



Ysgol Uwchradd LLANIDLOES High School

GOFAL

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MINUTES

Llanidloes Schools' Federation Governing Body Meeting; Wednesday 7 January 2026, 6.30 pm at the primary school

PRESENT

In person: Clare Bound, Margot Jones, Daniel Owen, Adrian Foulkes, Megan Higgs, Sally Fowler, Christoph Schultz, Angela Williams, Lisa E Davies

Via Teams: Lisa Ashton, Sarah Purdy, Karl Lewis, Jordan Davies

IN ATTENDANCE

Huw Cripps (secondary school School Improvement Adviser), Richard Williams (secondary school deputy headteacher), Ruth Davies (primary school acting deputy headteacher), Helen Rees (clerk)

1. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT, SECONDARY SCHOOL

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that part of this item be minuted as confidential.

Huw Cripps presented a report to the chair, vice chair and headteachers which the secondary school headteacher would present to all governors. Governors asked Mr Cripps if he felt that the school should have had more input from LA officers immediately after publication of their Estyn report. Mr Cripps told governors that he was not working for the local authority at that time, but that the school was now collaboratively working with the local authority and other schools and making effective progress. New appointments had increased capacity and officers had worked with heads of departments to identify areas for improvement, all of which were being worked on. There would be opportunities for governors to join forthcoming monitoring events, such as meetings of the Improvement Board (IB). Mr Cripps was thanked for his contribution.

Huw Cripps left the meeting

The headteacher told governors that Estyn would make a monitoring visit to the school, probably just before Easter, as they had decided that progress was still required. Following this visit the school would either be taken out of monitoring or put into a category; there would be no further extension of monitoring.

Teaching and learning support had been provided by Jess Davies, assistant headteacher at Ysgol Penglais, and John Sullivan, an English specialist external consultant. Anthony Bebb, LA adviser, and the LA subject advisory team had provided additional support. The school was working in partnership with Radyr Comprehensive School and an LA adviser to address wellbeing and attendance, as well as with skills advisers specialising in literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

Lisa E Davies joined the meeting

Governors asked how the support was accessed and were told that there were planned visits and activities that could be requested as required, for example, the delivery of professional learning.

Recommendation 1: the headteacher told governors that a more focussed and integrated PIAP was in place. Each Curriculum Area Lead's (CAL) improvement plans were specifically linked to the PIAP. The inconsistency in the quality of evaluations made by middle leaders had been addressed by the introduction of joint quality assurance (QA) activities. Line management meetings had a greater focus on pupil progress and the quality of teaching and CALs attended termly IB meetings.

Professional learning had not always been targeted to address precise areas. This was a priority for the deputy headteacher who had introduced an extensive professional learning programme for all staff. Feedback had been the focus during the Autumn term and questioning had been added for the Spring term.

As part of the new Professional Development Review process for teaching staff, objectives had been set that were closely linked to the recommendations.

It was also planned to improve federation working, especially regarding Year 6 to 7 transition and the coherence of the curriculum. It was suggested that it could be useful to share the CAT (Cognitive Ability Test) scores achieved by children in Year 4 and then Year 7 for comparison.

Support had been focussed on identifying strategies that had the greatest impact on improving progress.

Recommendation 2: it had been noted in the LA report that many teachers demonstrated evidence that learning objectives aligned with planned activities; it would be important to demonstrate this during the Estyn visit.

As a matter of routine, all teachers had the same expectations for all learners, for example, that they were ready to learn, so time was committed to activities that increased learning and provided challenge. All CALs had linked planning priorities to improving teaching and learning.

Governors asked whether the same priorities applied to the Welsh stream and were told that the Welsh stream had come out well in the Estyn report, so the current focus was on the English stream. For example, at the time of inspection, 40% of learners sat the English Literature GCSE examination, but this had now increased to 70%. Challenge in Welsh lessons had already increased, and support been provided by a Welsh-medium primary school. Further support was planned for the Welsh stream to provide appropriate levels of challenge, more aligned with challenge and expectation in the primary phase.

Governors expressed surprise that 40% of lessons observed during the Estyn inspection had been found to be not good enough. The headteacher told governors that the descriptor applied to a range of 21 - 39%, and that in this minority of lessons, planning had not taken into account the starting point of learners. Therefore there had been an emphasis on providing increased challenge. Middle leaders now had more confidence to have difficult and robust conversations. Regular line management meetings ensured that everyone was held to account and QA activities identified risks and issues which were then addressed. Governors asked if there was evidence that the minority of ineffective lessons had decreased and were told that there was. Estyn inspectors would triangulate evidence provided by the school with evidence from learning walks and book scrutinies to formulate their judgements. The school tried to emulate this by using their own QA activities to quantify judgements. These were then verified by LA officers who confirmed that they had seen the same evidence and therefore formulated joint LA/school judgements. Governors asked for data to be shared with them so it was agreed that data from Autumn term CAL reviews and the overview report would be shared at the governing body meeting on 4 February. Data from the forthcoming IB meetings would be available at the governing body meeting on 18 March.

Recommendation 4: the new Associate Senior Leader with responsibility for this area had made a positive start. Robust procedures and interventions had already resulted in increased attendance.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Linda Broughall, Jamie Jones and Gareth Morgan.

Governor not present and from whom apologies had not been received by the clerk was Heather Willis.

The meeting was quorate, therefore business proceeded.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST/BUSINESS INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Angela Williams was welcomed to her first meeting as a primary school parent governor. There was one vacancy for a primary school parent governor for which nominations would be requested.

5. BUSINESS OF MEETING

It was agreed to follow the order of business as set out in the agenda. No items were identified to be discussed under 'any other business'.

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the governing body held on 24 September were confirmed and would be filed in the schools' file.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT INCLUDED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

Item 16, Year 11 and 13 examination results analysis: governors asked if the IB had met as planned and whether there was anything to report regarding results in mathematics. The headteacher confirmed that the IB had met the previous term and that LA mathematics specialist advisers had provided support. Measurable improvement was expected following analysis of QA activities.

Lisa Ashton was welcomed back to school in her role as acting headteacher, working remotely at first. The arrangement would be reviewed at the end of January. Ruth Davies was thanked for providing consistency and stability in her role as acting interim headteacher during the Autumn term.

8. DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

It was agreed that it was important to appoint link governors to each AoLE and that these would be invited to join the secondary school IB meetings, the next of which were planned for 5 and 6 February.

The following link governors were appointed:

Humanities: Adrian Foulkes

Mathematics and Numeracy: Angela Williams

Languages, Literacy and Communication: Sally Fowler and Sarah Purdy

Science and Technology: Christoph Schultz
Health and Wellbeing: Lisa E Davies

9. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT, PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governors commented that they appreciated having the report made available well in advance of the meeting.

Karl Lewis left the meeting

Governors asked about progress on Priority 2, to improve pupils' writing skills in English. The headteacher told governors that there had been measurable progress, but that this was not at the pace originally envisaged due to the greatly reduced capacity of the SLT team, and the literacy coordinator having also been acting headteacher and ALNCo. The focus was now on the QA activities detailed in the monitoring calendar. It was noted that the priority could be extended for another year if required. Governors commented that writing skills in English were usefully transferable to other languages.

10. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Pupil Discipline and Exclusions committee had met on 1 July and upheld the secondary school headteacher's decision to permanently exclude two pupils. This had been upheld by an independent appeal hearing.

The Staffing and Finance Committee had met on 15 October. Clare Bound had been elected as chair and Linda Broughall as vice chair. The primary school budget forecast a small surplus at the end of the year 2025-26. The secondary school had submitted a deficit recovery plan as expected, although it was hoped that the new funding formula would improve the position. Governors commented that it was difficult to plan a realistic budget for the following three years when the effects of the formula change were unknown.

Curriculum and Strategic Planning Committee had met on 19 November when Adrian Foulkes had been elected as chair and Sally Fowler as vice chair. The meeting had started with a learning walk around the primary school, focussed on Welsh. The committee had reviewed progress on both schools' SDP priorities. It was agreed that the committee would focus on specific areas so as not to repeat discussions had at full governing body meetings. The committee had considered secondary school attendance and it was noted that it was important not to identify families by name or the inclusion of unique details.

11. POWYS SCHOOLS DATA MATRIX

Governors were told that headteachers had suggested alterations to the matrix, so the introduction was on hold while it was re-drafted.

12. CROCS, EARLY YEARS PROVISION

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that this item be minuted as confidential.

13. POST-16 PROVISION

A working group including Dan Owen, Margot Jones, Jamie Jones, Linda Broughall and Sally Fowler had met to consider the provision. The LA had undertaken stakeholder consultations in the Autumn term and had received

thousands of responses which were taking time to analyse. Governor consultations were due to take place in the Spring term. The Cabinet would select their preferred option in Autumn 2026. The headteacher told governors that schools were attempting to address the concerns that the Cabinet had raised, including transport and access to courses. It had been recognised that the requirement for a regular face-to-face meeting for online students could be disproportionately expensive when students were spread over a wide geographical area. It was felt that Llanidloes, Newtown, Bro Hyddgen and Bro Caereinion formed a cluster with realistic travel options where students could arrive at their own school then access onward transport. It had also been suggested that Access courses could be provided on the school site rather than at NPTC to cater for a wider range of students.

Headteachers would meet with the transformation team on 21 January, so it was agreed that the working group, including Clare Bound, would meet again on 28 January to hear feedback from this.

14. SECONDARY SCHOOL, TEACHERS' DIRECTED HOURS

It was agreed to postpone this item to the next governing body meeting.

15. PRIMARY SCHOOL, SCHOOL FUND ACCOUNTS 1 SEPTEMBER 2024 – 31 AUGUST 2025

Audited accounts had not yet been received so this item would be postponed until the next governing body meeting.

16. SECONDARY SCHOOL, SCHOOL FUND ACCOUNTS

The chair was awaiting information requested from the business manager. The item would be postponed until the next governing body meeting.

17. GOVERNORS' ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS

The secondary school headteacher told governors that the report had been circulated to parents. The primary school report would be compiled as soon as possible.

18. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Both schools were due separate Health and Safety audits with Terry Hampton, LA Health and Safety Adviser, on 3 March.

Governors expressed concern that the secondary school visitors' car park was unlit. The headteacher told governors that the original proposal included solar powered lights. Cables had been laid for these, but the lights not yet installed. The headteacher would ask for a progress report.

19. SAFEGUARDING

Both schools' annual safeguarding audits had been circulated to governors. Margot Jones, governor with responsibility for safeguarding, had met with Andrew Morel to discuss the secondary school audit. Governors agreed that all areas had been thoroughly addressed and approved the audits.

20. POLICIES AND PUBLICATIONS

It was agreed that the new Powys LA – Schools Partnership Agreement for 2025-28 would be discussed at a future governing body meeting. The secondary school headteacher told governors that the LA expectations of schools had been considerably increased.

Discussion of the Uniform and Behaviour Policies and the primary school Business Continuity Disaster Recovery Plan would be deferred to a future meeting of the governing body.

Governors agreed to adopt the Safeguarding Policy which had been adapted from a new LA template.

Governors agreed to adopt the primary school Lockdown Policy. The headteacher told governors that termly drills were held, although, as the LA had not yet installed an alarm, staff used whistles which could not be heard over the whole site. Consideration had been given to window coverings and means of quietly occupying children for the duration of a lockdown.

21. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

Governors were reminded to inform the clerk of any training completed.

22. DOCUMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AND/OR CLERK

There were no such items.

23. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AS, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, IS OF SUFFICIENT URGENCY TO WARRANT CONSIDERATION

There were no such items.

24. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that part of item 1 and item 12 be minuted as confidential.

25. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Governors were reminded to notify any such items to the clerk at least two weeks before the meeting date.

26. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Full governing body

Wednesday 4 February 2026

Wednesday 18 March 2026

Wednesday 29 April 2026 (budget approval 2026-27)

Wednesday 1 July 2026

Curriculum and strategic planning committee

Wednesday 4 March 2026

Wednesday 17 June 2026

Staffing and finance committee

Wednesday 21 January 2026

Wednesday 15 April 2026 (budget approval 2026-27; first week of term)