

**Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw**



**Annual Report to Parents**

**December 2024**

## CHAIR OF GOVERNORS LETTER

### REFLECTIONS 2023 – 2024

The Governing Body worked very closely with school leaders and staff during 2023 -2024 to strengthen the approach to pupil progress and wellbeing. This Post Covid period brought its own challenges as across Wales learners struggled to match previous rates of engagement in school life.

In line with all schools across Wales 2023- 2024 saw a more robust focus on promoting high rates of attendance. To this end a new routine of structured daily attendance meetings were introduced at school, involving key senior staff and support team staff in reviewing attendance on a whole school, class and individual learner level.

Of course, tracking learners' attendance doesn't by itself improve it. At the same time, a school community engagement officer was recruited via a Welsh Government Grant. This enabled school to increase the focus on learner engagement, and provide additional capacity to identify those learners who, following the demands of the pandemic, would benefit from additional support. This support includes direct liaison with families, working in partnership with other agencies, and / or meeting with learners on an individual basis. As a result of this increased emphasis on attendance rates have risen from post Covid levels of 86.9% in 2023 to 89.9% currently, which is very encouraging.

Improving the engagement levels of learners in school life is also significantly impacted by the range of experiences they access while at school. We were therefore very pleased during this post covid period to resume local community-based learning experiences. These included the following: School Council attended a Torfaen Council Meeting, Gwladys pupils and Sixth Form students participated in the Pontypool Eisteddfod & Urdd National Eisteddfod, various visits to Universities including Cardiff, Cardiff Met, Exeter, Bath, Oxford, participation in St Cadoc's Christmas Service and the Armed Forces Service in the Civic centre. Venturing further afield wider extra curriculum events were also welcomed back, such as residential visits to Glanllyn, a skiing to Austria, a geography trip to Naples, a history and a religious education trip to Krakow and Auschwitz.

Being able to resume welcoming visitors to classes and assemblies was another positive development during 2023 -2024, including School welcoming the Universities of Exeter, South Wales, Aberystwyth, Swansea, Y Coleg Cymraeg, and a range of providers including Torfaen Youth Service, Barod, Careers Wales and Aneurin Bevan Health Board. Such experiences are very valuable as they bring learning into a real-life meaningful context, and helps learners appreciate the relevance of their own learning in a subject discipline e.g. science, maths, history etc.

Equally significant is the influence of parents, carers and the wider family on individual progress. During 2023 -2024 school's approach to independent learning was reviewed and further developed. This led to the introduction of dedicated study space at Coridor Cymhelliant / Cwtsh Cynnydd and a programme of small group seminars, both virtual and on-site, to enable families to promote learning at home. You will have also noticed that during this time parents evenings / events benefited from a new hybrid approach. A positive legacy from the pandemic, enabling parents to make a choice of face-to-face meetings or virtual appointments, which feedback shows has proved a popular initiative.

At the heart of the school community is the voice of the learner. This is gathered in a range of ways including surveys, regular School Council meetings, events with staff, and meetings with governors.

In terms of the Governing Body, community representation is much appreciated. We are pleased to have members who represent parents, local councillors, and others who bring relevant expertise and experience. We are grateful to have recruited parents from our primary and secondary phases, and those with expertise in business and finance, as well as education and other public services. Nearly all governors are volunteers. and all are eager to support the whole school community. Please make contact if there is anything you would like to discuss. We are very interested in hearing your views and feedback.

Lesley Bush

Chair of governors

## **Governing Body Organisation 2023-24**

### **Headteacher**

Mark Jones

Helen Rogers (Acting Headteacher January – August 2024)

### **Local Authority Governors**

Lesley Bush (chair)

Anne Gunter

Daniel Tromans

Susan Edmunds

Amanda Owen

### **Parent Governors**

Christine Marchant

Michael Pearson

Rachel Williams

### **Community Governors**

Alun Thomas

David Francis

Lewis Barber

Matthew Williamson-Dicken

### **Staff Governors**

Richard Davies

Leighton Thomas

Mark Powell

In addition to the statutory subcommittees, the following subcommittees continue to operate, which also undertake some statutory functions:

- Leadership and management (which includes finance, staffing, health and safety)
- Curriculum, learning and teaching
- Wellbeing and inclusion
- Self-evaluation

Governors have also been allocated a link role, covering one or more strategic aspects, e.g. additional learning needs, finance, curriculum, professional development etc. Visits are undertaken, meeting with relevant senior and middle leaders and report back to the relevant subcommittee or full governing body.

### **ANNUAL REPORT MEETING**

The Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (The Act) removed the requirement for school governing bodies to hold an annual meeting with parents and a meeting will only be held if 30 or more parents request such a meeting.

No request was made to hold a meeting and as such, no meeting was held during 2023-24.

## **Summary of secondary school performance (SSSP) 2023-24**

You can find information about Key Stage 4 qualifications outcomes for the school, alongside comparative and other data, on the My Local School (MLS) website. This [link](#) will take you directly to this school's page on MLS or you can go to 'mylocalschool.gov.wales' and type the name of the school into the search bar in the top right corner of the screen.

The Welsh Government updates MLS throughout the year as and when data becomes available from an annual cycle of data collections and statistical releases – a list of key dates can be found <http://www.gov.wales/welsh-government-school-information-data-releases-2024-update>. Qualifications outcomes data is usually updated in January in relation to the preceding academic year.

It should be noted that the different assessment arrangements and grading approaches in place in response to the lasting effects of the pandemic mean it is not appropriate to use this data for 2023/24 to judge or compare schools.

## **Development priorities 2024-25**

The development priorities for 2023-24 were organised under Estyn's inspection headings and are summarised below.

### **1. Teaching and Learning**

- 1.1. All learners receive the appropriate challenge and support to succeed.
- 1.2. Provide a rich curriculum that develops skills and is a priority across the full age range.
- 1.3. Expand the Progression Step 5\* curriculum so that it suits and meets needs, so that learners do not drop subjects or leave education with no qualifications.
- 1.4. Improve learners' advanced reading skills across the age range.
- 1.5 Improve the standards in Progression Step 5 subjects, especially the core subjects.
- 1.6 Plan for the introduction of new Progression Step 5 qualifications in September 2025.
- 1.7 Establish consistency for Curriculum for Wales assessment strategies

### **2: Care, guidance and wellbeing**

- 2.1. Improve the attendance of groups of learners e.g year 9 and 10 girls and learners suffering from anxiety
- 2.2. Develop valuable partnerships with external stakeholders to offer some learners an appropriate alternative curriculum to enhance their commitment to their studies.
- 2.3 Strengthen the class teacher role and improve the provision of welfare and behaviour officers.
- 2.4 Reduce the number of temporary exclusions

### **3. Leading and managing**

- 3.1. Ensure consistency in how effectively middle leaders perform their roles.
- 3.2. Look at further reforms to the alternative curriculum to ensure that the offer meets the needs of individual learners so that they can make the best possible progress.
- 3.3. Adapt professional learning sessions to give teachers more time to experiment and embed practices at classroom level
- 3.4 Effectively plan, spend and evaluate the use of the PDG grant
- 3.5. Ensure that each area of learning provides learners with an appropriate level of challenge to make solid progress.
- 3.6. Ensure learners receive an appropriate level of challenge level and more experiences to enrich learning within Curriculum for Wales
- 3.8. Improve attendance rates especially that of girls in Years 9 and 10, reduce the gap between attendance of FSM and non-FSM learners.
- 3.9 Improve the relationship and effectiveness of work with cluster schools
- 3.10 Plan for investment to provide resources for Progression Steps 1 and 2

*\*Progression Step 5 refers to learners aged 14-16. Progression Steps 1 and 2 refer to learners aged 3 to 8.*

## **General update**

Our primary phase continues to grow with 50 learners from nursery age up to year 1.

The school continues to mature its collaboration with Ysgol Gwent Is Coed and Ysgol Cwm Rhymni to ensure a broad curriculum offer for post-16 learners. There have been further developments on the school site with the completion of the 3G pitch, which has already attracted significant interest for booking from the local community.

The school improvement journey continues and the systems put in place over the past year around teaching and learning and self-evaluation continue to mature. The school's work around curriculum and assessment continues to develop as we further embed the new curriculum in progression steps 1, 2 and 4.

## Toilet Provision

Please note: the below report relates to the toilet provision at the secondary department of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw in 2023-24. Toilet provision for nursery and reception learners in Gwladys Block are not included in this report.

The law requires schools with pupils over 5 years' of age to have a number of sanitation units equivalent to at least 5% of the number of pupils at the school.

There were 781 pupils at the school during 2023-24 (including sixth form). This would imply that the school must have at least 36 sanitary units.

A sanitary unit is defined as a water closet or 600mm of trough urinal (as per recommendation from the HSE).

Toilets are located in the main building, Glyndŵr Block, Llanofer Block and The Steffan and Bowden Centres. Disabled toilet facilities are in all the above locations.

### Provision at Gwynllyw:

Boys' main toilets:	26 water closets
Girls' main toilets	27 water closets
Multi-user toilets:	3 water closets

Boys' changing room toilets	1 water closet
Girls' changing room toilets	4 water closets
Multi-use changing room toilets	1 water closet

Total number of sanitary units = 62

Maximum number of pupils for toilet provision: 1240 pupils

### Additional toilet provision:

Boys Sixth form toilets	3 water closets
Girls Sixth Form Toilets	6 water closets

In all toilets, the school also provides the necessary ratio of wash basins to sanitary units (2/3 of the number of sanitary units).

### Primary Phase

Top floor (juniors – not used until 2025)

2 disabled WC

8 wc's (gender neutral)

6 sinks

Bottom floor

1 disabled WC

12 infants' wc's (mixed gender)

9 sinks

Toilets are cleaned daily and inspected at least once during the school day.

## School Term and Holiday Dates

School term dates make provision for 195 school days. Within these 195 days, schools are allowed to close for six days for training purposes. You should contact your child's school for information about the days on which they will close for training purposes.

### 2024/2025 Academic Year

#### School Term and Holiday Dates - 2024/2025 Academic Year

<b>Term</b>	<b>Term Begins</b>	<b>Half Term Begins</b>	<b>Half Term Ends</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>
<b>Autumn</b>	Monday 02.09.24	Monday 28.10.24	Friday 01.11.24	Friday 20.12.24
<b>Spring</b>	Monday 06.01.25	Monday 24.02.25	Friday 18.02.25	Friday 11.04.25
<b>Summer</b>	Monday 28.04.25	Monday 26.05.25	Friday 30.05.25	Friday 21.07.25

### In-service training (INSET) days 2024-25

*(Please note, there are also 6 Inset days in 2024-25 academic year)*

**Monday 2.9.24**                      **Friday 11.10.24**  
**Monday 3.3.25**                      **Tuesday 4.3.25**  
**Friday 4.7.25**                      **Monday 21.7.25**

### 2025/2026 Academic Year

#### School Term and Holiday Dates - 2025/2026 Academic Year

<b>Term</b>	<b>Term Begins</b>	<b>Half Term Begins</b>	<b>Half Term Ends</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>
<b>Autumn</b>	Monday 01.09.25	Monday 27.10.25	Friday 31.10.25	Friday 19.12.25
<b>Spring</b>	Monday 05.01.26	Monday 16.02.26	Friday 20.02.26	Friday 27.03.26
<b>Summer</b>	Monday 13.04.26	Monday 25.05.26	Friday 29.05.26	Friday 20.07.26

## Financial Summary

The below summary relates to the 2023-24 financial year. Please note: significant Covid-related funding was also received during 2023-24 and it was very difficult to be appoint staff to all the posts funded from the grants. As such, this contributed to a continued underspend

The school closely monitors the budget and governors have agreed a break even plan over the coming years. The primary phase budget is managed separately but included in overall deficit/surplus figures until systems are in place within the local authority to be able to accommodate an all-through school budget. This causes significant fluctuations in the final budget figures due to virements and recharges between the two budgets.

<b>Staffing costs</b>	
School balance from 2023-24 financial year	£869,246
Employee costs (whole school)	£4,145,495
Sickness absence, replacement staff and holidays	£70,695
Overtime and additional hours	£22,291
Maternity and paternity overall (including credit)	£3,629
Allowances	£9,431
Additional costs: course fees, advertising, employee charges, etc	£11,078
Total	£4,289,070
<b>Premises Costs</b>	£472,642
Transport costs	£9,697
<b>Supplies and services</b>	
Furniture, equipment and capitation, admin, licences, examination fees etc	£274,172
Catering	£49,381
Link courses and alternative provision	£30,157
Service level agreements	£89,901
Capital repayments and internal loans	£7,534
Total expenditure	£5,185,762
Total funding including grants	£5,375,485
Total surplus	£1,058,969

*Note: the surplus appears significant, but this includes the following headline items:*

- *Additional income generated through grants, additional work by staff £171K*
- *Solar panel cost which is to be paid from 2024-25 budget £175K*
- *Transfer back of setup surplus for primary phase £166K*
- *Salary savings £131K*

## **The Welsh language and extra-curricular activities**

**As per WG Circular 023/2007, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw is a Welsh medium secondary school.**

All subjects (including RE and PSE) apart from English are taught through the medium of Welsh to all pupils.

Welsh is the day-to-day language of the school. Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils and for the school's administration. The school communicates with parents in both languages.

For all pupils the normal expectation is that assessment at Progression Steps 4 and 5 will be through the medium of Welsh in all subjects apart from English or other languages, and that pupils will be able to progress easily to Welsh medium Post 16 provision. From September 2024 onwards, pupils in year 9 have been following curriculum for Wales and assessed according to local arrangements.

Extra-curricular activities are also offered to enable learners to practice their Welsh in informal contexts.

The school offers a wealth of extra-curricular academic, cultural and sporting activities.

Subject-support and subject clubs are running, including support for year 11 pupils in core subjects via a structured timetable of support activities. A host of trips both domestic and international are now running. In addition, the school offers a wealth of extra-curricular sporting opportunities via the following clubs:

Below is a list of the clubs offered during 2023-24

### **Autumn/Spring term**

#### **After-school clubs**

Netball KS3 & 4	Boys football KS3 & 4
Girls' football KS3 & 4	Boys rugby KS3 & 4
Girls' rugby KS3 & 4	

#### **Physical Education clubs/extra-curricular activities**

Football/ Rugby KS3 & 4	Girls' fitness
KS4 Fitness	Badminton KS4
Dodge-ball KS3	Basketball KS4 & 4

#### **Teams**

Rugby – Yr 7-11

Girls' football – Yr 7-10

Netball – Yr 7-13

Boys football – Yr 7 - 11

### **Spring/Summer term**

#### **Summer clubs**

Rounders

Welsh baseball

Athletics

Tag rugby

#### **Lunchtime clubs**

Rounders

KS3 Fitness

Athletics

Girls' fitness

KS4 Fitness

Welsh baseball

The above activities allow the pupils to use the Welsh language in a social setting whilst strengthening their wider key skills.

## Appendix 1 – election of parent governor – application form

### SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES - ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS

The Headteacher of your Child's School has been asked to arrange an election for a Parent Governor.

The Role of Governors has become increasingly important. They must ensure that the requirements of the national curriculum are met, establish standards of behaviour, select staff, deal with budget matters and prepare and present the Annual Report to Parents. Governing Bodies are required to meet at least once a term and most meetings are in the evening. The frequency and time of meetings is decided by the Governing Body.

Governors are elected for a four-year term of office, but parents may continue to serve even if their child leaves the school during that time. Training is continually available for all Governors, at no cost to the individual. All Governors, new and experienced, are expected to take advantage of any courses arranged as it is vital to keep up to date with new ideas and legislation.

A nomination form is enclosed to enable you to put your name forward for election.

Each nominee is invited to make a brief statement in support of their nomination which will be circulated to Parents in the event of an election. Please ensure any statement is clearly written to avoid problems when being reproduced.

All nominees **must be** a Parent, or Legal Guardian, of a Pupil registered at the School. Grandparents of Pupils are not allowed to take part in the election unless they are the Legal Guardians of the Child. No person may serve on more than two Governing Bodies in any category.

A person is not permitted to stand as Parent Governor if the following apply:

- (a) an elected member of the local education authority;
- (b) employed by the local education authority in connection with its functions as a local education authority;
- or
- (c) paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any twelve-month period commencing on 1 August and finishing on 31 July.

The nomination form should be returned to your child's school by the date given by the Headteacher. If nominations exceed the number of vacancies a secret ballot will be held. Details of the election will be sent to you if appropriate.

The name of the elected governor(s) will be displayed at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Lesley Bush

Chair of Governors

# ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw

## *NOMINATION FORM*

*PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**This form should be returned to the Headteacher through e-mailing [yggswyddfa@gwynllyw.cymru](mailto:yggswyddfa@gwynllyw.cymru) by 30<sup>th</sup> November.**

**Your personal details will not be shared, these are for school administrative purposes only**

*Personal statement (to be used for election purposes only – this will be inserted into a ballot paper together with your name if a ballot is required) no more than 50 words.*

The personal data above will be securely held by the EAS and will not be shared. If not successful in securing a governor position within two years, this information will be destroyed in accordance with GDPR.

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