

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr

The Annual Report Of The Governing Body 2007-08



The main aim of Plasmawr is to establish an active community based on respect,
a community which is Welsh in language and culture,
disciplined and broad-minded in its approach,
technological in skills and
a community which values each member equally.

Mr Dan Roberts, Chair of the Governing Body.

Dear Parent/Guardian

The past year has been particularly significant in the short history of the school. We have celebrated the successful growth and development of the school over the past decade and have had opportunities to reflect on the school's strengths and areas which require further attention. We have enjoyed looking back over the past ten years however it is now time to focus on the future and the next phase in the school's development.

2006-07 marked the end of an era as we accepted the resignation of Mr Geraint Rees the school's first Head teacher. Mr Rees has taken a senior advisory role within Cardiff LEA. Mr John Hayes has been appointed as the new Head of the school; he had previously held the position of Deputy Head teacher at the school. Mr Edward Jones has been appointed as the new Deputy Head teacher (from January 2009); he is currently the leader of the education advisory team within Cardiff LEA. I would like to thank all those members of staff who undertook additional responsibilities during Mr Rees's secondment to the LEA and who ensured that the school continued to strive despite his absence.

We would like to record our admiration for the work carried out by staff and pupils at the school, ensuring that it has been another successful and memorable year and it is with pride that the Governing Body once again presents its report.

Yn gywir

Dan Roberts
Chair of the Governing Body

Introduction by John Hayes, Head Teacher.

Here we present a brief summary of the life of the school during the past academic year.

It is an honour and a privilege to have been appointed as the new Head teacher of Ysgol Plasmawr. I acknowledge that following in the footsteps of Geraint Rees will be an enormous challenge as his legacy in creating such a successful school will be difficult to match. However, the end of the first decade closes the first chapter in the life of the school and I look forward to leading the school into a new period filled with new opportunities.

2007/08 was a particularly memorable and satisfying year with many high points. We celebrated the school's 10th birthday in style with many exciting events ranging from west-end style stage performances to glitzy gala-dinners! We gained successes in a host of fields and enjoyed a myriad of valuable and memorable experiences. There is firm evidence to show that the school provides a supportive and positive learning climate which allows pupils to develop academically whilst also encountering a variety of learning experiences. Our recent self-

evaluation process which generated responses from all interested parties confirms our view that the school has many strengths in many fields, but also highlighted areas which need to be further developed. We are committed to developing these areas over the coming months.

We could dwell on our sporting efforts, our successes at the Eisteddfod or our outstanding academic achievements, but in my own mind the fundamental question is, do we provide a caring and inclusive environment for all, irrespective of background or ability?

I am convinced that the answer to that question is a categorical Yes.

School Council

Each Key Stage elected 4 representatives for the school council at the beginning of the school year. The twelve pupils who were elected met regularly throughout the year and their contribution to discussions relating to the growth of the school, teaching and learning strategies, social inclusion issues, the improvement of P.E facilities and the healthy lifestyle agenda were extremely welcome and enlightening. The Council were represented on the Board of Governors by Geraint Herbert (Yr 11) and Ffion Lewis (Yr 12). The council were represented on the County's Youth Forum by Siobhan Brennan and Daniel Herbert (Yr 9). The remaining members of the school council were: Gwenno Hughes, Rhodri Llewellyn (Yr 8), Gareth Rosser, Steffan Lloyd and Llyr Owain (Yr 11), Zac Lee-Green (Yr 12) and Emyr John (Yr 13).

Leadership development

Our peer mentoring and leadership schemes received national recognition during the year. The school received a 'Leading Aspect Award' for our innovative peer mentoring schemes, and we were invited to contribute and present at many regional and national conferences. All the mentoring and leadership schemes that we offer are committed to offering opportunities for pupils to develop their own leadership skills and qualities. The peer mentors receive a high level coaching programme before they begin their work. Our Junior Sports Leaders assist with extra-curricular clubs and training sessions, our MAP's (Academic Peer Mentors) assist with the homework club, the CCC's (Anti-Bullying Mentors) are available at break-time and lunch-time to listen to the concerns of others and we have a team of volunteers who assist with our reading schemes. The contribution that these pupil leaders have made to sustain our supportive ethos is invaluable and I thank them for their hard work and dedication.

Extra-curricular activities

I am over-whelmed by the amount of extra-curricular activity that occurs throughout the school year, and last year was a particularly busy year. It was tremendous to see so many pupils involved in so many activities, and I would like to thank my staff for offering such a variety of opportunities. Particular highlights included our Christmas concert at St Catherine's Church in Canton, the Fashion show in January, performances of 'Jiwidas' in November and 'Joseff' in June, the debating competition, the young musician of the year competition which goes from strength to strength, the St David's day march through the streets of Cardiff, the school Eisteddfod at the 'All Nations Center' and the Winter competitions presentation evening. The National Eisteddfod in August was another notable highlight with many of our pupil's palying a prominent part during the week either through competing or performing.

Academic achievement

2008 was another year of excellent examination results. GCSE results were particularly impressive with 72% of pupils achieving 5 or more A* - C, GCSE grades.

A level scores were again commendable – with 84% of all grades being A, B or C. We were particularly delighted with our success in the Welsh Baccalaureate, 38 students attaining the Welsh Bac qualification which gave them an additional 120 points (grade A). All students who applied for University succeeded in continuing into higher education and we wish them well as they enter a new chapter in their lives.

We have continued with the clubs which characterize the school. We have continued to expand on the traditional ones – choirs, sporting teams and drama groups and now offer clubs such as the debating club, rowing, dance, war hammer, cooking, board games and many more. Our late bus on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday has grown in popularity as the number of pupils participating in after-school clubs has expanded.

On a County level, the school continues to be well represented by both staff and pupils. We have a good number of staff on County panels and working groups whilst others have contributed to conferences.

Awards:

It is extremely pleasing when aspects of the school's work receives wider recognition and the past year has been particularly memorable when it comes to awards. We were awarded a national 'Leading Aspect Award' for our emotional literacy projects and received a Bronze 'Arts mark' award for our work in promoting the arts in the school. Some of our pupil's have developed an interest and a specialism in digital animation which has led to two major awards. A group involved in an animation project based on the 'Institute' in St Ffagan were awarded a 'First Light' award in London and were nominated for a BAFTA Cymru, and another group won first prize in a 'Creativity in digital media' award within Cardiff.

Congratulations:

Our pupils continue to excel in sport, music and the arts. The following students have achieved Regional / National Acclaim, and we congratulate them warmly –

Tomos Roblin for his success in a National Mathematics competition.

Leigh Stephen and Dewi Edwards (Yr 13) for receiving national recognition for their Design and Technology A level projects.

Mathew Hole (Yr 11) for succeeding in a 'Futurechef' competition.

Ffion Edmunds and Jodie Davies (Yr 9) – 1st in the Urdd's regional catering competition.

16 of our pupils who represent the school in the Urdd youth theatre.

Our sporting achievements include

The 1st XV who were un-defeated all year in the league. Div 2 East Champions.

Rowing club – 5 gold medals and 2 bronze medals in the National indoor rowings champs.

Canoeing: 1st and 2nd in the National canoe championships – open canoe division.

Carly Latcham – British carting champion.

Carly a Kimberley Latcham – Welsh carting team.

James Payne and Joseph Duffin – Welsh baseball team U-16.
Seren Jones – Cardiff and the Vale netball squad.
Erin Gough, Mariane Dupuy a Nicola Powdrill - Cardiff and the Vale hockey squad.
Seren and Savanah Jones – S.E. Wales swimming squad.
Nathaniel Jarvis – Cardiff City U-16.
Year 9 female tag rugby team – Welsh champions.
Year 9 hockey team – Cardiff and the Vale finalists.
Zac Lee-Green a Ewan Williams – Welsh rowing squad U-17.
Megan John – British Special Olympics rowing squad.
Adam Jerrett – Welsh water polo squad.

Educational visits and extended learning opportunities

Our contribution to international relations has been good again this last year. Students have taken part in UN style debates and large groups of pupils have travelled all over Cardiff and other parts of Wales. Travel is an education in itself and I am deeply indebted to my staff who willingly taken hundreds of pupils away from school on educational visits, against the national trend.

Visits further afield included:

- ◆ War sites in Belgium.
- ◆ Anne Frank's home, the Jewish synagogue and Van Goch's museum in Amsterdam with the R.E. department.
- ◆ Work experience in France and visits to Brittany.
- ◆ Boulogne with the French Department.
- ◆ A cultural and historical trip to Rome.
- ◆ Ski trip to Canada.
- ◆ Water based course in the Ardeche.

Guests and visitors

We have welcomed a whole host of guests and visitors to the school during the year. These have included people from Brittany, Catalonia, Canada and Chile.

We were privileged to welcome some of Wales's most eminent poets and authors during the year, these included Mererid Hopwood, Gwion Hallam and Bethan Gwanas.

One of the highlights this year was undoubtedly the visit of George Abbey from NASA. He was a former director of the space shuttle pilot training programme and had been at mission control through all the APOLLO missions. The pupils were delighted to have the opportunity to question him about his experiences.

Charity work

A commendable development this year has been the adoption of four charities by our 'houses'. The 'houses' have contributed over £3,000 to the work of these charities through a range of different sponsored events and our annual fun-run.

| House | Charity |
|----------|--|
| Crwys | Lesotho |
| Curig | Leaves of Hope – Belarus orphanages |
| Elfed | Oxfam |
| Nantlais | Riders – an African based motor bike charity |

Our pupils also responded well to the China and Burma disaster appeal at the end of the Summer term. Other charities that have benefited from the school's work this year include Christian Aid, 'World Cancer Research', the Deaf society, BOBATH Cymru and the Macmillan cancer charity. The Sixth Form are particularly supportive of charities and have raised hundreds of pounds for Fair Trade and Christian Aid.

In summary

As we enter a new period in the development of the school we must build on the successes of the past and strive to further improve the school whilst remaining true to the core aims of the school.

We are extremely fortunate to have a very supportive Governing Body and PTA. We hope that we as a staff can continue to count on this support in 2008/09. The school's resources have improved year on year and the support of parents through CRAP should not be underestimated. Over the past ten years the school has received well over a £100,000 in donations from CRAP which has been spent on improving the educational resources for the benefit of all our pupils. Our mini-buses, our computers and our interactive whiteboards, as well as some coats of paint can be attributed to the fund raising of the PTA. Thank you.

For every support during the year

Diolch – Thank you

John Hayes
Headteacher.

Membership of the Governing Body – and date for re-election

| Community | LEA | Parent | Staff |
|---|--|--|---|
| Mr Dan Roberts, Cadeirydd 05/12/06 - 04/12/10 | Mr John Hayes Headteacher | Mr Mark Austin 25/11/06 - 24/11/10 | Mr Eifion Davies 19/04/07 - 18/04/11 |
| Mrs Teleri Bevan Is Gadeirydd 05/12/06 - 04/12/10 | Mr Emyr Currie-Jones 17/09/06 - 16/09/10 | Mr David Boobier 30/01/04 – 22/02/12 | Mr Paul Harris 04/10/05 - 03/10/09 |
| Mr John Griffiths 05/12/06 - 04/12/10 | Ms Ruth Parry 17/09/06 - 16/09/10 | Mrs Nicola Baker 25/11/06 - 24/11/10 | Mrs Karen Salter 05/10/07 – 04/10/11 |
| Mrs H Bowen 09/12/04 – 08/12/08 | * Mr John Rees 17/09/06 – July 2008 | Ms Eva Trier 23/11/06 - 22/11/10 | |
| Mrs Cath Thomas 30/11/06 - 29/11/10 | Mr Wyn Morris 17/09/06 - 16/09/10 | Mr Keith Lewis 08/10/04 - 07/10/08 | Pupils |
| | Mr Caerwyn Roderick 17/09/06 - 16/09/10 | Mrs Nicola Heywood –Thomas 18/10/07 – 17/10/11 | Geraint Herbert Ffion Lewis 05/10/07 – 04/10/09 |

* It is with a great deal of sadness that we must record the death of a member of the Board of Governors – **Mr John Rees**. He was one of the original group of governors who had the responsibility of establishing the school. As a historian, John was charged with the task of researching the local history of Fairwater, and to recommend names for the school. It is his idea that the school should serve its local parish, its city and its country which forms the basis of the school badge – a lasting legacy of John’s valuable and dedicated contribution to the Board of Governors. He will be greatly missed.

Mr Emyr Currie-Jones has notified the Chair of Governors of his decision to resign from the Board of Governors due to his failing health. Mr Jones’s contribution to the Board of Governors since the inception of the school has been invaluable and it has been an honour to have him as a school governor. We wish him good health and send him all our best wishes.

Mrs Elin Tudur has worked as the Governing Body’s translator for many years. Her contribution has been very important as we have used both languages in the meetings of the governing Body. Elin’s contribution has been significant in ensuring that all parents can feel that they can serve on the Governing Body – regardless of language. Elin has informed the clerk that she will no longer be translating in 2008/09, and we thank her sincerely for her services over the past years.

Mr Hywel Jones is currently our link with County Hall. We thank him for his support over the past year and look forward to further close collaboration in future years.

Our Clerk to the Governors is **Laura Lloyd Lewis** from County Hall. Should you wish to contact her, you can do so via Atlantic Wharf on 029 20872 000.

The Chair of Governors can be contacted through the school office.

EXAMINATION RESULTS 2008

Year 9 Teacher Assessments

The assessment results of the 4 core subjects were as follows -

| Subject | % Plasmawr Level 5 or better 2008 | % Cardiff Level 5 or better 2008 |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Welsh | 83.3% | 82.6% |
| English | 83.1% | 70.5% |
| Mathematics | 92.0% | 71.7% |
| Science | 84.6% | 74.4% |

Core Subject Indicator (i.e. % of pupils reaching Level 5 or better in Maths, Science and Welsh or English)

Plasmawr: 82% Cardiff: 59.6%

GCSE Results.

| GCSE | Plasmawr 2008 | Cardiff 2008 | Wales 2008 |
|--------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| 5 A*-C | 72.4% | 65.4% | 65.0% |
| 5 A*-G | 97.2% | 97.8% | 98.4% |

AS and A Level Results 2008.

Results of pupils aged 17 & 18 who sat AS or A level subjects.

| Course | A – C | A – E | Course | A – C | A – E |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|----------------------------|-------|-------|
| AS (first year of A level) | 60% | 86% | A2 (final year of A level) | 84% | 100% |

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE DATA

| 2007/08 | % |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Attendance across the whole year | 93.9% |
| Year 7 | 95.7% |
| Year 8 | 95.3% |
| Year 9 | 93.7% |
| Year 10 | 93.2% |
| Year 11 | 91.7% |

SCHOOL BUDGET

Please find enclosed the financial out-turn for 2007-2008.

IN SERVICE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

During the year each member of staff received In Service Training. Specialist training was provided on teachers' subject areas and pastoral training. A high percentage of staff also work as examiners for the WJEC and as a result they have taken part in planning GCSE and A Level examinations. We consider this to be a special way of developing expertise and as far as possible the school will support the staff in developing this type of work. The school has also developed an internal method of staff development by monitoring each other teaching.

IMPLEMENTING THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS POLICY

The provision for Additional Learning Needs has a high profile within the school. According to our inspection report it was an area of outstanding success across the whole curriculum. Awareness of Additional Learning Needs, including More Able and Talented Pupils, is high amongst the staff and the school has had success with the initiatives which have been introduced. There are excellent links with parents and external agencies; a strong focus on year 6-7 links which includes the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators Forum; effective co-operation with departments and a prompt and direct response to a substantial percentage of pupils with **reading and spelling difficulties** in both languages.

The work already accomplished to improve standards in literacy and numeracy is substantial, and is ongoing. In 2007 – 2008:

- 34 pupils joined the Home Reading Scheme
- 49 pupils received 1:1 reading sessions in Welsh with the Adult Volunteers for 4 sessions per week
- 33 pupils received 1:1 reading sessions in English with the Adult Volunteers for 4 sessions per week
- 16 pupils in Year 7 received 1:1 reading sessions in Welsh with Year 9 pupils for 3 sessions per week
- 15 pupils participated in the 'Toe by Toe' Structured Reading Scheme with Year 10 pupils for 3 sessions per week
- 14 pupils participated in the Numeracy Scheme with Year 10/12 pupils twice a week

We are indebted to the work and commitment of our 18 adult volunteers who assist Year 7 – 9 pupils with their reading and our pupil volunteers from Years 9, 10 and 12 who assist pupils with their reading and numeracy.

There are 174 pupils with Additional Learning Needs, 25 of whom carry a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

The Learning Support Area is a haven for pupils who require an intensive level of support with their learning needs which can range from: general learning needs, specific learning needs, emotional, behavioural or social needs, medical, physical or sensory needs. It also provides a suitable venue for our Adult Volunteer Reading Scheme. Our highly committed team of

support staff has grown and now consists of 11 permanent members of staff. A specialist teacher has also been employed to work with individuals or with small groups once a week.

All staff implement both the Additional Learning Needs and the More Able and Talented Policy. The individual education plans, and where necessary, the individual behavioural plans, are active documents which are regularly monitored. Teachers in every department receive all the necessary information regarding any additional needs that the pupils have and make good use of the information when planning pupils' work.

Effective use is made of all available resources: subject and specialist staff, support teachers, learning support assistants, external agencies and partnerships, reading schemes, home and school spelling schemes and the contribution of parents and friends for the benefit of pupils. As a result pupils with Additional Learning Needs are seen to be making progress and standards are rising.

We are now looking forward to extending the Learning Support Area to improve the provision for pupils with Hearing and Visual Impairment.

THE SCHOOL'S PRIORITIES OVER THE COMING YEARS

At the moment, we are working on our school improvement plan, which will see us through to 2012. The items listed below are likely to form the nucleus of that document. If you have a further comment to make about these priorities, or others that you would like to see included, please make your views known to the Head teacher.

Excellence in Teaching and Learning

- improve our teaching and learning styles in collaboration with our Learning Forum
- continue to adapt our curriculum to meet 2008 statutory changes, 14-19 curriculum and partnership needs
- continue to plan for a Key Skills revolution across the whole school
- Extend our plans for Assessment for Learning, Thinking Skills and Creating Independent Learners, and to continue to work collaboratively with our primary colleagues
- Focus on continuous improvement for our Most Able Pupils
- Develop fully our S3I / Self Evaluation Systems in line with LEA and ESTYN requirements
- listen to learner's voice

Excellence in Pastoral Care

- Develop further the skills of our Personal Tutors
- Develop further our anti-bullying and counselling strategies, CCC's and MAP's
- Develop aspects of emotional intelligence within the school

Extend our work as an inclusive Welsh medium school

- Promote the role of pupils – through the school council, counselling and mentoring

opportunities, sports coaching etc

- promote the use of Welsh in the school, and pride in its use
- work specifically to ensure the success of the school with its least advantaged pupils
- strive to develop further our relationships with parents
- develop an increasing range of partnership arrangements with our primary feeder schools
- continue to prioritise and develop our work with pupils with all additional needs including our VI and HI pupils.

Extend our pupils learning experiences

- Further develop the work of the Eco-council.
- Further develop our winter competitions.
- Continue to support and develop the 'Comenius project'.
- Enhance and develop the role of the 'houses'.

Developing Staff, the Site and our Resources

- Review regularly our staffing structure to ensure that we continue to deliver our statutory needs and that we meet the needs of our pupils.
- Promote the contribution of our staff, through providing leadership opportunities for staff across the school
- Meet our building needs and improve facilities for Physical Education in partnership with the LEA.
- Improve our facilities for our Visually and Hearing Impaired pupils.
- Continue to plan for the impact of the School Organisation plan.

September 2008

Responding to the report:

If you would like a meeting to discuss the report, you will have to formally request a meeting through Mr Dan Roberts, Chairman of the Board of Governors within 7 days of receiving the report.