

PARENT NEWSLETTER



March 2025



A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

March has been an incredibly busy month for us here at Nantgwyn. We returned from half term to lovely spring weather, lighter mornings and evenings – all of which were very welcome! Pupils settled very quickly back into their learning with evident conscientiousness across all year groups whether it is learning sounds in reception, tricky words in year 2, working on collaborative presentations with our local primary schools in year 5, learning the ukelele in year 8 or getting our heads down in the last weeks of preparation for the GCSE examination season in years 10 and 11.

Ballet Cymru and the Duets programme visited us again at the start of the term to do workshops with pupils in years 4 and 5. 32 pupils were selected to access a free scholarship programme with the company over the next two years. As the only school in RCT, and one of very few across Wales, we are incredibly lucky and privileged to have this offer. We will update you on pupils' progress as we go along.

Older pupils had a fantastic trip to Disneyland Paris at the start of the month also visiting Paris and ascending the Eiffel Tower! All came home very tired but with very big smiles on their faces and memories that will last a lifetime

All pupils and staff took part in a very well dressed World Book Day. Thank you so much for supporting this event and creating a positivity around reading. The costumes were absolutely phenomenal and pupils had an amazing time throughout the day exploring reading and books in different ways, while also trying to work out who everyone was. Among the staff we had all of the Shrek characters, Paddington Bear, Little Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Wolf to name a few...

As a final note, this edition focuses on assessment. It is vital that we know where pupils are in their learning, the rate of progress that they are making so that we can plan appropriately for their next steps. Staff use a range of different ways of assessing pupils and while this could include a 'test' for older pupils, the information that a teacher can learn from a conversation with a child is vast...hearing them read, thinking about the vocabulary they are using in their talk and what knowledge they have. This edition will explain how we assess and what we record, as well as how we make sure that your child is making at least good progress at all points in time. There is further information on the website.

With warm wishes,

Ms Laura Morris
Headteacher



Newsletter focus item:

Assessment and progression

Assessment is an integral part of learning. Assessment lets teachers see what progress pupils are making and provides teachers with information which assists them to plan how to help pupils make further progress. Assessment at Ysgol Nantgwyn takes place in a variety of ways from more formal tests and exams to teacher observations and ongoing reviews of pupil work. Through ongoing assessment pupils get to know their strengths and areas that they need to develop, and how to improve and make progress.

PP0	PP1	PP2	PP3	PP4	PP5	PP6	PP7	PP8	PP9	PP10
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We use our 0 to 10 pathway points as an assessment system at Ysgol Nantgwyn so that we know where our pupils are and where they could be. Our pathway points are used for all pupils from nursery to year 11. Each pathway point has a set of skills and knowledge that characterise it. These are our non-negotiables...things that pupils need to know, things that they need to be able to do and learning opportunities that they need to experience. Each pathway point is split into three smaller steps. Pupils progress from c to b to a. An example is shown below.

0a	1a	2a
0b	1b	2b
0c	1c	2c

When we write reports, we will tell you what pathway point your child is working towards achieving at the end of the school year. We will also give information about national expectations and where your child’s learning is in relation to them.



Feedback for pupils

Throughout learning experiences your child will be given feedback. This may be in the form of a verbal comment from the teacher, written feedback, peer feedback or self-feedback. The most important part of the feedback process is the time for pupils to act on what they have been told or found out about their learning. Pupils will have the opportunity to respond to feedback in lessons during whole class feedback sessions and at summative assessment points throughout the year. At home, you can ask your child about their progress and how they are engaging with the feedback they have been given. You will also receive interim reports and an annual full report, during these times you can talk with your child about their progress and, importantly, how they will tackle their next steps.

Our remaining reports and parents evening for the year are as follows:

Date	Information
Beginning of April	Interim reports for N, R, years 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9, 10 and 11
End April	Year 8 full reports sent out via Classcharts
Thursday 8th May	Gwyn parents evening (1) Year 8 parents evening
June	Years 4,5, 6 and 7 full reports sent out via Classcharts Interim reports sent out via Classcharts for year 8
Wednesday 25th June	Gwyn parents evening (2) Year 7 parents evening
Beginning of July	Lower school reports sent out via Classcharts



Classcharts

At Ysgol Nantgwyn we use Classcharts as our main form of communication. You can use Classcharts to keep track of your child's behaviour, view attendance records and report your child's absence if they are unwell, access their weekly timetable and view announcements and messages. If you have more than one child, you can access Classcharts information about your children from a single, centralised parent account.

Classcharts for parents can be accessed via the Class Charts website, or through iOS and Android apps. You should have received your parent code for your child. If you have not received this please email:

lowerschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk
middleschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk
upperschool@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk



How do I
sign up?

1. Select Sign up from the main page and fill in the form provided. Enter your parent code into the access code field. Please note: your access code is not the same as your password. The access code is only needed for the initial sign up. A confirmation message will appear, indicating that the sign up process is complete. Verify your email address to continue.

2. Click on the sign up button below the form.

3. Confirm the pupil's date of birth when prompted. Click on the date of birth field and use the date picker to enter the correct date.

4. A confirmation message will appear, indicating that the sign up process is complete. Verify your email address to continue

More information on the features of Classcharts can be found on the Ysgol Nantgwyn website:

[Classcharts attendance reporting - Ysgol Nantgwyn](#)

Independent learning:

Independent learning has now been set for all year groups for the half term. It is our expectation that all pupils complete their independent learning to support alongside the learning that takes place in school. Parents should have received a copy via Classcharts and pupils via their email or Google Classroom area via Hwb. A copy can also be found on our school website:

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/curriculum-and-learning/independent-learning>

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 homework.
- Remember that your child's independent learning is theirs, not yours. 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.

To support pupils and parents when accessing Hwb and Google Classroom, the following information has been added to our school webpage.

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/parents-and-pupils/accessing-hwb-and-google-classroom>

Ballet Cymru

This time last year pupils in Gwyn welcomed Ballet Cymru in a series of workshops across the building. A year later and we saw pupils in year 4 and 5 take the experience to another level. Over the course of the day pupils enthusiastically engaged in sessions with the hope of going through to a scholarship program. Ballet Cymru professionals were so impressed with the standard and commitment of all pupils and struggled to decide who would get a call back. 50 pupils performed again in the afternoon and after much deliberation 32 pupils were chosen to embark on the Duets program. This is a fantastic opportunity that will see pupils take part in after school sessions every Wednesday, visit professional venues and work with the professionals at Ballet Cymru. The scholarship is worth over £3000 per pupil, and we are so lucky to be getting this fantastic opportunity for free and we are the only school in RCT to part of it. Wednesday 12th March saw our first after school session and all dancers gave their all, fully committing to the sessions and impressed beyond our expectations. This is the beginning of a two-year program that will go from strength to strength if this start is anything to go by!



Another year, another amazing World Book Day at Ysgol Nantgwyn!

Walking around the school buildings on Friday 7th March, it felt as though we had been transported onto the pages of our favourite childhood stories. You could have partaken of some pink milk or black tea with the lovable aliens the Smeds and the Smoos, been terrified by a sea witch or eaten a picnic of marmalade sandwiches with a very realistic Paddington Bear. Staff and pupils all looked fantastic and really got into the spirit of the day. Pupils across Gwyn and Nant took part in reading activities and competitions to celebrate the joy that reading is; some pupils dressed in their comfy clothes and pyjamas really looked ready to snuggle down and get their nose into a book.

For the first time this year saw us hosting a book fair to coincide with our World Book Day celebrations. This allowed pupils to really engage with new books and they were able to spend their World Book Day vouchers on the latest recommended reads. The book fair was a resounding success thanks to the support of our fantastic pupils and parents and over £1000 was taken over the three days it was open. This means that we have earned over £500 for the Gwyn library to continue to embrace our love of reading and choose new books to fill the shelves. The two book fairs this year have made over £1000 for our school libraries so thank you again for your support.



St David's day and Eisteddfod

On the final day of half term we celebrated our 2nd annual Ysgol Nantgwyn full school Eisteddfod. The talent on display across the school was incredible, from singers, musicians, dancers and artists and a huge congratulations to everyone for taking part. Branwen (melyn) were the house winners on the day.



Disney trip

This March we took a group of year 9, 10 and 11 pupils to experience the St David's day festival at Disneyland Paris along with other schools from across Wales. This year, we decided to have a day in Paris to experience the city. We started at the Arc de Triomphe where pupils explored the war memorial with them learning about the grave of the unknown soldier. We then walked to the Eiffel Tower where pupils ascended the Tower to take in the sights of Paris. We then spent 2 days in Disneyland experiencing Welsh culture outside of Wales. Pupils enjoyed spending time with staff and friends as they took in the magic of Disney. We finished our fantastic weekend watching the drone and fireworks display before making the journey home. Pupils were a delight to take, they represented Ysgol Nantgwyn well, made memories to last a lifetime and I look forward to next year's adventures.

Diolch o galon for your company and the fun and laughter you provided.

Year 6 visit to Cenin Renewable Energy Park

Year 6 had a great time at Cenin Renewable Energy Park before half term. The experience allowed pupils to gain a better understanding of what we can do to help the fight against climate change, what different types of renewable energy sources are available and how they work. Pupils also got to look inside a sustainable eco-house designed by Cardiff University.



Dark Skies experience

Year 4 had a visitor from Dark Sky Wales this half term as part of their 'Discovery' theme. The children enjoyed the sky at night and learnt all about the stars. Pupils discussed how our ancestors used the stars as a map of the world and how the calendar was shaped by this. A wonderful, immersive experience.



Year 5 and 6 football tournament:

The year 5 and 6 boys football participated in tournament in the first round of the schools cup in Pentre, last week. The team won 5 and lost 1 to finish as runners up. The team scored a total of 14 goals with Niall scoring 6 and Ollie scoring 4. Equally impressive was that the team only conceded 3 goals in six matches. A fantastic day of football and congratulations to the boys for reaching the second stage.



NBA Basketball

Nantgwyn had the honour to represent the NBA Franchise, the mighty 'Chicago Bulls' at the Jr NBA South Wales basketball competition this half term at the Cardiff Archers Arena.



Nantgwyn played 5 games in total against; Indiana Pacers, Cleveland Cavaliers, Sacramento Kings, Orlando Magic and Miami Heat. All games were thoroughly competitive and high scoring with some fine performances from a team that stuck to the job playing a host of Cardiff schools and others from across South Wales.

More impressively Nantgwyn were one of the earliest games of the day at 10.30am and the team also played out the last scheduled game of a tournament attended by 18 schools, in a thrilling 5pm fixture against Miami Heat.

Attendance and punctuality reminders

We would like to remind all our families of the importance of school attendance. We would like your support in setting the highest of expectations for your child's attendance, as you have a significant impact on your child's view of school and the importance of good attendance.

Research indicates, when pupils attend school regularly, they are more like to make friends, enjoy their learning, achieve better results, and increase their life chances. This is something we want for your child. As a result, our attendance target for your child(ren) is 95% or above this academic year.

We understand there can be genuine reasons for absence during the school year, and this target of 95% or above allows for 10-days of absence across the year for illness if needed. While some medical appointments unavoidably need to take place during the school day, it would be beneficial for your child's learning that all non-emergency appointments are booked outside of school hours. Likewise, holidays during term time do create gaps in your child(ren) education, as they are missing important opportunities and experiences. So again, we politely request that all holidays are booked for the school holiday period.

As a reminder, morning registration will take place at the start of school, that is 08.55 for lower school and 08.40 for middle and upper school. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U code) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed.

