



# Vale School Governors' Association Cymdeithas Llywodraethwyr Ysgolion y Fro and Governor Support Unit **Newsletter**

## Note from the Chair

This is a time of change for many Governing Bodies with lots of new School Governors. May I welcome you to VSGA – the Vale School Governors Association - the organisation which represents the interests of School Governors in the Vale of Glamorgan.

You will find being a Governor a challenging, but ultimately a rewarding experience. You have important responsibilities, but you also get to see the impact of what you decide on the lives of the children at your school. You can make a real positive difference.

Becoming a Governor can be daunting; so much to learn – all the acronyms and jargon which the teaching profession take for granted. What precisely are you allowed to do, supposed to do and, just as important, not supposed to do.

Fortunately, help is at hand. The Vale of Glamorgan Governor Support Unit and Central South Consortium are running a comprehensive series of training sessions. You should have received

email information about them, and you will receive this regularly each term. There are induction events for new Governors, and training on specific activities for all Governors.

Remember, those of you who have been Governors a long time also need to keep up to date. Laws and regulations change. There are exciting new initiatives from Welsh Government. Do you know enough about safeguarding and recruitment? Are you up to speed on the Curriculum for Wales?

Make sure you and your Governing Body are not left behind.

We are fortunate in having some excellent training available. Take advantage of it!!

**Dr Martin Price**  
Chair of VSGA and Vice-Chair of  
Governors, St Richard Gwyn Roman  
Catholic High School, Barry

## Issue 53 Autumn Term 2022

### Special points of interest:

- AVAGO was formed in 1996 and re-launched in 2006 as Vale School Governors' Association (VSGA)
- The Management Committee is made up of 15 elected governors together with 2 elected parent governor representatives

### VSGA was set up to:

- Promote best practice in governance in schools within the Vale of Glamorgan LEA
- To promote partnership amongst schools and between schools and the LEA
- To work with stakeholders to ensure adequate resources for schools within the LEA
- To represent the Association's views on issues relating to school governance and the management and resourcing of schools to relevant authorities and organisations

## In association with the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Governor Support Unit

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VSGA has an email address that you may contact us on.

It's [VSGA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:VSGA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

alternatively you can contact VSGA by post at:

**VSGA Governor Support Unit**  
Learning & Development Dept.  
Vale of Glamorgan Council  
Civic Offices, Holton Road,  
Barry CF63 4RU



# Sustainable Communities

## Introduction

I joined the Vale in April this year and I work for the Sustainable Communities for Learning department to help protect the ecology of our new schools that are being built and to also support schools with enhancing the biodiversity and ensuring that this is included within the curriculum. My background is within ecology, horticulture, arboriculture.

## Marine Clean Cymru Beach Clean

Around 90 pupils from St Joseph's, Victoria and Westbourne carried out a litter pick before taking part in a workshop on environmental matters delivered by Council staff and Keep Wales Tidy.

Local Artist Nick John Rees, who is displaying pieces at Penarth Pavilion, spoke with the pupils, answering questions about his work, which is focussed around marine scenes.

The event was designed to raise awareness around green issues in line with Project Zero, the Council's plan to become Carbon Neutral by 2030.

It also formed part of the Authority's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, a component of which looks at how the areas where educational facilities are being upgraded can be enriched.

Members of contractors ISG and AECOM, who are involved in the Council's school-building programme, attended, along with individuals from Benthg Gwyrddio Penarth Greening and Penarth Growing Community.



officially launched with an event last Friday. It will be a base for children, as well as the wider community, to learn about environmental conservation.

Pupils are now working with Alison Maher, the Council's Associate Project Manager for Sustainable Communities for Learning, to develop a wormery for a food waste composting facility.



## Eco lodge

Having declared a climate emergency three years ago, Project Zero is the Authority's plan to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Inspired by that ambition, Barry Island Primary has been working in collaboration with experts from the Council to develop and create a body of work aligned with Welsh Government's Curriculum for Wales.

The aim was to create a series of dynamic, cross curricular lessons to educate young people about their world and locality, including the importance of biodiversity, ecology and sustainability.

Central to that learning is the creation of an Eco Lodge on the school site, which was



## Wormerie Pilot Project

In order to reduce food waste leaving the school site and in turn reduce carbon emissions, the Sustainable Communities for Learning department are launching a pilot project to introduce wormeries into three schools (Barry Island Primary, Colcot Primary & Oakfield Primary). Pupils will be responsible for collecting food scraps from the canteen and feeding them to the worms to produce vermicompost to use on their vegetable patches.

**Alison Maher**  
Associate Project Manager  
Learning and Skills



## Universal Primary free school meals

It has been another very busy period for us here at Big Fresh. With the roll out of UPFSM for reception, year 1 and year 2 starting on the first day back in September 2022.

We have been working on this roll out since February 2022 in terms of school kitchen audits to make sure we are fully equipped ready to service the children that take this option up.

We have not only purchased new equipment to make sure we are in the best position possible to move forward as a company and grow, more staff have been employed to increase our work force to help service the increase in meals served in our schools.

The feedback we have received from our schools has been very encouraging and puts us in a very positive position to push on into the winter and spring terms with the aim of continuing the standard of service we have grown to recognise as normal for Big Fresh.

Big fresh are pleased to welcome St Richard Gwyn Comprehensive school onboard from September 2022. We have been working well with the new Big Fresh team onsite to provide the pupils with a varied menu and are also in the process of implementing a new cashless till system from November.

Our buffet side of the business is still growing strong, so remember if you have meetings of any kind and are looking for any catering to impress your colleagues or friends, contact us and let us help.

Big Fresh @ the pier are working alongside the Penarth Pavilion management team to provide some festive activities over the course of November and December, so make sure you check Eventbrite and come along to see what is happening and enjoy something different this year.

**Symon Dovey**  
Commercial Development Manager  
The Big Fresh Catering Company



# Super Ambassador Event 2022

The Vale Rights Ambassadors project which is managed by the Vale Youth Service has continued to support Super Ambassador schools to raise awareness of Children's Rights this term.

This term the Rights Ambassadors project delivered an in person Super Ambassador event, since the start of the pandemic. This was held at Barry Memo Arts Centre on the 27th of October 2022 with 25 primary schools in attendance. The event provided 51 pupils the opportunity to learn more about their role as Super Ambassador pupils as well as understanding of the UNCRC, and the importance of promoting children and young people's rights in their schools.

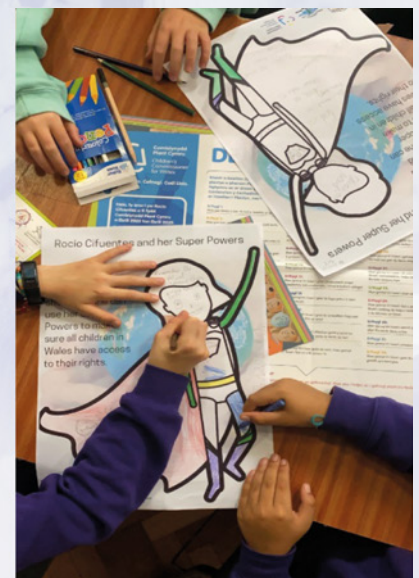
In addition, members of the Rights Ambassadors delivered a presentation to teachers on embedding a children's rights approach to children's rights within a school setting as well as raising awareness of the Children's Commissioner for Wales "The Right Way in Education" linking in with the New Curriculum for Wales. Teachers also had the opportunity to learn more about the National Participation Standards.

The Super Ambassadors Scheme is an initiative of the Children's Commissioner for Wales Office, their aim to promote children's rights and specifically raise awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in primary across Wales.

The Rights Ambassadors support the Children Commissioner of Wales, Rocio Cifuentes, invitation to all primary schools to sign up to the Super Ambassador scheme. The Rights Ambassadors will continue to support school body throughout the year through the delivery of additional workshops and teachers' resources.

All scheme signups are free, we actively encourage the schools' governors to find out if their school is signed up to the Super Ambassador Scheme. We invite you to promote this scheme at School Governors and promote the work done by The Rights Ambassadors. It is our mission to have as many schools sign up as possible Details of how to sign up can be found on the Commissioner's website. Super Ambassadors - Children's Commissioner for Wales ([childcomwales.org.uk](http://childcomwales.org.uk))

**Michaela O'Neill**  
**Rights Ambassador Project Worker**  
**Standards and Provision**





## Supporting Our Schools in the Vale

June this summer saw Lewis Gibbon join the Schools ICT Support team, and Lewis' addition to the technicians has helped us tremendously. He has excelled in the pace in which he has turned to the systems that we use and is thoroughly enjoying being a member of the team. Which is just as well because this term has been an exceptionally busy one. The Welsh Government funding programme continues, and we have all been busy shipping and enrolling various devices out to schools. To date we have sent out 7055 devices to all schools in the Vale of Glamorgan, including to schools that we do not support.

Truckloads of equipment have turned up again this term, arriving at the Civic Offices, some deliveries with next to no notice, yet the team have adapted to this, and have done a wonderful job of expediting the equipment out to schools, after cataloguing it in to ensure it had all arrived.

A tremendous amount of Apple equipment including iPads, are now being enrolled into Microsoft Intune, our Mobile Device Management system. The team has enrolled a vast amount of equipment into this system, finally allowing us to bring some form of standardisation to the school's equipment across the local authority. With the sheer volume of kit that we have deployed into our schools, Microsoft Intune has proved invaluable to the team. Gone are the days when school photocopiers, and printers had to be installed on individual devices, these are now managed by the system. New applications can be configured once and pushed out to as many or little computers required, all remotely.

We firmly believe that this makes the way we support ICT in our schools, combined with the help of the Welsh Government, so much more efficient and effective for us, to a point where we believe that we now have the edge technologically over our competitors.

This year we have seen several schools who have been with third party support agencies, come back to us for our support – and that for us, speaks volumes!

**Christopher Thomas**  
Schools ICT Support





# Relationships and Sexuality Education

Dear Governor,

This special [bulletin](#) outlines the requirements for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) within the Curriculum for Wales Framework and signposts resources to support schools with the development of their RSE curriculum. As RSE is a cross-cutting theme in the Curriculum for Wales, this information is essential for all staff.

Please also see below a letter from Welsh Government about RSE.

Y Grŵp Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus  
Education and Public Services Group



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

To: All Head Teachers in Wales

Cc:  
Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW)  
Catholic Education Service  
Church in Wales Education Service  
Regional Consortia  
Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)

9 November 2022

Dear colleagues

I am writing to provide you with some reassurance about Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in the new Curriculum for Wales.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the excellent work you are doing in preparing for the delivery of this sensitive aspect of the curriculum. I want to ensure that your school has access to support that will enable you and your school community to be confident in your approach to RSE. Therefore, I am writing to you to explain:

- Welsh Government's response to campaigns against RSE;
- the support you can expect in delivering RSE; and
- our expectations for RSE.

## RSE Misinformation

Protecting children from harm is the utmost priority and high quality, mandatory RSE in schools is an important part of our safeguarding efforts. This is made very clear in the RSE Code and statutory guidance.

A number of incorrect claims are made by a particular group who believe that RSE is part of a co-ordinated "global rollout" of "comprehensive sexuality education". The Welsh Government has publicly stated that it strongly refutes these allegations which are baseless and damaging. Their literature cites resources which are highly inappropriate and in our view are designed to be provocative and to mislead as to what RSE is about. None of those resources have been used in Wales and the Welsh Government has been clear that they would not be permitted under the Code. I would encourage you to read [this statement](#) by the Minister for Education and Welsh Language that sets out the position in full.

## Support for RSE

It is a critical priority for us to support you in delivering RSE. Over the last few months, we have published several supporting documents to assist you and to support you in engaging with your communities. In particular, I want to draw your attention to the [RSE toolkit](#) which is designed to help parents and carers understand the changes to RSE.

Local authorities are also able to support with responses to challenging correspondence you receive about RSE. They will also shortly be able to provide you with a suggested process to help engage parents and carers and respond to any concerns they raise.

I also want to make clear what plans we are putting in place to safeguard all our learners in Wales and provide you with the support to deliver high quality, protective, RSE over the short, medium and longer term.

1. Over the short term, you should consult your local authority about issues relating to engaging with parents and carers around RSE. You should also consult your professional learning provider, based in your local authority or regional consortium, who are able to provide you with support and guidance on the expectations of the RSE Code should you require this. They can also advise and assist with professional learning and with the identification of resources that are reputable, developmentally appropriate and sensitive to every child's needs. Given the newness and sensitive nature of RSE, I encourage you to work with these services on selecting resources.
2. In the medium to long term, the Welsh Government will be working with practitioners to provide further professional support over the coming year for schools to help them teach RSE. In particular, we are investing additional funding to support the co-development of resources for schools to support you with the delivery of RSE. We will also develop additional support about selecting resources for use around RSE. We will also work closely with schools to develop a consistent national professional learning offer around RSE.

## Expectations for schools

As you will be aware, the mandatory requirements for RSE are set out in the [RSE Code](#). Schools comply with the Code when providing RSE. This is supported by [statutory guidance](#) which schools must read carefully and should follow. The Code:

- gives clarity about what schools are legally required to include in their curriculum;

*Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.*

*We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.*



**BUDDSODDWYR | INVESTORS  
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[www.llyw.cymru](http://www.llyw.cymru)  
[www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)



- helps schools make decisions about what learning is developmentally appropriate;
- gives transparency to parents and carers about what their children will learn about.

The RSE Code and statutory guidance is in place for those schools who adopted their curriculum in September. I want to thank you for the huge amount of work that you have done to ensure this is the case. Those schools are legally required to deliver the Code but the Code gives you discretion about when specific learning should be covered.

It is critical that schools take the time to build their confidence in delivering content in this aspect of the curriculum.

Crucially, when developing lesson plans and selecting resources, schools should take the time to get these right: you should not feel rushed into delivering content or using resources that you do not consider are developmentally appropriate or that you are not comfortable with or feel confident in using.

I also want to reassure you that you should only introduce learning when you are confident that it is developmentally appropriate for learners. While the Code sets out broad phases, the earliest age in each range indicates when schools should start to consider if the learning in that phase is developmentally appropriate. Therefore, while the Code is mandatory, schools should not feel rushed into delivering aspects of the Code for learners because they are in a particular phase. Instead, that learning should be introduced when schools are confident that learners are developmentally ready for it and for some learners, this may be later than the age range specified in the code.

You will be aware that schools are under a duty to keep their curriculum under review and this includes RSE. That helps ensure that RSE remains developmentally appropriate for each learner.

We also encourage you to continue your dialogue with learners and parents, sharing your plans with them. This helps ensure that your RSE curriculum is sensitively and constructively designed, as will sharing examples of resources when you have selected these. We recognise that for a number of you this has been very challenging and we are working with local authorities to ensure you have support to respond to difficult questions and situations.

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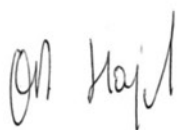
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[www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)



I remain very grateful for your approach to this aspect of the curriculum: as a government, we are very mindful of the challenges you face and are committed to providing you with the support needed to secure learning that helps keep children and young people safe and supports their well-being.

Yours faithfully



Owain Lloyd  
Director of Education and the Welsh Language  
**Education, Social Justice and Welsh Language Group**  
**Welsh Government**

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# VSGA Management Committee 2022-24

The Management Committee is comprised of elected governors plus the two Parent Governor Representatives (one each from the Primary and Secondary sectors).

No.	Title	Initial	Surname	School
1	Mrs	K	Bah	Oak Field Primary
2	Mr	N	Craggs	Gwenfo C/W Primary
3	Mrs	M	Gibbs	Romilly Primary
4	Cllr Mr	A	Hennessey	Rhws Primary
5	Mrs	C	Hunt	St Nicholas C/W Primary
6	Mrs	S	Jenkins	St Andrews C/W Primary & St Cyres Comprehensive
7	Cllr Mrs	J	Lynch-Wilson	Llantwit Major Comprehensive
8	Mrs	A	Malkin	Gladstone Primary
9	Dr	M	Price	St Richard Gwyn R/C High
10	Mr	D	Treharne	Llansannor C/W Primary
11	Mrs	T	Vaughan-Taylor	Cowbridge Comprehensive
12	Mr	O	Williams	Ysgol Sant Baruc
13	Cllr Mr	M	Wilson	Fairfield Primary & Victoria Primary
14	Vacant			
15	Vacant			
Parent Governor Representatives' (PGRs)				
Parent Governor Representative Primary - Lucy Barrowclough - Llandough Primary School				
Parent Governor Representative Secondary - Cathy Williams - Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg				



*"We would like to wish  
all our governors a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year  
from the  
Governor Support Unit"*

