

# PARENT NEWSLETTER



December 2022



## A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas... everywhere you go in Nantgwyn! To support families in celebrating what is the first normal Christmas in a few years, we have made the decision to make *Friday 23rd December an INSET day however we do ask that you support us with our whole school attendance figures by ensuring that your child comes to school right up to and including Thursday 22nd December*. There are lots of Christmas activities planned around the learning which will continue to the end of term - dates for the remainder of this half term are further on in this newsletter.

The 23rd of December, or **Christmas eve eve** as we're calling it, is probably one of the very few times that children will be with so many of their friends so close to Christmas. Watching Wales in the World Cup in school is such a lovely memory, we would really like for pupils to have a similar experience with their friends here at Ysgol Nantgwyn on Christmas eve eve eve and so we have special things planned. We would really love for every pupil to be here to be part of making these special memories.

Pupils have been very busy with their learning over the last month. We have had mock examinations for year 11 - they have received their results this week and are starting their 'boost' provision. It is really important that every year 11 attends for this provision as it will support them in catching up and pushing forward, really impacting positively on their workload going into the spring term. Our year 11s last year were really pleased to have this provision and were so positive about how much they achieved in this session. Across the school, there are rehearsals underway for Christmas performances; in Gwyn, this is all pupils and in Nant, this is for pupils that have asked to be a part of a performance.

Our push on 'chat and charm' across the Nant building has yielded fantastic results so far with pupils using their manners and being polite, courteous and charming around the school to each other. We will continue this push through the year...as we have said to the pupils, having good 'chat and charm' will really help them in every scenario throughout their lives.

We are starting to see a little fall off with attendance and I would like to ask for your support. As a school, we are evaluated on the standards of our attendance with the target for all schools in Wales being at least 95%. That aside, we know that below this figure, learning gaps start to appear and these pose difficulties for further learning and the amount of progress that pupils make. At this point in the term, a lot of pupils have an attendance of below 95% - this means that they will need to work harder to make the same amount of progress or, depending on how low their attendance is, may find it very difficult to catch up completely. I know that in the past couple of years we have, as parents, operated a cautionary approach before sending children to school if they are unwell. If you are unsure about whether your child should come to school, you may find the NHS Wales site useful - it has a specific box for advice about whether a child should or should not go to school.

This newsletter will share information with you on well-being as all stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff and governors) identified mental and emotional well-being as a key priority.

I wish you all a wonderful couple of weeks. I hope that you are able to rest, recoup and enjoy a relaxing time with friends and family.

With warm wishes,

Ms Laura Morris  
Headteacher



## **Newsletter focus item:**

### **Well-being**

Understanding the well-being and mental health needs of all pupils at Ysgol Nantgwyn is essential in making sure pupils thrive within their learning environment. By understanding pupil needs, we can apply appropriate support and provision where necessary to make a difference in pupil relationships, emotional and social skills, feelings towards school and also feelings of life satisfaction. We hope you find this newsletter theme informative; there are also a range of resources and guidance available on the school website within the well-being section. <https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/well-being>

### **Rights Respecting School**

We are excited to share that Ysgol Nantgwyn are working towards our Rights Respecting Schools award. Together young people and the school community learn about children's rights, putting them into practice every day. In Rights Respecting Schools children's rights are promoted and realised, adults and children work towards this goal together.

There are four key areas of impact for children at a Rights Respecting school; well-being, participation, relationships and self-esteem.

- Children are healthier and happier
- Children feel safe
- Children have better relationships
- Children become active and involved in school life and the wider world

The difference that a Rights Respecting School makes goes beyond the school gates, making a positive impact on the whole community. We look forward to updating you on our journey.



## Well-being in the curriculum

At Ysgol Nantgwyn, well-being is a subject that sits within the faculty of life. In line with the Curriculum for Wales, we have developed a holistic well-being curriculum that fosters a whole-school approach, enabling health and well-being to permeate all aspects of school life.

Although our pupils have timetabled well-being lessons, well-being isn't a subject taught in isolation and all staff at our school know and understand the part they play in developing well-being in our pupils.

Our curriculum encompasses a progression of pathway points from nursery to year 11 based around the 5 statements of 'what matters' from the Curriculum for Wales :

- Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits.
- How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional well-being.
- Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others.
- How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and well-being.
- Healthy relationships are fundamental to our well-being.

In nursery through to year 6, pupils are taught well-being through their Caru Dysgu themes and during designated well-being lessons, some of which are delivered by the sporting marvels team. Themes such as 'Conflict' in year 5 provide pupils with opportunities to develop skills such as being able recognise and resolve conflicts.

In years 7 to 11, pupils have a mixture of physical and classroom based well-being lessons. Our physical well-being lessons provide pupils with opportunities to develop skills in a variety of traditional and non-traditional sports and we also encourage our pupils to take on roles as officials and coaches to develop their leadership skills. In our classroom based lessons we follow a road map as follows:





Pupils in year 7 to year 11 also have fortnightly 'healthy, confident Individuals' form tutor lessons linked to the four purposes of the Welsh curriculum. These lessons have been developed after consultation with pupils, parents, governors and staff, where it was identified that 'building mental and emotional well-being' was the most important strand to focus on.

There are many ways you can help develop well-being at home:

- Make sure your child has a good night's sleep.
- Talk about how they can stay healthy, through exercise, healthy eating and making healthy lifestyle choices.
- Talk about and discuss different feelings and how they can manage these feelings.
- With younger pupils, play lots of games encouraging them to take turns, following rules, and listening to instructions.

You can also support your child by helping them make sure they are organised and ready for well-being lessons by ensuring they have the appropriate kit on physical well-being days so that they are fully engaged in all lessons.

Throughout the school year, pupils are also set regular independent learning tasks linked to well-being. Encourage and support your child to complete these tasks as they reinforce the learning taking place in school.



### **Pupil reception**

Our pupil reception area is now successfully up and running in the Nant building. Pupil reception is open and staffed daily from 8.30 to 3.10. All Nant pupils can use this area to ask questions, get help and support, pick up equipment, uniform items, or simply find out what lesson they have next. Whatever the query there is always a friendly member of staff waiting to help!

### **Healthy tuck shop**

This term, pupils have successfully rolled out a healthy tuck shop run by pupils for pupils. The tuck shop runs every breaktime and pupils pay 20p for a healthy piece of fruit. The initiative started with years 4, 5 and 6 and now includes year 3. We aim to expand further and include the lower school in Gwyn and the Nant building using the pupil reception as a base. The pupils purchasing and the pupils running the shop have done a fantastic job so far and it is an absolute pleasure seeing their faces. It also promotes independence, as well as the use and exchange of money.

### **Nant library**

Nant library is open after school on a Monday to Thursday for any year 7 to 11 pupils who wish to use the area to independently complete their independent learning or revision. Computers and printers are also available in this area for pupils.

Nant library is also open for pupils at break and lunchtime.





### **The 'library of things'**

We have been trialling the set up of our 'library of things' this term across years 5 and 6. We are building up a stock of sports equipment, games, musical instruments and other interesting items that pupils with a net zero for their behaviour points can borrow for the weekend. If your child is interested in borrowing an item they can fill out an agreement form, collect the item on a Friday and return it to school the following Monday. This initiative has been very popular with year 5 and 6 pupils and it is fantastic to see queues of excited pupils waiting for their 'things' on a Friday afternoon! We look forward to being able to offer the library of things to other year groups soon!

If you have any items that you would like to our 'library of thing' please send them in with your child. They can hand them to any member of staff.

### **Extra curricular activities report summary and thinking ahead to next half term**

Our extra-curricular provision continues to expand and develop. Pupils from year 1 through to year 11 have enjoyed a range of afterschool activities from multi-sport, to young writers, through to guitar club. It is our aim to continue to develop and build upon this to allow our pupils greater exposure and experiences to a wide variety of clubs. Next term we aim to link with the Mexican Embassy in Cardiff, explore language lessons, multi-sports for lower school and try our hand at new activities such as lacrosse, ballet and table tennis. Working with our community manager, we are also looking to run a series of pop up events to allow our pupils and wider community to experience new things. We will also be opening the extra-curricular offer to our nursery pupils who have now had a term of settling into new routines. Watch out for communication outlining the clubs timetable for January; with a view to us starting clubs in week 3.



# Community Pantry



Take what you need, swap or donate what you can,  
when you can.

*\*Need something to  
feed the kids?*

*\*Run out of pasta?*

*\*Know someone  
who is struggling?*

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

## Pantry

Our Nantgwyn community pantry is open twice a week currently for the full community to use. This means that you take what you need and pay what you can, only if you can. None of the items are priced. We want you, our community, to pay what you can for the items or if there are times when you are not able to, that's okay too.

We have a range of items available from toiletries to store cupboard essentials, fresh and frozen food as well as pre-loved uniforms for our school community.





## **Tuancy**

Tuancy is defined by Ysgol Nantgwyn as an instance where a pupil purposely avoids attending a lesson with the intention of not being detected by staff for the duration of the lesson. This poses a significant safeguarding risk as we need to know the whereabouts of all pupils throughout the day. Our truancy and safeguarding processes are stringent and robust with set time frames immediately implemented to ensure pupils are located when truanting and parents are contacted. Where there has been truancy from a minority of pupils, parents are being invited to attend school to complete a risk assessment process. Our primary objective is to support both pupil and parent/guardian to ensure the truancy ceases and we establish the reason for the truancy.

## **Behaviour update - Nant building (years 7-11)**

Having implemented our new system for the past few weeks, we have seen a really good decrease in the number of pupils that are not following rules, both in class and around the school. The changes to the behaviour system were generated from views shared by pupils and put together as a model as to how we work as a team to ensure that everyone demonstrates a positive approach to learning at all times.

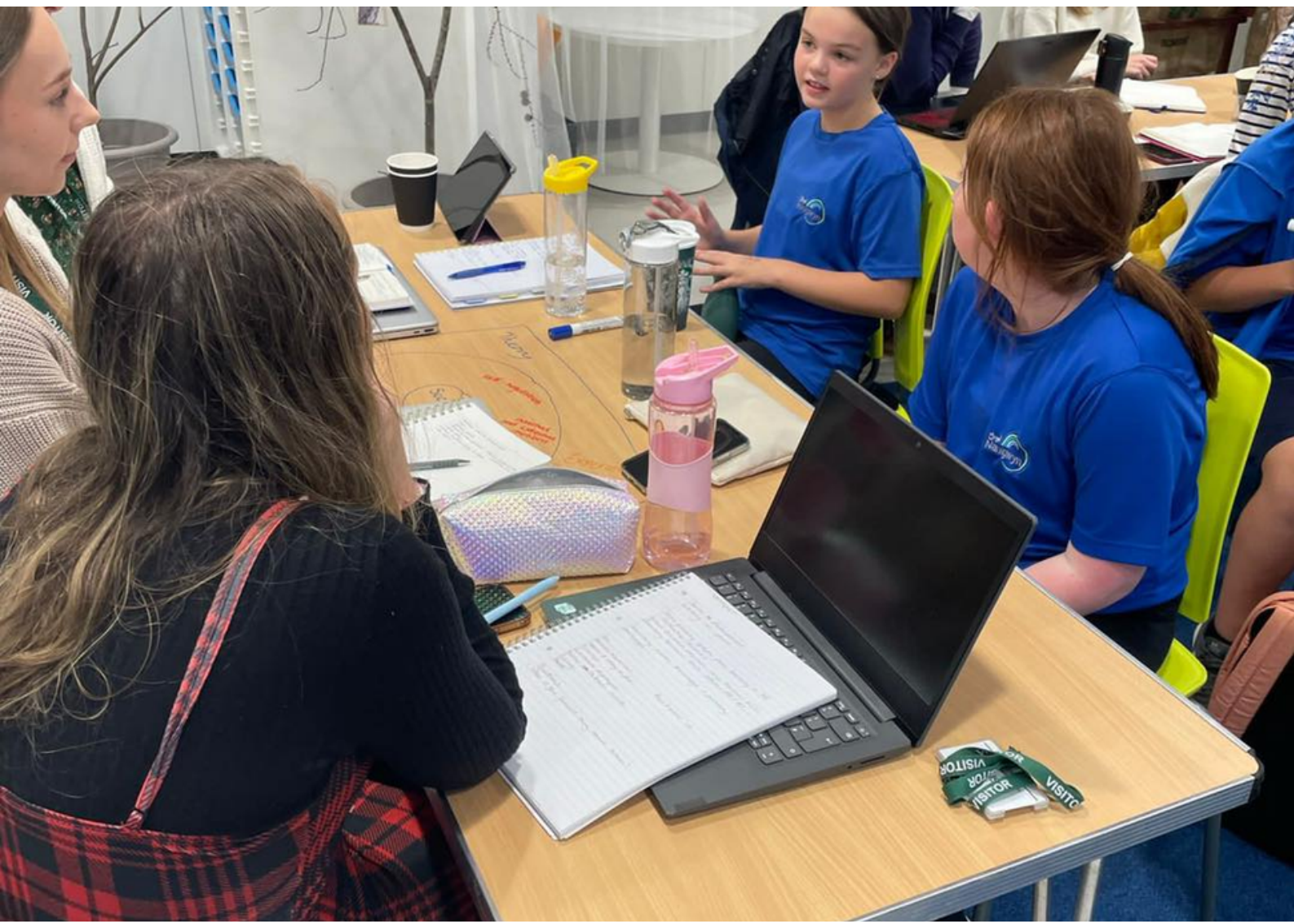
## **Attendance**

Our school attendance is currently often less than 90%. This means that a significant amount of pupils are missing out on a significant amount of their learning.

Currently, there are no restrictions on school attendance, there are no expectations for pupils to test for Covid and so all pupils should be in school every day unless they are seriously unwell. Previous guidance that was issued to schools prior to Covid is available here:

Should you have any queries about whether your child should or should not come to school, you can look to NHS Wales 111 for guidance.

We are also happy to discuss with you in the morning - you can reach us on 07926458084 from 07:15. Please keep trying if you don't get through straight away.



## Dates for your diary

To support families in celebrating what is the first normal Christmas in a few years, we have made the decision to make **Friday 23rd December an INSET day** however we do ask that you support us with our whole school attendance figures by ensuring that your child comes to school right up to and including Thursday 22nd December. There are lots of Christmas activities planned around the learning which will continue to the end of term.

All pupils return to school on Monday 9th January 2023.

### Lower school

Lower School Christmas experience: Thursday 22nd December - afternoon.

Nursery Christmas concert: Wednesday 21st December @ 09:15

Reception Christmas concert: Tuesday 20th December @ 09:15

Year 1 Christmas concert: Thursday 22nd December @ 09:15

Year 2 Christmas concert: Thursday 22nd December @ 10:15

Year 3 Christmas concert: Thursday 22nd December @ 11:15

Father Christmas Visit: Thursday 22nd December

Lower School Christmas Disco: Tuesday 20th December @ 13:30 - 14:15

Whole School Christmas Dinner Day: Tuesday 20th December

### Middle school

Christmas jumper week: Monday 19th December - Thursday 22nd December

Whole School Christmas Dinner Day: Tuesday 20th December

Gwyn Middle School Christmas Disco: Tuesday 20th December @ 14:15 - 15:00

Year 4 Christmas concert: Wednesday 21st December @10:15 in Gwyn hall

Year 6 Christmas concert: Wednesday 21st December @11:15 in Gwyn hall

Year 5 Christmas concert: Wednesday 21st December @13:45 in Gwyn hall

Middle School Christmas experience: Thursday 22nd December - afternoon.

Father Christmas Visit: Thursday 22nd December

### Upper school

Year 11 assessment week: Week beginning 21st November

Year 11 boost week: Week beginning 12th December and 19th December

Christmas jumper week: Monday 19th December - Thursday 22nd December

Christingle service: Monday 19th December - More information to follow.

Whole School Christmas Dinner Day: Tuesday 20th December

Father Christmas Visit: Thursday 22nd December

### Contact details

[lowerschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk](mailto:lowerschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk)

[middleschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk](mailto:middleschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk)

[upperschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk](mailto:upperschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk)