

The Nantlwys Federation

St Mary's Voluntary Aided Primary School
Nercwys

Ysgol Gynradd Wirfoddol Cymorthedig
Nercwys

School Prospectus



2023-2024

Challenging our Minds, Growing our Hearts

Herio ein Meddyliau, Tyfu ein Calonnau



Croeso/Welcome

Welcome to our new prospectus.

I have been a governor at St Mary's Nercwys for over 20 years and I was the Chair of Governors for St Mary's before we federated with Ysgol Nannerch.

I have been Chair of governors for the Nantlwys Federation since April 2019. As a former pupil of Nercwys school I am proud to be involved with the school and the Federation. Within my own work role, I was the Senior Finance Lead in Wrexham Education Authority. This enables me to support our Federation to ensure our finances are managed effectively and efficiently.

I firmly believe that the Federation has been beneficial for both schools. Each school has kept all the qualities that we celebrate whilst gaining extra skills and support from the other. We have a happy and successful Federation - schools who support each other to be successful.

The Governing Body are committed to providing the best possible learning experiences for each learner across the Federation, supporting them to fulfil their full potential and creating a nurturing family environment.

I hope that you will find this prospectus useful as an introduction to St Mary's Nercwys and what the school can offer your child.

Mr. Ian Roberts
Chair of Governors



Croeso/Welcome

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to St Mary's, Nercwys with our latest prospectus.

Our school motto is '**Challenging our Minds, Growing our Hearts**'. We welcome children, their parents and their families into our friendly, happy and hard-working environment, where respect for others and positive attitudes towards work and behaviour are encouraged and nurtured.

St Mary's, Nercwys is proud to be part of the Nantlwyn Federation. We are federated with Ysgol Nannerch, another small primary school near Mold. We are both rural Church schools and effectively support one another. We are stronger together and this helps add an extra dimension for pupils whilst retaining that supportive learning environment where each child matters.

St Mary's, Nercwys is a community focused school which recognises the importance of working in partnership with children, parents and the community in order that each child can be given the opportunity to develop their lifelong learning skills to enable them to reach their own unique potential.

Our school's values are:

community compassion perseverance trust wisdom hope

We aim to provide an environment which promotes every aspect of a child's wellbeing, to encourage them to strive to do their best and to achieve their personal targets.

This prospectus provides all the information about St Mary's, Nercwys to present our ethos, structure, practices and plans for the future. I would be happy to meet parents considering our school for their child, and I look forward to welcoming you and your child to St Mary's, Nercwys.

Mrs Andrea Taylor
Headteacher



Our School

St Mary's Nercwys is a Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School with a proud heritage. Originally built in 1871 to serve the local community, it continues to flourish and is today a school of warmth, strength and vision. We are an English medium school who actively promotes Welsh as a second language. Learners are taught effectively in mixed age classes making lots of use of our outdoor environments.

Our school has natural character and beauty. Nestled in the heart of the village community of Nercwys, St Mary's Nercwys has a lovely location. Nercwys Forest which is local to the school and the school is in a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We are a small school of around 40 full-time pupils. We place great emphasis on maintaining a very favourable teacher: pupil ratio. We use our teachers' skills and expertise together with our dedicated classroom support staff to develop strong relationships with the children and a clear idea of their needs and abilities. Respect and consideration for others permeates all aspects of school life, and our pupils are a credit to themselves, their families and their teachers with their outstanding behaviour.

Our school is a Voluntary Aided School within the Diocese of St Asaph. We liaise closely with the Diocese and Flintshire Education Authority. The school's Admissions Policy is updated annually and available from the school office.

Our last inspection from Estyn was April 2023 and we were really pleased with the outcomes. The report is available online via Estyn or our own website.





Our Vision

Challenging our Minds, Growing our Hearts

Herio ein Meddyliau, Tyfu ein Calonnau

In the Nantlwyns Federation we will be '*Challenging our Minds, Growing our Hearts*'. We will motivate everyone to do their very best and reach their full potential. Our nurture, care and support will ensure everyone will thrive at their own level yet challenged to be their best.

These were the most frequently used words when creating our vision with our stakeholders: Care, support, valued, community, happy, fair, resilient, ambition and family.

Our values are:

community compassion perseverance trust wisdom hope

- Learners will celebrate their Welsh language, heritage and culture throughout their school life
- Learners will be offered Outdoor learning and Forest School
- Learners will receive purposeful and meaningful contexts to their learning which will build on Literacy, Numeracy and Digital skills in a fun and engaging curriculum.
- Learning will encompass the 4 purposes in exciting ways and teachers will ensure learners have all their individual needs met through a vibrant and fun curriculum.
- Learner voice is strong and this goes a long way in our topic planning, learner feedback and progress.
- Our school communities work closely with the wider community including Church, School Beat, local playgroups and nurseries and local businesses.
- Our topics and themes are built around 'Cynefin' Our Local areas and the natural environment, historical and geographical features which surround Nercwys.



Our Staff

Headteacher	Mrs A Taylor
Deputy Headteacher	Miss J Roberts
ALNCo	Miss J Roberts
Foundation Phase Teacher	Miss H Gunes
KS2 Teacher	Mrs A Foster
HLTA	Mrs J Gillett
Teaching Assistants	Mrs C James Mrs H Allen Mrs J Elliott
Secretary	Mrs Fowles
Breakfast Club Supervisor	Mrs Elliott
Breakfast Club Assistants	Mrs James Mrs Gillet
Mid-Day Supervisors	Mrs Elliott
After School Club Supervisors	Mrs Elliott Mrs James Mrs Gillett Mrs Polytska
After School Club Administrator	Mrs Fowles
Caretaker	Newydd Cleaning and Catering





Governing Body 2023/2024

Working in close association with the Headteacher and Flintshire LA, the Governors have overall responsibility for school strategy and the efficient running of the school. Our governing body is made up of a committed, enthusiastic and talented group of people with diverse backgrounds who share a passion for the school and its place in the centre of our community.

The governors meet regularly as a full board, and also have a number of special sub-groups ensuring that close contact is maintained with the school covering staffing, curriculum and finance, for instance. As a full board, it represents all the groups who have an interest in the continuing success of the school: the local council, the church, the local authority, the staff and the parents. All our governors are approachable, and would be happy to explain their work more fully. Contact details are available from school. All meetings are recorded, and non-confidential minutes are available from school.

Name	Category
A Taylor	Headteacher
I Roberts (Chair of Governing Body)	Church foundation
J Moore (Deputy Chair of Governing Body)	Church foundation
C Yeardley	Church foundation
Rev K Stewart	Church
Rev D Stroud	Church
K Weston	Church foundation
K Bickerton	Community
G Williams	Staff
A Foster	Teacher
Vacancy	Community
D Thomas	Community
D Wood	Church foundation
G Toyne	Parent
S Bowd	Parent
V Small	Parent



Our School Day

Morning Session	9.00am to 12.00pm
Lunchtime	12.00pm to 1.00pm
Afternoon Sessions	1.00pm to 3.15pm
Nursery sessions	9.00am to 11.30am

Attending school regularly and punctually is very important. Should a child be absent, school should be informed by telephone, email or letter, before 9.30am on the first day of absence. This is when the registration period closes, and when information is required by the school cook for lunch preparation.

The reason for absence will always be required. 'Authorised' absences include:

- Illness
- Family holidays (up to a maximum of 10 days per year, and requiring the prior completion of a holiday form to ensure the permission of the headteacher)
- Medical/dental appointments
- Where LA-arranged transport to school does not arrive as planned

All other absences are recorded as 'Unauthorised'.



Wrap Around Care

Breakfast Club: We have a free Breakfast Club, which is funded by the Welsh Government. The Club is open to all school children including Nursery and Early Entitlement pupils.

The Club opens at 8.10 am. There is a selection of cereal, toast, fruit, yoghurt. Breakfast Club are unable to admit children for 10 minutes, 8.40am – 8.50am, as this allows staff time to tidy up before the end of the session. I would like to ask parents that children arrive between 8.10am and 8.40am for Breakfast Club, or between 8.50am and 9am for the start of the school day, when teachers take legal responsibility for the pupils.

Please note that we can offer Breakfast Club from 8am, but the first 10 minutes are not funded and do need to be paid for at 50p per day.

After School Club: We offer an onsite after school club until 5pm. The charges are:

From 3.20pm-4.00pm £3

From 3.20pm-4.30pm £5.25

From 3.20pm-5.00pm £7.50

We also offer a variety of other clubs across the school.





Term Dates and Training Days 2023-24

Autumn Term 2023		
Training Day	Friday	1st September 2023
Training Day	Monday	4th September 2023
Training Day	Tuesday	5th September 2023
School Opens	Wednesday	6 th September 2023
School Closes (Half Term)	Friday	27 th October 2023
School Opens	Monday	6 th November 2023
School Closes (Christmas)	Thursday	21 st December 2023
Training Day	Friday	22nd December 2023
Spring Term 2024		
Training Day	Monday	8th January 2024
School Opens	Tuesday	9 th January 2024
School Closes (Half Term)	Friday	9 th February 2024
Training Day	Monday	19th February 2024
School Opens	Tuesday	20 th February 2024
School Closes (Easter)	Friday	22 nd March 2024
Summer Term 2024		
School Opens	Monday	8 th April 2024
School Closed – May Bank Holiday	Monday	6th May 2024
School Closes (Half Term)	Friday	24 th May 2024
School Opens	Monday	3 rd June 2024
School Closes (Summer Holidays)	Friday	19 th July 2024



Partnerships with Parents

We have positive partnerships with parents.

Our school's website is regularly updated with weekly blogs that keep parents well informed about all aspects of school life.

We also have a very active school Twitter page that is updated regularly and a great way for parents to get to see what happens here at Ysgol Santes Fair Nercwys.



Staff/Parent Contact Time

You are more than welcome to see your child's teacher at the end of the school day. Alternatively, you can arrange with the child's class teacher an appointment.

We report progress to parents during each school term. The Autumn term provides an opportunity for parents to meet their child's teacher/s and receive information about their child's progress, targets and the planned work for the year. During the Spring term we provide a structured parent's evening to discuss children's work, targets and progress. In the Summer term, parents are provided with a written report on their child's progress and are then invited to request a follow-up meeting with their teacher if required.




School Communication

We provide ongoing information to ensure that parents feel informed about their school and their child's education.

www.nercwysprimaryschool.co.uk

Our school website is updated weekly with Head's News of the week and class blogs.

We use "SchoolComms", a text-messaging service to parents. At times of significant change, we also run information-sharing sessions to ensure joint working and understanding with parents and our wider community.

 @NercwysSchool on twitter is where you can also see a lot of our updates and interact with our valued partners and communities.



School Meals and Snacks

We are very fortunate at St Mary's Nercwys VA to have good school lunches prepared by Newydd. There are usually two choices daily, always with the additional availability of jacket potatoes and packed lunches.

From the Easter Term 2024, the roll out of Free School Meals will be extended to include all primary school pupils from Reception to Year 6.

Children are welcome to bring their own packed lunches to school. As a Healthy School, we ask that parents consider healthy options for their child.

Fruit snacks are offered at mid-morning break, with parents contributing £1 per week payable each half term. Foundation Phase pupils are also offered a free drink of milk. Pupils are asked to bring in their own water bottle which can be topped up during the day from our water cooler which is situated in the Foundation Phase classroom. We would again encourage parents to assist their child in making healthy choices.

Families on low income can get help with School Essentials – search: Flintshire Free School Meals (eFSM) and School Essentials Grant



Admissions

We follow Flintshire's 'Policy, Procedures and Process for Admissions to Schools', although, as we are a Voluntary Aided Church School, our Governing Body oversees admissions.

If, by 31st August 2023, your child has reached their 3rd birthday, they can attend five ½ day 'nursery' sessions each week from September 2023. Parents can apply to their preferred school and all schools have a maximum admission number for each year group. We also participate in Flintshire's 'Early Entitlement' Scheme, where children are able to attend school for our morning nursery sessions during the Spring and / or Summer school terms following their 3rd birthday.

If, by 31st August 2023, your child has reached their 4th birthday, they can begin their full-time education - their 'Reception' year - at school in September 2023.

Although most children start school at the beginning of an academic year, some may move during the school year for various reasons. We welcome new starters to our school provided our class numbers allow and in accordance with Flintshire County Council Guidelines.

We always welcome the opportunity to meet and present our school to families. Our headteacher would be happy to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet.

For further information regarding the County's Admission Policy, details can be provided by school, or Flintshire's Primary Schools Officer on 01352 704019.



Inclusion

St Mary's Nercwys VA is determined to demonstrate the advantages to all in providing a truly inclusive school community. We strongly believe that every child can achieve and will strive to do their best within an environment which promotes every aspect of their wellbeing.

We believe in the principles of diversity and equality. This does not mean we treat everyone the same, but that we recognise and respect difference and tackle barriers that cause discrimination. Every family is different; we celebrate individuality and encourage each child to reach their unique potential. Differences include gender, culture, disability, age, religion and language ethnicity. We strive to develop understanding of these differences so that we can meet the needs of our whole community. We are able to accommodate wheelchairs, and have a disabled toilet. All teaching is accessible on the ground floor, and outdoor learning environments are accessible.



Health and Well-being

We take the health, safety and security of our pupils, staff and premises seriously at St Mary's Nercwys. We aim to provide an environment that is safety conscious but not one that suppresses children's development of their own sense of responsibility for themselves and others. These aspects are addressed in a number of operational policies in place at the school – all of which are available to be viewed by contacting the school office.

School doors are kept locked and all visitors must ring the bell and wait for a member of staff to open the door. Pupils who are late should enter via the school office entrance and sign in.

At St Mary's Nercwys, we believe that all staff and pupils have the right to be respected, to feel secure and happy in their teaching and learning. We have many positive ways of promoting and rewarding good behaviour. House points, verbal and written praise, stickers, congratulations certificates and Seren yr Wythnos.

The school council created a pupil friendly behaviour policy in which we follow in school. St Mary's Nercwys Golden Rules:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Do be gentle | Do be kind and helpful |
| Do work hard | Do look after property |
| Do listen to people | Do be honest. |

Misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately with a reminder of the golden rules and the way we behave in St Mary's Nercwys. Pupils may miss some of their play time and may be asked to fill in a reflection sheet. Children are told that major incidents are recorded in the incident file and if a child is involved in a major behavioural incident, parents may be invited into school to discuss this with the Headteacher. This may also be the case if there is a series of minor incidents, or if a child is disrupting their own work and/or that of others.



Healthy Schools

The Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS) is committed to supporting every child within a healthy lifestyle. The scheme encourages the implementation of an effective Personal, Social and Well-being curriculum. The wider community is involved in its planning, implementation, evaluation and celebration of the scheme. It recognises the 7 health topics that should be covered throughout a school's involvement in the scheme which are as follows:

- Food & Fitness
- Mental and Emotional Health and Well Being
- Personal Developments and Relationships
- Substance Use and Misuse
- Environment
- Safety
- Hygiene

The school community in Nercwys have shown dedication and a high level of commitment to achieve Phase 4 award.



Curriculum

At St Mary's Nercwys, we recognise the importance of learning that is both meaningful and memorable. We provide a broad, balanced curriculum such that the talents and interests of all of our children can be recognised and developed. Each term across all age groups, there is a topic or theme through which much of the learning is organised. This encourages ownership, develops children's independence and shows that everything we do has a purpose - enabling us to celebrate children's work in meaningful ways. We are currently implementing the Welsh Government's New Curriculum alongside the Literacy and Numeracy framework and Digital Competence Framework. This initiative ensures the children develop excellent literacy, numeracy and digital skills which are taken across into other curriculum areas.

Six Areas of Learning and Expertise

- Health and Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts
- Humanities
- Language, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science and Technology

Relationships and Sexuality Education

The Government and Flintshire LA provide guidance on how schools should cover this important area in a child's development. Particularly, they state that

Relationships and Sexuality Education should not be provided in isolation, but included through the Six Areas of Learning and Expertise. It is a crucial area of development, and it is important to respond to children's natural curiosity. This enables them to develop a sound understanding of their and others' development, allowing them to mature emotionally with healthy attitudes towards people and relationships.

Bilingualism

St Mary's Nercwys teaches Welsh as a second language. Living and learning in Wales, we are keen to encourage the development of the Welsh language for our pupils, their families and our staff. We aim to use incidental Welsh as frequently as possible throughout the school day, in addition to structured teaching in Welsh lessons. We reinforce the value of Welsh all around the school, for example through the child led 'Clwb Cymraeg'. We have a Criw Cymraeg who are advocates for Cymraeg Campus.

We recognise the importance of the Welsh language in developing the children's appreciation of Welsh history and culture, as well as in developing their aptitude and interest in other language learning for the future.

Health and Well-being Area of Learning

During Key Stage 2, both girls and boys experience football, dodgeball, tennis, rounders, cricket, netball and rugby, and we take advantage of many opportunities to provide specialist coaching within and beyond the school day.

Years 3 - 6 also attend swimming lessons at Mold Leisure Centre. Our pupils attend for 6 sessions each year. We ask for a small voluntary parental contribution for this.

Religion, Values and Ethics

As a Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School, we are proud of our strong links with the village church, St Mary's, and the church community. This link directly contributes to our school's ethos and atmosphere and to the children's spiritual, moral and social development.

We hold regular whole-school worship, as well as participating in events such as 'Open the Book'. We conduct a number of services at our village church, including Harvest Festival and our Christmas Carol Service. These activities directly develop children's skills of 'Thinking', Literacy & Numeracy and D.C.F (Digital Competence Framework).

School Council

We have an active and influential School Council, with representatives from year 2 and above, voted for by their peers. School Council is supported by Mrs Foster, and a link governor. Through regular meetings the council makes recommendations and contributions to school development. Recently, they have recommended the

development of our 'Playground Games' and the playground 'Buddy System' as part of our Healthy Schools Scheme.

We also have an Eco Council, made up of 1 elected representative from each of the year groups in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, as part of our Eco Schools development. This council has recently influenced improvements to our outdoor learning provision and are currently auditing energy use in school.

Extra-Curricular Activities

As a community focused school, St Mary's Nercwys VA is committed to working in partnership with parents and others to support the development of children: providing extra-curricular clubs and activities is an ideal opportunity to develop partnership working.

We usually hold a very successful Sports Day each year, which is inclusive and enjoyable.

Previously we have been on a joint visit with Ysgol Nannerch to St Asaph Cathedral, as well as Wepre Park, and the Story House in Chester. Years 3,4,5, & 6 went on a 2-night residential visit to Robinwood, Wrexham, with pupils from Ysgol Nannerch. The Foundation Phase pupils visited Loggerheads for Christmas activities. Pupils from key stage 2 represented the school at the Formula 1 Jaguar Challenge event in Llandudno. We also organise after school football and netball events with other local primary schools.

Supporting Worthwhile Causes and Charities

Our school takes part in a number of fundraising events and the children themselves often decide on what the school can do in response to local, national and international charity needs. Our School Council also plays a vital role in deciding activities and ways to offer our support. Regular activities include a pyjama day for Children in Need. We also donate products from our Harvest Festival service to the local food bank.

Working with Our Community

We welcome contributions from individuals to enhance our children's learning and awareness e.g extra support with reading, needlework etc. We take part in Church Service e.g. Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day Service etc. Rev Kathy Stewart holds a Family Service on the first Sunday of each month.

Fundraising and School Support

The 'Friends of Nercwys School' (FONS) is our parent support group who organise many fundraising events to help support our school. We have held an Easter Bingo and Egg Hunt, Scholastic Book Fair, and Christmas Fair. Superb support is also provided at the Christmas play and other school and village events, raising funds

through raffles and provision of refreshments – we particularly enjoyed the home cake made cakes at the Christmas Fair!

Outdoor Learning

As a school we aim to learn in the outdoors as much as possible, we have a thriving garden area for the learners to explore and we have our raised beds where learners are able to grow their own fruits and vegetables.

We have two forest trained school staff who lead a variety of activities within the school garden. This helps build self-esteem, communication skills, independence and self-confidence, stimulating the imagination and putting learning into a real context.

Health Education

Our school promotes a healthy lifestyle, including benefits of exercise, healthy diet and an awareness of basic hygiene. The pupil toilets are located in the practical area at the back of the school. There are sufficient facilities for our pupil numbers and they are cleaned every evening in preparation for the school day.

Matters of Concern

Should any parent have a specific question or concern, then our teaching staff or headteacher would welcome discussing this quickly and will always make themselves available at a mutually convenient time.

We have a formal policy for dealing with complaints which is reviewed regularly by the Governing Body and is available from the school office, if required.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The Department for Education and Welsh Office Guidelines make it clear that schools and colleges have important roles to play in the protection of children against abuse. This is confirmed by the Policy of Flintshire County Council, which sets out the necessary procedures to be followed by all staff. St Mary's Nercwys, therefore has a duty to refer any concerns about the well-being of pupils to the Social Services Department, and the School Medical Officer if further advice is required. The Headteacher, and Miss Roberts who have both received Level 2 and 3 Child Protection training. All other members of staff have received Level 1 Child Protection training. We work closely with our Inclusion Welfare Officer. As we have brought our open-door policy to an end in the mornings, Parents are no longer allowed into school in the mornings. Pupils are accompanied to the school door by their parent etc where they are let into school by a member of staff.

Charging and Remissions Policy

The Education Reform Act (Section 110) describes the ways in which schools can receive funds for school trips and other functions that incur extra costs, stating that school cannot charge directly for such activities. All schools must inform parents of their policy. At St Mary's Nercwys VA, we actively seek opportunities to broaden and

consolidate our children's learning experiences, and some of these opportunities will inevitably carry a charge. Costs are covered in a number of ways – from school funds, from student mentoring and from parental voluntary contributions. Parents are not obliged to contribute, and this is only requested when necessary - but without sufficient contribution some activities may not be possible. Our policy in this respect is:

'The Governors may request voluntary contributions from parents. For activities wholly or mainly in school time, children will not be excluded if no contribution is made (except in the case of boarding and residential charges or optional extras).'

Additional Learning Needs

We have a team of trained practitioners including Teaching Assistants who confidently and successfully deliver a wide range of strategies to support all learners in 1:1, small group and within an inclusive class setting. Our Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo), Miss Roberts, and the class teachers oversee the structured support provided across the whole school.

Our highly skilled staff develop strong relationships with all the children, and are quickly able to notice if anyone needs extra learning support including those needing additional challenge. For those children who require support with emotional literacy, self esteem, social skills and friendship issues, we have a member of staff trained in ELSA.





Uniform

We encourage all our children to wear our smart and practical uniform at St Mary's Nercwys. Our school colours are red and black. The items in **bold** in the list below include our school logo, and are ordered through Forrester by Monkhouse, Mold throughout the academic year. Other items are widely available locally at reasonable prices.

Warmer Months	Colder Months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red or white polo shirt • Red sweatshirt • Red cardigan • Black shorts/trousers • Red gingham summer dress • 'School' shoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red or white polo shirt • Red sweatshirt • Red cardigan • Black trousers • Black or Grey skirt, pinafore or trousers • 'School' shoes or boots

All items of clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name. Both Foundation Phase and KS2 are encouraged to wear P.E. Uniform. We take part in a number of sporting activities away from the school during these years, and it is important that our pupils can be easily recognised. This consists of black shorts/tracksuit bottoms, and a red P.E. t-shirt. When other sportswear is required by the children (e.g. swimwear, football boots), parents will be advised in advance.

We strongly discourage the wearing of jewellery in school. Children with pierced ears should only wear small studs to school, and school cannot be held responsible for the loss or damage of such items.

Contact Details

Nercwys Primary School
Ffordd Pen y Bryn
Nercwys
Mold
Flintshire
CH7 4EL

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e-mail: nemail@hwbcymru.net

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