PARENT NEWSLETTER



October 2026

Ysgol Nantgwyn

A NOTE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear parents,
As we reach the midpoint of this term, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continued support and to celebrate the many successes we have seen across our school community. It has been a wonderfully positive and productive start to the year, and I have been delighted by the enthusiasm, commitment and positivity shown by our pupils from nursery through to year 11. Every class is engaging well with their learning, demonstrating curiosity, resilience and a real desire to succeed across the curriculum.

One of the exciting developments this year has been the introduction of our new caru dysgu curriculum in year 7. This approach is enabling pupils to continue the thematic, interconnected style of learning that they have enjoyed throughout primary school, supporting a smooth and engaging transition into secondary education. It has been fantastic to see pupils embracing opportunities to make links between subjects and develop a deeper understanding of their learning through meaningful contexts such as their current one of 'transformation'. Please do ask your child to share their learning with you at home and have a look through their books.

We have also continued to offer our highly successful immersion lessons, where pupils have been able to nominate topics and skills they would like to learn. These sessions have provided rich opportunities for pupils to develop new interests, work collaboratively and build confidence. Experiences this half term have included learning British Sign Language, crochet, cooking, and a range of other engaging activities. It has been wonderful to see pupils demonstrating such enthusiasm for learning beyond the traditional curriculum.

Our youngest pupils have also had an exceptional start to the year. The children in nursery have settled brilliantly into school life, quickly establishing routines, making new friendships and approaching each day with smiles and excitement. We are incredibly proud of how well they have adapted to their new environment.

As we look ahead to the second half of the term, I would like to emphasise the importance of excellent attendance. Every day in school matters. When pupils miss a day of learning, they miss valuable teaching, opportunities to practise new skills and important interactions with their peers. Whilst a single day's absence may seem insignificant, these small gaps can accumulate over time and negatively impact learning, making it more difficult for pupils to keep pace with their classmates.

Research consistently shows that when attendance falls below 95%, and pupils miss nine or more days across the school year, there can be a significant impact on both progress and achievement. Regular attendance is one of the most important factors in ensuring pupils reach their full potential. We therefore ask for your continued support in ensuring your child attends school every day unless they are genuinely unwell and unable to do so.

Thank you once again for your ongoing partnership. Together, we can ensure that every child continues to thrive, enjoy their learning and achieve success. I look forward to seeing all that our pupils accomplish during the remainder of the term.

With warm wishes,

Laura Morris (Ms)

Headteacher

Ysgol Nantgwyn

What we have been doing!

Lower school

October has been another exciting month of learning, and we have been lucky to enjoy plenty of outdoor learning opportunities while the weather has been kind to us!

From our nursery pupils making autumn soup in the mud kitchens, to year 1 working together to build a 100 square and creating fantastic chalk drawings inspired by Frida Kahlo on the yard, there has been so much creativity and exploration taking place. Year 3 have also made the most of the fantastic views from our school, using the beautiful Welsh landscape as inspiration for their poetry writing about Wales. It has been a busy and exciting month, filled with purposeful, creative and memorable learning experiences.





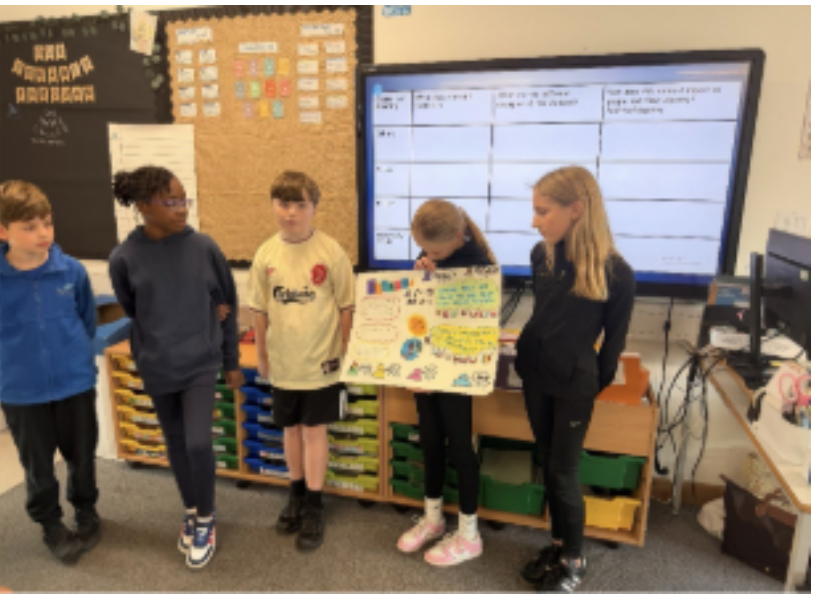


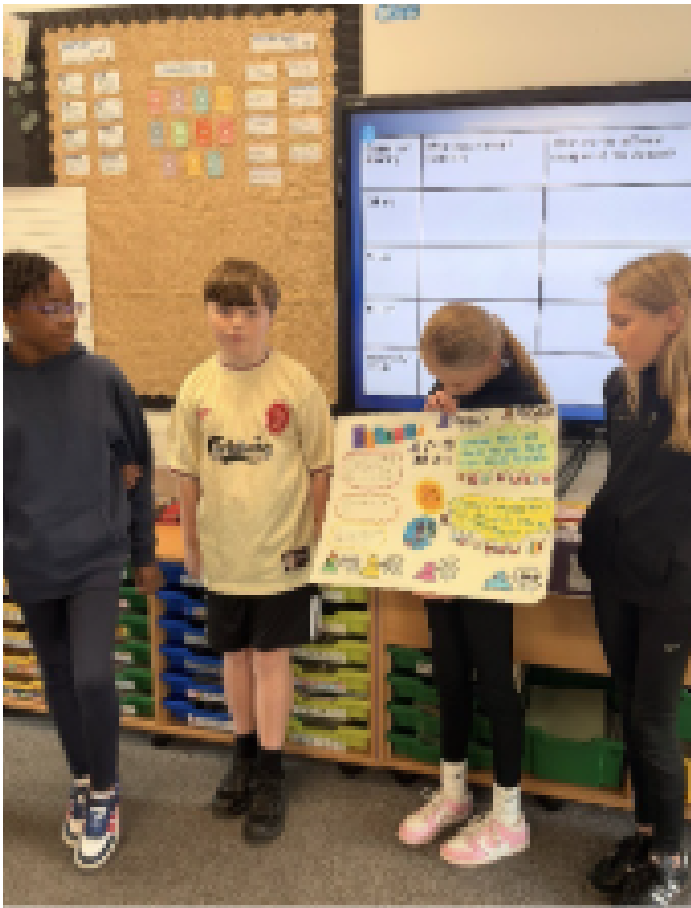


What we have been doing!
Middle school-Gwyn

Year 4 recently visited Techniquest in Cardiff, where pupils enjoyed taking part in a wide variety of engaging STEM activities. The interactive experiences encouraged pupils to explore scientific and technological concepts in a fun and practical way, while also developing their problem-solving and teamwork skills. Pupils showed great enthusiasm throughout the visit and enjoyed working together to tackle different challenges. In STEM, pupils have been developing their understanding of electrical circuits through hands-on exploration. They experimented with wires, bulbs, batteries, motors and ammeters, testing different combinations to see what worked and what didn't. Pupils took ownership of their learning, demonstrating excellent problem-solving, teamwork and resilience as they investigated and improved their circuits. Year 6 have continued exploring their autumn theme, identity, investigating how culture, beliefs, values and personality shape who we are. Inspired by Mike Barrett, pupils created identity portraits that celebrate what makes them unique. In Literacy, they have used The Shark Caller to develop inference skills, explore characters' emotions and decisions, and enhance their vocabulary and descriptive writing.









Faculty Focus!
Languages and culture

A busy and exciting start to the year in languages and culture. We have explored new ways of creating art, drama and music, with new staff joining team Nantgwyn. In languages we have continued to learn about the language and culture of Wales and Spain. On the 26th of September we celebrated European day of languages with food tasting from around Europe.







KEY DATES FOR PARENTS

autumn term 2026

Ysgol Nantgwyn

15 September 2026
Year 7 to year 9 school photos

17 September 2026
Year 5 and year 6 open evening

17 September 2026
Lower school phonics session for parents

28 September 2026
Year 11 assessment week

28 September 2026
Years 2 to 9 national testing for reading and numeracy

1 October 2026
Year 10 and year 11 qualification information evening for parents

2 October 2026
Nursery to year 6 school photos

21 October 2026
Lower school phonics session for parents

22 October 2026
Year 11 mock interviews

23 October 2026
All pupils • INSET day

2 November 2026
All pupils • return to school

6 November 2026
Gwyn pupils' books come home for the weekend

10 November 2026
Year 4/5 parent assembly & open afternoon

13 November 2026
All pupils • Children in need (further information to follow)

16 November 2026
Year 10 assessment week

19 November 2026
Gwyn parent evening 1

19 November 2026
Past year 11 certificate evening: Class of 2026

26 November 2026
Gwyn parent evening 2

26 November 2026
Year 11 parent evening

17 December 2026
Nursery and reception Christmas concerts

18 December 2026
Year 1 to year 6 Christums concerts

18 December 2026
All pupils • last day of autumn term

4 January 2027
All pupils • INSET day

5 January 2027
All pupils • return to school

Ysgol Nantgwyn

READY RESPECTFUL RESPONSIBLE

Future Starts Here

Key Dates 2027

ASSESSMENTS • EXAMS • DEADLINES

Information for pupils and parents (Years 10 & 11)

Plan ahead
Work hard
Be proud

Important dates for your diary!

JANUARY 2027

New year
New goals!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment
04.01.27 – 18.01.27	GCSE January Examination series
05.01.27 – 22.01.27	Yr11: Science: section A: practical examination
25.01.27 – 05.02.27	Yr11: Science: section B: theory examination
w/c: 25.01.27	Yr10: English: unit 2 – speaking and listening – task B
w/c: 11/01/27	Yr11: assessment week 2 of 2

FEBRUARY 2027

Keep going!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
05.02.27	Yr11: RVE – coursework submission deadline
05.02.27	Yr11: Skills – individual project – 1st submission deadline
During Yr11 lessons - hand-in 19.02.27 (Draft #1)	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment
23.02.27 – 26.02.27	Yr11: Welsh: unit 2: speaking & listening

MARCH 2027

Progress every day!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
w/c: 01.03.27	Yr11: Physical education – practical moderation day
01.03.27	Yr10 & Yr11: SWEET deadline (2 of 3)
05.03.27	Yr11: Health and Social Care – coursework deadline
05.03.27	Yr11: History – coursework deadline
05.03.27	Yr10 & Yr11: English coursework deadline
12.03.27 (Final submission)	Yr11: Skills – individual project – Final submission deadline
w/c: 15.03.27	Yr10: English: unit 3 – task B
19.03.27	Yr11: targeted completion date for all VQ/BTEC courses

APRIL 2027

Stay focused!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment
w/c: 05.04.27	Art: 2-day Examination – final portfolio
w/c: 05.04.27	Photography: 2-day Examination- final portfolio
During Yr11 lessons - hand-in 09.04.27 (Final submission)	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment

MAY 2027

Keep pushing!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
10.05.27 – 23.06.27	GCSE Summer Examination series starts
14.05.27	Yr11: SWEET deadline (3 of 3)

JUNE 2027

You can do it!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
10.05.27 – 23.06.27	GCSE Summer Examination series end
w/c: 21.06.27	Yr10: English: unit 3 – speaking and listening – task A

JULY 2027

Almost there!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
w/c: 02.07.27 (during lessons where possible)	Yr10: Skills – Enterprise & Employability presentations – group presentations

AUGUST 2027

Next chapter!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
19.08.26	Yr10 & Yr11: Results Day

Questions?
Speak to your subject teacher, form tutor or Year Team.

Be organised
Meet deadlines
Ask for support
Do your best.

Small steps make big progress!

Together Brighter Futures

Ysgol Nantgwyn

READY RESPECTFUL RESPONSIBLE

Future Starts Here

Key Dates 2026

ASSESSMENTS • EXAMS • DEADLINES

Information for pupils and parents (Years 10 & 11)

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Work hard
Be proud

Important dates for your diary!

SEPTEMBER 2026

A positive start!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment
w/c: 28.09/26	Yr11: assessment week 1 of 2

OCTOBER 2026

Stay informed!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
01.10.26	Qualification information session for parents (Yr10 & 11)
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: English: unit 5 – task A

NOVEMBER 2026

Keep going!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: Hospitality & Catering – theory & practical over two days (waiting on timetables for exact dates)
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment
02.11.26 – 11.11.26	Yr11: GCSE November Examination series
09.11.26	Yr10 & Yr11: SWEET deadline (1 of 3)
During Yr 11 lessons from 11.11.26	Yr11: Business Unit 2 – controlled assessment (online examination)
30.11.26 – 03.12.26	Yr11: Welsh: Unit 1: speaking & listening
w/c: 16.11.26	Yr10: assessment week 1 of 1

DECEMBER 2026

Finish strong!

Date / Deadline	Event / Information
During Yr11 lessons	Yr11: Engineering – controlled assessment
During Yr11 lessons	Yr10: English: unit 2 – task A
w/c: 14.12.26	Yr11: English: unit 5 – speaking and listen – task B
w/c: 14.12.26	Yr10: GCSE PE coursework deadline
w/c: 14.12.26	Yr11: GCSE PE personal fitness plan deadline
16.12.26	Yr11: GCSE PE video and medical evidence deadline (if applicable)
18.12.2026	Skills – global coursework deadline

Questions?
Speak to your subject teacher, form tutor or Year Team.

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Meet deadlines
Ask for support
Do your best.

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Together Brighter Futures

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
Pupils require a unique dinner code which can be obtained from the school office along with a step-by-step guide. This new system allows parents to view your child's balance as well as spending. Reminder that we also have a machine in pupil reception that can be used by pupils to add cash to their dinner accounts if you are unable to access iPay.

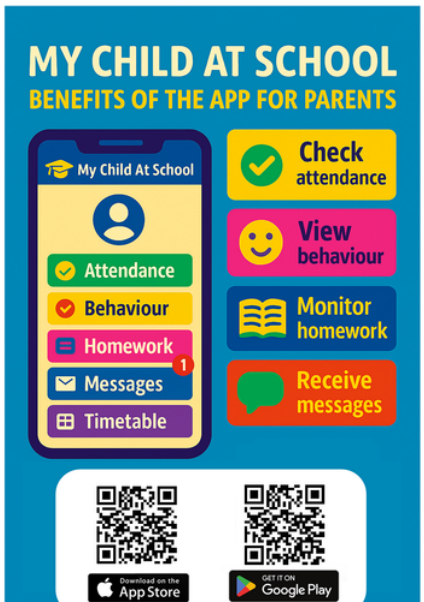
Schools essentials grant
Last year, 100 families in our school community who could have received this grant did not apply — and missed out on money they may have been entitled to. We want to make sure that doesn't happen again.

If you are eligible, the money is paid directly into your bank account for you to spend on what your child or family needs.

How much could you receive?
- £125 – Reception to Year 6
- £200 – Year 7
- £125 – Years 8 to 11

You could use the money towards in any way you choose; uniform, sports kit, school trips, IT equipment, music lessons, activities or anything else your child needs.

For more information, School Essentials Grant 26/27 (For September 2026 year groups) | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council



My Child At School App
This is our main form of communication with parents that we recommend all parents download.

Using the app, you will be able to access your child's attendance, behaviour, reports as well as report your child's absence.

If you require support, please contact the school office AdminYN_5@hwbcymru.net.

Ysgol Nantgwyn: Our parent forum
Meeting one: 14th October 2026

Agenda:

Introductions and purpose of forum
Introductions from parents and staff took place and reference to the aims and conduct of the parent forum were explained.

Curriculum focus- Caru Dysgu
Mr Hinton presented our year 7 Caru Dysgu curriculum theme 'Transformation' and explained the concept planning, big questions and pupil-led learning taking part in lessons developing pupils as ambitious, capable learners and ethical, informed citizens.

Homework feedback
Parents reviewed the new changes to homework and suggested next steps and points for review such as use of the Google Classroom, ensuring pupils know the due date of homework, the consistency and range of the tasks set and teachers recognising homework that has been handed-in. Parents found the Google Classroom support sheet useful. This has been shared on social media.

Parent item- toilets, dinner queues
Parents posed questions about dinner queues and toilets. Both systems were explained to parents. At present pupils can use both the caffi or dining hall during lunch time which supports with queues. If an item of food is not available due to it being sold out, the canteen staff can prepare this item Pupils can go to the toilet at break and lunch and during lessons; the main set of toilets are only closed for the 10 minute transition time in between lessons.

AOB
A query about nursery MCAS codes was raised. On checking, two parents were without codes, which have now been sent out.

Parent feedback:

Your feedback as parents is always important to us.

Please could you take 5 minutes to complete our monthly feedback questionnaire so we can keep improving as a school.

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/r5QZqzb0D2

Parent feedback:

Contact details

lowersupport@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru
middlesupport@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru
uppersupport@ysgolnantgwyn.rctcbc.cymru

www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk