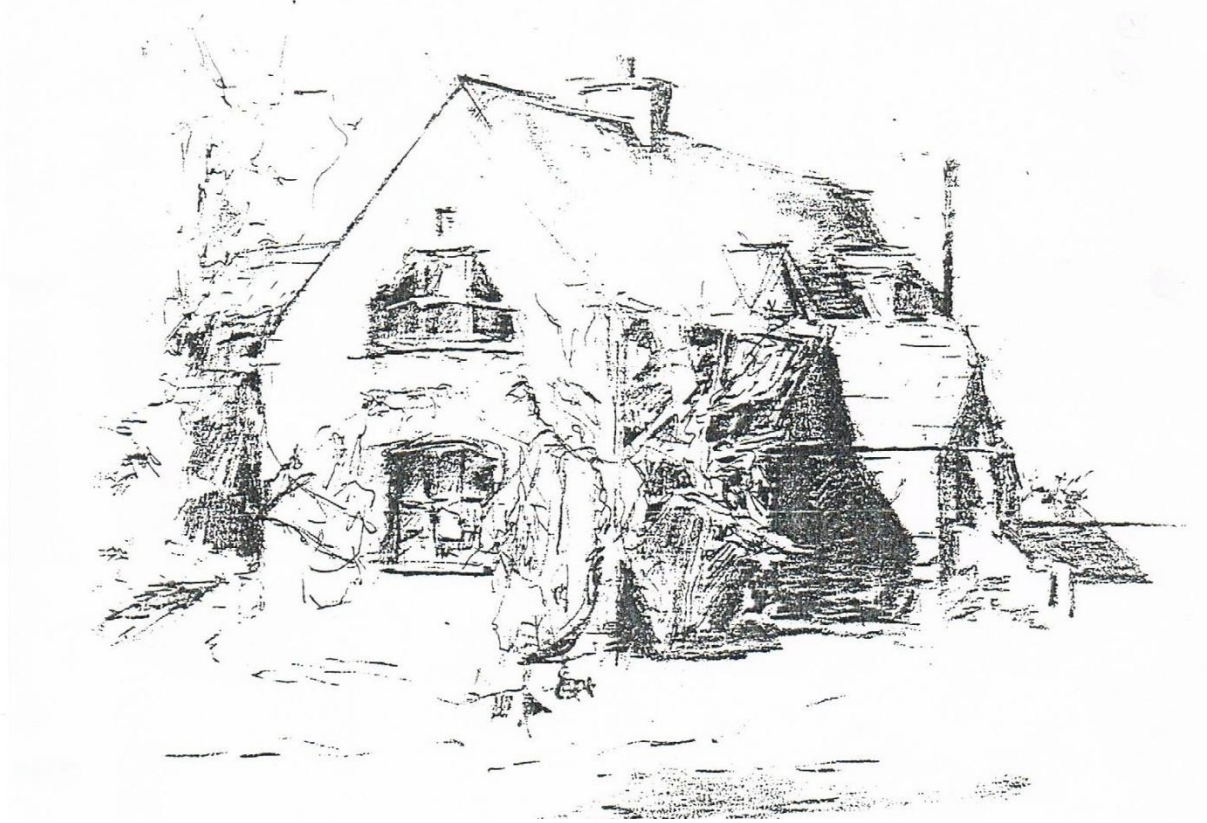


Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School



Parents' Handbook

**Revised Edition
May 2019**

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Parents' Handbook

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SECTION ONE - GENERAL

Background and Welcome

Welcome to Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School.

This Parents Handbook is full of information about the daily life of our school and will help you understand how our school operates and will assist you supporting your child in their education.

Each Steiner Waldorf School is independent. The curriculum corresponds to the inner development of the child as they journey from the imaginative world of early childhood to the adult world of clear intellectual thought. The teachers work out of the educational methods developed by Rudolf Steiner, founder of the first Steiner Waldorf School, the Free Waldorf School in Stuttgart in 1919.

In choosing this school, parents have made a statement of support for the goals and methods of our school. Understanding and referring to the information in this handbook will help your children find success and happiness at Nant-y-Cwm.

A Brief Introduction to the Education

A Steiner Waldorf school aims to offer a comprehensive education in a learning community where children root themselves in their humanity as they live and grow through childhood.

Children are taught in chronological age groups of mixed ability. Teachers and parents join a continuous learning process inspired by Steiner's ideas of human development. This helps to create the very best educational environment and climate for the growth of the child.

The curriculum has been carefully developed to meet the requirements of children at different ages. The teacher of the class strives to meet the emotional, academic, physical, and spiritual needs of each child. Rhythm is the foundation for all activities throughout the days, weeks and seasons.

The three faculties of thinking, feeling and doing are a fundamental part of the curriculum. These are addressed at every level, from the structuring of each lesson to the shaping of the weekly timetable. Whilst these three faculties are always interacting, there is a particular emphasis on the development of the will during the first seven years (Home and Early Childhood Education); the children learn by imitation and through activity. Between the ages 7 - 14 (Class 1-8) the education of the feeling life is nurtured through the guiding authority of the teacher, integrating artistic, imaginative elements into the learning process. Steiner pointed strongly to the negative effects on children if we encourage their intellectual and analytical capacities too early (before puberty). Children need to fulfill their childhood during each phase without being hurried into the intellectual, materialistic world conception of our times.

The sum total of the main lessons over the eight years in the main school forms one continuous organic and artistic whole.

For more information about Steiner Waldorf Education please refer to the booklist below:

School as a journey - Torin Finser

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Understanding Waldorf Education, teaching from the inside out - Jack Petrash
Phases of Childhood - Bernard C J Lievegoed.
Introduction to Steiner Education - Francis Edmunds
Waldorf Education - C Clouder & Martyn Rawson
The Essence of Waldorf Education - Peter Selg
Transformational Teaching - Mary Goral
The Education of the Child - Rudolf Steiner
Education towards Freedom - F Carlgren
Teaching as a lively art - Marjorie Spock

SECTION TWO – PRACTICAL INFORMATION

School Hours

Arrival **8:50**

Children should be in their classrooms ready to begin the school day at 8:50 am. Punctuality and attendance are necessary to the smooth running of school life. Each class begins the day with a greeting and a morning verse; this helps to create a positive mood so that attention and concentration are enhanced. This harmony can be disturbed if pupils arrive late.

Registration / Lessons **9:00**

Morning Break **11:00 – 11:40 Children bring their own packed snack.**
(11:00 - 11:20 – snack, 11:20-11:40 – break).

Lunch Break **13:10 – 14:00 Children bring their own packed lunch.**
(13:10 – 13:30 – lunch, 13:30 – 14:00 – break).

Food

Classes bring their own snacks and lunch; parents are asked to keep these very simple. We also ask parents to be conscious of the huge amount of rubbish that is created by the over packaging of many snacks. The snacks should be nutritious, simple, wholesome and easy to manage for the children. Please make sure your child brings a bottle of water. NB. No glass containers or cans.

End of School **15:30**

All classes will come out to the playground with their class teacher, parents can collect their child at 15:30 once their child has said goodbye to their class teacher. In wet weather the class teacher will bring the children to the front or side entrance to the school for collection. The class in the mobile classroom will stay there for collection if the weather is wet.

All parents must fill in a pick-up consent form with details of the adults that are authorized to pick up their children from school. Please refer to the pick-up policy.

The School Office

The Office Hours

Term Time

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Monday to Thursday 09:00 – 15:30
Friday 09:00 – 13:00

Office Opening Times for Parents

Monday to Thursday 9:00 – 9:30

The school office stocks colour pencils, crayons and fountain pens. These can be bought by the parents during the office opening times or by the children on Mondays at 11am.

The school office is staffed full time; telephone messages can be left at any time and will be checked daily. Contact can also be made via e-mail or in writing. The office can be contacted if you would like to make an appointment with your child's class teacher or have a question about the school.

In case we need to contact you: Please advise the school office of any changes of address or telephone numbers as soon as they occur. It is imperative that the school is able to contact you immediately should the need arise.

The office can be contacted via telephone 01437 563640, or email info@nant-y-cwm.co.uk.

Attendance

The law requires that **parent(s)** ensure that:

- All children of compulsory school age receive "an efficient education, suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude".
- All children of compulsory school age receive a full-time education.
- All children of compulsory school age attend regularly.

If parent(s) do not ensure that this takes place they are liable to prosecution.

The law requires that the **school**:

- Takes an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning and at the start of the afternoon session. The register shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent.
- Provides a broad and balanced curriculum.

At Nant-y-Cwm we:

- Regard any unnecessary absence as educationally detrimental. Our teaching methods make it almost impossible to catch up with work or for it to be done at home.
- Regard punctuality and attendance as necessary and essential to the running of the school life and consider avoidable lateness as hampering the pupil's development.
- Report attendance figures to parents should they fall below 92%.
- Report attendance figures to parents in end of year reports.

1. Registration

In accordance with legislation the teacher taking the first lesson of the morning and the first lesson of the afternoon marks the attendance register. Any messages taken by the office staff

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are communicated to the teachers.

It is a legal requirement for the School to maintain an accurate daily register of attendance. The School register is a legal document. Attendance records are checked by the WGSC (Welsh Government School Census).

2. Absence

Parents are required to telephone or email the school daily before registration time if their child will be late or absent, giving reasons which will be noted as authorised or unauthorised absences.

If a pupil is absent without prior notice the office staff will telephone the parent(s) to ensure

- a) that the pupil is safe and
- b) to establish the reason for their absence and then complete the register accordingly. The class teacher will then be informed of the situation.

The admin staff will report the reason for absence to the teacher, making a note in the register for the teacher to mark as authorised or unauthorised absence. Kindergarten will be left a telephone message.

2.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards. The authorising of a request takes into account the pupil's attendance record. Permission may be granted for medical reasons, family bereavement or other exceptional circumstances. Parent(s) may not authorise absences.

In cases of sickness arising during the day, the School will contact parents to arrange the most suitable care possible for the child. This will include a parent(s) collecting the child whenever possible. In this case the afternoon register will be marked as an authorised absence. Requests for absence must be made to the class teacher in writing.

Where an absence of more than 10 days has been authorised, it is the parent(s) responsibility to make arrangements for their child's education during absence. Parent(s) will be expected to get guidance from the class teacher, with an understanding that it is never possible to replace the learning and experience of the education in the class.

Parent(s) should not arrange holidays in term time. This disrupts the benefits for the child of continuity of integrated learning that is a key feature of the Steiner curriculum. The School will not authorise holidays in term time.

2.2 Unauthorised Absence

All other absences must be regarded as unauthorised.

Schools, including independent schools, must notify the LEA if a pupil attends irregularly or is absent continuously without authorisation for ten or more school days.

3. Punctuality

Punctuality is essential for the rhythm of the school day and parents are required to ensure that their children arrive on time. The school opens at 8.30 am and pupils are expected to register with the staff on gate duty at the front door and proceed to the designated classroom if they have arrived at 8:30am. At 8:35am the class teachers are in their classrooms and the gate duty person

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can send the children to their classrooms. School's responsibility starts the moment the child enters the school, before that the child is his/her parent's responsibility. Children must be ready to begin the school day at **8.50am** for a prompt start of lesson at 9.00am.

If children arrive late, the parent(s) must explain to the office staff the reason for lateness. The child will be taken to their classroom by the office staff. In the **Kindergarten** teachers are available from 8:50am before the start of the school day. Parent(s) are responsible for their children until then unless **prior** arrangements have been made.

If a child is persistently late the class teacher will arrange a meeting with parent(s).

4. Action

If a pupil's attendance or punctuality becomes irregular (less than 92%), Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School will initially contact the parent(s) by letter to bring the situation to their attention prior to reporting it to the relevant authority. If the problem persists the class teacher will arrange a meeting with the parent(s).

5. Truancy

If a child is suspected of being absent due to truancy the following procedures will be followed:

- Administration will contact the parent(s) to confirm whether they know the whereabouts of the pupil. It is the parents' duty to ensure that the pupil is brought to school once located.
- If the parent does not know the whereabouts of the child, the School will advise the parent(s) to contact West Wales Police. In the interests of safeguarding, the School reserves the right to report any case of truancy to the police.
- If the School is aware of the potential whereabouts of the child (e.g. child reported as seen walking in the woods) a member of staff may be mandated to collect the child on the parent(s) behalf and bring him/her in to School. (Please see the Attendance Policy for more information).

Drop off and pick up

Ensuring that pupils arrive and leave safely is a prime concern for us all at Nant-y-Cwm. We ask everyone to follow our pick-up and drop-off procedures. Please inform your children of these procedures.

This policy is valid for the main school only, not for the Kindergarten.

Drop Off

- A member of staff will be on Gate Duty every morning from 8:30am at the front entrance of the school. Any children arriving at 8:30am will wait in the designated classroom whilst the teachers are saying their verse in the staff room. There is no teacher in the classrooms before this time.
- At 8:35am the teachers will be in their classrooms and the children waiting with the Gate Duty person will go to their own classroom.
- The member of staff on Gate Duty will be waiting at the front door to the school. Their role is to ensure that all children that enter the school remain within the school.
- All children are to enter the school through the front door, if their classroom is the mobile classroom at the back of the school children must make sure they have been seen by the Gate Duty Person.
- We request that parents drop off their child at the front door rather than going into the school with their child. This will help the staff keep the school building secure. Children from classes 1-2 can have assistance from their parents if needed.

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- At 9am the front door will be locked, if you are late with your child please ring the door bell and the office staff will answer the door for your child to come into school. Let the person answering know the reason for lateness to be conveyed to the teacher.
- **Parking:** There are 2 car parks at either side to the school, one belongs to the community woodland the other to school. To reduce traffic in front of the school please park in the car park you come to first. The parking in front of the school is for **staff only**. Please do not park at the front of school including our neighbour's property or turn around in the entrance to their garden.
- **The school road is very narrow. Please drive slowly and watch for children!**
- *Dogs are never permitted on the school grounds, including our car park.*

Pick Up

- If your child finishes at 1:10pm, the teacher will send your child out after saying goodbye. Please wait in the playground or outside the gate.
- At 3:30pm all the children will be lined up outside on the tarmac side of the playground, with their class teacher.
- We would like parents to wait on the court side of the playground.
- The class teacher will say goodbye to any child when they see their parent.
- We request that parents leave the school grounds as soon as their child has said goodbye to their teacher. This will assist the school in closing down for the day, knowing that the children have left the school safely, and in helping the children rest after a long day at school.
- At 3:45pm the bell will be rung to indicate the school and grounds are closed for the day.

Wet Weather

If the weather is wet, the children will be with their class teacher in the school and may be picked up either from the front or side entrance to the school.

All children once collected are the responsibility of their parent(s) and they need to leave the school premises as soon as possible.

In exceptional circumstances parents may notify a teacher or the office of an alternative responsible adult, before the end of the day. All children must be collected by 15:45, at which time school's responsibility ends and the emergency procedure is in operation. Children aged 12 and over may be allowed to leave the school without an adult picking them up, if the class teacher has been consulted and agreed.

Emergency Procedure After 3:45pm

If by 15:45 children still have not been collected, they will be taken to the two Gate Duty Teachers who will wait in the school office and contact the child's parents. If the GDT cannot get in touch with the parents, the authorised adults on the pick-up consent form (in the class register) will be contacted.

Emergency School Closure Policy and Procedure in Adverse Weather Conditions.

If the weather forecast predicts severe weather, the school will check the weather forecast and decide by 3pm whether to close the school the next day. Parents will be informed at 3pm if the

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school will be closed the following day and by 3pm every subsequent day to inform them of when the school will re-open.

If however, there hasn't been severe weather forecast and the weather has become severe, parents will be informed the morning before school commences.

Parents will be informed via text and email on Parent Mail. Families that are not registered to receive Parent Mail via texts or email will be notified by telephone.

During School

During school hours, if the weather condition becomes hazardous to driving the school will close. The school office will notify parents via Parent Mail, sending a text message and email. Any parents not registered with Parent Mail will be notified by telephone.

If a parent is worried by the state of the roads when their child is in school and before the school takes action, then parents can telephone the school to come in to collect their child, or give permission for another parent to collect them.

The school will close until further notice is given via Parent Mail.

Accidents, Illnesses and Emergencies

On entering the school, a first aid consent form is required to be completed, and we ask that if any details change the school office is informed as soon as possible.

If a pupil is feeling unwell before reaching school, they should remain at home as there are limited facilities available to deal with sick children. Should anyone be taken ill at school then the parents/carer or other emergency contact will be asked to collect the pupil as soon as possible.

Minor Cases

If any pupil or staff member needs first aid or is taken ill, help is available from trained first aid staff.

A Minor injury is one that the person does not require medical assistance.

When a pupil becomes mildly unwell or suffers a minor accident (eg small cuts or bruises) appropriate first aid will be given, parents will be informed when they pick up their child. The class teacher or office staff will notify parents before pick up if any injury requires medical assistance and in all cases when the child has had a blow to the head.

It is therefore essential that the school have up to date emergency contact numbers.

Serious Cases

A casualty will never be left alone. The first aider will attend and stay with the casualty and ask for someone to call the emergency services.

Parents will be notified immediately. If the school is unable to contact the parents or guardian (listed on the pupil contact form), the casualty will be supervised and chaperoned by a member of staff to hospital.

No medicines will be administered by First Aiders, with the exception of an EpiPen, if your child has been prescribed one.

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It can be requested that the school supervises children taking prescribed medicine in school hours. The medicine must be kept by the class teacher or the office staff. A Medical Administration form must be completed by the parent/carer detailing the dosage, frequency and any known side effects. The class teacher has to agree to assist, please ask your child's teacher to help.

Childhood Illnesses

The table below sets out the statutory times for excluding a child from school, ie the period of being infectious. However, in having one of these illnesses a child's body needs time to rest and recuperate and we would therefore ask parents to allow for this.

CHILDHOOD ILLNESS	INCUBATION AND INFECTIOUS PERIOD	AFTER CARE
MEASLES	Incubation - 8-15 days. Infectious - 9 days before rash; 4 days after rash.	2 -3 weeks rest.
CHICKEN POX	Incubation - 7-21 days. Infectious - 2 days before rash; 7 days after rash, until last blister has scabbed & crusted over.	1 -3 weeks rest
MUMPS	Incubation - 12-26 days Infectious 9 days from onset of swelling.	2 weeks. This is an infection of the glands and therefore reproductive organs may be affected.
WHOOPING COUGH	Incubation period 7-15 days Infectious for 2-4 weeks	2-4 weeks. The child may feel peaky for some time with a recurring cough.
SCARLET FEVER	2-5 days' incubation 21 days infectious. Unwell for 4-7 days.	3 weeks' convalescence. Should be checked by Doctor before return.
GERMAN MEASLES (<i>Rubella</i>)	7-14 days' incubation. Infectious 1 week before rash appears and 10 days after rash appears.	2 -3 week's rest. NB Keep away from Expectant mothers at onset of rash.

Head Lice

For Prevention of head lice - Please check your child's hair once a week and comb every day if evidence of lice is found.

Financial Questions

Aims

- Nant-y-Cwm School aims to make Steiner Waldorf Education available to pupils from as wide a range of economic and social backgrounds as possible, within the prevailing

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circumstances. However, a reasonable and healthy income is essential to fulfil our broad educational task. We therefore expect parents to see their financial contributions to the School as a top priority.

- Nant-y-Cwm School relies wholly on its income from tuition charges and the following arrangements are in place:

Basic Tuition Charges.

- These are payable by options below:

Yearly payment, in advance, by the end of the first full week of the academic year by BANK TRANSFER.

Termly payments, in advance, by the end of the first full week of each term by BANK TRANSFER.

12 Monthly payments by the 7th day of the calendar month by STANDING ORDER.

Payments by cash or cheque are to be made by prior written arrangement only. Please arrange a meeting with Finance.

Details of Tuition Charges

- Tuition fees listed are baseline charges and currently set at a minimal level. Parents are strongly encouraged to consider a further donation towards development, which may be Gift Aided.
- The charges cover tuition, text books, stationary, photocopies, arts, crafts and handwork materials, premises and general running costs.

Additional Charges

- School trips and outings such as transport, admission and accommodation.
- Personal sets of blocks, crayons and pencils.
- Some personal items such as pipes, recorders, dictionaries.
- Tuition charges are not refunded in the event of absence of any kind, including closure of the school due to unforeseen circumstances.

Notice Period

The following notices apply to main school:

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Leaving end of Summer Term	1st May
Leaving at Autumn Half-Term	1st August
Leaving at end of Autumn Term	1st October
Leaving at Spring Half-Term	1st December
Leaving at end of Spring Term	1st February
Leaving at Summer Half-Term	1st March
Leaving at end of Summer Term	1st May

- In the case of the possibility of a pupil leaving, parents or guardians are advised to give provisional notice.
- In very exceptional circumstances upon and only upon written application to the Finance Team the notice period may be reduced.
- At least 6 weeks written notice is required when a Kindergarten pupil is to withdrawn or one half term's fee in lieu of such notice.

Finance Meeting

- Where a family's financial circumstance becomes such that they are unable to meet the full tuition charges, the Financial Administrator can offer clarifications and options. Parents are expected to be pro-active in approaching the school in the event of any financial difficulty during their child's education with the school. Please feel free to request a finance meeting at any time.

Annual Review of Financial Arrangements

- Tuition charges are set by the Finance Team in agreement with the School Governance Team by or during the Spring Term for the implementation of the Autumn Term.

Default

- The School wishes to maintain a mutually supportive relationship with parents. If there is a possibility that parents might not be able to make payment or face financial difficulty, they should contact the Financial Administrator immediately, in advance of any default.
- Parents are expected to continue payment regardless of any disagreement, complaint or grievance with the School.
- Where an account is in arrears, further children of the same family will not be admitted without a full financial interview.
- Where parents fall a term or more behind in meeting commitments a full financial meeting will be held.
- Where fees are not paid Nant-y-Cwm School Limited reserves the right to apply to the county court and the court fees will be added to the balance of fees owed.

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Parent-Teacher Support

Parents' Afternoons: Each class has regular parents' afternoons. It is a good opportunity for parents to find out about the curriculum and the teacher's personal approach to it. Time is set for questions and discussion, and the atmosphere is sociable.

Home Visits: A home visit can be very helpful in fostering a supportive connection between parent, teacher and children. Parents or teachers can initiate this.

Class Representative: Each class has a parent representative. The class rep has a specific role and role description (the document is available in the office).

Parent Workshops: The teachers hold regular workshops for parents outside of school time. These workshops are to give parents an experience of or information about the Steiner Curriculum. Parents will be sent a booking form via parent mail.

Pupil Support Team

In the Main School there is a Pupil Support Team (PST) consisting of children from classes 6 and upwards on a rotational basis. This team is in place in order to give all children at Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School further opportunities to share their thoughts and opinions and to play an active role in the decisions that affect their learning and wellbeing at NYC school. The team meets weekly with a class teacher as facilitator.

School Property and Grounds

- Pupils must follow the school rules at all times (see section 5).
- Parents will be responsible for any willful damage of school property.
- Pupils must observe the boundaries set within the school grounds. These may change with the seasons, for repair work and other activities.
- The school is out of bounds outside of school hours except for authorised activities.

General information

Newsletter: There is a regular school newsletter on Wednesdays, containing school news, messages from teachers and notice of events. This is sent via Parent Mail to all parents. (Paper copies are available on request). A copy is on the school noticeboard.

Notice-boards: There are two in the entrance porch of the school – one contains school information and the other is a community notice board. Anything you would like to display please make it A5 size and hand in at the office.

Parent mail: This is a secure on-line facility we use for day to day consent forms, medical information and school trip consent and information. We will also use Parent Mail for emergency emails and / or texts in case of school closure. Upon joining the school you will have an account set-up to verify.

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Lost and Found: All items of clothing such as coats and wellington boots should be clearly marked. Any clothing found will be put in the “Lost Property” box in the school porch for parents to reclaim. Unclaimed items will be recycled.

SECTION THREE – WHAT MAKES OUR SCHOOL A WALDORF SCHOOL

Home Rhythms

Giving children a strong feeling of rhythm at home reinforces what we do at school and strengthens every aspect of their development. We sleep and wake, we breathe in and out, and we pass through the seasons again and again. We soon feel the detrimental effect of any disturbance of these natural rhythms.

Modern life can lack rhythm for children and adults it is therefore important to this rhythm into the lives of children. Regular mealtimes and story times can help them develop a strong feeling for the days of the week and the weekend; we can do seasonal things with them, such as decorating eggs at Easter, going for walks, planting bulbs in the autumn etc.

Having a special corner at home for treasures found on walks, twigs and flowers, shells and stones or seasonal pictures can be enriching and fun. Lighting a candle before a meal or at bedtime, saying a simple grace or a bedtime prayer help children to find their place in the day.

It is important to have a regular homework or reading time, a set bedtime and a particular job or task to carry out daily at a certain time. In this way a real feeling of security is built up in the children, so that they can move through the complex world in which we live, feeling more confident and secure. In bringing a creative rhythm into daily living, children receive a gift which will be of value to them throughout their lives.

Television and Child Development

The Steiner Waldorf school movement does not encourage watching television or the use of screens.

Though much emotion surrounds the whole issue of television, and the role of television is a central one in modern life, there are some very sound reasons for believing that this powerful medium does fundamentally affect our children. That those effects are generally adverse, no matter how good or educational the program material, it soon reveals itself in the classroom, even if it is not so easily evident at home. Children who become used to 'zapping' from one program to another lose their awareness of the importance of listening to the spoken word, and unconsciously undermine the authority of the teacher. These observations, so commonly made in the classroom, are now widely backed up by research.

Broadly similar thoughts apply to other media such as video games, the internet, the radio, the cinema; and even recorded music and taped stories.

Some families hold very strong opinions in this area, so in order to avoid misunderstandings with the parents of children visiting your home, it would be advisable to check with those parents in advance if your children are likely to be watching television or playing computer games of any sort.

Your child's class teacher will be happy to discuss any questions relating to the modern media world. Together you can work out how you as a parent can best support the aims of the school and thus help your child's development.

Many interesting books and pamphlets have been published on children and the media. Please speak to your child's class teacher and refer to the booklist in the introduction and the further reading booklist at the end of this handbook.

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Festivals and Assemblies

The festivals are the heartbeat of school life. They are celebrated from Parent Child Group to Class 8, bringing children, teachers and parents together.

Children of Family Group and Kindergarten age are very close to nature; life in the Kindergarten has even been described as one long festival – one season giving over to another as Michaelmas, St. Martin's, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Easter and St. John's-tide follow each other round the year. In the main school we also let the cycle of the school year echo the processes in nature.

Michaelmas is the first festival of the school year at the beginning of autumn. Through the legends of St. Michael, conqueror of the dragon, we celebrate courage and strength of will. In our school we combine this festival with a celebration of thanks for the year's harvest, which culminates in a harvest feast for the whole school.

Martinmas is celebrated in November. The story of St Martin sharing his cloak is told to the children. They also make and carry their lanterns in a procession, celebrating with songs their bringing of light into the darkness of winter.

The Advent Spiral at the beginning of advent the children walk around the moss spiral to light their candles. It is a festival of quiet reverence, of darkness slowly turning to light.

St. Nicholas visits the children on December 6th, bringing a gift for each child and a sense of anticipation and preparation for Christmas to help them on their way through the coming year.

St. David's Day on March 1st is celebrated by all the children who are encouraged to dress in traditional Welsh costume to celebrate the day. We enjoy the story of St. David, sing and dance together and share welsh cakes.

Easter is the festival celebrating death and resurrection, a process we see all around us in nature at this time of year. The Easter hare brings eggs and hides them for the children in Kindergarten. Classes in the main school will also have a special event such as the blowing and decorating of eggs and egg rolling.

May Day is celebrated by all the children with May pole dancing and songs.

St. John's Midsummer Festival in June is a festival celebrated with stories, singing and games; culminating in the lighting of the St. John's fire with flaming torches and jumping over the fire.

End of Term Festival there is an end of term festival at the end of each term at which the children present plays, poems and songs to parents and friends. This reflects the work of the children and teachers during each term.

School Fairs The school holds a summer and Christmas fair. Much help with the planning, organization, setting and clearing up of these events is always needed and appreciated. They are enjoyable social occasions, and strengthen the whole school community and the main fundraising events for the school.

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Assemblies: About every 3 weeks, the pupils in all the classes meet together to listen to a story, sing and hear news about what's happening in our school.

Birthdays receive special attention in the Kindergarten, and in the main school many children like to bring a cake to school to share with their class.

Any parents wishing to deepen their understanding of the Christian festivals and to find new ways of celebrating them together will find the book *Families, Festivals and Food* by Judy Large and Diana Carey a great help.

Management of Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School

Nant-y-Cwm Steiner school is managed in accordance with Rudolf Steiner's vision that Steiner-Waldorf schools should be run as **modern self-governing learning communities, based on shared leadership¹ and consensus decision-making²**.

If you interested in becoming part of this, please contact the school office for any available opportunities. A copy of the School Constitution is available in the office on request.

1 **Shared leadership** is the practice of governing a school by expanding the number of people involved in making important decisions related to the school's organisation, operation, and academic issues.

2 **Consensus decision making** is a creative and dynamic way of reaching agreement between all members of a group. Instead of simply voting for an item and having the majority of the group getting their way, a group using consensus is committed to finding solutions that everyone actively supports, or at least can live with.

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SECTION FOUR – MAIN SCHOOL (AGE 7-14)

The Curriculum

The curriculum for Waldorf Schools has been developed by Rudolph Steiner. He indicated how he saw the relationship between the developing child; and the skills and knowledge they would need to acquire. The indications are partly so clear because a plan, detailing the material to be covered, had to be submitted to the Education Ministry at the time. The present, comprehensive curriculum, shows the vertical development of all subjects. It looks to provide an overall view of what needs to be covered, how that relates to the age of the children as depicted in Steiner's view of child development, and as a source of suggestions to inspire and stimulate the teacher's imagination. A foundation of Steiner education is the effective interplay between the content of the lessons and what the content elicits from the children. Steiner thought of education as a "healing process", one in which the content helps to put the child in touch with a healthy potential for growth and development.

The Main Lesson

The timetable structure is imbued with both a pedagogical and an artistic quality. This allows the rhythms of learning to create a natural and deep assimilation and digestion of the material. The main lesson occupies the first two hours of each school day. It is designed to immerse the children in a subject theme over a period of about three weeks. These themes call for the three soul forces – thinking, feeling and willing – to be exercised and developed in a balanced way. A three week block of, say, history will become an artistic and imaginative learning process supported by activities such as the recitation of poetry, singing, drama, drawing and writing – all integrated with the theme – as well as the daily recalling and discussing of the content given by the teacher the day before.

While the history can then rest and mature by sinking into the deeper levels of consciousness (to be taken up again later that year or the following year), another main lesson subject is taken up, and then another, and another through the years as the curriculum unfolds over time.

The class teacher takes all the main lessons for the class.

The main lessons are complimented by subject lessons, which continue throughout the year taught by specialist teachers. These lessons include languages (Welsh and French), games, arts and crafts and music.

Homework

This is up to each class teacher but no homework will be expected before class 4.

Pastoral Care and Pupil Support

Individual class teachers take responsibility to provide Pastoral Care meeting the varying needs of individual pupils at all times. For example, it may be that a pupil is experiencing bereavement, an unhappy relationship with others in the class, a difficulty in relationship with the adult world, or worries about the many challenges that confront young people and the associated peer pressure. It is during these times that the teacher may be able to give support and work toward resolving the problem.

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Class Assessments

It is extremely important that children are developing well and making good progress. It is equally important for the class teacher to be assured that the teaching methods being used are effective. To this aim every area of the child's learning and development is assessed and documented in a school wide approach twice a year.

Learning Support

If a teacher is concerned about the progress or behaviour of a child whom they teach they would share their concerns with their colleagues and the parents. If deemed necessary an Initial Referral Form would be completed with the Additional Learning Needs co-ordinator (ALNCo), and then an Individual Development Plan (IDP) may be put in place. Please refer to the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Policy for further details.

Reports

At Nant-y-Cwm reports aim to provide a deeper insight into the personal development of the child: and provide positive suggestions to work towards for the coming year, they are issued within the first 2 weeks of the summer holidays. The reports are written by the class teacher and the subject teachers.

Additional Activities

Regular class trips and outings will be organized by the class teacher that are relevant to the educational experience and support the curriculum.

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SECTION FIVE - School Rules

The following are the school rules including the rules of the playground that have evolved for pedagogic, educational or safety reasons. It is not a definitive list, but it should help reduce misunderstandings between parents, pupils and teachers.

Please note that these rules also apply to school functions such as work days, outings, open days, fairs etc as children are always representing the school. Parents cooperation in helping uphold the school rules is appreciated.

To ensure that the school is safe for everyone, please remember:

**Every member of the school is worthy of respect.
Please use positive and friendly language with children and staff.**

School and Playground Rules

- Be kind to each other.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Leave sticks on the ground.
- Respect and look after the environment (equipment, buildings and gardens).
- Keep your shoes on in the playground and in the field.
- Keep within designated boundaries.
- Do not throw anything unless part of an accepted game.
- Keep your food and drink for inside (unless given permission to eat outside with your class teacher).
- Water fights are not allowed.
- Do not throw hoops above head height.
- No rough, aggressive behaviour or play fighting.
- No climbing walls or trees.
- No kicking ball games to be played.
- No war games.
- The ball games "All against All" and "Storm the Castle" can only be played by Class 4 and above.
- Ask permission to fetch a ball that goes out of the playground. Use the gate to go out. (Class 4 onwards; Classes 1 to 3 must ask an older child or a teacher on duty to accompany them)
- Let the teachers on duty know if you or someone else is hurt.
- Always talk to the teachers on duty if you have any concerns.
- Come and tell a teacher on duty if you find dog poo.
- Ask permission if you need to go inside the school during playtime.
- Ask permission to get a piece of play equipment. You are responsible for its return.
- Bicycles, skateboards, scooters and roller skates are **not** to be ridden in the school grounds.
- Dispose of your litter in the bins and pick up any if you see it.
- Items not allowed in school are: home toys of any kinds, radios or other music players, matches, fireworks, comic books. Computer games, battery toys and games. Mobile phones may **not** be brought to school.
- Tobacco, alcohol and any illegal substances are not allowed at school

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- under any circumstances.
- Pupils must remain in school until 3.30pm when the school bell is rung, unless by prior arrangement with the class teacher.
- At the end of school all children must wait with their class teacher until they are collected by their parents or an authorised person from their pick-up list.
- Under normal conditions, all pupils should have left the school premises within 15 minutes of the last lesson.
- Pupils are expected to abide by a Classroom Code of Conduct. A copy is in every classroom from class 3 and up.
- **Clothing:** There is no school uniform, but clothes should be neat, clean and appropriate for school; logos or images are discouraged. Clothes should reflect time of year and weather conditions. There should be no bare midriffs or chests. Skirts and shorts should be appropriate for school (i.e. no shorter than mid-thigh length). The class teacher may ask pupils to change an inappropriate item of clothing. Bare feet are not allowed at school and shoes should be suitable for school activities. Children must have a coat in school for wet days and will be unable to go out at break times without one. Children are expected to wear suitable slippers/indoor shoes in the classroom.
- **Food** should be nutritious, simple, wholesome and easy to manage for the children. Please make sure your child brings a bottle of water. NB. No glass containers or cans.
- **Jewellery:** a small stud in each ear is allowed. 1 or 2 finger rings are acceptable from class 4 upwards. One discreet chain or necklace. No other body piercing or jewellery is to be worn.
- **Hair Styles** should be conservative, to avoid attention being prematurely drawn towards the child's physical appearance.
- No dyeing of hair in classes 1 – 7. Only natural hair colour dyes allowed in class 8.
- **No make-up** to be worn in classes 1 – 7 and only discreetly in 8. This includes nail varnish and any tattoos.

Pupils' Classroom Code of Conduct

The school has a Pupils' Classroom Code of Conduct. Parents can support their child and the school by familiarising themselves with the code and reminding their child of its content

Pupils Classroom Code of Conduct

- Be on time – knock and wait for an answer, then enter the room quietly.
- Respect other pupils' right to work.
- Do not wear outdoor clothes in class.
- Listen carefully to the teacher - do not interrupt. Put up your hand if you need to ask a question or to reply to a question put to the class.
- Do not eat during lessons.
- Do not verbally or physically abuse others, this includes bullying (Anti-Bullying Policy available in the school office).
- Stand quietly before and at the close of each lesson.
- Only leave your seat with the teacher's permission.
- Do not leave the room unless given permission.
- Make sure you have the right equipment before the start of each lesson.
- Persistent bad behaviour, refusal to work, rudeness and defiance will result in detention.

Exclusion Policy

Guiding Principles

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Mutual respect and recognition of the value of each individual are at the core of our education at Nant-y-Cwm School. We aim to create an environment where all pupils can access the rich and varied curriculum we offer. It is central to our philosophy that we work to develop strong relationships with the pupils in our care. Working out of Anthroposophy, we approach each child with love and compassion, study them in order to more clearly understand their needs and work curatively to help them become strong, healthy and balanced.

Nant-y-Cwm School seeks to be inclusive and to work with parents/carers and pupils to resolve difficulties and thus to reduce the need for a subsequent exclusion (see our Behaviour and Discipline Policy). Nonetheless, sometimes pupil's behaviour will be such that exclusion needs to be considered. The decision to exclude a pupil from school is a very serious one and is not taken lightly.

The decision to exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair. This policy takes account of our Equal Opportunity Policy and, in particular, pre-supposes that any decision to use sanctions would be informed by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the duty to make reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

The full policy is available in the school office.

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SECTION SIX – CODE OF CONDUCT

Policy For Parent/Carers

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to respectfully remind all members of the school about expected conduct, so we continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect. Educating children is a partnership.

This policy is applicable to Kindergarten and Main School, including the car parks and grounds. It also applies to employees away from the school but only in so far as it relates to the business of the school.

For the purpose of this Policy members of the school are all children, parents, carers, volunteers and visitors.

The Schools Expectation

We expect members of the school to:

- a) Respect the values adopted by our school, and our values of positivity, collectivity and learning.
- b) Recognise that teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- c) Set a good example in their speech and behaviour.
- d) Ensure that when a child is under a parent's care on school property they are responsible for their child's behaviour in keeping with the School Rules.
- e) Not discipline or distract their child whilst in the care of the school.
- f) Follow the schools concerns and complaints procedure to help resolve any issues or concern.
- g) Keep the school tidy and not to litter.
- h) Park carefully and avoid parking, waiting or stopping in areas which must be kept clear (for example, outside the school gates) including the neighbours property.
- i) Make an appointment via the school office to agree a mutually agreeable time to discuss matters with teachers or office staff.
- j) Be aware that children attending the school once brought into the school are under the school's care and supervision until a child has said goodbye to their class teacher at the end of the day.
- k) Not to contact members of staff at home regarding school matters, instead make an appointment via the school office.

Concerns and Complaints Guidance

The school wishes to uphold standards of courtesy and reasonableness that should characterise all communication between the school and carers /parents who wish to express a concern or pursue a complaint.

The school expects parents/ carers who wish to raise concerns to follow the School's Concerns and Complaints Policy.

SECTION SEVEN – CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

General Principles:

Our Concerns and Complaints Procedure is intended to support our core ideals and to contribute to the continual improvement of the education we provide.

Principles in practice:

Independent schools in Wales are required by regulation to offer a procedure for concerns and complaints.

This procedure meets the regulatory requirements in full. It is intended to support us in effective listening so that problems can be positively resolved wherever possible. Our core purpose is to offer high quality Waldorf education. In order to improve our work, we seek to improve by evaluating and reviewing our practice.

We believe that the education of children is most effective when there is co-operation and mutual trust between all parties involved in the upbringing and education of the child.

- 1.1 Communication with parents is via: weekly newsletter and parent mail, termly parent meetings and individual meetings and an AGM. We encourage all members of the community to contribute to the life of the school through these channels. We also welcome practical suggestions that can help us improve our communication and the way we work.
- 1.2 Our concerns and complaints procedure aims to deal with issues in a fair and open manner. We intend to respond to questions and criticisms promptly and to resolve problems effectively.
- 1.3 In situations where there are allegations of professional misconduct, criminal offences, including matters covered by our Safeguarding Children Policy, or others that might result in a member of staff facing disciplinary action; an urgent investigation will take place. Evidence will be gathered from all parties.
- 1.4 We endeavor to take all reasonable steps to resolve complaints via the procedures set out in this document. There may be circumstances where resolution proves to be impossible. On those rare occasions, once all stages of our procedure have been exhausted, the Trustees reserve the right to treat the matter as closed. Further steps open to the complainants are indicated at the end of the document.

Stage 1: Concerns

We hope that this procedure will help us to listen, acknowledge concerns, and be fair and consistent. We are committed to treating concerns seriously, and finding solutions.

1. If a concern is about any aspect of the school, please communicate this to the person/team directly responsible for the subject of your concern. If you are unsure of whom to contact please go to the school office.
2. Concerns, and any further steps identified during the meeting, will be recorded by the admin staff (i.e. actions arising).
If no further action is required, the concern will be recorded and filed for review by School Management Team.

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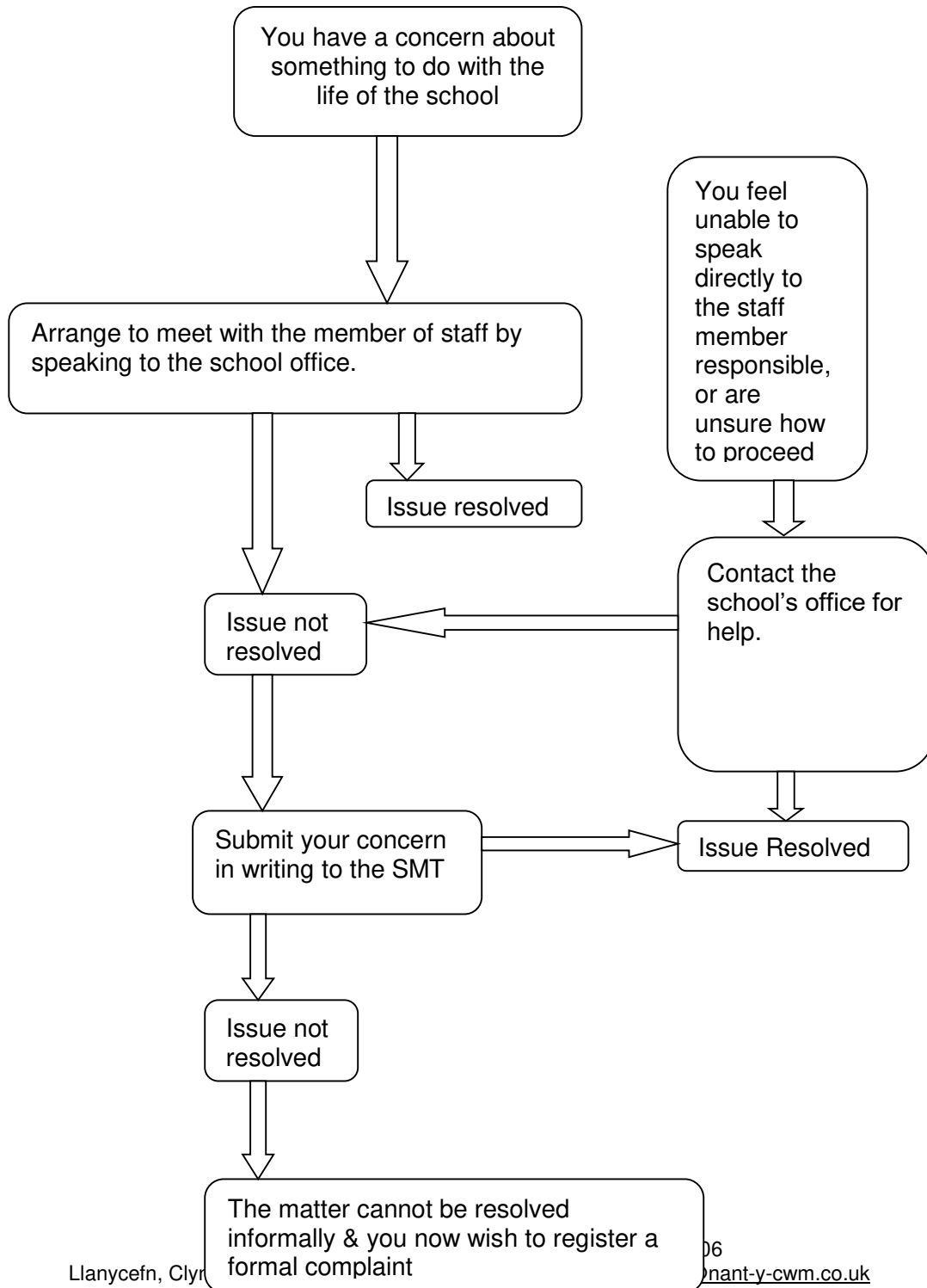
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- If concerns remain, the School Management Team can arrange a further meeting to help explore the matter informally.

It is our aim to deal with issues that may arise through our concerns procedure. However, if the matter cannot be resolved informally, it should be raised as a written formal complaint. This procedure should be used immediately if the issue is one of a serious nature.

Stage 1: Concerns Flowchart



Stage 2: Formal Complaints

1. To register a formal complaint put your complaint in writing on the **Formal Complaint Notification Form**, (copies available from the school office), addressed to the Trustees (SGT), who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and delegate SMT to administer the formal stage of the procedure.
2. SMT will arrange a Complaints Meeting of the relevant staff to discuss and investigate as soon as possible. The aim is to have a written response sent within four weeks of receipt of the formal complaint.
3. For the Complaints Meeting, SMT will gather all information surrounding the complaint; the details of the Concerns Stage; what was carried out; and any other relevant evidence and information.
4. A nominated administration person will attend the Complaints Meeting to take proper records of discussions and agreed actions, outcomes and timetables of implementation.
5. Following the Complaints Meeting, the agreed results will be communicated verbally to the complainant by the nominated member of staff and confirmed in writing. The aim is that such a letter should be issued within four weeks of the written formal complaint being received. If for some reason because of holidays or complexity of the complaint there is a delay, a letter will be sent by the nominated administration person explaining the reason for the delay and giving a revised date.
6. The verbal and written response will include full reasons for the conclusions reached at the Complaints Meeting and what action, if any, will be taken to address the matter.
7. The complainant will be advised that if they remain dissatisfied, in order to progress the complaint further, they must write to the SGT within two weeks. They will be offered the opportunity of taking the complaint to a Review by a Complaints Panel at Stage 3 of this procedure.

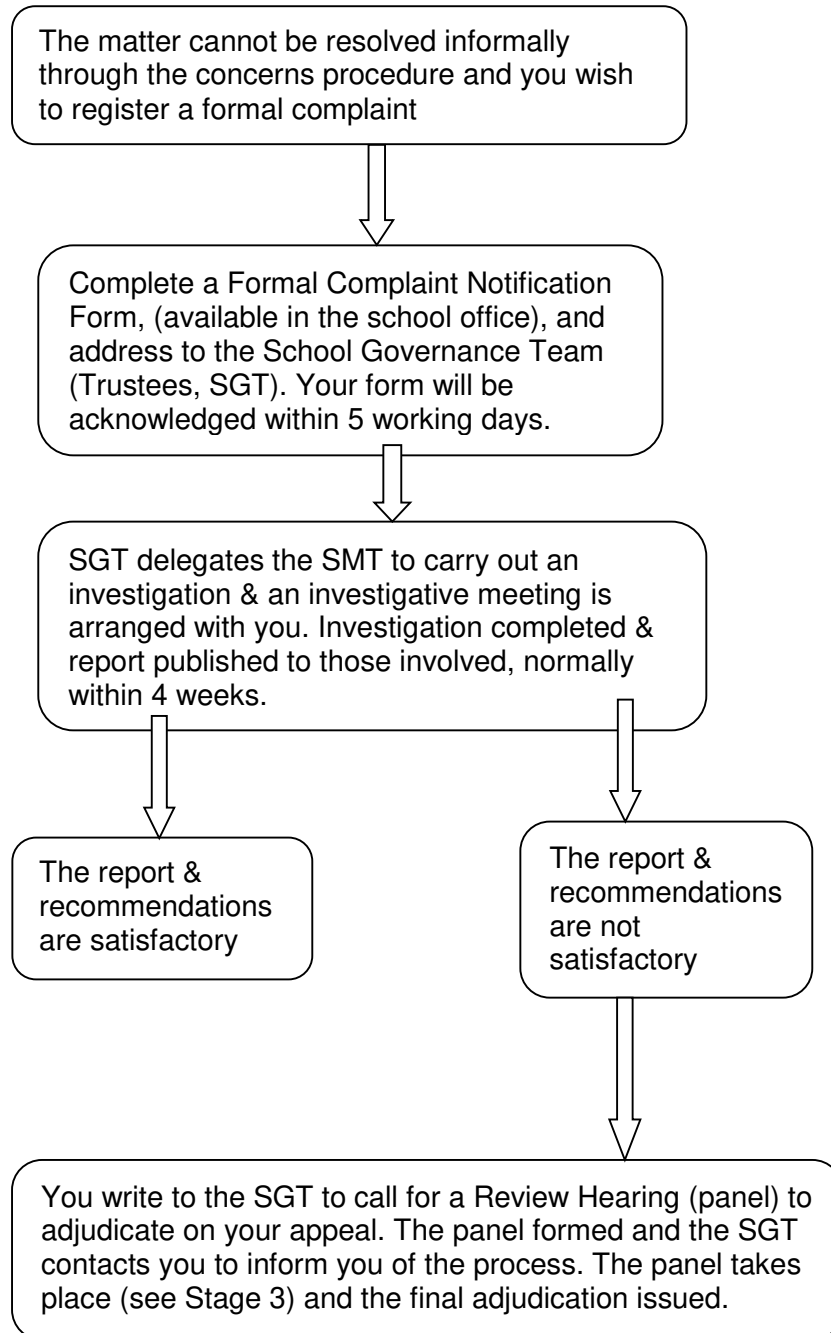
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Stage 2: Formal Complaint

Formal Complaints Flowchart



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Stage 3: Review by Complaints Panel

We hope that complaints rarely reach this level, if the need arises, an objective Complaints Panel will review the procedure followed and a hearing will take place.

1. Once a signed formal complaint has been submitted, the nominated administration person will issue a written acknowledgement-of-receipt. This letter will also confirm to the complainant that the complaint will be heard by the Review Hearing within 4 weeks of receiving the formal complaint. It will also inform the complainant of the right to submit any further documents other than the Formal Complaint Form. Any further information supplied must be submitted to the nominated administration person within one week of the receipt of this acknowledgement letter. The right to call witnesses to the meeting (which is subject to the approval of the Chair of the review hearing), and the right of the parent to be accompanied by a companion of his/her choice, will also be explained in this initial letter.
2. The trustees will appoint the panel, normally 2 members of the panel will be trustees and the third a suitably qualified person independent of the SMT and SGT. The appointment of the panel is the responsibility of the SGT. The Review Hearing will look at all the information from both the informal and formal stages of the procedure so far, and any additional information submitted by the parent or the relevant staff.
3. Once appointed the Panel Chair will contact the complainant and all relevant staff who may need to attend, within 48 hours to inform the complainant of the procedure and composition of the panel, this will include:
 - The date and time and location of the hearing
 - The process and aim of the hearing
 - Members of the panel will review the complaint confidentially, with objectivity and without fear or favour
 - The panel will make themselves familiar with the procedure and information relevant to the complaint.
 - The panel will hear your concerns and may call for the staff members against whom the complaint has been made.
 - The role of the panel is to verify whether the school has acted appropriately and to judge whether there is a need to change any procedures in light of the complaint.
4. A written decision will be sent by the Chair of the Review Hearing within two weeks of the meeting, to the complainant, relevant staff and the School Governance Team.
5. The decision of the Panel will be final. The school offers no further appeal to the decision of a Review Panel.

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Complaint Records

We keep the following records of complaint:

- The complaint will be listed with the date first raised
- The nature of the complaint
- Dates of meetings, communications and those attending them
- The outcome
- Copies of all documentation.

Complaint records will be kept confidential and secure.

The school will publish the number of complaints dealt with each year, as required and made available to school inspectors in accordance with the law.

Other Routes of Complaint

Parents can contact the Welsh Assembly Independent School Department direct, quoting our school number 6696008.

The Welsh Assembly cannot consider complaints about independent schools in the first instance. However, once the School's own Complaints Procedure has been followed, a parent can send their complaint in writing to:

Julie Webster
Cathays Park
Welsh Assembly
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

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BOOK LIST

Some recommended reading:

Books on Steiner Waldorf Education

- Waldorf Education - C Clouder & M Rawson, Floris
- Education Towards Freedom - F Carlgren, Lanthorn Press
- Educating Through Art - A Nobel, Floris Books
- Waldorf Education in Theory & Practice - R. Blunt, Novalis Press
- The Recovery of Man in Childhood - A C Harwood, R Steiner Press
- School as a Journey - Torin Finser, Anthroposophic Press
- Understanding Waldorf Education – J.Petrash, Floris books
- Love and its meaning in the world - Rudolf Steiner
- The Foundations of Human Experience - Rudolf Steiner
- Childhood: a study of the growing child - Caroline Von Heydebrand (one of the much loved teachers in the original Stuttgart Waldorf school)
- The way of the child - A C Harwood
- Towards Creative Teaching - Martyn Rawson and Brien Masters
- Multiculturalism in Waldorf Education - The Waldorf Multiculturalism Committee
- Encountering the Self - Herman Koepke
- You're not the boss of me! - Ruth Kerr
- Helping children overcome fear - the healing power of play - Russell Evans
- Waldorf Parenting handbook - Lois Cusick
- The developing child: Sense and nonsense in education - Willi Aeppli
- Education as Preventative medicine: A Salutogenic Approach - Dr Michaela Glockler, MD
- Phases of Child Development - Bernard C J Lievegoed, Floris Books

Early Childhood

- You are your Child's First Teacher - Rahima Baldwin,
- Work and Play in Early Childhood - F Jaffke, Floris Books
- The Incarnating Child - J Salter, Hawthorn Press
- The First Three Years of the Child - K König, Floris Books
- A guide to Child Health - M Glöckler & W Goebel, Floris Books

Practical Activities & Festivals

- Birthdays - Celebrations for Everyone - A Druitt, C Fynes-Clinton & M Rowling, Hawthorn Press
- All year Round - A Druitt, C Fynes-Clinton & M Rowling, Hawthorn Press
- Families, Festivals & Food -D Carey & J Large, Hawthorn Press
- Festivals Together - A guide to multicultural celebration, S Fitzjohn, M Weston & J Large, Hawthorn Press
- The Children's Year - S Cooper, C Fynes-Clinton & M Rowling, Hawthorn Press
- Earthwise -C Petrash, Floris Books
- The Christmas Craft Book -T Berger, Floris Books
- The Easter Craft Book -T Berger, Floris Books
- The Harvest Craft Book -T Berger, Floris Books
- Making Dolls –S. Reinckens, Floris Books

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- Painting with Children -B Muller, Floris Books
- Lifestyle and Child Development
- Lifeways -B Voors, Ed., Hawthorn Press
- Who's bringing them up? -M Large, Hawthorn Press
- Free your Child's True Potential- M Rawson, Hodder & Stoughton

Useful websites:

- www.waldorflibrary.org
- www.waldorfindspiredlearning.com
- www.waldorfteacherresources.com
- www.waldorfcurriculum.com
- www.waldorfbooks.com