



"United we, Empower, Nurture and Challenge."

"Wrth uno mae'n ein arfogi i feithrin a herio."

Blackwood Primary School

Prospectus 2024-2025

Address: Apollo Way, Blackwood, NP12 1WA

Telephone number: 01495 224111

Email: blackwoodprimary@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk

Website: www.blackwoodprimary.org

X (Twitter): @Blackwood_PS

Croeso i'r Ysgol Coed Duon

Welcome to Blackwood Primary School



Dear Parent/Carers,

On behalf of myself, the governors, the staff and the pupils, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to Blackwood Primary School.

Education is a partnership between home and school, and we truly believe that children learn best when parents/carers and staff at school work together.

We pride ourselves on being a community school and feel that strong communication with our families is paramount so that we can work together to meet the children's needs and interests. We encourage parents /carers to make us aware of any concerns or worries they may have straight away so we can work together to solve any issues that may arise. We have a dedicated email address for parents /carers to use so we can address any issues and provide the necessary support. Our experienced family liaison officer works tirelessly to support our families and is always ready with a listening ear on the telephone or a friendly face at a meeting.

I always feel so very privileged to work with such wonderful staff and children and feel encouraged that the welcoming ethos of Blackwood Primary School is recognised by those who visit and comment on the 'togetherness' of the team,

I am so proud of the children and with high expectations enjoy supporting them to grow into lifelong learners who are empowered to take control of their own learning in a nurturing environment where challenge is anticipated and celebrated.

I hope you find this information useful, and I look forward to working with you and your child and your family.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Davies

Pennaeth *Headteacher*



Mission Statement

United we Empower, Nurture, Challenge
Wrth Uno Mae'n Arfogi i Feithrin a Herio

Vision Principles

Blackwood Primary School is a nurturing learning organisation at the heart of the community which prides itself on an inclusive, engaging environment both indoors and out. The voice of every individual is valued, and their individuality is encouraged to flourish. Everyone is supported to take ownership of their own learning, so they are equipped to meet their full potential within a safe, secure and stimulating environment.

Empower

We empower our school community to be proactive, think creatively, and take measured risks in all aspects of learning. By fostering a sense of ownership over their futures, we encourage all to pursue their dreams. We ensure every voice is heard, cultivating a supportive community where all can thrive.

Nurture

We nurture our school community by providing a caring and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued. We emphasise the importance of being listened to, fostering positive relationships, and building empathy. By teaching resilience and instilling secure values, we help and support everyone to develop into compassionate and confident individuals.

Challenge

We encourage everyone to seek out and enjoy challenges, setting high standards for themselves and their learning. By fostering a culture of motivation and self-reflection, we help our school community to continually improve. We aim to connect and apply learning in meaningful ways, developing critical thinking and resilience. Together, we cultivate confident, lifelong learners ready to embrace every opportunity.



Principles into Practice - Our Aims

At Blackwood Primary School, our principles guide all aspects of school life. Our Inspire curriculum is designed to provide a stimulating, enriched, and inclusive learning environment where pupils and staff are encouraged to be creative, innovative, and reflective. We emphasise progression throughout the school, ensuring that learners build on their knowledge and skills confidently across a range of contexts. Our whole-school themes foster curiosity, resilience, and ambition, while promoting Welsh values and culture. In a safe, supportive, and secure environment, we nurture positive relationships, trust, and respect, empowering all pupils to take ownership of their learning, voice their ideas, and become responsible, ethical citizens of Wales and the world. Through this curriculum, we prepare our learners to thrive academically, personally, and socially, ensuring they are ready to face real-life challenges as confident, capable individuals.

The four purposes are at the heart of our curriculum. We aim to support pupils to become:

Ambitious, Capable Learners who:

- Set high standards, seek and enjoy challenges, and take ownership of their learning journey.
- Build a robust body of knowledge, connecting and applying it in different contexts to solve problems.
- Are empathetic, questioning, and reflective, enjoying the process of learning and self-improvement.
- Communicate effectively in various forms and settings, using Welsh and English, and utilise digital technologies creatively.
- Interpret data, apply mathematical concepts, and undertake critical research, ready to learn throughout their lives.

Enterprising, Creative Contributors who:

- Apply their knowledge and skills to create innovative ideas and real-world solutions.
- Think creatively to reframe and solve problems, identifying opportunities and taking measured risks.
- Lead and participate effectively in teams, fostering inclusivity and mutual respect.
- Express themselves through various media, giving their energy and skills for the benefit of others.
- Are prepared to play a full part in life and work, connecting learning with practical applications.



Ethical, Informed Citizens who:

- Evaluate and use evidence critically, forming informed views based on knowledge and values.
- Engage with contemporary issues thoughtfully, understanding the ethical implications of their choices.
- Understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights, respecting others' needs and rights in a diverse society.
- Are knowledgeable about their culture, community, and the world, past and present, and committed to sustainability.
- Are prepared to be conscientious citizens of Wales and the world, making ethical decisions in their daily lives.

Healthy, Confident Individuals who:

- Have secure values, are developing their spiritual and ethical beliefs, and show empathy and resilience.
- Build their mental and emotional well-being, apply knowledge about health, and manage risks in their lives.
- Form positive, trusting relationships based on mutual respect and have the confidence to face and overcome challenges.
- Are active, informed, and capable of managing their daily lives independently, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued society members.

School Information

School Address	Blackwood Primary School, Apollo Way, Blackwood, Gwent. NP12 1WA
Telephone Number	01495 224111
X (Twitter)	@Blackwood_PS
Email address	blackwoodprimary@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk mainoffice@blackwoodprimary.org - parent/carers only
Website	www.blackwoodprimary.org
Head Teacher	Mrs K. Davies
Local Authority	Caerphilly County Borough Council Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, CF82 7PG
Telephone	01443 815588
Director of Education	Mr Richard Edmunds
Chair Of Governors	Mrs C Ashcroft
Vice Chair of Governors	Mr R Wilks
Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)	Mr I Penrose



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Staff

Senior Leadership Team

Headteacher



Mrs K Davies

Deputy Headteacher



Miss G Jones

ALNCo



Mrs K Lohmus



Mr R Dyer



Mrs R Phillips



Mrs S Shand



Ms R Walters



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Nursery



Mrs K Nicholls



Miss R Blanchard



Mrs N Humayra



Mrs R Price

Reception



Mrs L Cooper



Miss L Samuel



Mrs K Cooper



Mrs M Paul

Year One



Mrs K Shuker



Miss R Walters



Mrs K Gardiner



Mrs C Brennan

Year Two



Mrs K Lohmus



Mrs S Davies



Miss L Fisher



Mr G Jones



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Year Three/Four



Mrs S Shand



Miss E Davies



Mr T Davies



Mrs K Morgan



Mrs E Thomas

Year Five



Mr R Dyer



Mr R Turner



Mrs S Jones



Mrs A Porter

Year Six



Mrs R Phillips



Miss K Kinsey



Mrs K Jones

PPA Staff & Family Liaison



Mrs J Hiscott (Family Liaison)



Mr C Grandin



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Admin Support Team



Mrs S Bradford
(Business Manager)



Mrs K Barber



Mr N Hook
(Caretaker)

Catering Team



Mrs P Levi



Mrs S Davies

Lunchtime Supervisors



Mrs S Davies



Mrs T Jones



Mrs L Carroll



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Governors

Chairperson:	Mrs C Ashcroft
Vice Chairperson:	Mr R Wilks
Appointed by CCBC:	Mr P Diamond, Mrs D Box, Mrs C Seaborne, Rev H Rees
Community Representatives:	Rev A Baker
Parent Representatives:	Mr M Conant, Mrs A Osborne, Mr C Owen, Mrs K Shuker
Headteacher:	Mrs K Davies
Teacher Representatives:	Mrs K Lohmus
Non -Teaching Representative:	Mrs K Morgan
Clerk to Governors:	Mr L John
Non- Voting Members:	Miss G Jones, Ms C Miton



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School Session Times

	Morning Session	Afternoon Session
Nursery	8:55 - 11:15	12:40 - 15:00
Reception	8:55 - 11:40	12:40 - 15:00
Year 1	8:55 - 11:50	12:50 - 15:00
Year 2	8:55 - 12:15	13:15 - 15:00
Year 3/4	8:55 - 12:55	13:40 - 15:00
Year 5	8:55 - 12:25	13:10 - 15:00
Year 6	8:55 - 13:20	14:05 - 15:00

All gates around the school site open at 8:45, where staff are available to greet the children. If you have any messages, staff at the main gate will have clipboards to take notes. Alternatively, you can email us at mainoffice@blackwoodprimary.org.

The gates close promptly at 8:55. If your child arrives after this time, they must report to the main office, where the admin team will record them as late on the register.

The school day ends at 15:00. Children from Nursery to Year 5 must be collected by an adult from their classroom door. Year 6 students may walk to and from school unaccompanied, but this must be agreed upon in writing beforehand. If there are any changes to your usual arrangements, please inform the class teacher.

During school hours, children are not allowed to leave the school site unless accompanied by a parent who must report to the office.

Break Time Arrangements

Children throughout the school have continual indoor/outdoor access throughout the day. In addition all children access the outdoor areas during their morning break time and lunchtime. Please ensure that your child has a coat so that they will be comfortable whatever the weather.



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Breakfast club, Snacks and School Meals

Breakfast Club

The Local Authority offers a free Breakfast Club service for children in Reception to Year 6, which operates from 8:25. Breakfast club pupils should enter through the main school entrance. Staff take a register each morning and are responsible for the children until school begins at 8:55. To enrol your child in the Breakfast Club, please complete an application form available via ParentMail in September. If you need an application form during the school year, kindly speak to the office.

Snacks

As a 'healthy school,' we promote nutritious snacks. Children may bring a small snack of fruit or cut-up vegetables; other snacks are not permitted. To ensure the health and safety of all pupils, **NO nuts or products containing nuts** are allowed.

Drinks

Research indicates that staying hydrated is crucial for maintaining alertness and focus. All children are encouraged to bring water to school daily in a **labelled, spill-proof plastic bottle** that can be taken home at night for rinsing and refilling. We offer school water bottles for a small cost. These bottles have a designated space for you to write your child's name. If you would like to purchase one, please contact the main office.

Fresh water is available throughout the day, and we encourage children to drink regularly. As a healthy school, we ask that children **do not bring squash or fizzy drinks** for consumption during the school day.

Additionally, free milk is available for pupils in Nursery to Year 2 during their mid-morning break.

Lunchtime

At Blackwood Primary, we value lunchtime as an opportunity for pupils to socialise and interact in a less formal setting. Whether they have school lunches or bring packed lunches from home, lunchtime allows for engagement and community building. Staff and midday supervisors care for the children during this time, encouraging them to eat their meals, interact positively, and demonstrate sensible behaviour in the hall and outside. From **September 2023**, all pupils from Reception to Year 6 are entitled to **free school meals**.



Academic Calendar

Academic Year 2024-2025

	Term Starts	Half Term	Term Ends
Autumn	Monday 2nd September 2024	Monday 28th October 2024 - Friday 1st November 2024	Friday 20th December 2024
Spring	Monday 6th January 2025	Monday 24th February 2025 - Friday 28th February 2025	Friday 11th April 2025
Summer	Monday 28th April 2025	Monday 26th May 2025 - Friday 30th May 2025	Monday 21st July 2025

INSET Days

Our **National Mission** is to achieve high standards and aspirations for all children and young people. The introduction of the Curriculum for Wales, alongside significant reforms related to Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and a strong emphasis on equity within the education system, aims to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to achieve their best. This transformation is reshaping the educational landscape in Wales.

At Blackwood Primary School, we are committed to supporting the professional learning of all staff, fostering reflective, enquiring, and collaborative education professionals. We cultivate a culture of mutual responsibility for professional growth, utilising allocated INSET time effectively to develop our school as a learning organisation.

INSET sessions may occur on school premises, off-site through various online platforms, or during previously scheduled Twilight sessions. These professional learning opportunities are aligned with our school priorities outlined in the school development plan, as well as covering mandatory training requirements.

For the 2024/2025 academic year, our INSET sessions will focus on further developing the Curriculum for Wales through our INSPIRE curriculum, alongside advancing our work towards ALN reform, and enhancing well-being and equity practices.



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INSET Days 2024-2025

Monday 2nd September 2024

Tuesday 3rd September 2024

Friday 2nd May 2025

Friday 20th June 2025

Monday 23rd June 2025

Monday 21st July 2025



School Uniform

At Blackwood Primary School, our school uniform fosters a sense of belonging within our school community. It helps identify pupils when representing the school during community events or visits, promotes positive behaviour, and enhances safety. For instance, in the event of an incident, uniforms allow for easy identification of students.

Wearing a school uniform alleviates the pressure of daily outfit choices and eliminates the stigma associated with branded clothing and footwear. In crafting our uniform policy, we have considered Articles 2, 12, and 13 of the Rights of the Child, ensuring that all pupils have options and a voice in uniform choices. Article 2 emphasises that every child has the right to be free from discrimination, regardless of race, gender, religion, or colour.



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Following Welsh Government guidance, the purpose of our school uniform is to:

- Provide a sense of identity, community, and cohesion within the school.
- Support positive behaviour and school discipline.
- Ensure pupils dress appropriately for learning activities.
- Remove peer pressure to conform to particular fashion trends.
- Enable pupils from all backgrounds to share in a common identity while embracing their individual needs.
- Help reduce inequalities and minimise triggers for bullying.
- Enhance safeguarding and attendance policies by assisting in the identification of truants.
- Aid in the identification of strangers on school premises.
- Support and promote the ethos of the school.

School uniform:

- Royal blue sweatshirt, jumper or cardigan (school badge optional).
- Yellow polo shirt (school badge optional).
- Shirt or blouse in pale blue (no logos or stripes).
- School tie.
- Grey trousers, tailored shorts, skirt or pinafore dress.
- Blue or yellow gingham dress.
- Black, white or grey socks or tights.
- Black footwear.

PE kit:

- Blue, grey or black shorts, jogging bottoms, leggings or skorts.
- Blue or yellow round neck t-shirt (school badge optional).
- Blue hoodie (school badge optional).
- black plimsolls or trainers.

Forest School/outdoor learning:

- Wellington boots

Please note that children will undertake outdoor learning in inclement weather. Please provide a suitable coat for these occasions. Please note that school provides waterproof clothing when learning outdoors in wet weather.



Jewellery

Children may wear small 'stud' type earrings and a watch (smart watches are not allowed). School will not take responsibility for any jewellery or watches that are lost or broken. This is the only jewellery allowed to be worn by all children within school. Children must remove all jewellery before they undertake physical activity sessions. If ear piercing is still healing, studs may be left in place to avoid risk of infection, however, parents must provide tape to cover studs for PE sessions.

Hair

The school reserves the right to make a judgement on whether a pupil's hairstyle, hair colour or headwear is inappropriate for the school environment; however, the school will ensure that any such judgements do not discriminate against any pupil by virtue of their protected characteristics. Each individual pupil's scenario will be taken into account where any judgements on appropriateness are to be made. Pupils with long hair must ensure that this does not impede their vision, cover their face, or cause a health and safety risk. Long hair must be tied up during practical lessons (e.g. during PE).

Makeup

As part of this policy, no make-up is permitted on school grounds for pupils. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of false nails, nail varnish, and eyelash extensions. However, pupils may participate in a broad range of Expressive Arts learning opportunities that may merit the use of make up, a change in hair, jewellery and costumes, in which case parents will be informed via ParentMail in advance.

Information

Attendance

High levels of school attendance are essential for pupils to achieve their full educational potential. A strong partnership between the school, parents or carers, and pupils is vital in fostering this. We emphasise the importance of regular and punctual attendance to both pupils and their families.

Children are expected to attend school every day that it is open, unless absences are unavoidable, such as in the case of illness. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly. If your child is absent, please notify the school as soon as possible. You can leave a message on the school telephone, report absences via ParentMail, or email us at mainoffice@blackwoodprimary.org.



In cases of infectious diseases, children should remain at home for the duration recommended by your GP or the school. Absences without an acceptable reason will be considered unauthorised. We encourage parents to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours or during school term breaks. If this is not possible, please inform the school in advance of the appointment date.

For persistent absences and poor punctuality, the Headteacher is required to notify the Local Authority Education Welfare Service. In certain cases, the Local Authority may impose fines on parents for their child's non-attendance.

Additional Learning Needs

In accordance with the Welsh Government ALN Act, we strive to identify children who require additional support as early as possible and ensure that appropriate provision/interventions are in place to meet their needs. Our school has an Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo), who collaborates with class teachers, teaching assistants, outside agencies, and families to ensure that suitable provisions are made for identified pupils.

Support is provided in line with the ALN Act at the following levels:

- **Universal**
- **Targeted**
- **Specialist**

All pupils have a One Page Profile outlining how best to support their needs in the classroom. This profile is created by the class teacher with input from parents and is reviewed annually. Each profile includes specific targets that are evaluated twice a year, in January and July. If it is determined that a child requires targeted or specialist provision, further discussions may lead to the creation of a School-Based Individual Plan (IDP).

Complaints

Our school is committed to addressing complaints effectively and aims to clarify any issues you may have. For any queries related to your child's education or general school matters, please discuss them first with your child's class teacher.

In practice, most concerns can be resolved quickly within the school. If we make a mistake, we will correct it and offer our apologies. We strive to learn from our experiences to improve our practices.

We define a complaint as "an expression of dissatisfaction regarding the school or a member of its staff that requires a response." The Governing Body follows the guidance of the Local Authority in adopting complaint procedures. A copy of our complaints procedure is available at the school or on our website if you feel your complaint requires further investigation.



This complaints procedure reflects our commitment to ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can raise a concern, confident that it will be heard and addressed in a timely and appropriate manner.

Extra Curricular Activities

We offer a variety of after-school clubs. Some clubs are age-specific and may have maximum capacity limits for health and safety reasons. Please note that these activities should not be relied upon for childcare, as they are run by staff and may be subject to cancellation.

Admissions

Children are admitted to the school in accordance with the admission policy of the Local Education Authority. Applications for Nursery or school placements at Blackwood Primary School should be completed online via the school admissions portal at [school admissions](#)

Transition

We have established arrangements to support the transition of children into our school throughout the year, including visits and tours of the facilities.

All schools in the Blackwood Cluster have collaborated to create an effective transition program. This includes visits from Year 6 pupils to Blackwood, as well as special events for both Year 5 and Year 6 students at our school.

To ensure a smooth transition between year groups, we provide opportunities for students to meet their new teachers and explore their new learning environments. We encourage children to share their learning experiences and interests with their new teaching team.

Charging and Remissions

The school's educational provision and most activities organised by the school are financed through funds received from Caerphilly Council. However, certain valuable educational experiences require additional financial support from parents. For visits that occur during school hours, a voluntary contribution may be requested to enable the visit to take place. If the contributions do not adequately cover the costs, activities may be cancelled. We may also seek contributions for visiting workshops that support various areas of learning.

If you encounter any difficulties regarding payments, please speak to a member of staff as soon as possible; we will do our best to support you.

The Governors expect parents to cover the costs associated with repairing or replacing school property—such as books, furniture, and fittings—that are damaged or defaced due to their child's unreasonable behaviour. This expectation also applies to any school property that is lost by a child.



Parental Involvement and Engagement

At Blackwood Primary School, we believe that a positive partnership between home and school is essential for our children's education. We encourage parents to take an active role in their child's learning and continually work with our community and families to foster participation in school life.

Throughout the year, we hold meetings and workshops for parents, providing valuable information on topics such as the curriculum, e-safety, new initiatives, and advice on how to support your child at home.

We also have an established Parent Teacher Association (F@B) that meets regularly to organise events and activities for our pupils. These activities include Coffee Mornings, Summer Fetes, and pupil discos. All funds raised from these events contribute to enriching experiences for our students.

If you would like to be a member of our F@B group or provide support during the events, please contact the school office.



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INSPIRE Curriculum

At Blackwood Primary School we are committed to ensuring all our pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and experiences through our INSPIRE curriculum outlined in Curriculum for Wales 2022. We use a robust, evidence-based process to help pupils realise the **four purposes**. They are the starting point for all decisions on the content and experiences developed as part of the curriculum to support our children and young people to become:

- ***Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives***
- ***Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work.***
- ***Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world.***
- ***Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.***

The *What Matter Statements* and descriptions of learning from all Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) guide staff to determine what matters most for our pupils and provides a context for our themes. Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) serve as the structured framework for educational delivery. They are designed to foster interconnected learning experiences across disciplines, promoting holistic development and critical thinking, ensuring learners acquire essential knowledge and skills relevant to contemporary society. Our Vision is the key driver in our approach to curriculum design where we *Empower, Nurture and Challenge* all pupils and staff.



We are committed to providing engaging learning experiences for every child which encourage reflective learning; meet their individual needs and which provides both challenge and support in equal measure.

By integrating these disciplines, we offer a rich, interconnected educational experience that allows pupils to explore their interests and develop essential lifelong learning skills. This holistic approach not only enhances academic achievement but also prepares each child for future challenges in an ever-evolving world.



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Blackwood Primary's Inspire Curriculum



Our curriculum infographic is designed to present our curriculum in an easy-to-read format. The rainbow features key words that support the delivery of the curriculum, while the flower outlines the **WHAT** and **WHY** of our educational approach. This visual representation helps clarify our objectives and the values that underpin our teaching, making it accessible for everyone in our school community.



Staff collaborate closely with learners using the “Flower” model to develop Authentic Learning Goals, enabling our pupils to truly 'blossom.' We share planned curriculum skills with pupils, inviting their input to generate ideas and determine the contexts for the skills they will develop. This approach fosters a sense of empowerment and fulfilment, encouraging full engagement with the learning experiences. The Authentic Learning Goal remains central to our focus, interconnected with the Four Purposes, the expectations outlined in the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs), and the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF), as well as the Digital Competence Framework.

I	Innovate	Creativity and innovation
N	Nurture	Take care of one another and keeping safe
S	Share	Collaborate with one another
P	Practise	Critical thinking and problem solving
I	Instruct	Instructional/ focused teaching
R	Reflect	Reflect on personal effectiveness
E	Explore	Independent and guided exploration

Metacognition underpins all aspects of the children’s learning, allowing both learners and staff to be innovative while ensuring comprehensive coverage and skill progression within each AoLE and across the curriculum.

Our INSPIRE principles emphasise the key aspects of teaching and learning at Blackwood Primary School. We prioritise establishing a safe, supportive, and secure environment where trust and positive relationships can flourish, enabling both pupils and staff to thrive.



Our curriculum design is based around 3 ‘lenses’ of progression. Each year group develops their knowledge, skills and experiences through a range of different ‘big questions’ linked to our termly school themes & driver concepts (developed through school cluster work), while also remaining focused on the scope of their specific ‘lens’ according to age and expectations to ensure learning is authentic and appropriate

to pupils in our setting. The focus of each year groups inquiry and big question is different within each year groups, with these also changing on a two yearly cycle (Y1-Y6) to ensure breadth and depth of learning as each individual progresses throughout the school.

Our termly whole school themes are:

Autumn term - ‘Cynefin’(Belonging) , ‘Dathlu’ (Celebrations)

Spring term – ‘Newidiadau’ (Changes)

Summer term – ‘Byd Bendigedig’ (Wonderful World)



Putting Principles into Practice:

- **Provide Rich Learning Experiences:** Create meaningful, age-appropriate opportunities that empower, nurture, and challenge our learners.
- **Foster Independence:** Enable children to become confident, resourceful, inquisitive, and independent learners.
- **Develop Learning Skills:** Provide opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their learning skills.
- **Meet Individual Needs:** Cater to the diverse needs of all students through tailored resources, support, time, and tasks.
- **Embrace Technology:** Integrate new technologies and participate in local and national initiatives.
- **Build Confidence and Relationships:** Foster children's self-esteem and help them cultivate positive relationships with others.
- **Promote Respect:** Encourage self-respect while teaching children to value the ideas, attitudes, values, and feelings of others.
- **Celebrate Diversity:** Show respect for all cultures and promote positive attitudes towards all individuals.
- **Strengthen Community Ties:** Help children understand their community and feel valued as contributing members.
- **Encourage Responsible Citizenship:** Support children in growing into reliable, independent, and positive citizens.
- **Provide a Dynamic Curriculum:** Offer a varied, balanced, and evolving curriculum that celebrates individual learning styles while promoting curiosity and a love for exploration.
- **Cultivate Lifelong Learning:** Allow individuals to develop confidence and self-discipline, fostering a lifelong passion for learning.

Learning Characteristics



In addition to helping pupils realise the Four Purposes, we aim to empower them to become ambitious, resilient, and capable learners who actively seek out challenges and persist in overcoming obstacles in their everyday lives. These qualities are essential at Blackwood Primary School (BPS) as they help our pupils understand not only their achievements but also how to reach even greater heights by effectively applying these characteristics.



As a result, at Blackwood Primary School pupils use the six *Learning Characteristics* across the curriculum to celebrate their successes, and identify ways to improve and further enhance their learning on a daily basis.



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Bilingualism

At Blackwood Primary School, most pupils speak English as their first language, which serves as the foundation for our teaching and learning, as well as our formative and summative assessment processes. However, we recognise the importance of developing communication, reading, writing, and oracy skills in Welsh, alongside an awareness of other international languages. Consequently, we strive to integrate both English and Welsh as second languages throughout the school. The Welsh language is prominently featured at Blackwood Primary through classroom signage, assemblies, songs, displays, and a variety of indoor and outdoor learning experiences.

Physical Development, Health & Wellbeing

Physical Development is a statutory element of our curriculum and a key component of our Health and Wellbeing learning, helping pupils understand what it means to maintain a healthy, balanced lifestyle. We strive to provide and celebrate a variety of sporting opportunities for our pupils, including weekly lessons and extracurricular clubs that support physical development for all. Our staff is dedicated to encouraging regular physical activity, utilising the outdoor environment whenever possible. Activities such as tennis, football, rugby, gymnastics, dance, swimming, and adventurous pursuits (including residential trips) ensure that our pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum at Blackwood Primary School

Religion, Values & Ethics (RVE)

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) is mandatory within our curriculum in Wales for all learners aged 3 to 16. RVE is determined at a local consortium level, and in addition to adhering to the Curriculum for Wales Framework Guidance, we also consider the locally Agreed Syllabus for RVE when designing our Inspire curriculum. As of September 2022, there is no parental right to withdraw children from RVE.

While parents cannot opt their children out of RVE instruction, they may request that their child not participate in collective worship, which occurs outside of RVE curriculum time. This collective worship is primarily of a broad Christian nature and has its own legal standing. Parents wishing to exclude their child from this aspect must contact the Headteacher in writing.

Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)

The Welsh Government states that:

“RSE is a positive and protective part of the Curriculum for Wales. It plays a central role in supporting learners’ rights to enjoy fulfilling, healthy, and safe relationships throughout their lives.”

At Blackwood Primary School, we believe that a curriculum grounded in children’s rights, dignity, and freedoms is essential for developing well-rounded, healthy individuals. Our RSE



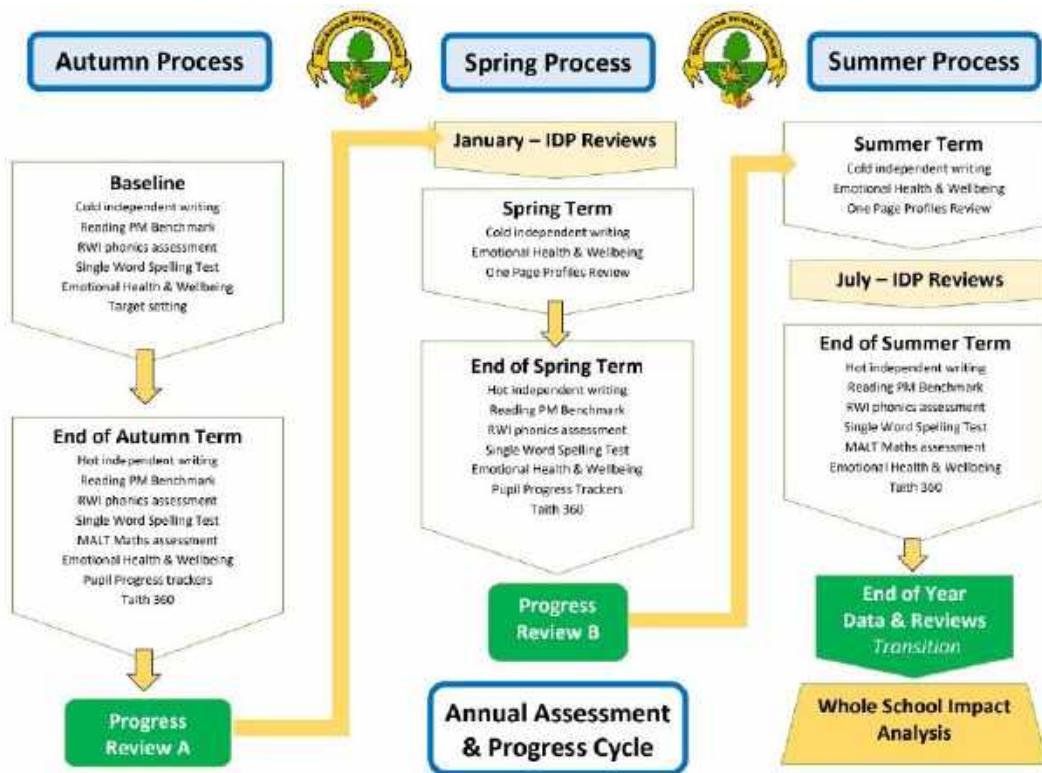
curriculum equips children with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to understand how aspects of relationships and sexuality shape their own lives and those of others. This empowers them to grow with a strong sense of self-awareness and nurtures their confidence. We also utilise the mandatory RSE Code to guide the content of RSE throughout the school.

The RSE content is structured around broad and interlinked learning strands:

- Relationships and identity
- Sexual health and well-being
- Empowerment, safety, and respect

As mandated by the Curriculum for Wales – Relationships and Sexuality Education Code 2021, RSE is a required component of our Inspire Curriculum at BPS. As of September 2022, there is no right to withdraw from RSE.

Supporting Pupil Progress: Assessment & Provision



At Blackwood Primary School, we have continually developed and refined our assessment processes, placing our pupils' progress at the heart of everything we do. Our annual assessment cycles provide a clear understanding of each individual's current standing, their journey, and their ongoing progress in learning. These cycles occur three times a year, allowing staff to frequently identify which pupils are making expected progress and those who may need



Blackwood Primary School
Ysgol Gynradd Coed Duon

"United we, Empower, Nurture and Challenge."
"Wrth uno mae'n ein arfogi i feithrin a herio."

additional support. We adapt our provision continuously to meet the needs of all pupils, ensuring that no one is left behind in their learning.

This approach also empowers pupils to understand their own learning trajectories, giving them opportunities to engage in target setting and reflect on their progress, thereby taking responsibility for their development. We maintain detailed records and tracking for each learner, with all staff sharing a commitment to the impact that consistent and accurate assessment has on pupil progress. Our formative and summative assessments enable us to celebrate our pupils' strengths while also helping staff and pupils identify:

- 1) *Where pupils are in their own learning*
- 2) *Where pupils need to improve*
- 3) *How they will get there & what barriers they might face*

Homework

At Blackwood Primary School, we believe that homework provides an opportunity for children to build on their learning and consolidate skills outside of the school day. Recognising the importance of family time at home, we do not make homework compulsory; instead, we offer a variety of online tools to support home learning.

Pupils are never criticised for not completing homework, and they are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular and local clubs. We support our students in attending these clubs and spending quality time with family and friends, as these experiences are vital for developing healthy, confident young individuals.

We prioritise providing opportunities for pupils to challenge themselves daily while also teaching them the importance of "switching off" and enjoying social interactions with their loved ones.

Pupil Parliament / Senedd y Plant

Pupil Voice permeates all aspects of Blackwood Primary School. It is really important that children in our school are listened to and valued. Each year we have a democratic election where children from Year 2 to Year 6 are elected as members of our Pupil Voice groups. Pupils show they are ready to take on leadership roles and responsibilities and play an active part in improving school life for everyone. Our Senedd members ensure that the views of all classes are taken into account in decisions that affect them.

Our Senedd is made up of 12 groups: It is the responsibility of Senedd members to share their opinions, and those of their classes, to improve and enhance school life for all. These leadership roles are important for sharing information with the school community and for ensuring all pupils' voices are heard. Each group has an Action Plan and regularly shares their aims and achievements with the School Community through Assemblies and Newsletters.



Professional Learning Vision & Approach

At Blackwood Primary School, professional learning (PL) is at the heart of our approach to pedagogy and curriculum development. Our PL is tailored to address the individual needs of both staff and learners, taking into account their experiences, expertise, and aspirations. This empowers all stakeholders with greater autonomy in acquiring new skills and teaching methods.

Through our comprehensive, school-wide professional learning initiatives, we aim to empower staff and enhance our understanding of accountability in alignment with a shared vision for the entire Blackwood Primary community. This commitment fosters a genuine culture of inquiry and learning, promoting leadership development that meets professional standards and national expectations. By cultivating a culture of sharing best practices and refining pedagogy, we continuously evolve our Inspire curriculum to meet the diverse needs of all learners at Blackwood Primary.

Values

As you walk around our school, it is evident that we have a caring, kind, and well-mannered community composed of pupils, parents, governors, and staff. Together, we have established a set of core values to focus on each month. This initiative helps all our pupils, including the youngest ones, understand the reasons behind their behaviours and prepares them for life beyond school.

Our core values include:

Cooperation	Courage	Tolerance	Caring	Patience
Respect	Creativity	Honesty	Trust	Perseverance
Happiness	Friendship	Positivity	Compassion	
Ambition	Reflection	Healthy	Fairness	
Independence	Hope	Thoughtfulness	Freedom	

These values guide us in fostering a supportive and enriching environment for all.



Health and Safety

We are committed to ensuring that children are safe and secure at all times. The school follows the guidelines set by Caerphilly County Council regarding Health and Safety in Education. Any health and safety concerns are promptly reported to the Headteacher. Regular visits from the Local Authority Health and Safety Officer help us monitor and review any issues, which may be communicated to pupils through assemblies and class discussions as appropriate.

We conduct regular fire drills, and the school is equipped with the necessary safety equipment. Comprehensive risk assessments have been carried out for potential hazards and educational visits.

Visitors must report to the school office, where they will sign in and receive identification if they are working in and around the school. All staff, including contract workers, undergo DBS checks.

The school site is secure throughout the day and is monitored by CCTV cameras 24/7. Please note that pupils are not allowed to use the play area or any equipment left outside classrooms at the beginning and end of the school day.

Parking

The entrance to the school car park is designated for pupil entry and exit during the morning and afternoon sessions, making it inaccessible to vehicles during these times. As a result, the car park is reserved for staff use only.

The area around the school can be quite busy at the start and end of the school day. We ask that you remain mindful of pedestrian safety and be considerate when parking near the school.

Accidents/Illness in School

Basic first aid is provided at school by qualified First Aiders when necessary. If your child becomes unwell or has an accident and we believe they would be more comfortable at home, we will make every effort to contact you. If we are unable to reach you, we will keep your child in school until the end of the session.

In the event of an accident requiring hospital attention, we will do our best to inform parents promptly. We ask that parents ensure all contact details are kept up-to-date so we can reach you in case of an emergency. It is our policy to inform parents of any head injuries, and all incidents are recorded.

Medical

Medication will only be administered in school in accordance with the Welsh Government guidance document: Access to Education and Support for Children and Young People with Medical Needs. Please inform the school of any medical conditions or allergies your child may



have. The school will work closely with medical professionals to ensure that any medical care plans provided by healthcare specialists are followed.

If your child has an allergy and has been prescribed an EpiPen, please let us know, as all staff receive annual EpiPen training.

For prescribed medications, parents can usually meet the prescription schedule by administering medicines just before the start of the school day and immediately after. If your child requires medication during school hours, please arrange for an adult to come to the school to administer it. No medication should be sent into school with children, except for labelled, in-date asthma inhalers.

Valuables

Children are strongly advised not to bring valuables to school, as we cannot take responsibility for any items that are lost, damaged, or stolen. Mobile phones are not permitted in school. However, if a Year 6 parent believes it is essential for their child to bring a mobile phone due to a prearranged agreement with the school for walking home alone, the phone can be securely stored in a central location during the school day, provided there is a written agreement in place. For younger pupils transitioning between two homes, parents can contact the school if a mobile phone is needed.

Accessibility

The school building is equipped with facilities to accommodate disabled children and adults. We are committed to inclusion and ensuring full access to the curriculum and all aspects of school life for every child. While Health and Safety issues may occasionally require exceptions, each case is carefully considered on an individual basis, and suitable differentiation is negotiated. A full risk assessment will be conducted prior to admission.

No smoking

The school has a strict NO SMOKING policy on the whole site. This applies to vaping as well as cigarettes/cigars.

Dogs

Please note that dogs are NOT ALLOWED on the school site to ensure the safety and comfort of all students and staff. However, we recognise the importance of assistance for individuals with disabilities; therefore, guide dogs are permitted on the premises under appropriate circumstances.

Conduct

Any person using inappropriate language within the school grounds will be asked to leave.



Behaviour

At Blackwood Primary School, we believe that good behaviour and discipline are essential for effective learning and teaching. Maintaining a well-ordered and safe environment for all our learners requires a collective commitment to promoting positive behaviour. All staff and pupils are expected to act sensibly and responsibly at all times, demonstrating consideration, courtesy, and respect for everyone in the school community, as well as for personal and public property.

School Rules

Our School Rules are defined by three simple statements: **Ready, Respectful, Safe**. These rules are prominently displayed in all classrooms and key areas around the school, and they are frequently referenced by both pupils and staff.

Rewards

We emphasise encouraging positive behaviour rather than criticising inappropriate actions, with rewards playing a significant role in this approach. We recognise and reward positive behaviour through various stages, as outlined below:

- **Verbal Praise and Stickers:** This immediate feedback is motivational and helps children understand that good behaviour is valued.
- **Partner Teacher Reward:** Children can be sent to other adults in the school for recognition of their good work, ensuring minimal disruption to ongoing lessons.
- **Phase Lead Award:** Pupils may be sent to the Phase Lead for additional recognition.
- **Award Assemblies:** Celebrations of achievements take place during award assemblies.
- **Head Teacher Award:** Exceptional work may be acknowledged by the Head Teacher.
- **Parent Communication:** We keep parents informed through ParentMail.

Consequences

Children need to understand the consequences of not complying with school rules. Sanctions for rule-breaking are displayed in every year group as part of the class charter. To promote consistency across the school, the following steps are implemented in every class:

1. **1st Verbal Warning**
2. **2nd Verbal Warning:** Reflection time (5 minutes away from the group)
3. **Continued Non-compliance:** Time in a partner class (5 minutes)
4. **Further Failure to Comply:** Support from a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Well Being

Safeguarding

Blackwood Primary School is dedicated to ensuring the safety and protection of all children and will take necessary actions to safeguard their well-being. We recognise that children have a right to protection, which is embedded in the ethos of our school.

Our safeguarding policy applies to all staff, volunteers, governors, and contractors working on the school site.

Our recruitment and selection processes include thorough procedures to ensure that all staff have undergone appropriate DBS checks in line with Safe Recruitment practices.

We collaborate with outside agencies to enhance child safeguarding efforts. When concerns arise, it may be necessary to refer the matter to Children's Services. All staff receive safeguarding training that equips them to recognise and respond to child welfare concerns. These concerns are then reported to the Designated Child Protection Officer, Mrs K Davies (Headteacher), or, in her absence, the Deputy Designated Child Protection Officers, Miss G Jones or Mrs J Hiscott.

They adhere to strict guidelines for addressing any concerns, as outlined in the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. The nominated Governor for Child Protection is Mr P Diamond.

Children who are looked after

We collaborate with Caerphilly County Council and other local authorities to fulfil our role as corporate parents, ensuring the safeguarding and promotion of the education of Looked After Children. Our goal is to provide a safe and secure environment that fosters belief in the abilities and potential of all children, including those in care.

We are committed to supporting our Children who are Looked After (CLA) by providing them with equal access to opportunities that enable them to achieve their potential and enjoy their learning experience. Miss G Jones is the designated person responsible for promoting the educational achievement of Children who are Looked After.

Equality and Inclusion

The Governors, Headteacher, and staff at Blackwood Primary School promote equal access to all areas of the curriculum for every pupil, regardless of race, gender, ability, disability, faith, or cultural background. We have clear policies in place and are committed to providing an equitable and inclusive education. All children have equal access to activities, and support is available to ensure this. We encourage respect for all within the school and the wider community.



Anti Racism

Blackwood Primary School is an anti-racist institution committed to addressing racism in all its forms. We work with our children and the community to be actively anti-racist, believing that simply not being racist is not enough.

Our school promotes race equality by fostering respect for people from all backgrounds and encouraging positive attitudes towards differences. We oppose all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. Any language or behaviour that is racist or potentially harmful to any ethnic or racial group will not be tolerated and will be challenged. The Local Authority requires us to record and report all equality-related incidents to monitor trends across the county.

