

# CURRICULUM POLICY

## Introduction

In “The Curriculum from 5 – 16” (HMI Series 1985) the school's curriculum is defined as consisting of “all those activities designed or encouraged within its organisational framework to promote the intellectual personal, social and physical development of its pupils. It includes not only the formal programme of lessons, but also the 'informal' programme of so-called extracurricular activities as well as all those features which produce the school's 'ethos', such as the quality of relationships, the concern for equality of opportunity, the values exemplified in the way the school sets about its task and the way in which it is organised and managed”.

Further to this, there is a growing emphasis on the development of Literacy skills, Numeracy skills, ICT skills and Cognitive Development, across the curriculum in order to provide a cohesive experience with the purpose of developing pupils. The development of these skills is key to enable the school pupils to learn effectively and make progress. Additional to this, promotion of the Curriculum Cymreig, Wales Europe and the World, Creative Skills and Personal and Social Education Skills are central to the school's curriculum objectives.

Meeting the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF), 2013 is a priority for the whole school. Reforms to the school's schemes of work clearly demonstrates that the school is meeting the challenge to promote and foster the key skills here to the full. The LNF is a key resource in curriculum planning. It also replaces aspects of the Communication and Numeracy Skills Framework 2008. The school will focus on ensuring that Literacy and Numeracy skills are the main focus of the planning for all subjects and thus curriculum design comes in a clear and coherent manner, as an essential element of success throughout the school. In presenting the LNF the school will ensure that the work plan includes specific steps to develop Literacy and Numeracy skills as the main focus and not as an additional aspect.

The document 'Skills Framework for 3 to 19 year olds in Wales' (2008) also helps teachers to plan appropriately in the context of the above various skills across the curriculum.

The school is also fully committed to meeting the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure, 2009. Since September 2011 the School has met the requirements at Key Stage 4 and 5. The School works in collaboration within the School Partnership 'Cyfleoedd' (Cymer Rhondda, Garth Olwg, Llanhari and Llangynwyd) in order to expand the vocational provision at Key Stage 5.

The whole school curriculum also meets the requirements of the following publications:

- Careers and the world of work: a framework for 11 to 19 year olds in Wales, 2008.

- Personal and social education framework for 7 - 19 year olds in Wales, 2008.
- Food and Fitness in the curriculum in Wales, 2009
- Wales, Europe and the World: A framework for 14-19 year old learners in Wales, 2009.
- Unity and Diversity 2010.

The challenge here in Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun, is to ensure that we provide challenging opportunities for pupils, so that they develop these skills effectively in all areas of learning, through curriculum reform so that it is more explicit, relevant to 21st century, learner-centered and focuses on skills and not necessarily purely subject based. This was the advice given by ACCAC, 'Review of the school curriculum and assessment arrangements 5-16' (2004).

The National Curriculum was introduced as part of the Education Reform Act 1988, and is still a statutory basis to educational provision in England and Wales.

It is essential that the curriculum prepares students for life and work in the twenty first century by developing their confidence and skills together with the basic and key skills. The school curriculum is designed to prepare pupils for a multi-career future where the emphasis is on converting skills from one area to another. There is a focus on promoting development and awareness within pupils: their social and cultural identity, their appreciation of their Welsh heritage, and their understanding of the importance of bilingualism as a key tool in ensuring future employment. These aspects are central to our ethos as a Welsh Comprehensive School, and equally applicable to other curriculum subjects.

## **Philosophy**

The curriculum is the heart of the school and represents "all those activities planned or encouraged within the organizational framework, to the benefit and welfare of pupils". The provision of a broad curriculum is a priority as is ensuring equal respect between the general and vocational learning pathways. Every person involved in managing this process within the school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum provided. Provision should be made for children with special educational needs in accordance with the Code of Practice (2004). The curriculum should allow access to all pupils towards achieving their potential.

## **Curriculum objectives**

The purpose of the curriculum is to promote academic, physical, social, emotional and moral development of each pupil in the school, as members of society, preparing them for adult life and lifelong learning. It should therefore offer equal opportunities for all pupils to ensure that they develop to the best of their ability.

The curriculum needs to allow pupils to display their talents and for the school to show pride in achievements ranging from academic, cultural and sports activities. If the curriculum is unsuccessful in motivating pupils to enjoy the process of learning, experience success and extend understanding, then it fails to meet the

needs of the pupil or promote the school ethos.

## **Curriculum features**

The following features are the basis for curriculum planning that meets the needs of the school.

- **Breadth and Balance**

The school will be fully committed to offer robust options to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure (2009).

- **Flexibility**

Curricular provision should fully consider the needs and achievements of every individual. It should meet the needs of each individual pupil. It should consider that every student has specific needs and allow access that enables them to participate in classroom activities in order to maintain motivation and prevent prejudice against any faction - from lower ability to the brightest pupils. Pupils should retain the right to refer to suitable courses at Key Stage 4 and 5. This may involve preventing a pupil from studying a particular subject or directing a pupil to directed study if the achievement levels mean that the pupil is failing the subject.

The use of time should be planned - that is the length and pattern of the day, week and school terms - in order to maximize the benefit to pupils.

- **Relevance**

The curricular provision for pupils should fully consider their needs, interests and experience as learners and individuals, preparing them for life and the world of work as adults.

- **Consistency**

Curricular provision should ensure that standards of achievement and quality of teaching and learning are maintained and improved.

- **Follow-up and Development**

Curriculum provision should plan and provide within and across the key stages (KS2-KS3; KS3-KS4; KS4-KS5), ensuring continuity and quality in the Learning Pathways.

- **Effectiveness and Efficiency**

Curricular provision should ensure that the quality of education provided will be maintained and enhanced through effective use of resources.

(The effectiveness of the above principles will be evaluated through the school's self evaluation process)

## **Appraisal and Review**

The curriculum should be reviewed annually and systematically against criteria that measure how the curriculum:

- contributes to achieving high standards of attainment and achievement.
- reflects the school's objectives with regard to their consistency and the extent to which they reflect the objectives set for children of statutory school age in the Education Act (1988).
- is broad and balanced in terms of pupil experiences, in individual subjects' schemes of work, and plans for the provision of cross curricular school elements.
- complies with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.
- delivers content to suit pupils' achievements.
- have done well in terms of grouping pupils, within mixed ability classes, streams, groups or bands; pulling pupils out of class or providing additional support.
- prepares students for employment demonstrating features of Lifelong Learning.
- has been enriched by extra-curricular activities, which complement the formal program.
- allows all pupils to have equal access to all the experiences offered by the school.

## **Values and ethos**

The curriculum should reflect the values and ethos of the school founded by the staff, management, parents and the local community. In a Welsh medium school the increasing awareness amongst our pupils of the characteristics that have given, and continue to give social, geographical, historical and Welsh cultural identity is critically important across the curriculum.

## **Cross Curricular Themes**

The curriculum should include teaching and learning activities that promote the following themes in the formal and hidden curriculum, during the different key stages:

- Curriculum Cymreig
- Careers Education: Guidance and Counselling
- Economic And Industrial understanding
- Education and Industry
- Education and the Community
- Environmental Education
- Equal Opportunities
- Health Education
- Information Technology
- Multicultural Education
- Personal and Social Education
- The European Dimension and the World
- Language Across the Curriculum

Of course, the ability of subjects to promote these themes will vary according to their nature and specific requirements. However, it is expected that each department plans and implements opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness of these aspects increasingly during their school career.

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**Related documents:**

School Curriculum Document 2016-17

Skills across the curriculum (ACCAC, 2002)

A curriculum of opportunity: Developing Potential into performance (ACCAC, 2003)

Developing the Curriculum Cymreig (ACCAC, 2003)

Learning Pathways 14-19 (WAG, 2006)

Skills Framework for learners aged 3-19 in Wales (WAG, 2008)

Making the most of Learning (WAG, 2008)

Learning and Skills Wales (WAG 2009)

National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (Welsh Government, 2013)

Curriculum planning guide (Welsh Government, 2013)