

HEADTEACHER'S GOVERNORS' REPORT **AUTUMN TERM 2015**

Introduction presented by Mr S M Jones, Headteacher

The school has, once again enjoyed a remarkably successful 12 months. Not only have the examinations results continued to set new records for the school and Wales, but the structure supporting the wellbeing and achievement of pupils has been further enhanced and improved. Meanwhile, the school has worked hard to ensure that the environment supports the excellent experience pupils receive. The following report outlines much of this work and will, hopefully, make very enjoyable reading.

Summer Examination Results 2015 – Presented by Mrs H Lewis, Assistant Headteacher

Examination performances this year were outstanding once again with the 2015 cohort recording record levels of attainment in all key measures.

- No pupil left Cardiff High School without 5 qualifications - 100% of the cohort achieved the Level 1 threshold (5 A* to G grades)
- A record 98% of pupils achieved the Level 2 threshold (5 A* to C grades)
- 93% of pupils achieved a grade C or better in Mathematics
- 94% achieved at least a C in English
- 94% achieved at least a C in Science
- 89% of the cohort achieved, arguably, the most significant threshold of Level 2+ (5 A* to C grades including English and Mathematics) with an amazing 100% of those pupils entitled to Free School Meals achieving this coveted threshold.
- The school continues to support SEN and vulnerable pupils resulting in some excellent individual achievements

As was the case last year, this L2+ performance is the highest of any comprehensive school in Wales and represents attainment in line with top performing institutions across the whole of the UK. Our skilled teaching professionals, our experienced and knowledgeable achievement team and our supremely dedicated support staff have all worked together to establish and promote a culture of high expectation and achievement backed up by superb pastoral care. We believe that it is this team approach, this aspirational environment and positive ethos, which has helped more children than ever reach their goals this year.

The national focus, as in previous years was on the L2+ threshold. However, the assessment and accountability processes applied to secondary school performance will change significantly in the coming years. With this in mind, Cardiff High School has been carefully and strategically planning to ensure that pupils are appropriately prepared for these new assessment arrangements. The new measures will place emphasis on all grades, rather than on the achievement of at least a C grade.

Our commitment to push every pupil to achieve the very best they can was evident this year in the high numbers of top grades awarded to students in the 2015 cohort. 36% of pupils achieved 5 A* to A grades including English and Mathematics.

Cardiff High School also enjoyed excellent results at Key Stage 5 in 2015. 40% of grades awarded were A* or A compared to 26% nationally, 81% were A* to C and 97% were A* to E. Students were particularly successful in the Welsh Baccalaureate which was graded for the first time in 2015 and this achievement secured university places for a significant number of students. The proportion of students achieving the Level 3 threshold (at least 2 A* to E grades) remains high at 99%. 3 students achieved 4 A* grades, a further 5 achieved 3 A* grades and 2 students secured Oxbridge places.

These performances are particularly pleasing, given that the Cardiff High Sixth Form continues to grow and the entrance requirement remains very open and inclusive at just 5 GCSEs at grade C.

At Key Stage 3 our younger pupils also performed exceptionally well during the last academic year with an outstanding 95.8% of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (at least Level 5 in English, Maths and Science) at the end of Key Stage Three. This achievement represents attainment well in excess of national averages. The recent National Reading and Numeracy test results showed performances significantly above local and national averages.

Departmental performance data for all key stages is examined in detail and discussed at scheduled meetings with each curriculum leader early in the autumn term. This analysis drills down to pupil level data to identify trends and patterns in both raw and value added data. These discussions ensure transparency and accountability and inform future planning. Recent exam performance analysis has shown that, at all key stages, groups of learners with additional learning needs achieve similar results to the general cohort, a testament to the care and support they receive in Cardiff High School. Similarly, analysis has also shown that there is little significant discrepancy in the performances of pupils from different genders, ethnic or social backgrounds; a further indication of the genuine inclusive environment.

Performance Management presented by Mr S Thompson, Deputy Headteacher

The current performance management cycle has now come to an end. This has involved every member of the teaching staff. Smart targets focused on school and departmental improvement plans (set up a year ago) have been successfully achieved. This improvement planning cycle contributes significantly to the on-going professional development of all staff and ensures that they remain highly skilled and proficient. The performance management system utilises the principle of performance related pay and the Pay Committee of Governors have scrutinised the process and agreed with the school's recommendations for annual pay increments for members of staff.

The cycle has now commenced again with targets being set for 2015/2016 based on the new school improvement plan and departmental improvement plans.

In addition to the performance management framework, the school has this year launched its own professional learning entitlement which outlines key areas for staff development. A key feature of this work will include the opportunity for staff to work on extended research in funded triads and also the re-launch and development of the Cardiff High School coaching scheme.

Improvement Hub Update presented by Mr S Thompson, Deputy Headteacher

Cardiff High School continues to very successfully operate as a School Improvement Hub for the Central South Consortium. The school has been at the forefront of the improvement hub agenda and to date Cardiff High School staff have been involved in providing training and professional learning opportunities for over 180 staff from the five neighbouring Local Authorities which make up the Central South region. In this academic year, Cardiff High will be responsible for training colleagues in the areas of:-

- Olevi Outstanding Teacher Programme
- Olevi Improving Teacher Programme
- Newly Qualified Teacher ASPIRE Programme
- Future Middle Leaders Programme
- Future Senior Leaders Programme

Moving forward, the school has been pivotal in the conception and development of a new NQT training programme, "Aspire" which both the Welsh Government and Central South Consortium have endorsed as a professional learning entitlement for all newly qualified teachers.

The first stage of the roll out will include training 300+ NQTs in the Central South region from November 2015. An exciting development in this area involves the school's facilitation teams providing external mentoring support to NQTs to more effectively support new teachers to the profession.

In July, the school was quality assured by Olevi, who grant the license for the Outstanding Teaching programme. Karen Hughes, the National Quality Manager visited an OTP cohort being run at the school to assess the quality and provision. The report commented on the high quality facilitation and delivery of the national programmes and the impact they were having on delegates.

Welsh Hub presented by Mrs L Evans, Curriculum Leader, Welsh Department

The Welsh Hub at Cardiff High School has been chosen as one of 3 centres of excellence in the Central South Consortium. The hub was launched on 24 September 2015 and many Welsh second language teachers across the consortium attended. Since then, the school has hosted a Conference on the use of data within the department and has facilitated the forging of links between the schools in the area in order to support one another. Courses have been organized on a monthly basis in a different location but led by the Head of Department at either Cardiff High School, Cowbridge Comprehensive or Treorchy Comprehensive. We look forward to helping schools develop their teaching of Welsh and also to gain valuable ideas from each other.

Eastern High Support Team Progress presented by Mr S M Jones, Headteacher

In March 2015, the local authority asked the school to consider working in a consultancy capacity with Eastern High School. With the support of Governors, the school agreed to support Eastern High in a number of key areas. These included Leadership, HR, Reporting and Assessment, Curriculum and Wellbeing.

This term the focus has switched to supporting the core departments of English, Maths and Science led by Simon Taylor, Assistant Headteacher, Samantha Williams, Acting Assistant Headteacher and Caroline Grennan, Curriculum Leader of Biology and Lead Learner.

Attendance presented by Mrs A Yarrow, Deputy Headteacher

Cardiff High School set itself the aspirational attendance target of 96.5% for 2014/2015 and, as reported in July, the figure submitted to the LA was 96.54% - placing the school in the top quarter of similar schools in Wales for attendance.

The current attendance rate for this term is, once again extremely encouraging – standing at just under 97%. The support within this crucial area of the school has been enhanced by the full time appointment of an Attendance Officer, Karen Holmes, to compliment the work of our existing team. Karen has a wealth of pastoral experience and will act as an excellent addition layer of support for the Wellbeing and Achievement team of the school.

The Restorative Room presented by Mrs A Yarrow, Deputy Headteacher

Having undertaken a trial of this initiative, the school was very pleased to observe its positive impact upon reducing fixed term exclusions. During the final half term of the last academic year in July 2014, there were 22 fixed term exclusions compared to 6 fixed term exclusions for the same period in July 2015. We firmly believe that for many of our students, who are in breach of school rules, a period of time at home will not positively enhance behaviour. The purpose of the Restorative Room, therefore, is to provide an internal exclusion with the unique purpose of encouraging students, with appropriate support, to reflect upon unacceptable behaviour; to undertake work provided by subject teachers and to access bespoke programmes from the Nurture provision such as Anger Management and Raising Self-Esteem. The timing of the day within the Restorative Room is not in line with the remainder of the school so that students are denied the privilege of having lunch and break with their peers. They also leave school 10 minutes after the final bell. Where appropriate, the student's day within the Restorative Room will end with a restorative meeting between the child and an affronted member of staff or fellow student. This is facilitated by the Restorative Manager. We are delighted with the appointment of the Restorative Manager – Mrs Eileen Humphries. Eileen is a behaviour support specialist teacher with many years' experience of working successfully with vulnerable and challenging learners.

English Language Lessons For Parents presented by Mrs A Yarrow, Deputy Headteacher

In a bid to further promote inclusion within the school, Ella Fraczkowska of the EMTAS team is offering English lessons to parents. These will take place in school on two occasions within a week – once during a school day and once after school – thereby providing maximum opportunity for attendance. The provision is free of charge and has been offered to all parents but with a specific focus upon families for whom English is an apparent obstacle to supporting their child in school. This is in its infancy at present – many parents have registered their interest.

Welsh Baccalaureate and Skills Challenge Certificate presented by Ms C Falcus, Assistant Headteacher

The new Welsh Baccalaureate has been implemented at Key Stage 4 and Post 16 from September 2015. The qualification itself is overarching and, along with success in achieving the Skills Challenge Certificate, requires GCSE or A level passes at the respective level. At National level, in Key Stage 4, English, Mathematics – Numeracy along with three other GCSE subjects (or two GCSEs and a vocational equivalent such as ASDAN) are required. Whilst at Advanced level in the Sixth Form two A level passes are required. At Key Stage 4, the Skills Challenge Certificate has a GCSE equivalence whereas at Advanced level, a pass in Welsh Baccalaureate has an A level equivalence.

The new Welsh Bac is graded. At Key Stage 4 the National Skills Challenge Certificate is graded A* - C and at Foundation level (GCSE D – G grade equivalence) it is graded Foundation Pass or Foundation Pass*. At advanced level the Welsh Bac is graded A* - E and for many learners will be included within their UCAS points offer.

Welsh Bac is steadily gaining recognition across British universities including Oxbridge. Year 13 will, however, continue to study the legacy Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification which is graded A*-C.

Following lengthy consideration of the most appropriate way to integrate the delivery of Welsh Bac within the curriculum and based upon previous experiences, the school has adopted an integrated approach to its delivery. As a result of this, the programme is delivered by Form Tutors during extended tutor periods on Monday and Tuesday mornings. This model has been adopted across the whole school and provides an integrated approach for provision for Skills Challenge, PSE and Careers and the World of Work. At Key Stage 3, pupils focus on developing skills in these areas that can be built upon at later Key Stages. Initial feedback from staff and pupils indicates that the programme has had a very positive start.

School Catering Update – Presented by Mrs D Macho, Business Manager

The school canteen continues to go from strength to strength with more students than ever using the facilities.

The Sixth Form provision has been extended this year to include a pre order service for lunch, as well as the ever popular tuck shop and breakfast club. Meanwhile, some Sixth Formers use the canteen in the traditional way.

New options have been tried on the menu recently, including the provision of soup and a roll (to take away in a thermal container), Chicken Pitta Pockets with salad and mayo and from the main meal option salmon fillets with new potatoes and veg or paella, all of which have proved popular. The school is constantly reviewing the menu and will continue to try new things.

The school has also increased the number of service points in order to reduce the time students have to wait in queues.

ICT & New Technologies Update 2015 – Presented by Mr R Brown, Director of New Technologies

Over the summer this year the school has successfully taken all printing “in-house”, this has made a significant saving both financially and in terms of time taken in providing support. The school no longer has an annual lease cost for printing which will help improve finances over the coming year(s) but also means that the school can remedy any issues onsite quickly without having to wait for a third party to provide support.

The school has improved communications with students and visitors alike and have installed 5 additional digital signage screens around the school to help promote more effective communication and celebrate our achievements. Classroom G19 has now been upgraded to be a classroom with ICT facilities and a future proof network cabinet which will allow for expansion as required in the future.

All Teaching Rooms of ICT have been brought up to a high standard and the school now has consistent equipment throughout. This has been well received by both staff and students and the school aims to continue to improve our facilities further over the coming year.

All staff have benefitted from a more streamlined IT helpdesk system which helps everyone keep up to date on their requests and also for the first time all school ICT facilities have been re-configured to use a simple one username/1 password system. This keeps requests for password re-sets to a minimum and improves efficiency so that students and staff are not distracted by basic issues.

The Music department are now making use of the School Ipads for composition using Garage band software and the Students in Ty Celyn now have 30 new laptops. The original laptops have been redistributed to be used in English and Learning Support/SEN.

Estates Department Update presented by Mr C Newton, Estates Manager

A hectic summer schedule saw a number of internal and external estate works being carried out which were appreciated by staff and students alike on their return in September.

With the upgrading of the sports facilities being a priority this summer, work started on Day 1 of the holidays to erect a scaffold around the outside of the Sports Hall to replace the guttering and downpipe which has long since ceased to function properly. The replacement of the guttering and downpipe not only looked aesthetically more pleasing but also resulted in a major reduction in the amount of flood water that accumulated at the back of the main building. Other works to the external area of the sports hall included the construction of a retaining wall, planting of shrubs and reseeding of a long standing bare area of playing field outside of the sports hall entrance. The school has also purchased and installed 20 outdoor benches to allow our students more use of the external grounds during break times.

Internally, the dated high powered sodium lamps in the main hall were replaced with up to date LED fixings which provided a much better light for sporting activities as well as costing a fraction of the cost to run. These also lit the sports hall up instantaneously unlike previously where staff had to wait 5-10 minutes for the hall to be light enough for curriculum activities to begin.

The removal of a store room wall at the back of the existing fitness room has allowed us to create a much larger indoor training area which in partnership with the PTA and WRU has been kitted out with the latest training equipment which is being utilised intensively by students and staff alike.

The school identified 3 sets of student toilets most in need of renovation and work was carried out over the 6 weeks to upgrade these to a more acceptable standard. The changes carried out included new flooring, ceiling and lighting and replacement of all cubicles, toilets and sinks. New mirrors, hand dryers and decoration provided the finishing touches and have been well received by all students.

Having used the conference room for the past 12 months to deliver training programmes it was felt with the number of courses the school had been commissioned to carry out and the logistics of the training remaining in its current location, that during 2015/2016 a more bespoke facility was required to move forward. The area formerly known as the Sixth Form Common Room on the top floor above the canteen was identified and the transformation began. The three classrooms and adjoining offices were stripped bare and decorated. The scope of work carried out included the replacement of existing suspended ceiling, lighting and carpeting throughout, new blinds, furniture and creation of a kitchen area to provide additional on-site catering facilities and ensure that there was no added pressure placed on the school canteen.

All rooms were painted to a high standard and the entrance doors were fitted with security locks. The 'Conference Suite' has three Teaching rooms, a kitchen, a boardroom for meetings of up to 16 and a lobby area with relaxed seating and images of Cardiff High School activities for all delegates to enjoy. The Conference Suite area can also be used as a meeting/teaching area for school staff and there have also been enquiries to use it from Cardiff Council to book it out for courses which will provide another additional revenue stream for the school with the funds being generated to enable future projects such as toilet renovations and decoration programme to continue at a much faster pace than they otherwise would.

There have been renovations to three classrooms which include decoration, new blinds, carpets and classroom tables and chairs as well as an upgrade to the offices of both the Deputy Headteachers. Future works planned include the replacement of carpets in four classrooms during the October half term together with the replacement of chairs in six classrooms. The on-going problem regarding the leaking caused by the mating of the new build extension to the existing building is in progress and designs have been drawn up and planning permission has been granted for the replacement of the leaking façade of the tower block in front of the main reception. A six week project has begun to replace up to 80% of the fluorescent lighting in the school with the latest LED technology which is not only predicted to reduce our annual electrical costs by almost £18000 which will be used to fund the project. This also creates a better lighting environment for teaching and learning to take place and will see a large reduction in the environmental impact caused from the daily running of the school. The school will also be installing additional hold open devices to the fire doors within the school which has so far created a much safer and faster journey for our pupils and staff within the school environment. Finally due to the increased numbers of our pupils/staff preferring to cycle to school, the existing storage facilities are constantly full to breaking point so we will be creating an additional safe storage area for cycles and have identified the area to the rear of the Sixth Form Centre for its safe and secure location.

Finance presented by Mr S M Jones, Headteacher

To date, the school has ensured that all spending remains within the allocated budget set. However, it is anticipated that a challenging budget settlement will be presented to schools in March 2016.

Staff Changes

It has again been a busy year for recruitment. I enclose below a list of all new staff, teaching and non-teaching.

New Staff**Teaching**

Kathryn Rickson, Teacher of English
Lee Oldfield, Teacher of English
Laura Cope, Teacher of English
Lowri Middleton, Teacher of English
Lucy Webb, Teacher of Maths
Sarah Williams, Temporary Teacher of Maths
Amy Scudder, Teacher of Maths
Emily Salt, Teacher of Maths
Fiona Barnard, Temporary Teacher of Maths
Alison Venn, Head of Lower School
Beth Wilson, Teacher of History
Shane Henry, Curriculum Leader of Chemistry
Joshua Coles, Teacher of Chemistry
Lloyd Jenkins, Teacher of Physics
Sarah Foley, Curriculum Leader of Economics & Business Studies
Sophie Marlow, Teacher of Economics & Business Studies
Daniel McGriale, Temporary Teacher of Geography (Maternity Cover)
Emma Rogers, Temporary Teacher of Geography (Maternity Cover)

Support Staff

Rhian Doubler, Assistant Cook
Kylie O'Leary, Kitchen Assistant
Eryl Browning, Teaching Assistant
Karen Holmes, Attendance Officer
Owain Marchbank, School Rugby Officer
Samantha Green, Kitchen/Catering Assistant
Claire Edge, Art Technician
Eileen Humphries, Restorative Officer
Samantha Menzies, Teaching Assistant
Kirsty Hoyles, Science Technician
Kathryn McMillan, Science Technician