

# Gaer Primary School



## **Governor Annual Report to Parents 2023-2024**

*'Everyone achieving; learning in harmony'*  
*'Pawb yn cyflawni; dysgu mewn heddwch'*

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## SECTION ONE – GOVERNORS

### **1 Letter from the Chair of Governors**

#### **Letter from the Chair of Governors**

I hope that this report finds you all well.

The academic year of 2023-2024 was again full of wonderful opportunities and experiences for both our children and our community.

The Gaer and Maesglas Primary School Partnership has continued to grow from strength to strength. This collaboration between the schools has been pivotal to shaping our curriculum design as we move forward. We have also continued to engage effectively with a range of partners and our local community to shape the culture and ethos of Gaer Primary.

Together in partnership with Maesglas Primary, we have played a lead role in collaborating with other schools and colleagues from across the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our families for their support in ensuring that our children grasp the wealth of opportunities presented to them. Your support is always very much appreciated.

We are now looking forward to continued success in the academic year 2024-25.

Chairperson,

Mrs Barbara Williams

Mrs. Barbara Williams

## 2 Gaer and Maesglas Primary School Partnership Governing Body

Representative	Name	Elected or Appointed by	Term of Office Ends
Parents	Fiona Colcombe Stephen Fisher-Davies Saima Hamdard Cristina Obreja	Parents	07.12.25 07.12.25 07.12.25 07.12.25
Headteacher	Alex Smith	Ex Officio	N/A
Teacher Representatives	Claire McCarthy James Maloney	Teachers Teachers	23.11.25 23.11.25
Staff Representatives	Rebecca Johnston Anna Khan	Non -Teaching Staff Non -Teaching Staff	23.11.25 23.11.25
LA Appointed	Rob Gregory Councillor Stephen Marshall Councillor Beverley Perkins Councillor Dimitri Batrouni	Newport Education Authority	23.11.25 23.11.25 23.11.25 23.11.25
Community Governors	Beverley Flood Colin Jones Christopher Matthews Barbara Williams	Governing Body	08.12.25 08.12.25 08.12.25 08.12.25
Clerk to the Governors: Mr Dave Hutchings Education Achievement Services Tredomen Gateway	CF82 7EH Tel: 01443 864963/863155		
Chairperson: Mrs Barbara Williams Contact Information: Gaer Primary School or Maesglas Primary School (FAO Chair of Governors)			

## 3 Parent Governor Vacancies

When a vacancy arises on the governing body for a parent representative, the Local Authority will inform all parents of the vacancy and will make the necessary arrangements for the subsequent election. Every parent of a registered pupil at the school will be entitled to stand as a candidate and to vote at the election. Each parent will be provided with a letter via student post and a nomination form. The nomination form and personal statement must be returned to the school by the set date.

Elections will be held by secret ballot. The next scheduled election of Parent Governors is December 2025.

## 4 The Organisation of our Work

We are the body responsible for the education, welfare and well-being of everyone at Gaer Primary School. This is achieved via the professional services of the headteacher and the staff, with whom we have regular, formal and informal discussions. We receive, for example, regular reports relating to the standards pupils are achieving, the quality of teaching and the health and safety aspects of school life.

Our meetings begin with a presentation by members of staff or pupils on curriculum updates and various other initiatives undertaken at the school. Each governor is associated with a curriculum link area. We are involved in the continued development of the curriculum. Governors are committed to whole school self-evaluation. We watch lessons and conduct learning walks with the Senior Management Team. We also have a 'Standards Group' where we meet with the children to discuss and celebrate their learning. We also support the school on informal and formal occasions in its calendar of events.

The full Governing Body meets twice a term and, as necessary, the following committees hold their meetings: -

- ✓ Finance and Premises Panel
- ✓ Personnel and Staffing Panel
- ✓ Pay Review Panel (& Appeals Panel)
- ✓ Staff Appointments Panel
- ✓ Performance Management Review Panel (& Appeals Panel)
- ✓ Staffing Requests Panel
- ✓ Staff Grievance (& Appeals Panel)
- ✓ Staff Discipline and Dismissal Panel (& Appeals Panel)
- ✓ Complaints Panel (& Appeals Panel)
- ✓ Pupil Discipline and Exclusion Panel (& Appeals Panel)
- ✓ Policy Panel
- ✓ Health and Safety Panel

The committees discuss the detail of matters pertinent to their purpose, and report back to the full Governing Body at the next available full meeting for ratification of proposals or recommendations. To assist us in our work we have the opportunity to participate in a specialised programme of governor training, organised by the Education Achievement Service (EAS). The support and advice we regularly receive is greatly appreciated.

Many aspects of the school are discussed, including national and local issues. During full Governing Body meetings, the Headteacher Report details various activities and information about the school. The Headteacher also produces reports on matters of concern thought to be relevant. In addition, the Local Authority produces background papers and reports which receive the necessary attention. We can report that no governors claimed for travelling or subsistence expenses during the last year.

## 5 Review of Policies

The school considers and reviews major policy developments pertinent to the school. Policies are updated and redrafted regularly and, with Governing Body approval, formally adopted. They are

open to inspection by parents by prior arrangement with the school and many are available on the school website. When all policies have been updated to reflect the primary school, the Governing Body will follow a review timetable to ensure policies are reviewed and updated where necessary.

## SECTION TWO – SCHOOL INFORMATION

### 1 Term Dates

For the academic year 2023/24 term dates for pupils are as follows: -

Term	Start	Half Term starts	Half Term ends	Term ends
Autumn 2023	1 September	30 October	3 November	22 December
Spring 2024	8 January	12 February	16 February	22 March
Summer 2024	8 April 2024	27 May	31 May	19 July

For the academic year 2024/25 term dates for pupils are as follows: -

Term	Start	Half Term starts	Half Term ends	Term ends
Autumn 2024	2 September	28 October	1 November	20 December
Spring 2025	6 January	24 February	28 February	11 April
Summer 2025	28 April	26 May	30 May	21 July

Six additional training days will be arranged and included in the school calendar.

### 2 Session Times

School commences at 9.00a.m. (Reception-Year 2), 9.00a.m. (Year3-Year 6) and ends at 3.15 p.m (Reception-Year 2) and 3.20p.m. (Year 3-Year 6).

Lunch break is between 11.55 a.m. and 12.55 p.m. (Reception-Year 2) and between 12.40 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. (Year 3-Year 6). A 15-minute break is taken at 10.15am in (Reception-Year 2). A 25-minute break is taken at 10.30 a.m. in (Year 3-Year 6).

### 3 Prospectus Changes

The school publishes a prospectus annually. The prospectus is currently available from the school on request and is also be available on the school website.

### 4 School Status

Gaer Primary School is an English Medium Community School.

### 5 Welsh in School

Welsh is taught as a second language to all pupils. The school does not have provision for pupils to receive their education solely through the medium of Welsh. Our Cymraeg and Curriculum Cymraeg Policies detail how the Welsh language, culture and history are supported across the school. There

is a Welsh advisory teacher who supports this teaching throughout the school. Cluster arrangements are in place to ensure there is continuity of learning when pupils transfer from Primary to Secondary school. The main receiving secondary school is John Frost School.

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### Attendance 2023-24

During the academic year 2023-24 we continued to work in partnership with the Local Authority and Education Welfare Officer, to support families to ensure that the children are in school whenever possible.

### Improvement Plan Summary 2023-24

**Priority Outcome 1:** To raise standards in literacy:

1. AoLE team to deliver Voice 21/Writing Refresher and training.PL-27.09.23.
2. Lesson Observations-Voice 21/Short Burst Writing-Autumn 2023 w/c 27.11.23
3. To continue to embed and implement RWI Phonics scheme across the school.
4. To implement RWI parent workshops in the Autumn Term with Reception parents.
5. To lead progression meetings internally across Gaer/Maesglas Partnership
6. To review and update high quality shared text overview to include Reading and Oracy opportunities.
7. To ensure that vulnerable readers make good progress
8. To effectively track English and LLC across the school
9. Listening to Learners; Book Scrutiny
10. To revisit an approach to making 'MFL' a high focus.
11. To keep up to date regarding the Curriculum for Wales and National/ International developments
12. To refine 'Individual Writing Targets' across the school
13. To provide effective transition opportunities in LLC provision from Year 2 to Year 3.
14. To embed the new format for 'GGR' in the Foundation Phase to align with RWI 'Reading Leader' folder.
15. To allow for a more independent approach to writing.

**Priority Outcome 2:** To raise standards in numeracy:

1. Embed shared vision for Maths and Numeracy
2. The learning environment to reflect the high status of Maths and Numeracy
3. Refresh all TAPAS Boards (newly purchased in Summer 2023)
4. Invest in new maths resources to support our vision
5. Embed the 'Four Mathematics' PL (planning and delivery)
6. Investigate maths/numeracy experiences to support curriculum development
7. Adaptive test data to be used to inform groupings and intervention Autumn 2023
8. Preparation for Diagnostic Personalised Tests
9. Listening to Learners; Book Scrutiny 11.12.23; 12.07.24
10. Continue to implement Maths Alive
11. TAPAS Warm Up PL across the partnership Autumn 2023-20.09.23 and 15.11.23
12. Embed approach to book set up and how to record learning
13. Targeted intervention across the school
14. Undertake Maths Across the Curriculum Lesson Observations - w/c 05.02.24
15. Lead Maths Progression Meetings across the GPS/MPS Partnership 30.11.22
16. To reinforce high expectations for AfL processes in maths/numeracy
17. To keep up to date regarding curriculum development
18. Deliver parental workshops
19. Engage with EAS Lead skills in Mathematics

**Priority Outcome 3:** To support and strengthen health and wellbeing (HWB) for all learners through:

1. To embed new Jigsaw Platform to underpin social, emotional and mental wellbeing pedagogy
2. To implement ELSA intervention
3. To embed the changes aligned to the RSE legislation and Health and wellbeing AoLE
4. To further improve attendance levels
5. To reduce the impact of poverty on learners' progression and attainment
6. Increased contribution of pupil voice with a focus on school improvement
7. To embed the Nurturing Schools Programme Principles
8. To embed Edukey, OPP with targets, OPP for all pupils and new format for ALN Files
9. To further enhance our 'Family Learning Project'
10. To develop a whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing (WSA EMWB)
11. To embed 'Gaer Values'
12. To embed 'Health and Wellbeing' teaching and learning as part of curriculum design
13. To embed the PASS (Pupil Attitude to School and Self) Survey to inform wellbeing interventions
14. To fully refurbish KS2 toilets

**Priority Outcome 4:** To develop a greater collaborative community focus through:

1. Extending effective use of ICT to communicate with all stakeholders.
2. Ascertaining the views of the community in respect of 'Curriculum Design'
3. Further developing cluster working (A particular focus on cross phase pedagogy aligned to CfW)
4. Developing partnerships/links with community/business/industry links to provide the

experiences, skills and knowledge necessary to fulfil the new curriculum

6. Developing a comprehensive ‘Family Engagement Programme’
7. Continuing to develop an effective partnership with Maesglas Primary
8. Initiating a more strategic approach to World of Work
9. Engaging with Heart of the Community Award

**Priority Outcome 5:** To develop the learning, leadership and procedural systems through:

3. To implement PL activities aligned to the SLO Self- Evaluation Toolkit recommendations
4. To continue to refine pedagogy aligned to Curriculum for Wales vision and design principles
5. To continue to develop excellent ‘Cluster Working’
6. To embed vision for ICT/DCF
7. To update annual policies and upload to website
8. To further develop the role of the GB
9. To implement a self-evaluation timetable/format
10. To pilot thematic projects, experiences and opportunities as part of the curriculum design process
11. To embed role of AoLE teams across the partnership
12. To embed Performance Management processes aligned to the National Teaching and Leadership Standards
13. To further develop our ‘Assessment and Progression Strategy’
14. To undertake collaborative role as a ‘Partner School’ (Wellbeing, Welsh Second Language, Maths, PL)
15. To raise standards in bilingualism across the school
16. To undertake the role as ‘Lead Partnership School’ USW
17. To embed consistent medium and short term planning formats, aligned to Curriculum for Wales
18. To introduce a consistent approach to professional enquiry/research projects across the partnership
19. To initiate an approach to ‘Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning’ (DARPL)
20. To improve the learning environment across the school
21. To revise and share a new ‘Teaching and Learning Handbook’

## **Organisation of the Curriculum**

At Gaer Primary School, we offer a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum to all children. The class teacher will monitor each child’s progress very carefully, and our aim is to ensure that each child achieves his or her full potential, whatever his or her ability.

In line with the Learning to Learn agenda, we acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. Lessons cater for a range of learning styles – audio, visual, kinaesthetic – and staff are aware that most learners draw from a combination of styles.

At Gaer Primary School, learning embraces a project-based approach to learning aligned to Curriculum for Wales. We have designed our dynamic and evolving curriculum in consultation with all stakeholders and our cluster schools.

At Gaer Primary we adopt a thematic/Project approach which enables our children to:

- make genuine links between areas of the curriculum
- enjoy learning that is linked to children's experiences and surroundings
- have a pupil voice – harvesting the attitudes, values skills, knowledge and understanding that the children would like to learn about the theme/project.
- Undertake learning that has a balance of subject knowledge, skills and application
- enjoy learning that is personalised to groups and individuals
- use Assessment for Learning and Learning to Learn implicitly in teaching and learning
- be inspire learners - linked to home learning
- enjoy themed days/weeks to revisit learning & apply skills

Our projects for the year were 'Welcome to the World' and 'Cynefin' and 'Transition Bridging Units'. Our learning also includes 'Back to Basics' weeks which enables our children to set up and establish existing and new routines very quickly. Throughout the year we use 'Learning to Learn' tools- Building Learning Power; De Bono's Thinking Hats, Thinking Maps and Growth Mindset as initiatives to inspire the children, create a common language of learning and prioritise the 'Learning to Learn' agenda.

## **Additional Learning Needs**

At Gaer Primary School we aim to build an inspiring community through teamwork, trust and respect; providing a fun and safe environment where we all achieve.

### **Equalities**

Gaer Primary School is an inclusive school, where all children and staff are valued equally, and our similarities and differences are recognised and celebrated. Every child, regardless of race, creed, age, gender or disability has access to the curriculum at a level appropriate to their individual needs, in order that every child may experience success and satisfaction through their participation in learning.

Children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) include:

- Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- More Able and Talented children (MAT)
- Children Looked After (CLA)
- Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Travellers, refugees
- Young carers

### **Our Aims and Objectives**

- To identify and address the variety of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) recognised at any and every stage of education, and to work in partnership with parents and other agencies, to meet these needs in the most appropriate, positive and effective manner.
- To ensure that children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) receive the variety of learning opportunities which are offered to all children, including maximum possible access to statutory education.
- To ensure that all children are appropriately challenged / supported and that their learning objectives are clear and unambiguous.

### **Provision for children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

- Children who are identified as having Additional Learning Needs are given extra support where necessary in order for the individual to achieve their full potential;
- Class teachers and teaching assistants meet the needs of the children identified as having Special Educational Needs and who require an Individual Development Plan and Action Plan
- Visual timetables, workstations and adapted equipment are some of the strategies used to support children with ASD.
- Children who are identified as Most Able or Talented may require individually differentiated learning and are supported to become self-directed learners of an enriched and extended curriculum;
- Children with English as an Additional Language, (EAL) and asylum-seeking children are supported by GEMSS, in liaison with the class teachers;
- Children who are being 'Looked After' (CLA) require a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and are supported by the various involved agencies in partnership with the school;
- Teachers employ a variety of teaching and learning strategies and styles, including multi-sensory approaches, enquiry-based learning, problem solving, thinking skills and the development of independent learning skills, in accordance with the Building Learning Power (BLP) mindset, thinking hats and thinking maps
- All planning is inclusive, based on differentiated targets, with objectives reflecting the needs of all children, in accordance with Individual Development Plans (IDPs) & Action Plans, Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs) and individual learning targets;
- All children are actively involved in the target setting and reviewing process and are encouraged to become reflective practitioners;
- All children have access to a wide range of enrichment activities, such as our extra-curricular activities and clubs; residential visits in Key Stage 2; access to outside experts e.g. artists, sports, subject specific; competitions; musical and other contributions to assemblies, concerts and the annual Eisteddfod.

#### Child and Parental Involvement:

We aim to work in partnership with all parents and will strive to create positive working relationships. We are aware that this partnership will have a crucial bearing on the child's educational progress. Our school values the unique knowledge and information parents provide, and recognise that the most effective provision will be made when the parents are actively involved.

The school provides information about the Additional Learning Needs Policy on the school website. This details the school's policy and practice in identification, assessment provision, monitoring and record keeping of Additional Learning Needs. The school's Additional Learning Needs policy is available to parents.

The school also recognises the important and relevant contributions which children can make in formulating plans for their own educational provisions and aims to actively involve children with Additional Learning Needs in such processes as appropriate.

#### Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) if he/she has a learning difficulty which requires special educational provision to be made. A child is said to have a learning difficulty if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty than the majority of pupils of the same age or has a disability which

prevents or hinders them from making best use of the facilities normally available to pupils within the area. There are six classifications of educational difficulty recognised, namely:

- Learning;
- Sensory impairment- visual;
- Sensory impairment- hearing;
- Physical;
- Medical;
- Speech, language and communication;
- Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD).

The earlier the child's educational needs are identified, assessed and action is taken, the more responsive the child is likely to be and the more successful the outcome. To assist in the early identification of children with special educational needs the school makes use of appropriate screening and assessment mechanisms. Assessment is a continuing process and information transfers both within the school, when the child moves from one class to another and from school to school. To give specific help to children who have special educational needs, the school adopts a staged response. This approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and where necessary brings increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing.

## **Opportunities and Links with the Community**

### ***Communication***

The school has fully embraced opportunities to utilise digital technology to improve links between home and school. We have again invested in Parents2Teachers-a texting service enabling us to swiftly inform all parents at the push of a button. Parentpay allows parents to make online payments and not have to worry about 'having the correct money on a Monday morning'! The website provides up to date information. Twitter is used to celebrate exciting learning at Gaer Primary. Newsletters and letters are distributed to parents.

### ***Family Engagement***

At Gaer Primary School we have enjoyed learning alongside our parents and families for several years. During the academic year 2023-24 our bespoke 'Family Learning' programme was a huge success. It is wonderful to see our children, joined by family members, enjoying learning together.

### ***Music Matters***

Our children have been able to receive workshops from both Gwent Music and Upbeat. Our children from Reception-Y2 undertake the 'Strings project' in partnership with Gwent Music.

### ***PTA***

The excellent work previously undertaken by the PTA was again apparent in the academic year 2023-24. The PTA undertake much appreciated work on behalf of our school to both fundraise and give our children a wealth of opportunities.

### ***Police Liaison***

The 'School Beat' Programme 2023-24 provides an invaluable service to our school. Our partnership collaboration with the police is very good.

## **Toilet Facilities**

Toilets:

- 46 pupil toilets
- 1 pupil disabled toilet
- 2 pupil urinals
- 6 adult toilets
- 1 urinal

Toilets are available across both of the school buildings. Other than in nursery and reception children are encouraged to use the toilet facilities during break or lunch time periods. Toilets are cleaned by the school cleaners daily and are inspected by the Caretaker and Headteacher.

## **Healthy Eating and Drinking**

The school has continued to promote healthy eating and drinking messages as part of our 'Healthy Schools' approach. All children are encouraged to eat a healthy morning snack and to drink water at desks. Chartwells are our catering contractors-they present a healthy menu.

## **Sport Provision**

Our partnership work with Newport County in the Community, Newport Gwent Dragons and Newport Live has again provided a wealth of opportunities for our children.

## **Training Days 2023-2024**

Training Days - 6

01.09.23  
02.10.23  
22.12.23  
09.01.24  
24.06.24  
19.07.24

Signed: Mrs Barbara Williams

Chair of Governors

## Appendix 1

<b>Gaer Primary</b>		
<b>Financial Statement for Year Ending 31st March 2024</b>		
<b>2022/23</b>		<b>2023/24</b>
<b>Outturn</b>		<b>Outturn</b>
£		£
1,192,000	<b>Employees</b>	1,271,358
472,482	Teachers	
35,927	Support Staff	533,916
19,293	Caretakers	35,344
41,520	Midday Supervisors	21,251
	Cleaners	40,017
	<b>Other Employee Costs</b>	
24,352	Supply Insurance Premium	26,482
515,293	Agency Staff	304,827
0	Lunch Time Meal Entitlement	0
0	Foreign Language Assistants	0
0	Exam Invigilators	0
0	Advertising	0
0	Interview Expenses	0
0	Misc Employee Costs	272
	<b>Energy</b>	
26,039	Gas	72,145
14,455	Electricity	37,219
0	Oil	0
108,141	<b>Capitation and ICT</b>	62,028
0	<b>SCC, EIG and PDG Expenditure</b>	0
	<b>Premises Related</b>	
673	Hire of Facilities	673
22,336	Rates	24,058
12,126	Building Maintenance and Alarm Lines	25,699
32,858	Grounds Maintenance	12,893
5,097	Water	13,363
0	Building Cleaning Contract	0
4,007	Refuse Collection	6,256
21,448	Miscellaneous Premises	11,296
	<b>Communications</b>	
0	Postage/Fax/Telex	0
3,977	Telephones	3,181
	<b>Transport</b>	

0	Vehicle Maintenance	0
0	Purchase of Vehicles	0
2,510	Vehicle Hire	2,030
35	Car Allowance	11
970	Travel Expenses	602

0	<b>Exam Fees</b>	0
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	<b>External Courses</b>	
5,125	School Funded Training	1,758
0	Alternative Curriculum Provision	0
0	Sixth Form	0

61,324	<b>Central Services</b>	78,760
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	<b>Income</b>	
0	Lettings	0
-3,500	Sales Income	-4,900
-2,232	Music Service Income	0
-472	Donations	-8,880
0	Miscellaneous	-183
-46,360	Supply	-70,931
0	Exam Fees	0
-675	Interest	-1,631
0	Rental Income	0
0	EIG	0
0	PDG/EYPDG	0
0	Energy Compensation	0
0	Coaching Fees	0
-431,089	Other Grant and Contributions	-466,473
0	Reserve Transfer	0
0	After Schools Club	0

2,137,662	<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	2,032,441
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1,927,971	<b>Total Funding</b>	2,037,435
-209,691	In Year Surplus / Deficit	4,994
275,986	Prior Year Surplus / Deficit	66,296
66,296	<b>Accumulated Surplus / Deficit c/fwd</b>	71,289
3.44%	Balance as % of Funding	3.50%