

National Assembly for Wales

Children, Young People and Education Committee

CYP(4)-06-14 – Paper 4 – Blaen y maes Primary School

Inquiry into Educational Outcomes for Children from Low Income Households

VISION STATEMENT

We aspire that all our children become confident secure individuals who achieve personal success. They are given every opportunity to achieve their full potential, develop a love of learning, and acquire skills to become 21st century learners with the ability to make informed choices.

At Blaen y maes Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils is monitored and we use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We are a Restorative Practice school and a Rights Respecting school. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Our mission at Blaen y maes Primary School is to provide a school where the children, parents/Guardians, staff, governors and community work together to offer a welcoming, caring, stimulating and safe environment in order to stimulate effective learning and instil a sense of pride in oneself, the school, the community and the country.

We endeavour to celebrate our achievements together, as a school family, with each person being valued and respected. The children, their education and well being are central to all decision-making at Blaen y maes Primary School. Our vision is to provide a rich, varied, balanced and well-resourced curriculum which will stimulate the natural curiosity and enquiring mind of every child, regardless of ability, race or gender. We want each and every child to achieve his or her true potential.

Our aim is that the lives of all who leave Blaen y maes Primary School will have been enhanced by their experience with us, having experienced a network of support ensuring each child will leave equipped with the ability and eagerness to learn more and be ready to meet the challenges of adolescent and adult life.

Characteristics of our school

Blaen y maes Primary School is located within a large housing estate on the eastern side of the city of Swansea. It is a local authority maintained school. The school building dates from 1960's. Originally the buildings housed separate infant and junior schools under the same roof. The school is now an amalgamated primary school. The accommodation consists of a very large main complex, built on two levels. The original infant wing is predominantly used as a Flying Start setting and includes a Reception class, a large hall, staff room, PCSO room, SENCO/Music area and reprographics area. The original junior wing includes a Head teacher's room, an administration office, all key stage 2 classes as well as year 1 and 2, an art room, a family room, a computer suite and 2 withdrawal rooms. Although we try to make the building and its grounds as aesthetically pleasing as we can, and as well-maintained by the Site Manager as it can be, the physical state of the building is in need of general updating. In the LA's Building Conditions Survey (2008), the building was categorised as 'D' (in a range of A-D). In recent years the Governing Body and LA has invested considerable sums of money in general refurbishment and redecoration. The area is one in which litter, vandalism and graffiti are commonplace, but - thankfully - the school remains relatively untouched by these elements. The school occupies an extensive site that is adjacent to the Police Station and local football pitch and Community Centre.

The school serves Penderry 7 ward, one of the most deprived wards in Swansea ranked in the 1st quartile. We are the most challenged school in our Core Data family.

Housing in the area consists of council and Gwalia housing there are no private rental properties. Around 73% of pupils are entitled to free school meals (the FSM figure has varied between 70 and 81% over last five years). The vast majority of pupils come from homes where English is the first language. 8.4% of the school has English as a second language. Transition arrangements are fragmented as our local Comprehensive was closed 3 years ago, last year the children split to 5 different comprehensives. Pupil mobility rates (in-year transfers in and out of school) are high 22.8%+ November 2013, the highest in Swansea. Total S.E.N. rates are around 51%+ (children on SEN register). Even though there is a national and county-wide emphasis on reducing the numbers of statemented children, we still carry a high ratio of statemented children (13) to mainstream children.

There are currently 190 f.t.e. pupils on roll, which include 46 part-time Nursery children. The school is proud to manage the Flying Start setting which has the capacity to accommodate 108 two year olds. 55% the possible school catchment attend the school, higher than any of the 3 local primaries and 15 of children who attend are preferred placement. Attendance over the past 4 years has risen from 86% to 93%. The school is organised into single-age classes and mixed-age classes as well as two part-time Nursery classes. They are taught by nine full-time teachers.

Around 92.1% of the school roll is situated in the most deprived 30% of areas in Wales. Local information suggests that the Penderry ward has the highest levels of unemployment and income support claimants. We are a designated 'Communities First' area.

To enable us to achieve our goals we have established a Well Being Team that comprises of an emotional well being officer, family inclusion worker,

The school runs a number of successful groups to give families/parents opportunities to work with their children.

Strengthening Families – Oxford Brookes programme

Men behaving dadly – Only men and Kids allowed

Parenting Groups

Flying Start

Story Sack Workshops

So to do – programme

Family Support – individual help, food hampers, clothes, drug awareness, difficult behaviour etc

Family Values

Family Learning

Family /Guardian Council

Information Rotation

Community cohesion days

New for the Spring Term:

Numeracy/Literacy Work shops

Attendance has greatly improved over the past 5 years moving from 86% to 93%, it currently stands at 94%.

Last year saw the best results at the end of Key stage 2 where 83% achieved level 4 or above.

Whilst some parents won't engage with different agencies, school provides a buffer zone and acts as support and encourager with great success. We have worked incredibly hard over the past 5 years to instil a sense of trust and fair play within our school community. This now enables us to communicate

effectively with some of most vulnerable families and make a difference to the lives of the children.

Every child has a network of support that encompasses their school life at Blaen y maes. We use data and variety of tests and professional input to determine their academic needs, from this lesson's are differentiated and decisions made to best support the child's learning. Using PASS and school questionnaires we determine the child's well being needs, which are discussed and a suitable plan to meet their needs is put into place e.g. accessing our So to do project. We work closely with Housing Associations, the Police, Fire Service, Parenting, Social Services and many other agencies that affect the lives of the community we serve.

We are a Restorative Practice School and a Rights Respecting School the principles of which underpin the ethos of the school. In Blaenymaes every child has the right to access the best quality education, ensure their well being needs are met which enables each child to achieve his or her full potential.

Mrs Bev Phillips
Head Teacher
Blaen y maes Primary