



Making the most of everyone.

Curriculum Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy Adopted May 2024
Valid until May 2026

Signed:

(Chair of Governors)

A Statement on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

At Ysgol Penmorfa, the UNCRC will underpin our school vision and aims and we will encourage the children to:

- **listen to others and respect their ideas.**
 - **learn about their rights, respect the rights of others and to inform others of children's rights.**
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Introduction

This Curriculum policy outlines the purpose and design of the curriculum at Ysgol Penmorfa. It is shaped by our commitment to enabling all our learners to achieve the highest academic and personal standards of which they are capable. In designing and continuously refining our curriculum, we aim to provide our learners with a broad and balanced curriculum that enables them to realise the four purposes and equips them for ongoing learning, work and life. We have developed a challenging curriculum and robust assessment procedures whilst implementing the Curriculum for Wales 2022. In applying aspects of curriculum design, new approaches and pedagogy, we are continually using our own learning to evaluate and refine our approach. We work closely with our cluster schools to ensure an equitable offer for all the children in Prestatyn and to develop teacher professionalism and collaboration by sharing expertise and good practice.

At Penmorfa, as lifelong learners, we believe that learning should be a positive and inspiring experience for us all with well-being and enjoyment at its core. Through our curriculum provision, we equip our learners with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. Through placing an emphasis on 'Pupil Voice', we empower our children to make decisions about their own learning pathways and enable them to drive their own tailor-made curriculum.

We work hard to ensure that all learners experience the highest quality teaching and learning during their time at Penmorfa, offering a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes learners' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development and relates to local, national and global contexts. Using the experience, enthusiasm and expertise of staff, we provide engaging and inspiring teaching and learning experiences that are differentiated appropriately to meet children's individual needs and abilities in inclusive classroom and outdoor environments. Our curriculum is driven by Pupil Voice, detailed planning, our Teaching and Learning Policy and from navigating the curriculum reform process.

Aims

In undertaking our process of designing, planning and trialing our curriculum, we developed a curriculum that will:

- enable our learners to realise the four purposes and equip them for ongoing learning, work and life;
- engage our learners in holistic, cross-curricular, enquiry-based learning delivered using a suitable range of pedagogical principles;
- build high expectations and enable all learners to achieve their full potential;
- offer a broad and balanced education that enables our learners to make links between the different areas of learning and experience and to apply their learning to new situations and contexts;
- support progression along a continuum of learning, working with our cluster schools and Prestatyn High School to ensure that there is alignment in the transitions across a 3 to 16 continuum;
- support learners' health and wellbeing;
- support learners' development of the knowledge, skills and experiences that are the foundation of being an informed citizen;
- recognise our learners' identity, language(s), ability and background and the different support they may need given their particular circumstances;
- reflect the diversity of perspectives, values and identities that shape our learners' locality and Wales, as well as develop an understanding of the wider world;
- be shaped by Pupil Voice, co-constructed and responsive to learners, their families and the wider community;
- enable our learners to make sense of growing up in contemporary Wales and of issues that will be important into the future, including well-being, sustainable development and citizenship;
- enable our learners to develop an understanding of their rights and the rights of others.

The Curriculum

In fully implementing the Curriculum for Wales 2022, we have designed and implemented a curriculum that:

- contains the six areas of learning and experience (AOLEs);
- encompasses the statements of 'What Matters';
- reflects the principles of progression set out in the progression code;
- includes the mandatory curriculum elements (Religion, Values and Ethics framework, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), Welsh and English);
- encompasses the mandatory cross-curricular skills (Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competency);
- develops integral skills within a wide range of teaching and learning – creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving, personal effectiveness, planning and organising;
- incorporates opportunities for learning and consideration of cross-cutting themes – Local, national and international contexts, Careers and work-related experiences, Human Rights Education and Diversity.
- Supports learners to work towards the four purposes and the twelve pedagogical principles.

Our Vision for the New Curriculum for Wales

After consulting with pupils, parents, staff and governors, we have developed our vision for the Curriculum for Wales in our school and it can be summed up as follows:

'Our curriculum at Ysgol Penmorfa will give every child the opportunity to engage in rich and diverse experiences in a nurturing and supportive environment. It will be shaped by the children's needs and curiosity and it will give them the firm foundation they need to become the best they can be and to be healthy, happy and confident citizens of Wales.'

Principles of our Curriculum Design Process

During the design, planning and trialing phase, we developed a challenging curriculum supported by assessment procedures and informed by the Curriculum for Wales Guidance. The principles that informed this approach included the following which have been sustained to ensure continuous review:

- Development through co-construction – Within our school and with our cluster school partners, we co-construct our curriculum through adopting a collaborative approach to curriculum design, sharing ideas and expertise, as well as problems and jointly developing solutions. It is informed by Pupil Voice and then refined by year groups in response to feedback from pupils and year group cluster staff.
- Equity in co-construction – In co-constructing our curriculum, we value the contributions made by every voice within the process.
- Space and time to think and engage – Our school acknowledges that co-constructing solutions takes longer. High-quality thinking, solutions and relationships are developed over a prolonged period of engagement. We also recognise that curriculum design is a continuous process of refinement, rather than a project with a final outcome. Non-contact time where teachers can genuinely collaborate on curriculum design in year groups and cluster teams is an important 'non-negotiable' and is planned for regularly.
- Clear understanding of 'why' things are learned and done – knowledge supports our systems to help us make better decisions about what should be in the curriculum.
- Critical engagement with expertise – In designing our curriculum, we engage intellectually with quality research, expert input and international expertise.
- Leadership at all levels - A system of distributed leadership at our school enables all teaching and classroom support staff to meet our curriculum vision and aspirations. It provides clear direction, challenge and high expectations whilst also allowing ownership by individual teachers and support staff, year group teams and AoLE teams. Such distributed leadership creates a culture of trust and empowerment.

At Ysgol Penmorfa, we implement cross-curricular, thematic or topic-based learning that blends the subjects. Our thematic approach is shaped by the four purposes, responsive to Pupil Voice and informed by pedagogical principles. Through 'Pupil Voice' exercises, teachers plan with the children's aspects of a 'Big Question' (BQ) that they would like to explore. Pupil voice and planning evolves during the course of a topic. This approach invests the children with ownership of their learning, making it more engaging and purposeful for them. A balance between the AoLEs is achieved throughout the academic year and AoLE's are incorporated into all Darganfod sessions.

Each Big Question is launched with a 'Hook' - immersion activities or experiences to engage the children's interest and enthusiasm for their anticipated learning. Similarly, each Challenge Question culminates with

a 'Fabulous Finish' event to celebrate or showcase the learning.

- Literacy, numeracy and digital competency skills are taught throughout all our Challenge Questions.
- Language and Mathematics are taught as discrete subjects during the morning using Read, Write, Inc, Writing Chains and White Rose Maths as a teaching resource. Literacy and Numeracy skills taught in these lessons are then consolidated, applied and extended in other sessions across the curriculum.
- Personal and Social Education is planned using the Jigsaw scheme.
- Mandatory elements of Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE).
- Welsh as a Second Language is linked to thematic, cross-curricular topics as much as possible but discrete lessons may be taught where more appropriate, using Fflic a Flac and Pod Antur.

Pupil Voice and how it co-constructs our curriculum

Pupil Voice plays an extremely important part in the development and planning of curriculum content at Ysgol Penmorfa. Before each Big Question is discussed by year group staff from the cluster, each school has specific Pupil Voice time for pupils to talk about the different aspects of a topic they would like to explore. These ideas are discussed and incorporated at the teacher planning meeting and the content evolves in each school over the course of the term so it is more specifically tailored to each school. This approach invests the children with ownership of their learning, making it more engaging and purposeful for them.

We encourage our children to take responsibility for their own learning and to assume ownership of the learning process as much as possible through:

- creating opportunities to initiate and influence learning e.g. through class planning sessions.
- creating opportunities for learners to make personal choices and to follow their interests in curriculum activities.
- our Assessment for Learning (AfL) processes.
- ensuring that status is given to 'thinking time'.
- sharing and negotiating learning objectives and success criteria, using the 'I can...' approach
- involving our learners in setting their own targets in literacy, numeracy and well-being.
- celebrating children's positive attitudes and efforts.
- providing high quality marking and feedback to children regarding their learning.
- encouraging and facilitating self- and peer-support and assessment.
- recognising and celebrating children's achievements in all areas of life.

How Our Curriculum is Structured

Planning is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our current planning processes are as follows:

Long-Term Planning

Following trials and staff consultation, we now have a Big Question over one term, which enables more in-depth teaching and learning and the flexibility to engage in current affairs and theme weeks planned throughout the academic year.

Within our school calendar, we have also considered opportunities to take advantage of special days special days/weeks e.g. anti-bullying week, World Book Day, St. David's Day, Black History Month, Parliament Week. These are interwoven through the term.

Medium-Term Planning

Just before the end of each term, class teachers hold a Pupil Voice session to discuss what they'd like to find out and explore about the next Big Question. Following this, year group teams from the cluster schools meet at each other's schools to discuss these ideas and collaborate on medium term topic plans that are driven by Pupil Voice.

Once back in each individual school, these plans develop as the work progresses. Pupil Voice leads the direction of learning both in the classroom and outdoors.

When cluster staff meet up again, they have the opportunity to review things such as what worked and what didn't, what the children particularly enjoyed, assessing samples of work and ultimately what changes they'd make to the Big Question planning next time.

Short-Term Planning

Teachers plan and organise their teaching on a weekly basis. They use short term plans that are completed collaboratively in year group teams and then individualised based on pupil voice. Pupil progress in learning informs planning and take into consideration opportunities for assessment during that particular week. Teaching plans are refined and adapted on a day-to-day basis according to teachers' evaluations of pupils' learning within their classes.

Storage and Display of Planning

Staff display their planning on their planning walls which are outside of each classroom. This ensures that all staff and visitors to school can, at a glance, see what the children are doing and if a member of staff is off, planning is easily available for supply staff.

Each year group also has a planning folder which contains, long, medium and short term planning. Literacy, numeracy and the digital competence framework are also included, as well as prompts for planning, e.g. principles of planning.

Finally, we ask that electronic copies of the planning are saved into folders in the 'Teacher Team' year group file online. This makes it accessible to all should it be needed if a member of staff is off and it can be easily amended in the future.

Monitoring of Planning

Planning is monitored on a half termly basis by SLT. Feedback is provided during staff meetings, as year groups or on an individual basis. This monitoring also feeds curriculum reports to governors.

Welsh Second Language / Bilingualism

Ysgol Penmorfa is an English medium school, however we take pride in our role as Welsh educators and actively promote and develop the use of Welsh as a living language. We aim to make our children's learning across the curriculum as bilingual as possible.

In addition to Welsh lessons taught within the context of our cross-curricular topics where we teach 'Welsh as a Second Language', we use a variety of strategies to promote the use of Welsh:

- We aim to promote the children's confidence in, enjoyment of and enthusiasm for speaking everyday Welsh throughout the school day. Activities take place daily such as playing Welsh language games, giving commands in Welsh to signal specific times of the day, chanting rhythmic language patterns, initiating Welsh conversation and singing Welsh songs. Each classroom displays and uses a range of Welsh vocabulary and resources. Each year group uses the progressive language patterns in the Welsh Second Language Continuum of 'Cymraeg ar dy dafod'.
- Whenever possible, instructions are given in Welsh or bilingually so that the children regularly listen and respond to the Welsh language e.g. during registration, when lining up, tidying up, asking to go to the toilet and in transitions between lessons.
- School staff and learners greet each other throughout the school day in Welsh. Learners are encouraged to use the language patterns they know beyond the classroom e.g. in corridors, in the playground, in the canteen.
- Our 'Criw Cymraeg', consisting of a representative from each class, promotes the use of Welsh throughout the school. We have successfully achieved the Cymraeg Campus bronze award and we are now actively working on actions to support the school in achieving the silver award.
- Some subject-specific Welsh appropriate to learners' age and ability is used within topic-based teaching.

Principles of Teaching

In shaping our curriculum, we do not place an emphasis on any one particular approach, understanding that decisions about teaching and learning are very context and purpose specific, and are best taken by our teachers themselves. Teaching and classroom support staff use different teaching styles such as direct instruction, inquiry-based learning and collaborative learning to suit the ability and learning styles of our learners in a wide variety of teaching and learning contexts.

Within our curriculum, our teaching approaches are informed by pedagogical principles that we view as having integrity depending on the learners and their specific contexts.

These may include:

- creating authentic contexts for learning.
- encouraging learners to take responsibility for their own learning.
- supporting social and emotional development and positive relationships.
- encouraging collaboration.
- promoting sustained pupil effort to reach high but achievable targets.
- employing a broad repertoire of teaching approaches.
- promoting problem solving, creative and critical thinking.
- building on previous knowledge and experience to engage interest.
- focusing on the four purposes.
- using Assessment for Learning to accelerate progress.
- making connections within and across Areas of Learning and Experience.
- reinforcing cross-curricular responsibilities in literacy, numeracy and digital competence.

It may be appropriate to teach the whole class or to work with small groups and occasionally with individual learners. Classroom support staff are used effectively throughout the school to provide additional support for groups and individuals, helping to support specific learning difficulties, weaknesses or barriers to learning as well as challenging and extending more able learners.

Classroom Setup/Teaching Environment

At Penmorfa, we strive to improve our teaching and learning environments, believing that a carefully planned environment sets the climate for effective teaching and learning. We pride ourselves on the equal weighting of opportunities we provide for outdoor learning and have a range of areas developed in the outdoor space, e.g. forest, garden, builders yard and outdoor classrooms.

Our classrooms are set up with areas of learning that are appropriate and relevant to the year group and cohort.

Classroom Display

The school views the use of classroom display as an additional teaching and learning resource, not just a way of showing pupils' work off. All classrooms have a range of working walls, topic walls and visual prompts to aid them with their learning.

SeeSaw Learning Platform

All classes use the 'SeeSaw' learning and engagement platform. This is an integral part of the pupils' routines. Work is uploaded to specific folders by either a member of staff or pupils themselves depending on age.

Seesaw is used as a platform to communicate with parents and celebrate pupil's successes.

Outdoor Learning

We have a wide variety of outdoor learning spaces at Ysgol Penmorfa, e.g. our outdoor classrooms, in our life skills, animal care, builders' yard and forest school areas, on our school playgrounds and elsewhere in our extensive school grounds. Opportunities are planned throughout our curriculum to use outdoor settings to develop the children's knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour and to promote the personal, social and academic benefits of engaging with the outdoor environment.

Equal Opportunities

All learners regardless of ability, gender, religion, social background, disability and race will have access to our curriculum provision. All activities are planned in such a way as to encourage full and active participation by all learners so that they can develop their skills, knowledge, confidence and enjoyment of learning. Every child is valued and perceived as unique. We aim to ensure that our curriculum responds to the learning needs of the individual pupil, challenging them to the full extent of their capabilities and providing them with opportunities to demonstrate fully what they know, understand and can do. Our children's well-being is always central to everything we do.

Differentiation

All learners have equal access to our curriculum. Our curriculum provision is differentiated appropriately so that all learners are challenged and supported in their learning in order to achieve maximum educational and personal benefit. Our methods of differentiation as evidenced on our 'Differentiation Deviser' can include:

by task.

- by grouping.
- by resource.
- by support.
- by outcome.
- by questioning.
- by assessment and feedback.
- by teaching style.

Disability

In accordance with the statutory requirements, our school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. The school has an Accessibility Plan that is available to parents on request.

Religious Education

Religious Education is available to all pupils as part of the RVE syllabus.

From September 2022 parents and carers no longer have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education.

Collective Worship

All pupils are expected to take part in daily collective worship. Pupils in the Sunshine class will take part, dependent upon the nature of the provision and their specific needs/anxieties. The worship is mainly of a broadly Christian character but it is not distinctive of a particular Christian denomination.

The school has a collection of resources to support the delivery of collective worship in class.

Parents have a right to withdraw pupils from acts of collective worship. They should inform the Headteacher in writing if they wish to do so.

Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)

The school follows Denbighshire's Relationship and Sexuality Education policy and there are elements incorporated in the Jigsaw scheme of work. It is taught to all pupils throughout the school, at an appropriate level, under the PSE framework.

Political Education

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school is forbidden by law. Some simple political issues may be encountered as part of the National Curriculum. Study of historical events may often include some reference to political influences. These are always presented in a balanced manner.

Physical Education

pupil should only be excused from physical activities for medical reasons, for which a note from a parent or carer will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school. Pupils are expected to comply with clothing and jewellery guidelines for all Physical Education activities.

Extra-curricular Activities

At Ysgol Penmorfa, we pride ourselves on the wide range of extra-curricular activities we offer the children that take place outside the formal curriculum. These are provided without charge. At lunchtimes and after school, opportunities are created for the children to take part in rewarding sports, performing arts, cookery, environmental and other activities. The clubs and extra-curricular activities offered at our school help to develop the children's personal and social skills such as their ability to co-operate with others, to make decisions and to take initiatives. The children also acquire specialist skills in these extra-curricular activities such as the ability to pass a rugby ball, to nurture a plant or to harmonise whilst singing.

The school plans a number of educational visits throughout the academic year including residential trips. Where possible, we plan educational visits to support our curriculum that are free or involve a minimal charge e.g. to museums in Wales, to places of interest in the local area. We calculate the cost of all trips using costings gained from coach companies and admissions charges by the places visited. On occasions, parents and carers are asked to contribute to the cost of an educational enhancement.

Members of the local and wider community such as speakers, experts, professionals, artists, business people and representatives of organisations are invited into school to further enhance the experiences of our pupils.

Homework / Blended Learning

All homework tasks and activities are designed to pre-teach, consolidate, reinforce or extend skills and understanding in literacy, numeracy and the topic being studied in class. Some of the homework will be ICT-based. At times, online tasks may be started in school and completed at home or vice versa.

Homework consists of:

- one MyMaths activity set weekly from Yr 1 upwards.
- weekly reading and phonics.
- a range of suggested activities for literacy, numeracy and cross curricular activities, which link to the Big Question. These are sent home half termly.

Additional Learning Needs

If a child has Additional Learning Needs, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the ALNET ACT 2021.

A graduated response is followed by teachers and the ALNCo. All children have individual targets in class and some children may have intervention targets so that we can review and monitor the progress of each pupil at regular intervals. Our pupils with IDP will have more detailed reviews held at least annually. A range of interventions and assessment strategies are utilised to help identify particular difficulties and external agencies can be involved in order to provide more specialist assessments and support.

Our Nurture provision 'Sunshine's' caters for children who struggle to access their mainstream class on a full-time basis. Within this provision Read, Write Inc and White Rose Maths are taught as well as planned activities to respond the pupils Emotional, Behavioural and Social needs.

Please refer to our school Inclusion Policy and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales (Act) 2018 for further information.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the curriculum – planning, coverage and standards of teaching and learning, is conducted by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. This is done in several ways including:

- Learning Reviews
- monitoring planning
- analysing assessment data
- monitoring targets
- 'Drop In' sessions
- Lesson Observation (if necessary)
- learning walks
- listening to learners
- looking at displays
- Informal discussions with staff and pupils

Review

We are aware of the need to monitor our Curriculum Policy, and to review it regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, Curriculum for Wales guidance, developments in technology and changes to the physical environment of the school. Our Curriculum Policy will be reviewed bi-annually (or sooner as necessary) by the senior leadership team of the school and discussed with SLT from our cluster partners schools.