

WLCOW SCHOOLS AWARDS REPORT 2025/6 Margaret Davies and Kathy Seddon

Ysgol Y Deri (Special Needs School) Sebastian Hyde

Seb joined Ysgol Y Deri in 2017, he was in year 6 and he was full of energy and very eager to learn. It was clear that Seb had a wealth of knowledge on many subjects and was especially interested in history and the sciences. His favourite lessons were practical science experiments as he has always loved to find solutions and solve problems. Although he had many obstacles put in his way, Seb would face them head on and persevere, showing great resilience and determination. Seb made friends easily due to his great capacity for fun and laughter.

He has grown into a mature, funny and resilient young man. He is popular in the school and is well liked by peers and staff alike. His natural charisma and quick wit make him a joy to be around, often lifting the spirits of those around him with his humour. Seb has ability to balance light-heartedness with empathy makes him an excellent friend. He will often help his peers in lessons. Seb has been working hard for the last three years towards his GCSE qualifications. He has already achieved, 4 GCSEs and has been committed to achieving four more this year. Seb had a difficult start to the year personally, but Seb has shown great levels of resilience and determination to succeed.

Seb has decided he would like to go to college next year and begin studying towards his A Levels with the aim to have a career in Biochemistry. His next step is an FE College in Cardiff



Monmouth Comprehensive School Saffron Jarvis Geography Cambridge



"My name is Saffron Jarvis and for the past 7 years I have been lucky enough to attend Monmouth Comprehensive School, studying Chemistry, Biology and Geography at A level and for the past year acting as one of four head students within our student leadership team. My interests lie in the area of earth sciences, and I have been fortunate enough to receive offers from Cambridge and Durham universities to study in this field should I be successful in attaining the required A Level results. Outside of academic study I also attended the 2024 World Affairs Seminar in Wisconsin to meet with likeminded young people and discuss major world issues such as democracy and peace-making, notions which I feel are important to all areas of study in the 21st century. I am passionate about our planet with a fascination for its inner workings and how this affects life at the surface. This has always been a crucial field in terms of hazard management and safety; however, considering our changing climate. I think there has never been a more crucial time to understand our planet and its processes. My future goal is to work around hazard mitigation and research, particularly with regards to tectonics in developing nations - where the combination of traditional practise and modern science fascinates me. If I were fortunate enough to receive this Award, I would put the funds towards purchasing a computer with the correct specification to support the GIS and similar soft wares needed for my studies at university, which I feel would immensely benefit me as I currently do not have access to this level of technology."

Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi: Ollie Reed Biomedical Sciences Cardiff

"Science plays a fundamental role in shaping and improving our society, and biomedical sciences offer potential by advancing our understanding of health and disease. It is through the study and application of biomedical sciences that we can significantly improve people's lives, enhancing both their quality of life and overall wellbeing. I am studying A-level Biology, Chemistry, ICT, and the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ). In Biology, one topic that particularly captivates me is cell replication, as it has deepened my appreciation for the complexity of cellular processes required for new cells to be synthesised. I have also found cellular respiration to be an exceptionally engaging topic; I greatly enjoyed learning about the intricate and multistep process involved, which highlight the complexity of cellular energy production. Chemistry has played a pivotal role in preparing me for a career in biomedical science by deepening my understanding of key biochemical processes. Also, studying ICT has significantly enhanced my organisational, time management, and data analysis skills. Completing the WBQ has been instrumental in refining my ability to conduct thorough research, critically evaluate relevant literature, and develop my academic writing and referencing skills. These competencies will be invaluable as I progress in my studies. Following an opportunity to attend a Cardiff University lecture on Biomedical Science, I gained valuable insight into the course structure and the opportunities it offers, such as a placement year and the support available for working with the NHS. These aspects of the program highlight the real-world relevance and diverse career paths, strengthening my ambition to pursue this degree and make a meaningful contribution to healthcare and research.

During Sixth Form, I have volunteered for a variety of roles, including assisting with transition days and supporting pupils in the Hafan unit. Following this experience, I completed 15 hours of volunteer work at the unit as part of my community project. The unit is a dedicated space within the school for students who require emotional, social, and behavioural support. During my time there, I focused on providing emotional and social support by engaging with the pupils and making them feel at ease. This experience not only allowed me to develop valuable interpersonal skills but also deepened my understanding of the importance of supporting students' emotional wellbeing in an educational setting."



St David's College Elanna Fox Psychology University S. Wales



"My personal experiences have sparked a keen interest in psychology and applying my skills to help others. I have participated in many research projects such as Dr Joanna Martin's 'Why Are Girls Less Likely to be Diagnosed with ADHD than Boys?'. I attended a seminar on this study after sharing my views with the Youth Advisory Group at the National Centre for Mental Health before the research commenced. This study amplified my interest in neurodiverse conditions in females, and why they are less likely than males to be diagnosed early, if at all.

Furthermore, I have participated in a co-production research event at St. David's College titled 'What Are the Factors that Trigger or Undermine Curiosity?' with Dr Matthias Gruber from CUBRIC. This session was incredibly enriching as I have personally experienced how education systems can undermine curiosity by neglecting varied learning styles, contributing to burnout. I have also participated in an agenda-setting workshop to inform the research project 'Adolescent Sexuality Development and Mental Health and Wellbeing: Research Priorities for Mental Health Surveys' and was involved in Anna Norman's thesis 'How do Autistic Middle-Late Adolescent Females Make Sense of their Masking Behaviours? I volunteer for the NHS Youth Board, Cardiff Youth Council and Cardiff University's research advisory group, ALPHA, which is run by the research centre

DECIPHer, where I provide feedback to researchers. In January 2025, it was the 25th anniversary of DECIPHer (Centre for the Development and Evaluation of Complex Interventions for Public Health Improvement) which is one of five UKCRC Public Health Research Centres of Excellence, led by Cardiff University. Through my involvement with ALPHA, I was invited to speak at this event and presented to over a hundred guests from academia, public health practice, the third sector, the public and Welsh Government. Being a member of voluntary groups such as these allows me to get my voice heard and have a genuine impact on young people's lives.

I have always contributed to my school/college community. I was appointed the class representative for my AS Welsh class and my A2 French class. These roles involved me obtaining feedback from my peers about how the courses were being run and communicating this to the teachers. I have also been involved with some social groups at college (e.g. Neurodiversity Group) and provided input which helped to shape the focus of such groups and how they function. For example, I was involved in helping to deliver a quiet version of the college's Culture Day to ensure that the event was inclusive to all students at the college. I also contribute to my local community by volunteering as a leader with the Girlguiding Rainbows group in my village. As a child, I was always a member of Girlguiding myself, so I really enjoy working with the young girls who are just beginning their Girlguiding journey."

Hillside (confidential) The young person has achieved a number of GCSE and Agored Qualifications whilst at the centre.

In addition, they have completed two sections of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award – Physical and Volunteering. During their time at Hillside, they have engaged well and set up, using their own time, a successful Coffee shop. With staff support they have completed Barista training now are looking to utilise the WLCOW award to enable access to a variety of resources including PPE, coffee ware and courses that will ensure a good CV towards becoming a Barista.

Coleg Gwent Zhi Qiang Fan, Masters Maths Warwick

"My interest in mathematics skyrocketed when I was nominated to represent my school in a team competition across South Wales. We finished in first place, and this provided an invaluable opportunity for me to develop my teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills. This led me to take Additional Mathematics sessions at my local college. I particularly enjoyed the Calculus element of the course which provided a perfect taster to mathematics beyond secondary school.

Upon enrolling at college, I was selected to be part of the prestigious SEREN Network in Wales offering a variety of super-curricular activities such as trips, masterclasses and workshops. I learnt about the history of the periodic table, properties of various materials, and aircraft manufacturing. Furthermore, I really enjoyed taking part in the SEREN Mathematics Competition, where I had the chance to apply my knowledge of material that is not covered on the A level specification. In fractals, I came across the Koch snowflake and the concept of "infinite perimeter, but finite area" was intriguing.

I attended a residential at Cambridge University. During this time, I completed assignments on Isaac Physics, built a model house with limited materials, and competed against like-minded students in a mathematics competition. These activities helped me to further develop my ability to be innovative as well as emphasising my versatility in the area.

I was selected to take part in The Brilliant Club's Scholars Programme. As part of this, I wrote an essay on Symmetries in the Universe and received a First Class. I thoroughly enjoyed exploring the idea of time dilation when learning about Lorentz Symmetry as well as symmetries associated with particles such as charge conjugation, parity transformation and time reversal. I also received a 2:1 in my essay on xenotransplantation. I learnt how we can use gene editing tools such as CRISPR to modify animal organs for transplants in humans due to a shortage of donors. However, I had to consider the



limitations of this process due to ethical reasons and hence evaluate its potential in future procedures. This massively improved my written communication skills.

Additionally, I took part in a problem-solving masterclass delivered by the FMSPW where I attended regular STEP sessions. This is where I encountered more material that is beyond the standard A level specification. For example, I enjoyed looking at conic sections and I took the opportunity to use different software to enable me to visualise my findings.

I was also an essential team member that represented Coleg Gwent in the EESW 6th Form STEM Project. We worked in partnership with Thales to design AR glasses which were designed for dementia patients to recognise faces and recall names. With 51 teams and 13 awards, we won the award for Project with the Most Commercial Potential. I was the financial and technological analyst on the team. I oversaw the financial aspects of business operations such as bookkeeping and calculating projected revenue based on market trends. I also identified and analysed potential issues we may face and hence evaluated the sustainability of our product. Lastly, I secured a place on a two-week internship at J.P Morgan through the SMF. I had the opportunity to shadow my mentor and his colleagues on the structuring, trading, and execution desks. I presented "What will a bank look like in 25 years?" to the entire cohort which greatly improved my public speaking skills. For my last task, I was asked "What stock should J.P Morgan invest in for the long term?" and presented my findings to the staff. This required many hours of research into stocks and further refined my analytical skills.

Why am I choosing to study Mathematics at university? Maths is at the foundation of everything I love. Ranging from science to engineering to finance, mathematics is needed in every regard. I am looking forward to the challenge that maths at university has to offer."

Merthyr College Eloise Mariano Biomedical Science Cardiff



As a student at Merthyr College, I am truly honoured to be nominated for the Livery Guild Award. My drive to pursue a career in STEM was actively stimulated by experiences that exposed me to the dynamic nature of the field. However, it was my exposure from work experience that left a lasting impression on me and cemented my decision to become a doctor – even if that means taking the longer postgraduate route.

Volunteering has played a key role in deepening my commitment to helping others. Whether visiting care homes, working at Cancer Research UK, serving as a discussion group leader at youth camps, or being on the youth advisory panel of Snakes and Ladders a mental health project based in Merthyr Tydfil – I found purpose and joy in making a difference in people's lives, especially those who are vulnerable. I loved these experiences that have helped me develop strong interpersonal skills, particularly in communication, problem solving and most notably, empathy – a quality I consider one of my greatest strengths.

During high school, I was honoured to be Head girl, a role that strengthened my leadership and organisational skills as I helped manage whole school events. Throughout the years I also immersed myself in STEM focused enrichment opportunities: I shadowed professionals in labs and hospitals, won Swansea chemistry analyst competitions, participated in programmes such as GetIn2Med and Cardiff Step up, and engaged in numerous STEM webinars and classes. As part of The Brilliant Club, I was proud to achieve a first class honours for my final essay.

My college journey has been one of both challenges and growth. Balancing a demanding academic workload while throwing myself into numerous extracurricular activities often left me stretched thin. Still, I remained resilient pushing through difficulties steadfast in my commitment to my academic and personal goals. Receiving this award would provide valuable support for my educational pursuits, not only helping me reach my current academic goals but also contribute to my long-term aspirations of making a meaningful impact in my chosen field. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Bishop Vaughan Swansea Emily Cole Law Swansea



“Due to my interest in pursuing law, I attended a talk by a Barrister in Wales who shared not only the preparation needed to start law school but also the use of the degree for a career. The many avenues the law degree can take me strengthened my motivation to continue pursuing this subject. This influenced me to visit Swansea University’s Open Day where I learnt about lecture halls, law clinic and seminars. This supported my original idea of pursuing law due to the beneficial work that helps others in difficult situations. To intertwine my academic progress with my personal studies, I joined my school’s debate society in which I led Year 9 students by offering points of interest to develop their critical thinking skills while also improving mine. Learning the importance of speaking up and respectfully debating sensitive topics is core to conversations with future clients. My dedication to reading in church enhanced my confidence to speak in front of an audience and develop my vocal skills - pivotal to law. Law drives me to not only envisage a more equitable society but to actively carve my path within it, protecting the rights and voices of those silenced by oppression.

I aspire to be the first generation of my family to attend university. My enthusiasm for law also deepened after shadowing a John Morse solicitor. I had the opportunity to carry out administrative duties by sorting files containing wills, medical negligence, Power of Attorney and property. This broadened my insight into the daily life of a solicitor, enhancing my understanding of its practical application. To learn more, I participated in Street Law masterclasses to widen my perspective of law. Discussions of law surrounding women, workplace, terrorism and crime allowed me to diversify my thoughts while growing my comprehension and my communication and application skills from a university student’s point of view.”

Coleg Cymoedd April Hughes PPE Oxford

April Hughes, a 2025 award winner from the Worshipful Livery Company of Wales, hails from Llantrisant, Wales. Having successfully completed her studies in A Levels at Coleg Y Cymoedd, she has achieved top grades, including A's in Mathematics and Further Mathematics, and a B in History and is set to read Politics, Philosophy, Economics (PPE) at Oxford University. April's passion for multidisciplinary learning is evident in her commitment understanding complex societal issues, which she has pursued through her education and a gap year volunteering with the British Red Cross. Her ambition is to continue exploring humanitarian challenges through an academic lens, aiming to enrich her understanding of the world. This award will support her journey, covering essential university costs and facilitating her involvement in university life, including joining the philosophy society. April's dedication and aspirations reflect a promising future.



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Pembroke Harri Tudur Jassim Jawed Maths Warwick



We are delighted to nominate Jassim Jawed for this award in recognition of his outstanding attitude, commitment, and contribution to school life. Jassim is an exceptional student whose quiet determination and consistent work ethic have set a strong example to his peers. He has maintained excellent attendance throughout his time with us and approaches every day with a positive, respectful attitude. He is a thoughtful and mature young person who engages fully with both his academic studies and the wider school community. Although Jassim is a talented mathematician, what truly sets him apart is his self-motivation and drive to succeed. He independently studied Further Mathematics remotely, to access his chosen higher education course—demonstrating resilience, independence, and a clear sense of purpose.

Beyond the classroom, Jassim has contributed positively to the school environment through his reliability, kindness, and quiet leadership. He is well-liked by staff and peers alike, and we are confident he will go on to make a valuable contribution wherever his future takes him.

We believe Jassim is a deserving recipient of this award and would benefit greatly from the support it provides as he moves into the next stage of his education successfully taking on the challenge of organising fundraising events, whilst concomitantly keeping up with his academic commitments.