



YSGOL GYMUNEDOL
CWMTAWE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Governing Body Report to Parents

November 2023

Chair's Comments:

I am delighted to present the Annual Report to Parents which describes the work, activities and achievements of the school for the academic year 2022-2023.

Cwmtawe Community School continues to flourish under the leadership of Mr Hitchings, Headteacher and all his staff. They continue to work extremely hard to provide sector leading education for all pupils, under the pressures of coming out of the pandemic, tightened budgets and the new curriculum soon to be introduced by the Welsh Government.

Both I and the Governing Body are exceptionally proud to be associated with Cwmtawe Community School. We take this opportunity to congratulate the staff and pupils in the school who have attained the schools best ever results this year, which easily exceed both the national and local averages. This continues to place us as one of the highest performing schools in Wales, which has been the case for over a decade.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to teaching and teaching support staff, governors, pupils and to you as parents for choosing to educate your children at Cwmtawe.

I hope you take time to enjoy the many successes of our pupils in this report.



Mr V Thomas, BA(Hons), MEd, PGCE.

Chair of Governing Body



Introduction

Governors are volunteers; people who care about teaching, learning and children. They represent people in the local community and the staff of the school. They are part of a team which accepts responsibility for everything a school does and have commitment to attending termly meetings and other occasions, when needed. Governors are willing to learn and attend governor training sessions held by the local authority. They are able to act as a friend who supports the school, but are still able to cast a critical eye upon how the school works and the standards it achieves. Governors act as a link between parents, the local community and the school.

The Governing Body has a statutory obligation to meet at least once a term. The Headteacher's written report on the school has been considered at each meeting. There were a number of wider issues brought to our attention under the heading 'Committee Reports'. Minutes of all these meetings are available at the school for anyone who wishes to read them. In addition to the formal meetings, Governors usually visit the school to enjoy concerts, school productions, Eisteddfod, sporting events, Annual Presentation, Parent Teacher Association functions and many other cultural, social and academic activities.

Governors attend training courses arranged at a local and national level and are often asked to represent local authority panel meetings for a variety of events. In addition to the normal pattern of meetings, special meetings are convened for particular purposes, e.g. teaching appointments, major policy decisions, finance, staff re-organisation, health and safety, admissions etc.

The Governing Body has taken a full role in continuing our development and in supporting our efforts in raising standards for all pupils. Governors have also given excellent support to the school's charity work and often been present when donations have been made to charitable organisations.

Governing Body Membership

The governing body members during the 2022/2023 academic year are outlined below:

Name	Category	Term start	Term end
Cllr Heath Davies	LA	Sept 2022	Aug 2026
Suzanne Lewis	LA	Jan 2021	Dec 2024
Julie Mallinson JP (Vice Chair)	LA	Sept 2020	Aug 2024
Vivian Thomas (Chair)	LA	Jan 2022	Dec 2025
Vacancy	LA	-	-
Beverley Davies	Community	Jun 2021	Jun 2025
Jill John	Community	Jun 2021	Jun 2025
Dr John Sharp	Community	Mar 2021	Mar 2025
Abby Truscott	Community	Jun 2022	Jun 2026
Vacancy	Community	-	-
Caroline Batsford	Parent	Feb 2021	Feb 2025
Rebecca O'Brien	Parent	Feb 2021	Feb 2025
Varsha Nagaraj	Parent	Nov 2022	Nov 2026
Emma-Kate Williams	Parent	Dec 2019	Dec 2023
Dr Paul Temblett	Parent	Dec 2021	Dec 2025
Darren Thompson	Parent	Nov 2022	Nov 2026
Julie Montinari	Staff	Nov 2022	Nov 2026
Victoria Ellis	Teacher	May 2023	May 2027
Kath Sails	Teacher	Jan 2020	Jan 2024
Mr C L Hitchings	Headteacher	Jan 2014	n/a
Joseph Flint	Associate	Sept 2022	Aug 2023



Olivia Kieft	Associate	Sept 2022	Aug 2023
Mr M Rosser	Clerk	-	-
Miss C Such	Deputy Clerk	-	-

The Chair of the Governing Body and the Clerk to the Governing Body can be addressed in writing c/o Cwmtawe Community School, Parc Ynysderw, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4EG.

Pupil Numbers

Our pupil number on roll for each year group is outlined below.

	Male	Female	Total
Year 7	122	111	233
Year 8	132	124	256
Year 10	110	115	225
Year 11	124	96	220
Total	611	568	1179

Each year, around 100 pupils transfer from our main catchment schools, with a further 100 or more children selecting the school as a preferred placement. Our usual year group size is between 200 and 250 pupils, with a maximum planned admission limit of 256.

Meeting with Parents

Welsh Government legislation introduced in 2013 meant that schools are no longer required to hold a parents' meeting with governors each year, unless specifically requested. In order to request a meeting, a petition of at least 30 parents must be submitted to the school. Full details are available on our website.

The governing body did not receive a petition request for a parents' meeting in the 2022/2023 school year.



Financial Statement

The most recent financial statement (2022/2023) provided by the local authority is outlined below:

Delegated costs	
Teaching Salaries	£4,632,640
Other salaries	£1,265,358
Other employee expenses	£587
Premises	£459,819
Transportation	-£25,498
Supplies and services	£434,851
Third Party Payments	£39,912
Support services	£275,457
Government grants and contributions	-£65,464
Sales	-£220,374
Fees and charges income	-£205,445
Internal recharges	-£390,965
Interest received	£0
Transfers	-£65,703
TOTAL	£6,135,175

Non-delegated costs	
Teaching salaries	£0
Other employees	£24,957
Other direct costs	£405,127
Miscellaneous income	£0
Capital charges	£568,827
TOTAL	£998,911

The school's delegated and non-delegated finances are audited regularly by the governing body and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

Key Stage 3 Comparative Data

The outcomes of our Year 9 pupils at the end of key stage 3 are shown below for 2023. In line with the new Curriculum for Wales, end of key stage outcomes will cease in 2024.

Expected level (5+) in English	80%
Expected level (5+) in Mathematics	79%
Expected level (5+) in Science	80%
Core Subject Indicator	70%

Key Stage 3 Targets

Targets for key stage 3 outcomes are not required after 2024, as all schools will be following the new Curriculum for Wales. The previous teacher assessed levels will cease to be awarded. Schools will continue to assess using their internal assessments and report to parents in the usual way.



Key Stage 4 Comparative Data

The Summary of Secondary School Performance is no longer published by Welsh Government. However, an outline of our school performance for 2023 is detailed below:

Level 2 threshold (5 GCSEs at C or above)	80%
Level 2 including English and Mathematics (5 GCSEs at C or above which must include English and Mathematics)	71%
Five or more GCSEs at A*/A grade	30%
English Level 2 (C or above)	88%
English Level 1 (G or above)	99%
Mathematics Level 2 (C or above)	72%
Mathematics Level 1 (G or above)	98%
Science Level 2 (C or above)	78%
Science Level 1 (G or above)	98%
% of cohort gaining double science at C or above	72%
% of cohort gaining 3 separate sciences at C or above	50%
Literacy average point score	44.7
Numeracy average point score	42.8
Average Point Score	42.6

Whilst Welsh Government do not currently publish the data above for all schools in Wales, we would encourage all parents/carers to enquire and compare the performance measures above.

Further details can be obtained by visiting [Welsh Government's My Local School](#) website.

Key Stage 4 Targets

The school analyses the performance of pupils in each year group following every assessment point. This data is utilised to generate overall targets for the cohort.

The targets for our Year 11 leavers in 2024 are outlined below.

Literacy Points Score	42
Numeracy Points Score	40
Science Points Score	40
Capped 9 Points Score	40
Welsh Baccalaureate SCC Points Score	40
Level 2 including English and Mathematics	70%

Attendance

Attendance figures for 2023 are illustrated below:

Overall attendance	88.51%
Authorised absence	6.76%
Unauthorised absence	4.73%

Possible sessions	350,179
Present marks	303,704



Approved activity	6,247
Authorised absence	23,661
Unauthorised absence	16,567

The school's attendance target for 2022/2023 is 94.7%. Information on how the school is tackling unauthorised absence can be found in the schools Attendance Policy. This can be requested by contacting the school.

Pupil Destinations Post-16

Careers Wales West no longer undertake a destinations survey with school leavers. Therefore, the school is not able to publish this data.

Extra-Curricular Activities

There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils to get involved in, across all areas of the school.

Music and Drama

The department has had another busy year with numerous concerts and musical events giving pupils in Cwmtawe every opportunity to develop their musical skills and experience, both inside and outside of the classroom.

The music department currently operates:

- Senior Orchestra
- String Group
- Brass Band
- Rock Band Workshop
- Grade 5 Theory Classes
- Chamber Choir
- School Choir
- Ukulele Club

The department provides lessons in the following areas:

- Upper Strings Mr Robert Cavay
- Lower Strings Mrs Rachel Webley
- Percussion Mr Nick Hedges
- Singing Miss Kirstie Roberts
- Brass Mr Glyn Davies and Mr Simon Howells
- Woodwind Mrs Heidi Davies
- Guitar Mr Ray Williams

Instrumental lessons are an invaluable element of life in the department. We are incredibly fortunate to be able to offer instrumental lessons free to all pupils, many of which have access to instruments loaned to them, again free of charge. Many pupils have used these lessons to further their musical development, which has enabled them to take part in school performances and musical activities on a county and National level.

At Christmas, the Music and Drama department were back on stage with the first production since the pandemic. The Nativity was a special production for several reasons. Firstly, it was the first opportunity for pupils in Cwmtawe to experience performing 'live' in front of an audience. In addition, it was a challenging musical that stretched the



talents of both pupils and staff, starring none other than Cwmtawe's Mr Lear as Mr Poppy. The show was incredibly well received with pupils, parents and staff in high attendance to observe the range of talent on stage.

As part of their curriculum, our Year 9 GCSE Drama class were given the task of organising and taking part in a performance evening featuring all GCSE pupils. This required pupils to apply for roles through an online application system, for roles such as compere, stage manager, lighting engineer, sound engineer etc. They even had to liaise with the Headteacher and Caretaker to negotiate the best date for the concert, likely attendance, ticket prices and raffles. The concert was a remarkable success, with some superb performances and the event operated smoothly by the pupils concerned.

In March, we held an Eisteddfod for St David's Day, where pupils took part in activities across the school. The Music department were centre stage once again, providing music for the National Anthem, The Cwmtawe School Song, Delilah and also the instrumental and singing competitions.

Several pupils have represented the school at county level in various ensembles, but a special mention to Carys Morgan who represented Cwmtawe on the National Youth Orchestra Wales. In addition, a special mention for an ex-pupil Lowri Thomas who has just been awarded a permanent seat with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

Sport

The department continues to pride itself on the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer to our pupils. Lunchtime and after-school activities attract large numbers of pupils taking part in recreational and competitive activities throughout the year. We are appreciative of the support of the PE staff and non-PE staff who help to run clubs, and to Pontardawe Leisure Centre for their support.

Pupils were able to participate in a variety of competitions both regionally and nationally in football, rugby, netball, cricket, tennis, badminton athletics, basketball and cross-country events. At lunchtimes, pupils are also able to make use of the weights room, gym and CV room and also there are a growing number of pupils playing darts and basketball.

Notable sporting achievements 2022 – 2023

Welsh Acro Gymnastics – Maya Verbeek

South Wales Cricket – Seren Morrow, Leila Osell, Thorin Edwards, Joe Hall

Wales Jujitsu – Aria Roberts

Wales Basketball U14 – Idris O'Brien

Wales U16 Football and Cardiff City – Dakari Mafico

Wales U16 Football – Emma Thomas

Swansea City U16 – Ellie Gibbons, Grace John

Welsh Athletics / West Wales Cross Country – Ashton Parry

ANT Athletics – Sofia Haeney

Welsh Open Weightlifting Gold Medallist – Fletcher Watkins

ANT Netball U16 – Imogen Harries, Lola Thair, Megan Hamer, Olivia Kieft

ANT Netball U14 – Lillia Jones

Ospreys U16 – Rose Lewis

ITF J200 World Tennis Tour – Oliver Page

ICO Welsh Kick Boxing Champion – Aron Rees



Karate Welsh Open Silver / UK Open Silver – Steffan Batsford

It has been a busy period for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, with 45 pupils successfully completing their Bronze awards and 21 pupils completing their Silver level awards.

Summer Activities 2023

During activity week, a range of events were organised to suit everyone. Pupils enjoyed visits to Oakwood Theme Park, surfing, the cinema, Pontardawe Golf Club and climbing at Dynamic Rock. Pupils also participated in various events at the school's sports days, which were held over three days.

Year 7 pupils also had their first overseas trip to France since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and given the opportunity to support Wales by attending Euro qualifiers in Cardiff.

Term Dates 2024/2025

Autumn Term	Term start	2 September 2024
	Break	28 October 2024 to 1 November 2024
	Term end	20 December 2024
Spring Term	Term start	6 January 2025
	Break	25 February 2025 to 28 February 2025
	Term end	11 April 2025
Summer Term	Term start	28 April 2025
	Break	26 May 2025 to 30 May 2025
	Term end	21 July 2025

Key Stage 3 Curriculum

The new Curriculum for Wales was implemented in September 2023.

Year 7		Year 8	
English	6	English	6
Mathematics	6	Mathematics	6
Science	6	Science	6
Art	2	Art	2
Design Technology	4	Design Technology	4
Drama	1	Drama	1
Geography	2	Geography	2
History	2	History	2
Modern Languages	4	Modern Languages	4
Music	2	Music	2
PE/Sport	4	PE/Sport	4
ICT	2	ICT	2
RVE	2	RVE	2
Welsh	3	Welsh	3
Wellbeing (inc. RSE)	4	Wellbeing (inc. RSE)	4



Children with Additional Learning Needs may be disapplied from some areas of the curriculum through a Statement of SEN or a local authority maintained IDP.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The core curriculum for key stage 4 is outlined below.

Key Stage 4 Core Curriculum	
English	7
Mathematics	7
Science	9
PE/Sport	2
RVE	4
Welsh	4
Wellbeing (inc. RSE)	1

At key stage 4, the wellbeing curriculum is supplemented by additional carousel days, where outside agencies and visiting speakers provide specialised advice and guidance.

Pupils may select four option subjects from the choices below. These are taught for four hours each, in addition to the core.

- Art and Design, Fine Art, Photography
- Business Studies
- Construction
- Digital Technology (ICT)
- Drama
- Product Design and Engineering
- Food and Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- German
- Health, Social Care and Childcare
- Hospitality and Catering
- History
- Music
- Physical Education
- Sports and Coaching
- Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate

A very few pupils follow a Junior Apprenticeship Construction course in conjunction with NPTC, leading to qualifications in English GCSE, Mathematics GCSE and Level 2 Construction.

Children with Additional Learning Needs may be disapplied from some areas of the curriculum through a Statement of SEN or a local authority maintained IDP.

Additional Learning Needs

The school has a very strong reputation for our outstanding provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs. There are two local authority support centres on site, one for pupils with specific learning difficulties and another for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition. Access to these units is designated by the local authority ALN Support Team and pupils are transported to Cwmtawe from across the county borough.



In addition, we operate our own inclusion unit for a few pupils with social, emotional or behaviour challenges. This has allowed

Pupils within mainstream are supported by our dedicated teaching support staff and our Additional Learning Needs Coordinator via our Additional Learning Needs Study. This benefits from its own dedicated outdoor study garden and sensory room. We also have an outdoor classroom and reflection area for small group support.

The school has experienced a significant increase in demand from parents/carers requesting additional support and neurodevelopmental referrals.

Language Category

Cwmtawe Community School is an English medium school.

Full Welsh medium provision is available locally at Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera. However, some parents/carers opt to send their children to Cwmtawe from Welsh medium primary schools (and in some cases transfer in from Welsh medium secondary schools). Although we are unable to deliver subjects through the medium of Welsh, the school is committed to accommodating language needs wherever possible through Welsh lessons.

In some cases, pupils with more developed language skills may be grouped together and follow a more advanced curriculum, leading to qualifications in First Language Welsh or new additional Level 2 qualifications being introduced in Cymraeg from September 2026. In Years 7 and 8 pupils have 3 Welsh lessons and Years 9 to 11 have 4 Welsh lessons a fortnight.

Safeguarding

The school is committed to maintaining very high levels of safeguarding. All staff undergo safer recruitment checks on appointment and every member of staff receives annual safeguarding training, including our catering and cleaning colleagues. Visitors to the school must always be supervised unless they have undergone the same checks as employees (e.g. local authority staff and college lecturers).

Any school visits are closely controlled. Parents/carers are not permitted to visit the school without appointment and must be supervised whilst on the site.

All external entry points are secured with electronic locks, as are various internal areas of the school.

Regular safeguarding reviews are undertaken by school staff and by local authority officers.

Community Links

The school takes pride in its very strong community links. We have a dedicated Police Liaison Officer that supports us by delivering lessons, building positive relationships with pupils and dealing with issues which occur within the school and in the local community.

We also maintain strong links with third sector groups, such as PANTRY foodbank, Pontardawe Arts Centre and local churches and charity organisations. Pupils regularly organise collection of donations for PANTRY, supporting some of the most vulnerable families in our community. In addition, several local churches visit to support our CiCS programme (Christians in Cwmtawe School) and they also deliver assemblies at key times throughout the year (e.g. Christmas, Easter).

The school has always maintained strong links with local old age associations. Our Year 9 pupils invite members into the school at Christmas time for a Christmas lunch or afternoon tea. This is a tradition which has spanned over 30 years.



Local business leaders, such as Tesco, have supported the school in many ways. They have provided competition prizes, support for charity events and even bottled water on an extremely hot day for our GCSE examination pupils.

Some of the school's facilities are made available to important local community events, on request, including the Cwmtawe 7s, Pontardawe Town Football Club, Rotary Club, Primary Schools, and sporting and other associations in the locality.

Charity fundraising is well-established, with pupils supporting several worthwhile causes in the local and wider community. It is encouraging to report that nearly £4,500 was raised again last year, distributed across a range of worthwhile local and national charities.

The school also has close links with other local organisations including the Leon Heart Fund, The Maerdy Youth Group, the Riverside Community Space, Pontardawe History Society and the Pontardawe Sports Association.

We also take this opportunity as a Governing Body to express our gratitude to all the local businesses which kindly help the school each year by providing placements within the local community for pupils' work experience, including those needed as part of our vocational courses.

School Prospectus

The School Prospectus is available on the school website for parents/carers. Paper copies may be obtained from the school office, by appointment.

Transition Booklet

All new Year 7 pupils receive a Transition Booklet to ease their start in Cwmtawe. This provides reassurance about what happens in the first few days at school and outlines the opportunities and support available.

Toilet Facilities

The school, in conjunction with Neath Port Talbot local authority, re-developed all pupil toilets in the summer of 2022. There are separate toilet facilities for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils, to those available to Year 9, 10 and 11 pupils. This ensures that very young pupils do not feel uncomfortable by the presence of older pupils.

The school council were heavily involved in the updates. They visited other new-build schools with the Headteacher to investigate the options available, and chose the colours and materials used.

Regrettably the toilets remain a target for vandalism by a very few individuals. Where this occurs, it compromises the education and wellbeing of many others. Therefore, control measures have been implemented to mitigate this risk, such as increased staff supervision at break and lunchtimes.

All toilet facilities are cleaned at the end of the school day and periodically throughout the day, as the need arises. Regular checks are carried out by premises staff.

Staffing

The school employs 76 teaching and 39 non-teaching staff. Catering and cleaning staff are also directly employed by the school. In addition to the Headteacher, the school has two Deputy Headteachers and three Assistant Headteachers. Administration staff are led by the School Business Manager.

The governing body reviews the school's staffing structure each year to ensure it continues to meet needs.



Expenses

No expenses have been claimed by governors in the last financial year.

Healthy Eating and Drinking

The school is fully compliant with the Healthy Eating in Schools measure. We have an active School Nutrition Action Group, who work with catering staff to promote healthy options which appeal to young people. Energy drinks and high sugar snacks are not permitted in school.

Policy Review

The governing body has reviewed the following policies over the past year.

- Admissions Policy (devised and managed by local authority)
- ALN Policy – updated to reflect new statements/IDPs
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Capability Procedure
- Charging Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Curriculum Policy - new curriculum updates
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Disposal Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Misuse Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct - Support
- Employee Code of Conduct - Teaching
- Employee Rehabilitation Scheme
- Equality Policy (Strategic Equality Plan)
- ER/VR/CR Scheme (Teaching)
- ER/VR/CR Scheme (Non-Teaching)
- EWC Code for Professional Conduct and Practice
- Flexible Working Policy
- Flexible Retirement Policy
- Gender Reassignment Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Honoraria Payments Policy
- Internet Use Policy
- Leave of Absence - Non-Teaching
- Leave of Absence - Teaching
- Maternity/Paternity Scheme
- Maximising Attendance at Work
- Maximising Attendance at Work Procedures
- Pay Policy – devised by local authority and adopted by governing body
- Parental Bereavement Leave Policy
- Performance Management Policy



- Redundancy Policy
- Register of Interests
- Safe Recruitment
- Safe Recruitment of Volunteers
- Safeguarding
- Sex Education Policy
- Terms of Reference for Unofficial Funds
- Travel and Subsistence Policy
- Uniform and Appearance – amendments to allow tailored shorts at all times of the year.
- Whistleblowing Policy
- XL Policy

Summary of School Improvement Priorities

The governing body works with the school to develop three-year school improvement priorities. Progress against these priorities is reviewed annually.

The main priorities for the current academic year are:

1. Improving attendance
2. Developing teaching, learning and the curriculum
3. Refining Additional Learning Needs provision
4. Improving parental engagement
5. Refining improvement planning processes

My Local School

A range of information on Cwmtawe Community School is published on Welsh Government's [My Local School](#) website. You are also able to view the data of other schools across Wales to make comparisons.

Publication

This report is published on the school's website. Parents are notified by text message when it is updated. A paper copy can be provided upon request.

Updates

Stay up to date with school news and events by visiting our website or following our social media channels.

