

PRESS RELEASE

A FRENCH TOWN OPENS IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

Event:	French Fun Day
Where:	Ysgol y Gwendraeth, Carmarthenshire
When:	Friday, 4 May 2012
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Year 8 pupils from schools across South Wales came to Ysgol y Gwendraeth to visit the award-winning *Euro-Village*.

Routes into Languages Cymru recently held a French Fun Day for year 8 pupils. Working in partnership with Swansea Metropolitan University, CILT Cymru and Ysgol y Gwendraeth, the event aimed to achieve two things: to give young people the opportunity to speak French and interact with native speakers of French; and to showcase the award-winning Euro-Village located at Ysgol y Gwendraeth.

The pupils worked in teams and throughout the day completed a carousel of activities that allowed them to showcase their knowledge of French. Points were granted after each activity, and at the end of the day prizes were awarded to the team with the highest score...the team which had used the most French. The activities were lead by students of Swansea Metropolitan University all of whom are working towards a PGCE qualification in languages.

The highlight of the day was a visit to the Euro-Village. For this event, the small French town was staffed by French students which gave each pupil the opportunity to use their French in a realistic setting. The pupils well and truly took advantage of this opportunity and not a word of English or Welsh could be heard – all interactions were in French.

The Euro-Village was built by Ysgol y Gwendraeth and officially opened in 1997. It is also known as The Garrero Centre in memory of the school's late headteacher Mr Garrero. In 1997 it won The Mary Glasgow Language Trust Award for innovative teaching. In 1998 it won a Welsh Secondary School Association award and in 1999 it won a European Award for Languages. *"We were really pleased to be part of the event"* commented Jane Roe, Head of Languages at Ysgol y Gwendraeth. *"It was really great to see pupils enjoying French all day. We felt privileged to host it and would love to be involved in something similar in the future."*

Lynne Meiring, Senior Lecturer in Education (Modern Foreign Languages) at Swansea Metropolitan University said *"This 'French fun day' gave Swansea Metropolitan University PGCE modern*

language students a fantastic opportunity to work more informally and creatively with pupils and other colleagues to promote language learning. Their collaboration in the planning of activities and their involvement in running events on the day have certainly contributed positively to their professional development.”

The winning team was The Bryngwyn Braniacs, Ysgol Bryngwyn, Llanelli. The runners-up, Les Filles de Bryn Hafren, came from Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School, Barry. All pupils received a certificate of participation and the winners and runners-up were awarded prize bags of resources to encourage their language learning.



ENDS

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Notes for editors:

1. The French Fun Day took place on Friday, 4 May 2012.
2. The event was attended by Year 9 pupils from Ysgol y Gwendraeth, Ysgol Bryngwyn, Ysgol y Strade, Penyrheol Comprehensive School, Ysgol Coedcae and Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School.
3. The event was organised by Routes into Languages Cymru in partnership with Swansea Metropolitan University, CILT Cymru and Ysgol y Gwendraeth.
4. The Routes into Languages programme was developed by three organisations working in partnership: the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML), the HE Academy Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) and CILT, the National Centre for Languages. The Routes into Languages programme is coordinated by a team at the University of Southampton, directed by Professor Michael Kelly. <http://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/>
5. Routes into Languages Cymru is a £750,000 project funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW).

6. Led by CILT Cymru in partnership with 11 universities across Wales, the specific aim of the Routes into Languages Cymru project is to increase the take up of languages from school to university. It encourages young people to have a positive attitude towards their language learning and promotes languages as an essential skill.
7. CILT Cymru is funded by the Welsh Government and is managed by WJEC.