

PARENT NEWSLETTER



October 2025



A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

As we move towards the end of the half term, I wanted us all to focus on something that plays a crucial role in every pupil's learning and overall success and one of our improvement priorities this year – attendance.

We all know that life can sometimes get in the way—illness, family commitments, or other reasons can occasionally prevent a child from coming to school. However, consistent school attendance is one of the most important factors in ensuring your child achieves their full potential.

At Nantgwyn, we are committed to providing the best possible education for every child. Ensuring regular attendance is an essential part of that commitment. With your support, we can make sure every pupil has the opportunity to succeed, not just academically but in all areas of their development.

We have had eight weeks this half term with an INSET day at the start of September and the end of October which means that pupils should have attended for 38 days in total by Thursday 23rd October. Small amounts of absence make a very big difference to pupils learning and progress but also their well-being as they miss out on experiences with their classmates.

Days missed	Attendance in days	Attendance percentage	Categorisation
1	37 of 38 days	97.4	Good
2	36 of 38 days	94.7	A slight concern
3	35 of 38 days	92.1	Concerned
4	34 of 38 days	89.5	At risk of persistent absence
5	33 of 38 days	86.8	Persistent absence

A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Why is attendance so important?

- **Continuous learning:** Each school day builds upon the last. When a child misses even one day of school, they can miss out on important lessons, discussions, and activities that help them progress. Even a few missed days here and there can quickly add up, leaving gaps in their learning that may be difficult to fill.
- **Building habits for the future:** Regular attendance not only helps pupils succeed academically but also sets the foundation for good habits in their future lives. Showing up every day teaches responsibility, time management, and work ethic—all qualities that will benefit them in adulthood.
- **Stronger connections:** School isn't just about learning from books. It's about learning to work with others, make friends, and develop social skills. Regular attendance allows children to build those vital relationships with their peers and teachers, which are important for their emotional and social development.
- **Early intervention:** If attendance is irregular, we can more quickly spot potential challenges your child may be facing which gives us the chance to offer support early on to prevent any long-term issues.

What can be done at home to support good attendance?

- **Establish a routine:** Encouraging your child to go to bed at a reasonable time and waking up with plenty of time to get ready for school can set them up for success each day.
- **Talk about attendance:** Discuss with your child why it's important to be at school. Help them understand that every day is an opportunity to learn, grow, and achieve something new.
- **Let us know about any issues:** If there are any underlying reasons why your child is having trouble attending school—whether it's related to their health, anxiety, or something else—please reach out to us. We are here to support both you and your child in overcoming any barriers to good attendance.
- **Be supportive:** If your child is reluctant to come to school, talk with them about their concerns and, if necessary, work with the school to address them. Our staff are always here to help!

Thank you for being such an important part of #teamnantgwyn. If you have any questions or concerns about attendance, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Thank you for your continuing support
Ms Laura Morris
Headteacher

Main focus item:

Attendance.

Attending school not only ensures that your child receives a high-quality education but also helps them build essential social skills and resilience. According to the Welsh Government's statistics, over 90% of pupils who attend school regularly achieve their expected outcomes, contributing to a 5% increase in overall attainment levels across Wales in the last academic year. Each day in school is an opportunity for learning, and when children are present, they benefit from direct interaction with teachers and peers, which enhances their understanding of the curriculum. Within our curriculum, we focus on developing not only academic skills but also personal and social competencies that will serve them well both now and in the future. Missing school can lead to gaps in knowledge, hinder academic progress, and affect your child's confidence. It can also create challenges in building relationships with peers and teachers, which are vital for their emotional and social development.

How can you support your child's attendance?

There are several ways you can support your child's regular attendance. First and foremost, establishing a consistent daily routine can make a huge difference. Encourage your child to prepare for school the night before by packing their bag, laying out their uniform, and having their lunch ready. This can help alleviate any morning stresses and make the transition to school smoother.

Additionally, it's important to talk to your child about the value of education and the exciting learning experiences awaiting them each day. Ask them about their day, their friends, and the things they enjoy learning. Showing genuine interest can motivate them to look forward to school with enthusiasm.

Who can support at school?

If any obstacles are preventing your child from attending regularly, please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of our team. Open communication between home and school is crucial, and we are here to support you and your child in any way we can.

We encourage you to contact your child's provision leader, who is available to discuss any support you may need. You can contact them via email at:

Lowersupport@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru

Middlesupport@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru

Uppersupport@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru



Reporting your child's absence using Classcharts

Should you need to report your child's absence to school, we ask that you do this as early as possible to ensure we are aware of this and so we can prevent any further communications being sent as a result. You can do this by following the steps stated below.

Step-by-step guide:

1. **Log in:** to the Class Charts parent app or website.
2. **Select your child:** if you have multiple children at the school.
3. **Click the "Report new absence" button:** or the "Report Absence" tab.
4. **Enter the date:** of the absence.
5. **Provide a reason:** for the absence.
6. **(Optional) Attach supporting evidence:** by clicking "Attach supporting evidence" and selecting your files.
7. **Click "Submit":** to send the report to the school.

Attendance % in one school year	Equivalent to number of days absent	Approximately	Equivalent number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	54 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	114 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	228 lessons
70%	59 days	12 weeks	342 lessons

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Don't miss out on the education you deserve.



Assessment at Ysgol Nantgwyn.

Assessment - in school processes

We record teacher's assessments on our school systems four times a year and this allows us to check that all pupils are progressing well. After teachers have put their assessment information into our systems, we enter into a process of academic review; this is where we look at the progress of every single pupil and discuss their next steps in their learning.

Assessment - pathway points and the rainbow road

We assess pupils against our Ysgol Nantgwyn pathway point system. This system runs from nursery all the way through to the end of year 11 and helps us to make decisions about where pupils are and what their next step is across the full range of the curriculum. Pathway points start at 0 and continue through to 10. Each is characterised by a set of knowledge and skills; we call these non-negotiables.

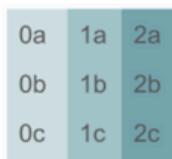
To make sure that all pupils are making at least good progress, we use a system called 'the rainbow road'. This looks at milestones in pupils' learning relative to the minimum national expectations. This system has been used at school and helps us to identify where pupils are doing really well in their learning and similarly, where further support is needed. It helps us to plan to make sure that all pupils' provision is right for them. 'The rainbow road' has been shared with all pupils and we return to these as we share assessment information. With this, we discuss how every pupils' attainment and progress is different but that the biggest factors that impact on these are attendance to school, approach to learning and completing independent learning.



We use our 0-10 pathway points as an assessment system at Ysgol Nantgwyn so that we know where pupils are and what their next steps could be.

Our pathway points are used for all pupils from nursery through 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 to the left.

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.

Assessment at Ysgol Nantgwyn.



ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESS

PATHWAY POINTS

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

We use pathway points from nursery to year 11 so that you know where you are and what your next steps could be.

A B C

THE RAINBOW ROAD



You will track your progress using the rainbow road. Your teachers will do this too.

FEEDBACK

You will have feedback every lesson.

You will have individual and whole class feedback regularly.

Use the feedback to improve your learning.

Full reports and interim reports - what does the information tell me?

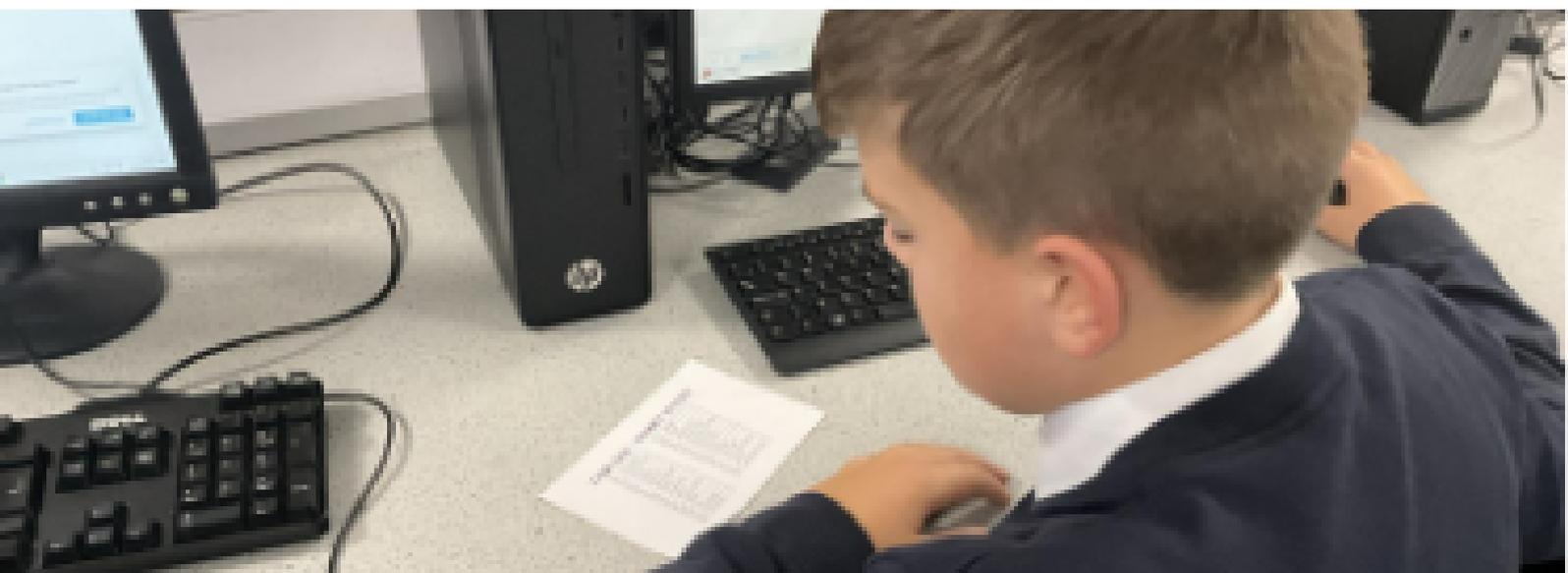
Your child will receive two interim reports and one full report over the school year. These will be shared with you through Classcharts.

The report information in an interim report will tell you what pathway point your child is expected to reach by the end of this year based on what they are currently demonstrating and how they are progressing against the non-negotiables. The report will also tell you whether this is in line with national expectations, or whether it is above or below. Further information about our pathway point system can also be found within the report.

Teachers assess your child continuously. At times, this could be a written test or assessment (for older pupils) but teachers also assess pupils more informally including by listening to the contributions that they make in class and with their group or person sat next to them, observing them play and learn, looking at the work that they have done during lessons, their conversations with them during the lesson and the answers that they write on mini whiteboards. All of this information is put together for the teacher to decide at which pathway point your child is working.

Your child's full report will include more detailed information from each of your child's teachers to tell you how your child is progressing in each subject area. Parent evenings follow each full report so that you can discuss the report in more detail.

Both interim and full reports will include information about your child's attendance so that you know whether or not your child is reaching their 95% attendance target and what they need to do to improve.



Assessment at Ysgol Nantgwyn.

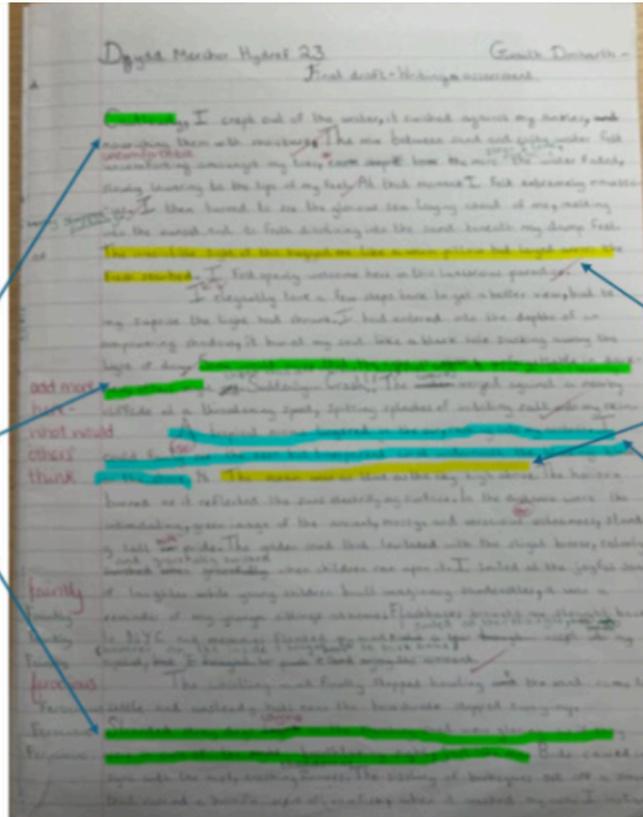
Here is an example of a literacy writing assessment completed by a year 6 pupil, in which they were required to write a descriptive piece about a beach setting based on their class novel, 'The Shark Caller'. This particular piece of writing demonstrates several non-negotiables outlined in our Ysgol Nantgwyn pathway points 5 and 6, highlighting the expectations we have for our learners.

PP5 I can use strategies including my understanding of root words to spell words.

PP5 I can use punctuation to mark and separate sentences and start to use speech marks commas and apostrophes.

PP5 I can change the order of words, phrases and clauses in my sentences by using different sentence types to add interest.

PP6 I can write using the correct tense most of the time.



PP6 I can write with a clear purpose and develop my main idea(s) with reasons, information and examples, showing awareness of the reader.

PP5 I can use a range of figurative language for effect.

PP6 I can use appropriate vocabulary including words and phrases that are linked to the subject or topic

Acti
Go to



What we have been doing!

Autumn exploring!

This month we have been really busy in reception class, learning about autumn and exploring all the different items we found on our autumnal walks. As a class we collected conkers, leaves and acorns. We enjoyed looking through all the different things we found. We also went on a shape hunt around the yard to find all the different shapes we are learning about.



Senedd visit

Year 5 have had a visit from Branwen Miles who works at the Senedd. She explained all about how the Senedd works, who represents us and what their role is. They also took part in a mock election. The yellow party won. Well done team melyn!

Congratulations to the winner of the European day of languages competition:

Saffron W 7B

European Day of Languages

European Day of Languages brought a buffet of delights to the language's corridor. From sweet waffle treats from the Netherlands, to Greek olives and Welsh cockles pupils were given the opportunity to try new flavours from round Europe. Learning a language is about more than the language itself, it is also embracing the cultures and traditions of other countries. We are so proud of how open the pupils were to try new things. Our biggest learning point was polenta is not cheese!



What we have been doing!



STEM

7C's science lesson following instructions to complete a DNA double helix. They had to match the base pairs to its corresponding pair, before following the instructions to fold their own double helix. This was in order to understand the structure.

Life

Strong showings from all our teams representing the school in rugby fixtures and at recent Rhondda Schools Rugby 15 a side tournaments. Year 8 are starting to show promise and beginning to gel as a team in recent performances. Year 10 finished 2nd place at their tournament and finally year 9 pictured, have won all of their games winning the RSR tournament, they now qualifying outright for the Welsh cup. Big praise to our year 7-9 girls players who also won their tournament outright and thanks to Miss Edwards for organising them. Well done to all players who have represented the school with pride this academic year. Keep it going!



Reading corner!

Learning to read is one of the most important skills your child will learn and like most parents you are probably looking for ways to encourage your child to read more- at any age!

Some of our top tips:

Here are some top tips for story time:

- make it a treat – introduce each new book with excitement
- make it a special quiet time – cuddle up!
- show curiosity in what you're going to read
- read the story once without stopping so they can enjoy the whole story. If you think your child might not understand something say something like 'Oh I think what's happening here is that...'
- chat about the story e.g. I wonder why he did that? Oh no, I hope she's not going to...

Our pupil reading recommendations:

Little Red Riding Hood- Kendal, year 1

The Butterfly Lion by Michael Morpurgo- Indie, year 4

To All the Boys I've Loved Before by Jenny Han- Daisy, year 11

Cirque du Freak by Darren Shan- Blake, year 7



Pupil leadership team (PLT) update:

PLT have had a busy month in their roles so far! They have met with our form representatives from across the school and conducted their first round of form rep discussions linked to learning, learning organisation and well-being. This feedback has been valuable in identifying key priorities and ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to participate in sharing their views and ideas. So far, PLT have discovered that pupils love interactive lessons and feel like there is an appropriate level of challenge across all lessons. They have also discussed attendance and strategies linked to improving this. Our form representatives have shared with PLT that they would love to see weekly rewards and even a pizza party as part of celebrating their attendance so our PLT are now looking at what could work and how soon we can implement these ideas. PLT have also delivered assemblies across the school to share what they have been working on and upcoming things for pupils to look out for. Below is a photo of our PLT during their assemblies!



Attendance reminders:

Attendance to school is essential. School attendance is important because it directly affects a pupil's academic attainment, social and emotional well-being, and future opportunities, including employment.

Consistent attendance helps pupils learn effectively, access necessary support, build relationships, and develop good habits for life, with research showing a strong link between missing school and lower educational outcomes.

Every pupil should be aiming for an attendance target of at least 95% to reach their full potential

Pupil absences should be reported via the Classcharts app.

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/parents-and-pupils/classcharts-attendance-reporting>

The infographic is divided into several sections with icons and text:

- Top Left:** Icon of a superhero flying. Text: "HIGH ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL GETS YOUR CHILD'S LIFE OFF TO A FLYING START!"
- Top Middle:** Icon of a line graph with an upward arrow. Text: "INCREASING ATTENDANCE BY JUST 5% CAN DOUBLE THE CHANCES OF GAINING GOOD QUALIFICATIONS"
- Top Right:** Icon of a calendar with "10%" written on it. Text: "MISSING TWO DAYS A MONTH MEANS A CHILD MISSES 10% OF THE SCHOOL YEAR"
- Far Right:** Icon of an open book. Text: "GOOD ATTENDANCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL Improves reading Writing + MATHS SKILLS"
- Middle Left:** Icon of a clock face with "IN" and "OUT" written on it. Text: "THERE ARE 175 DAYS A YEAR NOT SPENT IN SCHOOL PLENTY OF TIME FOR SHOPPING, HOLIDAYS AND APPOINTMENTS!"
- Middle Middle:** Icons of a pencil, a chef's hat, a key, a speech bubble, a musical note, a soccer ball, a person, and a Wi-Fi symbol. Text: "100s OF SUBJECTS | 1000s OF CLASSES ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES"
- Middle Right:** Icon of a clock face. Text: "TURNING UP JUST 5 MINUTES LATE EVERY DAY ADDS UP TO OVER 3 DAYS LOST IN THE YEAR!"
- Bottom Right:** Icon of a rocket, a person, and a lightbulb. Text: "MORE SCHOOL = HIGHER GRADES INCREASED CONFIDENCE MORE FRIENDS BRIGHTER FUTURE"

Bottom Section: Large white text on a dark blue background: "Every day in school makes a difference to your child's future."

Uniform:

As a reminder our school uniform expectations, based on parents and pupil consultation are as follows:

Bottoms:

Choose from grey tailored shorts, culottes, trousers, skirt, pinafore or Nantgwyn tartan skirt or pinafore.

Leggings, jeans, and sportswear are not permitted.

Tops:

Choose from a white or royal blue polo t-shirt or a white shirt or blouse. Where a white cotton shirt is worn, it must be accompanied by a Nantgwyn tie.

Choose from a plain and unbranded royal blue or navy sweatshirt, a royal blue or navy cardigan, or a navy v-neck knitted jumper.

A navy blazer may be worn if a pupil so wishes.

Hoodies are not permitted. Branded sweatshirts are not permitted.

Footwear

Any fully black sensible footwear including plain black trainers with black soles. No additional colours are permitted on footwear.

Crocs, high heels, flip flops are examples of footwear that is not sensible for the school environment.

Should a Nant pupil arrive at school wearing an item of clothing that is not school uniform, we will be in contact with parents to bring their uniform to school.



School and community support:

Preloved uniform

We have a large selection of preloved uniform for all ages groups available. Items have been checked, washed and ready to be rehomed so please pop into main reception if you would like to take a look or pop us an email and we can check sizes for you beforehand. We do have a rough pricelist for items however there is no obligation to donate. Any funds raised are put back into the hardship fund to support our families.

Foodbank partnership

If a situation arises and you find yourself in need of foodbank support, please reach out and we can issue an emergency voucher in partnership with the local foodbanks. Contact main reception or email AdminYN_5@hwbcymru.net.

Dinner account balances

There is a machine in the pupil entrance foyer for pupils to check their lunch balances as often as they need to or you are welcome to contact the catering to check your child's balance as and when required Nant.Kitchen@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru.

Schools essential grant

The purpose of the grant is to provide assistance to families on lower incomes for the purchase of various school items. For more information, <https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/ChildrensServices/HelpandSupportforFamilies/Informationforfamilies/Financialsupportforfamilies/SchoolEssentialsGrant2526ForSeptember2025yeargroups.aspx>

ONLINE CONTENT

10 tips to keep your children safe online

The internet has transformed the ability to access content. Many apps that children use are dependent on user-generated content which can encourage freedom of expression, imagination and creativity. However, due to the sheer volume uploaded every day, it can be difficult for platforms to regulate and moderate everything, which means that disturbing or distressing images, videos or audio clips can slip through the net. That's why we've created this guide to provide parents and carers with some useful tips on keeping children safe online.



1 MONITOR VIEWING HABITS

Whilst most apps have moderation tools, inappropriate content can still slip through the net.



2 CHECK ONLINE CONTENT

Understand what's being shared or what seems to be 'trending' at the moment.



3 CHECK AGE-RATINGS

Make sure they are old enough to use the app and meet the recommended age-limit.



4 CHANGE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Make accounts private and set content filters and parental controls where possible.



5 SPEND TIME ON THE APP

Get used to how apps work, what content is available and what your child likes to watch.



6 LET CHILDREN KNOW YOU'RE THERE

Ensure they know that there is support and advice available to them if they need it.



7 ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING

Talk about what people might post online and why some posts could cause distress.



8 LEARN HOW TO REPORT & BLOCK

Always make sure that children know how to use the reporting tools on social media apps.



9 KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE

If a child sees distressing material online, listen to their concerns, empathise and offer reassurance.



10 SEEK FURTHER SUPPORT

If a child has been affected by something they've seen online, seek support from your school's safeguarding lead.

Parent forum update:

Our parents forum are a group of parents that meet informally once per half term to learn a little bit more about the school and also give a parent view on items that we are developing. Your voice as parents is really important to us and it is the hope that this will strengthen the communication that we already have.

Aims:

- To become aware of the perspectives of pupils, parents, staff and governors
- To learn more about what happens when pupils are in school
- Meet some of our pupils and staff and learn about what they think
- Share the views of our parents
- Share information about the community
- Explore views on specific concerns or issues
- Consult on potential developments in school

Please complete the following form if you are interested in joining:

<https://forms.office.com/e/dLercFLfQ8>

2nd October- Parent forum meeting update

School items consulted with parents:

Times of the school day

A discussion took place regarding the start and end times of the day, statutory duration of the school day and learning time, current break and lunch times and the current structure and number of lessons in the school day.

School items shared that are currently happening:

Changing rooms and enhancing sports hall

The group visited our new PE changing rooms in Nant building and make suggestions for upgrading the sports hall and currently facilities, including lockers which will be discussed further with the pupil leadership team to gather pupil opinion.

The session ended with a walk around Nant building for the group to see our facilities and get to know the school.

Parents item:

Parents nominated theme/aspect for the agenda next time

The group will think about this agenda item and bring ideas to the school.

Specific questions from different year groups.

Toilets: how more pupils can be encouraged to use at break and lunch, ensuring they feel comfortable to do so. Pupil voice will be carried out in this area.

Parent feedback:

Your feedback as parents is always important to us.

This month we would like to consult with parents regarding our newsletter. Please could you take 5 minutes to complete our survey:

<https://forms.office.com/e/uwC3ABKQG3>

Contact details

lowersupport@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru
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