

# PARENT NEWSLETTER



December 2024



# A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

And that draws the autumn term to a close. It has been fantastic to see our pupils celebrate being together in the final days of the term. We hope that our families that were able to join us for the Christmas concerts in Gwyn enjoyed seeing their children happy participating alongside their friends. They have worked really hard, with lots of practice and encouragement, to ensure that they were able to shine. And each of them did. In Nant, pupils have enjoyed their festive wear with some becoming increasingly adventurous in their outfits across the week. I have to say that I didn't quite imagine that we would have someone come to school in a full grinch costume, let alone the enormous slippers that made an appearance but it all made for a positive talking point.

We had carols around the tree with many wonderful performances from pupils across the school and a special visit from Santa on Tuesday, organised by the PTA. In the past few days, we have had our Christmas lunch together, Christmas parties, Christmas assemblies and performances all of which have been very enjoyable.

This break can mean different things for different people but I hope you get some time to rest and relax over the coming weeks. A big thank you from myself and all staff for all of your support – I know that getting children out of bed in the dark and wet mornings can be difficult, particularly during this extremely long term. Our return will start to see some longer, lighter days which I am sure we are all looking forward to. We all return to school at the usual times on Monday 6th January 2025 – I look forward to seeing pupils back in their normal uniform and hearing their stories from their break.

Have a wonderful break,

Laura Morris  
Headteacher

# Newsletter focus item:

## Careers

### Our commitment to pupils:

High quality careers education and guidance in school is critical to young people's futures. It helps to prepare them for the workplace by providing a clear understanding of the world of work including the routes to jobs and careers that they might find engaging and rewarding. It helps them to acquire the self-development and career management skills they need to achieve positive employment destinations. This helps pupils to choose their pathways, improve their life opportunities and contribute to a productive and successful economy.

We have a responsibility to set pupils on the path that will secure the best outcome which will enable them to progress in education and work and give employers the highly skilled people they need. At Ysgol Nantgwyn, we act impartially, in line with our statutory duty, and do not show bias towards any route, be that academic or technical.

We are committed to providing relevant and appropriate careers and work-related experiences for all our pupils, from nursery through to year 11, that enrich their classroom-based learning and raise their aspirations. We seek to open their eyes to a world where they are masters of their own destiny and where no career path is out of reach. This is our passion, our promise and our duty.



### Partnership Working

At Ysgol Nantgwyn, we work with a variety of different partners in order to provide the very best information, guidance and experiences for our pupils, whatever their age or ability. We want to ensure pupils have bespoke experiences that are of interest to them.

We work with partners such as Big Ideas Wales, Careers Wales, local colleges and sixth form providers, MPCT, Cynon Valley Organic Adventures to name but a few. We also take part in the RCT employability programme and work closely with the RCT Education, Employment and Training team in order to provide additional support such as the Green Light Project and application workshops in readiness for employment, college interviews or apprenticeships.



# Gyrfa Cymru Careers Wales

We have our very own allocated Careers Wales advisor based on site. Lorna Mackintosh works with pupils from year 7-11 in a variety of different ways as noted in the table below. We also liaise with our other links from Careers Wales; Rhian Thomas is our employer engagement officer, and she works closely with staff across the school to arrange bringing in a wide range of employers to promote careers and raise aspirations for our pupils. Rhys Davies is our curriculum consultant who works with staff as educational professionals, to develop and deliver a robust and effective careers programme in line with the new curriculum for Wales, as CWRE is one of the cross-cutting themes in line with literacy, numeracy and digital competency.

## **Here's how Careers Wales can support you and your child:**

**Flexible appointments:** Careers Wales are happy to offer appointments during lunch breaks, after school hours, and even during holidays. Just let them know what works best for you and your child.

**Online resources:** The Careers Wales website provides lots of information, with resources to help young people find out about a range of career ideas and make informed decisions. Please explore the website with your child. There are also web pages dedicated to parents, with information and tools to help you support your child to plan their future.

**Appointment with a Careers adviser:** They can offer a one-on-one session with their expert careers advisers. They are there to answer any questions, address concerns, and provide the guidance your child needs to plan their move from school to the world of work or further education.

To arrange, or ask for an appointment with our adviser please feel free to contact them at:

[lorna.mackintosh@careerswales.gov.wales](mailto:lorna.mackintosh@careerswales.gov.wales)

## **Some useful careers links can be found below:**

### **Lower school:**

Engineering Fairytales

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/parents/your-child-in-primary-school>

### **Middle school:**

<https://careerswales.gov.wales>

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/career-match-quiz>

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/job-information>

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/teach/careers-collection/zbvrt39>

### **Upper school:**

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/>

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/career-match-quiz>

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/job-information>

Career insights youtube channel

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/>

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/build-a-cv>

<https://careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/interview-techniques>



Please see an overview below of what each child can expect throughout their time at Ysgol Nantgwyn.

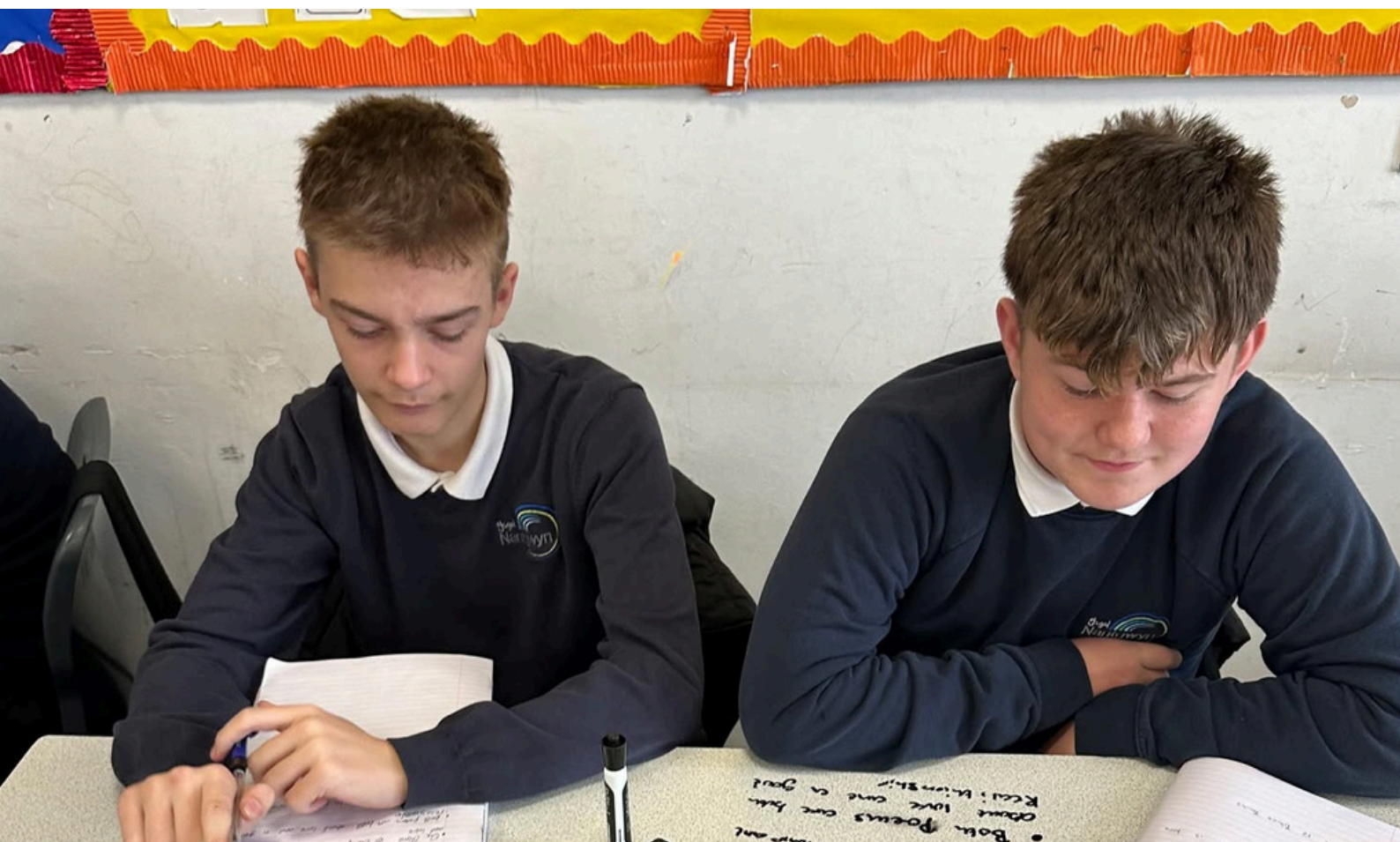
Year Group	Outline	Links/Reference/Additional details
Lower school	CWRE referenced, and specific lessons taught in line with the new curriculum. One experience per half term, mapped out in all schemes of learning.	<p><b>Nursery and reception:</b> The theme in the autumn term was 'me'. Pupils looked at the jobs they would like to do in the future and what family members and other relatives did.</p> <p><b>Year 1:</b> Within year 1 the children were learning about 'People' in the autumn term with careers linked to emergency service teams and how they work together to help those in need.</p> <p>Within year 2 and 3 our next theme this term is 'Disaster' and the pupils will look at how the various services work to help rescue and support people in need e.g. specialised search and rescue workers in earthquakes, RNLI and how volcanologists help to predict volcanic eruptions and evacuate areas at risk.</p>



Year Group	Outline	Links/Reference/Additional details
<p>Middle school years 4-6</p>	<p>CWRE referenced, and specific lessons taught in line with the new curriculum. One experience per half term, mapped out in all schemes of learning.</p>	<p><u>Year 4-</u>  Through the disease theme, pupils have learned about some of the jobs involved in health care and medicine. During the discovery theme pupils find out about careers linked to making discoveries. Pupils learn about astronauts and jobs within NASA.</p> <p><u>Year 5-</u>  During the theme of 'rights' pupils found out about the many careers involved within our justice system. Pupils found out about all the roles and responsibilities of people involved in a court case e.g. judge, lawyer, usher, clerk etc. Pupils then performed their own court room with pupils performing the roles of the different members of the court. During their conflict theme pupils will be finding out about careers in the military. As part of this they will use the Careers Wales website to find out the skills and qualities needed to be a soldier in the army and from this information they will write a letter of application explaining how they demonstrate these qualities and why they would make a good soldier.</p> <p><u>Year 6-</u>  Pupils discuss ambitions linked to careers. They research expected wages, qualifications, skills and qualities required and career paths needed. During their 'enterprise' theme pupils learn about businesses and entrepreneurs. They learn about the skills and qualities required to be successful entrepreneurs. They carry out a small enterprise project where they design, create and sell a product. They learn about the roles involved in business teams and carry out the Buzz Quiz on the Careers Wales website to discover what roles are best for them within their teams based on their personalities and attributes.</p>



Year Group	Outline	Links/Reference/Additional details
years 7 and 8	At least one real-life experience of the world of work for each pupil per year group. By the end of year 11. Pupils will have undertaken a minimum of 3 different experiences.	Year 7 – experience of working as a pupil receptionist. Year 8 – school-based experience working with younger pupils in Gwyn building.
year 9	Inspire me week Options process and support (see below) Careers experiences and talks prior to option selection.	External speakers – raising aspirations.  Year 9 – 1 week's external work experience.  Subject specific careers talks – within lessons.
years 10 and 11	Individual interviews with a level 6 trained Careers adviser, looking at pathways, destinations and future planning. Green light project (selected pupils) Mock interviews	Careers Wales dedicated careers adviser RCT EET team.  Mock interview process with real application and interview practice.  Real employers from the local community attend school and interview 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 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;

<b>Date</b>	<b>What?</b>	<b>Details</b>
Week 25th November and 2nd December	Careers fortnight	Pupils have a series of assemblies, workshops and information giving events with videos, activities and external speakers.
Week 9th December	Straw poll for pupils- this is where pupils pick their ideal subjects from a list of 30 subjects in order to generate the final options blocks	Pupils will complete the straw poll during registration sessions, attendance is vital.
Beginning of January	Options booklet sent home	An options booklet is sent home to parents providing information on all subjects available for pupils to choose from.
Throughout the spring term	Year 9 'Inspire me' employers and careers week	Pupils will take part in workshops which focus around careers and the world of work within their school day at Ysgol Nantgwyn.
Tuesday 29th January	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. Information to book appointments will be sent out via Classcharts.
February- March	Option blocks finalised	Option blocks will be finalised and released to pupils and parents.
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.



## Options process 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• art and photography</li><li>• media</li><li>• DT food</li><li>• Spanish</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• performing arts</li><li>• GCSE PE</li><li>• history</li><li>• BTEC sport</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• business studies</li><li>• ICT</li><li>• engineering</li><li>• German</li></ul>

\*\*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
- skills challenge certificate

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