



Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School

Kindergarten Prospectus



KINDERGARTEN: FOR AGES 3-6



- Kindergarten is from 8:45am until 1pm, Monday to Thursday.
- Afternoon care is available from 1pm – 3:30pm each day
- Thursday morning is 'adventure day.' which is available for children 4 years and over.
- We provide a mid-morning, organic hot snack for the children Monday to Wednesday.
- We provide high-quality, natural materials for art & crafts.
- All food in kindergarten is organic, all materials are non-toxic.

“Young children live in their senses. They thrive in a world of rhythm, warmth, and beauty.”

-Rudolf Steiner



A GENTLE AND NURTURING BEGINNING: GROWING THROUGH RHYTHM, PLAY, AND CONNECTION.

At Nant-y-Cwm's kindergarten, we recognise that everything in a child's world—both seen and unseen—shapes their growth and development. Childhood is a time of deep sensitivity, and young children flourish in an environment that is calm, familiar, and unhurried, where their senses are gently nurtured.

At the heart of our approach is an understanding of human development, how children grow in body, mind, and spirit. We respect each child's natural rhythm, allowing them time to develop at their own pace through meaningful play, hands-on experiences, and rich sensory learning. The daily rhythm, filled with stories, songs, creative work, and outdoor play, provides security and balance, supporting children's physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being. Through simple yet nurturing experiences, we help each child's unique gifts unfold, laying the foundation for a strong, joyful, and resilient start in life.

"The child should not be seen as a vessel to be filled, but a lamp to be lit."

- Plato

BUILDINGS

We have two Kindergarten settings, one is nestled on banks of the river in a purpose built cob and turf-roof building, designed by celebrated eco-architect Christopher Day MBE (a founding parent of our school).

The building has been recently listed with CADW for its cultural significance.

This beautiful building is well-known in Wales for its inspiring early years setting – the classrooms inside are cosy, with small nooks designed for little children to feel safe and comfortable, everything the perfect height for a young child.



Our second kindergarten setting is known as 'Orchard' for its location, nestled below our apple trees. This enchanting kindergarten is a wooden cabin, surrounded by trees that change with the seasons—from delicate spring blossoms to the rich colours of autumn.

Large windows give the space natural light, offering children a constant connection to the outdoors, while underfloor heating ensures it remains warm and inviting throughout the year. The interior is designed to feel cosy and homely, with natural materials, soft lighting, and thoughtfully arranged spaces that encourage creativity and play.



OUTDOOR PLAY

The children enjoy spending time in the safely enclosed gardens surrounding each of our Kindergartens, which feature sandpits, hammocks, wheel barrows and much more. Here, they are free to run, climb, skip, dig, splash, and observe the world around them—whether it's watching a beetle crawl along the wall or exploring the many wonders of nature.

Through these activities, the children develop a deep appreciation for the natural world around them.

Kindergarten life is centered around movement—giving children opportunities to test and strengthen the abilities of their bodies through activities like balancing, climbing, and jumping. Rain or shine, the children go outside every day, helping them build a lasting connection with nature and an understanding of its rhythms.



ADVENTURE DAY

On Thursday mornings, children over the age of 4 take part in Adventure Day, where they explore the Nant-y-Cwm community woodlands that border the school.

During Adventure Day, the children embark on a walk through the woods, visiting special places like the climbing tree and the mudslide, much-loved spots that spark their imagination and sense of adventure.

They enjoy a picnic outdoors together, and often take part in exciting activities such as making fires and baking bread over the fire, deepening their connection to nature and developing practical skills.



KINDERGARTEN: DAILY RHYTHM

5 - Snack Time

Each day, the children enjoy a warm, organic, homemade snack, such as soup, apple crumble, or rice. The weekly rhythm remains the same, providing a comforting sense of structure. Over time, the children naturally use these meals to mark the days of the week, often referring to them as "Soup Day" or "Rice Day."



6 - Outdoor Play

The children spend time outside exploring the beautiful Kindergarten garden, embracing all that nature has to offer. Whether playing, discovering, or simply enjoying the fresh air, outdoor time is an essential part of their daily rhythm.



7 - Story or Puppet Show

The children enjoy a seasonal story or puppet show from their Kindergarten teacher. The puppet shows feature handmade dolls, and use natural props and decorations.



8 - Home-Time Song

The children close the day with a home-time song, and are handed over to their parents at the gate.



KINDERGARTEN: DAILY RHYTHM

Kindergarten is a magical space: a home from home where children can feel the security of our extended family. Imaginative play has a very important role in a child's development and forms a major part of the kindergarten day. We work with a strong rhythm that remains the same from day to day and week to week, from season to season and year to year. The rhythm becomes deeply rooted in the children, allowing them to know what each day will bring.

1 - Morning arrival

The children are warmly greeted by their kindergarten teachers, hang their coats on their hooks, and put their slippers on. They greet their friends, and enjoy some free-play to settle into the day.



2 - The day's activity

Each day, the children engage in a different activity, such as painting, bread baking, or crafts. This consistent rhythm remains the same throughout the year, providing a sense of security and familiarity.



3 - Free-play

Children can explore all that is on offer in the Kindergarten room at their own pace, enjoying the natural toys, 'house corner', or following their own imaginative ideas. They also have the opportunity to take part in preparing the day's snack, helping to cut fruit and vegetables.



4 - Circle time

Circle time is a special part of the day, where the children come together for songs, movement and rhymes. It creates a sense of unity and warmth, helping to bring the classroom together in a calm, centered way.



WHAT IS A STEINER-WALDORF EDUCATION?

Steiner-Waldorf education draws on the educational ideas of early 20th Century philosopher, Rudolf Steiner.

Steiner developed a model of education that aims to enable each child to become their true self, equipped to lead a life of their choosing and to contribute positively to society as a force for good in the world.

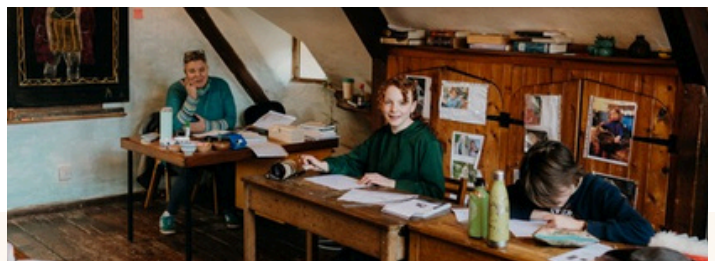
It centers on nurturing a child's intellectual, artistic, and practical capacities, tailored to their developmental stages. The philosophy values the individuality of each child, encouraging a love for learning, ethical responsibility, and a sense of community.

It is respected worldwide for its ability to produce very able young people, who have a strong sense of self and diverse capacities that enable them to become socially and economically responsible citizens.

WHY IS IT GOOD CHOICE?

In today's digital era all information is readily available at the touch of a button, and educational approaches that focus on memorisation and rote learning no longer serve our children. A Steiner education develops knowledgeable children who are creative problem solvers, who are curious, think critically and are conscientious. These qualities underpin a successful life, and make our students stand out from the crowd.

As well as the academic advantages, students at Nant-y-Cwm enjoy the benefits of a heart-centered, holistic school. They feel respected, encouraged, and worthy, which lays the foundation for healthy self-esteem, confidence, and emotional intelligence: a spring board for the rest of their life.



HOW WE DELIVER THIS AT NANT-Y-CWM

Holistic Curriculum: The curriculum is designed to address the whole child—the head, heart and hands.

Developmental Approach: The curriculum is tailored to the developmental stages of each child. Subjects are introduced at times when the child is deemed developmentally ready.

Continuity of care: Each class typically has a teacher who stays with the same group of pupils throughout their journey, allowing the teacher to understand the individual needs and development of each child.

Interdisciplinary Learning: Lessons are taught with connections drawn between different subject areas. This approach aims to provide a more interconnected and meaningful understanding of the world.

Creative Expression: Artistic activities are integrated into the academic curriculum to engage the imagination and creativity of students.

QUOTES FROM OUR 2024 CIW REPORT

Children have a very strong voice and their opinions and interests are highly valued and acted upon.

Children are extremely happy and engaged and have a strong sense of belonging

Interactions between children and staff are consistently stimulating and children cooperate enthusiastically.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning and are immersed in the exciting opportunities that are available to them.

Staff champion all round healthy lifestyles.

Staff have excellent relationships with their colleagues and communicate very well with each other; this ensures they supervise and support children effectively at all times.



- Staff consistently encourage children's curiosity and problem solving skills.
- All staff are very good role models, they take time to explain and give reasons for their expectations, which impacts the way children show empathy towards each other and compassion for the world around them.
- Staff know the children well and are familiar with their likes and dislikes.
- The environment is safe, secure, well-maintained indoors.
- [Staff] organise the environment well so that it provides a good range of play opportunities suitable for the mixed age ranges cared for.