

Barry Comprehensive School

Governors Annual Report to Parents



They did it again!

And now it is “D. R. Swallow, OBE”

‘Tremendous effort’ made our school the most improved in South Wales!

Barry Comprehensive School has had much to celebrate in the past year, all of which has reflected on the achievements of pupils and the dedication of staff and the senior management team.

In the words of the head, David Swallow, “This year again saw many awards given to students for their tremendous efforts in different subject areas throughout the year. It is a great pleasure to acknowledge and reward young people who have gained so much exam success. The school is proud of its continual improvement in its examination results.”

Directly because of the 2002 results, the school was the most im-

proved school in South Wales and the second in the whole of Wales.

Exam results this year have improved even more than the previous year. In the past four years, the 5 A* - C pass rate has doubled to this year’s outcome of 53 per cent.

“The school’s performance, for the second year in a row, also runs contrary to the evidence that boys underachieve at this age in comparison with girls. This is a significant achievement and fully reflects the hard work and dedication of the staff at Barry Comprehensive.”

“Raising academic achievement will always be the number one priority and the current year 11 pupils are confidently expected to produce the school’s best-ever results.”

The head, as always, praised the team work that produces the re-

sults. “Staff work tremendously hard during lessons, after school and at revision weekends to ensure that the students are prepared as well as possible for their examinations and their coursework is produced to the best of their ability.”

Parental support and partnership with the school are also stressed as key factors in the success of the school.

Well deserved praise for all concerned.

Governors were delighted to learn in the spring that our head teacher, David Swallow, had been awarded an OBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list for his services to education. As usual, he insisted on sharing the credit with the dedicated team at the school.

Congratulations to David and his family.

Finance

Russell Grant

As repeatedly reported, schools in the Vale of Glamorgan continue to receive less money per pupil than almost any other schools in England and Wales. This is a result of the way in which the Welsh Assembly Government determines the council's revenue support grant. As a consequence, our limited budget places a restraint on the ambitions of staff and governors alike for the school's development.

In 2002-03, our budget requirement of £3.4 million was not met, resulting in the need to identify £200,000 of cost savings. Again in 2003 – 04 our budget of £3.8m was £150,000 short of the funding allocated to the school from the council. However, we have been able to identify and secure various miscellaneous grant aid, which should see the school return a balanced budget for 2003- 04, without further cost reductions.

It is estimated that over the last nine years there has been a cumulative school budget shortfall of approximately £1m. The manner in which the Welsh Assembly Government allocates councils' revenue support grants, and therefore money available to schools must be challenged.

Delivery and monitoring

The governors' Finance Committee works closely with the school's management to ensure that value for money is achieved from its limited resources. The Committee has delegated powers, which include the regular authorising of financial commitments and expenditure. This strategic management is only made possible by the day to day expertise and financial acumen of the Bursar and her staff, a fact repeatedly acknowledged by the Vale council's audit department.

As previously stated, every effort is made to identify and secure grant assistance to fund specific initiatives in an attempt to balance the budget. Whilst the uncertainty of this is an inefficient way in which to fund the school, our limited financial resources dictate such an approach in

order to be able to deliver the school development plan.

In recent years, in order to provide up to date computers that the information technology curriculum demands, we have leased rather than purchased equipment. This method of financing maximises the budget available by spreading the financial commitment over more than one year and further ensures that the school has and will keep pace with advances in technology and curriculum demands. Currently we have repaid all our leasing obligations. However, we continue to build up reserves to enable the school to enter into further leasing obligations to be able to respond to technology - led demands.

Our overall financial priority is to ensure that staffing levels are maintained to be able to deliver the school's development plan. In spite of our financial restraints, we have never reduced staffing levels and it is not the intention to do so.



Pupils enjoying the facilities of the LRC

Curriculum

Kath Beaudette

Reference has already been made to the school's continued improvement in exam results. A2 and AS results also showed significant improvements with a 99% pass rate and a 70% A-C success rate (95% and 54% last year respectively). What is also gratifying to note that within all examination results, individual grades were higher. This is due to, not only the hard work of staff, pupils and parents, but also to the support strategies that the school has in place to encourage pupils to achieve. It is also attributable to an imaginative development of the curriculum that allows pupils to achieve their potential across a range of abilities.

The school continues to grow; the Year 7 intake reached 250 and there are new pupils in every year group. There are now approximately 1400 pupils on roll. Eleven new members of staff were welcomed. Despite the pressure of numbers, Year 7 class sizes have again been kept low, averaging 25.

School Development Plan

The content of the SDP is a key factor in determining the development of the curriculum and the allocation of resources.

The school has set its priorities for 2002/2003 to include:

1. Enhancing student attainment in KS3 by incorporating Key Skills more fully into the curriculum;
2. Continuing to develop courses that enable students to gain success at KS4;
3. Enhancing the quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement;
4. Ensuring that recording systems are able to demonstrate progression at all levels;
5. Continuing to improve levels of attendance and punctuality.

The Governors' Curriculum Working Party will continue to support staff to achieve these aims.

Personnel

David Kennett

The school has successfully implemented the Assembly's performance management requirements throughout the whole school. This now provides a formal basis for the award of future salary increases under the Assembly government's threshold pay arrangements.

The budget for the school year 2003-4 was significantly improved and this has enabled us to recruit additional teachers to contain pupil-teacher ratios at their existing satisfactory levels despite the 25-30% increase in pupil numbers in year 7. If this continues in future years then more teacher recruitment will be necessary.

During the year we have lost both a Deputy and an Assistant Head, both of whom have moved on for career reasons. This has meant that the strain on the Senior Management Team that has effectively lost 25% of its people. It has been difficult to recruit a deputy who meets the exacting standards that the school requires of its SMT members but the decision has been taken not to appoint until the 'right' candidate has been interviewed. In the interim an increasing burden has fallen on the remaining members of the team and there is an urgent need to appoint at least one Assistant head to relieve the pressure.

Lower down the school we have been able to continue to recruit very good replacement teachers either externally or from amongst newly qualified teachers who have been working at the school for members of staff who have moved on and to cope with the expansion in pupil numbers.

Pupil performance is dealt with elsewhere in this report but the Governors would like to take this opportunity to thank all the teaching and non-teaching staff at the school for their hard work in producing a further substantial improvement in examination results and generally improved non-academic performance at the school. These things do not happen by accident. They are the result of forward planning, excellent leadership and the wholehearted commitment of everyone employed at the school.



The school's annual "Sleepathon" continues to reach legendary proportions.



All weather activities prove popular in the excellent sports hall.



*The production of **Blood Brothers** was an absolute triumph from the drama department, which, together with Music and the Performing Arts, go from strength to strength.*



Relaxed and friendly, but effective learning support.

Welfare, sport and community

Pat Beard

The Governors Pupil Welfare Working Group focuses on the pastoral role of the school and the policies that govern it, including special educational needs. These include reviewing the school's own welfare policy, but also keeping up with new requirements resulting from changes in legislation. The school also has a designated governor with responsibility for SEN, who has access to specialist training. For instance, this year we looked in more detail at *The Education of Looked After Children and Personal Education Plans*.

The Learning Support Department continues to be one of the strengths of the school, both in terms children's learning needs and behaviour support. A cause for concern which emerged during the year was the allocation to the school of the full schedule of Literacy Support Sessions, as the result of staffing shortages in the Vale. We shall monitor this closely in the coming year.

We are also pleased to report that for the year 2002-2003, for the first time ever, the school reached 90% attendance, the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government

Another aspect of the school's pastoral care is reflected in the highly successful PSE days which are organised at the end of the spring term. An initiative of the RE Department, these days offer pupils the opportunity to address a wide range of issues affecting their personal and social development.

Pupils continue to contribute to the wider life of the community and to local charitable causes. At the school's Presentation Evening at the end of the summer term, a cheque for £3,000 was presented to LATCH.

Both individual and team sporting successes continue, with our star gymnasts giving highly imaginative displays in competition and to school audiences.

Governors 2003



Barry Comprehensive School Governors are committed to the school and to its role in the community. We strongly support the school's partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and community schools throughout the Vale.

The Governing Body is made up of elected parent and teacher and staff representatives, members nominated by the local education authority, and people co-opted for their commitment and expertise. The head teacher is a governor. Recently elections for two vacancies for parent governors have been held.

The Governing Body meet formally twice or more in a term to consider issues in relation to the school's development, management and curriculum. Committees and working groups of governors deal with pupil welfare, special needs, staffing and performance, curriculum, premises and finance.

Parent Governors from November 2003:

Pat Beard, Kath Beaudette, John Doel, Steve James, Mary Dyas, Alvine Westerland

Co-opted Governors:

Matthew Griffiths, Russell Grant, David Kennett, Nick Paulakis, John Stacey Marks

Teacher Governors:

Jason Hicks, Brian Williams

Non-teaching staff Governor:

André Desrosiers

LEA Governors:

Chris Britten, Tony Hampton, Emlyn Williams, Graham Ellis, John Williams

Headteacher:

David Swallow, OBE

The Chair of the Governing Body is elected annually, in September. The present chair is Matthew Griffiths. The Vice Chair is David Kennett. They can be contacted via the school or the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Janice Davies, at the Vale of Glamorgan Education Department.

Minutes of the Governing Body can be inspected at the school or on the school web site.

Barry Comprehensive School
Port Road West, Barry CF62 8ZJ
Tel. 01446 411411; Fax. 01446 411422
Www.barrycomp.com

ANNUAL MEETING FOR PARENTS—REQUEST FORM

Please complete this form and return it to the school before **Monday 19 January 2004** if you would like governors to organise an annual meeting for parents. A meeting will be arranged to discuss this report formally if the parents of twenty or more pupils respond.

I/we would like to request an annual meeting for parents.

Name(s) _____

Pupil name(s) _____

Address _____

Tel: _____