

Saint John the Baptist Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School



Governors' Annual Report 2023 – 2024

The governors are pleased to present this report, summarising important information relating to St John's School for the last school year, ending July 2024. Please note, unless specifically stated, this report relates to the academic year from the 1st of September 2023 through to the 31st of August 2024.

Message from Helen Dalrymple, Chair of Governors.

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is with great pleasure that I present this Annual Report for the 2023-2024 academic year. The year has been full of achievements, growth and celebrations across all areas of school life. As a board of governors, we continue to play an active role in the direction and support of the school, working closely with the staff to ensure the best possible learning environment for all our pupils.

The Christian ethos of the school remains at the heart of our daily activities. This ethos is visible not only in our daily routines but also in the meaningful church services we celebrate throughout the year, including Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the Leaver's service. St John's Church continues to be a vital part of our school community, regularly hosting a variety of educational and spiritual activities.

We are particularly proud of the achievements of our junior pupils, whose hard work and dedication were showcased at the National Urdd Eisteddfod. Their performances in drama, recitation and singing were truly outstanding, earning them recognition and success at a national level. These accomplishments are a testament to their talent, creativity and the support they receive from our dedicated staff, especially Mrs Griffith. A special congratulations goes out to all those involved in these performances for their exceptional work.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Mrs. Stephens and all the staff at St John's, whose passion and commitment ensure that this remains a special and inspiring learning environment for our pupils. Their continuous hard work and dedication to the development of each child is deeply appreciated.

Our Home-School Association (HSA) continues to be a strong pillar of support, both financially and in enriching the social experiences of the school. We are immensely grateful to the parents and carers for their time, energy and dedication. Your contributions have made a real difference to the school community.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the future as we continue to embrace the Curriculum for Wales. This new curriculum offers fresh opportunities to build on the successes of our pupils, further developing them not only academically but also as confident, capable young people.

On behalf of the governing body, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support, and we look forward to another successful year ahead.

With best wishes,
Mrs. Helen Dalrymple
Chair of Governors

The Governing Body September 2023

Position	Name	End of term of office
Headteacher	Mrs Anna Stephens	N/A
Parent Governor	Mrs Madeleine Philips	25.10.2027
LEA Governor	Mrs Susan Pemberton (Vice-Chair)	21.10.2025
Foundation Governor	Mrs Helen Dalrymple (Chair) c/o St John's School, Chester Road, Penymydd	14.02.2026
Foundation Governor	Mr Steve Wallace	22.06.2025
Foundation Governor	Mrs Pamela Wallace	28.11.2026
Foundation Governor	Mrs Ann Bronnert	24.09.24
Foundation Governor	Mrs Anna Millington	25.09.2026
Foundation Governor (ex-officio)	Father Paul Wheelar	03.10.2026
Foundation Governor	Rev. Simon Piercy	18.07.2026
Minor Authority Governor	Mr Andy Sloan	03.10.2026
Teacher Governor	Mrs Emily Tiryaki	01.09.2027
Staff Governor	Mr Samuel Gocher	02.09.2027

Clerk: Ms Debbie Graham c/o St John's School,
Chester Road, Penymydd

Special Education Needs Governor: Mrs Pamela Wallace

Child Protection Governor: Mrs Anna Millington

Religious Education Governor: Mrs Helen Dalrymple

Health & Safety Governor: Mr Steve Wallace

Foundation Phase Governor: Mrs Anna Millington

Our next election for the role of foundation governor (who will also be a parent of child at St John's) will take place during the Autumn term 2024. Our next election for the role of parent governor will take place during the Autumn term 2024.

The governing body have not met with parents to discuss the annual report, however, parents are invited to have raise their opinions through regular questionnaires and parent forum meetings.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24

The school's financial income primarily comes from Flintshire County Council, its allocation is significantly influenced by the pupil enrolment numbers. The task of scrutinising budgets, proposing recommendations and overseeing the school's financial health has been entrusted to the Finance Sub-Committee by the Governors. This committee convenes regularly, collaborates with the Headteacher, and subsequently relays updates to the Governing Body. Additionally, the school maintains a school fund, utilised for supplementary resources and subsidising school trips. The use of this fund undergoes an annual audit to ensure transparency and accountability.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST VA SCHOOL (331)

OUTTURN 2023/24

BUDGET HEADING	BUDGET 2023/2024	EXPENDITURE 2023/2024	DIFF + OR (-)
BALANCE FROM 2022/2023	1,844		1,844
EMPLOYEES	452,748	559,224	-106,476
PREMISES	53,447	39,226	14,221
SUPPLIES	15,857	29,840	-13,983
SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS	15,919	16,079	-160
INCOME		-107,489.00	107,489
TOTAL 2023/2024	539,815	536,880	2,935

Changes to School Prospectus

During 2023 – 2024 the School Prospectus was updated, with the following amendments being made:

- School dates
- Attendance and any unauthorised absence details
- Staffing changes
- Governor changes
- Information regarding the Little Disciples out of hours Club.
- Curriculum arrangements for the New Curriculum.

Policy Review

Over the past year, the teaching staff and governors have been busy reviewing a large number of school policies. The policies reviewed this year were:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy: Staff and Pupils
- Educational Visits Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy

Overview of School Improvement Plan

Our Vision

Working together with kindness, respect and encouragement to achieve our best, in a caring Christian school.

The Governing Body has approved the School Improvement Plan. Our new strategic plan runs from 2023 – 2026. Members of the Curriculum Sub-Committee of the Governing Body meet termly with staff to monitor the progress of improvement plan. The Curriculum Sub-Committee alongside the headteacher, reports back to the full governing body.

Key priorities during 2023 2024 were:

Priority 1: To ensure effective planning for progression of learners' numeracy skills as learners move up the school.

As a result of this priority, pupils have more opportunities to practice their maths skills in real-life situations, such as during Caffi Cymraeg, baking, the Great Big Birdwatch and making milkshakes. Many are making expected progress in their personalised procedural and reasoning assessments, with a few in most year groups showing strong improvement. In addition, most pupils are progressing well in their White Rose topic assessments compared to their starting points. Teachers

are also gaining a better understanding and increased confidence in delivering the new mathematics and numeracy curriculum.

Priority 2: To ensure effective planning for progression of learners' digital skills as learners move up the school.

The introduction of digital skills tracking has provided a structured way to monitor and improve pupils' digital abilities. Training on digital portfolios for upper key stage 2 pupils and staff has enhanced most pupils' organisational skills and staff's ability to integrate these tools into teaching, though further development is needed to help pupils reflect on their learning progress. Hwb and Adobe Express training has improved pupils' understanding of internet safety and creative use of digital tools, with most able to explain how they stay safe online. Coding training has introduced fundamental programming skills and sparked interest in Science and Technology, with plans to build on this during 2024-2025. Digital committee meetings have ensured updated online safety protocols, fostering a safer digital environment for pupils.

Priority 3: To improve the Welsh oracy skills of all learners and to develop their confidence to speak in Welsh.

Staff have become more confident in delivering stage-appropriate Helpwr Heddiw activities, with good practices from Dosbarth 3 helping create a consistent approach to teaching everyday Welsh across the juniors. Most pupils can confidently ask and answer Helpwr Heddiw questions with familiar adults and actively engage in activities. By Year 6, nearly all pupils are confident leading bilingual Church services or Collective Worship. Community involvement has grown, with Criw Cymraeg pupils conversing bilingually at events like Caffi Cymraeg and teaching everyday Welsh phrases. Success at the National Eisteddfod saw many juniors performing confidently in Welsh plays, song, and recitations, even on national television. The Play Pals project has encouraged more pupils to speak Welsh outside the classroom, but further development is needed for consistency. Staff have also supported other schools, sharing expertise to improve Welsh language teaching practices.

The School Improvement Plan for 2024 – 2025 are:

Priority 1: To ensure a consistent approach to guided reading that effectively develops pupils' higher order reading skills, enabling many pupils to achieve strong progress.

Priority 2: To further refine and embed effective planning and provision strategies that support the progression of pupils' numeracy skills.

Priority 3: To strengthen distributive leadership in order to develop a coherent and progressive approach to curriculum and assessment.

External accreditations: To work towards the Silver Award for Cymraeg Campus.

These priorities have been shared with parents during the autumn term.

2024 – 2025 Term Dates

Autumn Term starts	Wednesday 4th September 2024	INSET DAYS Monday 2nd and Tuesday 3rd September
Half Term	Monday 28th October - Friday 1st November	
Autumn Term ends	Thursday 19th December	INSET DAY Friday 20th December
Christmas Holidays	Monday 23rd December - Friday 3rd January 2025	INSET DAY Monday 6th January 2025
Spring Term starts	Tuesday 7th January 2025	
Half Term	Monday 24th February - Friday 28th February	INSET DAY Friday 21st February
Spring Term ends	Friday 11th April	
Easter Holidays	Monday 14th April - Friday 25th April	
Summer Term starts	Monday 28th April	BANK HOLIDAY Monday 5th May
Half Term	Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May	
Summer Term ends	Friday 18th July	INSET DAY Monday 21st July

Curriculum Statement

Over the course of 2023– 2024, members of St John’s community refined our Curriculum Rationale document in response to the 2022 Curriculum for Wales. We listened to our learners, parents, staff, governors and our local community. Collectively, we have chosen our Christian Values and linked each value to the Four Core Purposes and their associated learning and social behaviours:

We are currently in the process of delivering a newly designed curriculum and have successfully completed the first year of its implementation. Our focus is on crafting a customised curriculum that caters to the unique needs of our learners, facilitating their progress from their current stage to help them reach their full potential. Our Curriculum Vision can be found on the school website.

Core Purposes	Christian Values	To work towards our vision, we will...
Ambitious, capable learners Ambitious Alex	Perseverance Courage	Be committed to keep going and not giving up. Overcome fear and face a challenge.
Ethical, informed citizens Ethical Ezra	Community Respect	Be stronger together. Show respect and care for the world around us.
Healthy, confident individuals Healthy Haven	Love Friendship	Grow and learn together because we know that God loves us. Share hopes and dreams, include others.
Enterprising, creative contributors Creative Charlie	Creativity Generosity	Be inquisitive, explore our wonderful world and utilise our talents. Take care of God’s creation for future generations.

Whole School Numeracy and Literacy Skills

The literacy and numeracy framework is a key element of the curriculum across the whole school. It provides skills ladders for pupils from reception to year 9. It is designed to support activities which link different subjects and enables children to use their literacy and numeracy skills in real contexts.

Digital Competence Framework (DCF)

Following a report from Professor Graham Donaldson CB in February 2015, entitled ‘Successful Futures,’ the Welsh Assembly Government have developed an

IT framework do develop children's Digital Competence, across all areas of the curriculum.

The Digital Competence Framework was released to schools in September 2016 and became statutory in September 2018, during this period of time the school has been working on embedding these key skills across our curriculum. The governors would like to thank Mr Gocher for his input into developing our learners' digital skills.

If you would like to access more information about the DCF (Digital Competency Framework), please follow the links below.

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/cross-curricular-skills-frameworks/digital-competence-framework>

Additional Learning Needs

The national curriculum is taught to all pupils unless there are any special arrangements for misapplication for specific reasons such as medical or particular learning needs. Pupils who have additional educational needs are supported in classrooms and sometimes taught in small groups or as individuals.

Our Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo) works across the school with all year groups. She liaises with staff and parents and outside agencies ensuring that children's needs are identified and they are given all the support they need to meet their individual targets. She is always available for extra consultations when parents wish them. Our ALNCo, Mrs L Barnes, and members of the senior leadership team have been preparing the school for the implementation of the New Additional Needs Code of Practice which was launched across Wales in September 2022. More information on the new Code of Practice can be found at

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2018-12/draft-additional-learning-needs-code-for-wales_0.pdf

Classroom assistants play an important role in supporting children's specific needs in numeracy and literacy. Some pupils may access our catch-up programmes for a period of time in order to accelerate their progress.

Catch Up Literacy Programme

Supported by the Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards (RRRS)

Accelerated Learning Grant

As you will know at St. John's we are constantly looking at ways of improving the language skills of our pupils. We are fortunate in having the services of a Teaching Assistant at school, Mrs. J Davies, whose brief is to afford support in delivering the Literacy Curriculum and has the 'Catch Up Literacy' qualification. One of our targets as a whole school is to improve standards of reading and for this reason we use the 'Catch Up' scheme. This is essentially a fun, but intensive reading programme over a period of weeks or months that help pupil's 'catch up' on their reading, handwriting and spelling skills. Each child is monitored very closely and the reading and spelling materials used are carefully structured to maintain their interest and enthusiasm. The programme has been running successfully now since October 2007 and assessment results have shown that the pupil's involved have shown improvement in their reading and literacy skills.

The Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG)

The purpose of the Pupil Development Grant is to improve the educational attainment of pupils from low income families and who are entitled to free school meals (FSM). Schools are expected to maximise the use of this funding by introducing sustainable strategies which will quickly lead to improved outcomes for pupils entitled to free school meals.

As a school, we want to learn from the best practice in Wales and beyond by:

1. Planning interventions that focus on improving the attainment of pupils from deprived backgrounds, regularly monitoring pupils' progress and evaluating the impact of the intervention.
2. Integrating plans for the effective use of the PDG into the School Development Plan, basing our practice on sound evidence and including them as part of a whole school strategy.
3. Balancing whole school strategies with targeted interventions to ensure that all learners entitled to free school meals benefit as individuals, whilst the whole school also develops its ability to support every learner to achieve their full potential.

In 2023 - 2024 St John's School were allocated a total Pupil Development Grant of £2903.

St John's School has a comprehensive plan, agreed and monitored by GwE and Flintshire Local Authority, to promote high expectations attainment and progress and to remove barriers to learning for pupils entitled to this funding.

We have used the funding available to:

- Provided training for teachers and support staff.
- Provided additional support for pupils.
- Funded part-payments for educational visits and musical tuition.

It is not appropriate for the school to publish a detailed plan as it could identify individual pupils.

Attendance 2023 2024

Attendance	Authorised Absences	Unauthorised Absences
95.2%	4.8%	0%

Attendance is highly valued by the Local Authority, our governors and staff and it is our expectation that pupils attend school every day. Our attendance policy aligns with the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, wherein headteachers have the discretionary power to authorise leave for a family holiday during term time upon parents' request. However, unless under exceptional circumstances, no more than 10 days' leave may be granted for this purpose.

While we are committed to discouraging term-time holidays to enhance children's outcomes, we acknowledge that, at times, families may have limited choices regarding when to take holidays. In such cases, parents are required to contact the school in advance to complete an official request for a leave of absence form. All requests must be submitted in writing by a parent or carer, even if they are not accompanying the child on the holiday. The school maintains close collaboration with the Local Authority attendance officer, who conducts regular attendance monitoring to ensure compliance with these guidelines.

Toilet Facilities

There are sufficient toilets on site for the number of pupils on roll. Our toilets are well maintained and private facilities for our pupils to use. The toilets are thoroughly cleaned daily by our cleaning/caretaking staff to a good standard and are monitored throughout the day for any issues that may need attention. There is also one disabled toilet, which due to the recent remodelling is of a high standard and fit for purpose.

Destination of School Leavers

In 2023, nearly all our year 6 leavers moved onto Castell Alun High School. The school maintains very close links with Castell Alun (and other schools as needed) in order to ensure as smooth a transition for the pupils as possible.

Pupils have access to a variety of transition days and meet the teacher session at their secondary high schools. Pupils who were identified on their individual ALN plans as requiring additional support with transition, were offered additional and enhanced

transition including extra visits and time spent in their feeder schools. Furthermore, past pupils visited our year 6's with Mrs L Allen, head of year 7 at Castell Alun High School, to discuss general school life as a year 7 to allay any of our learners "moving" up concerns.

Complaints

We work hard to maintain good relationships with parents and the community. These are based on mutual respect and a willingness to listen. The Governors sincerely hope that any concerns and problems can be addressed by discussion with the Headteacher and staff prior to becoming an issue for the attention of the Governing Body. If there are however, issues which cannot be resolved then a copy of the complaints policy is available from the school upon request.

You are welcome to have a copy or to read it on our school website at www.stjohnsflintshire.org

Languages

Pupils are educated through the medium of English. Welsh is taught as a second language and is used as part of the Welsh lessons, as incidental Welsh throughout the day, across the curriculum where possible and during Collective Worship which supports our achievement in gaining the Bronze Cymraeg Campus Award (January 2020). We ensure that all pupils are supported in the learning of Welsh as a second language and recognise their linguistic backgrounds. Following the introduction of the new Curriculum for Wales, we have been teaching Makaton and British Sign Language from nursery through to year 6.

Healthy Eating and Drinking by Pupils of the School

We are a health promoting school. Healthy eating is part of our Science and Technology and Health and Wellbeing curriculum and the healthy eating message is frequently raised. Newydd, our School Meals Service works closely with our school to promote healthy eating choices.

Children are encouraged to bring their own water bottle into school and are encouraged to drink water throughout the day. Across the infants, pupils are offered a variety of healthy snacks and milk/water for their continuous snack provision.

Sporting Aims and Provision

The governors would like to thank the classteachers, pupils and the H.S.A. for organising and taking part in our sports day during the summer term. We would especially like to thank Mrs Betts for organising all the races. Everyone enjoyed themselves, diolch pawb.

As you can see from the activities below, during 2023 - 2024, St John's partook in

a variety of sporting tournaments:

Trips, Visits, Whole-School Events and Charitable Causes

- Whole school Harvest service, with food donations for the local food bank.
- Whole school Christmas service.
- Whole school Easter service.
- Whole school end-of-year leavers' service.
- Year 5/6 outdoor educational overnight trip to Cardiff.
- Sporting tournaments with Castell Alun feeder schools in football, tag rugby, netball and dodgeball (years 5/6).
- Whole juniors to trip to Pantomime at Theatre Clwyd.
- Technocamps digital visits to all classes.
- Cycle Awareness training for Year 6's.
- Magi Ann visit to the lower infants.
- Termly visits by School Police Liaison Officer (years 1 to 6).
- Whole school visit by members of church in Texas, America.
- Visits by local clergy to deliver school assemblies.
- Whole junior swimming sessions.
- Sporting after-school clubs in multi-sports, tag rugby, football, dodgeball and athletics.
- Whole juniors Urdd after-school club.
- Whole school sports day.
- Whole school fundraising days: Children in Need, Christmas Jumper Day, Red Nose Day, Teams4U Christmas boxes, The poppy appeal, British Legion.
- Whole school Eisteddfod, Dydd Musig Cwl, Santes Dwynwen, Dydd Gwyl Dewi Sant celebrations.
- Whole school book fair and celebration of St John's book day.
- Year 6 transition visits/trips to Castell Alun High school:
 - Year 6 wellbeing day at Castell Alun
 - Year 6 trip to Castell Alun to participate in a Welsh activities day and watch a play.
 - Visit by Year 7 head of year and year 7 pupils.

Links between St. John's Church Community and our School

St John the Baptist is a Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School with a distinctive Christian ethos and character. We greatly value that status and are committed to continuing the strong links we have with both the Borderlands Mission Area and the Diocese of St Asaph. We welcomed Father Paul Wheeler to our governing body and our services, alongside Rev. Simon Piercy.

We were very thankful to be able to host all of the main festivals back at St John's Church and it was lovely to be able to invite all parents to join us for these occasions.

Please "Google" St John's Church at <https://sites.google.com/site/stjohnspentrobin/home> and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnspenymynyddflintshire/>

Links with our Local Police

The school holds strong links with the Local Police who carry out a planned programme of education in Classes 2, 3 and 4 covering drug and alcohol awareness, internet safety, stranger danger etc. Thank you, PC Stuart.

Home School Association (H.S.A.)

The governors extend their heartfelt gratitude to our Home School Association for their unwavering dedication and efforts. They work tirelessly to raise funds for the school and organise events that foster a sense of community among pupils, parents and staff. The association also ensures a seamless transition each year by maintaining a core team for continuity while welcoming new members to take on committee roles. The governors deeply appreciate the commitment and hard work of both the parents and the committee in making these events successful and in supporting the school's fundraising initiatives. Over the past year, the association have either fully, or part funded school activities as below:

- Christmas party
- Christmas class activities
- Pantomime contribution
- Playground markings and consumables
- Continued to support the Leavers' treat.

We would especially like to thank Mrs Jess Billington-Dykes and Mr Neil Shone-Jones as they have passed on the H.S.A "baton" to the existing committee. We as

a team, now look forward to the next year together with a number of new ideas to engage the children and continue to raise funds.