



"United we, Empower, Nurture and Challenge."

"Wrth uno mae'n ein arfogi i feithrin a herio."

Blackwood Primary School Ysgol Gynradd Coed Duon

Governing Body Annual Report to Parents 2023-2024 Adroddiad Blynyddol y Llywodraethwyr i Rieni 2023-2024

Governing Body Annual Message to Parent/Carers of Blackwood Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the 2023-24 Blackwood Primary Governors Annual Report to Parents. It has been another busy year at school, with lots to celebrate and write about.

Over the last academic year, teaching staff at Blackwood Primary have continued to further embed Blackwood Primary's Inspire curriculum, ensuring that it fully meets the needs of all learners. The Inspire curriculum fully supports the Curriculum for Wales four purposes supporting pupils to become ambitious capable and lifelong learners, enterprising and creative, informed citizens, healthy and confident individuals.

The school has once again delivered as a Regional Partner school, for the fourth year in a row with a focus on Early Years (Nursery-Year 2), Global Futures/International Languages, Leadership and Teaching (Professional Learning). As a lead school for Cardiff Metropolitan University, Blackwood Primary is dedicated in supporting professional learning for students through the Initial Teacher Education Programme. Students are welcomed throughout the school from both Cardiff Metropolitan University and University of South Wales to work alongside our staff.

In June the School was awarded the prestigious accreditation of 'The Heart of the Community' silver award, in recognition of its commitment to developing and elevating community engagement.

Monday morning family engagement sessions became even more popular this year, deepening that relationship between school and parents and helping to support attendance initiatives. The parent/carer forum was also fully launched providing an opportunity to appoint representatives for each year group and to provide feedback to school. One great example of the success of this forum, was the suggestion to use the mini-Police to encourage responsible parking outside school. Pupil voice has also remained strong this year with the pupils having an impact on setting school targets and being involved in making our uniform policy more accessible for all. We ended the school year with some lovely sports days where it was wonderful to see the children supporting their houses along with a return of the parent race! Our summer fete, organised by the wonderful F@B, proved very popular, with a great turnout.

The Governing Body would like to thank all staff at the school for all their relentless hard work and for the achievement of another successful year.



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School information

Blackwood Primary is a local authority maintained primary school within Caerphilly County Borough Council and the school sits within the Islwyn region, working in a cluster with Blackwood Comprehensive School and five other primary schools – Cefn Fforest, Fleur-de-Lys Primary, Libanus, Markham and Pengam. At Blackwood Primary school we share a commitment to the development of the whole child. Our total class count of pupils, as of 30th April 2024, was 406, which includes nursery provision. For the 23-24 academic year, Blackwood Primary School had 14 classes comprising of a mixed year 2/3 across three forms, and a two-form entry for all other year groups (Nursery AM and PM are counted as one class). Nearly all children come from non-Welsh speaking families and, as of 30 April 2024, 5.17% of pupils used English as an additional language. 31% of our children were eligible for free school meals (Y1-Y6). Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) have their needs met through either universal or targeted support in line with the new Welsh Government ALN Act.

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive primary school family, supporting and encouraging all our staff and pupils to achieve their potential. We ensure all stakeholders have a voice in decision making and have the opportunity to improve all aspects of school life. We aim to ensure that everyone has the same chances and opportunities irrespective of race, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, class or disability. We believe that by working together and consulting with all our stakeholders, everyone feels valued and included - a key factor for school improvement. Our school mission statement continues to be 'United we, Empower, Nurture and Challenge, Wrth uno mae'n ein arfogi i feithrin a herio.' We strive in all aspects of school life to be a continuous, self-improving learning community, aiming for excellence in all we do.

The school prospectus can be found at [Prospectus / Prosbectws | Blackwood Primary School](#)



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Curriculum

Blackwood Primary continues to be reflective and is proud of the Inspire Curriculum which meets the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales and national priorities. In September 2023 in person events were held at school on the INSPIRE curriculum, as part of the 'Meet the Teacher' days. Blackwood Primary's INSPIRE curriculum has been designed with the involvement of all key stakeholders. The four purposes are fully reflected in the design to ensure that our learners are ambitious, enterprising, ethical and healthy citizens. Health and wellbeing is a priority and learning environments at our school have been designed with this in mind. Further information for parents can be found at [Our INSPIRE Curriculum / Ein Cwricwlwm INSPIRE | Blackwood Primar](#)

Term Dates – reporting year 2023-2024

Term	Term Begins	Half Term Begins	Half Term Ends	Term Ends
Autumn 2023	Friday 1 st September 2023	Monday 30 th October 2023	Friday 3 rd November 2023	Friday 22 nd December 2023
Spring 2024	Monday 8 th January 2024	Monday 12 th February 2024	Friday 16 th February 2024	Friday 22 nd March 2024
Summer 2024	Monday 8 th April 2024	Monday 27 th May 2024	Friday 31 st May 2024	Friday 19 th July 2024

Session Times

- Foundation Phase & Key Stage 2: 8:55am – 3:00pm
- Nursery: AM session, 8:55am - 11:15am PM session: 12:40pm - 3:00pm

Inset Days

As outlined in the National Professional Learning Entitlement, Blackwood Primary School supports the professional learning of all staff to further develop reflective, enquiring and collaborative education professionals and a culture of mutual responsibility in relation to professional learning. Time allocated to INSET is used effectively to develop staff within the context of schools as learning organisations. The INSET sessions at Blackwood Primary School may take place on the school premises, off site via a variety of online mediums, or using prior worked Twilight sessions. Professional learning for staff is linked to school priorities as detailed in the school development plan as well as covering the mandatory training required. INSET sessions in 2023/2024 focused on further development of the Curriculum for Wales and ALN reform.



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Our Governing Body and Terms of Office

The Governing Body and the Headteacher share responsibility for the strategic management of the school. Whilst the Governing Body provides strategic leadership, challenge, and support, the Headteacher is responsible for internal organisation, management, and control of the school. The full Governing Body meets at least once a term, usually more frequently. In addition, sub-committees meet to discuss specific issues and report back to the Governing Body on a regular basis. School and LA policies are reviewed by the Governing Body each term on a rolling basis.

Type of Governor	Name
Clerk to Governors	Mr Lewis John
Headteacher / Pennaeth	Mrs Karen Davies
Community Gov appointed by GB / Cymunedol, penodwyd gan BLI	Rev Andy Baker 10/02/2027 Mr Philip Diamond 05/07/2025 Mrs Catherine Ashcroft 13/10/2025 (Chair)
LA Appointed / Penodwyd gan yr ALI	Mr Richard Wilks (Vice-chair) Rev Heulwen Rees
Parent Representative / Cynrychiolydd Rhiant	Mr Chris Owen 06/11/2026 Mrs Kirstin Shuker 21/03/2028 Mr Mark Conant 27/06/2026 Ms Amy Osborne 27/06/2026
Minor Authority / Man Awdurdod	Mrs Donna Box 07/02/2028
Staff Representative / Cynrychiolydd Staff	Mrs Kelly Morgan 18/05/2026
Teacher Representative /Cynrychiolydd Athrawon	Ms Kathy Lohmus 16/05/2026
Observers	Mrs Claire Milton Miss Gemma Jones

Parent Governor Vacancies

When a vacancy for a parent governor becomes available, invitations for nominations will be sent home with every pupil and balloting will take place in accordance with statutory requirements.

Parent Meetings with the Governing Body

It is important that parents are able to engage with governing bodies on issues that matter to them, and parents may request up to three meetings in any school year with a governing body, on matters which are of concern to them. Further advice on this is available on the Welsh Government's website at: <https://gov.wales/parent-meetings-guidance-governing-bodies>. There were no parental petitions for meetings in the 2023-2024 academic year. To contact the Chair of Governors or the Clerk, please write to the school at Blackwood Primary School, Apollo Way, Blackwood, NP12 1WA or email blackwoodprimary@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk marked for the attention of the Chair of Governors.



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Governor Interaction

This year, our governors have been hands on in school through a variety of activities including class tasks, assemblies, concerts and STEM activities. Here are some examples of this:

Assemblies

The end of another busy year! We began in the Autumn term with a whole school Harvest assembly, giving thanks for all the gifts God gives us and for all that surrounds us. The story of the two young fish who didn't know what water was- taught us to open our eyes and use our senses to notice all the wonderful things in our world.

Remembrance Day brought us together to think about not only what it means but also to remember the families of service men and women who are posted throughout the world to serve. Some service children went with their families to different countries while others stayed in this country while their parents served in war zones and were away for many months at a time.

At Christmas we had a very active Christingle service which involved everyone joining in, singing the words of the Christingle song to the tune of "Frere Jacques" and of course doing the actions- standing up, sitting down turning around, nodding heads, smiling and having a lot of fun!



Easter brought a whizz through the Easter story and what it means to us and the receiving of palm crosses which are usually given out on Palm Sunday.

Finally, we gathered together to look back at the wonderful times we have had this year and as the pupils look forward to new classes, new schools, new challenges and making the right choices.

(Rev. Heulwen Rees)



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STEM

Our STEM link governor gave an interactive presentation to Key Stage 2 pupils about the water cycle and setting a challenge to keep the plants in the school grounds hydrated over the summer. Each year group then went away and developed their own methods of answering the brief. Our STEM link governor took part with Year 5 pupils where they used BBC Micro Bits to create soil moisture sensors and automated watering devices to keep the allotments watered over the summer months.

Year 6 – Ecosystems & Conflict

Our STEM link governor held a series of sessions with Year 6 pupils in November linking engineering and science in response to their topic of Ecosystems & Conflict that the pupils were studying. Sessions over 4 weeks looked at:



Session 1 – Ecosystems – Setting the Scene

Session 2 – Ecosystems & Dams

Session 3 – Dam Engineering

Session 4 – Effects on ecosystems of dam failure

Throughout the sessions, the pupils explored what is an ecosystem, examples of different types and what types of conflict there may be. We explored through interactive computer programmes, ecosystem evolution and the effects of introducing different species. We then went on to introduce dams on ecosystems. Different types of dams were explored and we built various types out of clay and wood and tested them to destruction.



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Year 5 Cooking

On Governors' training day I met with the team of cooks in year 5 (soon to be year 6's). I'm sure I was more nervous than they were! The team had allocated a head chef ("chef de cuisine") who organised, supervised and helped in the cooking task. The kitchen area was hygienically prepared, hands washed thoroughly, and equipment selected. Then the most fascinating discussion took place. Before I'd arrived, they had selected a recipe to use – but then after discussion they changed their minds and chose another one. They decided to cook "breakfast muffins", but with a difference. The original recipe had included peppers, but as none



were available, they thought this wasn't an essential ingredient and they could substitute it by adding more cheese or bacon. Then the weighing, mixing and cooking began. Ingredients were accurately measured; bacon was fried on the hob, then chopped, while other team members grated cheese, cracked eggs, and whisked the ingredients together. The oven was turned on to the required temperature, the muffin tin greased and warmed – in preparation for the mixture. After all the ingredients were prepared and then whisked together, the mixture was poured into the individual tin moulds and cooked in the oven. The team then discussed what would be their

choice for a side dish. Some opted for a wrap, filled with baked beans, or toast with baked beans while I chose just to have the muffin with a "side" of baked beans. The only slight "hiccup" was the time the muffins took to cook. The team were very patient testing the muffins, until they pronounced that the golden-brown muffins were cooked all the way through. The best bit came next. The dish was served, and we all ate! I was so impressed by this team of capable confident cooks. Afterwards they said that the cooking time needed to be longer and that they were looking forward to using and adapting more recipes to cater for different tastes and extending their skills. "Seren Aur!!!"



Rev. Heulwen Rees



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School Attendance

Attendance remains a school priority. We have a full time Family Liaison Officer who focuses on prioritising attendance levels within school, working in collaboration with the Headteacher, Wellbeing lead and the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer. The Governing Body reviews attendance throughout the year and is pleased to see the active role that pupil leadership take to contribute towards this priority.

Pupil Numbers on Roll

Class	April Class Count 2024
Nursery	64
Reception	45
Year 1	51
Year 2	43
Year 3	37
Year 4	65
Year 5	47
Year 6	54
Total	406



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Financial statement 2023/2024

OLAS	OUTTURN BUDGET 2023/2024
<u>EMPLOYEES</u>	£
Teachers	1,091,792.73
Support Staff	563,365.36
Other Staff related costs	164,952.22
<i>Sub Total</i>	1,820,110.31
<u>PREMISES RELATED</u>	
Building Maintenance	41,025.91
Gas	33,791.41
Electricity	28,518.43
Rates	29,869.05
Water	6,621.25
Cleaning Contract	34,299.55
Cleaning Materials	2,624.29
Refuse Collection	9,974.56
Insurance	9,357.23
S.Units/H. Driers/C. Hygiene	1,778.94
Fire Fixtures	166.60
CCTV	1,045.00
Alarms	2,696.01
<i>Sub Total</i>	201,768.23
<u>SUPPLIES & SERVICES</u>	
Computer Costs	11,967.72
Furniture	3,625.31
Postage	14.40
Capitation/Stationary	51,265.73
Medical	361.65
Licences	775.79
Music Support Services	5,962.40
Telephone Charges	695.25
Photocopying	11,041.48
Transport Hire / Swimming	5,075.03
Uniform/Protective clothing	67.98
Activities / Trips	31,549.61
School Meals/Catering	1,273.49
<i>Sub Total</i>	123,675.84
<u>SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS</u>	
All Services	33,709.73
<u>SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u>	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,179,264.11

<u>INCOME</u>	
Reimbursement School Meals	15,895.69
Supply Compensation	14,443.20
LA Income	73,280.69
Miscellaneous	24,995.06
Secondment	73,556.73
Donations	315.15
EIG/PDG Funding	270,022.00
Grant Funding	135,736.90
GTC & other training grants	47,236.21
Early Years Funding	22,106.70
TOTAL INCOME	677,588.33
<u>NET EXPENDITURE</u>	1,501,675.78
<u>TOTAL SURPLUS/CONTINGENCY</u>	329,250.19
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,830,925.97

TOTAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOL

<u>FUNDING</u>	
Formula Allocation (net of retro. adj)	1,462,157.41
Retrospective Adjustment from prev yr.	17,849.91
Total Formula Allocation	1,480,007.32
Total Carried Forward from prev. yr.	350,918.65
TOTAL FUNDING	1,830,925.97
<u>BUDGET SHORTFALL</u>	

Note: there were no payments made to governors for expenses. A gift was made to school through the PTFA. They had no business interests.



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Provision of and cleaning of school toilets and services

School toilets are cleaned daily at the end of the school day. Toilets are checked by staff and hygiene and cleaning issues are dealt with on a needs-led basis throughout the day. Facilities for disabled staff and pupils exist in the school.

Blackwood Primary School is proud to be part of the Welsh Government Period Dignity Plan. We have free period products available for pupils if required. We ensure that our toilets have accessible period products for anyone who needs them.

School Development Plan – Priorities 2023-24

2023/2024	Priority <i>Blaenoriaeth</i>
1	Leadership at all levels is recognised, supported and developed through professional learning opportunities which empower and challenge the Blackwood Primary Family to accurately evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development.
2	To continually review Blackwood Primary's Inspire curriculum so that it prepares the pupils to become independent, confident, innovative, healthy creative and ethical. Internal and external collaboration throughout the school and cluster will support a curriculum that is developmental and progressive enabling learners to build skills and competence through clear intrinsic assessment processes to meet the needs of the learners.
3	Blackwood Primary schools' culture promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, mental, emotional, physical and cultural development. The ALN reform and wellbeing and equity procedures and practices develop school processes to identify and support learners and families.



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Welsh Language Provision Datblygu'r Iaith Cymraeg



Blackwood Primary is committed to improving the confident use of Welsh within school and the Criw Cymraeg worked hard to support the achievement of this during the year. For example, by holding a special assembly to share their targets with the school, giving out Tocyn Iaith rewards to pupils that regularly speak Welsh in class and updating the Welsh displays around the school.

Once again they helped to make this year's St David's Day / Dydd Gwyl Dewi celebrations a success, where certificates were awarded for challenges set in different categories such as cooking and creative tasks. All year groups have a 'Cwtsh Cymraeg' where Welsh books, magazines, dictionaries, language mats and activities are incorporated to make Welsh learning fun.



Healthy Eating, Drinking and Living

Blackwood Primary works hard to promote the importance of good nutrition and healthy eating and drinking. Pupils are asked to bring only healthy food and drink into school and water and milk is readily available to all pupils throughout the day. A daily healthy snack is available for a small fee of £1 per week and all pupils are encouraged to take up the offer of Free School Meals which has been available for all year groups at Blackwood Primary from September 2023.

Healthy living is embedded within Blackwood's Inspire curriculum, for example, vegetable growing in the school allotments, nutritious cooking activities, forest school, outdoor learning, weekly PE sessions and cycle safety training. A range of extra-curricular activities that promote healthy living are also on offer to all pupils, such as after school cookery clubs, a wide range of sporting clubs and tournament opportunities that are available throughout the school year.

In January 2024, the school took part in the 'Count Me In Month' initiative, run by Caerphilly County Borough Council and Nesta, with the aim to encourage all pupils to enjoy a free school meal everyday. Parental drop-in sessions and a survey were used to gather feedback which was largely positive. A link to the report can be found here:

<https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/school-meals-count-me-in-month/>



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Extra-curricular clubs

Extra-curricular clubs were popular as ever this academic year with Cooking, Lego, STEM Yoga and the new Radio club proving popular as ever. Taekwando, Football and multi-sports were also delivered by external agencies. The Governing Body would like to extend a big thank you to the school for their work in offering these opportunities which help to stimulate pupils learning and improve social skills.

School Events & Community Engagement

Here are just some examples of the events and community engagement that the pupils have been involved with this year:

- Meet the teacher and Curriculum Design open day
- Whole school Charity Days – Children in Need, Red Nose Day,
- Rainbow Friday to celebrate diversity
- Anti-bullying week
- St David's Day celebrations
- Earth Day
- Celebration of Harvest, donating to local food banks



- World Book Day
- Whole school local library visits
- After school clubs including lego, craft, cooking
- Parent consultation and book-looks
- End of year Sports Presentation
- End of term Christmas sing-along
- Monday Family Zone sessions

The following PTA Events were held:

- Termly Disco's,
- Supper with Santa
- Inspirational Women's Day
- Inspirational Men's Day
- School Summer fete

PTA have also supported at other school events such as nursery fun day, sports presentation and the leavers assembly



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Trips, events and visits included:

- Nursery – Family fun day, nursery graduation
- Reception – Summer term visit to Collier's farm,
- Y1 – Autumn visit to St Fagan's National Museum, Spring trip to Llancaich Fawr, Summer trip to Colliers Farm
- Y2/3 – Spring term visit to St Fagans, Summer term trip to The Bristol Zoo Project
- Y4 – Spring term visit to Blackwood Library, Summer term trip to Folly Farm
- Y5 Autumn trip to Dwr Cymru Education Centre, PGL Brecon, intensive swimming course
- Y6 – Autumn trip to Swansea Museum, Spring Llangrannog residential stay, Summer trip to Oxford University, Y6 Leavers Concert and Disco
- Whole-school Christmas Pantomime trip to Blackwood Miners Institute

Sports Events

The school has had another excellent year of sporting achievements which culminated in a Sports Presentation Ceremony at the end of the year. Sporting events that pupils have taken part in include:

- Cross Country tournament
- Football tournaments
- Tennis events
- Rugby tournaments (contact and tag)
- Golf events
- Bowls events
- Duathlon event
- Netball tournament
- Athletics events
- Cricket events
- Athlete Visit



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Final Message

Pupil voice is integral to our success at Blackwood Primary School. Therefore, we would like to conclude this report with a message from our Pupil Leadership Team for the academic year 2023-24.

Message from the Head Girl & Head Boy

It's been a delightful experience being Head Boy and Head Girl throughout year 6 and we've really appreciated our time here. We have increased pupils' attendance massively through the school through the introduction of incentives and rewards and we have had a big influence on improving the presentation of our work as well as developing pupil voice. We have also given a presentation about our astonishing school to many head teachers and staff from different schools and countries such as The Netherlands. We would like to thank all the teachers, staff and pupils of Blackwood Primary School for everything that they have done to help us on our journey. We really enjoyed our time here at BPS. Many thanks from the head boy and girl.

Max and Zuzanna

Message from the Pupil Leadership Team

It has been an absolute pleasure working as Pupil Leadership in Blackwood Primary. We have been given responsibility for some jobs that we immediately worked on throughout the year. We will miss many people including the pupils and teachers. However, we are all looking forward to



comprehensive school and the challenges we will face there. We have achieved many things as Pupil Leadership Team including developing attendance rewards, our new dragon Enfys who represents our Inspire Curriculum and the Uniform swapshop. We have hosted a charity day event with events like a bake sale, mile run, a M&M raffle and an ice cream sale. The charity day was to raise money for Cancer Research. We will definitely miss our amazing teachers, our weekly assemblies doing the dance and doing presentations to the school/ governors and announcing the house points and weekly attendance. One of our best memories of being in the Pupil Leadership team were the challenges we have completed for the Staff and Headteacher this year. We particularly looked forward to our monthly meetings with Mrs Davies and even took our own minutes!

We are looking forward to helping to select the next Leadership Team and we wish them good luck for next year!

Max, Zuzanna, Jake, Jacob, Chloe, Sofia, Hollie, Hollie, Maizie, Oscar, Kai and Jack.



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