

## Support for Felindre 2014-2018

The school has benefitted from additional financial support during the last four academic years. In addition to supporting temporary headteachers at the school, Felindre has received a school improvement package of support that is worth at least £10k above the amount effective schools would receive. Overall, the school has received approximately **£50k** worth of additional support during the last four years to prevent the situation getting any worse.

## Background

- Prior to September 2014 the headteacher successfully applies for a headship at a larger school.
- September 2014: Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher started in post, although the headteacher had already been acting head during the previous academic year. There had been a great deal of change in the school's staffing situation over the last few years.
- October 2014: Autumn Core Visit - School National Categorisation Amber – in order to provide support for new head.
- February 2015: School judged as Adequate, Adequate during Estyn inspection. At the time there were 57 pupils aged between 3 and 11 years on roll, including 6 part-time nursery pupils arranged into three mixed-age classes.
- March 2015 - Challenge adviser (CA) and headteacher worked together on the Post Inspection Action plan (PIAP)
- April 2015 – During the summer and autumn terms CA worked very closely with headteacher to implement and review the PIAP regularly. This was an ongoing process until the revisit by Estyn in May 2016
- April 2015- Full Governing Body (GB) meeting attended by CA to discuss way forward after Estyn inspection and details to be included in PIAP
- October 2015 – Autumn Core Visit. Categorisation Amber to allow continued support during period of Estyn monitoring.
- May 2016 – The school successfully came out of Estyn monitoring, having made good progress in most of the recommendations.
- September 2016- Headteacher successful in her application for headship at a larger school. It was decided that the deputy head would act up as head for a period of time until a new headteacher was appointed.
- October 2016- Autumn Core Visit – categorisation Amber, due to the continued need for support as unknown details of future leadership at school.
- Autumn Term 2016 - The deputy headteacher was successful in gaining employment at a larger school. This would mean that he would only be available for the first half of the spring term. This meant that the school would lose 50% of its teaching staff. This was deemed by many parents to be too much change in too short a space of time. Leadership changes were out of the control of the local authority.
- October 2016 – January 2017 – Due to the imminent departure of the headteacher, following their successful application for a post at a larger school, the chair of governors and CA met on numerous occasions to discuss

different strategies with the Chief Education Officer. The Chief Education Officer at the time tried unsuccessfully to second a person to fill the post. Initially we approached a neighbouring school to offer the secondment to either the deputy head or the assistant head, both of whom had NPQH (the qualification required for headship), but the offer was refused. However the head at another school agreed to carry out the responsibility on a part-time basis for three days a week from 1 January 2017.

- January 2017 to March 2017 – the local authority provided £7,787 to fund the experienced head. The supportive role with the CA was reduced slightly, although there was continued regular visits to the school and opportunities for updates regarding the current situation at the school. During her time at the school the acting headteacher noted concerns regarding the way that the GB was being run. It was decided to broker support for the GB from the appropriate agencies at the local authority. The Primary Support Officer began attending the finance sub-committee for the first time.
- February 2017 – the CA met with appointments panel to advertise for new head. 2 applications received and during shortlisting meeting it was felt that the post needed to be re-advertised as neither applicant were deemed suitable. The deputy head also left post during the half term.
- September 2017 – an assistant headteacher at a neighbouring was seconded to the school to very closely with the part-time headteacher from another school who was employed in a supportive role. £30K cost to the LA. Bespoke training took place from members of the School and Governor Unit who attended the Governing Body meeting to work with them.
- The local authority brokered support with an excellent school in Carmarthenshire to improve Foundation Phase provision. This was set up in conjunction with the regional school improvement service, as monitoring showed that this provision was not effective within the school. The school had taken on board many strategies and these were put in place across the school. There had also been a change in teaching staff in the Foundation Phase which had been very positive.
- March/April 2018 - The acting head was also successful in a headship application at a larger school and started his post in the summer term 2018. A deputy headteacher was then seconded from another authority to take up the role of acting headteacher to allow the other acting headteacher to take up his new post and to maintain leadership standards at the school.
- May 2018 – There were only 14 pupils at YGG Felindre, all housed in one of the buildings.
- June 2018 – Report to Cabinet seeking approval to commence statutory consultation on potential closure

The CA has worked very closely with each headteacher and with the GB during this period of uncertainty. We have sought to find a resolution to the problems at Felindre at each step of the way. The LA has been very supportive of the school at all times. However, the issue of numbers has always posed a challenge. The GB has also seen 3 chairs of governors and there has also been a significant change in the members of the GB during this time.