

BOARD of GOVERNORS

8TH JULY 2025

Together we aim for the stars

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors for Victoria School on
Tuesday 8th July 2025

Members Present

Mrs Sam Davies
Major David Emery
Mr Peter Hall
Mrs Laura Halliwell
Mr Simon Husband
Mrs Judith Jones
Mrs Cerys McDonald

Ms Nicola Moorhouse
Mrs Helen Moreton, Clerk
Mr Mark Petherick (Chair)
Mr Grant Robson
Mrs Jenine Sulley
Mrs Amy Warne Jones
Cllr. Mark Wilson (Vice Chair)

Apologies

Cllr. Rhiannon Birch
Mrs Rebecca Connor
Mr Alistair Davey
Dr Rhiannon Slade

Apologies were given and accepted by Governors.

Presentation by SLT

SD introduced the Senior Leadership Team, she reminded the GB that her head teacher report always provided an update on the School Improvement Plan. The SLT meet every term to review the SIP; the document is active and flexible. Monitoring is undertaken in a variety of ways; learning walks, pupil voice surveys, data analysis, staff questionnaires. **SD** advised that if on a learning walk it became apparent that something needed addressing or wasn't working then it would be reviewed. FADE forms were completed when an area of development was identified:

FADE =

Findings

Analysis

Development

Evaluation and Impact

SD commented that it was important to measure the impact on pupils, staff or both.

The governors were reminded of the Sip Priorities for 2024/25

1. To ensure the Curriculum is relevant, engaging and robust
2. To continue to develop an awareness and understanding of diversity
3. To develop positive attitudes to reading across the school
4. To ensure that professional learning opportunities have a positive impact on pupils' learning and wellbeing
5. To continue to promote and develop the Welsh language

In addition to the above a subsidiary priority was identified which was to improve family and community engagement.

Priority 1 - Emma David

ED shared that the curriculum and resources had been extensively reviewed, staff had received training on progression within Religion, Values and Ethics. The revised curriculum has a specific Welsh dimension and uses the locality to enhance learning for the children. Trips and visits have been revised to have a greater focus on the local area. Diversity and inclusion are explicitly planned for and taught as a golden thread throughout the curriculum. **ED** commented that a number of governors had engaged in monitoring activities, resulting in a more informed GB.

Priority 2 – Sam Osborne

SO informed that AoLE leads have attended 'Diversity' training. The decision was taken not to mark 'Black History' month, as it would be part of the curriculum throughout the year. The biggest priority has been to review RVE, ensuring a diverse range of people and cultures are explored, including visits and visitors. **SO**, delivered a workshop to staff which made them feel more confident and reassured regarding the new curriculum. In addition, the diversity group (a group of children who have been chosen by SD and other staff), have led an assembly introducing themselves and clarifying their role. A resource library has been established to reflect the curriculum. The school is aiming to achieve the School of Sanctuary award.

Priority 3 – Laura Halliwell and Gemma Morgan

GM advised their SIP priority was to develop positive attitudes to reading across the school. They have monitored the overall literacy standard and reviewed Reading Corners. They have been able to view excellent practice for reading by visiting Cyfarthfa Park. Diversity book boxes have been introduced and there have been author visits.

LH informed that 'reading for pleasure' now has a higher profile across the school with most staff reading to children every day. In September, reciprocal reading will be rolled out.

Priority 4 – Rachel Jones (Apologies from Rachael Glover who was unable to attend)

RJ said that she and **RG** have attended coaching training which was disseminated to staff. Teach Mate AI has been purchased and is being used to assist with teacher workload. It has supported staff in creating engaging resources and good practice. Staff are learning to embrace AI but recognise it is a journey. In addition, the staff have engaged in professional reading and planned projects bespoke to their year groups, trialling new approaches and evaluating its impact. On the Inset days in September, staff will be working with colleagues across the school, sharing their insights.

Priority 5 – Lucie Pritchard

LP informed that a staff survey had been taken to assess attitudes and confidence towards Welsh. Criw Cymraeg have met regularly and have delivered assemblies, teacher assemblies have included links to Welsh identity. Incidental Welsh is embedded in every class. YR6 have worked with the Welsh lead from Stanwell. The school has been working towards the Siarter Iaith Silver award and once achieved will aim for the Gold award.

Additional Priority – Simon Husband

SH advised that he had created a Parent Voice group which had met several times throughout the year to discuss the development of the existing canteen to a 'community café' and a place where parent workshops could be held. **SH and SD** had visited the Holton Road Community Café which is run by parents for parents and the wider community. **SH** said that staff had received training from CSC on practical ways to further support families experiencing poverty, for example, focussing on local visits/trips to reduce costs. An external provider, 'Cookstars' had run a series of workshops introducing parents and pupils to healthy eating and cooking sessions.

SD asked the GB if they had any questions. **Clr.MW** asked if reading at home was monitored. **LH** advised that reading books were sent home and parents asked to sign reading records. **SD** commented that we can't force parents to read with their children but we can aim to fill the gaps. **GM** said there was guided group reading every day with the aim of igniting the love of reading. **DE** asked if the children could understand what they read. **LH** advised that the children were assessed on both their reading and comprehension levels. **DE** asked if the children understood the Welsh they were using. **LP** advised that Welsh books were in every classroom and also used in guided group reading, which was then followed by questions regarding comprehension.

SD thanked the SLT for their presentation, and acknowledged their experience and dedication. The GB asked for a copy of the presentation, HM confirmed it would be sent to them.

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 8th April 2025

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on Tuesday were approved by JJ, seconded by Cllr.MW and signed by the Chairperson.

Matters arising

SD advised that the results of the 'mentimeter' completed at the last meeting would be shared in October so that the GB could then devise an action plan.

Head teacher Report

This had been circulated prior to the meeting, SD highlighted the following:

Pupils and Class Organisation

Children have experienced class swap afternoon and have met their new teacher/teachers.

The lower numbers in Nursery and Reception are in line with other schools, and are reflective of the lower birth rate. Although reduced numbers are not good for the budget, it does mean there are very small classes in Reception and YR1.

Staffing

A number of experienced LSA's are leaving us in the summer term, all are leaving education to work elsewhere. These valuable members of staff have already been replaced and there are no gaps in our staff team. Mrs. Belinda Batey, admin, retired in June and Mrs. Helen Turner has extended her hours to replace Mrs. Batey.

Attendance

Attendance rates are stable and are currently 94.2% SD said she was optimistic that there will be an improvement next academic year as a result of no longer authorising holidays from September 2025.

The School Improvement Plan

SD reminded the GB that the SIP for the academic year is reviewed termly by the SLT and shared with staff.

'Checking and Evaluation' of the quality of teaching and learning

This term, Health and wellbeing leaders have monitored their area in order to evaluate consistency and standards across the school (pupil voice, learning walk, journals and planning). Their key focus was: To what extent does our current Health and Well-being curriculum offer a relevant, engaging learning experience where all pupils achieve success? Overall, there are a wealth of opportunities for direct and cross-curricular H&W learning. Any tweaks have been identified and discussed at SLT level, e.g. consistency of PSHE lessons and a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The focus of improvement will be to fill any gaps in the provision, particularly areas identified by the pupils as areas they feel less confident in.

Data

This term there has been a substantial amount of data tracking and testing, the results of which will be shared with the GB in the Autumn term.

Staff Development

Much of our training and development for this term is linked to our SIP and the implementation of professional enquiry. All members of teaching staff have participated in professional enquiry, with a focus on identifying actions which have a positive impact on achievement e.g. improving engagement in writing for reluctant writers; the use of AI in promoting positive learning experiences; ensuring full engagement in continued and enhanced provision. The findings have been written up and will be part of staff INSET next academic year.

Our end of year INSET day, will focus on self-evaluation and identifying areas of development, through evidence-based discussions.

Premises

Work has been delayed on converting the shelter to the new canteen due to unforeseen issues with Welsh Water. We have a progress meeting this week; however, it is looking very likely that the building will not be handed over before the end of the summer holidays. Plans have already been devised if this is to happen and will be shared with parents as necessary.

Over the school holidays, the KS2 toilets will be refurbished.

Support Services

We are currently happy with the support services that we are receiving in terms of school cleaning and catering. Big Fresh have implemented some changes to the menu and are consulting with pupils to get their feedback.

Health & Safety

We have recently held our second lockdown drill, and the children were exemplary. We need to add an additional lock to the FP building, but no other improvements were identified. **SD** advised that there had not been a fire drill this term as the assembly point was currently the school field due to building works. However, she reassured governors that there was a stringent evacuation plan if it was needed.

Budget

The PTA is currently working towards funding the new canteen furniture. **SD** advised that various grants have been applied for.

JS asked if once the community café was established could it make a profit and therefore contribute to the school's income? **SD** stated that the aim of the proposed hub was to reduce poverty and support parents. Potentially it could become a space to rent out.

Celebrations/Events

A number of exciting events have already been held, with many more scheduled. The governors were reminded that they were always welcome to attend any event, they each received the newsletter with the diary dates and therefore aware of what was planned.

SD concluded her report by thanking the GB for their support.

JJ commented that the learning walk had been very positive and wished to convey her thanks to the staff. **DE** asked if in future the date for the LW could be shared earlier. **SD** said that it was disappointing how many governors had attended the LW as that was the best way for them to see the school in action. The date of the next LW would be shared when the diary dates for the year were sent out, **SD** asked if governors could make every effort to attend.

GR asked if it was feasible to make greater use of the school field? **SD** advised that at the moment due to the building work, PE was taken at the field and staff were using it very day whilst there was good weather. It was not possible to use it at playtimes due to the logistics of getting the children there. **GR** also asked if there could be more sporting opportunities for all ages as part of the extra-curricular clubs which staff provided. **SD** advised that there were usually more sporting clubs in the summer term but unfortunately that had not been possible this term due to the constraints of the building programme. Furthermore, the sporting opportunities were usually offered to KS2 children not FP. Finally, **GR** wondered if the new community hub could be established as a 'community foundation'. This would have the potential to secure much needed grants and support from local communities. **SD** asked if **GR** and **CMcD** could investigate and report back at the next GB meeting. There was certainly a great deal of scope and a wealth of opportunities to be explored.

MP thanked **SD** for the comprehensive report.

Fixed Penalty Notices

The GB were reminded that at their last meeting they had agreed not to authorise holidays from September 2025 unless there were exceptional circumstances. **SD** will send a reminder to parents before the end of term. All governors were provided with an information leaflet which provided a brief guide to FPN's for non-attendance at school. **SD** advised that the GB take the leaflets and an informed discussion/decision would be held at the next meeting.

Purchase Card

SD and **HM** sought approval from the GB for a Purchase Card, the GB were reassured that there were very stringent controls in place. GB gave their approval.

Safeguarding

JJ reported that she met with Jayne Hall in June. Systems for managing the reduced playground space/ entry and exit points have been challenging but successful. **JJ** confirmed that the 'safer recruitment' policy was being adhered to, all new staff and regular volunteer helpers were DBS checked prior to commencing duties. All current staff have read and signed the safeguarding, Anti-Racism and Restrictive practice and Physical Restraint policies. All are available on the school website. The recently held lockdown drill had presented no points of concern.

Furthermore, 5 staff have recently been trained in 'Team Teach'. Some staff have already completed their DSL Training (Level 3). The annual Level 1 training will be delivered to all staff in September on the first INSET day. The value of 'My Concerns' was noted as an excellent resource.

Correspondence

HM advised that she would circulate the 'Schools Professional Development Review' policy which had recently been received. It will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Any other Business

MP advised that volunteers were needed for the Health and Safety committee, **NM** offered her services. The GB also nominated **GR**. Additionally, **MP** asked the GB to consider if the timing of meetings could be amended to 5.00PM and informed that in the next academic year there would be 1 meeting per term. However, the **expectation** would be for governors to attend the learning walks and to meet with their AoLE leads. **CMcD** asked if it would be possible for a future discussion on the challenges of ALN. **SD** said she would ask Jayne Hall to present to governors in the spring term. **Cllr.MW** acknowledged that governor attendance at training courses was very low, governors were reminded that there were many courses available and they could book them directly with governor support.

A further reminder was given regarding the end of year celebrations. **LH**, advised that she would be leading a staff training session on reading on 10th September from 3.45-4.45 which all governors would be welcome to attend.

Matters Confidential

See attached

MP thanked the governors for their support this year.

