



All systems go!

Tŷ Coryton is up-and-running and busily enrolling its first day and residential pupils at the £6m centre of excellence for children with autism

On the 1st August our custom-made specialist school for children with autism, Tŷ Coryton, was given the final green light to open its doors to pupils from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW), who have granted the school formal registration as a children's home.

With a capacity of 50 places for residential and day pupils, Tŷ Coryton is now the largest and most far-reaching facility of its kind in south Wales, with provision for 52-week residential education and care for 30 pupils aged 8-19.

This desperately needed resource will provide a safe and caring environment in which children with autism can live and learn in close

proximity to their family homes, eliminating the need to travel the lengths of the UK for a placement.

Our location close to junction 32 of the M4 means our students will be kept close to home, and are within easy reach of the many attractions Cardiff city centre has to offer.

Following an intense inspection process, the CISSW issued a registration certificate for Tŷ Coryton that will be reviewed every year to ensure that standards are kept high.

Additional to registration, the school also clocked up an early achievement with a Bronze award for hygiene from Cardiff County Council.

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Purpose-built flats next to the main school building provide 52 week residential places for 30 pupils with round-the-clock care and support



**For more information on Tŷ Coryton
and Orbis Education visit our website
www.orbiseducationandcare.co.uk**

Nasen Special Needs Exhibition

Nasen and the TES will be hosting a Special Needs Exhibition in London's Business Design Centre on the 17th and 18th October 2008.

The event will provide resources, ideas, advice and CPD training to teachers, SENCOs, support

staff and parents to equip them with the tools and skills that can help all pupils achieve their very best.

Orbis Education and Care will be exhibiting on **stand 34** at the event. For more information visit teachingexhibitions.co.uk

Tŷ Coryton

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Principal Mike Ridout said "With the registration complete we are all set to start making quality specialist education and care available to as many children as possible from within Wales and even across the border.

"Our autism-specific teaching methods provide access to a broad curriculum, including the National Curriculum, and programmes are tailored to suit the needs of each individual.

"The personal development of our pupils is also encouraged outside of the classroom. The provision of extra-curricular

activities ensures that learning, development and exercise continue beyond school hours.

"Home-cooked food served up by our expert kitchen staff is carefully planned to provide a healthy and balanced diet for all while catering for the tastes and dietary requirements of every pupil.

"Our mission is to improve the wellbeing of each and every one of our students, caring not just for their education, but also their physical health related and emotional needs, in order to give them the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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NAS Competition Winners

Drawings by Tŷ Orbis pupils William Tomkins and Evan Findley-Dyke will be appearing on a greeting card that will be in the National Autistic Society's (NAS) 2008 Christmas card collection.

The boys submitted drawings of a snowman, a penguin and an igloo to a Christmas card competition which was run by the NAS. The judges of the competition liked the drawings so much that they decided to put them all together on one card, which will be called 'Cool Yule'.

Copies of the card can be ordered online from www.autism.org.uk/christmascards with all proceeds going to the NAS, which provides support and services for people affected by autism throughout Wales.



Winning 'Cool Yule' design

Spectrum

brings you news and views about the educational needs of children with autism in Wales and is available in print or can be downloaded from our website

www.orbiseducationandcare.co.uk

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News from Tŷ Orbis



Welcome to our sensory garden

Nandos Team Builds New Sensory Garden

A team of managers from restaurant chain Nandos rolled up their sleeves and got digging in our grounds this summer to create a brand new sensory garden for the children of Tŷ Orbis.

The project was undertaken as part of a management exercise for team leaders from Nandos restaurants, who travelled from various locations across the UK to be involved in the task.

Nandos donated £1400 to help fund the project and Homebase Brecon also showed their support by donating materials which were used in the construction of the site.

The new garden boasts a seating area and a bamboo screen fences off the garden to add to the feeling of seclusion and tranquillity.

A variety of fruit trees have been planted in the area and plants have been selected to bring a range of textures, colours and smells to the garden which stimulate the senses and encourage visitors to interact with their surroundings.

The soothing sound of wind chimes can be heard in the trees and reflective discs hang from branches to cast light around the garden.

Martin Carter, Head of Education at Tŷ Orbis, said

"Children with autism often have difficulties with communication and imagination, which sometimes makes the world around them seem both confusing and distressing.

"A garden like this can have therapeutic benefits for our pupils and allow them to communicate through their senses, which they may find less challenging than writing and speaking.

"On behalf of all the children and staff here at Tŷ Orbis, I'd like to say a big thank you to the Nandos team and Homebase Brecon for contributing towards the project and helping to bring this fantastic garden to life."



The 60 yard dash

Sports Day Fun

The sun came out for sports day and fun was had by pupils and parents alike as the games got underway.

Events included the 60 yard dash, the standing jump and beanbag throwing.

Pupils were joined by

siblings and friends for the relay race and all participants were awarded a medal and certificate for their efforts.

The grand finale of the day saw parents and staff hitting the field for the much anticipated three-legged race.

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David Reid joins Tŷ Coryton

There's a new face at Tŷ Coryton as David Reid joins the school as Registered Manager, with a dual role as Deputy Director of Care for Orbis Education.

David needs no introduction to those already familiar with the care of children not just in Wales but across the UK. With a background rooted in the social and psychiatric care of young people, his focus is firmly on safeguarding their welfare and supporting them in their learning and living environments.

David studied sports science at Loughborough University before specialising in Social Sciences and gaining an MSc from Cardiff University. His career has taken him from children's services at local authority level to positions in

psychiatric hospitals and specialist schools and homes, where he became a firm supporter of the principles of group healing and therapeutic communities.

Early on in his career he held a management post at a Regional Assessment Centre in South Wales, and later held management positions in various therapeutic communities throughout the UK.

He returned to Wales in 2002 to join the management team at Headlands School, where he gained experience in the care and education of children with higher functioning autism or Asperger Syndrome. His work there received great attention from the media and from the Welsh Assembly Government.

John Noakes is new face at Orbis Education and Care

John will work directly with individuals as well as offer advice to teachers, parents and support staff to tackle learning difficulties and social or emotional problems, making sure that every pupil gets the support they need to reach their full potential.



John will be joining the team as a chartered educational psychologist and will be on hand to help pupils who are experiencing problems within an educational setting with the aim of enhancing their learning.

With a career in educational psychology that spans over 30 years,

John has gained a wealth of experience in his field and has worked for a number of local authority services across south Wales.

John was also the first Associate Tutor on Swansea University's training course for educational psychologists and held the position for 9 years. He still

presents training and stress management courses for teachers and support staff and will be bringing these skills to the Orbis team.

John has presented at national and international conferences and his articles have appeared in a number of Psychology journals.