

Governors Annual Report to Parents/Carers – Full Report

St. Mary’s Catholic Primary School Flint

September 2019 – July 2020

All governing bodies of maintained schools are required to produce an annual report to parents with statutory contents which are detailed in guidance from the Governor Wales website.

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Introduction from the Chair of Governors

Dear Parents/Carers and supporters of St Mary's,

The past academic year has been truly extraordinary in every respect. In Sept 2019, the new school year started in "normal" fashion but by March 2020 the whole of the UK was in lockdown including sadly the closure our own School community.

We started 2020 in an incredibly positive fashion with Estyn confirming that we had delivered all elements of our prior Post Inspection Action plan. The school with its strong catholic ethos and inclusive community has now fully implemented the 'person centred thinking' approach across the whole school which focusses on understanding the needs of individual children. The benefit of this approach continues to be seen in the increasing attainment of pupil's individual "value added" learning steps as they make their journey from Nursery/Foundation to Upper Key Stage Two. This is a strategy that clearly focuses developing individual learning plans and objectives for each child no matter what their academic starting point may be,

Sadly, we never got to celebrate Easter this year as the national lockdown came into force. The whole school team coordinated by the senior leadership team immediately responded by putting in place a range of initiatives to support continued learning opportunities for our children. The following extract from an open letter recognises the fantastic effort by all involved to keep our school community connected during this worrying time.

On behalf of all the Governing Body I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the team for your outstanding efforts to continue to support the education and welfare of the children of St Mary's 'key worker' families.

It has been 7 weeks since we have had to close the school with the staff team organised into a rota to support the teaching team in the St Mary's wing of the Gwynedd primary Hub. To compliment this support, the school team have, with the use of IT/media been able to provide 'distance learning' opportunities to the wider school community. I am sure that parents have been extremely grateful for the 'helping hand' to guide and support the efforts of the 'school of Mum and Dad'!

When the Welsh Government first announced the planned three-week restart to school life in early July, we were all very apprehensive and had several initial concerns. Our school Head Miss Molyneux led the team in compiling a very comprehensive Risk Assessment to ensure both children and staff would remain safe in a Covid secure environment. Looking back, we all feel it was the right decision as our children were incredibly happy to be reconnected with both teachers and friends after being apart for so long.

Distance learning support became an extremely important link between school and home during the lockdown period.

For those with internet connections the school web site (<http://www.stmarysflintshire.co.uk/>) along with twitter feeds and regular updates via email became a critical link. For those without IT links staff produced home "work packs" to try and support distance learning.

We are pleased that the marked fall in the nursery intake from the prior year has been partly reversed in this last year and although in the short term there has been a financial impact we are starting to "balance the books". We want to continue to promote St Mary's as a school of choice for local families.

On behalf of the Governing Body I would like to thank the Senior Leadership Team and all the teaching and support staff for all their hard work and dedication to St Mary's. Also, my sincere thanks to all who support the school in a wide range of different ways (especially the PTA) through fund raising and practically assisting our classroom teachers and pupils.

The PTA provides a vital support to the school and currently there is an urgent need for more parents to support the PTA.

Finally, as most of you know our Head teacher for the past 12 years Miss Molyneux will be retiring at the end of year and the attached extract letter recognises her outstanding contribution during that time and the lasting legacy she leaves as we welcome our new Head teacher Paul Phillips.

Dear Parents/Carers and staff of St Mary's

Our current Head Miss Molyneux has after much soul searching decided to retire on the 31st December 2020 and will take a richly deserved "breather" from teaching.

On behalf of the Governors of St Mary's I would like to take this opportunity to formally recognise and to thank Rachel for her unique and outstanding contribution to the management of St Mary's School over the past 12 years. Rachel's driving passion to instil the Catholic ethos we all seek along with her professional leadership skills has allowed the school (pupils and staff) to continue to build a welcoming, caring and compassionate

community where children's individual education and dignity has been able to flourish.

Her care for what she often referred to as 'our little people' has always been personally evident in helping create a safe learning environment in a warm and inclusive community where every pupil's educational progress is valued and nurtured.

Rachel is a highly respected leader in local educational circles holding the role of Chair of the Heads Federation and as such successfully bringing that important 'catholic voice' into the local Education Authority's decision-making processes.

As our school leader she has successfully cultivated a wide range of partnerships with parents, church, and local businesses/community to support pupil learning and progress. Her personal passion in championing the work of the Rainbows group (Bereavement support GB) once again illustrates her caring and compassionate nature. Rachel has confirmed she will continue to work with other schools in terms of training after retirement in her role as Trustee of the charity.

The Governors owe Rachel a heartfelt and sincere vote of thanks in working tirelessly in seeking and delivering continual improvement in every aspect of school life. We can honestly say that she will leave a real and lasting legacy from her decade of leadership at St Mary's supporting the Governors with her wise counsel and passionate focus on improving pupil learning attainments along with protecting the wellbeing of all within the special community that is St Mary's.

We wish her all the best for the future and a safe and healthy retirement. She will be sadly missed by the Governing Body as she will also be by all her friends and colleagues.

Philip Leddy (Chair of Governors)

Governor Meetings & Annual Report to Parents

Governors meet termly and committees meet two weeks in advance of each Full Governing Body Meeting to discuss Finance, Curriculum, Health and Safety issues and report back to the full board of Governors. Any issues concerning the schools Mission and Purpose is discussed by the full Governing Body.

Due to the extraordinary circumstances in 2020 we have been advised that we do not need to include sections on School performance, targets, or attendance in this report as data is not applicable due to unplanned school closure. Staff do have assessment evidence of achievement and value-added progress, but this is not reported on this year. We will recommence reporting progress in these sections when data becomes meaningful. The latest update from the Welsh Government is that National testing will not be undertaken in 2021. Teacher based assessment will continue to support individual pupil “value added” progress throughout the child’s learning journey through the school.

If you have specific questions that you would like to be answered please send them into school. Please note that anonymous questions will not be answered.

The current parent governor is Clare Hall. The next election is due in September 2022.

Term Dates - 2020/2021

Autumn Term	Inset Day/s SCHOOL CLOSED	School opens	School Closes	School Reopens	School Closes
Sept 1 st – Dec 18 th	Sept 1 st and 2 nd Planning and Preparation Days Sept 3 rd and 4 th Inset Days	Monday Sept 7 th	Friday Oct 23 rd	Monday Nov 2 nd	Friday Dec 18 th
Spring Term	Monday Jan 4 th	Tuesday Jan 5 th	Friday Feb 12 th	Monday Feb 22 nd	Friday March 26 th
Summer Term	Monday April 12 th	Tuesday April 13 th	Friday May 28 th	Monday June 7 th	Friday July 16 th
Summer Term	Monday July 19 th and Tuesday July 20 th				

Please note – this academic year an additional Inset Day has been allocated by the Welsh Government

(6 days in total) so that staff can prepare appropriately for the new curriculum. Its launch has not been delayed despite lockdown which is disappointing.

As there are five Catholic primary schools and St Richard Gwyn Secondary school in Flintshire school have an annual Diocesan Inset day and try to agree the days to support parents who have siblings in St Richard Gwyn. While school try their utmost to honour the LA days, they may be different so please follow these dates, not the dates on Flintshire Website. As soon as the days have been agreed, for 2021/2022 parents will be notified though the School Newsletter and the website.

3 a) Governors

Governing Body:

Governor	Name
Headteacher	Rachel Molyneux
Chair	Phil Leddy
Deputy	Laura Loftus
Foundation	Fr Adrian Wilcock
Foundation	Ian Evans
Foundation	Sian Williams
Foundation	Clare Hansen
Foundation	Thomsz Szczuka
Teacher	Ais Knight
Staff	Karen Dalton
Parent	Clare Hall
Town Council	Vacancy
Clerk	Carol Sheane

Governors regularly attend training provided by the Diocese and the LA.

b) Prospectus

The school prospectus is reviewed annually and is available on the school website.

c) Policies

Policies are reviewed annually by Governors regularly on a rolling scheme.

All policies are available to be viewed and parents can ask for a copy of any policy, but a small fee will be charged to cover the cost of photocopying

d) Curriculum



The Aims and Ethos of Our School

In line with **Our Mission Statement**,

'We Live, Learn and Grow Together in Jesus'

'Dwi'n byw, dysgu ac tyfu efo'n gilydd yn Iesu'

our primary aim as a Catholic Voluntary Aided School is to enable the children to become aware of God's presence in their lives and encourage their response to His invitation to enter a personal relationship with Him.

We would hope that all that occurs in our school gives us the opportunity to show God's loving care for each other and for everyone involved with the family of St. Mary's.

Our school is committed to the development of the whole child, we hope that by fostering a caring Christian inclusive community with a secure, happy, stimulating environment linked with a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum each child will fulfil their potential spiritually, academically, physically and emotionally. It is our belief as teachers in a Catholic school that every child and adult in our care is unique and created in the image and likeness of God and possesses special characteristics and qualities, which it is our task to bring out to the full.

Religious Life of The School

Religious Education is the core of our Catholic School. The school uses the 'Come and See' Religious Education programme to encourage and support children to further develop their own knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith. We aim every day to live out our Mission Statement:

'We Live, Learn and Grow Together in Jesus'

'Dwi'n byw, dysgu ac tyfu efo'n gilydd yn Iesu'

In a normal year we relate to the cycle of the Church's year with liturgical celebrations and assemblies. Fr. Adrian visits school to share Mass with us every term and on special occasions so that we can celebrate all our achievements during the term and ask God to bless us in all that we strive to do in our school and Parish community. The School joins with the Parish to prepare and celebrate the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

Unfortunately, the pandemic lockdown from March 2020 sadly prevented Fr Adrian continuing his regular school visits and Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion have had to be delayed this year. The school web site has allowed the sharing of the Parish website newsletter along with access to recorded weekly Mass for pupils and their families. (www.flintcatholicparish.org.uk)

Foundation Phase Curriculum

Children throughout Foundation Phase follow a curriculum designed to allow the holistic development of the child. Young children's growth and development varies and the Foundation Phase curriculum acknowledges and promotes this. The curriculum sets out experiences and skills within the areas of learning and the activities and provision set out in our excellent indoor and outdoor learning environment supports this.

The areas of learning are:

- Language, Literacy and Communication
- Personal and Social Development, Wellbeing and Cultural Diversity
- Mathematical Development
- Welsh Language Development
- Knowledge and understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

ICT skills and Curriculum Cymraeg enhance each of these learning areas wherever possible.

School Curriculum

School provides a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum, where all children can develop independence and skills for life. We work with individual children to ensure that they achieve their potential and cater for all children's unique characters, talents, needs and interests.

The New National Welsh Curriculum to be introduced from 2021 onwards will focus on six Areas of Learning.

- Language, Literacy and Communication (English and Welsh),
- Maths and Numeracy,
- Science and Technology,
- Expressive Arts,
- Health and Wellbeing
- Humanities. (Welsh Government include Religious Education in Humanities but Catholic Schools will continue to deliver this as the core of the curriculum and will continue to follow and develop the Come and See Programme)

Religious Education

Religious Education is the heart of the curriculum in our Catholic school. The children enjoy the experiences from the 'Come and See' programme that we use.

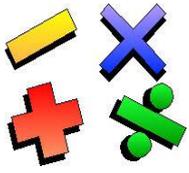
Core Subjects at Key Stage Two

English

Key Stage 2 work within the National Curriculum Guidelines covering **Oracy**, **Reading** and **Writing**. We enable children to develop skills to communicate their ideas both verbally and in written form. Children are encouraged to read widely, for pleasure as well as for information.

All learners' needs are met through a variety of creative teaching approaches that develop the three main strands of the English Curriculum.





Mathematics

Our aim is that all children acquire mathematical skills and concepts in a way that has relevance for them in the outside world as well as throughout the curriculum.

We work within the National Curriculum Framework for Wales that covers four areas.

- Using and Applying Mathematics,
- Number and Algebra
- Shape, Space and Measures and
- Handling Data.



Science

Science gives us an understanding of ourselves and the world around us. As a core subject it has an important part to play in our school curriculum. By building upon the natural sense of wonder and curiosity of the children we aim to help them to find answers to their questions. This is mainly through the use of practical activities and firsthand investigations in which they will develop their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding.

There are two main areas of Science - Planning and Communicating and Developing and Reflecting.



Digital Competency

Digital competency at Key Stage 2 is taught during focused ICT sessions and through planned activities in other subjects. The school keep abreast of up-to-date and relevant technology. We also put a strong emphasis on teaching the children to use ICT safely.

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Welsh

Welsh is taught as a second language to;

- Ensure that the children enjoy lessons therefore fostering a positive attitude to the Welsh Language
- Endeavour to make Welsh a living language within the school community
- Foster a real interest in Wales, Welsh Heritage and Culture through class -work, assemblies and visits



National Literacy and Numeracy Framework

This provides a structured and progressive framework for schools to develop and embed children's literacy and numeracy skills across all areas of the curriculum. In May children from Years 2-6 will sit National Tests in Reading Comprehension, Procedural Maths and Numerical Reasoning.

Foundation Subjects at Key Stage Two

The Foundation Subjects at Key Stage Two are Art, Design Technology, Geography, History, Music, Physical Education and Personal, Social and Health Education and are taught through vibrant cross-curricular themes.



ESDGC

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship is a special part of the whole school curriculum every year. This is a time where children have the opportunity to explore, investigate, experience and develop their awareness of different countries and their cultures to ensure a respect for all.

Relationships and Sex Education

The school has adopted the Diocesan Policy for Relationships and Sex Education, Journey in Love, and governors, parents and staff have all been trained and informed about the content of this new programme. All children have lessons in Personal and Social Education (appropriate to their age). Parents are kept fully informed and are welcome to view teaching materials/discuss any issues prior to lessons.

Governors and the Head teacher liaise with the Diocese to ensure that our Policy complies with Diocesan Guidelines.

Record Keeping and Reporting to Parents

Staff are continually assessing the children and recording progress. An early assessment is made shortly after they have started school. This helps the teachers to get to know each individual child ensuring that all make appropriate progress.

We invite you into school to discuss your child's progress with the teacher during the Autumn and Spring Terms. A full report is provided in the Summer Term celebrating your child's achievements and progress.

Additional Learning Needs

St. Mary's is an inclusive school. We recognise the uniqueness of every individual and the contribution that each individual brings to our school community. We work together with pupils and parents to ensure that all children regardless of any 'additional need' receive the best quality education in order to meet their individual needs.



All pupils' learning needs are met through a differentiated curriculum. Sometimes, it may be necessary for pupils to receive additional support in order to make sufficient progress in their learning. Support from the Additional Learning Needs Teacher may be provided within the classroom or pupils may be withdrawn on an individual/group basis. Parents are always kept fully informed and are an integral part of the process of agreeing and reviewing pupil learning targets. Welsh ALN reforms were due to be introduced in January 2020 but this has now been delayed until September 2021.

Equal Opportunities

At St. Mary's we believe that as God's children all people are of equal value and, as such deserve equality of opportunity, thus enabling them to fulfil their maximum potential. To achieve this we endeavour to promote equality and to minimise discrimination in all aspects of school life. All members of our school community, irrespective of race, culture, religion, sex or disability are valued and respected, and treated with courtesy and consideration, so each individual has a true sense of dignity and self-worth.

For disabled pupils there are ramps for access throughout the school and two disabled toilet facilities. Adaptations have been made to allow easy access to all parts of the school buildings.



ST MARY'S (189)

FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2019/2020

BUDGET HEADING	BUDGET 2019/2020	EXPENDITURE 2019/2020	DIFF + OR (-)
BALANCE FROM 2018/2019	160,492	-	160,492
EMPLOYEES	757,382	958,620	-201,238
PREMISES	62,964	52,077	10,887
SUPPLIES	39,239	38,929	310
ADULT MEALS/LINK COURSES		102	-102
SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS	47,266	51,437	-4,171
INCOME	-	-175,128	175,128
TOTAL 2019/20	1,067,343	926,037	141,306

Budget is always a concern as the majority of the budget is spent on staffing. As St Mary's have a very experienced team of staff costs are high but this emphasises the very good quality of education and provision that your children receive. (This does not mean that less experienced staff are not good, but as in all professions, people develop skills as they gain experience).

Numbers of pupils also have a significant effect on budget because each child is allocated an amount of funding. High numbers of Year 6 children leaving and small numbers joining Reception can cause up to £50,000 loss in one year. Schools depend on grants from Welsh Government and these are reduced depending upon National and Local funding. It is a constant concern for everyone trying to do the best they can for all of the children and staff.

Community Links

There are informal links with the local community at different times throughout the year:

Links with Church of the Immaculate Conception

- Sacramental Programme
- Masses when whole school go to Church e.g. Feast of the Immaculate Conception- this is a big commitment from school as buses have to be ordered because of weather and little legs!
- Beginning and End of term Masses – Fr. Adrian visits school and Mass is celebrated in the school hall, these are always a very dignified celebration and a great success with increasing parental support.
- Feast Day Masses
- One Parish catechist works as a Teaching Assistant in school so can maintain an ongoing links and support children through the Parish

NB Sadly from March 2020 it was no longer possible due to Covid regulations to continue the normal links with our parish church although the school and Parish remain virtually connected through their respective websites

Links with Local Community

- Exceptionally good links with Saint Richard Gwyn school-there are regular meetings, discussions about standards, transition projects and involvement in their annual drama productions and Eisteddfod.
- Flintshire Food Bank, local vulnerable families – all receive harvest products in the Autumn Term along with regular donations of food /vouchers from the local SVP conference
- Fairtrade stalls are present at Summer and Christmas Fayres. Also support the Fairtrade 'Big Brew' event which is a great success and is growing annually.
- Staff and pupils visit the Library and staff from there come to talk to pupils about holiday Reading Projects
- Community Police visit school each term and lead sessions on various topics that relate to the curriculum.
- All of Year 6 attend the annual Mass at Wrexham Cathedral which is for every child in the Diocese – this is always a great celebration.
- The five Catholic Flintshire schools go to Pantasaph for the annual retreat. Saint Richard Gwyn send their transition staff; Head of Year 7, the Bishop and Fr. Adrian are invited.

Links with the Global Community

- World Gifts – this has been a fabulous success and has grown over the years. Children are asked to send only one Christmas card to the whole class and donate the surplus for a World Gift. Each class chooses what their gift will be.
- School have linked with a school in Nepal and have developed an ICT programme where the pupils e mail and communicate with each other.

Miscellaneous:

All pupils have at least two hours of curriculum PE during their week. This includes manipulative skills in Foundation Phase where cutting and malleable play are included. Swimming lessons for children from Year One to Year Six are an important part of Physical Education.

There are a variety of after-school clubs available for the pupils which are led by staff on the basis of good will.

Thanks must be noted to Mr. Nev Powell who continues to lead an after school club every week to support our children, his commitment is commendable. He also runs holiday soccer schools here in St. Mary's which many of our children attend.

Language Category

The school language category is Welsh bi-lingual. Bi-lingualism and the teaching of Welsh as a second language is a priority in St. Mary's Catholic School. All staff, including support staff, secretary and DRA's are encouraged to support the school in developing the use of incidental Welsh in all aspects of the school day. Welsh is now a core subject in schools in Wales and as such, children's achievements have to be reported. Oracy carries 70% of the score so it is important that the children are encouraged to speak Welsh wherever possible.

Toilet Facilities

4 blocks of toilets are available for use, all of which are maintained to a high standard on a regular basis.

Healthy Eating

St. Mary's have worked hard with parents and pupils to support the healthy snack. All pupils are encouraged to donate 25p per day and choose from a variety of fruits and vegetables (season dependent). Some children still bring in crisps and chocolate which is a shame because funding is allocated for additional sporting events if a school supports the healthy eating programme.

Breakfast Club also follow the healthy schools' rules and encourage the children

School work hard on three actions across the school to earn their Healthy Schools Award every year.

School Council

St. Mary's have a very active School Council who meet at least once a term to discuss issues that their classes raise, their class representatives who are voted for then represent their views at the meeting.

They take responsibility for typing the minutes and e-mailing them to the Chair of Governors, who also attends all the meetings and supports any direct request for help from the Council. They also put information on Twitter for parents to be aware of e.g. World Gifts. The children lead the meetings and Mrs. Jones and Miss Molyneux attend. Each year, the children, who are as young as six, surprise the adults with their ability to share information and listen to other points of view.

Thank you for your support.