

PARENT NEWSLETTER



December 2025



A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

A heartfelt thank you to all Nantgwyn families for your incredible support over the past fifteen weeks. The autumn term is often considered the most challenging in education – it's the longest, the days grow shorter, and sometimes the brightest moments are those spent in school. The weather can make getting out and about less enjoyable, and we know it can be harder to get children up and ready, with extra work drying coats and shoes. Please know how much we appreciate everything you do to help your children make the most of each day.

Although the term is long, it brings a wealth of learning opportunities. We've seen pupils make significant progress, which you'll have noticed in interim reports and conversations at home. Recent reading assessments show that we continue to have the highest proportion of pupils reading at or above their chronological age – a vital foundation for accessing the full curriculum. Reading skills grow alongside speaking and listening, and all three influence writing quality. The time you spend talking with your child, reading together, listening to them read, or simply giving them a quiet moment with a book is invaluable. Please keep this going over the festive break – even twenty minutes of shared reading can be a welcome pause amid the December bustle.

We've ended the term on a high, with Christmas jumpers, singing, parties, concerts, and carols around the tree – a truly joyful celebration.

Looking ahead, we'll share the events calendar for next term soon. We've loved connecting with you more often and in informal ways – Gwyn assemblies, school tours, meet-my-teacher sessions, celebration evenings, and transition events have helped strengthen our partnership. We look forward to continuing this in the new year.

Our governors' annual report is attached to this newsletter. On behalf of #teamnantgwyn, I'd like to thank our governing body for their dedication to ensuring the very best for our children and community.

Finally, I wish you all a restful, relaxing holiday and look forward to welcoming you back in 2026.

Warm wishes,
Laura Morris
Headteacher



Main focus item:

ALN.

Nantgwyn, we believe that every child deserves the opportunity to thrive in an environment where they feel valued, respected, and supported. Inclusive education is at the heart of our ethos—it ensures that all pupils, regardless of ability or need, can learn and succeed together. This edition of the newsletter focuses on pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and how, working as a team, we can ensure the best possible outcomes and experiences for pupils' learning.

It is important to note that all children may experience challenges with their learning at some point and for most children, these difficulties overcome with support from teachers and home. However, children with ALN are likely to need extra or different help to be able to learn.

Supporting pupils with additional learning needs is not just about meeting statutory requirements; it is about creating a culture of understanding and empathy. When we embrace diversity in learning, we help every child develop confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging. This benefits not only those with additional needs but enriches the experience for all learners.

We work closely with families, specialist staff, and external agencies to provide tailored support that meets individual needs. Your insight, communication, and collaboration help us better understand your child's needs and ensure we are providing the right support at the right time. By working together, we can ensure that every child reaches their full potential.

Thank you for your continued support in making Ysgol Nantgwyn a truly inclusive school.

Nantgwyn has experience of meeting different needs including: general learning difficulties, dyslexia, autism spectrum condition, hearing impairment, visual impairment, speech, language and communication difficulties and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.

The Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act

- The ALN Act replaces the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice and terms including Statement of SEN, School Action and School Action Plus will no longer be used.
- Pupils with Additional Learning Needs who require Additional Learning Provision (ALP) will have an Individual Development Plan (IDP).
- Additional Learning Provision refers to a higher level of support beyond the scope of the school's standard provision for all pupils.
- Additional Learning Provision is defined by the Act as 'educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that generally made for others the same age.' (Section 6.11)
- Pupils with support needs will be identified to staff, they may also have a support plan.
- ALN information for parents/carers – click [here](#)
- ALN information for pupils – click [here](#)



Main focus item:

ALN.

Some key points:

- Some children may have ALN because of a medical condition or disability, other children may have ALN without a diagnosis or disability.
- Children are not necessarily considered to have ALN if they do have a diagnosis.
- Children are not considered to have ALN just because their first language is not English or Welsh.
- A child would not have ALN if their lack of progress or learning difficulties can be addressed through differentiated teaching of the kind that is usually available in schools.

If you have concerns about your child's learning or well-being, please get in touch. We are a team that works together.

From RCT Additional Learning Needs principles document:

"Rhondda Cynon Taf is committed to ensuring that all learners have access to excellent schools that deliver high-quality education that enables them to achieve the very best possible outcomes they are capable of and realise their ambitions. This is reflected in our mission statement 'To deliver equity and excellence in Education and enhanced wellbeing for all'. In doing so, Rhondda Cynon Taf ensures that it is compliant with the statutory requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act (Wales) 2018 and its supporting mandatory Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code for Wales 2021.

The aim of the Code is:

- To support the creation of a fully inclusive education system where all children and young people are given the opportunity to succeed and have access to an education that meets their needs and enables them to participate in, benefit from, and enjoy learning.

The key principles underpinning the ALN system in Wales are as follows:

- A rights-based approach where the views, wishes and feelings of the child, young person and their parents / carers are central to the planning and provision of support; and the child, young person and their parents / carers are enabled to participate as fully as possible in the decision-making processes. This can be achieved through the implementation of Person-Centred Practice (PCP).
- Early identification, intervention and effective transition planning where needs are identified and provision put in place at the earliest opportunity.



What we have been doing!



In languages and culture we have been busy developing the expressive arts experiences for pupils both in lessons and extra-curricular.

Our Nant school choir has grown to over 30 members and we are looking forward to our first performance on the 15th December. In lessons we have developed media and film studies into our curriculum broadening the learning.

In art year 8 have been looking at how different artists portray emotions in their work and showing how we understand their intentions by creating our own.

In year 9 and year 7 we have been asking the question "Does engaging in the arts increase our sense of belonging and our mental health?" We have looked at the data, analysed it and came up with our own reasons as to why it absolutely does.



What we have been doing!



Middle school pupils had an amazing time in Llangrannog taking part in activities in a very Welsh setting!



What we have been doing!

In mathematics and numeracy this half term we have been developing our financial literacy and understanding with pupils in year 7 and year 9. We had visits from HSBC working with pupils in year 7 to look at bank accounts and how to sensibly and safely save money. Year 9 were able to think ahead about their future career paths, exploring what this route might look like. Year 9 have also started to take their first assessments for their financial literacy qualification – it has been lovely to see them developing their financial understanding over the term.

We have also been applying our learning from business studies lessons to real-life contexts. Pupils were given a failing chocolate brand and asked to re-brand and relaunch the company. They looked at all aspects of the marketing mix and came up with some great ideas for ways to improve the brand, presenting their ideas to their peers in lessons.



What we have been doing!

An amazing visit to Cardiff Bay today to see Mary Poppins in the Wales Millennium Centre made even more special by all the year six pupils across Pontrhondda, Cwmclydach, Llwynypia and Williamstown being with us.



We have come to the end of this year's Transition Thursdays. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with so many children from across the cluster and we're really looking forward to welcoming you all again across events in the spring and summer term!



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 reading for learning:

- Create rituals: Set aside cosy times for reading, like by the fire or during festive breaks, to make it a special part of your Christmas holiday.
- Variety is key: Don't stick to one genre; mix in Christmas classics, winter mysteries, heartwarming winter tales or even magazines and cookbooks for fun.

CHRISTMAS READING CHALLENGE
THE 12 CHALLENGES OF CHRISTMAS

Read a Christmas themed book <input type="checkbox"/>	Have a whole family bedtime story <input type="checkbox"/>	Create a puppet show of a book <input type="checkbox"/>
Read a story by the Christmas tree <input type="checkbox"/>	Read a book that is older than you <input type="checkbox"/>	Build a den and share a story in it <input type="checkbox"/>
Read a story about an animal <input type="checkbox"/>	Read a book about kindness <input type="checkbox"/>	Share a story with someone over Zoom <input type="checkbox"/>
Draw a picture from your favourite book <input type="checkbox"/>	Share a poem with someone <input type="checkbox"/>	Read a book that makes you laugh <input type="checkbox"/>

TIS THE SEASON TO GET READING!



Pupil leadership team (PLT) update:



The Pupil Leadership Team (PLT)

The role of PLT is important because we are the voice of pupils and we speak to senior leadership team and teachers, we have also spoken to the form reps from each class in every year. The experiences we have had so far are running cake sales, raising over £70 and running a Halloween disco for our Gwyn pupils. We have also done non-school uniform days such as doing one for Children in Need and we raised nearly £400 for Children in Need.

The role of PLT is important because we try to widen every opportunity available to pupils. As PLT we know what it's like to be a pupil, we know what pupils need, what pupils want and more importantly we listen. It's important because the pupils need someone to relate to, someone to talk to. Our role is essential in ensuring that pupils feel like they belong, pupils feel like they're heard, and that pupils feel appreciated in the school environment. As PLT we take the role in our school to enhance the opportunities, the well-being, the experiences and so much more. We work towards making sure every pupil feels valued, like they're apart of our school. This has been evident in our own school improvement plan aspect linked to developing a sense of belonging across the school.

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 a grid of 12 blue panels with white text and icons. The top row includes: a superhero icon with 'HIGH ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL GETS YOUR CHILD'S LIFE OFF TO A FLYING START!'; a line graph icon with 'INCREASING ATTENDANCE BY JUST 5% CAN DOUBLE THE CHANCES OF GAINING GOOD QUALIFICATIONS'; a calendar icon with '10%' and 'MISSING TWO DAYS A MONTH MEANS A CHILD MISSES 10% OF THE SCHOOL YEAR'; and an open book icon with 'GOOD ATTENDANCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL Improves reading Writing + MATHS SKILLS'. The middle row includes: an 'IN OUT' clock icon with 'THERE ARE 175 DAYS A YEAR NOT SPENT IN SCHOOL PLENTY OF TIME FOR SHOPPING, HOLIDAYS AND APPOINTMENTS!'; an icon of various subjects with '100s OF SUBJECTS | 1000s OF CLASSES ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES'; a clock icon with 'TURNING UP JUST 5 MINUTES LATE EVERY DAY ADDS UP TO OVER 3 DAYS LOST IN THE YEAR!'; and an icon of a graduation cap with 'MORE SCHOOL = HIGHER GRADES INCREASED CONFIDENCE MORE FRIENDS BRIGHTER FUTURE'. The bottom section is a large blue banner with white text: '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>

Parent feedback:

Your feedback as parents is always important to us.

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

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

Well-being:

December Kindness 2025

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

- 1 Spread kindness and share the December calendar with others
- 2 Contact someone you can't be with to see how they are
- 3 Offer to help someone who is facing difficulties at the moment
- 4 Support a charity, cause or campaign you really care about
- 5 Give a gift to someone who is homeless or feeling lonely
- 6 Leave a positive message for someone else to find
- 7 Give kind comments to as many people as possible today
- 8 Do something helpful for a friend or family member
- 9 Notice when you're hard on yourself or others and be kind instead
- 10 Listen wholeheartedly to others without judging them
- 11 Buy an extra item and donate it to a local food bank
- 12 Be generous. Feed someone with food, love or kindness today
- 13 See how many different people you can smile at today
- 14 Share a happy memory or inspiring thought with a loved one
- 15 Say hello to your neighbour and brighten up their day
- 16 Look for something positive to say to everyone you speak to
- 17 Give thanks. List the kind things others have done for you
- 18 Ask for help and let someone else discover the joy of giving
- 19 Contact someone who may be alone or feeling isolated
- 20 Help others by giving away something that you don't need
- 21 Appreciate kindness and thank people who do things for you
- 22 Congratulate someone for an achievement that may go unnoticed
- 23 Choose to give or receive the gift of forgiveness
- 24 Bring joy to others. Share something which made you laugh
- 25 Treat everyone with kindness today, including yourself!
- 26 Get outside. Pick up litter or do something kind for nature
- 27 Call a relative who is far away to say hello and have a chat
- 28 Be kind to the planet. Eat less meat and use less energy
- 29 Turn off digital devices and really listen to people
- 30 Let someone know how much you appreciate them and why
- 31 Plan some new acts of kindness to do in 2026



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together

The festive season can be different for many families for lots of different reasons. A range of support can be found on our school website:

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/well-being>



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>

November- Parent forum meeting update

Pupil attendance:

Discussion around improving pupil attendance to school. Discussion focused around the following questions:

1. Do you know the current attendance of your child?

Parents from year 6, 7, 9 and 11 present- all knew the attendance of their child from Classcharts, letters or recent interim report or some knew that their child hadn't missed a day this term.

2. What are the main general challenges your child faces that may affect their attendance at school?

Generally no challenges. Year 11 sometimes distractions to learning with busy classroom and parent mentioned that perhaps transport or not having correct uniform could be an issue for some pupils. Discussed provisions in place to support.

3. Do you know how to report your child's absence to the school?

All parents confirmed this was a quick and very easy process through Classcharts, but queried when absence messages were picked up, explained this was through the day.

4. What support or resources do you think the school could offer to help improve attendance?

Parents would like more updates of their child's attendance such as Classcharts message each term of the figure and the equivalent in days or a notification if their child's attendance was dropping. Parent would like school to look into a way that they could see child's attendance to lessons and Q room to monitor.

Parent queried how pupils 'catch-up' on missed work and school explained how the Google Classroom was used by teachers to upload the work for pupils.

5. How well do you feel the school communicates with you about your child's attendance?

All parents thought that communication was good.

6. What incentives or strategies do you think would motivate pupils to attend school more regularly?

Ideas such as a treat afternoon were discussed. Pupils do not always like to receive certificates publicly in upper school reward assemblies.

7. Are there any changes you'd like to see in school policies or routines that could help improve attendance?

A school day that suits needs and an area for pupils to keep belongings when they have a busy day.

Contact details

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