



Governor Newsletter to Parents and Carers

Autumn 2017

It has been a long and busy Autumn term with lots of good work by pupils to be seen throughout the school. The Data Committee have spent two monitoring sessions visiting classrooms and talking to learners during the term. These have focused on marking and improving of work, standards of reading, wellbeing and attitudes to learning. It is pleasing to report that attainment in the Foundation Phase has improved and is good at both the expected and the higher levels, placing the school in the top 25% or higher 50% of similar schools in all core areas of learning expect LCE at the higher level in 2017. Equally attainment at the end of key stage 2 has improved and most pupils make good progress and achieve the expected levels in all core areas by the end of key stage 2. The school is placed in the top 25% of similar school for CSI and for all core subjects at the expected level in both 2016 and 2017. Further attainment data can be found in the Annual Report to Parents.

The school is still awaiting a monitoring visit from Estyn and this continues to be the key focus. In October our Local Authority challenge adviser visited to evaluate performance so that we can get an objective view of how the school is progressing towards the Estyn recommendations:

R1 Raise standards of writing, problem solving and reasoning skills in key stage 2-**satisfactory progress**

R2 Improve the standards of Welsh oracy across the school-**strong progress**

R3 Plan better opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills progressively across the curriculum- **strong progress**

R4 Improve planning to ensure consistent challenge for pupils of all abilities, especially those who are more able-**satisfactory progress**

R5 Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement planning processes so that they are effective in raising standards of teaching and learning-**strong progress**

R6 Improve the role of governors in allocating the schools financial resources and in holding the school to account for its outcomes-**very good progress.**

CHALLENGING THE SCHOOL:

Since the last newsletter, the school has been questioned on its class structure and use of funding. The following text explains the current position.

Staffing

In September the teachers and support assistants changed classes. In key Stage 2, Mrs Watkins started in Class 5/6, Miss Bufton took over Class 4/5 and Mrs Rogers went to Class 3. Our support assistants in Key stage 2 work with individual pupils to help them to access the curriculum and reach their potential.

In Foundation Phase, Mrs Pritchard moved to Class 2, Mrs Smith had a big move to Class 1 and Miss Bates who is currently covering Mrs Jenkins, started in Reception. These classes are supported by non-teaching assistants. This allows our staff continued professional development opportunities and also increases their knowledge of expectations in different year groups.

Supporting Learning

We are proud in supporting all of our learners and helping them to reach their full potential. We know that children's wellbeing is paramount and children need to feel safe and secure to learn. Our support staff are trained in intervention programmes for those children who require a boost with their learning, either in literacy or numeracy. This support is timetabled with the class teacher.

Mrs Thomas is our part time SENCO. Mrs Thomas works with children who have additional learning needs. These children are provided with an individual education plan which is reviewed termly.

More able and talented learners: (Extract from Local Authority Report, October 2017) The school has made effective use of best practice visits and has improved the provision to challenge more able pupils. For example, the LNF is effectively mapped across all themes to ensure coverage and progression. Teachers use differentiated success criteria in all lessons to provide effective challenge, as evidenced by planning scrutiny, work scrutiny and lesson observations. Most teachers now demonstrate appropriately high expectations of pupils and as a result, plan good quality lessons which offer challenge to all groups of pupils. The improved provision for more able pupils at the school is impacting positively on standards.

As a school we receive specific grants which allow us to support our most vulnerable learners. We are also extremely fortunate that we currently have a member of staff who is undertaking 'THRIVE' training. This allows the school to be proactive and support children with emotional and behavioural needs. By supporting these learners we are also supporting our other learners in school, by providing a safe, quiet and engaging environment.

CHANGES TO THE GOVERNING BODY

Claire Lewis took over as Chair of Governors this term with Andrew Morgan as Vice-Chair. Three new governors have been appointed:

Clare Haslam as Minor Authority Governor: As well as being mum to Rhys (10) Dylan (8) and Gethin (22mths), I work within childcare. For the last 10 years I have been leader of the Pre-School settings within Trefonnen School as well as occasional periods of working within the school as a TA in the reception class as well as with years 5 and 6. During this time I have undertaken further training courses that I hope will also benefit me within my governor role alongside my general interest in education.

Claire Mills as Parent Governor: I live in Llanyre on our family farm with my husband Darren, daughter Jess (9), our Labrador Indie and Border Terrier Ruby. I am a qualified teacher and taught in main stream Primary for four years. I then went on to run the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Powys, until two years ago when I had a complete career change, and came to work as the Parliamentary Researcher for Brecon and Radnor's MP. I was also recently elected as County Councillor for Llanyre and Newbridge on Wye. As a parent and former teacher, I fully understand the importance of formal and informal learning in addition to the value of extracurricular activities for our children.

Melanie Ross as Parent Governor: I am a married mother of 4 children. My eldest son Owen started Llandrindod High School in September. I have three children in Crossgates, Ciaran (Yr5), Isla (Yr2) and Finley (Rec). I am a primary teacher and work in Rhayader and I am aware of the pressures Powys schools face. I believe my profession and length of time as a parent at school will stand me in good stead to help support Crossgates to continue to improve.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and hope that everyone comes back in January refreshed and energised to carry on the good work!