

# PARENT NEWSLETTER



February 2023



# A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

It has been a super busy half term of learning and experiences and I think everyone is ready for a well deserved rest. This half term has seen many fantastic achievements across the school including:

- lots of exciting experiences for pupils including the Crucial Crew visiting year 7, reception visiting the local travel agent, a trip to the theatre for our older pupils;
- parents' evenings for years 8 and 11;
- winning the British Film Industry award for Wales;
- being involved in national research about digital learning;
- some superb GCSE results for our year 11 pupils;
- pupils working with student teachers to support their development;
- a visit from Chris Bryant;
- the wins and losses (both allow development) of our sports teams; and,
- completion of practical examinations in science for both year 10 and year 11 (worth 10% of the full qualification).

Pupils have been busy progressing their learning. For those in nursery through to year 8, a lot of this is against the curriculum themes and for our older pupils, looking ahead to their qualifications. The list of these can be found on our website under curriculum.

We have a lot to look forward to next term with two international trips, World Book Day, the Eisteddfod and St David's day (further details of these are further on in this newsletter).

I have been meeting with Nant pupils over the past weeks and they, in turn, have been consulting with their classmates about how we improve lunchtimes for them. There have been lots of really helpful suggestions and the group of 20 pupils and I will work towards a proposal that will shortly be released to pupils for them to give their views and vote.

I would be really keen to hear parent views on lunchtimes as well - if you would be willing to come in and offer your views on the proposals over a mug of tea or coffee please could you get in touch via [head@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk](mailto:head@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk)

With all that is planned, it is crucial that pupils are in school to learn every day as learning gaps very quickly emerge when there are even very few absences. I understand that, over the last few years, there were temporary changes to the expectations about when children were expected to attend school however those changes have passed and all children are expected to be in school every day unless they are very unwell and unable to attend for this reason. There is more information in this newsletter about attendance to support discussions with your child. Our team are always available should you wish to discuss your child's attendance.

The second focus area of this newsletter are the year 9 options process which has already started with in school consultations and will progress to the stage of pupils considering and choosing their qualification pathways in the next couple of weeks. Lots of information below an helpful links available on the website under 'curriculum' and 'careers'.

The link here will take you a publication called Primary Times which lists activities available for children in the half term period across Cardiff and the Vale (and surrounding).

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/f041cef4-be5b-4429-a513-44bb71fc9524>

Wishing you a wonderful half term,

**Ms Laura Morris**  
**Headteacher**



## Newsletter focus item:

### Attendance

When children attend school consistently they are more likely to do well with their studies but also build strong relationships and feel connected with the school community. It also demonstrates reliability which will help prepare children for life beyond education and looks positive to future employers.





Our school attendance is currently often less than 90%. This means that a significant amount of pupils are missing out on a significant part of their learning. All pupils should aim to attend school 95% of the time, or even better- 100% so as not to miss out on the exciting opportunities on offer! 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.

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 07762323340 from 07:15. Please keep trying if you don't get through straight away.



#### Understanding Your Percentage Attendance

100%	0 days missed	Fantastic attendance!	
99%	2 days missed	Well done—you are at or above the School Target	
98%	4 days missed		
97%	6 days missed		
96%	8 days missed	At 96% and below you are just below target—make sure you do not miss any more days	
95%	10 days missed		
94%	12 days missed		
93%	14 days missed	At 93% and below your attendance is becoming worryingly low.	
92%	16 days missed		
91%	18 days missed		
90%	19 days missed	At 90% and below you are Persistently Absent—school will support you and your family to help this improve	
89%	21 days missed		
88%	23 days missed		
87%	25 days missed		
86%	27 days missed		
85%	29 days missed		

Every day in school makes a difference to your child's future. When pupils are not in school, the amount of days missed will impact on the learning that takes place. It is also important to stress the non-academic advantages of being in school too where friendships, socialising and wellbeing support all play a significant part in the development of our pupils. Any pupil with attendance below 95% is below target. Pupils should already be aware of their attendance percentage. If you are unsure please contact the lower/middle/upper school team.



### Supporting attendance

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.

### Punctuality

Punctuality is also as important as attendance. Not only is punctuality an important life skill, but further, learning starts promptly each day and pupils who arrive late are missing vital sessions of the day including literacy sessions and parts of the day where important information is given. As a reminder school starts for middle and upper school pupils at 8.40 and lower school pupils at 8.55. Pupils should be at their classrooms for this time.

<b>Lateness = lost learning time</b>	
<i>Times are calculated over a school day</i>	
<b>If you are late this number of minutes per day...</b>	<b>...this is how much learning time you would miss by the end of the year</b>
5 minutes	3 days of lost learning
10 minutes	6 days of lost learning
15 minutes	10 days of lost learning
20 minutes	13 days of lost learning
30 minutes	19 days of lost learning

### Reporting absence

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. Please can you use the classcharts app to report absence. It is easy to do and takes seconds. 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.

## Attendance celebrations

Congratulations to the following pupils who have all recently received certificates for 100% attendance over the autumn term. What a fantastic achievement!

<b>Jaxon N</b>	<b>Lowri 1B</b>	<b>Ryan 2B</b>	<b>Jesse 3A</b>
<b>Daisy N1</b>	<b>Ella 1B</b>	<b>Thomas 2B</b>	<b>Jamie 3B</b>
<b>Ariana N1</b>	<b>Evelyn 1B</b>	<b>Griff 2B</b>	<b>Mitchell 3A</b>
<b>Cruze 1A</b>	<b>Kiara 1B</b>	<b>Effie 2A</b>	<b>Samuel 3A</b>
<b>Hudson 1A</b>	<b>Meelah 2B</b>	<b>Jacob 2B</b>	<b>Ruby-Tania 3A</b>
<b>Lowri 1B</b>	<b>Cora 2B</b>	<b>Jaxson 2A</b>	<b>Elliott 3B</b>
<b>Cruze 1A</b>	<b>Alys 2B</b>	<b>Israel 2B</b>	<b>Lacey 3B</b>
<b>Hudson 1A</b>	<b>Joshua 2B</b>	<b>Thomas 3A</b>	

<b>Charlie 4A</b>	<b>Reo 5A</b>	<b>Mason 7D</b>
<b>Kaden 4A</b>	<b>Faith 4B</b>	<b>Louis 7A</b>
<b>Joshua 4B</b>	<b>Jaxon 6A</b>	<b>Ellis 7D</b>
<b>Seren 4B</b>	<b>Lucy 6A</b>	<b>Logan 8A</b>
<b>Zak 5A</b>	<b>Charlie 6A</b>	<b>Callum 8C</b>
<b>Cobi 5B</b>	<b>Leo 6A</b>	<b>Chloe 8A</b>
<b>Olivia 5B</b>	<b>Ceryn 6B</b>	<b>Praise 8C</b>
<b>Joshua 5B</b>	<b>Ellie- Mai 6A</b>	<b>Owen 8A</b>
<b>Halleluyah 5A</b>	<b>Harley 6B</b>	
<b>Elliot 5B</b>	<b>Demi 5A</b>	

<b>Evie 9C</b>	<b>Ellie 9D</b>	<b>Daisy 11A</b>
<b>Katie-Anne 9B</b>	<b>Jayden 9B</b>	<b>Courtney 11A</b>
<b>Amy 9A</b>	<b>Grace 10A</b>	<b>Elliott 11D</b>
<b>Calum 9B</b>	<b>Alex 10D</b>	
<b>Lucas 9A</b>	<b>Leo 10A</b>	

## Attendance afternoon tea celebration

We regularly celebrate attendance at Ysgol Nantgwyn and as part of our 'in to win' initiative, 2B enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea on the last day of the autumn term for being the class with the highest attendance across the whole school. Well done 2B! Which class will be our winner this term?

## **12 days of Christmas winners!**

We challenged all pupils to make sure that they attended school the last 12 days before Christmas. Lots of pupils rose to the challenge and were entered into a prize draw to win a family cinema ticket. The winners who were drawn at random were Riley R2, Jacob 2B, Carys 3B, Katie 5A, Lara 6B, Faith 7C, Kiara 8D, Mya 9E, Ethan 10B and Regan 11A. We hope that you enjoyed your family prize.

## **95%+ autumn term attendance prize draw**

The winners of the 95% + for the autumn term were Elladee in year 5, Jayden-Leigh in year 8 and Dafydd in year 9. We hope you enjoyed the prizes of Echo dots that you all received.

Thank you to all those who donated prizes. Our attendance prizes and initiatives will continue this half term.

## **Pupil ambassadors**

This year has seen the launch of our pupil ambassadors. Staff have nominated pupils in each class from nursery to year 11 to represent each of the five faculties. The ambassadors collate pupil voice and feedback to teaching staff on a range of areas of focus including teaching, learning and experiences both in and out of the classroom. Our pupil ambassadors will also represent the school on a number of projects with external partners such as Swansea University. We are excited to see the impact our ambassadors will continue to have at Ysgol Nantgwyn. Keep an eye out for newsletters in the summer term that will document our first ever ambassadorial summit!

## **Baby group**

Exciting news coming soon... Ysgol Nantgwyn are launching their very own mother and baby group here at the school. The group will be staffed by the Ysgol Nantgwyn team and we are very much looking forward to opening our doors to the community. We are in the final stages of planning, so watch this space for more information in the coming weeks. If you would like to be placed on the mailing list please email: [lowerschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk](mailto:lowerschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk) - we look forward to hearing from you.

## **St David's day**

All pupils will celebrate St David's day on Wednesday 1st March. On this day we will be holding a school Eisteddfod (Nant building during the morning and Gwyn building during the afternoon). Pupils will also get the opportunity to compete in different independent learning competitions in different subject areas leading up to the event. On this day Gwyn pupils can wear anything Welsh/red/white/green or traditional dress. Nant pupils can wear a red/green/white accessory with their school uniform however it should be removable eg not a key item of clothing.

## **World book day celebrations**

This year we will celebrate world book day on Friday 3rd March rather than Thursday 2nd March. In Gwyn building, pupils may dress up as a book character, wear pyjamas/ dressing gown and bring in their favourite bedtime book or wear their school uniform. In Nant building, pupils may dress up as a book character or wear their school uniform. We will have lots of fun activities taking place throughout the day for all pupils.



## Year 9 options information

As parents will no doubt be aware, we have now started the careers focus fortnight and options process in earnest. In order to keep you informed and abreast of the most up to date information, we are sharing information with you via this newsletter.

Please see a timeline below that clearly sets out the next few weeks and how the process will unfold;

Date	What?	Details
Wk 9th Jan Wk 16th Jan	Careers fortnight	Pupils have a series of assemblies, workshops and information giving events with videos, activities and external speakers.
Wk 30th Jan	Careers newsletter to parents and straw poll for pupils.	In addition to the parental information, pupils will complete the straw poll during registration sessions.
Wk 8th March	Options booklet sent home	An options booklet is sent home to parents providing information on all subjects available for pupils to choose from.
Wk 13th March	Parents evening and options event	In addition to the traditional parents evening, there will be the opportunity to discuss pre-16 pathways with a representative from careers Wales.
Wk 20th March	Option blocks finalised	Option blocks will be finalised and released to pupils and parents.
Wk 27th March	Option meetings in registration	During registration over the two week period commencing on 27th March, pupils will need to finalise their option choices with form tutors.

### Frequently asked questions:

#### What are option blocks?

Pupils will choose three subjects in total. One from each option group, or block as per the example below\*\*

Option A	Option B	Option C
Art and photography Media DT food Spanish	Performing arts GCSE PE History BTEC Sport	Business studies ICT Engineering German

\*\*This is an example and does not in any way represent how the option blocks will appear this year. This has yet to be decided\*\*

#### What is a straw poll and why is it so important?

This is where pupils are given a vast array of subjects to choose from and they pick their top 5. It is important that pupils complete this and give it careful thought as this is used to inform the final option blocks. So, for example, if 45 pupils want to do engineering but 25 of those also want to do art, we would ensure that art and engineering do not appear in the same option block. The straw poll helps to inform the option blocks (as above) and allows us to ensure we give as many pupils the opportunity to study the subjects that they most want to do.

#### What about core subjects?

Core is made up of:

English literature, English language, mathematics, mathematics - numeracy, Welsh, science - biology, chemistry and physics, well-being, religious studies and the skills challenge certificate.

This could give pupils the equivalent of up to 10 GCSEs.

Pupils will also study a complementary curriculum which includes: finance education, information technology skills, enterprise skills.

This curriculum could give pupils the equivalent of a further 5 GCSEs.

## Upper school

In addition to the formally timetabled examinations, year 10 and 11 also have the following examinations scheduled over the next term which will make up part of their final qualification grade. Attendance to school is vital for pupils to secure the best outcomes.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Year group</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>13.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Creative media exam</b>
<b>20.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Media component 3 exam</b>
<b>21.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Art exam</b>
<b>21.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Media component 1 exam</b>
<b>22.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Art exam</b>
<b>23.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Photography exam</b>
<b>24.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Photography exam</b>
<b>23.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Media component 3 exam</b>
<b>24.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Media component 1 exam</b>
<b>30.03.2023</b>	<b>Year 10 and 11</b>	<b>GCSE PE practical moderation</b>
<b>18.04.2023</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Transition-All Star leaders</b>
<b>19.04.2023- 21.04.2023</b>	<b>Year 10 and Year 11</b>	<b>Welsh unit 1 non- exam assessment</b>
<b>24.04.2023- 26.04.2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Welsh unit 2 non- exam assessment</b>
<b>03.05.2023 and 04.05. 2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Spanish unit 1 exam</b>
<b>17.05. 2023</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>GCSE PE theory exam</b>



## Dates for your diary

Eisteddfod: Wednesday 1st March 2023

World Book Day: Friday 3rd March 2023

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

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

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

### Lower school

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

Experience trips: Nursery, reception, year 1, 2 & 3: week beginning 1st May

Nursery parent assembly: Tuesday 23rd May, 14:15

Nursery, reception, year 1, 2 & 3: Pupil reports will be sent home, week beginning 3rd July 2023

Nursery, reception, year 1, 2 & 3: Parents' evening, Tuesday 11th & Wednesday 12th July

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

### Middle school

Year 6 experience trip to the Senedd: Wednesday 1st March

Year 7 & 8 assessment week - week beginning 27th February

Year 5 bootcamp experience: Tuesday 7th March

Year 6 parent assembly: Wednesday 8th March

Year 5 transition day: Tuesday 18th April

Year 8 experience trip to the slavery museum: w/c 24th April

Year 7 reports: Pupil reports will be sent home, w/c Monday 12th June

Year 7 parents' evening: w/c Monday 19th June

Years 4, 5, 6 reports: Pupil reports will be sent home, w/c 26th June

Years 4, 5, 6 parents' evening: w/c Monday 3rd July

End of year trips: w/c Monday 10th July

Year 6 'Moving on up' celebration: Tuesday 11th July

### Upper school

Year 10 parents' information evening for qualifications - Thursday 2nd March

PET XI pupil skills booster sessions - Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd March

Year 9 reports - w/c Monday 6th March

Year 11 parents' information evening for qualifications - Thursday 9th March

Year 9 parents' and options evening - Wednesday 15th March

Year 11 prom - date to be confirmed

### Contact details

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