

PARENT NEWSLETTER



May 2024



A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Barely a newsletter or assembly goes by without me returning to our three key aims at Ysgol Nantgwyn:

- To ensure that all pupils have the best learning, outcomes and experiences.
- To enable all pupils to become and be amazing human beings.
- To all work together to have a nice day, every day.

We discuss how we achieve this through consistently demonstrating our values: that we are ready; that we are respectful; and, that we are responsible. We also note that it takes every single member of #teamnantgwyn to make this happen – pupils, parents, staff and governors.

Pupils and staff are expected to demonstrate these values consistently throughout the day, in and out of lessons, and they do that extremely well and make us feel very proud to have them as part of our team. Through the pupil leadership team consultation and pupil voice activities, as well as our Estyn report, our pupils state that they feel safe in school and that they are supported in their learning by a system that recognises positives and negatives to reinforce what we want for all pupils, in all lessons.

Over the past year, in response to pupil voice, we are making sure that there are more opportunities for us to recognise the very, very many positives that we see – in lessons by awarding positive points, verbal and written praise and stickers and in wider celebrations like assemblies where we have the opportunity to award certificates, applause and cheers from their peers and also our social media feed on Facebook (please follow us if you don't already).

We have also co-constructed with pupils and staff the parts of the system that we use when a pupil is not demonstrating our three values in a way that has a negative impact on another. These negative points and the system that they sit within are very well understood by pupils and they explain well how teachers use this to make sure that the class can learn productively at all times.

We have seen over the past years, the outcomes for our pupils improve in all year groups – their reading ages, the pathway points that they are attaining, the qualifications that they are getting in year 11 – and, as a school, our performance continues to improve and puts us in a very good position; from our positive Estyn report to our recognition by various stakeholders about our effective practices and their impact on pupils. It is this point that we make with pupils, from nursery through to year 11, that we are working together to be the very best that we can be...as individuals and as a whole school team and everything that we achieve, we achieve together - #teamnantgwyn.

The focus of this edition is looking at our systems for behaviour in school – both positive and negative. We consult at various points in the year and do so with parents using our parent forum meetings – if you would like to join the parent forum which meets each term for around an hour, please contact me on head@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk

With warm wishes,

Ms Laura Morris
Headteacher



Behaviour update

As part of our continuing development and improvement as a school, we have been working with staff and pupils to increase the information that we send to parents via the Classcharts app to support you in discussions with your child. Currently, parents just receive -1 and -2 negative consequence notifications however, moving forward, we would like to be able to give you a level of detail about the incident that has taken place.

The main element of the policy will remain the same in that we have a stepped gradual -1, -2 and -3 approach as below however for each of the levels you will be given some information to accompany, for example, -2 responsible – unsafe behaviour in class. We hope that this will be helpful and will be seeking to gain some feedback from parents at a point later in the half term.

Point	Behaviour	School actions	Communication
-1	Not following school rules	Warning is given Possible change of seats in class Short positive conversation -1 recorded on ClassCharts	None
-2	Persistently not following school rules in the classroom	Pupil has a short amount of time out Pupil is supported by another member of staff to talk about the incident and how to find a solution so the pupil can regulate their behaviour	ClassCharts feed
-3	Serious incident or has had multiple -2s throughout the day	Pupil goes to reset Pupil is supported to consider their behaviour by another member of staff potentially through emotional support session/nurture session Pupil stays in reset for the remainder of the day Pupil completes same day after school detention Pupil has positive restorative discussion with classroom member of staff at a point during the day (possibly in detention) to resolve any issues with returning to that class	ClassCharts feed
-4	Not following rules in reset (after a period of de-escalation)	Pupil is placed with a member of senior staff whilst we await a parental meeting	Phone call to request that parents attend the school for a meeting to discuss next steps

Independent learning

We call our homework independent learning and it is our expectation that all pupils complete this in line with the deadline. These independent learning tasks are published at the start of each half term. Pupils receive positive points for all tasks that they complete. Please could you encourage your child to complete these tasks - sheets are emailed to pupils and mailed to parents at the same time so that you are aware of the expectations for your child.

Why is independent learning important?

Independent learning tasks support and strengthen the learning that has taken place in class and, on occasions, is essential for helping to understand future learning. Independent learning supports your child in developing good study habits. Research shows that independent learning also benefits factual knowledge, self-discipline, attitudes to learning and problem-solving skills.



How can you support your child with their independent learning?

- Encourage your child to complete all of their independent learning.
- Break down tasks into manageable chunks.
- Establish a consistent routine where your child completes their independent learning.
- Remember that your child's independent learning is theirs, not yours. Support, but don't do it for them.
- Allow your child to get things wrong and try again.
- Talk about the learning and independent learning with your child.



Independent learning tasks can be found on the Ysgol Nantgwyn website:
<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/curriculum-and-learning/independent-learning>

Pupil leadership team:

The pupil leaders have been working hard to get their charity non-uniform day up and running. You will have seen their posters and the video on our social media pages stating who the charities are and why they are collecting money for their chosen charities. We look forward to seeing our Nantgwyn family pulling together and supporting the wider communities. We will shortly be looking for our pupil leaders for the next academic year. We will have lead pupils from the current year 9 and 10, and the current year 5. Next half term, we will begin the process, looking for information on how to support your children interested in becoming part of the pupil leadership team.



Outdoor learning:

Outdoor learning is now an embedded part of everyday life for lower school pupils learning. The past month has seen pupils complete an environmental week that allowed pupils to explore their surroundings and discover the learning opportunities they have as part of the outdoor provision. More recently, pupils have undertaken our sun safety week, which promoted how we all need to ensure we maintain good skin care and regularly hydrate ourselves as the temperatures start to get warmer. Please see the pictures below of pupils enjoying their outdoor learning here at Ysgol Nantgwyn.



Outdoor classroom:

I am sure everyone that has been on site recently would have noticed the new outdoor classroom that has been constructed in the Gwyn yard. This has been the vision of Ms Morris for the past year, and now she has delivered following feedback from both staff and, more importantly, our pupils. The news of the building came with great excitement, and this was increased as pupils watched the structure come together over a 3-day period. We have now tasked Mrs Roberts with the job of making the classroom a purposeful learning environment that gives our pupils a panoramic view of the valley in which they live.



Rights respecting schools

Article 26 of the UNCRC says that children and young people should get financial support to provide them with a good enough standard of living.

There are lots of ways in which we can support families with the cost of living at Ysgol Nantgwyn, from access to our pantry to advising families on grants that may be available to them.

More information can be found on the following links or contact your child's school team who will be happy to support.

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/well-being/cost-of-living-crisis-support>

School uniform grants:

Children whose families are on lower incomes and qualify for certain benefits can apply for a grant of:

- £125 per learner
- £200 for learners entering year 7 (to help with increased costs associated with starting secondary school)

All compulsory school years from reception to year 11 are eligible. Families are only entitled to claim once per child, per school year.

Further information is available here: <https://www.gov.wales/school-essentials-grant>

School uniform swap shop:

We have a significant amount of preloved and new school uniform available in Ysgol Nantgwyn. You are very welcome to swap items and/or donate a small amount in exchange for an item or take items. Uniforms are available via the Pantry or by arrangement with school teams. We also have 'pop up' events during the year.

The pantry:

The Pantry is open every Monday & Thursday 3-4pm, Tuesdays & Fridays 8.30-9.30am

Should you have any items that you are able to donate, please 'post' them in the blue bins in either Gwyn or Nant reception.





Contact details

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