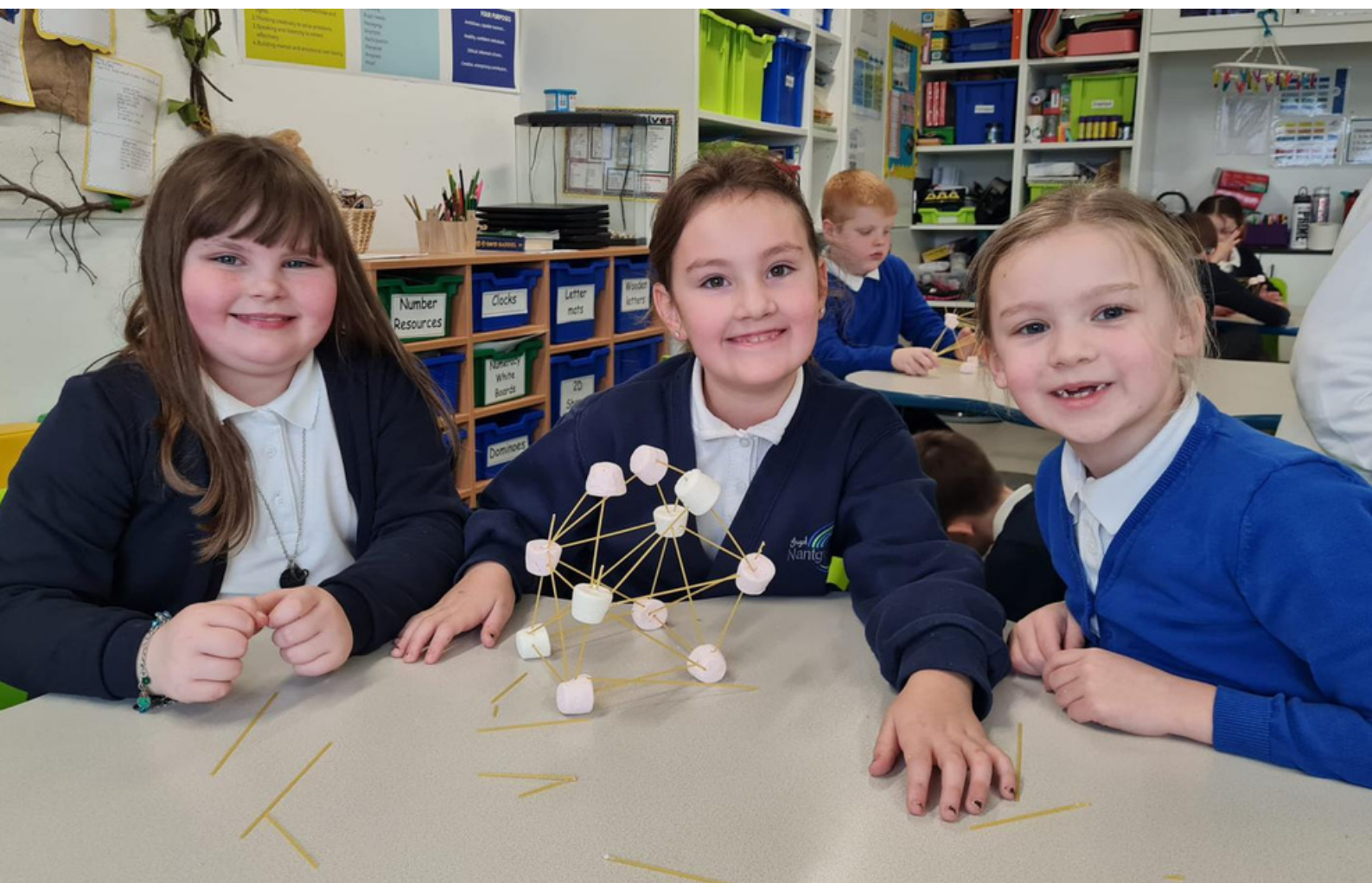


PARENT NEWSLETTER



March 2023



A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

I can't quite believe that we are at the end of the spring term! This past week has felt very different in school. While albeit wet, the temperatures have been higher and the lighter evenings are making a difference to energy levels already. It won't be long until we have light mornings back again too which will help with the feeling of stepping into summer.

We are continuing to implement changes around attendance and it is pleasing to see that our attendance is starting to improve. Thank you so much for all your support; I know that it can be difficult, at times, to get children to school but the impact on their learning from just a day or two can be significant so I really appreciate everything you do to get your children to school. If there are any issues or problems that you feel that we may be able to support in respect of attendance, please do get in touch with your school team.

We have also seen big improvements in terms of behaviour over the past months since we have introduced our new system. We have regularly spoken to pupils in assembly about our expectations and everyone working as a team to make sure that we are all ready, responsible and respectful at all times. Pupils have reported that they feel behaviour has improved and our behaviour records support that too. I know that parents have been so supportive with these improvements, so thank you. We will continue to work as one big team to bring about further improvements.

I have been working with a group of around twenty pupils from across the school to develop some proposals for changing/improving our lunchtime facilities so that there is more available for them. So far, pupils have worked with their peers to develop a list of ideas. This week, we will be prioritising them and then making them into a proposal for wide school consultation before making some exciting purchases in the not too distant future!

I am keen to work with a group of parents to gain their views to inform how we work as a school and would like to propose that we have a group of around 15 parents across lower, middle and upper school. It would involve coming into school approximately once per half term for an informal meeting to discuss what is working well and how things could be even better. If you have around an hour to spare once per half term, I'd be really keen to hear from you. You can email me on head@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk

I hope you have a lovely couple of weeks and we look forward to seeing you all soon!

With warm wishes,

Ms Laura Morris
Headteacher



Newsletter focus item: Four purposes and what they look like in learning

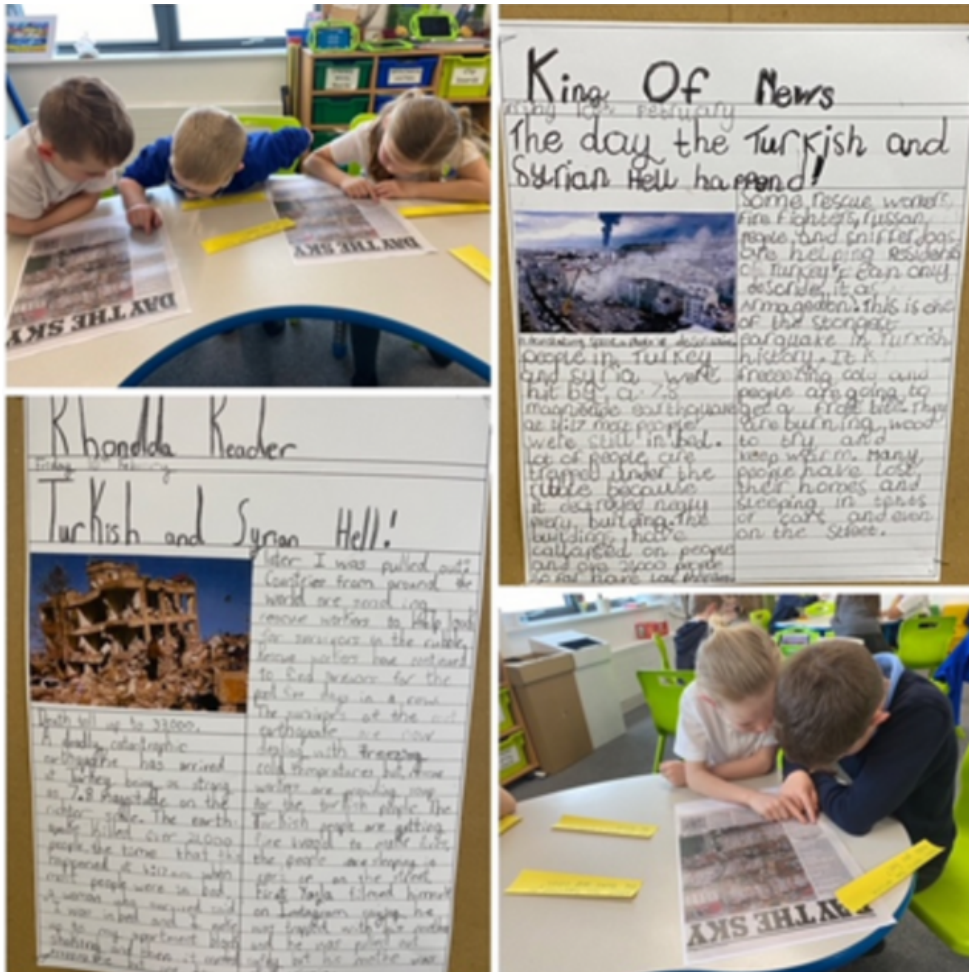
Lower school

Children are always interested and curious about the world around them. They become highly motivated within their learning if it concerns real life events.

One activity carried out in lower school to develop the core purposes- ambitious capable learners and ethically informed citizens was to allow the children to read actual newspaper articles about the devastating earthquake which happened in Turkey and Syria. This event linked into our theme of 'disasters'. The children had to cooperate with each other to read, find and discuss the main points within the article.

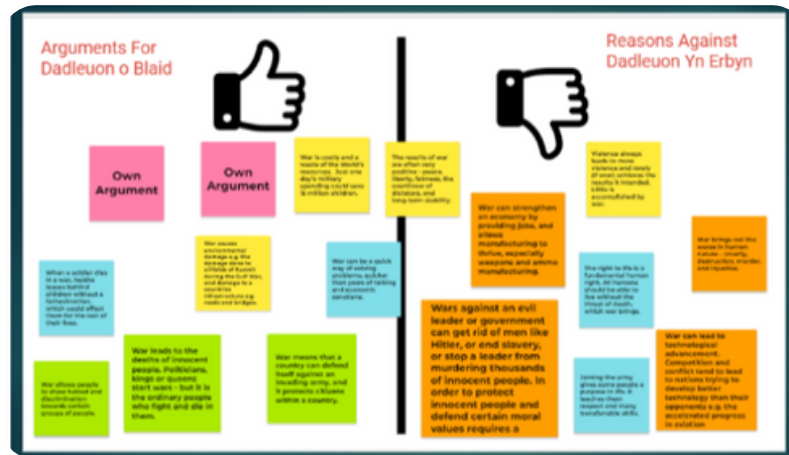
The children were then given the task to create their own newspaper articles about the tragic event. The children were highly motivated in becoming reporters and reporting on a real life event. They were able to write fantastic newspaper articles and were very empathetic towards the people caught up in the awful event.

This activity developed and encouraged the children's skills within the English literacy and communication faculty by encouraging their speaking and listening skills, communication skills, writing skills and their reading skills. It also developed the children's skills within the faculties of life and science and technology by encouraging their knowledge of the wider world and the effect events can have on the environment.



Middle school

One activity carried out in Middle School to develop the core purpose- ethically informed citizens was for pupils to consider the question 'can war ever be justified?' focusing on the statement of understanding and considering the impact of their actions and choices. This linked into our theme of 'conflict'. The children had to communicate their ideas and opinions and justify their arguments either for or against this question. This topical discussion became somewhat heated with the pupils in year 5 who provided some great arguments for both sides. An excellent debate.



This activity further developed pupils' ability to justify, and voice their opinions correctly, further developing their sentence starters and vocabulary whilst supporting their understanding of historical events in our world.

Another activity focused around the statement of 'find, evaluate and use evidence to form views'. Pupils in year 6 are currently studying the theme of 'change' and have been looking at the different societal changes in history. When doing so, posed the question 'which societal change has had the biggest impact on the world?'

Pupils researched the differing key changes which they felt the most significant before hosting a debate around this question. The debate, which they hosted, clearly demonstrated the passion and determination our pupils have in arguing their point of view and justifying each with supporting evidence. The debate was concluded with a statement from a pupil: 'all of these changes can all be the most important, it depends on the perspective of the person making the decision'. A very mature statement made by an eleven year old pupil who further explained their thought process.

A heated discussion led by pupils:



Upper school

Across upper school the four purposes are developed across all curriculum areas and also within form time.

We expect pupils to approach their learning with a positive attitude, but also encourage them to question, take risks and, of course, make mistakes. Through this process, underpinned by the four purposes, we look to build resilient, self-motivated, lifelong learners.

During form time, pupils have been focusing on different aspects of 'ethical, informed citizens'.

Year 9 considered: ethical, informed citizens who understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting. They were tasked with discussing a variety of different scenarios, what the consequences may be and whether the consequences were proportionate.

Year 10 considered: ethical, informed citizens who respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society. Pupils looked at their own identity and individuality. They then considered differences and how this supports a diverse and inclusive society.

Year 11 considered: ethical, informed citizens who are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past. Pupils considered a range of cultural customs and the interlinking theme. They then discussed why it is important to be knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world now and in the past.

Pupils really engaged in the discussions, and were active and engaged in their learning.

Task 1

1. Do not openly display money; use an envelope - China
2. Never pour yourself a drink; always allow someone else to do it for you - Japan
3. In business meetings, allow the oldest person to enter the room first - Germany
4. When entering a residence, you are expected to remove your shoes outside - India
5. In China, don't discuss business at any meal - China



Discuss each of the cultural customs and decide on the theme that links them together.

Why is this theme important to them and important to us?



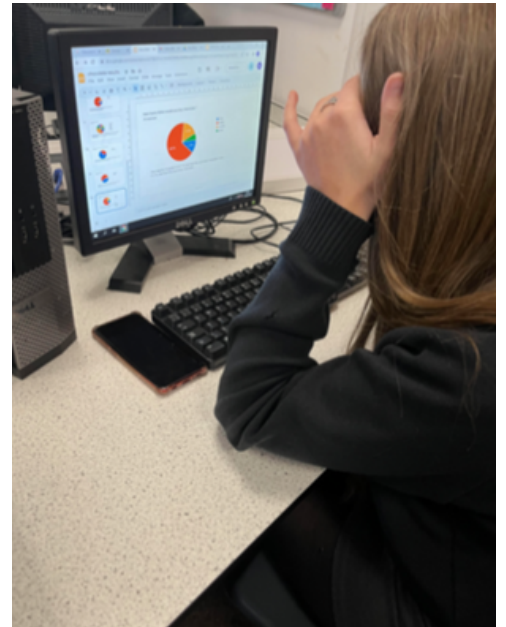
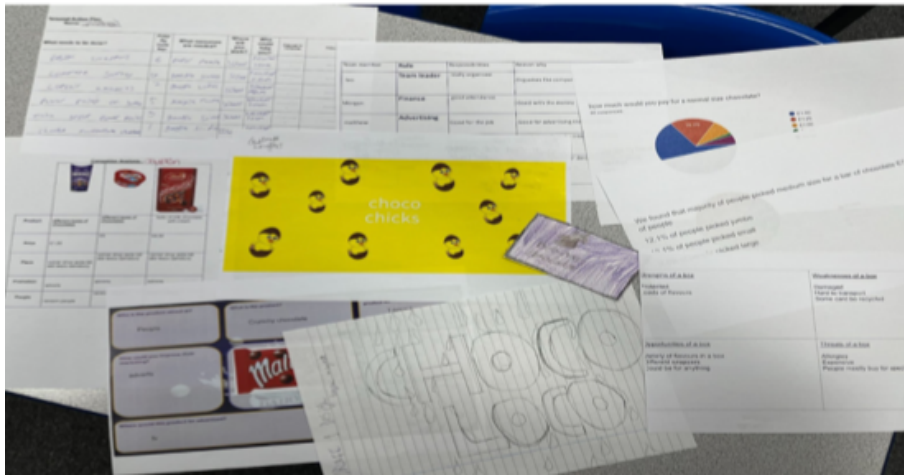
Faculty lessons also develop the four purposes and some examples of this are as follows;

Faculty of Life - Enterprise

As part of their enterprise qualification, our year ten pupils have started to plan their own business idea, gathering a range of primary data from peers and secondary competitor analyse information to help them decide on a final product.

Faculty of Life - RVE:

In RVE, pupils have been completing a medical ethics SOL this term in years 9 and 10. They have been exploring IVF, abortion, blood donation, organ donation and euthanasia. Pupils have been exploring different worldviews and texts, to form their own opinions. This week year 10 have explored Bob Marley and how his beliefs influenced the treatment he believed was acceptable when he was diagnosed with a melanoma. They then engaged with quotes from different religious and non religious texts about different topics within the theme and reached a judgement as to whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements and why.



Faculty of Science and Technology - Digital Technology:

Year 10 and 11 have been creating their own animations during Digital Technology lessons. The task requires them to become independent, confident and knowledgeable users of existing digital technologies. The specifics of the task enable pupils to interpret data before designing their proposal aimed to fulfil the assignment brief. Pupils will then be required to use appropriate technical skills to develop their animation. The logging of issues, problems, hurdles and solutions allows the pupils to develop a digital product that meets the identified needs of the context.

This is just a flavour of the types of lessons and work going on across faculties to develop our learners in line with the new curriculum and the four purposes. We have seen improved engagement and skills development across the board where these experiences have been fully exploited.

We continue on our learning journey as we develop our unique Ysgol Nantgwyn curriculum, and we continue to look for further opportunities to develop our young people's knowledge and love of learning!

Attendance

Date	Cumulative Attendance (January 2023 to date)
Week beginning 2nd January	85.50%
Week beginning 9th January	85.70%
Week beginning 16th January	85.50%
Week beginning 23rd January	85.60%
Week beginning 30th January	85.60%
Week beginning 6th February	85.70%
Week beginning 13th February	85.70%
Week beginning 27th February	85.80%
Week beginning 6th March	85.70%
Week beginning 13th March	85.80%

Attendance to school- How can parents help?

- Make school attendance a priority.
- Talk about the importance of attending school every day.
- Ensure that your child attends school on time so that they do not miss their morning mark.
- Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework, packing their bag the night before and getting a good night's sleep.
- Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the school day.
- Don't let your child stay home unless truly sick. Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety.
- Talk to your child's school team if they have any worries or anxieties about school- these can quite often be resolved easily.
- Stay on top of academic progress and seek help from teachers or if necessary.
- Communicate with the school.
- Know the school's attendance policy.
- Talk to teachers if you notice sudden changes in behaviour.
- Check on your child's attendance to be sure absences are not piling up.
- Ask for help from the school, other parents or community agencies if you're having trouble getting your child to school.

How we can support where there are difficulties

If you are having any difficulties with your child attending school or if your child is anxious or worried about going to school, please ask your child's school team for help. We have lots of experience in these situations and above all, we are here to support, working with you as a team to support you and your child with their attendance.

Unauthorised absences

It is vitally important that your child's absence is reported to us on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence unless there has been medical authorisation for a period of absence granted on day one. Reasons for not attending school should be specific rather than 'unwell.' Please can parents use the Class Charts app to report absence. It is very quick and easy to do this. If you are unsure or do not have your login details, please contact your child's relevant school team who will be happy to help. Medical evidence is required to authorise absences.

Bullying

At Ysgol Nantgwyn we pride ourselves on being an inclusive, supportive school where all pupils can flourish and feel safe. We are a rights respecting school, where all adults and pupils within the school have the right to feel safe, to feel secure, and to be treated fairly and equally regardless of age, race, background; all pupils have the right to an education. Bullying is treated seriously and all parties are supported in recognising the wrongdoing and working towards repairing relationships in order to diminish repeat offences, using restorative approaches. Challenging bullying by addressing unacceptable behaviour and creating an inclusive learning environment for all students is vital.

Distinction between unwanted behaviour and bullying:

At Ysgol Nantgwyn we use Welsh Government guidance to clarify unacceptable behaviour that does not constitute bullying. This will be dealt with in line with the schools behaviour policy. Such incidents not considered as bullying are outlined below:

Friendship fallouts – a friendship feud may however deteriorate into bullying behaviour that is enabled by the fact that former friends have an intimate knowledge of the fears and insecurities of one another. Children and young people who are targeted by former friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group

One-off fight – the Welsh Government expects it to be addressed according to the school's behaviour policy unless it is part of a pattern of behaviour that indicates intentional targeting of another individual

An argument or disagreement – between two children or young people is not generally regarded as bullying. Nevertheless they may require assistance to learn to respect others' views

A one-off physical assault – the Welsh Government expects it to be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate

Insults and 'banter' – children and young people will often protest that an incident was a joke or banter. If two friends of equal power are in the habit of bantering with one another it is not deemed to be bullying. If one learner uses banter to humiliate or threaten another who is powerless to stop it and made fearful by the act, the border between banter and bullying is likely to be crossed.

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Our approach is child centred and does not lose sight of the needs of the learner, irrespective of whether they are a target or perpetrator of bullying, or a bystander. We understand the need to listen effectively to learners and the need to educate learners by helping them to develop resilience by practising the problem-solving and assertiveness skills they need to challenge unacceptable behaviour, as well as in applying the restorative approach to repair relationships and help all parties understand feelings in incidents of bullying.

What pupils can expect:

Pupils can expect that they are listened to and taken seriously. They can expect that each reported incident is investigated and acted upon. They can expect that appropriate paperwork will be completed and the incident will be recorded and kept on file. They can expect to have a go-to person who will check in on them a week after the initial report is investigated and more so if required.

For every bullying incident reported, there will always be a conversation with the targeted pupils about what happened. There will always be a conversation with the perpetrator, in the first instance to discuss and educate on how behaviour impacts others including a thoughts/feelings exercise.

What parent/carers can expect:

That any instances of bullying that are reported in, will be fully investigated and the school will apply policies. Parents/carers can expect that Ysgol Nantgwyn will take their concerns seriously and support their child with the issues that are happening. The Anti-bullying policy along with the definition of bullying and unwanted behaviour will be shared with parents. If parents are unhappy with how incidents of bullying have been handled, they can raise the complaint with the head. Communication to parents will be clear and transparent.

Dates for your diary

School term dates and INSET days are on the school website.

Lower school

Lower school

Open afternoon for parents of Gwyn pupils: Week beginning 19th June 2023

Moving up transition afternoon in Gwyn: Monday 10th July 2023

Reception parent assembly: Tuesday 28th March 2023, 14:15

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, 11th & 12th July 2023

End of year trips: Weeks beginning, Monday 10th & 17th July

Middle school

Year 6 parent assembly: Wednesday 22nd March 2023, 14:15

Ski Trip, Pila, Italy: 1st - 8th April 2023

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

Upper school

Ski Trip, Pila, Italy: 1st - 8th April 2023

Wales V Latvia trip: Tuesday 28th March 2023

Year 9 options interviews with form tutors: Week beginning 27th March 2023

Individual academic reviews (Y9 and Y10) 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

Contact details

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