

PARENT NEWSLETTER



April 2023



A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

A hello from all of us at the start of a new half term and a new term. This term brings with it many different learning experiences for all year groups as lower and middle schools begin their new themes and upper school move onto different skills and knowledge in pursuit of the qualifications that they will gain at the end of year 11. Our curriculum themes can be found in the 'curriculum' section of our website - we are continuing to update and add helpful information for you as parents. Our 'what are we learning' sheets are available on the website and will also be emailed to all parents via Parentmail. We will also see sports days, open afternoons for parents as well as the remaining parents' evenings as opportunities for you to come into the school. We have a wonderful Shakespearean evening planned for later this term with pupils performing and several curriculum experiences in and out of school. Year 9 will be making their option choices and undertaking their assessment week, years 10 and 11 will be progressing their learning and taking examinations/assessments in their qualifications. Every day is important and learning gaps accrue very quickly when a child does not attend so please try aim for 95% and above attendance and get in touch if there is anything we can do to support in this respect.

We start our term with assemblies that reflect on what we are doing well as a school and how we could be even better. We will be sharing views that pupils have shared with us and how we have worked together as a team to put solutions in place. These can be bigger things like how we have pulled together as a team to improve behaviour in Nant building, but also smaller things like how we have changed lunchtimes to have three sittings so that there are fewer pupils in the hall at any one time. I am currently working with a group of around twenty Nant pupils to discuss and put together a proposal for how they would like lunchtimes to change. They have put together a list of potential solutions and are currently consulting on it with their peers in registration times. When this consultation closes, we will look to put in place some of the solutions proposed by pupils. We would very much like to involve parents in this process (and others like it) and so there is a link here to a survey which this pupil group has put together for you to give your views on the potential lunchtime solutions. I would very much like to set up a group of parents that would be willing to meet on a half termly basis to discuss other items like this - if you would be willing to give around an hour each half term, please let me know by emailing head@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk

<https://forms.gle/mX6SvhTk6QjSGn3bA>

Our assemblies this week will reflect on our school improvement priorities which focus on:

- Learning
- Teaching, learning and widening pupils' experiences
- Well-being including attendance, behaviour and mental and emotional well-being
- Developing as a learning organisation
- Ensuring that we use our resources well

Again, pupils and all staff have input into evaluating these areas and these would be the type of item that we would be talking about in the parent meetings. Remember, you can volunteer by emailing head@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk !

We have our Estyn visit in the week beginning Monday 24th April. This is very welcome; it is our first as Ysgol Nantgwyn and our pupils do wonderful things every day that we are keen for our visitors to see. We have spoken with all pupils in assemblies and classes about what may happen during the week and explained that we will have an additional 8-10 team members around the school, in corridors, classes and chatting with pupils and staff about their time in school. We are very much welcoming their team into ours and let pupils know that they have come to write our 'story' so we should speak with them as we would any member of staff and tell them our Nantgwyn 'story'. If you, or your child, are worried about any aspect of inspection or have any questions, please do get in touch with your school team. We sent a letter with further information prior to half term.



We have been able to use some funding to enhance aspects of our environment following feedback from pupils about different areas of the school. These areas include:

- Extending the pedestrian crossing on the Nant side so that pupils can go straight across rather than walk around.
- Painting the exterior of one block in Nant and putting in planters to make the approach to the school nicer (plants to come).
- Taken out the 'bumps' in the Nant quad so that it is a more accessible and multi functional space for recreational activities and outdoor learning.
- A large outdoor classroom on its way for the rear of the Gwyn building.
- Painted the Nant neuadd entrance so that it is lighter, brighter and more welcoming.
- Painted 'pops' of colour on the white walls inside the school building to give it more character (as requested).

This newsletter gives a curriculum and learning focus with information on how we work as a school. I hope that you find it interesting and helpful.

With warm wishes,

Ms Laura Morris
Headteacher



Newsletter focus item: Curriculum development

The Ysgol Nantgwyn curriculum is designed to take account of the needs of all pupils and offers a broad and balanced range of experiences for all pupils. We recognise that pupils are individuals and therefore the way in which they experience the curriculum may differ. Our curriculum is iterative in its development and provides opportunities for pupils to inform and lead their learning. It provides opportunities for pupils to have meaningful learning experiences, to consider themselves and others and the part they can play in their local community as well as the wider world. The Ysgol Nantgwyn curriculum presents pupils with a range of big questions, gives them the opportunity to ask questions and enables their development of knowledge and skills in the exploration of possible answers through a variety of learning experiences. Our staff will carefully listen to our pupils and ensure that their thoughts, views and needs inform their learning.

Over the last term, we have further developed our thematic, enquiry led curriculum in years 1 and 2. Pupils have shown great interest and enthusiasm when exploring the themes of 'people' and 'world' and I'm sure they have enjoyed sharing their learning and discussing the themes with you at home!

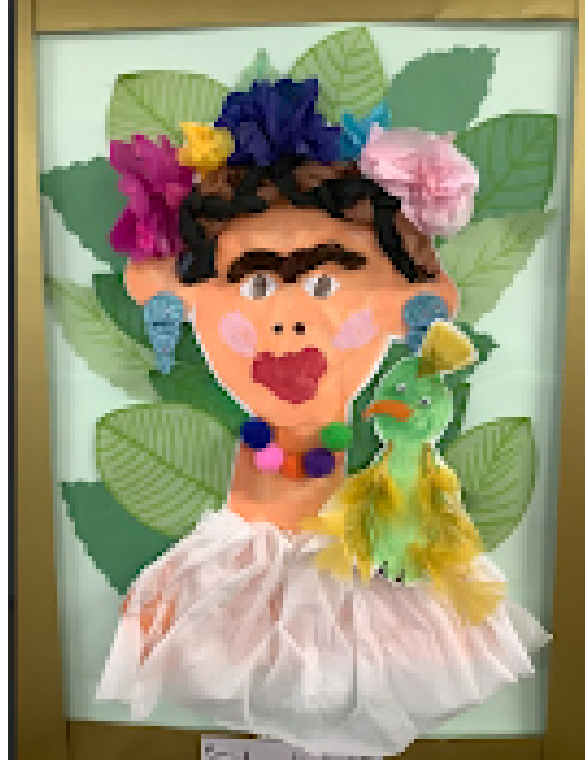
Year 1 - 'people'

Over the last half term year 1 have been exploring the theme of 'people.' Pupils have explored the following questions to develop their own thoughts and ideas on the theme:

- Who am I?
- What are my beliefs and values?
- Are my values different to other people- at Ysgol Nantgwyn and globally?
- What can I find out about myself?
- Who are other people?
- How can I use what I know about myself to get on better with other people?
- How do different types of people get on with other people?
- What is a stereotype?
- How can I challenge stereotypes?
- What kind of jobs do people do? What skills and attributes would I need to do these jobs?
- What does the population look like in Ysgol Nantgwyn?
- How does the population of Ysgol Nantgwyn compare to the population of other countries?
- What are my rights?
- Are my rights the same as people in other countries?
- Who are famous people that changed the world?

Pupils have learned about key people Josephine Baker, Frida Kahlo, Mahatma Gandhi.

During the summer term, year 1 will explore the theme 'environment' and we look forward to sharing their experiences with you!





Year 2 - 'world'

Over the last half term year 2 have been exploring the theme of 'world' and in particular they have looked at poverty and fairtrade. Pupils have explored the following questions to develop their own thoughts and ideas on the theme:

- What is poverty?
- What is being rich?
- Are there different types of poverty/ richness?
- Is poverty different in different areas of the world?
- How can we help our community?
- How do we distinguish between needs and wants?
- What are my rights as a child?
- Where are the poorest and richest areas in Wales/ UK/ the world?
- How is the world influenced by processes and human actions?
- What does fairtrade mean?
- What is sustainability?
- Why are some countries unsustainable?
- How do we create a sustainable world?
- What is a developing / developed country?

During the summer term, year 2 will explore the theme 'justice.' We are very excited to see the learning that they will produce!

Religion, values and ethics (RVE)

Religion, values and ethics (RVE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales for all learners from age 3 to 16. RVE will be delivered in an 'objective critical and pluralistic' way and so there is no right to withdraw as with every other subject in the curriculum. RVE makes an important and distinctive contribution to supporting the four purposes by giving learners opportunities to:

- engage with and explore ultimate and philosophical questions about the meaning, significance and purpose of life, and about the nature of human thought and of the universe, and the connections between them.
- develop and express their own informed viewpoints, which prepares them for lifelong learning in a pluralistic and diverse world.
- use their knowledge and understanding of both institutional and personal religious and non-religious worldviews to think critically about their own values and about how they might make important social and personal decisions.
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- explore the ways in which religion and non-religious philosophical convictions have influenced human experience throughout history, so that they can make sense of their place in the world, imagine possible futures and create responsible solutions that take in to account the diverse needs and rights of all people.
- develop secure values and establish their ethical beliefs and spirituality through the exploration of religion and non-religious philosophical convictions on a range of issues, which can in turn enable them to form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect.

Over the summer term, year groups from nursery to year 8 will explore the following philosophical statements and questions with a religious, ethical and cultural focus as part of their Caru Dysgu theme. Years 9 and 10 follow the Agored Cymru qualification for exploring worldviews. Year 11 have scheduled drop down RVE days throughout the year as part of the statutory requirement.



Religion, values and ethics (RVE)

<p>Nursery</p>	<p>Everyone should have a home. What do different religions believe about charity? How might peoples' homes represent their worldview and identity? Do people have to go to buildings to pray? Do all religious and non religious people feel the same towards our environment?</p>
<p>Reception</p>	<p>Humans are more important than creatures. Do all religions believe that humans are superior to animals? Are material items more valuable than people? Should we and do we all have free will? What are our responsibilities to our world?</p>
<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Only the government can make a difference to our environment. Do all religions act as stewards? What significance can individuals make in protecting our environment? Do we live in a wonderful world? If you could create a perfect world, what would it look like?</p>
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Sometimes it's ok to lie. What are the 'golden rules'? How do we respond to injustice? Are there different types of truth? Can it ever be right to deny a human right?</p>
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>Sometimes the law is wrong. How do muslims put the golden rules in practice? What does social justice look like? What are our responsibilities towards justice? What roles do organisations have in fighting injustice?</p>
<p>Year 4</p>	<p>We should all follow the same belief system. What opinions do different religious and non religious people have? How do we show inclusivity? Do we always have to respect the beliefs of others? Should people get into trouble for not being inclusive to others?</p>
<p>Year 5</p>	<p>We should stop advancing medicine because the world doesn't have the resources for the growing population. How do views about the Big Bang theory differ? How does our culture impact our attitudes to science/ medicine? How has the discovery of technology impacted religion? Should anyone be able to opt out of medical treatment?</p>
<p>Year 6</p>	<p>All countries should follow a capitalist approach. Is capitalism a religion? What impact can the work of individuals have on protecting the lives of others? Should all business people follow an ethical code? Should we boycott businesses that have bad business ethics?</p>
<p>Year 7</p>	<p>All communities in Britain look the same. How do religious communities support our community? What does the census information tell us about our community? Should we all follow a community code? What does Britishness look like?</p>
<p>Year 8</p>	<p>An individual cannot make a big difference to equality in our society. Can religious and non religious individuals really make a big difference to equality within our local, national and international communities? Do all religions have the same worldview towards charity? Are our rights upheld and protected within our cynefin? What role do religious and non religious organisations play in protecting our rights?</p>

Form lessons

	Pupils	Parents	Governors	Staff
Healthy, confident individuals	Building mental and emotional well-being	Form good relationships based on mutual respect and trust	Building mental and emotional well-being	Building mental and emotional well-being
Ethical, informed citizens	Understand their responsibilities and rights	Respect the rights and needs of others	Respect the rights and needs of others Consider the impact of their actions when making choices	Respect the rights and needs of others Consider the impact of their actions when making choices Understand their responsibilities and rights
Enterprising, creative contributors	Be a team player	Take part in opportunities	Think creatively to solve problems Share their ideas and emotions	Think creatively to solve problems Take measured risks and try new things
Ambitious, capable learners	Set themselves goals	Build up their knowledge and apply it	Build up their knowledge and apply it	Set themselves goals

Our curriculum planning encompasses all aspects of the four purposes however, we have agreed that we will seek greater opportunities to:

Healthy, confident individuals	Build mental and emotional well-being
Ethical, informed citizens	Understand their responsibilities and rights
Enterprising, creative contributors	Think creatively to solve problems
Ambitious, capable learners	Set themselves goals

Part of how we have done this is to create weekly lessons with form tutors. These 'sit on top' of the timetable - I will let your child explain how that works! - and they alternate between a focus on ambitious, capable learners and setting goals and healthy, confident individuals and building mental and emotional well-being. Importantly, these lessons create additional space and time for your child to develop a strong relationship with their form tutor outside the short, daily morning sessions.

Our 9Ps of teaching, learning and experiences: Focus on participation

Participation is one of the 9Ps in our teaching, learning and experiences framework at Ysgol Nantgwyn and one of our areas of focus for development this academic year. Participation is key to pupils making good progress - outlined below are some of the ways in which we work together with pupils to encourage their participation.

Participation: Speaking and listening

Speaking and listening are two important skills that we want pupils to develop through all learning experiences. In lessons, teachers will make opportunities for pupils to not only speak but to strengthen and broaden their vocabulary as they contribute to class discussions and share opinions. We also encourage active listening, giving pupils the skills to engage with those around them in meaningful ways. At home, you can help by talking with your children. Encourage them to develop their ideas and use new words and phrases. You can also ask your child what the word of the week is, and see how you can incorporate it into your conversations.

Participation: Independent learning

Independent learning is about consolidating and deepening the learning that takes place in school, but it is also meant to develop the independence of pupils. Teachers carefully design tasks that will complement what is taught in school, giving pupils the opportunity to make further progress against pathway points. These tasks are sent home at intervals appropriate to your child's age. At home, you can access your child's independent learning tasks via Google Classroom/Seesaw and the school website.

Participation: Feedback

Throughout learning experiences your child will be given feedback. This may be in the form of a verbal comment from the teacher, written feedback, peer feedback or self feedback. The most important part of the feedback process is the time for pupils to act on what they have been told or found out about their learning. Pupils will have the opportunity to respond to feedback in lessons during whole class feedback sessions and at summative assessment points throughout the year. At home, you can ask your child about their progress and how they are engaging with the feedback they have been given. You will also receive interim reports and an annual full report, during these times you can talk with your child about their progress and, importantly, how they will tackle their next steps.



What are we learning sheets

These will come out to you in the next day or so and will let you know what your child is learning in their different lessons as well as information about how you could help at home. These will also go onto our website so you can access them [here](https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/curriculum-and-learning/what-are-we-learning).

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/curriculum-and-learning/what-are-we-learning>

Learning in year 6: Spring term 2022-23		Learning in year 6: Spring term 2022-23		
<p>Caru dysgu curriculum</p> <p>What will your child be learning? In Caru Dysgu pupils will be exploring the theme of 'change' through an enquiry led curriculum. Pupils will ask their own questions about the topic in order to conduct research and find answers. Pupils will identify different types of changes that they have made and experienced in their lives, locally, nationally and globally. They will discuss the evidence for these changes and explore how these changes have an impact on them. They will gain an in-depth understanding of the different types of change that occur both past and present including medical, technological, environmental and societal changes. In addition, pupils will study significant people who have advocated change and impacted on the world that we live in today. Pupils will also gain some understanding of the processes and techniques in making change including problems and protocols. In response to this pupils will analyse the work of J.R.R. Tolkien who is an artist and scientist that combines art with scientific data to raise awareness about different environmental issues. Pupils will create their own pieces of artwork in the style of J.R.R. Tolkien. Pupils will develop a range of drama techniques to present different scenes from our novel 'A Kind of Spark'. Homework sheets will be developed throughout the theme as pupils compare data and statistics about environmental issues in order to create their artwork.</p> <p>What can you do to help at home? Research the topic of change with your child. Discuss and give examples of different changes and advancements in medicine and technology. Have they had positive or negative impacts. Use the following questions to discuss what your child is learning: What is change? How have people changed the world? Why is change important? How are changes made? Pupils should complete 20 minutes of Reading Eggs (approx 5 times a week). The logs details are https://www.eggs.com. Please contact your child's teacher should you require your child's reading log or details. Reading with your child will also support with their reading. To develop your child's communication skills you can hold purposeful discussions and debates as a family. Encourage your child to look at you when they are talking, ensure that they don't interrupt and ask them to repeat what they have said clearly. Talking about what your child has read or seen at school will allow them to talk about subject specific matters. Encouraging your child to speak and answer in full sentences will also improve their writing skills.</p>	<p>Faculty of English, literacy and communication</p> <p>What will your child be learning? Children will be reading the novel, 'A Kind of Spark'. Pupils will be creating an extended reading response based on the question, 'How is Ailie feeling in chapter 12?' They will also develop their creative writing skills through a piece of extended writing in the form of a diary entry from the point of view of Ailie.</p> <p>What can you do to help at home? Encourage any form of reading at home. Reading Eggs assignments. Pupils to complete lessons on Reading Eggs once completed assignment. Weekly spellings.</p>	<p>Faculty of science and technology</p> <p>What will your child be learning? In Science and Technology lessons, pupils will be exploring the issue of recycling. They will explore how we recycle on an individual basis and mass scale. Pupils will learn about the impact of pollution and global warming, and the difference between weather and climate. In design and technology lessons, pupils will design and make a textiles item made from recycled materials.</p> <p>What can you do to help at home? Pupils can visit the following websites for ideas on how to recycle. https://discovery.com/recycling-projects-kids-sc-projects/ https://practicalaction.org/ As a family discuss how you can live more sustainably.</p>	<p>Faculty of language and culture</p> <p>What will your child be learning? In both Welsh and Spanish pupils will be learning key vocabulary around the topic of school as part of a triple literacy approach. Pupils will develop their use and understanding of the present, future, conditional and past tense so that they can describe what subjects they like in school, their ideal school. Pupils develop their language skills through reading, writing, speaking and listening through a fun and exciting approach to develop a love of language learning.</p> <p>What can you do to help at home? Pupils can use the Linguascope website to practise key Welsh and Spanish vocabulary. www.linguascope.com</p>	<p>Faculty of life</p> <p>What will your child be learning? Pupils will continue to explore and develop the skills and practices that they need to lead a healthy lifestyle and making healthy choices in their future. Pupils will continue to develop an understanding of the rules of a variety of games, the principles of attacking and defending and can discuss the ethics of sports. Through the theme of 'change' pupils will explore changes that they have experienced and they will also discuss the physical and emotional changes they will experience as they get older.</p> <p>Pupils will develop their understanding of religious leaders and why these leaders are important for religious believers. They will also consider people in authority in their own lives and the qualities that make a good leader.</p> <p>What can you do to help at home? Go for a walk or practice some mindfulness to discuss how we can also look after our mental health. Discuss with your child why it is important to respect different religions. Use BBC Bitesize to explore and learn more about aspects of Christianity and other religions. https://www.bbc.com/religion/religion/faith34</p> <p>Pupils should be encouraged to ask questions about what authority means to them and others, and find examples of good leaders within the news and be able to share their conclusions.</p>

Independent learning

This half term's independent learning sheets will be with you in the next day or so and will also be placed on the school [website](https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/curriculum-and-learning/independent-learning). Please encourage your child to complete these activities - they get positive points for each piece that they complete, their report includes an assessment of completion rates and, most importantly, it helps to strengthen their learning in a different way and help them to become more independent in their learning.

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/curriculum-and-learning/independent-learning>



Nursery CLASS: LOWER SCHOOL

These independent learning tasks should be completed by 17/02/23. All completed tasks will be rewarded with positive points.

Mathematics and numeracy	English, literacy and communication	Science and technology	Caru dysgu: Humanities
<p>This term we will practise forming numbers - 1, 2, 3; develop our counting skills and learn about coins to pay for items in the class shop. Can you create a simple toy/ food shop at home? Write your own price tags and count 1p coins to pay for items. Share on seesaw.</p>	<p>Listen to the story "One Winter's Day" on seesaw. Record yourself talking about the animals hedgehog helped and what he did to help them. What do you do to help others?</p> 	<p>Winter is here! Design some winter gloves, a hat and a scarf? See activity on seesaw, complete and share. Or send a photograph of you dressed in Winter clothes and record yourself- describe what you are wearing.</p>	<p>This term we will be learning about the people who help us in the community and the jobs they do. (police, firefighter, shopkeeper, hairdresser, doctor, nurse, dentist etc) What job would you like to do when you grow up? Find out some interesting facts about the job.</p>
Caru dysgu: Expressive arts	Well-being	Languages: Welsh	Languages: Spanish
<p>When I grow up, I would like to be a..... Draw/paint or collage a picture and bring it into school for us to see. Join in and sing along to The People Who Help Us song on seesaw. Have fun!</p>	<p>Get your bodies moving with some Winter dancing. : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBTV3tadR3s</p>  	<p>Practise counting sets of objects in Welsh. Un, dau, tri, pedwar, pump. Which numbers can you write correctly? Can you count to 5? Can you count to 10?</p> 	<p>Practise counting sets of objects in Spanish. Uno, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco. Which numbers can you write correctly? Can you count to 5? Can you count to 10?</p> 

Dates for your diary

May bank holiday	Monday 1st May, 2023
Coronation additional bank holiday	Monday 8th May, 2023
Last day of the school year	Friday 21st July, 2023 for pupils
INSET day 4	Friday 26th May, 2023
INSET day 5	Friday 7th July, 2023
INSET day 6	Monday 24th July, 2023

All term dates and INSET days can also be found on the school website.

Lower school

Open afternoon for parents of Gwyn pupils: Week beginning 19th June 2023
Moving up transition afternoon in Gwyn: Monday 10th July 2023
Interim reports: Week beginning 24th April 2023
Experience trips: Nursery, reception, year 1, 2 & 3: Week beginning 1st May 2023
Nursery parent assembly: Tuesday 23rd May 2023, 14:15
Nursery, reception, year 1, 2 & 3 pupil reports: Week beginning 3rd July 2023
Nursery, reception, year 1, 2 & 3 parents' evening Tuesday 11th & Wednesday 12th July 2023
End of year trips: Weeks beginning, Monday 10th & 17th July
Sports day plan A Tuesday 4th July, 2023
Sports day plan B Tuesday 11th July, 2023

Middle school

Year 5 cluster transition day: Tuesday 18th April 2023
Year 5 explorers experience day: Week beginning 22nd May 2023
Year 7 reports issued: Week beginning 12th June 2023
Open afternoon for parents of Gwyn pupils: Week beginning 19th June 2023
Years 4-6 reports issued: Week beginning 26th June 2023
Year 4-6 parents' evening: Week beginning 3rd July 2023
Year 6 into year 7 parent information evening: Thursday 6th July 2023
Moving up transition afternoon in Gwyn: Monday 10th July 2023
End of year trips: Week beginning Monday 10th July
Sports day plan A Tuesday 4th July, 2023
Sports day plan B Tuesday 11th July, 2023

Upper school

Year 9 options interviews with form tutors: Week beginning 27th March 2023
Individual academic reviews (Y.9 and Y.10) Week beginning 20th March 2023
Welsh oracy assessments (Y11) Week beginning 24th April 2023
Spanish speaking assessments Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th May 2023
Year 10 reports issued Week beginning 1st May 2023
Year 10 parents' evening Week beginning 8th May 2023
Year 11 prom Friday 30th June 2023

Contact details

lowerschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk
middleschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk
upperschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk