

PARENT NEWSLETTER



February 2025



A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Another half term gone in what seems like a flash! It has, again, been a positive and productive half term. We do a full review on the learning and progress of every pupil four times a year and this has just been completed for the second time this year. This makes sure that all pupils are making good progress and we are able to identify areas of strength and areas for development to keep them moving forward in their learning. You receive this information through our interim reports (two a year) and the full written report (one a year) as well as in discussions at parents' evenings. It has been really pleasing to see standards continuing to strengthen throughout the school with the highest reading ages ever in the latest round of testing and good progress in all year groups, including years 10 and 11 who will be starting their assessment and examination seasons soon.

It was lovely to meet parents of year 7 pupils at the recent event on Monday 27th January where good fun was had by all. The activities put on were for families to participate in...trampolining, pizza making, painting...hopefully an opportunity for families to come in to get to know staff a little or a little more. It is different when children enter the secondary phase and it is important to us, as a school, that we are able to maintain and develop those relationships as you are such an important part of #teamnantgwyn

This newsletter focuses on our pupil leadership team that are in place this year and they really are quite a leadership team! It is really important to us, as a school, that our pupils feel that their views are listened and responded to and I am really pleased that, with the strong relationships that are evident between staff and pupils across the school, pupils often speak with members of staff to express their views. However, as a school of almost 1100 children it is really important that we have mechanisms in place to support ALL pupils in sharing their views and, essentially, working with us as a really important part of #teamnantgwyn to evaluate where we are and what we should be looking at next.

Over the past three years, pupil voice has been an increasing part of Ysgol Nantgwyn's practice and many changes have been put in place because of their views. These include things like:

- Re-furnishing the Nant dining room and re-decorating it to make it a warm, inviting space
- Changing some of the menu items available for breaks and lunches
- Having an outdoor classroom in Gwyn
- Introducing re-cycling in all areas of the school
- Making available additional outdoor seating and activities (outdoor table tennis tables)
- Creating an indoor sports space on a daily basis so that pupils can spread out more at lunchtimes
- Having more non uniform days to fundraise for pupil nominated charities

With almost 1100 pupils, not all ideas have been able to be put into practice. There were a couple of suggestions like 'zorb-balling' down the banking and 'axe throwing'...while these have become popular in recent years, I'm not sure they are suitable as a school activity! The important thing here is that pupils have been asked and we have taken on board their views and tried to put as many in place as is reasonable and possible. They have really valued being heard and it is important that this continues.

We are also very keen to hear the views of parents and do this through our parent forum. We have had a fall in people participating in this over the past months as, understandably, people have commitments. We would be delighted to hear from any parent that would like to start attending parent forum - it is one informal meeting of around an hour a term where we discuss aspects of what we do, consult with you on some proposals for change and answer any questions that you might have. Please do get in touch if you are interested - we'd be really pleased to hear from you.

With warm wishes,

Ms Laura Morris
Headteacher

Newsletter focus item:

Our pupil leadership team

In July of last year, some of our current year 11 pupils put themselves forward as potential candidates to represent us as part of our pupil leadership team for September 2024. From our list of almost twenty pupils, all our pupils across the school were responsible for selecting who they wanted to represent us for our year 11 team. This was completed through an extensive polling system where every form class had the opportunity to vote for their leaders based on the vision presented by the individual pupil. During this vote, our current year 11 pupils were asked to create a one-page profile to represent themselves and their ideas as potential leaders. Below are some examples of what our pupils produced:

Laylah Jones.

- What skills do you have for the role?
The skills I have for this role is creativity and I am a good listener and I can organise things in a neat and tidy way so that it's more easy for people to understand, I also have good communication skills when talking to people
- What do you bring to the team?
I bring encouragement and ideas to the team, I also bring communication and to some they find me easy to talk to if someone talks to me first but I will go ahead and out of my comfort zone and talk to someone first if they seem upset
- What is your top priority with the team?
My top priority is to get more sports equipment for outside as because there are only rugby balls, basketballs, and footballs when there used to be tennis balls, and land hockey balls. And also to bring more trips and activities possibly as there are only art, drama/music, and welsh trips so far

Abigail Brett

Skills I bring to the roll:

- Creativity
- Receptive to new ideas
- Listening Skills
- Flexible
- Respectful

What I bring to the team:

- Unique perspectives
- Open Mindedness
- Not pushy
- Encouraging
- Abstract Thinking
- Empathy

My priorities:

- Solving the issue of phones
- Looking at disciplinary system
- Revamping PE changing rooms
- More funding for art

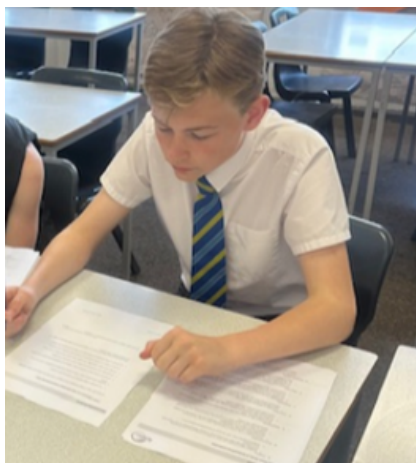
From this process, we managed to go from twenty potential leaders to six and I am very excited to share with you who these pupils are and what we have been doing so far as part of their role in the pupil leadership team!

Our pupil leadership team are:

- Abigail Brett
- Laylah Jones
- Deionne Baker
- Benjamin Goddard
- Bronwen Edwards
- Arianwen Edwards



During our first meeting as the pupil leadership team, pupils were given a copy of the pupil leadership handbook. This outlined their roles and responsibilities so that our team clearly understood what this role entailed and the importance of their presence across the school. Pupils were asked to sign their handbooks as an acknowledgement of this responsibility and below are some photos of this process:



Our pupil leadership team have been very eager to get straight into the role and have already allocated themselves into three subgroups where they will focus on an area of the school improvement plan. We have Abigal and Laylah who are currently focused on developing wellbeing and looking at extra-curricular opportunities and activities to enhance experiences for all our pupils across the school. Deionne and Benjamin are excited to delve into learning organisation where they will have the chance to evaluate teaching and learning across lower, middle and upper school. Both Bronwen and Arianwen are keen to work with pupils and teachers by looking at teaching strategies and pupil needs to ensure engagement and challenge are high across all areas of learning.

As part of their role, this week we have been running assemblies across the entire school to share their vision and ideas with pupils. This has involved our pupil leadership team presenting to pupils, explaining what their role is and explaining what our next steps are as a school. Our PLT team were amazing when delivering their assemblies and here are some photos of these taking place:



Some of the ideas that have been shared with pupils are a pupil voice box in different locations of the school for all pupils to share their opinions and ideas. They also discussed a meeting with form representatives that will take place next week to start important form time discussions to further develop our pupil voice. This will tie into our meetings with the headteacher and school governors and will be linked to the School Improvement Plan.

A final plan for this term will be creating our very own pupil leadership team noticeboard so that we have a visible presence in the school at all times. This noticeboard will include our key developments each term so that everyone is aware of the progress made by the pupil leadership team. Some very exciting times ahead with some very keen leaders so I look forward to updating you again on our ideas and the progress we have made!

The images below demonstrate the format of our leadership team, along with where their responsibilities lie. You can also see that alongside our team, we have form leaders from across all areas of the school and governors who work together to support our pupil leadership team.

pupil leadership team

