



Ysgol Gynradd Gwaelod y Garth Primary School

Annual Report of Governors to Parents 2024-2025



Gwaelod y Garth Primary School
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The Governing Body

Clerk to the Governing Body

Emma Taylor
Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth
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Gwaelod y Garth
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029 2081 0489

Chair of the Governing Body

Non Gwilym
Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth
Main Road
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Election of Parent Governors

We will next elect parent governors on **or before 17.02.26** if a parent governor resigns.

Members of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has responsibilities for all matters of school governance, including the curriculum, provision, funding, staffing and policies. The Body meets regularly and receives a report from the Headteacher. The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected at the beginning of each new academic year. The Chair and Clerk can be contacted by contacting the school office.

The current members of the Governing Body are:

		<u>Membership Dates</u>
Non Gwilym (Chair)	Community Governor	21.10.22 – 22.10.26
Dona Lewis (Vice-Chair)	Parent governor	21.10.22 – 22.10.26
Helen Sharkey	Headteacher	08.04.24 -
Sara Brown	Local Authority Member	25.02.23 – 24.02.27
Rhys James	Local Authority Member	29.03.23 – 31.03.27
Meurig Jones	Local Authority Member	29.11.24 – 28.11.29
Huw Rolant	Community Governor	16.06.24 – 15.06.28
Fflur Rowlands	Community Governor	25.10.24 – 14.10.28
Fflur Rowlands	Community Governor	10.10.24 – 09.10.28
Claire Meredith	Parent governor	12.02.25 – 11.02.29
Huw Darch	Parent governor	21.10.22 – 20.10.26
Victoria Patterson	Parent governor	02.10.23 – 01.10.27
Wendy Owen	Staff governor (teaching staff)	14.03.25 – 13.03.29
Debbie Thole	Staff governor (support staff)	20.06.24 – 19.06.28



A word from the Chair

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Governing Body, to present the Annual Report to Parents for the academic year 2024–25. This has been another successful and inspiring year for Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth, shaped by the energy, commitment and creativity of our pupils, staff and wider community.

As Chair of Governors, I have had the privilege of seeing first-hand the dedication of our teaching and support staff, who continue to provide a rich, nurturing and ambitious learning environment across the school. Their professionalism, resilience and passion for children's learning is evident in every part of school life, and I extend our sincere thanks on behalf of the full Governing Body.

This year we have seen strong progress in delivering the Curriculum for Wales, ensuring that pupils experience stimulating, authentic learning that develops curiosity, independence and confidence. The school has continued to prioritise wellbeing, inclusion and high-quality teaching, and we are proud of the thoughtful, supportive ethos that underpins everything that takes place at Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth.

Governors have worked closely with the Headteacher and senior leadership team to oversee school improvement, finances, staffing and policy development. Our responsibility is to provide both challenge and support, ensuring the school continues to thrive. I would like to thank all members of the Governing Body for their hard work, commitment and willingness to give their time freely for the benefit of the school.

We are also grateful for the strong partnership with parents and carers. Your support, encouragement and involvement make a real difference to the experiences of our children. Special thanks go to the PTA for their enthusiasm and fundraising efforts, which really enriches school life.

Most importantly, I want to recognise the pupils of Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth. Their enthusiasm, kindness, creativity and determination are at the heart of everything we do. They represent our school values every day, and it is a privilege to see them grow and flourish.

As we look ahead, the Governing Body remains committed to ensuring that Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth continues to be a happy, inclusive and high-achieving school at the heart of the community. We look forward to building on the achievements of this year, to work closely with the Local Authority to ensure the school continues to thrive.

Thank you for your continued support.

Dona Lewis
Interim Chair



Term Dates 2025-26

	Begins	Half Term	Ends
Autumn Term	01.09.25	27.10.25 – 31.11.25	15.12.25
Spring Term	06.01.26	16.02.26 – 20.02.26	27.03.26
Summer Term	13.04.26	25.05.26 – 29.05.26	20.07.26

The school will be closed on the May Day Bank Holiday, Monday 04.05.26. The school will be closed to children for INSET days on the following days:

Monday 01.09.25

Tuesday 02.09.25

Friday 24.10.25

Monday 05.01.26

Friday 22.05.26

Monday 20.07.26

Times of Day

The times of the school day are as follows:

	Start*	Morning Play	Dinner	Afternoon Play	Finish
Admission – B2	09:00	10:15 – 10:35	12:00 – 13:00	14.15 – 14.30	15:30
B3 – B6	09:00	10:40 – 11:00	12:00 – 13:00	14:30 – 14:45	15:30

* Gates open at 8:50 a.m. and close at 9:00 a.m.

Nurture:

	Start	Finish
Morning Nursery	09:00	11:30
Afternoon Nursery	13:00	15:30

School Prospectus

We review the School Prospectus annually to reflect procedural and governance changes. The staffing list and dates of the season have been updated in this year's prospectus. A copy of the prospectus can be found on the school's website [Click here](#)

School Policies

The school regularly examines and assesses the success of all strategies used in the school. The school has prepared a number of policy documents which cover areas of the curriculum and other aspects of school life. Staff and governors continually review these and update them to include new developments and legal requirements.



Finance

The total funding for the school in 2024-25 was **£1,217,247**. With the agreement of Cardiff Council, a projected deficit budget of **-£88,294** was set at the start of the year. By the end of the year, the school had a deficit of **-£36,506** which is **3%** of the funding. Most of the funding was spent on staffing. Around **£32,000** was spent on learning resources. Members of the governing body did not receive reimbursement this year for travel or subsistence.

The school received **£19,550** in the form of a Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and was spent on interventions to promote attainment and wellbeing.

With the agreement of Cardiff Council, a projected deficit budget of **-£192,381 has been set** for the end of the 2025-6 financial year, which is **16.92%** of the school's funding. The school's financial position is similar to that of many other schools in facing rising costs within a challenging financial context locally and nationally. The Governing Body recognises the challenges that exist as a result of current funding. We are committed to continuing to provide a world-class education to all pupils in the school.

The School and the Community

Community is an integral and unique part of the ethos of Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth and we are continuously working to foster and build community links within and beyond the school walls. Our children's education is enriched through a successful partnership between the home, school, and local community. This includes a variety of community and educational visits, regular visitors to the school which also enrich our children's curricular experiences, residential visits to Llangrannog, Maes y Fron and Canolfan Urdd y Bae, parental support (e.g. reading, Eco Council, visits, curricular experiences), local contacts and agencies such as the Police and Fire Service and very regular visits to the forest, fields and local area among others. The weekly partnership between WI members and Year 5 pupils which has continued for years is now a unique and special element of our community spirit. A record of the various activities can be seen on the school's lively Instagram account and on the SeeSaw or Google Classrooms accounts of individual classes.

We are proud to have been able to support a number of local charities again over the year. £253.12 was raised on **Children in Need** Day, £123.50 towards **Epilepsy Society** and £192.50 for the **Heart Heroes** charity. This year, we set up a **monthly Food Bank** collection in conjunction with Garth Rotary, including a collection for our Harvest Celebration.

We are very fortunate as a school to have the support **of a very lively Parent and Teacher Association (PAA)** in the school. Although it is a separate organization that is not governed by the school, the society is very supportive and holds a number of activities annually that not only raise funds but also enrich our school community. Through various community activities, an incredible **£14,346** was raised by the **PTA** this year and every penny will go towards resources for your children. We encourage you to support **PTA activities** for an opportunity to raise money and have fun at the same time!



Sporting Activities

All children in the school have access to PE activities on a weekly basis as part of the school curriculum. Extracurricular sports clubs are also offered. Pupils regularly compete in a variety of sporting activities and competitions, including:

Cricket Workshops
Urdd Football
Urdd Netball
Wellbeing Day/Week

Cycling Lessons Y6
Urdd Gymnastics
Urdd Cricket
Swimming in Year 4

Urdd Cross Country
Urdd Tag Rugby
Urdd rugby lessons
Dance Competitions



Health and Safety

The school has two external entry and exit points. The gates are locked during the school day. All visitors must speak directly to office staff in order to access the site. All visitors must sign in at the main reception.

4 members of staff have an extended First Aid Certificate. There are a number of first aid points around the school. A defibrillator is located in the Hall. For accessibility, the front school entrance allows access to all areas of the site for pupils and adults with mobility needs.

The school has a comprehensive Health and Safety policy, which is followed to ensure there is a safe environment throughout the school. The authority's Health and Safety officer visits the school at least every half term.

The school has the required toilet facilities for a school of its size. They are cleaned at least once a day by cleaning staff employed by the school. The school has a Toilet policy that complies with the statutory requirements. If concerns are raised about their sanitation or resources the issue will be addressed as soon as possible.

The appointed governor for Health and Safety is Mr Rhys James.



OUR VISION

Inspire - Support - Succeed

Our aim as a school is to provide the best possible standards of teaching and support to all pupils within an environment where everyone has numerous opportunities to achieve and exceed their potential.

Our community and *cynefin* here at Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth provides a range of rich opportunities that **inspire** our pupils to be ambitious and inquisitive learners. The rural area, the forest and the mountain provide beneficial outdoor experiences and encourage independence and curiosity. The community is an integral part of our *cynefin* and we work with community members to build on the sense of **belonging** that is typical of us. This active relationship is central to the life of Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth as the potential of each pupil is nurtured in the school, in the community and beyond.

Bilingualism is celebrated in our school and the natural collaboration between the two streams enables us to cultivate confident pupils who take pride in their language and culture. All pupils will be challenged and high expectations are an integral part of our school. All pupils will receive all possible **support** in order to **succeed** and we pride ourselves on the supportive, inclusive ethos that exists in our school. All pupils are encouraged to be the best they can be.

Through *Llais*, our Pupil Voice committees, we encourage all pupils to contribute to the life of our school and to make strategic decisions. They are encouraged to make choices that will have a positive impact on their school, their community, their country and the wider world. We appreciate the multicultural nature of our area and the capital city, encouraging respectful and caring pupils who celebrate their differences. At Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth we pride ourselves on our identity and *Cymrecitod* and our curriculum celebrates our languages, histories, culture and habitat.





Curriculum, Educational Organisation and Teaching Methods

Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth provides teaching through the medium of Welsh and English in two streams. There are eight single age classes in the Welsh stream and two mixed age classes in the English stream. In the Welsh Department, pupils and staff are expected to use the language at all times. Children who are new to Welsh are supported to develop their Welsh language skills.

A range of teaching methods are used to motivate our children and promote progress. The pedagogies of the new curriculum are continuously implemented in the school in order to support all pupils to be ambitious, capable learners, enterprising, creative contributors, principled, informed citizens and healthy, confident individuals.



Inclusion, Equality and Accessibility

We are proud to be a school that celebrates diversity of all kinds and we will take all possible steps to promote the inclusion of all members of the community. We believe that every individual deserves an equal opportunity to succeed. Accessibility issues and requirements are constantly reviewed in order to respond to the needs of our pupils and our wider community.

The school has an Equality Policy along with a Strategic Equality Plan. Their goal is to promote good relationships to respect and value diversity and to promote equity and equal opportunity for all. We aim to remove unlawful harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex, ethnicity, language, religion, disability or sexual orientation in order to place respect, fairness and equality at the heart of the school community.



Healthy School

Health and wellbeing is a significant and integral part of our curriculum for all pupils to ensure they have a broad knowledge and understanding of health issues and develop the appropriate skills and attitudes that lead to a responsible and healthy lifestyle. The school has completed the work for the National Healthy Schools Quality award. We regularly use health and wellbeing questionnaires to ensure we understand health and wellbeing needs and then adapt provision as needed.

The school promotes healthy eating. Children from Nursery to Year 2 receive a healthy snack and free milk every day. Pupils in Years 3-6 are encouraged to bring fruit to school daily to eat during playtime. All children are also encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school daily and pupils are encouraged to drink water regularly during the day. The school has taken part in the "Healthy Lunch Boxes" project and the pupils have prepared information for parents and pupils about healthy eating.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is taught in accordance with the requirements of Curriculum for Wales and in accordance with the developmental age of our pupils.



Estyn

The school was inspected in December 2019. The report is commendable and the school was judged to achieve a 'Good' standard in all areas of inspection. The school has made good progress in responding to the recommendations set out in the report, namely:

1. Ensure that the expectations of all teachers enable all pupils to achieve
2. To ensure that there are consistent opportunities for foundation phase pupils to make choices about their learning in order to develop as independent learners.
3. Raising the standard of pupils' information technology and communication skills.

To view the full report visit: [Estyn Report](#)



School Improvement Plan

Good progress has been made against the 2024-25 improvement priorities, namely:

- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Wellbeing and Inclusion
- Oral and Reading
- Leadership

The School Improvement Plan for the 2025-26 academic year has been created. The targets set include short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives. The targets and associated activities are regularly reviewed by Staff, the Governing Body and by a school's Collaborative Partner who supports the school on behalf of Cardiff Council.

The school's improvement priorities for 2025-26 are:

1. **Literacy Skills:** How can we develop further to give pupils additional opportunities to develop their Welsh speaking and reading skills?
2. **Pedagogy:** How can we develop and harmonise effective pedagogy to ensure learners make the best possible progress?
3. **Assessment and tracking:** How can we build on existing tracking systems to ensure high standards, identify need early and identify next steps for all pupils?
4. **Wellbeing and Inclusion:** How can we develop our use of restorative approaches and can we enrich our wellbeing and inclusion provision in a way that promotes the wellbeing of all?





Attendance

The school works closely with the Attendance Officer to monitor pupil attendance. We work closely with families where there are concerns about attendance by offering care, support and guidance. The attendance percentages over the last 3 years are as follows:

	Attendance Percentage	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
2022-23	93.6%	4.6%	1.8%
2023-24	95.2%	3.4%	1.4%
2024-25	95.1%	3.9%	1.1%



Llais Pupil Voice Committees and School Council

Listening to the voice of our pupils is an important ethos for planning improvement at Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth. We have a school parliament called "*Llais*" which includes the School Council and six learner committees which include all pupils from Year 3 to 6:

Digital Wizards

Wellbeing Ambassadors

Lively Learners

Eco Advice

Future Citizens

Wise Dragons

Pupils are strategically involved in shaping and implementing our school's vision. Examples of the committees' strategic plan and projects can be found on our website.

The School Council meets regularly and has a strong voice in giving views on strengths and areas for improvement. New members of the School Council are elected annually.



Year 6 Leavers 2024-5

The Governing Body would like to thank all staff, families and the school community for all their support and co-operation throughout the year.