

Blaen y Maes Primary School

Report to Parents

The Governing Body is pleased to be able to offer this report to parents. As always, the relationship between pupils, parents/carers and staff remains incredibly important to the school and may we thank you all for working with the Headteacher and staff.

Although we are no longer in a pandemic, as a school we recognise the impact that COVID-19 has had on families and pupils. We are incredibly proud of the work that teaching, support and specialist staff have undertaken to help enhance learning for pupils and to ensure that they have the best start in life. In that vein, it is important that we recognise not only the work of school leaders and staff, but our Family Inclusion Officer and Well-Being team for the work that they do every day to support families.

In this report, the Governing Body offers a precis of what is happening within your school: there is much to be pleased about and also, there are exciting plans to improve the school in the future. The Governing Body remains dedicated to working with Mrs Lecrass, the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and other staff to ensure that our school remains at the heart of Blaen y Maes and helps to prepare children to be the citizens, leaders and pioneers of tomorrow.

This report will be placed on our website. Should parents wish to discuss any aspect of the report, we will be holding a session at 4pm on Wednesday 22nd November in the school hall. To book a place at this meeting, would parents please inform the class teacher on dojo. We will be pleased to help with any queries.

Constitution of the Governing Body

During the past year, the composition of the Governing Body has changed. We enjoyed a full cohort of Parent Governors last year and, supported by the School Council, we will soon be advertising for new Parents Governors. We really value the engagement of parents in the work of the Governing Body and would like to encourage anyone who wants to contribute to the governance of the school to consider standing for election. The Headteacher, Mrs Lecrass, the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Amirat, or the Chair of Governors, Dr Charles will be very happy to have a chat with any interested parents about this.

It was with great sadness that we lost Councillor Hazel Morris who passed away. Hazel was a long serving member of our Governing Body and she will greatly missed.

We have though lost some of our Governors due to personal and work commitments.

We would like to say thank you to Kanika Lay, who served as Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, to Jonathan Lomas and Emma King for their service as Governing Body members and Kate McCabe, who brought to us a wealth of experience as an officer of Pobl.

Conversely, a big welcome back is offered to Gillian Seaton (a former long-standing Governing Body member and former Vice-Chair of Governors) who has re-joined us

and also, the council is currently in the process of appointing new Governors who we hope will join us soon. We cannot, when mentioning the Governing Body fail to thank Mrs Amirat for the incredible work that she does as Clerk.

The Governing Body remains active and we have been reviewed our Committee structure so that it meets the needs of the school. Currently Committees focus upon finance, human resources, estates, research and performance, teaching and learning and wellbeing. Updates to our Committee structure will be posted on the school website as they occur.

In addition to the Governing Body, we are so pleased that our Parents Council is going from strength to strength. Many thanks to the parents who take the time to share their views and participate in this invaluable initiative. This year, Parent Council members also took part in the appointment of our Headteacher: this is a testament to the importance that we place on the views of our parents/carers. The parent council have been liaised with our family inclusion officer and pupil voice groups looking at school improvement.

Governing Body, as well as listening to parents/carers is actively engaged in listening to the School Council. We want Blaen y Maes to be a listening school, where everyone is able to have a view on how we develop and move forward.

If at any time you have any questions about the role and work of the Governing Body, please do not hesitate to contact the Headteacher or the Clerk to the Governors.

Term Dates for 2023/2024

The term dates for 2023/2024 are:

Term	Term begins		Mid-term holiday begins	Mid-term holiday ends		Terms ends
Autumn 2023	Friday 1 September	Friday 27 October	Monday 30 October	Friday 3 November	Monday 6 November	Friday 22 December
Spring 2024	Monday 8 January	Friday 9 February	Monday 12 February	Friday 16 February	Monday 19 February	Friday 22 March
Summer 2024	Monday 8 April	Friday 24 May	Monday 27 May	Friday 31 May	Monday 3 June	Friday 19 July

Details of inset days will be shared with pupils and information sent home to ensure that parents/carers have time to prepare for these.

Attendance

Attendance is both a national, local and school priority. Good attendance is essential for both academic development and the well-being of the children. This is a key priority moving forward as our annual attendance figure last year was just under 87%. Attendance figures are monitored weekly and work is being undertaken not only in our school, but across our cluster to understand attendance and how we can improve it. Mrs. Spencer is working hard with our communication/well-being ambassadors to promote good attendance across the school. Should you have any queries concerning your child's attendance at school, please reach out to her for support.

Financial Statement

The effective management of the school's finances remains a core priority of the Governing Body. Within the 2023/2024 financial year, although we have had challenges, our finances are stable and we have been able to allocate resources to update some of the school's estate (to ensure that pupils can study and grow in a safe and comfortable environment). We currently have a number of projects pending including the repairs required for the school roof.

A summary of our financial statement is below:

STATEMENT OF ACTUAL EXPENDITURE 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR

	Delegated Expenditure	Non-Delegated Expenditure	Total Net Expenditure
	£	£	£
Teachers Salaries	777,450	-40	777,410
Salaries	716,355	58,173	774,528
Other Employee Costs	-867	309	-557
Premises	13,298	0	13,298
Transport	740	0	740
Supplies & Services	293,172	0	293,172
Recharges	0	0	0
Gross Expenditure	1,800,149	58,442	1,858,591
Grant Income	-624,259	0	-624,259

<i>Other Income</i>	-62,732	0	-62,732
Gross Income	-686,991	0	-686,991
Net Expenditure	1,113,158	58,442	1,171,600

RESERVES:	£
FINAL FORMULA ALLOCATION:	1,123,789
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE:	1,113,158
TRANSFER TO / (FROM) RESERVES:	10,631
OPENING BALANCE ON RESERVES 01/04/22	286,112
CLOSING BALANCE ON RESERVES: 31/03/23	296,743

Our Pupil Deprivation Grant expenditure is also here summarised for parents/carers and a full report is available on the school website:

PUPIL DEVELOPMENT GRANT STRATEGY STATEMENT

This statement details our school's use of the PDG for the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

It outlines our strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending had within our school.

School Overview

Detail	Data
School name	Blaenymaes Primary
Number of pupils in school	213
Proportion (%) of PDG eligible pupils	68.9% PLASC/ currently 74%
Date this statement was published	October 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2024

Statement authorised by	GB
PDG Lead	Kathryn Lecrass
Governor Lead	Anthony Charles

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount
PDG funding allocation this academic year	£192,050
eFSM	£146,050
EY	£46,000
Total delegated budget for this academic year	£1,159,110

Questions regarding the school budget should be directed to the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors.

School prospectus

The current prospectus is available on the school website <https://www.blaenymaesprimary.co.uk/school-prospectus/>

Statement on the use of the Welsh Language

Pupils, staff and the Governors of Blaen y Maes Primary School have a strong sense of pride in our Welsh community. Staff in the school encourage the use of the Welsh language and such is integrated into both classroom and extracurricular activities. Where possible, children are encouraged to be bilingual and Welsh features prominently in school community activities such as assembly. As part of our new curriculum, we remain committed to exploring Welsh history and culture with our pupils and will encourage them to see the Welsh language as something which is positive and celebratory. We have also invested in our Criw Cymraeg at school and have achieved a Bronze award in the Siarter Iaith. The school is now working towards the Silver Award.

Provision of toilet facilities and cleaning arrangements

Especially post-COVID, the school is proactive in terms of seeking to promote hygiene and the well-being of our pupils. A critical aspect of that aspiration is that we provide well maintained toilet facilities for boys and girls at school. We consider that good facilities help to promote health, responsibility and wellbeing and, allied to physical infrastructure, we also:

- Encourage hand washing;
- Responsible use of toilet facilities;
- The reporting of any problems (if pupils encounter them);

- Provide appropriate access to toilets;
- Ensure that statutory standards are met; and
- Have staff members work with pupils to make toilet spaces safe

Regular checks on toilet facilities are undertaken and they are prioritised as part of the frequent cleaning schedule for the school. We also have a Wellbeing ambassador pupil role, and that individual liaises with the Headteacher and other staff, reporting on the cleanliness of our toilets.

Healthy schools

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to promote healthy eating and drinking by pupils in maintained schools. Welsh Government requires local authorities and governing bodies to take action to promote healthy eating and drinking. In discharging this duty, local authorities and governing bodies must have regard to Welsh Guidance. Guidance provides advice on:

- What constitutes healthy eating and drinking;
- Appropriate action to promote healthy eating and drinking; and
- How sustainable development applies in relation to the promotion of healthy eating and drinking

Children can purchase fruit or vegetables at snack time, and they are encouraged to drink water through the day. The school is developing the allotment area in order to grow our own fruit and vegetables. The pupils have recently collaborated on a lunch time charter.

Improving the school estate

Governing Body has agreed to invest in improving the school estate and we have upgraded:

- The entrance gate;
- Intercom entrance system;
- Windows;
- Carpets in classrooms (this is a rolling process);
- Security camera upgrade;
- Hand rails;
- Flooring in the nursery toilets and sensory room and
- Electrical wiring throughout the school

Following a disappointing estate survey, Governing Body will be prioritising a conversation with Swansea Council this year to explore the possibility of a new build. Parents may have noticed that our older building is now, regrettably, being affected more and more by inclement weather. We want pupils to learn in the best facilities possible and will thus be speaking with the council to see what options exist for a new build or upgrade to the school estate.

Extracurricular activities

The school provides a diverse and exciting range of extracurricular activities for pupils – some of which have been requested by the children. These include:

- Maintaining our popular breakfast club;
- Football club;
- Digital coding club;
- Foundation fun club;
- Welsh club and
- 'So to Do.'

Some of our Ambassadors also run an emotional well-being play time café in response to training from the Vibe project.

Parents/carers and Pupils learning together

Following successes achieved last year, the school, working with community colleagues will continue to provide:

- Community farm workshops;
- Topic celebration events;
- Class assemblies and workshops;
- Family festival days;
- Fayres and
- Cooking sessions

Should parents identify other needs or potential opportunities for us to collaborate with, please would they let the Head know? Thank you.

Curriculum for Wales



The school has continued to develop a varied, relevant and inspiring curriculum, which has been designed to ensure that children attending Blaen y Maes become:

- Ethical and informed citizens;
- Enterprising and creative;
- Ambitious and capable learners; and
- Healthy and confident

We work together with our new School Improvement Advisor to monitor the impact of our curriculum provision.

Continuing to review and improve

The Governing Body, Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and staff across the school are committed to raising standards for all of our pupils. In doing so, they have worked with literacy/numeracy advisors, fostered pro-active approaches to Additional Learning Needs, successfully re-accredited the school as a Gold Award Rights Respecting School and participated in Core Visits organised by the Education Department. All of these positive achievements are considered in our School Development Plan. Specifically, as we move through 2023/2024, key priorities in the Plan can be viewed on our website as part of our SDP summary report: <https://www.blaenymaesprimary.co.uk/school-development-plan/>

A significant range of activity is taking place in school and the Governing Body would like to formally recognise the dedication and commitment of the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and our teachers and support staff. We have an impressive team in Blaen y Maes Primary School and whilst there is work to be done for us to be excellent in all that we do, we are making progress. A full version of the School Development Plan is available upon request.

Appointment of a Headteacher

It would be remiss of the Governing Body not to include the recent appointment of our Headteacher in this report. Early this year, the Acting Headteacher, Mrs Lecrass was, following a competitive appointments process, appointed as permanent Headteacher. The Governing Body is delighted by this appointment: Mrs Lecrass is an inspirational, dedicated and enthusiastic senior leader who has invested significantly in our school. We are looking forward to continuing working with her.

Concluding Statement

At the beginning of this 2023/2024 school year, we, the governors of Blaen y Maes Primary School commend this report to parents. Although but a snapshot of the array of work which takes place in school, we hope that you find this report interesting and informative. We are fortunate in Blaen y Maes to have an incredible staff team and the dedication of all team members, whether they be the Headteacher or support staff, is impressive. As suggested above, much work is taking place to develop teaching and learning in school and the Senior Leadership Team, in partnership with the Governing Body has designed plans to embed excellence into all that we do. We are moving forward step by step and we look forward to you joining us on the journey of progress and enhance the education and experience of pupils (and families) who engage with Blaen y Maes Primary School.

The Governors of Blaen y Maes Primary School
November 2023

