

PUPILS GO FOR A 'BIG DIP' RAISING MONEY FOR Tŷ HAFAN

As part of their ambitious target to raise £10,000 for Tŷ Hafan and as part of Castle School's tenth anniversary celebrations, pupils from years 9, 10 and 11 braved the elements on a cold, windy and wet day last week. And this single courageous event has seen them well on the way to realising their target, as collectively they raised over £1,800 in the space of a few very cold minutes.



At the start of the new academic year, everyone at Castle School was challenged to find innovative ways of raising money and the year 10s decided it might be a good idea to cast aside their blazers and run into the bracing waters at Amroth, asking their friends and families to sponsor them for their bravery. They also decided that they shouldn't stand alone and asked other classes to join them.

Despite reservations by many of the staff, who felt uncertain pupils would rise to the icy challenge, they were amazed and delighted to see that almost every student signed up. Given that the idea had been conceived back in early September when Wales was enjoying a late Indian summer, perhaps little thought had been given to the planned date, so staff were even more impressed when, on the day, despite the sun choosing not to show its face and with wintry conditions prevailing, no-one was tempted to back out but instead enthusiastically clambered aboard the coach that had been kindly laid on by Narberth Travel to transport them to their icy encounter.



Parents had gathered along the beach to watch in trepidation as their children changed into bathers, shorts and T-shirts, with some still doubting, as they watched the swarm of youngsters race down to the water's edge, that everyone would make the last few strides into the perilously cold sea. Some students didn't have to reach the water's edge, as in their enthusiasm to reach their goal they stumbled and landed face down in the rockpools that had been formed by the out-going tide. Undaunted, they picked themselves up and continued on, eager to catch up with their friends.



The definition of a Big Dip was varied. For some, wading up to their knees or waists was deemed success, but for others nothing short of full submersion would suffice and several of the group emerged from the sea, dripping from head to toe.



Once out of the water, the chilling air began to bite but thankfully, with the tide out, everyone used the swift jog back as a chance to warm up as once again they raced each other back to the rocks and to their warm towels, dressing gowns and blankets. Some were even enterprising enough to bring hot water bottles. The school and pupils were extremely grateful to parent Chris Dennis who had organised with the Amroth Arms for refreshments to be on-hand and quickly after they had discarded their wet things and wrapped themselves up in layers of clothing everyone was rewarded with warming mugs of hot chocolate.



Bystanders, including head teacher, Su Cowell, were startled to hear many of the bathers declare that 'it hadn't been too cold and that they wouldn't mind doing it again next year.' In fact they felt it should

become an annual event. And it was lovely to hear comments from parents, including Mrs Bucer who remarked 'how lovely it was that the school did things like this, building happy memories for the students.'



Organiser Miss Algieri assembled everyone together as they huddled to keep warm and thanked everyone for taking part, including the dippers, the life-savers and the supporters who all worked together to make the event such a massive success. She was delighted to tell them that they had almost reached a fifth of their target in this single event alone, raising over £1800.