

SRG NEWSLETTER



July 2026
Issue #9

IN THIS ISSUE



Message from
Mr Blackwell

Page 2



Student voice

Page 10

MESSAGE FROM MR BLACKWELL



As another busy but productive academic year draws to a close it is time to reflect on the successful year that we have had. We are grateful to all families for the continued support and guidance that you give our learners.



As usual there are some changes in our staffing. Mrs Caroline Robinson, who has worked in the school for over 20 years, recently retired from her role as HR Manager and PA to the Headteacher. She has been an exemplary colleague who has always worked tirelessly in the background to ensure the school runs effectively. She has also been a great friend and role model to all. She will be a huge loss but we wish her every joy in her retirement.

The phone ban has been in force for a few years and continues to be a real benefit to our community from a learning and social interaction perspective. This move will hopefully only support the transition for children with the upcoming social media ban, another move to support their mental health and wellbeing that we welcome. Correct uniform is a constant drive as it sets the tone for our expectations. Please continue to support us to ensure you child looks smart in order to think smart. We will also continue to strive for excellent attendance, punctuality and equipment. Please encourage your child to organise themselves appropriately so that when they return in September, they are on time and ready to learn. I would like to extend my thanks to all learners, families and staff for their support in ensuring that your children's wellbeing and academic success is our core priority.

It was wonderful to have our Section 50 inspection this academic year and hopefully you saw the glowing report that outlines the fantastic work of our RE department, Chaplaincy and the collective mission of all of our staff. It was a real reflection of the excellent progress in learning, alongside the ethos of our school being at the heart of all we do. If you didn't see it, the link is below:

<https://rcadc.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/St-Richard-Gwyn-Catholic-High-School-Barry-2026.pdf>

As Pope Leo XIV says:

"Education is of the greatest importance in forming the character of the young, and in shaping their sense of duty toward God and toward society"

The new school development comes with huge excitement for our community. Over recent months we have seen the steel frame beginning to be erected and this really brings the build to life. I hope you have enjoyed our pupil video updates along with the recent drone footage. We will continue to share updates as they happen, but when we return after the summer break. It will be brilliant to see the frame completed and the outside fabric of the building beginning to take shape. Let's hope for positive conditions and no stumbling blocks, as they continue to work hard to meet our proposed move in date of Feb/ March 2028.

The key to our school is the work that goes on inside, not the building itself. The ethos of working together in the best interests of all with our faith at the centre, whilst striving for excellence where every child is the best they can be is key to our success. However, a new building will give the students appropriate surroundings and access to the first-class facilities that they deserve, which will support them in their learning experiences for many more years to come. Exciting times ahead!

Wishing you all the best for a fun, relaxing and safe summer break. Good luck to all of our pupils picking up GCSE results on the 20 th of August. See you in September, ready and refreshed for a new school year.

CATHOLIC PUPIL PROFILE

A reminder that this term, we were growing to be:

ATTENTIVE & DISCERNING

loving hopeful
attentive faith-filled generous eloquent intentional
learned prophetic wise grateful discerning
truthful compassionate active

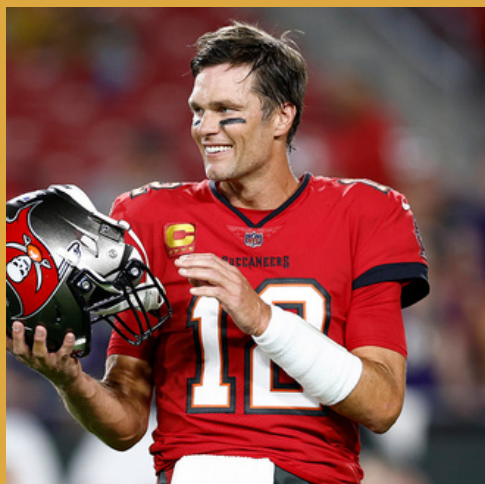
This term our focus has been
Attentive & Discerning

Y tymor yma, mae ein ffocws wedi bod ar
Astud a Dirnad

Attentive and Discerning are the virtues that invite young people to slow down, to listen deeply, and to develop the wisdom to make thoughtful and considered choices, growing as people who are reflective, perceptive, and guided by their faith and values.

To be attentive is to be truly present — to the world around us, to the people we encounter, and to the quiet promptings of our conscience and our God. It asks us to look beyond the surface, to notice what others might miss, and to respond with care and compassion. In our classrooms and communities, attentiveness shapes pupils who listen well, engage meaningfully, and recognise the dignity and worth of every person they meet.

Discernment flows naturally from attentiveness. It is the ability to weigh our choices carefully, to distinguish right from wrong, and to ask not simply what we want, but what is good, true, and just. Rooted in the Gospel call to seek wisdom, discernment equips young people to navigate the complexities of the world with integrity and courage. Together, these virtues form the foundation of a life lived with purpose, compassion, and a heart always open to the guidance of God.



“

Too often in life, something happens and we blame other people for us not being happy or satisfied or fulfilled. We all have choices, and we make the choice to accept people or situations, or not.

Tom Brady

GOODBYE YEAR 11!

We say a final goodbye to our 'Class of 2026'



Congratulations, you made it! It feels like only yesterday I first met many of you during summer school, at the tail end of Covid; a time when the world itself felt a little frayed at the edges. Yet even then, you arrived as a vibrant bundle of threads, each one different, each one full of potential, ready to be woven into something strong and beautiful. From those early stitches to now, it has been a privilege to watch you grow, finding your pattern, your texture, and your place within the fabric of our school.

When we began this journey together, my hope for you was not only that you would achieve your full academic potential, but that you would also become the very best people you could be. Like any carefully crafted piece, success was never just about the final product, but about the care, patience, and resilience shown along the way. And you have done just that thread by thread, lesson by lesson creating something truly remarkable.

I wish you all the very best for the future. Continue to work hard, stay determined, and trust in your own design. Not every stitch will be perfect, and not every pattern will go to plan, but it is through those moments that the most interesting and meaningful creations are made.

I look forward to seeing how your individual journeys unfold, and how the fabric of your lives continues to grow, evolve, and inspire. You each have the potential to create something extraordinary.

Finally, remember:

Embrace what makes you different, stand tall when others doubt you, and let your true colours lead the way.

Best wishes,

Nerys Williams - Progress Leader for Year 11 2021 - 2026 🇬🇧

LEAVER'S LITURGY

As we prepared to say goodbye to our wonderful Year 11 cohort, they came together to create a moving Leavers' Liturgy — a celebration of their five years of friendship, faith, and growth.



Parents, carers, and staff gathered to share in the scripture, prayers, and reflections the students had so thoughtfully chosen, in what was a truly special afternoon.

Beautifully led by Year 11 representatives, the students gave thanks to staff right across the school community — from teachers and teaching assistants to kitchen staff, site team, admin, and senior leaders



One of the most touching moments was a set of wings, each feather carefully inscribed with the name of every student to have been part of the Year 11 cohort — a lasting and beautiful tribute to every individual who has walked through our doors.

The evening drew to a close with a solo from Nahla Park, and an impromptu performance from the year 11 band. As the Class of 2026 prepare for the next chapter of their journey, they leave us with full hearts — and, in the spirit of Dr. Seuss, with all the adventures they are yet to have ahead of them....

Oh, the places you'll go! ★

PROM!

On Thursday 25th June, our Year 11s attended their Leavers Prom at St David's Hotel in Cardiff on one of the hottest days of the year!!



The students arrived in style for their well-deserved prom, turning heads in everything from sleek fancy cars to a haulage truck and even an overlander – proof that at SRG, we know how to make an entrance! They looked absolutely gorgeous, each and every one of them!

Their behaviour throughout the evening was impeccable – a true reflection of the mature, wonderful young people they have become. After months of hard work, dedication, and the pressures of exam season, they deserved every moment of celebration.



REAL SKILLZ

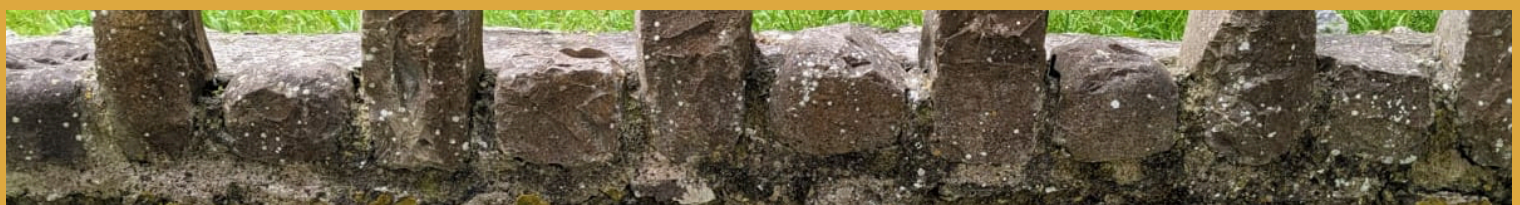
This year, a group of our students have taken part in the Real Skillz programme, a hands-on initiative giving young people genuine, practical experience in the construction industry.



Working alongside experienced tradespeople, students have been busy repairing historic stone walls in the grounds of Gileston Manor in the Vale of Glamorgan – combining heritage, craftsmanship, and real community impact.

Beyond learning a trade, the programme has helped students build skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and safe working practices, all in a supportive environment. Students have approached every task with real enthusiasm and growing confidence.

Experiences like this help young people see the practical relevance of what they learn, while opening their eyes to future career pathways. We are incredibly proud of every student involved – their hard work has been a credit to themselves and to SRG.



SVP MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our SVP members have been actively supporting the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVP) through a range of meaningful community activities this term.



Pupils enjoyed visiting Bethel House Residential Home, where they spent time chatting with residents, sharing stories, and bringing smiles to their faces.

The visits were a wonderful opportunity for our pupils to demonstrate kindness, compassion, and respect while strengthening connections with members of our local community.

Our annual Tea with SVP brought together members of our school and the wider community for an enjoyable afternoon of refreshments, conversation, and fellowship.



“

"SVP helps me connect with people in the community who I wouldn't normally be able to help."

"I feel more aware of what is going on in my community and I feel more passionate about helping people."

"I have developed more confidence and social skills."

"I have made new friends."

The event also marked a special milestone as our new Year 7 SVP members were commissioned, officially beginning their journey of service within the school and wider community. Thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended and contributed, the event successfully raised funds to support the invaluable work of the SVP while also increasing awareness of the charity's mission to help those in need.

We are incredibly proud of our SVP members for living out our school values through their compassion, generosity, and commitment to serving others. Their dedication continues to make a positive difference within our school and the local community.

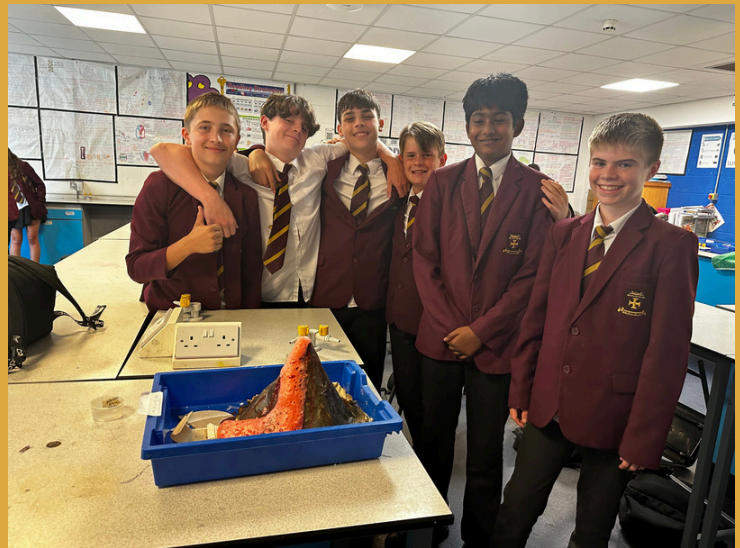
SCIENCE BRINGS LEARNING TO LIFE!

Learning by doing — our Science department has had a wonderfully creative year, bringing the curriculum to life in the most exciting ways!



From erupting volcanoes to water-powered rockets, our students have thrown themselves into hands-on experiments that make science unforgettable. Even the humble shaving foam became a classroom star, helping students visualise the magic of rainbows and rain clouds in a way no textbook ever could.

Year 8 got wild when ZooLab paid a very special visit, bringing with them a collection of exotic animals that had students wide-eyed with wonder. Getting up close with creatures they would never normally encounter was not only thrilling, but a fantastic way to spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and remind our students that science is vibrant, surprising, and endlessly fascinating.



STUDENT VOICE!



SCHOOL COUNCIL – Celebrating a fantastic year of making a difference!

As another successful academic year comes to a close, our School Council is proud to reflect on a year filled with opportunities to make a positive difference both within St Richard Gwyn and across our wider community. From supporting local charities and environmental projects to representing pupil voice at the highest level, our School Council members have shown outstanding commitment, leadership and compassion throughout the year.

Representing Pupil Voice

School Council members have continued to ensure that pupil voice remains central to decision-making. Representatives attended School Council Network meetings, presented to the Senior Leadership Team and Governors, and met with Councillor Burnett, Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, to discuss the local authority's budget and ask questions about issues affecting young people.

Members also met with our uniform supplier, A Class Apart, to discuss the future of the school's uniform, particularly as we prepare for our new school building. One outcome of these discussions has been the introduction of optional full ties from September 2026, alongside the existing clip-on ties, giving families greater choice.



STUDENT VOICE!



Supporting Our Community

One of the highlights of the year was the work of our Homelessness Awareness Group. Working in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, pupils learned about the challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness, visited the YMCA and even created emergency blankets using recycled materials to provide warmth for those in need. The project gave our pupils valuable insight into an important social issue while encouraging empathy and community action.



Supporting Important Charities

Throughout the year, School Council members have organised and promoted fundraising events for causes that matter to our school community.

Our non-school uniform day in support of Velindre Cancer Centre raised valuable funds for the charity, while our Show Racism the Red Card campaign encouraged pupils and families to support an important national cause promoting equality and inclusion. Both initiatives were planned and led by members of the School Council, demonstrating the positive impact that pupil leadership can have.



Welcoming Our New Pupils

Supporting Year 6 transition has been another rewarding part of the year. School Council members welcomed prospective pupils and their families during Open Evening, led school tours and acted as transition helpers during induction days. More recently, our Year 7 representatives have been creating a transition video featuring a "Day in the Life" at St Richard Gwyn and answering questions from our incoming Year 6 pupils. We look forward to sharing this on our social media channels and school website.

STUDENT VOICE!



Celebrating Diversity and Inclusion

Our Ethos Committee once again organised a wonderful Cultural Appreciation Day, celebrating the many cultures that make up our school community. Through activities, discussions and shared experiences, pupils learned about different traditions while raising funds to support next year's event.

Members of the Ethos Committee also visited Archbishop McGrath School in Bridgend to share ideas about promoting cultural inclusion within schools. This partnership has been an excellent opportunity to exchange good practice and is something we look forward to continuing in the future.



Caring for Our Environment

Environmental responsibility has remained a key priority this year. Working alongside Keep Wales Tidy, School Council members have organised regular litter picks around the school site while also supporting wider community initiatives, including Keep Barry Tidy and the Big Barry Clean. These activities form part of our continued work towards achieving the Eco-Schools Award.

Supporting Important Charities

Throughout the year, School Council members have organised and promoted fundraising events for causes that matter to our school community.

Our non-school uniform day in support of Velindre Cancer Centre raised valuable funds for the charity, while our Show Racism the Red Card campaign encouraged pupils and families to support an important national cause promoting equality and inclusion. Both initiatives were planned and led by members of the School Council, demonstrating the positive impact that pupil leadership can have.

Giving Pupils a Voice

Our Learning and Achievement Subcommittee has worked closely with Deputy Headteacher Mr Dunn to explore what makes successful learning. Together, they developed the 5Cs of an Excellent Learner: Commitment, Curiosity, Confidence, Courage and Contribution. These five qualities will continue to play an important role in supporting learning and personal development throughout next year.

Looking Ahead

We are already looking forward to another exciting year of representing pupil voice, supporting our community and helping make St Richard Gwyn an even better place to learn.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the School Council, please speak to one of our representatives. Alternatively, we welcome suggestions from the community and these can be emailed to us at schoolcouncil@strichardgwyn.school.

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

We understand the importance of keeping in touch.

Here's where you can find us and how you can contact us:



01446 729250



www.strichardgwyn.co.uk



info@strichardgwyn.co.uk



St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School
Argae Lane
Barry
Vale of Glamorgan
CF63 1BL



St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School



[strichardgwynbarry](https://twitter.com/strichardgwynbarry)



[strichardgwynbarry](https://www.instagram.com/strichardgwynbarry)



FOR THE CALENDAR:

Autumn Term 2026

INSET DAY:

YR7 & 11 Only in school:

Whole school on site:

Colorfoto – YR7 & YR10:

YR7 Retreat:

YR7 Retreat:

YR7 Welcome Mass:

YR7 Retreat:

YR7 Retreat:

Awards Evening:

YR7 Retreat:

YR7 Retreat:

Welcome Mass:

Open Evening:

Tues 1st September

Wed 2nd September

Thurs 3rd September

Tues 8th September

Frid 11th September

Mon 14th September

Wed 16th September

Frid 18th September

Mon 21st September

Thurs 24th September

Frid 25th September

Mon 28th September

Wed 30th September

Thurs 1st October

YR11 English Oracy Recordings:

Shwmae Day:

St Richard Gwyn Feast Day:

Parish Mass:

YR7 & 11 Progress Data Published:

Mon 5th October

Thurs 15th October

Frid 16th October

Sun 18th October

Frid 23rd October

HALF TERM:

Mon 26th October

INSET DAY:

Frid 2nd October

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

A reminder, particularly for our new Year 7 families, that St Richard Gwyn continues to operate a no-phone policy throughout the school day. Phones are to be kept away from the moment students arrive until they leave. This has had a wonderfully positive impact on student wellbeing, focus, and social interaction — and we are grateful for the continued support of all families in upholding it.



Our uniform is important. It sets the foundation for high standards in other aspects of school life, including a positive work ethic and conduct in and around school. Our school uniform is compulsory and we expect all students to attend school dressed smartly at all times.

Again, we ask for families' support in enforcing these expectations. We do not want a situation where pupils have to be sent home because of incorrect or inappropriate uniform.

Just a reminder that students should either wear a pleated skirt, tailored trousers, or tailored shorts in warm weather. We do not allow an A-line skirt or tube skirt as an option. Please bear this in mind when ordering and sorting your child's school uniform over the summer period.

Once again, if you have any concerns about uniform, please get in touch. Welsh Government grants are available to support families. Please check your eligibility via your Local Authority. We are grateful to families for their support in upholding these expectations.

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

ATTENDANCE – Annual Review



Year 7	91.98%
Year 8	92.26%
Year 9	90.52%
Year 10	91.08%
Year 11	89.09%

As another academic year comes to close, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the SRG community who have supported our attendance improvement journey this academic year. Our final attendance figure for the whole school was 91%. This is an improvement on last year's, but there is still more that can be done.

The Vale LEA has set all Secondary Schools an attendance target of 92% for the next academic year. This can only be achieved with your continued support and communication.

Recent studies have shown that students who have more than 2 absences in September (the start of a new academic year) are more likely to have less academic success and will foster poor attendance routines that will last their whole pupil career.

Please endeavour to book medical appointments outside school hours, holidays should be taken in non-term time, and communicate with us as soon as possible if your child is displaying an unwillingness to attend school. We want to work with you to support your child's attendance.

Whole School
90.94%



01446 729250



www.strichardgwyn.co.uk/contact



info@strichardgwyn.co.uk



Arbor app

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Do you have any spare uniform that your child has outgrown or doesn't need any more?

We accept donations of good quality worn (and new!) uniform for our uniform locker.

Please don't include any torn, stained or dirty clothing as we don't have the facilities to launder and make repairs.



BLAZERS
TIES
SKIRTS
TROUSERS
JUMPERS
SPORTSWEAR



As well as uniform, we're also in need of items such as calculators / text books / pencil cases and other stationary items.

If you have a child that's left us at SRG, and they no longer need their books and equipment, we'd be very grateful if you would consider donating them to the school.

These can all be dropped off at reception.



Don't forget – we still have a clothes bank in the rear car park!

We receive **40 pence for every kilo** of clothing, shoes, bags and belts which we use to pay for essential school supplies.

If your wardrobe is looking a little full of clothes no longer wanted or worn, please consider donating them to us!

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

We would like to remind all families they ensure their child's ParentPay account is topped up no later than 10:00am each day to avoid students being refused service in the Canteen and The Street.



If you have any changes in information that we should be made aware of, please can you let us know as soon as possible before the start of the new school year. Important changes include:

- **Address / Contact numbers / Email addresses**
- **Name changes (family or student)**
- **Addition or removal of permitted contacts**
- **Changes in medical information**
- **Changes in dietary information**
- **Permissions**



JOINING US FROM YR6?

Please can you double check that you have returned the following to avoid any delays in your child starting school with us:

- **Data Sheet**
- **GDPR form**
- **Medical / SEN information**

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Schools across Wales are facing increasing financial pressures, and SRG is no exception. Every penny raised through our fundraising initiatives goes directly towards essential school supplies, resources, and supporting students who need it most. Among the many ways of supporting our school, there are two other simple ways you can help – and both cost you nothing extra!



Easyfundraising is a completely free and easy way to support SRG every time you shop online. Simply sign up, select St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School as your chosen cause, and shop as normal through the easyfundraising platform. Over 7,000 retailers – including Amazon, ASOS, and supermarkets – will donate a small percentage of your purchase to our school at no extra cost to you. It really is that simple!

👉 Sign up at www.easyfundraising.org.uk



Launching next year, Your School Lottery is a fun and affordable way to support SRG while giving yourself the chance to win cash prizes! Tickets cost just £1 per week, with 40p from every ticket going directly to our school. There is also a guaranteed weekly winner and a top prize of £25,000! Every ticket makes a real difference.

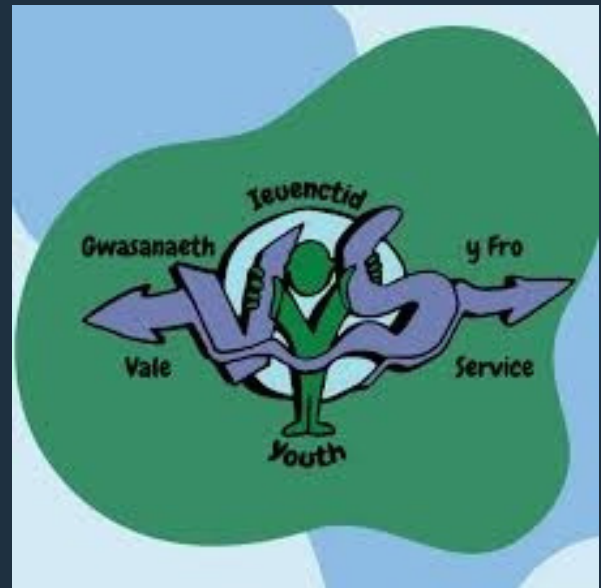
👉 Sign up at www.yourschoollottery.co.uk from October 2026

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Vale Youth Service have a summer of event for students aged between 11 and 17.

Pop along to one of their many events, or for further information contact:

valeyouthservice@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Vale Youth Service

SUMMER PROGRAMME 2026
OPEN-ACCESS ACTIVITIES

FOR 11-17 YEAR OLDS
WEEK 1

<u>MONDAY</u> <u>20TH JULY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u> <u>22ND JULY</u>
12:30-4:30 Life Skills ages 11-16 - YMCA, Barry	10:00-3:00 Flying Start Family Fun Day - ages 11-17 Youth Zone, Pencoedre Park, Barry
4:00-6:00 - Multi-Sports - Meggit Park, Barry - Dinas Powys Street-based - Mobile Youth Bus	10:00-15:00 Link HUB ages 16-25 - YMCA, Barry
4:30-6:00 Penarth Youth Action - Task Group	THURSDAY 23RD JULY 6:00-8:00 St Athan Youth Club - The Gathering Place
6:00-8:00 - Youthy - YMCA, Barry - Rhoose Youth Club - Roost	FRIDAY 24TH JULY 11:00-2:30 Beach Day ages 11-16 - Barry Island
TUESDAY 21ST JULY 11:00-2:30 - Sports Camp ages 11-16 - Colcot Sport Centre 6:00-8:00 - Penarth Youth Club - The Nest	

CONTACT US AT:
VALEYOUTHSERVICE@VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK

Vale Youth Service

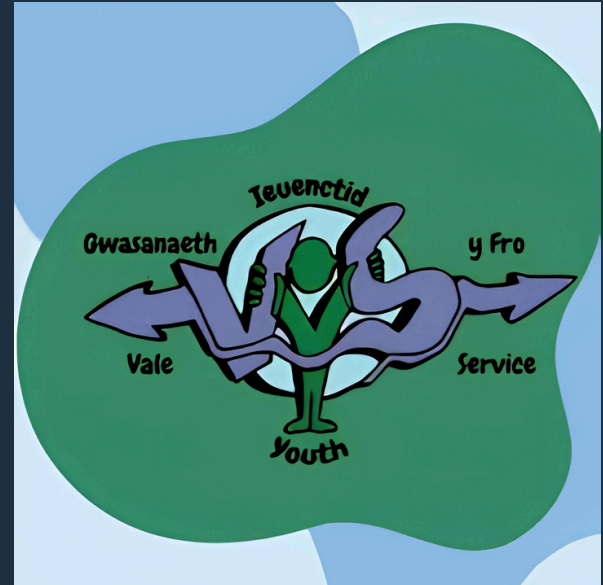
SUMMER PROGRAMME 2026
OPEN-ACCESS ACTIVITIES

FOR 11-17 YEAR OLDS
WEEK 2

<u>MONDAY</u> <u>27TH JULY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u> <u>29TH JULY</u>
12:30-4:30 Life Skills ages 11-16 - St Pauls Community Centre, Penarth	10:00-15:00 Link HUB ages 16-25 - YMCA, Barry
4:00-6:00 - Multi-Sports - Meggit Park, Barry - Dinas Powys Street-based - Mobile Youth Bus	6:00-8:00 - Llantwit Major Youth Club - Llantwit Lounge - Vale Youth Council - Meeting
4:30-6:30 Penarth Youth Action - Meeting	THURSDAY 30TH JULY 6:00-8:00 St Athan Youth Club - The Gathering Place
6:00-8:00 - Youthy - YMCA, Barry - Rhoose Youth Club - Roost	FRIDAY 31ST JULY 11:00-2:30 Beach Day ages 11-16 - Llantwit Major Beach
TUESDAY 28TH JULY 11:00-2:30 - Sports Camp ages 11-16 - Colcot Sport Centre 6:00-8:00 - Penarth Youth Club - The Nest - Youthy 17+ - YMCA, Barry	

CONTACT US AT:
VALEYOUTHSERVICE@VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES



Vale Youth Service

SUMMER PROGRAMME 2026
OPEN-ACCESS ACTIVITIES

FOR 11-17 YEAR OLDS
WEEK 3

MONDAY 3RD AUGUST <u>12:30-4:30</u> Life Skills ages 11-16 - St Pauls Community Centre, St Athan	WEDNESDAY 5TH AUGUST <u>10:00-15:00</u> - Link HUB ages 16-25 - YMCA, Barry <u>11:00-15:00</u> - National Play Day - Gladstone Park, Barry
TUESDAY 4TH AUGUST <u>11:00-2:30</u> Sports Camp ages 11-16 - Colcot Sport Centre	FRIDAY 7TH AUGUST <u>11:00-2:30</u> Outdoor Day ages 11-16 - Clifftops, Penarth

CONTACT US AT:
VALEYOUTHSERVICE@VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK



Vale Youth Service

SUMMER PROGRAMME 2026
OPEN-ACCESS ACTIVITIES

FOR 11-17 YEAR OLDS
WEEK 4

MONDAY 10TH AUGUST <u>12:30-4:30</u> - Life Skills ages 11-16 - Colwinston Village Hall <u>4:30-6:00</u> - Penarth Youth Action - Task Group	WEDNESDAY 12TH AUGUST <u>10:00-15:00</u> - Link HUB ages 16-25 - YMCA, Barry <u>6:00-7:30</u> - Vale Youth Council - Task Group
TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST <u>11:00-2:30</u> Sports Camp ages 11-16 - Colcot Sport Centre	FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST <u>11:00-2:30</u> Outdoor Day ages 11-16 - Colwinston Village Hall

CONTACT US AT:
VALEYOUTHSERVICE@VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK

