the Autumn term and will do a final crisp packet count in the last week of term. The Eco Council will think of new targets for our school to continue to embed sustainability and eco initiatives across the school.

Criw Cymraeg

The Criw Cymraeg is helping our school to achieve the next Siarter Iaith award. We currently have the Bronze and our mission is to achieve Silver by the end of this year. We have 10 targets that we need to collect lots of evidence for in order to achieve this award. On October 15th the Criw held their first whole school assembly of the year, which was about Shwmae day. This is a special day in Wales, where everyone is encouraged to greet each other by saying 'Shwmae'. In School we wore red, green, white or Welsh clothing and carried out different activities in our classes. Criw are looking forward to helping Mrs Steele to further develop Welsh throughout the school and there are lots more activities to carry out.

Staffing

- Miss Davies will begin her Maternity Leave after Christmas. Her baby girl is expected in January. We wish her and her family all the very best for their exciting times ahead. Miss Brett will take over Miss Davies's duties and cover her Maternity Leave in 3 Porffor.
- A huge thank you to Mrs Mathias who has been covering in Nursery whilst Mrs Brunker has been recovering from foot surgery. We hope to see Mrs Brunker back with us after the Christmas break.
- Mrs Murphy's last day was on Friday December 5th when she began her Maternity leave. We will keep you updated on the arrival of her baby.
- Congratulations to Miss Taylor (currently in 5 Porffor) who has successfully been appointed as a permanent teacher at Howardian.

Food Bags

We have a good stock of food which is available to support families should you wish to receive food bags. All requests will be dealt with sensitively and discretely. Please contact the office or myself directly to arrange collection.

School lunches

A huge thank you to our families who pre-order lunches on a weekend ready for the week ahead. This is an incredible help to Mrs Marshall, our cook, as she is able to order and prepare stock accordingly. Please could you all ensure that your child/ren's lunches are ordered at least a day in advance. For those pupils who have not ordered a lunch, some find this upsetting and they are not always able to have the choice that they want due to the availability of meals that are left against what has already been ordered. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

Tours of the School

If you know of any families who are considering a primary school in the area for their children, (any age), please inform them that they would be welcome to attend a tour of the school on a Thursday at 4pm. These are held on a monthly basis. Please contact Mrs Curran or Mrs Liddington in the office to arrange a date.

Attendance

Currently, our whole school attendance is 95%. At Howardian, we are committed to promoting positive attitudes to learning and school in general. Good attendance supports this ethos. Pupils who have low attendance at school are at risk of a negative impact on their social, emotional and academic development and progress.

In order for our pupils to make the most of every learning opportunity, they need to attend as regularly as possible (aside from illness or appointments that cannot be taken outside of school hours) and arrive at school on time. School starts at 9am and learning starts at 9am, mostly with the class's daily Guided Group Reading sessions.

Please support your child's development by getting them to school on time, booking holidays during the school holidays, taking appointments outside of school hours as much as possible, and informing us on your child's first day of absence, giving the reason for that absence. We do understand that life happens and we are sympathetic to any family or personal circumstances that might affect your child's attendance. We are really happy to engage with you in such situations.

Punctuality

Please ensure that your children arrive in school on time. Lateness has a negative impact on your child's progress, as reading takes place from 9am most mornings. It also affects your child's emotional wellbeing as children who are late often feel that they have missed out on learning opportunities and this is very unsettling and upsetting for them. When children arrive late, this also has an impact on the admin staff as they have to take the younger children down to their classes.

Is your child entitled to Free School Meals (eFSM)?

Whilst all primary-school aged pupils are universally entitled to free school meals (uFSM), there are a number of benefits for pupils who apply to receive eFSM status. eFSM pupils receive a discount on their educational and residential trips, group music lessons (provided by the Cardiff and Vale music service) are subsidised by the school, and a free playtime snack is provided to foundation phase children. Pupils who receive eFSM will also be entitled to a uniform grant and other offers from Welsh Government and the council. The school also obtains extra funding for every pupil who is registered as eFSM. This is used to employ staff to run interventions and provide various types of support for the pupils.

Primary (and secondary) school pupils will get free school meals if their family receives:

- Income Support
- Income Related Employment Support Allowance
- Income Based JobsSeeker's Allowance
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit with an income less than £16,190 or
- Universal Credit if the net household earnings are less than £7400.

*Families who get Working Tax Credit do not qualify.

Once you submit an application, you will be notified in writing of the outcome. If you are eligible for free school meals, we will be notified so that we can update our records. Please click the link below to apply for eFSM.

<https://www.cardiffcouncilforms.co.uk/article/1684/>

Mrs Curran (Senior Admin Assistant) is able to provide support with your application if needed.

Dates for your Diary

We strive to include all key dates on the school calendar. Schools are very busy places and dates may be subject to change, or events might be communicated at relatively short notice, but we will endeavour to communicate such changes as soon as we can.

If you have not yet subscribed to the school calendar, please do so at your earliest convenience so that you do not miss key events.



Key events for the rest of this term and for the first half term in January/February are:

Tuesday December 16th, 6pm: KS2 Carol Concert in St German's Church

Wednesday December 17th: Elfridges (PTA fundraiser)

Thursday December 18th: Christmas parties: children may wear party clothes / non-uniform and bring a labelled plate of party food – NO NUTS

Friday December 19th: break up for the Christmas holidays.

Tuesday January 6th: children back to school for the spring term.

Tuesday 6th – Friday 9th January: STEM week

Monday 12th– Friday 16th January: 5P – Miss Taylor, Cycling Proficiency week

Monday 19th– Friday 23rd January: 5M – Miss Court/Mrs Wyatt, Cycling Proficiency week

Monday January 26th – Friday February 6th: Year 3 swimming lessons at NIAC

Tuesday February 3rd & Wednesday February 4th: Parents' Evening

Monday February 16th – Friday February 20th: Half Term week

INSET days 2025-2026 – Staff training: school closed to pupils

Spring Term: Monday 5th January

Monday 23rd February

Summer Term: Thursday 7th May

Monday 20th July

And finally, from the Howardian Team.....

