

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2026-2027

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The Governing Body ratified the SDP on : 22.9.2026	

Introduction

Insert a short contextual introduction to your SDP including reference to your **vision**– showing the direct link between self-evaluation and improvement priorities. Where appropriate including links to national and local priorities.

Ysgol Bryn Onnen is a lively and busy Welsh medium school in the north of Torfaen. The school opened in 1995 when the existing provision at Pontnewynydd Welsh medium Unit was transferred to the current site in Varteg some 3miles north of Pontypool.

Currently there are 154 pupils on roll and the school has 40 half-day Nursery spaces (20 pupils in the Nursery at the start of the academic year). The school currently has 6 classes. The Nursery is split into a morning and afternoon session. Currently all Nursery pupils attend either the morning or afternoon session.

The school's catchment area encompasses the town of Blaenafon, the villages of Talywain, Farteg and Garndiffaith as well as some northern suburbs of Pontypool.

Very few pupils come from Welsh speaking homes and there are very few opportunities for pupils to use the Welsh language outside of school in the community. However, the number of parents able to speak some Welsh is increasing as past pupils begin to send their children to Ysgol Bryn Onnen. A minority of pupils in Nursery access Welsh medium wraparound provision through Cylch Meithrin Abersychan. Almost all pupils continue their education at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw on completion of their education at Ysgol Bryn Onnen. Since April 2023 the school has been part of Carreg Lam's Welsh language immersion provision based at Ysgol Panteg with a small number of pupils receiving intensive support and/or outreach and also Carreg'Lam's Camu ir Uwchradd (Step in to Secondary) programme.

The school is in a rural area but has strong community links through partnerships with Big Pit Museum, Blaenafon Heritage Day, Blaenafon intergenerational Group, Noddfa Church and local sports clubs.

The school was last inspected in March 2024. The school was placed in Estyn Review following the inspection. Ysgol Bryn Onnen was removed from Estyn Review in June 2025.

The Estyn Inspection of 2024 provided the school with 3 priorities;

R1 Strengthen leadership at all levels to implement the school's improvement priorities more effectively **R2** Raise pupils' standards of Welsh, particularly their writing skills **R3** Ensure consistency in effective teaching practices across the school and raise teachers' expectations to provide a consistent challenge for all pupils

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Substantial progress was made towards these Priorities in 2024-25 leading to the school being removed from Estyn Monitoring. In 2025-2026 the school focussed on embedding the processes implemented.

In response to R1 the school's Leadership Structure was revised and sharpened and continued to be an SDP priority in 2025-26 and will be again in 2026-2027 as the school continues to build its capacity and for and strength of leadership. In 2024-25 there was a clear focus to Leadership of the school and as a result priorities that were earmarked were successfully driven and there was a high impact on pupil progress e.g. through language drilling and group reading. Due to capacity issues in 2025-2026 this has plateaued. As a result the school has restructured classes to ensure more time to be dedicated to leadership and included Leadership and Self-evaluation as one of the SDP priorities for 26/27.

R2 was addressed by investment in PL provided by Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili on Language Drilling sessions and group reading. These continue to be cornerstones of the school's Welsh language provision. In this year's SDP there will be further focus on developing pupils' writing skills. Impact of this PL was visible in daily language drilling sessions and improved accuracy of language patterns in children's oracy and written work.

Since 2024 the focus of the majority of the school's MER activity has been on ensuring high teacher expectations and challenge for pupils at all levels.

Contextual Information

2026 - 2027	Yr N	Yr R	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	TOTAL
Cohort	21	18	19	22	20	16	29	17	162
	Male	12	8	13	16	11	6	18	89
	Female	9	10	6	6	9	10	11	73
FSM	N/A	3	11	10	4	1	8	6	43
CLA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
IDPs	0	0	1	2	1	0	2	0	
Insert breakdown of any other notable groups of pupils relevant to your School/setting			1 EAL		1 VI				
Attendance and exclusions (Whole school or year group)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Progress towards Estyn Recommendations

Estyn Recommendation	Actions Taken	Impact on pupil progress
R1: Strengthen leadership at all levels to implement the school's improvement priorities more effectively	Restructuring of the SLT New leader for CC 1 and 2 The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders are clearly defined Support from the School Improvement Partner and YGG Llyn y Forwyn Leadership Team. e.g. Joint self-evaluation (SSE) activities Collaboration between the ALNCOs of the two schools SIP joins for self evaluation activities Support in the summer term '24 for the induction of the CC 1 and 2 leader 1 have completed the National Senior Leaders Course through the GCA in July 2024. 1 Leader has completed the National Middle Leaders Course through the EAS in July 2024. 1 member of staff engaging with the above this year. ALNCO attends Torfaen and Gwynllyw Cluster ALNCOs forum every half term Deputy Head attending EAS Deputies Forum A clear leadership structure shared with all staff so that everyone understands who the line leaders are and who is responsible for SDP priorities. Ensure that pupils (groups e.g. Wal Iaith, School Council) influence how the school is led;	Senior leaders have worked together to create a detailed SDP for 25/26 responding to ESTYN's recommendations and the school's priorities. Responsibilities of Senior Leaders are clear in the SDP. This has led to robust accountability and all school staff are clear about who leads each priority. Constant monitoring against the priorities of the SDP with all members of the SLT contributing towards T.A.S meetings and Governor's meetings. Monitoring processes ensure high standards of teaching across most classes. This is seen in our data from the national tests and data from self-evaluation activities. Further development steps have been put in place due to a monitor that is specific to individuals or specific aspects. E.g. drill the language and "pace" of the sessions. This has ensured a constant focus on the priorities and moving the school forward. Governor is effective and holds the Headteacher and Senior Leaders accountable.

R2: Raise pupils' standards of Welsh, particularly their writing skills	We focused on five specific areas; Group reading Language drilling Writing Feedback Writing across the curriculum Support was received from Caerphilly NT with the focus initially on years 2-6 but now extended to year 1. The school has invested heavily in staff professional development. Use of highlighter heads – perfect pink and enhancement green and green heads for challenge and redrafting. Professional development Summer Term 2024 - Literacy Leader has provided training for the 3s - hook, skills, writing and literacy within a Curriculum for Wales October 2024 – Literacy Chains whole school training - Helen Bowen INSET day to collaborate within PS on developing a whole school literacy plan Group reading training from a partner school Personal research by a literacy leader into the VIPERS system (reading - Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explain, Retrieve, and Summarise/Sequence) leading to whole staff training. This has led to whole class reading sessions and more effective group reading. Modeling of language drill sessions by a partner school and opportunities to visit to see good practice Darllen Co	Evidence from self-evaluation activities showing that most classes follow a clear weekly timetable for group reading. National Reading Test scores show a majority of pupils achieving an increase from the previous year's scores. When talking to learners it can be seen that language drill has had a positive effect on many pupils' Welsh syntax and vocabulary. Consistency is seen across all classes in the use of the marking code which has led to an increase in the standard of writing of many pupils. National Reading Test scores show an increase in Welsh reading test scores;
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R3: Ensure consistency in effective teaching practices across the school and raise teachers' expectations to provide a consistent challenge for all pupils	The main focus of the school's Monitoring and Evaluation has been on challenge, through learning walks, book scrutiny and lesson observations. YG Caerphilly has given a set of Yr 2- 6 books (literacy and topic) for "moderation" within a staff meeting. I.e. Ensuring at the beginning of the year that our favourite staff understand "what good looks like". The Literacy Leader and YG Caerffili have worked together to create a portfolio of writing work for years 2-6. Staff have received training on effective feedback. Effective systems in place to track pupils' progress. Cluster moderation for year 6.	Evidence when scrutinising books that many pupils across the age range identify an additional challenge and record it in a green pen. An increase in National Test scores supporting the school's view that staff expectations are higher in terms of reading. Consistent and detailed feedback from monitoring activities keeping focus on the priorities of the SDP and on the progress of pupils/groups of learners. Differentiation can be seen in many books across the age range. Listening to learners demonstrates that many pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do in order to improve their work.
Next steps	• Continue to monitor and ensure consistency and embedding of the strategies introduced. In the past progress at the school has fluctuated due to strategies being introduced but not being sustained long enough to see an impact. • Insufficient resources were given to Leadership in the 205-26 school year. This will be addressed in 26/27 by investment in PL for School Leaders (LASIS Self-Evaluation and School Improvement) and Dedicated Leadership Time for all members of SLT. In addition, the school will continue to develop Middle-Leaders.	

Three Year SDP Plan

Year 1: 2026/2027	Priority
1	Strengthen the School's Self-Evaluation Processes. a) Implementation of a robust self-evaluation timetable b) MER activities linked closely to SDP targets c) Clear roles and responsibilities identified in MER cycle
2	Develop pupils' extended writing skills and writing across the school.
3	Develop pupils' reasoning and problem solving skills in mathematics.

Year 2: 2027/2028	
1	Embed Effective Self-Evaluation and School Improvement practice across the school
2	Manage school through period of major refurbishment ensuring safeguarding of pupils, Health and Safety and day to day management of building work.
3	Strengthen pupils' calculation skills in Numeracy, focussing on use of manipulatives and depth of understanding of mathematical concepts.

Year 3: 2028/2029	
1	Further develop pupils' reading skills in English and Welsh.
2	Embed use of manipulatives to support teaching of literacy.
3	Implement/Prepare for implementation of WG Literacy and Numeracy strategies.

Main SDP Evaluations from 2024-25

EVALUATION OF SDP	Impact on pupil progress	Considerations/next steps
Priority Area 1: Target 1: Improve provision for Creative Arts across the school focussing on Art with Music and Dance to follow in 2026-27. Develop Artistic Skills by (1) Strengthening Technical Mastery, (2) Raising the Profile of Art across the School, and (3) Learning about the Work of Famous Artists	• Low impact on pupil progress. • In most classes there are more opportunities for pupils to develop their Creative Art skills. This is particularly so in PS 1 and 2 in the enhanced provision.	• In retrospect this should not have been an SDP priority. • Monitor schemes of work to ensure planned art activities to go with current topics are implemented and effective.
EVALUATION OF SDP	Impact on pupil progress	Considerations/next steps
Priority Area 2: Target 2: Further Develop Leadership across the School by (1) Professional Development of Middle Leaders, (2) Continue Development of Senior Leaders, and (3) Increase the Effectiveness of Pupil Voice Panels.	• The school has continued to develop middle leaders effectively. As a result the school now has a core of senior and middle leaders capable of moving the school forward strategically. • Impact can be seen on pupils in the consistency of priorities that have been implemented over the last two years. E.g. Language drilling and group reading have become embedded practice. Monitoring of the provision in Nursery – Y 2 has also been effective. • The school is using NRT and NNT test scores to plan interventions and support for specific groups.	• Time and capacity for leadership needs to be a priority in the next SDP. • The school has an MER cycle but is not specific and rigorous enough and insufficient time is allocated to Senior Leaders to complete MER activities in a meaningful and impactful way. • One teacher will engage with LASIS middle-leaders programme. • All SLT members will engage with LASIS School Improvement and Self-Evaluation training on Cohorts 9 and 10.

	Leadership of ALN across the school is effective. Communication with families and external agencies is clear ensuring provision is put in place for pupils with ALN.	
EVALUATION OF SDP	Impact on pupil progress	Considerations/next steps
Priority Area 3: Target 3: Improve Pupils Digital Skills through (1) Ensuring Breadth of Provision, (2) Ensuring Measurable Skills Progression for Learners, and (3) Developing Critical Thinking Skills through Every Day Problem Solving Exercises	- There is good impact on pupils' digital skills. - Greater consistency in teaching of digital skills can be seen in most classes. - Many pupils' digital skills are developing in line with national expectations. - Assessment procedures have been introduced.	- Build on and embed progress made. - Where best practice was observed digital skills were developed over a series of planned sessions. However, in a minority of classes there were too many stand-alone sessions where despite pupils acquiring new skills, their progress over time was slow. - The school also needs to adapt its curriculum for e-safety as this is a fast and constantly evolving field e.g. the emergence of AI, legislation on the use by children of social media. - Embed and ensure QA of assessment software.
EVALUATION OF SDP	Impact on pupil progress	Considerations/next steps
Priority Area 4:		

School Development Plan Priorities 2025-2026

PRIORITY 1: Strengthen the School's Self-Evaluation Processes.

- b) Implementation of a robust self-evaluation timetable b) MER activities linked closely to SDP targets c) Clear roles and responsibilities identified in MER cycle

Rationale for improvement focus from self-evaluation processes:

Self-evaluation processes at the school have been patchy over the previous 12 months and although MER processes have been carried out they have not always had sufficient impact.

The school has invested heavily over the last 3 years in developing capacity for leadership and is now in a place where adults have the sufficient skills to lead school improvement and lead strategically.

Links to:

National priorities:

Regional/Local priorities:

Strengthening self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. This involves making processes more robust, strategic, and focused, ensuring accurate identification of areas for development, monitoring effectively, and focusing on the impact on pupil outcomes and progress.

National Mission:

The actions in this priority will contribute to:

- high-quality teaching and leadership

Priority Lead: Rhys ap Gwyn/Steph Watkins

Governor Link: Kerys Sheppard

Staff involved in priority: All

Objective/Priority	Action/Professional Learning	Success Criteria	Resources including costs/funding	Timescale	Monitoring arrangements <i>Who, what, where, when</i>
Professional Learning for SLT in what effective MER processes look like.	HT has already completed EAS Self-Eval and SDP PL Other members of SLT to join Cohort 8 and 9	All SLT members consistent in use of MER documentation. All SLT members make effective use of evaluative and "Estyn"	Supply Cover for SLT 3x3 days £2000	Autumn term Oct 6,13,20th	Arranged by HT through LASIS Business Support at earliest available opportunity.

		style writing for MER reports. All MER reports consistent in style.			
SLT to write a robust MER Cycle for the 2026-27 academic year.	MER Cycle co-constructed by SLT. MER Cycle clearly states what monitoring activities are to be completed each month and by whom.	MER Cycle clearly states individual roles and responsibilities. MER Cycle identifies weeks of term for completion of each activity. MER Cycle to cover all three ESTYN Inspection areas and to gather information from variety of sources including staff, pupils and parents. Impact of MER activities to be noted in MER/SDP half-termly review	£1000 release time for preparation and analysis of questionnaires.	All MER activities from 1.9.2026	
Written feedback given to staff following all MER activities.	Leadership time planned and timetabled to allow detailed feedback to be given to individuals following MER activities – see MER cycle	All staff receive effective written feedback following Mer activities. All feedback consistent in its format and language used. Follow up monitoring activities planned to measure impact and plan further PL.	SLT members to use dedicated leadership time to provide feedback.	As o1.9.2026	

Half-termly report to Governing Body following MER activities.	One Senior Leader to report in detail to GB at each meeting on progress towards their area of responsibility within SDP.	MER feedback on agenda for all GB meetings All Governors have a good understanding of progress school is making towards SDP priorities.	£0	Half-termly	
Further support and PL arranged for staff following MER outcomes.	SLT to provide coaching and mentoring and broker PL as needed as a result of MER activities.	SLT to revisit any priorities set for staff following MER to timescale agreed with teachers.			
All staff Professional Development Priorities linked to SDP.			£500 Two days supply cover to release staff for PD.		

Autumn Term Progress

Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for Spring Term 2025
RAG rating for progress	

Spring Term Progress

Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for Summer Term 2025
RAG rating for progress	

Summer Term Progress	
Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for SDP 2025-26
RAG rating for progress	

PRIORITY 2: Develop pupils' writing skills and writing across the school.**Rationale for improvement focus from self-evaluation processes:**

The school has invested heavily in developing pupils' oracy and acquisition of language patterns through language drilling over the last two years. This has been embedded but the impact is still limited. Self-evaluation shows that on-entry pupils have weak motor skills and low language skills. New priority will focus on developing pupils' early literacy skills, including pre-writing, to give pupils a securer base to develop their extended writing as they go up the school.

Links to:**National priorities:**

The actions in this priority will contribute to raising standards in:

- Literacy

Regional/Local priorities:

Improving the progressive development of pupils' skills across the curriculum, including literacy, specific focus areas include writing quality (including spelling and grammar), numeracy and digital skills.

National Mission: (Delete as appropriate)

- high-quality teaching and leadership

Priority Lead: Sara Meredith-Woods

Governor Link: Hannah Young

Staff involved in priority: All

Objective/Priority	Action/Professional Learning	Success Criteria	Resources including costs/funding	Timescale	Monitoring arrangements <i>Who, what, where, when</i>
Develop pupils fine motor skills	Weekly plan of activities to develop fine and gross motor skills in place in Dosbarth Cyw. Videos and suggestions shared with families on how to support with	Many pupils in PS 1 developing fine and gross motor skills in line with expectations			

	developing fine and gross motor skills.				
Develop writing in PS 1	Bro Teyrnnon School to School Support				
Mapping of genres across the whole school	Literacy Lead to work with LASIS Literacy Advisor (JR) to map writing genres across schools. Streamline the number of genres taught so pupils develop confidence and fluency in a targeted number of written forms rather than scatter gun approach currently seen.	All teachers effectively plan series of lessons to develop pupils' writing skills, building towards 3 weekly extended writing task. All PS medium term plans show a balance of factual and fictional writing and formal/informal writing styles. PL provided by Bro Teyrnnon.	£250 – release costs	10.7.2026	
Guided/shared writing	Literacy co-ordinator to attend PL on guided/shared writing and cascade good practice focussing on PS 3 in the first instance.	Literacy co-ordinator to obtain place on training. Guided writing sessions trialled in PS 3 for Autumn Term.	£500 release costs		
Wal iaith	Literacy Co-ordinator to lead whole staff PL demonstrating content and how to use Wal iaith.	All learning walks to demonstrate effective use of Wal iaith in literacy sessions.	£500 resources £500 release of co-ordinator	Before 22.10.2026	

Autumn Term Progress	
Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for Spring Term 2025
RAG rating for progress	

Spring Term Progress	
Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for Summer Term 2025
RAG rating for progress	

Summer Term Progress	
Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for SDP 2025-26
RAG rating for progress	

PRIORITY 3: Develop pupils' reasoning and problem solving skills in mathematics.

Rationale for improvement focus from self-evaluation processes:

Analysis of National Numeracy test scores show around half of pupils score substantially lower in the reasoning test than in the procedural.

Links to:

National priorities:

The actions in this priority will contribute to raising standards in:

- Numeracy

Regional/Local priorities:

Improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning, focusing on providing appropriate challenge, effective differentiation, learner engagement, feedback and assessment, and independent learning.

National Mission: (Delete as appropriate)

- high-quality teaching and leadership

Priority Lead: Paul Lucas/Dafydd Evans

Governor Link: *****

Staff involved in priority:

Objective/Priority	Action/Professional Learning	Success Criteria	Resources including costs/funding	Timescale	Monitoring arrangements <i>Who, what, where, when</i>
Map opportunities for numeracy across the curriculum across the school.	Numeracy Leader to meet with LASIS Numeracy Co-ordinator. Look at whole school schemes of work. Map and plan opportunities for numeracy across the curriculum in all year groups.	Plan put in place outlining support to be received from LASIS. PL planned for all staff in developing pupils numeracy skills across the curriculum.	Release of numeracy co-ordinator X 2 days £500	September 23 rd 2026	
Analyse pupils reasoning skills	Analysis of National Numeracy and Reasoning test scores and responses.	All staff understand which types of problems cause pupils the most difficulty.	£0	September 2026 Staff meeting time – each teacher to	

Objective/Priority	Action/Professional Learning	Success Criteria	Resources including costs/funding	Timescale	Monitoring arrangements <i>Who, what, where, when</i>
	What types of questions pose the pupils most difficulty? Listen to learners -why are certain types of questions difficult? Baseline assessment of pupils' problem solving skills.	All staff working planning effective opportunities for pupils to develop problem solving skills.		analyse own class.	
Introduce Daily "Problem y Dydd" activity incorporated into daily numeracy lesson	Staff meeting set aside for staff to work together creating bank of "Problem y dydd" slides.	All slides consistent in their appearance. Clear progression of problem solving skills as pupils progress through progress steps. Problem y Dydd occurring daily in all classes. Many pupils demonstrating improved strategies for problem solving.		1 st Autumn half-term	
Develop structure/strategies for pupils to break down problems into smaller steps	PL provided by LASIS upskilling staff's understanding of strategies *** update following meeting with SJ 23.9.26			1 st Autumn half-term	
Ensure consistency in approach to numeracy lessons	All classes in each PS to adopt consistent structure for daily numeracy lesson.	All observed lessons following the same structure.		Autumn term	

Objective/Priority	Action/Professional Learning	Success Criteria	Resources including costs/funding	Timescale	Monitoring arrangements <i>Who, what, where, when</i>
across Progression Steps.	Lessons to include daily practise of i) number facts, ii) calculations, iii) problem solving and iv) mathematical skills.	Problem solving skills developed in all numeracy sessions. All book looks demonstrate opportunities for pupils to develop problem solving and reasoning skills.			
Develop effective use of visuals and manipulatives to support with pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts.	SJ meeting 23.9.2026				
Wal rhifedd	Develop use of numeracy walls in every classroom. Plan for progression in skills demonstrated in numeracy walls.	Consistency in appearance of Numeracy wall in all classes. Learning walks and listening to learners show pupils using Numeracy Wall during focussed and independent tasks.	£500 purchase of resources.	Spring Term	

Autumn Term Progress	
Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for Spring Term 2025
RAG rating for progress	

Spring Term Progress

Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for Summer Term 2025
RAG rating for progress	

Summer Term Progress

Impact against actions and success criteria	Next steps for SDP 2025-26
RAG rating for progress	

Staffing structure – insert school version /use table provided

Staffing structure

Name	Roles and Responsibilities
Senior leadership team	
Rhys ap Gwyn	Headteacher
Dafydd Evans	Deputy Headteacher
Kirsty Rome	ALNCO
Sara Meredith-Woods	Literacy
Stephanie Watkins	PS 1 and 2
Teaching Staff	

Paul Lucas	Numeracy
Aimee Sheppard	Wellbeing
Rebeca Jones	ICT
Support Staff	
Malicia (Millie) Smith	Y2/3 + ASD support
Karen Williams	Nur/Rec
Maddie Jones	Y2/3
Shelby Long	Y4,5,6
Elle Laws	Y1/2
Olivia Archer *	Y1/2

*** Maternity Leave June 26- June 27**

Appendix 1 Specific Grant Expenditure (EIG,PDG, RRR etc) insert school version/use table provided

SDP	National Mission	Planned Activity	Funding Source	Type of Spend	Success Criteria	Cost
				Staffing Release Resources Cover		
					Total	
					Variance	

MER cycle – insert/hyperlink

Professional Learning Statement : – insert hyperlinks to relevant docs that outline this or include short statement

Summary of how the school intends to develop staff

Partnership working – insert hyperlinks to relevant docs that outline this or include short statement

Cluster, SIP, other schools, local Community etc