



YSGOL GYMUNEDOL
CWMTAWE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Governing Body Report to Parents

November 2024

Chair's Comments:

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am delighted to present the Annual Report to Parents which describes the work, activities and achievements of the school for the academic year 2023-2024.

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 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 continue to attain exceptional examination 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 2023/2024 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
Christopher Truscott	LA	Jan 2024	Dec 2027
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
Dr Claire Prosser	Parent	Feb 2024	Feb 2028
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 2024	Jan 2028
Mr C L Hitchings	Headteacher	Jan 2014	n/a
Joseph Flint	Associate	Sept 2023	Aug 2024



Olivia Kieft	Associate	Sept 2023	Aug 2024
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.

The next scheduled election for a Parent Governor will be held in February 2025. Nomination forms and details will be sent to parents at the beginning of February 2025.

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.

Pupil Numbers

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

	Male	Female	Total
Year 7	99	86	185
Year 8	120	109	229
Year 9	126	96	222
Year 10	122	116	238
Year 11	130	120	250
Total	597	527	1124

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 2023/2024 school year.



Financial Statement

The most recent financial statement (2023/2024) provided by the local authority is outlined below:

Delegated costs	
Teaching Salaries	£4,770,048
Other salaries	£1,318,601
Other employee expenses	£1,188
Premises	£768,176
Transportation	£2,159
Supplies and services	£473,417
Third Party Payments	£42,619
Support services	£98,167
Government grants and contributions	-£529,545
Sales	-£225,197
Fees and charges income	-£97,024
Internal recharges	-£297,080
Interest received	-£97,221
Transfers	-£65,678
TOTAL	£6,162,630

Non-delegated costs	
Teaching salaries	£0
Other employees	£27,437
Other direct costs	£488,859
Miscellaneous income	£0
Capital charges	£647,424
TOTAL	£1,163,720

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 2024. 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 2024 is detailed below:

Level 2 threshold (5 GCSEs at C or above)	76%
Level 2 including English and Mathematics (5 GCSEs at C or above which must include English and Mathematics)	66%
Five or more GCSEs at A*/A grade	25%
English Level 2 (C or above)	80%
English Level 1 (G or above)	99%
Mathematics Level 2 (C or above)	71%
Mathematics Level 1 (G or above)	99%
Science Level 2 (C or above)	66%
Science Level 1 (G or above)	99%
% of cohort gaining double science at C or above	66%
% of cohort gaining 3 separate sciences at C or above	50%
Literacy average point score	43
Numeracy average point score	40
Science Average Point Score	39

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	380
Welsh Baccalaureate SCC Points Score	40
Level 2 including English and Mathematics	70%

Attendance

Attendance figures for 2023/24 are illustrated below:

Overall attendance	89.9%
Authorised absence	5.6%
Unauthorised absence	4.5%

Possible sessions	344,714
Present marks	309,726



Approved activity	7,142
Authorised absence	19,422
Unauthorised absence	15,588

Pupil Destinations Post-16

Data provided by Careers Wales for the Academic Year 2022-2023.

School Leaver Destination	Pupils
Apprenticeship	6
Further Education (Full-Time)	190
Further Education (Part-Time)	1
Jobs Growth Wales Plus Advancement	2
Jobs Growth Wales Plus Engagement	7
Job (Full-Time) with no formal training	7
Job (Full-Time) with formal Training	5
Non Employed – Not available to enter	1
Non Employed – Not ready to enter	1
Year 12	3
Total	223

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

The Music department has had another busy year with numerous concerts and musical events giving the learners in Cwmtawe every opportunity to develop their musical abilities and experience both inside and outside of the classroom. Sadly this year we have said goodbye to Mrs Webley as she has retired from the school to pursue other interests.

The music department currently operates:

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

The department provides lessons for the following musical families:

- Upper Strings Miss Caroline Nicholas
- Percussion Mr Nick Hedges
- Singing Miss Kirstie Roberts
- Brass Mr Glyn Davies
- Mr Simon Howells
- Woodwind Mrs Heidi Davies
- Guitar Mr Ray Williams



Instrumental lessons continue to be a strength of the department and the school. Being able to provide learners with high quality instrumental education from experts in their fields at no added cost is something that we are very proud of and we hope continues long into the future. We have had many successful graded exams this year, many Year 11 pupils have gone on to continue music education in college and 2 ex Cwmtawe pupils (Bethan Nicholas-Thomas and Carys Morgan) attended and represented the National Youth Orchestra of Wales in the summer.

Bethan Nicholas-Thomas has just successfully gained a place at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Moli Edwards successfully earned a place at the Royal Northern College of Music. We are very proud of them both for these amazing achievements.

This year at Christmas we held a concert to showcase the Drama and Music department working in partnership. There were performances from chamber choir, choir, KS4 drama pupils, orchestra, brass band and ukulaliens.

On top of that, the brass group entertained the local old age, Godre'rgraig Primary School and Cwmtawe's own staff with Christmas Carols, helping to spread the festive spirit.

Again this year, Year 9 GCSE class were given the task of organising and taking part in a GCSE performance evening featuring all GCSE pupils. Pupils worked diligently in their decided roles to prepare not only their performances, but also the running order and general production of the concert. The concert was a big success with some superb performances by some of our seasoned performers, but it was also extremely pleasing to see many pupils perform in public for the first time.

In March, we celebrated St David's Day with an Eisteddfod, where students participated in various activities throughout the school. The Music department took the lead again, providing music for the National Anthem, the Cwmtawe School Song, as well as accompanying the instrumental and vocal competitions.

Sport

The PE Department continues to pride itself on the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer to our pupils. Lunchtime and after-school sees large numbers of pupils taking part in recreational and competitive activities throughout the year. This supports the progress our learners make in class and allows for the development of pupil to pupil and pupil to Staff relationships. 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 a growing number of pupils playing darts.

Notable sporting achievements 2023 – 2024

Welsh Acro Gymnastics – Maya Verbeek

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

Wales Basketball U14 – Idris O'Brien, Gabriel Porter

Wales U16 Football – Emma Thomas

Swansea City U16 – Ellie Gibbons, Grace John

Welsh Athletics / West Wales Cross Country – Ashton Parry

ANT Athletics – Sofia Haeney, Archie Quick

Welsh Open Weightlifting Gold Medallist – Fletcher Watkins



ANT Netball U17 – Megan Hamer

ANT Netball U16 - Olvia Kieft

ANT Netball U15 and Wales U16 – Lillia Jones

ITF J200 World Tennis Tour – Oliver Page

ICO Welsh Kick Boxing Champion – Aron Rees

Karate Welsh Open Silver / UK Open Silver – Steffan Batsford

Sofia Jeremiah - HHI International Dance Competition (Phoenix, Arizona) - 18th out of 100 entries

Teams -

Year 10 - Afan Nedd Boys Football Cup Winners

Year 10 - Boys West Glamorgan Cricket Champions and UK Qualifiers

Year 10 - Urdd Boys 7s Rugby Cup Semi Finalists

U13s and U15s Lady Taverners Regional Cricket Winners

It has been a busy period for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. 41 pupils and 14 ALN pupils successfully completed their Bronze awards and 16 pupils completed their Silver level awards. There will also be at least 3 pupils who will receive their Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award at St James' Palace.

Summer 2024

During activity week, a range of activities were organised to suit everyone. Pupils enjoyed trips to Oakwood Theme Park, surfing, golf at 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.

This year, Year 7 and Year 8 pupils have had the opportunity to attend an overseas trip to France, whilst the Year 10 and 11 pupils were given the opportunity to attend an overseas trip to see the Christmas markets in Germany and the Art Department arranged for a trip to go to Paris.

There have also been a number of school trips spread throughout the year, including a trip to the Big Bang exhibition in Birmingham, the Natural History Museum in London, a history trip to London, Noah's Ark Zoo in Bristol and various theatre trips. There have also been residential trips to Llangrannog and Borth.

Pupils were also given the opportunity to support Wales by attending Euro qualifiers in Cardiff, watch Cardiff Devils, Glamorgan cricket and Celtic Dragons netball.

Term Dates 2025/2026

Autumn Term	Term start	1 September 2025
	Break	27 October 2025 to 31 October 2025
	Term end	19 December 2025
Spring Term	Term start	5 January 2026
	Break	16 February 2026 to 20 February 2026
	Term end	27 March 2026
Summer Term	Term start	13 April 2026
	Break	25 May 2026 to 29 May 2026
	Term end	20 July 2026



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 Wellbeing and Inclusion unit for a few pupils with social, emotional or behaviour challenges. This has allowed the school to reduce exclusions and maintain education for pupils with various challenges.

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.

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, NPT PASS Scheme, 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 68 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)
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Capability Procedure
- Charging Policy
- Cluster Schools Transition Plan
- Collective Worship Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Cover Policy
- Curriculum Policy - new curriculum updates
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Drug and Alcohol Misuse Policy
- Effective Feedback and Marking Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct – Support Staff
- Employee Code of Conduct - Teaching
- Employee Rehabilitation Scheme
- ER/VR/CR Scheme (Teaching)
- ER/VR/CR Scheme (Non-Teaching)
- E-Safety
- EWC Code for Professional Conduct and Practice
- Exam Disability Policy
- Exam Contingency Policy
- Examinations Policy
- Extended Learning Opportunities Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Flexible Retirement Policy
- Gender Reassignment Policy



- Grievance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Honoraria Payments Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Initial Teacher Training Policy
- LAC Policy
- Leave of Absence - Non-Teaching
- Leave of Absence - Teaching
- Library Policy
- Management of Change Policy
- Maternity/Paternity Scheme
- Maximising Attendance at Work
- Maximising Attendance at Work Procedures
- Non Examination Policy
- Parental Bereavement Leave Policy
- Pay Policy (Teaching)– devised by local authority and adopted by governing body
- Pay Policy (Non-Teaching)– devised by local authority and adopted by governing body
- Peer Mentoring
- Redundancy Policy
- Register of Interests
- Safe Recruitment
- Safe Recruitment of Volunteers
- Safeguarding
- School Council Policy
- Schools Domestic Abuse in the Workplace Policy
- School Fund Policy
- Self-Harm Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Social Networking Policy
- Special Leave Scheme
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Travel and Subsistence Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Word Processing (Exams) Policy
- XL Policy
- Young Carers 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 and learning
3. Developing curriculum and assessment
4. Improving support for ALN and vulnerable pupils
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.

