



Governors Annual Report to Parents

Autumn 2023

Heol Wenallt

Cwmgwrach

Neath

SA11 5PS

Tel/fax: (01639) 720342

Head Teacher: Mrs Louise Williams

Chair of Governors: Mrs Sharon Davies



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to warmly welcome both new and current families alike to our happy, inclusive, and successful school. It is our privilege that we have the opportunity to provide your child with the very best learning experiences. The children are at the heart of every decision we make here at school. This is to ensure that our pupils are happy, confident and successful individuals. Our aim is to ensure a stimulating curriculum so that our pupils are enthused about learning, have high aspirations and succeed. We recognise that a child's education is a 'once in a lifetime' chance which we aim to make as fun, relevant and successful as possible.

I consider myself extremely fortunate to lead a dedicated team of hard-working staff. Our priority is to ensure your child's success by working closely with you as parents and the local community. We believe that your child's education is a partnership between school and home, and value your support on all occasions.

All of our pupils deserve a safe, secure and stimulating environment, where they are interested and motivated to learn. Our pupils are given every opportunity to develop an enthusiasm for learning – about themselves, their friends and the world around them in an environment where their natural development can be fostered. At Blaengwrach Primary School, our pupils experience a stimulating curriculum that recognises their wider range of achievements and ensures they realise the four core purposes as they develop and grow. It is our responsibility to ensure that each and every pupil is equipped with 'life-long' skills that will prepare them to face the 21st century with independence, confidence and success. Our pupils are given a wealth of opportunities where their full potential is recognised and actively developed. They know that their efforts are valued, and they are always respected and treated fairly. Our pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves; they are supported whilst achieving their goals and this empowers them to succeed in their ambitions. Pupils have a strong voice at the school and we are a Gold Award Rights Respecting School.

Our motto 'Believe, Achieve, Succeed' is embedded in our philosophy and permeates our whole school ethos.

This document provides important information about our school, our aims, our curriculum and all aspects of school life which we are proud to be part of. I'm confident that through sharing our policies and ethos, you will gain a better understanding of how our school operates.

I look forward to working in close partnership with you during this phase of your child's educational journey.

Yours Faithfully,

Mrs Louise Williams BEd (Hons), NPQH

Head Teacher



Address from our Chair of Governors

Welcome to the Governing Body Annual Report for Blaengwrach Primary School.

I have the privilege of being the Chair of Governors of this excellent school at the heart of the local community. The Governing Body works collaboratively with the Headteacher, Mrs Williams, to assist her and all her staff in the efficient leadership and management of the school. The Governors of Blaengwrach Primary School are all volunteers and have a wide range of experience which we bring to the role. We play an integral part in running the school and evaluating its effectiveness. We do this as Link Governors with specific responsibilities, and via membership of the various committees. We evaluate the progress made by the school and also evaluate our own effectiveness as a governing body against current guidelines.

This school is a warm and caring special place with recognised high standards in all areas of school life. The traditional building, the pupils and the staff are a vital resource for the village and are pro active in community events. Our pupils play an important part in school life and are positively encouraged to be involved in shaping policies and plans through the School Council, Eco Committee and through regular opportunities to express their views and opinions. The Governing Body meet regularly with pupils to get their feedback and aim to give them the opportunity to develop their confidence and to become proactive citizens.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this Annual Report and finding out more about the governing body and how it works!

Mrs Sharon Davies

Chair of Governors



Our School Context

Blaengwrach Primary School is situated in the Upper Neath Valley and serves the communities of Blaengwrach, Cwmgwrach and Glynneath. We are very fortunate to be sited in a picturesque location and we offer a wide and varied programme of extra-curricular activities.

The school has two buildings; the original block which was built in 1908 and the 'new addition' which was built six years later in 1914. The buildings are separated by play areas. We are extremely lucky to own a school field and a nature area very close to our school. We take every opportunity to make the most of our wonderful grounds.

The original building houses the Head Teacher's Office, the Administration Office, the Community room and several classrooms. The pupil toilet facilities in this building were re-designed and refurbished in 2012 and fully comply with statutory requirements. Toilet facilities ensure the school is fully inclusive. They are cleaned daily with any emergency spills dealt with immediately. Liquid soap and toilet paper is frequently checked and refilled when necessary. Hand driers and paper towels are provided for pupils use.

The infant building houses the Staff Room, Canteen, hall/library and four classrooms. There is also a separate enclosed play area which has both hard and grassed surfaces.

Blaengwrach Primary School is a single site school located in the village of Cwmgwrach. It is in an attractive setting and parents and children are encouraged to develop ideas for the enhancement of the external environment of the school.



Pupil voice is a particular strength in our school; we are very proud holders of the Healthy Schools National Award, Rights Respecting Gold Award, the second ECO-School Green Flag and the Bronze Siarter Iaith.

Strong Home/School links are vital and we work hard to develop good working relationships with parents and carers. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to connect with school and keep up to date with children's progress. Letters, newsletters, Twitter and texts ensure up to date information is always available. Our school website: <https://blaengwrach-primary-school.j2bloggy.com/> is an ideal way of keeping up to date with diary dates, newsletters and gaining answers to many questions you may have. Our Governors, Head teacher and Staff are always eager to discuss any queries you may have at a mutually convenient time.

General Information

Blaengwrach Primary School
Heol Wenallt
Cwmgwrach
Neath
Neath Port Talbot
SA11 5PS
01639 720342

Email:	blaengwrachprimary@npt.school
Website:	https://blaengwrach-primary-school.j2bloggy.com/
Twitter:	@BlaengwrachPri1
Director of Education:	Mr Andrew Thomas
Head Teacher:	Mrs Louise Williams
Deputy Head Teacher:	Mrs Heather Thomas
Administration Officer:	Mrs Karen L Thomas & Mrs Julie Raine
Bursar:	Mrs Michelle Morgan
Age Range of Pupils:	3 – 11 years
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Sharon Davies
Numbers on Roll:	136



Our Governing Body

Our school Governors have legal duties, powers and responsibilities. They make important decisions about how the school is run. They meet as a whole body at least once a term and review school policies and procedures on an annual basis. In addition to this, various sub committees such as Finance, Curriculum and Health and Safety meet regularly to scrutinise in further detail the work of the school. This information is used to inform our School Self Evaluation report and identify improvement targets for the following year. They consist of parents, support staff, local Council representatives and teachers and work closely together to support and shape our school for the benefit of the children. Our Clerk to the Governors may be contacted using the school telephone number and address.

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS:

Mrs Sharon Davies

c/o Blaengwrach Primary School
Heol Wenallt
Cwmgwrach
Neath
SA11 5PS

CLERK TO GOVERNING BODY: Mrs Maureen Winter

Schools and Family Support Team
Neath Port Talbot Civic Centre
Port Talbot
SA13 1PJ
01639 763518

The Governors have reviewed and approved the following Policies recently:

NPT Smoke Free Policy, Cluster Transition Plan, NPT Adoption Policy, NPT Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Managing Crisis in Schools Policy, Admissions Policy, NPT Flexible Working Scheme for School Based Staff, NPT Teachers Pay Policy



Governing Body

<u>GOVERNOR STATUS</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE ELECTED</u>	<u>OFFICE ENDS</u>
<u>LA</u>	Mrs Sharon Davies Chairperson	01/04/23	31/03/27
	Mrs Yun Yun Herbert	01/04/21	31/03/25
	Cllr Hayley Davies	27/09/22	26/09/26
<u>COMMUNITY (CO-OPTED) (Minor Authority)</u>	Mr Ward Jones	04/01/20	03/01/24
	Mr Richard B Owen Vice Chairperson	08/11/23	07/11/27
	Carolyn Edwards	30/06/23	29/06/27
	Vacancy		
<u>PARENT</u>	Miss Kirsty Davies	05/10/21	04/10/25
	Mrs Grace Wild	03/02/23	02/02/27
	Mrs Nia Burgin	12/03/20	11/03/24
	Mr Jamie Ellson	21/10/20	20/10/24
<u>HEAD TEACHER (Voting)</u>	Mrs Louise Williams	01/09/2023	---
<u>NON-TEACHING STAFF</u>	Mrs Ann Alexis	08/09/21	07/09/25
<u>TEACHING STAFF</u>	Mrs Heather Thomas Deputy Head Teacher	18/07/22	17/07/26

CLERK TO GOVERNING BODY: Mrs Maureen Winter



Aims of Our School

Believe Achieve Succeed

To provide a school ethos where each child feels valued, respected, listened to and proud of themselves, their school and their local community. *Article 12*

To encourage children to set themselves high standards to become ambitious and enthusiastic individuals with enquiring minds, ready to learn throughout their lives. *Article 29*

To provide a rich learning environment which stimulates, motivates and excites children to express themselves within a range of contexts. *Article 3*

To develop independent, collaborative learners who are able to identify and grasp opportunities, by taking risks and thinking creatively to solve problems. *Article 29*

To value strong partnerships with children, parents and the wider school community. *Article 3*

To promote the use of bilingualism and to respect the needs and rights of others as a valued member of a diverse society. *Article 30*

To empower children to be committed to our sustainable future by encouraging the ability to make measured decisions and face and overcome challenges. *Article 29*

To support the development of children's health and wellbeing; building confidence, resilience and empathy. *Article 24*

Our School Day

Doors open	Session 1	Break time	Session 2	Lunchtime	Session 3	Break time	Session 4
8.40am	8.50am – 10.30am	10.30am – 10.45am	10.45am – 11.50am	11.50am – 12.50pm	12.50pm – 2.20pm	2.20pm – 2.30pm	2.30pm – 3.20pm

Nursery Session
Morning session - 8.50am - 11.20 a.m
Afternoon session – 12.50-3.20 p.m.



School Organisation

Our class structure is governed by our variable year group numbers. Where classes are involved in a mixed age arrangement, the Governors agree that classes are organised according to a number of factors, including; date of birth, balance of gender, dynamics, ability and friendship groups.

The needs of each child are catered for through the hard work and commitment of our dedicated teachers and teaching assistants. Detailed planning, a wide range of formative and summative assessments and a thorough knowledge of the ability of each child all ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is delivered through a differentiated approach. Regardless of whether children are placed in a 'straight year group' or a 'mixed year group', each specific cohort of children will display a range of abilities and qualities which our staff are highly trained to cater for. Each year group has access to 'age' and 'stage' appropriate experiences. At our school, there will be times when each child will work in a variety of different learning areas both inside and outside the classroom.

We are supported by peripatetic teachers for Welsh and music and pupils are given the opportunity to learn to play an instrument.

We take the national priorities of raising standards in literacy, numeracy, Welsh and tackling poverty issues very seriously. Regardless of which class a child is placed in, our highly trained staff cater for specific 'groups of learners' to ensure that each child is challenged at their appropriate level. The success of this approach rests with the expertise of our teachers and teaching assistants who are eager to ensure we continue to raise standards of achievement at our school.

Teaching Assistants deliver various programmes including Rapid Reading, Language Link, Speech Link, Wellcomm etc. to various identified groups of learners each week. This ensures children are receiving tailor made opportunities to reach their full potential.

Pupil progress is monitored throughout the year and in addition to the marking & feedback that takes place every day, pupils are also assessed termly in maths, spelling and reading. Ensuring every pupil reaches their full potential remains a priority of the school and we involve pupils in their own and each other's assessment to develop their thinking skills.

Many trips and visits are undertaken during the year, which complement the curriculum. Two are residential in nature and are only available due to the commitment of staff who give up considerable amounts of their own time. Year 4 visit Llangrannog in May in order to develop their Welsh language skills and have a lot of fun in the process. Year 6 pupils visit Manor Park, Abernant. They take part in a wide range of outdoor adventurous activities. Trips such as these provide great benefits for the children involved. We are indebted to the support from staff involved.



There is very good attendance at Parent Evenings. This reflects the commitment of our parents and their wish to play a full role in the education of their children.

School Improvement Plan & Self-Evaluation

The school has a very rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation programme that is linked to our School Improvement Plan targets. The targets are shared with staff, pupils, governors and parents and we all work together to achieve our goals. Our School Improvement Plan (2023/24) and the Self-Evaluation Review can be found on our school website.

The Welsh Language

Although our pupils are taught through the medium of English, our pupils are encouraged to use every day Welsh when greeting others. The pupils are also encouraged to use Welsh to communicate outside of formal instruction such as games during playtime and instructions throughout the day. Everyday Welsh is spoken and practised in each class throughout the school and this is reinforced by our very enthusiastic Criw Cymraeg at breaktimes and during assemblies. The school actively promotes the development of the Welsh language and is committed to following the Siarter Iaith. We have been awarded the Bronze Siarter Iaith award. The Welsh advisory team visit the school regularly to support and work alongside our teachers and children. We are members of the Urdd and as a result are able to enter the Eisteddfod competitions throughout the year and receive language support from the Urdd leaders. St. David's day is an important part of our heritage and is celebrated through our curriculum; pupils have the opportunity where appropriate to apply their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales (Article 30).

Local and Global Citizenship

The school continues to be involved in a range of charitable activities and during the last academic year we raised hundreds of pounds and helped many people in need including: MacMillan Cancer, Children in Need, Genes4Jeans, Comic Relief and Food Bank Wales. The Governors thank the children and parents for their generosity.



The Curriculum

Extra-Curricular Activities

We have a wide variety of after school clubs available to the children.

Rugby coaching takes place weekly and we have a very popular netball club held once a week by an experienced netball coach, enabling pupils to develop their ball skills and provides an opportunity for pupils to compete in tournaments. We are particularly proud of their recent achievement securing 3rd place in the Swansea Valley/Neath Schools Primary School Netball tournament.

Mrs Charlotte Gibbs, our peripatetic music teacher delivers music tuition each week. The children have the opportunity to play flute, clarinet or saxophone.

During Autumn term 2023 our Year 4 pupils have received 'First Taster' Brass lessons with NPT Music Service and we would like to thank NPT Music Service for providing this fantastic opportunity for our pupils.

There is also a very well attended choir club at lunchtime which enables pupils to perform at various events in school and in the community.

Pupils have the opportunity to take part in Clwb Cymraeg, Gardening Club, Board Games Club, and NPT Pass, physical activities for Year 6 pupils during the Autumn term.

Healthy Schools Initiative

Miss Gully is our Healthy School Co-ordinator and we have been awarded the prestigious Healthy Schools National Award- the only school in Neath Port Talbot to hold this award. Our children are encouraged to eat a balanced diet and drink water throughout the day in order to remain hydrated and to be able to concentrate more readily. Water bottles are provided for each pupil and they bring in fresh fruit for snack every day. In addition, a junior Fruit Shop is run every break time by the Year 6 prefects to encourage healthy eating and develop numeracy skills. Lunchboxes are encouraged to be healthy; fizzy, sugary drinks are avoided by all pupils.

We are very pleased to be actively involved in promoting the Anti-Bullying Alliance message during Anti-Bullying Week and strongly encourage pupils in our school to support each other and consider each other's feelings and wellbeing.

Staff have recently attended Zones of Regulation training to support pupil's social and emotional development and, as a result, we have invested in resources to support our pupils.



Sporting Achievements

Sport in our school continues to thrive as we continue to provide our children with a full and varied programme of sporting activities.

The school has a very successful rugby, football and netball team. Pupils have taken part in tournaments and have been very successful. We continue to strive for an inclusive sports curriculum, whereby all pupils enjoy a full range of sporting activities (Article 31).

The Governors would like to congratulate the many pupils who have taken part in all the sporting and non-sporting activities throughout the year and all the dedicated staff, parents and friends who regularly give their free time to help the pupils and school achieve the many sporting successes.

Other Events

There are many visitors to the school throughout the year, all of whom greatly enrich the pupils learning. The Governors would like to thank all of them for giving their time and sharing their expertise with the children of Blaengwrach.

The school has strong links with our Cluster Secondary and Primary Schools. Links with community are also very strong. Some visitors to our school include: Local Police Liaison Officer, Swansea City Community Football, Healthy Schools Coordinator & School Nurse, The Keep Wales Tidy Officer, The Road Safety Department, Matthew Bunt ECO Schools Coordinator, members of our local churches, Designed to Smile, Mr Ffit and the Community Council.

We work closely with other agencies to ensure the curriculum is rich and varied. We worked hard as a whole school community to obtain the second ECO Green Flag; we continue to promote a number of activities to support this including litter picking, bio diversity areas in the village and pet litter bag stations; We have also cut back on our use of paper in the school by using electronic methods of communication.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Community Council for their continued support by allowing school to use the Community Hall, a fantastic community facility, to support our pupils to develop their physical skills using the hall for PE sessions and, also, to host our annual Christmas concerts for families and our local community.

We are very pleased to be part of the Wales Credit Union programme, practice recently commended by Estyn in our recent Estyn Inspection in May 2023. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils run a Credit Union savings club for all full time pupils. This is very popular and many pupils are now long standing savers; promoting financial management is a very important life skill.



Additional Learning Needs

The approach to supporting children who have difficulties with learning is changing. The Welsh Government has passed new legislation, called the **Additional Learning Needs (Wales) Act 2018** and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code 2021, replaces all remaining legislation and guidance about special educational needs.

Since September 2021, over a three year period, a new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system replaces the previous Special Educational Needs (SEN) system. As well as the name change, responsibilities towards children and young people with ALN changed too.

By the end of the academic year 2023/2024 all children with Additional Learning Needs will have an **Individual Development Plan** which will replace current SEN Statements and Individual Educational Plans (IEPs).

Learners with any level of Additional Learning Need who require Additional Learning Provision' (ALP) to be made for them are entitled to an IDP outlining their support needs. This system protects the rights of all children, regardless of the extent of their additional learning needs.

Any existing statements will continue to be legal documents until replaced by an IDP or until the local authority states it intends to end a statement. When a school or LA is 'made aware' that a child or young person may have additional learning needs [ALN], it **MUST** decide whether that child or young person has additional learning needs unless:

- an individual development plan (IDP) is already in place for the child or young person
- a decision *has already been made* and the school is satisfied that the child's needs have not changed since that decision and there is no new information.

The system puts the learner at the heart of everything that happens and our school will take a person-centred approach to planning for, and supporting children and young people. The ALN Act 2018 states that that the views, wishes and feelings of children, their parents and young people **must be considered at all stages of the IDP process**. Parents can request that a school consider their child's needs and request that a decision regarding ALN and IDP's are made.

As a caring school we are committed to inclusion and equality, we recognise the uniqueness of each individual. Every effort is made to provide the necessary resources to help all pupils access the curriculum as fully as possible. The school co-operates with other professionals in seeking each child's full entitlement e.g. physiotherapist, speech therapist, visual impairment personnel, hearing impairment personnel etc. (Article 23).



Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality is rigorously monitored, with parents being reminded in newsletters about the importance of contacting the school on their child's first day of absence. We operate a First Day Response system and follow the Local Authority attendance policy. If we have not received a message from home, a text message is sent to which parents are expected to respond. Letters are sent out to parents detailing any concerns and consequent procedures.

Attendance posters are displayed around the school reminding parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance.

Personalised colour coded individual pupil attendance percentages are sent to parents termly with a reminder of how important regular attendance and punctuality is.

A breakdown of the consequences of poor attendance is also included. This is helpful to keep parents and carers fully informed. We offer support regarding attendance to any family should they require it.

Pupil attendance last year was 91.2%; and our attendance target is 95%. Please remember that holidays should **not** be taken during term time and avoided at all costs.

An Education Welfare Officer visits the Head Teacher on a regular basis and will visit families who require support and encouragement regarding attendance and punctuality (Article 28).



Term Dates for 2023- 2024

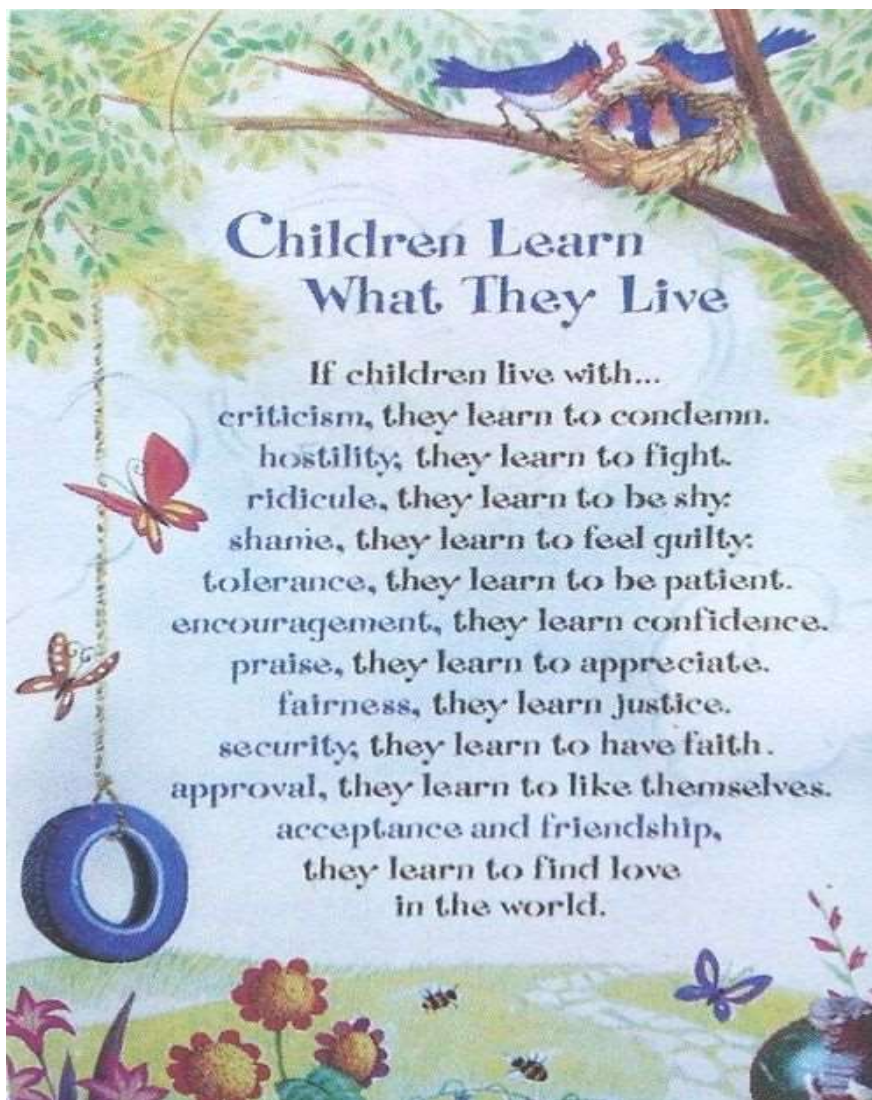
School Holidays	Starts	
Autumn term 2023	1 Sep 2023 (INSET) 4 Sep 2023 (INSET) 5 Sep 2023 First day back for pupils	
Autumn Half Term Holidays	30 Oct 2023 (Mon)	03 Nov 2023 (Fri)
Winter Holidays	25 Dec 2023 (Mon)	05 Jan 2024 (Fri)
Spring Half Term Holidays	12 Feb 2024 (Mon)	16 Feb 2024 (Fri)
Spring Holidays	25 Mar 2024 (Mon)	05 Apr 2024 (Fri)
Summer Half Term Holidays	27 May 2024 (Mon)	31 May 2024 (Fri)
Summer Holidays	22 Jul 2024 (Mon)	30 Aug 2024 (Fri)

Schools will be closed to pupils for INSET/Staff Preparation on six days between Monday 1st September 2023 and Friday 19th July 2024. Details of INSET days will be sent via text, newsletters or through the school website.



Acknowledgements

The Governing Body wishes to thank pupils, staff and the community who all play a huge role in helping the school achieve its goals. Our school continues to grow from strength to strength and when we all work together and when each and every learner believes in themselves, they can achieve their goals and succeed in their chosen path.



Author Unknown