



Annual Governors' Report to Parents

Autumn 2023





SCHOOL HOLIDAY DATES 2023-24

Autumn Term

Staff Training Day 01.09.23

Staff Training Day 04.09.23

Term starts 05.09.23

Half term close 26.10.23

Staff Training Day 27.10.23

Half Term Open 06.11.23

Staff Training Day 22.12.23

Term ends 21.12.23

Spring Term

Term starts 08.01.24

Half term close 09.02.24

Staff Training Day 19.02.24

Half term open 20.02.24

Term ends 22.03.24

Summer Term

Term starts 08.04.24

Half term close 24.05.24

Half term open 03.06.24

Staff Training Day 01.07.24

Term ends 19.07.24



Excellent Estyn Report March 2019 places school in top 2% of Wales:

Nearly all pupils including those with additional learning needs make good and often very good progress in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills by the end of Year 2, sometimes from low starting-points. Nearly all pupils' attitude towards learning is exemplary. Standards of behaviour and self-discipline in lessons and around the school are high. They are polite and considerate, and they relate well to each other. The quality of teaching supports very high levels of pupils' engagement and very strong progress in learning. Teachers and assistants work highly effectively as a team and create an enthusiastic learning environment in all classes. They have very high expectations of each pupil. The quality of care, support and guidance provided is excellent and has a very positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing. Senior leaders provide a strong strategic direction for the school with a clear focus on meeting the diverse needs and wellbeing of all pupils. Team work is a strength of the school. The governing body is highly supportive of the school.

Trauma Informed Schools award:

We have been working towards this award for a number of years and we have now sent in all of our evidence to be assessed. If the evidence meets the high standards expected then we will receive a visit in September to observe our practice within school. We now have 10 members of staff who have completed the TIS diploma and all staff have received awareness training. This means we can fully support pupils throughout school in being able to manage their 'big' feelings and worries in order to help them become ready to learn.

Cymraeg Campus Silver award:

Since achieving our Bronze award in 2018 we have been working towards the Silver award. We are extremely proud to have now achieved the award as it recognises the hard work and commitment all staff have given. The silver award is the highest award we can achieve as an infant school but we are going to continue on our Welsh journey and increase the amount of Welsh taught and spoken in classes, in line with the Welsh language targets set by the Welsh Government.

Governor Meetings and Business

Since the last annual report to parents was published, the Governing Body have met every half term. The meetings are a combination of Full Governing Body meetings and Sub-Committee meetings. Curricular and non-curricular meetings were also held involving the pay and performance management committees and the data scrutiny group the finance working party.

Various curriculum policies and non-curricular policies have been reviewed in line with the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Policies reviewed include the statutory policies: Child Protection and Safeguarding, ALN Policy and Pay policy.



Who is who on the Governing Body (2022-2023)?

Headteacher—Ysgol y Foryd—Mrs. N Rowlands

Chair of Governors—Mr Gary Young

Clerk-Mrs K Evans

Local Authority Governors - (appointed by LEA for a four-year term)

Cllr G Corry (31.05.24)

Cllr M Smith (31.05.24)

Mayor L Formston (31.05.24)

Cllr B McLoughlin (20/01/27)

Community Governors

Cllr B Griffiths (21/09/27)

Ms Joanne Matthews (24/9/24)

Mrs Rachel Hyland (01/10/25)

Teacher Governors (appointed by teaching staff)

Vacancy

Mrs H Williams (31.08.23)

Parent Governors (elected by parents)

Mr C Headland (31.10.24) Vice Chair

My G Young (31.08.26)

Mrs R Quayle (31/08/23)

Mrs Laura Carlyle-Jones (1/10/25)

Ancillary Staff Governor (appointed by ancillary staff)

Mr J Burt (31/03/25)

Local Authority Contact:

Mrs Kate Evans

GWE Supporting Improvement Officer:

Mrs Rhian Jones



Transition and what our pupils do after leaving our school?

We work very closely with parents, local day nurseries and relevant outside agencies when it comes to inviting new pupils into our nursery class, Traed Bach. A combination of home visits, taster sessions, parents and professionals meetings ensures a smooth transition into part time school.

As the children move into full time education and through school they engage in a number of transition activities. The aim of these activities is to develop positive relationships between the pupils and their new staff members. Transition to new classes has been extremely positive this year.

Once the children finish year two they transition to Ysgol Maes Owen, our feeder junior school. The year two teacher, Miss Jones and the year 3/4 teachers at Maes Owen planned and delivered a comprehensive transition programme which saw year 2 pupils visiting Ysgol Maes Owen several times during the summer term and Miss Pye visiting Y Foryd to work with the year two pupils in their familiar surroundings.

Ysgol Emrys Ap Iwan update us with news of past pupils and we enjoy hearing their success stories.

What do the pupils say about school and does this support school improvement?

Pupils' wellbeing remains a key priority throughout the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to express their feelings and talk about emotions. Pupils in years one and two complete a survey called 'Pupils Attitude to School Survey (PASS) twice a year. The results of this survey are extremely positive with pupils stating they feel safe in school, they have people they can trust and talk to in school and they enjoy learning.

Our School Council met periodically with Mrs Rowlands and Mrs Williams to discuss ideas for improvements in classes and in the school grounds. They enjoyed monitoring attendance and punctuality too...although this is an area that requires improvement next year.

Our Eco-Council have met with Mr Patterson during the year to support sustainable development. Mrs Patterson continues to support this area and our lunchtime supervisor, Mrs Sylwia Stanco, leads the continued development of our garden areas. The Summer term was particularly successful for harvesting and sharing fruit, vegetables and flowers.

As part of Mrs Rowlands' Welsh sabbatical the use of Welsh around school and in classes has increased. The children enjoyed a Welsh assembly once a week and they were taught new phrases regularly which they can use to hold basic Welsh conversations. Pupils from each class form our Criw Cymraeg who met regularly to discuss ways to increase the use of Welsh. Cai Coch, our Welsh dragon went home with some children to have adventures in the local area – he is looking forward to more adventures next year!

What activities and options are available for our pupils?

Extra curricular activities are an important part of the children's experiences at Ysgol Y Foryd. We continued to invite 'Kick it Chris' into school to deliver sports sessions after school – this was extremely popular! Other clubs were delivered by class staff on a voluntary basis, including story club, ICT club and board games club.

We have trim—track play equipment, a climbing frame, a slide, swings, a train and sand pit to use at break times. We also have an outdoor classroom to broaden the pupils' learning experiences. We make good use of Ysgol Maes Owen's woodland area and community woodland. Classes regularly use the leisure centre for various activities, including outdoor PE sessions in the muga. We are well equipped, thanks to generous donations from the PTA, with bikes and play equipment for the children to use at playtimes.



How are we making sure that every child is taught in a way that meets their individual needs?

We are very well staffed at Ysgol Y Foryd, with excellent pupil to staff ratios. Across school we currently have two higher-level teaching assistants (HLTA), 9 teaching assistants and one family liaison officer. We also have four teaching assistants with responsibility for supporting pupils with additional learning needs. All staff are committed to providing pupils with the necessary skills and support to achieve their full potential. Classes are all of mixed ability and teachers provide a variety of activities to suit the diverse learning needs of all pupils. Pupils regularly talk about their learning and discuss their next steps with adults. Progress is tracked carefully throughout the year.

Pupils are rewarded, praised and encouraged when working hard and learning new things. Our weekly celebration assembly continues to be held on a Friday throughout the year, celebrating all achievements, both in and out of school. 'Stars of the Week' are chosen for pupils who are positive and cheerful. The stars of the week become the class 'Helpwr Heddiw' for the following week. A 'Headteacher's award' is given weekly to somebody who has been outstanding in their behaviour, attitude or work. Pupils are also awarded for following the 'Y Foryd Values' and for good use of Welsh in class and around school; these pupils are chosen by the 'Cryw Cymraeg'.

The new Curriculum for Wales became statutory from September 2022 and we are very pleased with the implementation thus far. Our curriculum has been designed to suit the needs of our learners and we are carefully monitoring progress to ensure the pupils experience a range of activities during their time at Y Foryd which will help them achieve the four purposes (healthy, confident individuals, ethically informed citizens, ambitious capable learners and enterprising, creative contributors). We were fortunate to receive a third and final grant from the Arts Council and we used this grant to launch our new curriculum. Each year group were in charge of one of the four purposes and they helped the 'Stars' – Ambitious Anwen, Healthy Haf, Ethical Emrys and Enterprising Efan to fly during our amazing celebration day which was held in school for the pupils.

Parents are encouraged and welcomed to be partners in their children's education and we regularly report to them on their child's progress and achievements. Class Dojo helps to inform parents of their child's learning journey and staff are always visible at the start and end of the school day to answer any questions parents may have about their child's learning. Where appropriate parents are invited into the classroom to learn with their child!

At Ysgol y Foryd our highly experienced and trained team of staff work collaboratively to support pupils and, through early identification, plan and deliver the interventions they may need. Where pupils are identified as having Additional Learning Needs (ALN), the class teacher works with the additional needs coordinator to ensure those needs are being met. Pupils in nursery, reception and year one have now transferred to the new ALN system the Welsh Government have devised. Pupils identified as having ALN in these year groups will have either a school Individual Development Plan (IDP) or a local authority IDP, which ensure more focused support in addition to the universal provision offered by the school. Pupils in year two will transition to the new system next year. Our additional learning needs coordinator in school is Mrs Samantha Hogg. Various interventions are delivered to a diverse range of pupils; sometimes being withdrawn from class but mostly within their own class setting. Interventions include literacy, numeracy, nurture, physical development, SALT (speech and language therapy), Headsprout (reading) and SAFMEDS (Say-All-Fast-Minute-Every-Day-Shuffled). All such interventions are tracked to ensure pupils are making progress. Thank you to Mrs Williams and Mrs Hogg for their hard work in this area.



How do we make sure our pupils are healthy, safe and well supported?

We continue to develop an excellent programme of play, physical education, sport and games to keep learners active and fit. School meals became free in Wales to all pupils from September 2022 and the uptake has been good. Our catering department offer a balanced diet throughout the week, with a good choice of meals to suit all pupils. Pupils have fruit with milk or water at snack time and have water bottles in class to encourage them to keep hydrated.

The Welsh Assembly Government ensure all pupils are able to receive a Free breakfast. We continue to run a free breakfast club from 8am and breakfast club staff safely deliver pupils to their classes at 8.45am.

Health and Safety is regularly monitored through protocols in school and checklists are carried out monthly within each year group and monitored by Mrs Fernandes. All defects are reported to Mr Jones the caretaker and to Mrs Rowlands or Mrs Williams when of a more urgent nature. Mr Young is designated Governor for Health and Safety.

Toilet facilities. We have sufficient toilets for our pupils and two disabled toilet facilities as well as four adult toilets. All facilities are checked and cleaned by staff throughout the day and by our two cleaners after school hours.

What we are trying to improve?

Following a rigorous self-evaluation process we devise priorities for school improvement. 2022-23 priorities included:

Current school priorities:

- To improve progress in Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC) for all pupils, particularly boys (2022-2023) (Linked to National Priority)
- To improve standards of provision and learners' experiences to close the gap following the pandemic. (2021-2024) (Linked to National Priority)
- To continue to develop the emotional wellbeing of pupils, parents and staff (2022-2023 – apply for TIS award Autumn/Spring term) (Linked to National Priority)

Additional priorities:

- Continue to develop the Curriculum throughout the school, focusing on further improving Pedagogy in line with the 12 Pedagogical Principles and assessment (Cluster priority - 2022-2025) (Linked to National Priority)
- To continue on the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) transformation programme, implementing new policies and procedures as they become mandatory (2022-2024)
- To develop the use of Welsh language in school, working towards the silver Cymraeg Campus award and contributing to the Wales' mission of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050 (2022-2023 – apply for Cymraeg Campus award Autumn/Spring term)
- To continue to work closely with families and the attendance officer to improve attendance and punctuality, aiming for a whole school percentage of 94 (2022-2023) (Linked to National Priority)

National priorities:

- Improving pupils' progression by ensuring their learning is supported by a range of knowledge, skills and experience
- Reducing the impact of poverty on pupils' progression and attainment



What are our child absence rates?

Attendance figures for Whole School year 2022-2023

Whole School attendance 90.9%

Authorised absence 7%

Unauthorised absence 2%

Unauthorised reasons for absence i.e. not an acceptable reason for absence 0.9%

Present marks 90.3%

Circumstanced absence 1.1%

Holiday absence 1.67%

3% Late

0.2% late after the register (after 9.30am)

4.8% illness

Whole School attendance termly;

Term 1a – 92.7%

Term 1b – 91%

Term 2a – 90.9%

Term 2b – 91.2%

Term 3a – 91%

Term 3b – 90.9%

70 learners have a holiday recorded on their register.

42 learners had a holiday of a week or longer.

2 learners maintained 100% attendance throughout the academic year.

Reception overall attendance was 93.5%

Year 1 88.6%

Year 2 91.4%

18 learners were identified as having attendance concerns with their attendance dropping below 80%

Using this information we are able to identify areas of concern ahead of the next academic year and can ensure early interventions are put in place and support can be offered immediately.



How are we working with parents and community?

As a school, we continue to build strong links with all our parents to enrich the learning opportunities for our children. Our monthly newsletter, which is emailed to parents, keeps all parents and members of our school community informed of Y Foryd business. This also includes a calendar of forthcoming events. It is also published on our website which has been updated regularly by Mrs Williams throughout the year.

We have delivered numerous parent groups this year which have been well attended and feedback from you as parents has been excellent. Mrs Maher runs a 'cuppa and chat' morning with the family centre which has benefited parents from Y Foryd.

Our production of The Lion King was a great event enjoyed by members of the school community – we are extremely proud of all of the pupils for the excellent singing, acting and dancing!

Parents evenings were held during the academic year to keep parents informed of their child's progress.

Parents received interim written reports during the Spring term which included detailed attendance information. A full report was sent to parents in July 2023.

Attainment and progress:

Mrs Williams and Mrs Rowlands hold termly pupil progress meetings with all teachers, giving opportunity to discuss all pupils, ensuring all pupils are making progress, discussing any pupils who may not be making progress in order to provide relevant interventions.

Pupils are assessed on entry to Ysgol Y Foryd and their progress is monitored and tracked throughout their time here. Progress is good and we are continually developing ways to evidence this in line with the expectations of the new curriculum.

Other matters of interest:

- The whole school held a Harvest festival, parents were invited and it was very popular
- We supported children in need and red nose day
- All year groups performed Christmas events
- The PTA held successful fundraising events
- A whole school Eisteddfod was held to celebrate Dydd Gwyl Dewi Sant
- The pupils and staff dressed up as a character from their favourite book for World Book Day
- The pupils enjoyed swim sessions - 6 Swimming sessions for Year 1 and Year 2, 2 swimming sessions for Reception
- Ysgol y Foryd held a mock King's Coronation Day
- We put on a whole school Lion King production
- Each year group held Sports Days and parents were invited to come and watch
- Year 2's enjoyed a trip to Greenwood and a sleepover at Y Foryd!
- Year 2 children went to the "Children's Day" at Llangollen's International Eisteddfod
- Food and Fun successfully ran for 3 weeks during the summer holidays



- Mrs Natasha Puttick was successful in the teacher interviews and will be full time from September 2023.
- Ysgol y Foryd have been nominated for Best Primary School in North Wales, Mrs Maher has been nominated for Best Support Worker in North Wales and Mrs Nia Williams has been nominated for Best Teacher in North Wales.
- Reception children prepared a Publishing Party to share the work they had been doing during the first half of the spring term.
- We have a strong PTA who have met regularly and arranged PTA fundraising ideas including tea-towels that the children have designed
- Mrs Rowlands attended a Welsh sabbatical scheme to develop her own Welsh in order to improve and develop the Welsh language across school.
- We had an Easter parade and amazing Easter bonnets were brought in from home
- Design to smile initiative has re-started so all pupils (with consent) are brushing their teeth in school
- Staff enjoy a weekly wellbeing session with Mrs Maher on a Friday after school. This has been very well attended (100%) most weeks and is a nice way to end the week positively.
- Darren Millar visited school to see the hard work that has been happening in our eco garden – da iawn Mrs Patterson!
- A first aid course was delivered for parents
- A first aid course was delivered to pupils
- We took part in a two minute silence for remembrance and held a short assembly
- All children took part in the Urdd Jambori!
- Mayor Geoff Corry has organised delivery of selection boxes for each child, funded by Mr Adam Williams, Tir Prince Leisure. This is extremely generous and very well received.

Finances

Briefly, the school budget for the year to April 2022 totalled to £690,225 with additional resources which include a substantial EIG and Foundation Phase Grant of £118,382. The total resources for the school was £808,607 and a surplus of £150,665 (15%) will be carried into 2023-2024. This large carryover is intentional, to maintain staffing levels despite an expected reduction in number of pupils.

Leadership

Mrs Nicola Rowlands has been the Headteacher since May 2019 following an 18 month period as acting headteacher. Mrs. Hannah Williams has been Deputy Headteacher since June 2019 following an 18 month period as acting deputy Headteacher. Leadership was judged as excellence in our 2019 inspection, stating that “senior leaders provide a strong strategic direction for the school with a clear focus on meeting the diverse needs and wellbeing of all pupils. Team work is a strength of the school. The governing body is highly supportive of the school.”

During the academic year, Mrs Rowlands attended a full time Welsh sabbatical scheme to improve her own Welsh, which would naturally support the development of the Welsh language throughout school. Mrs Williams became Acting Headteacher during this time and continued to lead the school in an excellent manner.



Thank you

Firstly, the Governors wish to express their thanks to Mrs Williams for taking on the role of Acting Head Teacher since January as Mrs Rowlands attended a full time Welsh learning sabbatical training opportunity. Congratulations to Mrs Rowlands for completing the scheme which will support the development of the Welsh language throughout school. Their leadership in striving for continuous improvement against ever challenging resource pressures is acknowledged.

A special thanks to Miss Seeley for all her hard work and commitment in maintaining the high standards within the office, and to Miss Kathy Evans who has been a key support to the governing body in her first academic year as clerk.

Also a special thank you to Mrs Anwen Maher for continuing to support our families and for establishing positive relationships with outside agencies to ensure the needs of staff, parents and pupils are met.

Thank you also to Mrs Rhian Jones for her continued support to Ysgol y Foryd as our 'Supporting Improvement officer' this year.

The staff and pupils are also to be massively congratulated and thanked for another successful year.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the school and those individuals for the following well deserved North Wales school award nominations:

- *Primary School of the Year*
- *Teacher of the Year - Mrs N Williams*
- *Support Worker of the Year - Mrs Maher*