



Minutes FGB Meeting 14.11.23

Present - Ceri Littlewood, Nerys Sales, Barrie Lewis, Heather Holder, Amanda Moore, Paige Baldwin, Lowri George, Janine Burr, Nia Vaughan, Damian Faulkner, Jack Shaw.

Apologies - Lyn Walters, Martin Smidman, Paige Baldwin.

Non attendees - Ian Williams, Matthew Jones.

2. To confirm the minutes of the FGB Housekeeping Meeting held on 18.7.23

For Information	To be Actioned
Agreed by FGB present.	Agreed

3. To confirm minutes of the Curriculum Meeting held on 27.9.23 and Finance on 11.10.23

For Information	To be Actioned
Agreed by FGB present.	Agreed

4. Matters Arising

For Information	To be Actioned
None	Noted

5. To receive the Report of the Director of Education

For Information	To be Actioned
1. Message	1. For Information
2. Education Outrun	2. For Information
3. Guidelines for Calculating Annual Leave for term time support staff	3. Adopted
4. Discretions Policy	4. Adopted
5. Early retirement, Ill health retirement and redundancy policy	5. Adopted
6. Flexible retirement policy	6. Adopted
7. Education engagement team CPT	7. For Information
8. Update from Group Manager Education and Family Support	8. For Information
9. School Support Update	9. For Information
10. School Modernisation	10. For Information
11. Improving School Attendance	11. For Information

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12. Food and Fun 13. Update from learner support team 14. Corporate Learning and Development 15. Fixed Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence 16. Governor Training Discussion was held around Child Protection Training and recommendation was made that all governors book a slot to attend as there have recently been some amendments. Training for safeguarding is not mandatory but it is highly recommended. The chair is already booked on to the designated CPT course.	12. For Information 13. For Information 14. For Information 15. For Information 16. For information Governors should email Ceri Littlewood with their preferred date from the options available in the directors report.
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6. To receive the report of the Headteacher.

For Information	To be Actioned
The full report is available in the drive for viewing, the headlines are as follows; School Development, Performance and Curriculum The School Improvement Partner, Simon Roberts, visited the school during October and met with the Senior Leadership Team and the Criw Cymraeg. During his visit, SLT discussed the SIP and PDG grant funding. Highlights of Simon's report Welsh - A learning walk was carried out by CriwCymraeg and Simon was very happy with the outcome, the findings of this are included in the main report. School Priorities - Discussion was held around all priorities as listed in the report, the cluster is very strong and shares many ideas and successes. A PDG project is underway allowing children to develop life-skills where they learn to cook. The school uses its PDG very positively and this should be shared. - Claire Davies has supported FL – used playlists, play based learning, twelve principles of learning (Tina Bruce), play policy. Taking part in a CSC workshop. School considering non-maintained curriculum in Nursery and already using	Noted

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assessment resources. All the staff are enthusiastic. Developing this further. School very enthusiastic about impact.

- Maths - good links to CSC clusters. Use of WG tests shows high scores and progress. Y6 is especially strong.
- Looking at how to develop MAT and numeracy cross-curricular.
- Reading is not so strong, RA is good but standardised scores are less so. As a result, this is on the SDP for this year and return to guided group reading in older classes has started and use of literacy trees. Focus on this through training.

SDP

- Summary form from last year shows impact and is recorded well and this has been shared with parents.
- Milestones are clear within the current plan.
- Rationale is linked to SER from last year. Links to NR: EI and use of questions have been incorporated and evidence from monitoring is hyper-linked to the SDP to show progress.
- Distributed leadership can be seen in how CfW work has been delegated, resulting in good knowledge amongst staff. Accountability for this is clear, too, within the SDP
- Welsh and V21 Professional Learning are key focus areas within the plan.
- Role of Stakeholders and monitoring of well-being is clearly linked to this aspect of the SDP.
- LLC, numeracy and DCF focus are also clearly sign-posted and this will feature as scrutiny in future IP work.
- Focus of all is on embedding current good practice to enable time to be freed up to support staff Well-being - linked to HT MA project.

PDG programme

- Baby and toddler group and other school-based events.
- Developing community rooms – pop up uniform shops etc.
- Bigger presence in the community with Heronsbridge, children home etc. Also, healthy eating for parents and reading/numeracy events for parents. See comments above regarding cluster work.
- PDG lead has assessed vulnerable children.
- Any interventions run by FLO to address gaps. Life skills project with these children e.g., budgetary and healthy living.

- Governors commented that Simon's report was very positive and it was good to see so much going on in school that are recognised as excellent.
- Discussion held around the increase in FSM children, now 12%, along with the reasons for the increase.
- Discussion was held around the purpose and impact of the interventions being carried out, and how the school could move forward in this area.
- Following evaluation the FGB recognised the importance of the FEO, Outdoor Learning Officer and Wellbeing Champion within the school and congratulated the school on the level of engagement with all families.

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- Outdoor learning 3-6. Use of outdoor programmes with links to other schools. Links to enrichment activities.
- HT has achieved MA in leadership with a focus on well-being.

Assessment

- Pupil Progress profiles. These are well constructed and linked to learning dispositions and progress for writing, reading, well-being and numeracy. Links in testing scores. Developing this next for other AoLEs.
- Separate data package for vulnerable groups.
- Learning dispositions used with parents.
- New feedback and marking policy. Used critique from previous IP visit as an introduction to this work.

An update on Foundation Learning

Following a review of the Foundation Phase last year, it was agreed that the current provision could have been more conducive to the vision of Curriculum for Wales and our school curriculum. Foundation Learning is paramount as it sets the stage for a child's academic, social, and emotional development. It fosters essential skills, values, and attitudes that will serve as the building blocks for their future education and personal growth. Providing a strong foundation during this phase is crucial for creating well-rounded, capable individuals who are prepared to thrive in both their academic and personal lives.

During the summer term, changes were made which focused on developing the outdoor environment throughout the school, and there is now an outdoor wellbeing champion leading learning. SLT wants to develop classroom practice to maximise learning whilst reflecting the ethos of their new curriculum and foundation learning pedagogy.

On September 19th, the SLT met with Claire Davies Foundation Learning Practitioner for CSC to devise a plan to provide six days of support over two terms. It was agreed that all foundation learning practitioners would undertake the Welsh Government module on '[Play and play-based learning](#).'

An update on Attendance

The Assistant Head and Family Engagement Officer have worked closely with the admin team to target attendance.

The school promoted the Attendance Launch and promoted the video and pamphlets within the school newsletter and via email to parents.

- A governor asked if the school had to pay for the CSC training.

The Headteacher responded that it was free of charge, and that it was going really well, the next steps are that Claire will support individual staff with developing skills.

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The importance of attendance was discussed in classes and will be driven by the newly elected JLT and pupil voice candidates throughout the academic year.

Following the meeting, the cluster of schools has agreed to move to a consistent approach to tackling attendance. At Oldcastle, the Assistant Head will work with the Family Engagement Officer and admin team to continue to tackle attendance and punctuality. Termly letters will be sent to parents to highlight attendance/ punctuality. These letters will be sent out simultaneously as the cluster schools to demonstrate a consistent approach.

The Assistant Head and Family Engagement Officer meet regularly with the EWO to discuss children whose attendance is below 90%. During the meeting, children are discussed, and the next steps are planned, for example, a meeting with EWO involvement. Any children whose attendance continues to fall is then discussed with the EWO, and the relevant actions can be taken. The impact of this is that the Assistant Head or Family Engagement Officer has been able to discuss issues face-to-face with parents and often signpost the families to other services for help.

An update on ALN

The ALNCo has continued to work on implementing the new changes to Additional Learning Needs within the school through supporting staff and parents. This has ensured that all children get the best education and help both in school and at home.

The ALNCo has attended ALNCo forums with the Local Authority and Cluster lead meetings. This ensures that information is current and any key issues are addressed with all ALNCOs to ensure consistency within schools. The ALNCO has worked closely with the cluster ALNCOs to share good practices and resources and streamline processes across the cluster. This ensures that all children have consistent opportunities to ease the transition to comprehensive school.

The school currently has five pupils with Individual Development Plans (IDPs) and 24 pupils are mid referral for support.

- The ALN lead governor talked about a meeting held with the school's ALN coordinator and how surprised she was with the volume of paperwork and outside agencies involved with families going through this process. The schools ALNco is heavily involved in supporting these families.

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Pupil Voice Update

Pupil Voice has been thoughtfully incorporated in alignment with our school's model, demonstrating our commitment to fostering an inclusive educational environment. Pupils will actively engage in the school community, thereby asserting their voices and contributing to the decision-making processes that impact their educational experience. By empowering our pupils to have a say in shaping their educational journey, we aim to enhance their sense of ownership, responsibility, and engagement, ultimately fostering a more enriching and responsive learning environment.

Community Hub School Update

During this term, staff members have met with Neil Aubrey (BCBC), Adam Reymond (Acting head of Pencoed Primary) and Baobab Bach (Community Pantries and Gardens). The meetings aimed to devise a plan for moving the school forward as a community school. The focus for this term is to set up a Parent Baby and Toddler group organised by the FEO. Work with the Community Pantries to develop a school pantry to provide food at a low cost to parents in need. Work with Ty Peny Bont to grow vegetables that can be used to offer cooking classes for parents and have provided a uniform swap shop for parents.

School Performance Update

This term, we used a range of data to assess pupil progress. From Years 1 - Year 6, pupils completed Star Reading to determine their current reading age. The Star Reader test will be repeated in late spring to map progress. Pupils below their reading age by 9+ months are identified and added to class action plans to allow further interventions.

Pupils from Years 2 - 6 completed The Welsh Government tests for Procedural, Reasoning and Reading. One entry test in Autumn and one in Summer. The data collated is analysed, and pupils who receive a standardised score of 85 or below are identified as requiring universal provision. Pupils working above the expected level (120+) are identified as more able. All data is currently being analysed and will be shared with Governors in the following curriculum meeting.

Vulnerable Pupils Update

All pupils that fall into the vulnerable category have been tested using Language Link and RWI tests. These results, along with the WAG testing

- Discussion held around the potential impact of the schemes. FGB agreed they were all excellent ideas and welcomed the scheme's, giving the school an opportunity to help out families and the community.
- Discussion held around the difference between guided learning and whole class learning, the school has moved back to guided learning following a review of the reading test data. Governors supported the school's approach.

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and school assessments, have helped devise a programme of learning which will be delivered by one of the Well-Being Champions.

As part of the [MER cycle](#), SLT has undertaken monitoring. The outcomes and ways forward can be found in the evaluation sheet below.

Curriculum

Family Engagement

The Family Engagement Officer has begun LAP sessions for nursery children. In addition to LAP, the FEO has delivered Keepmi sessions with Reception children and their parents/ carers.

The FEO has attended home visits and Nursery open sessions/ meetings to establish links with families from the start.

Outdoor Learning

Mr Murdoch, one of the school's Wellbeing Champions, has developed an outdoor learning programme for our Junior Learners. For the first half term, the pupils have focused on Willow weaving. This half term, the children will be able to develop their woodwork skills.

As part of the Outdoor Learning Programme, the pupils have also undertaken the following visits.

- Wednesday 20th and 27th September: Year 4 visited Newbridge fields: Nature walks, identifying trees from leaf shapes, birdsong and types of birds, Autumn scavenger hunt.
- Wednesday 04th October: Year 5 visited Newbridge fields: Nature walk, identifying trees from leaf shapes, birdsong and types of birds, Autumn scavenger hunt
- Wednesday 11th October: Year 6 visited Brynteg Comprehensive School, working in partnership with Ty Seren nurture groups, garden development project.
- Wednesday 18th October: Year 3 visited Newbridge fields: Nature walks, identifying trees from leaf shapes, birdsong and types of birds, Autumn scavenger hunt.

Science and Technology

Week beginning 23rd October the school undertook its first [Discovery week](#). This was planned and organised by Mis Matthews. The week was a success and allowed us to provide:

- A Love for Science: Science Week sparked children's interest in science by making it fun and engaging. Hands-on

- Discussion was held around the importance of this role within the school and the impact, engagement is very high with many families.

- Governors commented that the outdoor learning was going from strength to strength, community engagement was excellent and children are thoroughly enjoying a very consistent learning experience.

- Following a review of curriculum a number of gaps were recognised and

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activities, experiments, and demonstrations helped foster a love for learning about the natural world.

- Encouraged Critical Thinking: Engaging in scientific investigations enabled pupils to ask questions, think critically, and develop problem-solving skills. This enhanced their ability to analyse and understand the world around them.
- Developed Practical Skills: Participating in hands-on experiments and activities helped pupils develop practical skills, such as measuring, observing, and recording data. These skills are essential for both science and everyday life.
- Increased Awareness of the Scientific World: Science Week exposed pupils to various scientific fields, including biology, chemistry, physics, and environmental science. This broadened their awareness of the diverse careers and possibilities within the scientific world.
- Enhanced Science Literacy: Learning about science at an early age can help pupils become scientifically literate individuals who can make informed decisions about scientific and technological issues in their lives.
- Built Confidence: Successfully conducting experiments and projects helped boost pupil's self-confidence and encourage them to pursue STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) subjects in the future.
- Connected Learning to the Real World: Science Week provided opportunities to connect classroom learning to real-world applications. This practical approach can make science more relevant and interesting to pupils.
- Engaged Parents and the Community: Science Week involved interactive demonstrations and exhibits, which allowed parents to see what their children had been developing.

Cymraeg

After successfully obtaining the Bronze award last term for the Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus, We are delighted to have been awarded the Silver Award this term. This success is due to the hard work of Miss Craven and all the staff in their commitment to the Welsh language at Oldcastle.

this week provided a good opportunity to bridge the gap. The week proved extremely successful and children loved it, it was planned and delivered by school staff. The school will plan this into the yearly schedule in future due to its success. Well done Miss Matthews who organised the event.

- Well done to Ceri Craven and Criw Cymraeg.

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Cluster Collaboration Update

Cluster collaboration work on assessment and Progression has continued this term. Miss Lincoln is working closely with CSC and the cluster school to develop the progression map for Numeracy and mathematics.

Reading Update

In response to the results of the school's reading monitoring conducted in the previous term, the school has undertaken strategic adjustments to its instructional approach concerning whole-class reading, particularly within the framework of the Literacy Tree Scheme. The primary objective of these modifications is to optimise pupil outcomes by strengthening the effectiveness of teacher assessments.

Specifically, in the Junior Learning classes, a shift from whole-class reading to a guided reading methodology is being implemented. This transition is designed to provide class teachers with a more comprehensive insight into the individualised requirements and skills of each pupil. The adoption of guided reading strategies is anticipated to facilitate a more tailored approach to reading pedagogy, allowing class teachers to better cater to the diverse learning needs and abilities of their pupils.

Literacy, Language and Communication Update

Being a Flagship School for the Literacy Tree, we are delighted to have supported the following schools this term:

As a distinguished Flagship School affiliated with the Literacy Tree program, we are delighted to have extended our educational support to the following schools during the current academic term: Penybont, Gloucester Road and Brynteg.

Staffing and Finance Update

School Budget

Allocation	£1,532,383
Income	£353,691
Underspend from last year	£175,047
Total amount available	£2,061,121
Estimated Expenditure	£2,031,934
Estimated credit	£29,188

- Governors discussed the forthcoming year and the potential of a deficit in 2024-2025. Discussion was held around the non

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The budget continues to be tight, and funds are being micromanaged each month to ensure the school is on track and conserving as much funds as possible. There are no additional spending plans at present.

Staffing

Appointments:

Sara Baldwin has been appointed to cover Eira Davies Sabbatical, which starts next term.

Miss Large and Ms Marriott were appointed as lunchtime supervisors. Abigail Mullins will be returning from her maternity leave at the end of December.

Training

Food Network

Tuesday 5th September - Sara Peters.

Diabetic Training

Monday 11th September - Sara Peters and Addell Whiteley

Attendance Lead Forum

Wednesday 13th September - Lyndsey Hodgson

Safeguarding Designated Lead Forum

Thursday 14th September - Ceri Littlewood

Foundation Learning

Tuesday 19th September - Ceri Littlewood, Janine Burr and Lyndsey Hodgson

Children's Participation in Schools

Tuesday 19th September- Sian Griffiths and Sian Hughes

Tuesday 10th October- Sian Griffiths and Sian Hughes

Tuesday 24th October- Sian Griffiths and Sian Hughes

Evolve

Tuesday 19th September- Sara Peters

Tuesday 17th October - Sara Peters

ITE Partnership Forum

Tuesday 19th September- Janine Burr

Literacy Tree

Wednesday 27th September - Julia Williams

Mental Health First Aid Training

Monday 2nd and Tuesday 3rd October - Addell Whiteley and Rachel Evans

Safeguarding Training

Friday 6th October - Lyndsey Hodgson

class based roles and how important it is to retain these after evaluating the impact the roles have had within the school.

The FGB reiterated they would fully support the school in making future decisions and that all decisions would be made after a full evaluation and based on the needs of the school.

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Digital Leads Meeting

Thursday 12th October - Shannon Matthews

Numeracy Cluster Meeting

Thursday 26th October - Katie Lincoln.

Periodic / Specific Issues

Year 5 have completed their swimming lessons.

Parents' Evenings were conducted during the week beginning 23rd October.

Policies to be reviewed

- School Conduct
- Unacceptable Actions by Complainants.
- Health and Safety Policy.

Governors commented that the report was very informative and detailed and provided a really good insight to school life.

- Agreed
- Agreed
- Agreed

7. Safeguarding

● For Information	● To be Actioned
● Moved to P and C	● Noted

8. Governor Self Evaluation

● For Information	● To be Actioned
● A panel of governors have been evaluating the performance of the FGB including, awareness of policy and awareness of process. The scheme used allowed the panel to evaluate performance within categories and then score accordingly using green, amber and red. A report highlighting findings is available to view in the drive. ● Discussion was held around the challenges faced during the evaluation process and the areas which now require addressing. A FGB meeting will be scheduled to purely discuss these in order to put an action plan together. ● Governors commented that it was a really useful exercise.	● Noted ● Date TBA

9. Correspondence brought forward at the discretion of the Chair/Headteacher.

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For Information	To be Actioned
None	Noted

10. AOB

For Information	To be Actioned
Governors were reminded of the importance of confidentiality around school based matters. A copy of the confidentiality agreement was provided and is in the drive for future reference.	Agreed

The minutes are a true reflection of the meeting held on Tuesday 15.11.23

Agreed

Name - DAMIAN FAULKNER Date - 01/05/24

Signed - 
Damian Faulkner- Chair of Governors

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