



Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth

FULL ANNUAL REPORT FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS
October 2022

Dear Parent / Guardian,

As Chair of the Governing Body, it is my pleasure to present the annual report of Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth.

We look back over another exceptionally unusual year. There were numerous challenges resulting from the pandemic requiring the whole school community to come together and discover new ways of working in constantly changing circumstances. I would like to thank all school staff, the Head for his firm guidance, the Deputy, teachers, learning assistants and support staff for their efforts and success in continuing to provide valuable experiences for the pupils. I would also like to thank parents and guardians for their constant support.

It has been a year of regularly responding to new circumstances with the ebb and flow of Covid. There have been many developments which we can be very proud of; the regular communication alleviating parents' fears, support staff welcoming every child at the beginning of each new day, and I'm especially proud of the way the teachers appeared to move seamlessly from teaching in the classroom to teaching on Teams several times during the year. Their flexibility and ability to respond to such circumstances is something to be very proud of.

Despite the fact that we failed to maintain the calendar of usual activities which usually bring the whole school community and parents and guardians together, new ways were discovered to provide experiences for everyone. It is wonderful to take pride in these innovative new opportunities.

As we embark on a new academic year, and further uncertainty regarding the implications of the pandemic, we can face this period with the confidence that we have the leadership, the creativity and the will at this school to provide the best education and care possible, and I'm sure I speak on behalf of the full Governing body when I extend our thanks to the Head and all the staff for their excellent work.

Pupil numbers have continued to rise at the school, and the numbers are consistently high. The school roll included 435 pupils in July 2022, and a staff team including the Head, Deputy Head, 15 full-time teachers and 6 part-time teachers. Three members of staff undertake the role of Head of Department for the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and the Additional Learning Needs Department. The school has an effective team of Assistants who provide support in the Foundation Phase and assist pupils with Additional Learning Needs.

The school has an active group of support staff who assist with the work of providing the best opportunities for pupils. This team includes a secretary, caretaker, three cleaners, five lunch time assistants and five kitchen staff.

Time and location of Meeting – There has been a change in the requirements for holding the Annual Meeting of Governors (see below for details). No requests were made to hold a Governors meeting with parents in accordance with section 94 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 during the last academic year.

See below for details of the requirement to hold an annual meeting.

Changes to Parent / Governor Annual meetings

Section 94 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act) makes important changes to previous legislative arrangements relating to Annual Parent/Governor Meetings. It provides new arrangements whereby parents can request a meeting with the governing body.

However, parents must meet four (4) statutory requirements in calling such a meeting:-

- (i) the parents of 10% of the registered pupils, or the parents of 30 of the registered pupils (whichever is the lowest) must sign a petition requesting a meeting;*
- (ii) the purpose of the meeting must be to discuss school-related matters;*
- (iii) the maximum number of meetings parents may request during any school year is three (3);*
- (iv) there must be enough school days left in the school year to allow a meeting to be held.*

Moreover:-

- (a) the meetings must be held within 25 days;*
- (b) the period of 25 days begins the day after receiving the petition, but this does not include any non-school day;*
- (c) if another meeting must be held as a result of a different petition, the 25 day period will not begin until the day after holding the other meeting;*
- (ch) there must be enough days left in the school year to hold a meeting before the end of the 25 day period;*
- (d) meetings will be open to parents of all registered pupils at the school, the Head and anyone else invited by the governing body;*

(dd) *the notice of any parent meetings must include the date, time and location of the meeting and the matter or matters to be discussed.*

A copy of this report can be accessed from the Governor Section of the school website - www.ysgolgymraeg.ceredigion.sch.uk <<http://www.ysgolgymraeg.ceredigion.sch.uk/>>.

Clerk of the governing body – Education Department, Ceredigion County Council, Canolfan Rheidol, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, SY23 3UE.

Chair of governors – Kate Woodward Katewoodward123@gmail.com

Arrangements for the next Governing Body election – the Education Department and the school will inform parents / guardians of any opportunity to be a part of the Governing Body and the arrangements for elections.

In-service Training – full details of the courses attended by staff between September 2021 and July 2022 may be obtained (see below for course examples). I would like to thank staff for attending these courses.

Here's a taste of the In-service Training attended;

Education Authority Workshop 1 and 2	
Preparations for training a new Cohort with the Academy	
Aber Addysgu+ Mentor Training	
Pupil Voice Training	
Healthy Schools Assessment	
Health and Safety, Child Protection, First Aid, Pupil progress, target groups arrangements	
Latest on the New Curriculum principles	
Leadership Academy – approval of courses	
Aberystwyth Heads Area Meeting	
On-line training for Additional Learning Needs arrangements	
Ceredigion Heads Conference	
Digital learning on Teams	

Opportunities to share Good practice with schools and organisations

The role of the school in a wider education system locally, regionally and nationally:

Curriculum for Wales 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school participated in a research project with Cardiff Met University cascading information on the New Curriculum to schools who aren't members of the innovation network • Information-sharing meetings have been held with local schools in the Aberystwyth area
Additional Learning Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is in the process of adapting ALN

	<p>arrangements to meet the requirements of the new ALN Code</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year, the school gave particular attention to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One-page profiles for all pupils on the ALN register (SA, SAP, SAPRA) including pupil voice - Person-Centred Reviews - Following the person-centred process in every ALN meeting - Meetings training staff on the upcoming changes • This year, the focus will be on continuing to implement changes for the New Code. • Cathryn James, the school ALN coordinator has been on a 2 day week secondment to the ALN Department at Ceredigion Education Authority. From September 2022, she will undertake a full-time role with the Education Authority and Gareth James will start as the ALNCo
<p>National Academy for Leadership, Educational Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The head is a member of the first cohort of heads who have assisted in establishing a vision for the Academy and developing its' work. • The head is now a trainer / facilitator for the training and learning experiences for new members.
<p>Prospective Teachers Training Partnership - Aber Addysgu+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ysgol Gymraeg is a leading school in the partnership with Aberystwyth University and has participated in the process of preparing the course. • The course has been operational since September 2019. • Students will have experiences in the primary and secondary sector
<p>Assistant Adviser with Ceredigion Education Authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head has undertaken the role of Challenge Adviser for the Education Authority for 8 years. • The work includes supporting schools during the self-evaluation process for raising and improving standards.

There was no requirement for a meeting during October 2021. However, there was an opportunity to discuss school developments during the virtual Parent and Teacher Association Annual Meeting – a presentation was given on specific areas relating to teaching and learning and the School Development Plan.

Steps taken resulting from any decisions made at the meeting – No decisions were made during the meeting held in October 2021.

The appendix includes a list of school governors, their appointees and their term of office termination date.

Financial details -

- See the appendix outlining a full statement on the school budget.

How the school uses the money received

- Generally, school budgets has been a very challenging area over recent years and we work closely with the Education Authority to make the best use of the money available. The school budget was used to ensure the best educational experiences for pupils and ensure appropriate resources for them.
- The school uses additional funds to target literacy and numeracy.

Social Deprivation Grant – The Social Deprivation Grant is used purposefully to meet the needs of specific pupils, and additional resources and staff were organised to support and raise standards in these areas.

Donations received by the school

- Generous contributions were received from the Parent Association, which includes sponsorship money from local businesses contributed to Christmas concerts and the Summer Festival. The school greatly appreciates the support received.

Allowances or subsistence payments for the Governing Body

- Governor expenses – No costs were paid to the governors during 2021-22. I wish to thank my fellow governors for providing their services on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the school.

Pupil standards and progress

We wish to see every pupil achieving their potential and the school is very pleased with the teacher assessments for pupils in both Key Stages. The internal assessments are positive and a reflection of the hard work of pupils, staff and the cooperation with parents / guardians.

Pupil attendance

Commentary on school attendance

We are pleased with the average level of attendance at the school. Targets were set by the governors for the next three years to continue the improvements in attendance. The school has focussed on punctuality during the year and we would like to thank parents and carers for their positive response to the campaign.

Improving attendance and reducing unauthorised absence

The school follows clear steps to reduce unauthorised absence. Late arrivals in the morning can affect unauthorised absence data. The school sends a letter to parents emphasising the importance of punctuality, drawing attention to the practice seen amongst some families who go on holiday during the school term. The school contacts parents / guardians when attendance levels are low or fluctuate.

Attendance targets

Attendance target for 2022 -2023 - 96.7%

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Children leaving the school at the end of Year 6 – pupils at the end of Year 6 usually transfer to the secondary schools in town, Penweddig and Penglais. This year, 45 moved on to Penweddig and 6 to Penglais. The school has a positive partnership with the secondary schools, implementing effective transition plans. We send our best wishes to the crew who have transferred this year.

Forging links between the School and the Community

The school is one of the main institutions in town and an integral part of the local community. The school makes good use of local resources including the National Library, the University, the Leisure Centre, the Arts Centre and the local secondary school. The school organised many educational visits including to Castell Henllys, and local Farms e.t.c. The school has performed to local organisations and there is very good support for the new Summer Festival held on the school field and the end of term bbq/social evening.

Activities were held to promote understanding of fundraising for good causes during the year. Generous sums were collected for Children In Need.

Parent and Teacher Association / Friends of the School

We would like to thank the Parent and Teacher Association and all friends of the school for their support during the year. The Parent and Teacher Association is hard-working and extremely enthusiastic, holding various fund-raising activities. The money raised is used to purchase resources and organise social events with a real family-focussed and Welsh ethos.

We look forward to resuming the full timetable of the Parent and Teacher Association from September 2022.

Parent / guardian meetings – we have an excellent partnership with the parents. During an ordinary year, the following events are organised;

- Annual meeting of the Parent and Teacher Association.
- Termly open evenings and an invitation for parents / guardians to come to the school to receive their children's reports in July.
- An invitation for parents / guardians to the school's open afternoon.
- An invitation to the school sports day.
- Two grand concerts are held during the year (always attended by around 800 people). The Summer Festival has been a popular addition.
- A meeting for the parents / guardians of nursery-aged children who wish to attend the school.
- A meeting between the parents / guardians of children receiving support and the specialist teachers.
- In every letter, the head includes the wording “if you have any concerns regarding your child's education, please contact me immediately”

Use of the building / campus – Ysgol Gymraeg Parent and Teacher Association, some football teams, Yr Angor (the papur bro for Aberystwyth), Aberystwyth Town Adran, Urdd National Meetings, Urdd Eisteddfodau and the Bridge Club.

Links with the police – police officers work closely with the school, making a positive contribution to personal and social education activities. The police hold discussions with the School Council and assist with the traffic by the school entrance.

Progress of the School Action Plan (post-inspection)

The school implements the Action Plan following the 2016 Estyn report. Here is a summary of developments.

Description/activity/progress	Progress
A1 – Ensure that the provision for	We have now planned every strand of the DCF across the

<p>developing pupil information and communication technology (ICT) skills systematically builds on those already acquired</p>	<p>school, identifying opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills more systematically. A new iPad timetable has been produced allowing better use of these across KS2. To respond to the new DCF requirements, teachers have been using j2e to share homework and important messages. Response to the Estyn post-inspection recommendation We have produced assessment sheets to be placed in pupil books ensuring that every pupil is aware of the ICT skills they require. These sheets are intended to provide pupils with an opportunity to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to identify the ICT skills acquired during the lessons and across the curriculum.</p>
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Self-evaluation and the School Development Plan

Main priorities of the school

1. Raise literacy standards of specific pupil groups across the school.
2. (Estyn 2016) Ensure that the provision for developing pupil information and communication technology (ICT) skills systematically builds on those already acquired
3. Develop plans for the new Curriculum.
4. Develop skills and extend the knowledge of all staff to act in accordance with the requirements of the new ALN measure

The school has made good progress in developing aspects of the School Development Plan over the last year – a full copy is available from the head.

Improvements set by the Governing Body in relation to pupil performance

- The school has made good progress in terms of ensuring that every child achieves their potential across the curriculum.
- Pupil success reflects positively on the challenging targets set each year.
- The children are given regular Language, Mathematics, Science and English targets in Key Stage 2.
- Each parents receives a detailed report at the end of the year and regular open evenings are held providing an opportunity to discuss the end of year report.

Pupil Expulsions

No expulsions

Review of school policies and strategies – the school regularly reviews policies to ensure the best provision for pupils. During 2021-22 all school policies were reviewed, specifically those relating to health and safety, child protection, bullying, and some curricular aspects. Copies of the policies are available from the school or website. There is a list of the reviewed policies in the governors records by the main entrance.

Actions following the review of policies – The developments are regularly monitored during the termly meetings. School staff have received further training on safeguarding children and implementing autistic-friendly school procedures. The school has improved safety by improving the fences between the school and the Rugby Club.

Sport and Extra-curricular Activities

The school provides a variety of sport activities in all aspects of Physical Education. The pupils gain skills and experiences from Nursery age up to Year 6.

There is a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme to satisfy the interests of all pupils. A weekly Urdd Class offering varied activities is provided by school staff on a voluntary basis. Key Stage 2 activities include sport, a weekly running club, cycling, art club, gymnastics club and various activities clubs for the Foundation Phase. The school supports hockey activities with the Mini Minor league every Friday night.

There is a strong link between the school and the Urdd and all pupils have enriching experiences through the programme of activities for the year.

Urdd Eisteddfod – It was wonderful to see pupils participating in the Urdd Eisteddfod held in Denbigh this year. I would like to thank the staff for their training and all pupils who represented the school.

Healthy food and drink – the school promotes pupil health and is keen for them to develop healthy eating and drinking habits. A healthy school lunch is provided daily and pupils are encouraged to eat healthy packed lunches. There is plenty of water available for pupils, and every pupil is encouraged to bring their own bottle to be filled during the day.

Changes to the school Handbook – The handbook is reviewed and updated every term. There is a copy of the handbook on the school website or available from the head. Changes have been made to the content of the handbook during the current year to improve its' form.

Term dates for the year
(see appendix)

INSET closure days

September 1st, 2nd (additional dates to be arranged in 2022)

Session Times (this has changed as a result of Covid 19 – please see the letter from the head for further information)

	KS 2	Foundation Phase	Nursery
School starts	9.00	9.00	9.00
Morning break	10.30 – 10.45	10.30 – 10.45	10.30 – 10.45
Lunch	12.00 – 1.00	11.45 – 1.00	11.50 – 1.15
Start of afternoon session	1.00	1.00	1.15
Afternoon break	2.20 – 2.30	2.20 – 2.30	2.20 – 2.30
School finishes	3.25 – Yr 3 and 4 3.30 – Yr 5 and 6	3.15 Reception 3.20 Yr 1 and 2	3.15

Curriculum and teaching organisation

The school is one of the pioneer schools in Wales and operates as an organisation which shares good practice and innovates in teaching and learning. The quality and variety of the learning experiences provided to pupils across the school is very important to us. A wide-ranging and balanced curriculum meeting all statutory requirements is provided. Teachers continue to review the curriculum in accordance with new developments. There is a great emphasis on developing communication skills, number skills, ICT skills and thinking skills. The school has worked closely with Aberystwyth University in developing an enriching programme of experiences for prospective teachers of the future.

Additional Learning Needs The school endeavours to ensure that every child feels like they are an integral part of school life and work, achieving their potential as individuals. The school regularly reviews the Additional Learning Needs policy to ensure appropriate support for pupils.

Pupils with disabilities The school campus is regularly adapted to provide easy access for pupils with disabilities. Ramps were placed to promote access to classrooms and through careful planning, children with disabilities have been fully integrated in the school curriculum.

School language category – Designated Welsh-medium School (C)

Use of Welsh at the school

- Welsh is used as the main language for all curricular and extra-curricular work of the school in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. English is introduced in Year 3.
- Welsh is the natural language of communication at the school.
- There is no restriction on the use of Welsh in the school, Welsh is promoted in all aspects of school life and work at Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth.
- Through careful planning, the school ensures continuation and regular development of the experiences to use Welsh in all school curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Late-comers to the school can utilise the provision offered by the Local Authority Language Centre at Penweddig secondary school.
- Pupils transfer to the secondary schools in town where they are given opportunities to continue to develop their use of Welsh. Extended transition opportunities are available during the Summer term for pupils who need to develop their confidence in Welsh.

Toilet facilities and arrangements -

The school has an appropriate number of toilets for the number of pupils registered at the school. The facilities are cleaned daily by the Education Authority cleaning service. There is an effective 'Tackling the Toilets Committee', a group of pupils who work on behalf of the School Council to improve the toilets with the Senior Management Team.

Building maintenance

During the year, the school has developed an external ALN teaching cabin and a nature garden. The Parent and Teacher Association have contributed generously to these developments. Plans are being prepared for a new school building (10 classrooms) over the coming years. The school appreciates the support of Welsh Government towards Welsh education and the Education Authority for preparing a successful application for 5.7 million for the new extension.

Safety

The school insurance policy allows for pupils to be at the school from 8.45 (Breakfast Club 8.15-8.45). In the afternoon, Nursery and Reception aged children leave at 3.15, Years 1 and 2 leave at 3.20, Years 3 and 4 leave

at 3.25 and Years 5 and 6 leave at 3.30. Before these times, parents or carers are expected to note their attendance at the office near the main entrance.

People must park carefully near the school, without parking in taxi/disabled bays or on the grass. There should be no parking on the Plascrug school road either to prevent possible traffic jams.

Safety is extremely important to the governors, the Senior Management Team, the School Council and the staff. Everyone needs to be careful and respect others.

Safety developments at the building – renovating the fence around the play area has improved safety and prevented access to strangers.

Break-ins

There have been no break-ins at the school during this academic year.

I hope you've found reading about the developments at this busy school a useful experience. Please contact the Head if you require further information regarding school development.

As parents, thank you once again for your commitment to the school, your support is an important part of your children's educational and social development and of Ysgol Gymraeg's unique culture.

Kate Woodward, Chair of Governors