

Parent newsletter:

Upper school

Letter from Mrs Retallick, Headteacher

As we draw to the close of the second full term as a new school, it is my enormous pleasure to write to you regarding the developments, challenges and successes of the year so far. We have had the privilege of celebrating many successes and commend the many achievements of our pupils in all aspects of school and outside-school life. We regularly share these achievements on our social media pages and with pupils in school assemblies and other events, such as 'Hot Chocolate with the Head'.

This term we have celebrated outstanding academic, sporting and performance achievement across the school and pupils talents and experiences always amaze me- when they set their mind to achievements, they really do reach for the stars.

Our recent Eisteddfod, concerts and a wide range of sporting events and competitions, echo the aspirations we have for all of our children. We are incredibly lucky to be surrounded by so many talented and dedicated individuals, who are a credit to us all and should be congratulated for the great work they have done, not only for themselves but for other pupils and our school community as a whole.

In this end of term letter, we have carefully selected pieces of information to share with all families and parents to act as a reminder and to support information and that we share via ParentMail, Facebook and increasingly via our school website.

Thank you for continued support and feedback in our joint commitment to make our school the very best it can be. This year will not have been without bumps in the road, but our honesty, openness and action will ensure we continue to improve to ensure the best outcomes for all of children. We have travelled a long way in a short time, and I am incredibly proud of the journey so far, together we can make this the very best school for our children to be happy and thrive within. A part of this communication from RCT has also been shared with a link to the RCT consultation on proposals to develop the school further are included and can also be accessed via this link: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations.

As we approach exam season, it is important to share how proud we are of all of our pupils in their dedication and commitment towards preparing for these exams. Pupils are having to manage deadlines, revision and tight timescales to ensure they meet their goals, which can be tough, but will be worth it. Mr Evans and Miss Mein have shared guidance on how to support your children through this time and the 'Helping your child to revise' events have been particularly valuable. We want all of our pupils to try their best and to be happy with what they have achieved so far, using this dedication to strive forward over the coming weeks. We have a detailed programme of Easter revision (in school and in the community) and events through the exam season and would encourage all pupils to attend. Their hard work will pay off.

Have a great Easter.

Yours, as always,

Kirsty Retallick

Letter from Mr Ryan Evans, Head of Upper School

Wow, what a term! It has been filled with many events and pupils have excelled in so many different areas.

As we look forward to next term, we continue to have very high expectations of pupils in every lesson. This is true of year 11 and their approach to the examination season, but also years 10 and 9 who are studying their GCSE courses.

Throughout this newsletter, there is a lot of information for you to use to support your child in making sure that their approach is the correct approach. Please use the resources to support discussions with your child and give them any reassurance that they may need about any particular areas of concern.

We recognise all of our Ysgol Nantgwyn pupils as individuals, and their success goes beyond examinations and tests. We support them daily to be the very best that they can be and to become:

- Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives
- Enterprising, creative contributors who are ready to play a full part in life and work
- Ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world
- Healthy, confident individuals

We look forward to seeing our pupils return after Easter (and those completing revision during the holidays)!

Ryan Evans

Consultation

During the Summer term we will be consulting with parents and pupils on a new behaviour initiative (Nant focused) which we would like to launch in the second half of the summer term. We would welcome your views and suggestions, which will also include a visit to another school in South Wales who have implemented this new approach to great effect and would encourage parents to be part of this visit to share their experiences and observation via our communication routes with other families.

Parking and traffic management

Please can we all ensure we drive safely and sensibly when entering and exiting the school site. We have issued a range of reminders and we all need to work together to ensure the safety of all of pupils, staff and visitors. I appreciate that traffic on site at the end of the day is heavy, but working safely, appropriately and within the safe driving practices the processes can be less problematic. We have to work with what we have, so your patience and continued reporting is appreciated. Work is being completed on the Gwyn

Literacy and numeracy tests

For pupils sitting the National Tests (Year 2-Year 9), preparation in key lessons continues to take place as well as a wide range of other learning activities, which have literacy and numeracy embedded into them. Normal school life and activities continue with test preparation amended and planned to ensure that pupils' normal routine and creative experience is as consistent as possible. The tests that pupils take can give us a picture of the progress that children are making, but it is important to remember that the tests are a snapshot of where children are at a moment in time and on that day, with some having better days than others at a particular day or time.

We use the tests to help guide and plan provision and to identify whole school and individual strengths and areas for development to ensure that they are making good progress as they move throughout the school. We use a wide range of other information to get a whole picture of each and every one of our children and it is this collective information that helps us ensure that we plan for their future development and success. National Tests are only one part of a much bigger picture and how they perform in the future is not tied into the outcomes of these tests, our children are more than this. Please

Literacy and numeracy tests

All pupils in Wales that are in year groups 2-9 are expected to sit three national tests per year. These are:

Numeracy: Procedural test

This tests pupils' mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding.

Numeracy: Reasoning test

This tests how well pupils can apply their mathematics skills to a range of situations.

Literacy: Reading test

This tests how well pupils can access shorter and longer texts and their comprehension of what they have read.

Each test is half an hour long.



To support all pupils in doing as well as they possibly can, we will:

- Be conducting the tests in classrooms rather than in a hall
- Ensure that the 'usual' member/s of staff are administering the test
- Provide all equipment that they might need
- Cut the test into smaller sections for younger children so that they have a break
- Provide an additional room for those who need additional support to complete the test
- Ensure that pupils only sit one test in a day

We submit the marks to the Welsh Government however, from a school point of view, we

We submit the marks to the Welsh Government however, from a school point of view, we use the data from these tests to evaluate how well your child has learned and remembered parts of their learning and also use it to plan what your child needs to learn next.

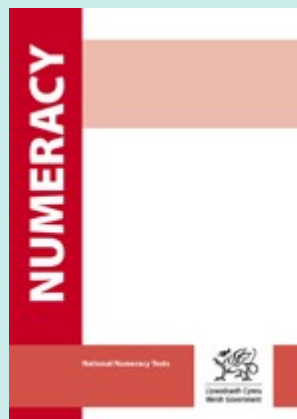
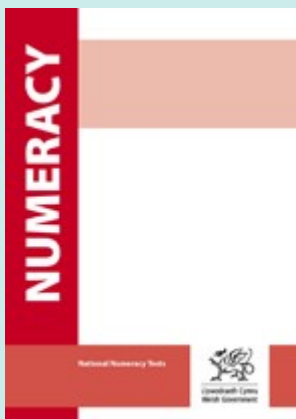
Classroom teachers will be working with pupils in the run up to the tests to make sure that they have seen test papers and practised completing them. Simple things like making sure pupils know to read questions carefully, often more than once, and write their answers clearly and in the right place can make a difference. We do not want our pupils to worry about the tests and so will work with them to ensure that they are familiar with the format, style and expectations before they sit the real one. You may wish to, as a parent, look at some of the sample materials with your child and help them to become familiar.

Year 2-6 will be sitting the tests in the period 7th to 14th May and year 7-9 will be sitting the tests during the period 29th April to 14th May. Actual dates will be sent by parentmail after the Easter break.

Numeracy sample materials <https://learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/numeracy-sample-materials/?lang=en>

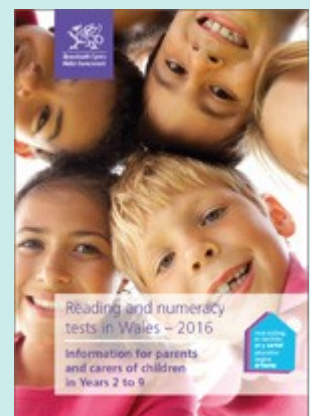
Literacy sample materials

<https://learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/reading-sample-materials/?lang=en>






Welsh Government have put together a really helpful piece of parent guidance about the literacy and numeracy tests which follows here:

<https://learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/reading-and-numeracy-tests-information-for-parents-carers/?lang=en>



Key dates

We return to school on Monday 29th April with a bank holiday on Monday 6th May when school is closed. This is a short 4 week term, with us breaking up for half term on Friday 25th May. There are no INSET days in this half term.

Student A Reads	Student B Reads	Student C Reads
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 minutes per day.• 3600 minutes per school year.• 1,800,000 words per year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 minutes per day.• 900 minutes per school year.• 282,000 words per year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 minute per day.• 180 minutes per school year.• 8,000 words per year.
		
• Scores in the 90th percentile on standardized tests.	• Scores in the 50th percentile on standardized tests.	• Scores in the 10th percentile on standardized tests.

Reading with pupils

Lots of research tells us the difference a short time spent reading every day can make to educational outcomes and we would encourage you to read with your child as often as you can and support them to spend some time reading when they are independent.

We are currently working a small project with year 10 pupils reading with pupils in Gwyn however will be looking to expand this in the summer term to enable increasing numbers of pupils reading for at least twenty minutes a day.

If you, or a family member or friend, have any time that you would be able to give to read with some of our pupils we'd be really pleased to hear from you. Please could you get in touch with admin@ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk

Volunteers do have to complete a form and a DBS check however we are very willing to help fill in the forms!

Eisteddfod

We have been extremely privileged to have held four Eisteddfods during the past couple of weeks and have been overwhelmed by the various talents of the Ysgol Nantgwyn pupils. We saw very many excellent competition entries including poems, drawings and 3D models of varying sizes and descriptions! During the Eisteddfod itself, all pupils participated fantastically – those bravely performing and those supportively encouraging others. Gwyn was a vision of red as pupils wore national sports kit and traditional costumes and while Nant pupils stayed away from traditional costumes, they also demonstrated their support for the event by adorning various reds.

The four session event was added to by a highly successful Noson Cawl a Chan evening where pupils again performed their pieces to an audience of friends and families, who happily partook in some sampling of traditional Welsh cawl and Welsh cakes, cooked and served by our kitchen team and PTA members.

A huge thank you to pupils, parents, governors, PTA and staff for making this such a positive and successful first Eisteddfod for Ysgol Nantgwyn.

Homework

Ysgol Nantgwyn staff have been working to develop a new homework policy across the school. The new policy is based on tasks that will interest and engage pupils as well as provide them with practice that they need to become secure in their learning. Homework sheets will be coming home after Easter. We would very much appreciate your support in encouraging your child to complete all homework set.

School uniform

Please can we remind you of the uniform requirements for all pupils. I remind all parents and families that shoes must be **all** black and worn at **all** times. Links to details on our website are here:

<https://www.ysgolnantgwyn.co.uk/parents/school-uniform>

As shared last year, from September, blazers will become a compulsory part of school uniform for upper school, Year 9, 10 and 11. These can be purchased from a range of local suppliers as detailed in the link above.

Attendance

We continue with our Challenge 95 campaign where we set a target of attendance for all pupils of at least 95%. The impact of attendance on achievement has been clearly evidenced.

As you know, good attendance at school is vital to ensure your child achieves their full potential. Where possible planned absences should be taken outside of the school day. We know that good attendance (striving for 95%+) makes a dramatic difference to progress and results, it is a challenge for all pupils to catch up on any lessons/days missed.

ATTENDANCE %	NUMBER OF DAYS LOST	IMPACT ON YOUR EDUCATION
100%	None! Outstanding Attendance! Excellent work, well done	This gives you the best chance to achieve your potential as 78.7% of students with 100% attendance achieve 5+ A*-C including English and Maths.
> = 97%	Great Attendance Fewer than 6 days of absence in one academic year You are above the school attendance target, well done!	
95 – 96.9%	Less than 10 days of absence Students are likely to achieve their targets and will be well prepared as they move through school	Statistics show that 69.1% of students in this attendance bracket go on to achieve 5+ A*-C including English and Maths.
92 - 94.9%	Up to 15 days of absence – if your attendance is in this category you will have had up to 3 weeks absent in the school year	According to statistics, only just over half (52.8%) of students in this attendance bracket achieve 5+ A*-C including English and Maths.
90 - 91.9%	You will have had up to 19 days of absence (up to 3 weeks and 4 days) Pupils in this category may fall behind and it will be difficult for them to achieve their best	Attendance in this bracket is a major concern and should be addressed quickly. Only just over half (52.8%) of students in this attendance bracket go on to achieve 5+ A*-C including English and Maths.
< 90%	Persistently Absent : you will have had more than 19 days absence (more than 3 weeks and 4 days) over the academic year This is very poor attendance and the Educational Welfare Officer may become involved	Poor attendance – this is extremely worrying Of those students with below 90% attendance, only 35.6% are likely to achieve 5 A* - C including English and Maths (according to statistics).

Useful revision sites

General	http://www.gcsepod.com/ http://www.wjec.co.uk/students/past-papers/
Maths	https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/z34k7ty https://vle.mathswatch.co.uk/vle/ https://corbettmaths.com/5-a-day/
English	https://www.gcsepod.com/
Science	Google Classrooms access code: j675sye
Art	https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/z6hs34j
GCSE Physical Education	www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/physical-education/r-gcse-physical-education-from-2016/ http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2015-16/15-16_21/eng/index.html
Languages	https://www.memrise.com/home/# https://quizlet.com/latest https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/welsh-second-language/r-welsh-second-language-gcse-2017/ https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/spanish/r-spanish-gcse-from-2016/ https://members.gcsepod.com/shared/playlists/playlist/268551 https://members.gcsepod.com/shared/playlists/playlist/268552 https://www.amazon.co.uk/Revision-Spanish-Modern-Foreign-Languages/dp/1785832735 https://www.amazon.co.uk/Palabra-por-Sixth-Vocabulary-level/dp/1510434828/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1552894949&sr=1-1-fkmr0&keywords=palabra+por+palabra+wjec
ICT	https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/zqmtsbk
Computer Science	https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/z34k7ty
Health and Social Care	https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/health-and-social-care/health-and-social-care-gcse/
DT Food Technology	https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/food-and-nutrition/

Upper School Revision Timetable Y10/11

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunch		RE N4 English N46	WBQ N1 English N46 ICT N31	WBQ N1 ICT/ Computer Science N31 Welsh N41	
After School	PE 3:10-4.10pm N7	History 3:10-4.10pm N6 Maths- all Art	English N46 Spanish N40 WBQ N1	WBQ N1 ICT/ Computer Science N31 Science N30 Spanish N40 Welsh N40	Art

Easter Holidays Upper School Revision Timetable Y10/11

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 Cwmtyddach Development Centre 10.00-2.00	N Richings - Biology Year 10	N Richings - Biology Year 11			Bank Holiday (Closed)
Week 2 Ysgol Nantgwyn	Bank Holiday (Closed)	A Daley - Chemistry Year 11 N30 10.00-2.00	A Daley - Physics Year 11 N30 10.00-2.00 Maths- All classes Year 11 10.00-2.00	V Evans - English Literature - N46 and 11 10.00-12.00 R James-Algeo English Language Year 11 10.00-12.00 M.Morse- Spanish Year 11 10.00-12.00. N40 A.Cross- History Year 11 10.00-12.00 N6	