

Ysgol Aberconwy



Curriculum Policy

POLICY DOCUMENT NO: 44 ISSUE NO: 4

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Signed:

Date: 11/03/25

Review due date : 01/03/27 LT Link : GM

POLICY RELATING TO THE WHOLE CURRICULUM

1. Rationale

“The curriculum is everything a learner experiences in pursuit of the four purposes. It is not simply what we teach, but how we teach and, crucially, why we teach it.” (Curriculum for Wales Guidance)

At Ysgol Aberconwy, our curriculum is designed to inspire, challenge, and support learners to achieve their full potential. Rooted in the principles of the Curriculum for Wales, it provides rich, meaningful learning experiences that foster curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning. Our curriculum reflects the school’s vision and values and prepares students for life in a diverse and evolving society.

2. Purpose

Our curriculum is built around the Four Purposes; these are central to everything we do. The purpose of our curriculum is to:

- *Develop ambitious, capable learners ready to learn throughout their lives*
- *Cultivate enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in society*
- *Nurture ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be part of Wales and the world*
- *Support healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society*

Through the design of our curriculum, we ensure it:

- *Is suitable for each learner’s age, ability, and aptitude*
- *Takes account of each learner’s additional learning needs (ALN), if any*
- *Secures broad and balanced learning and teaching for each learner*
- *Makes arrangements for assessing the ability and aptitude of learners in respect of the relevant curriculum on entry to a school or setting, to identify the next steps in their progression and the learning and teaching needed to support that progress*

3. Skills Integral to the Four Purposes

The Four Purposes are also underpinned by integral skills developed within a wide range of learning and teaching. When planning our curriculum, teachers identify and build opportunities to develop and refine the following skills:

- *Creativity and innovation – learners are given space to be curious and inquisitive and to generate many ideas.*
- *Critical thinking and problem-solving – learners are supported to ask meaningful questions and evaluate information, evidence, and situations.*
- *Personal effectiveness – learners will develop emotional intelligence and awareness, becoming confident and independent. They will have opportunities to lead debate and discussions, becoming aware of the social, cultural, ethical, and legal implications of their arguments.*

- Planning and organizing – *Where developmentally appropriate, learners will be able to set goals, make decisions, and monitor interim results. They will reflect, adapt, and manage time, people, and resources.*

4. Cross-Curricular Skills

We believe that the mandatory cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy, and digital competence are essential to unlocking learning. They enable learners to access the breadth of our curriculum, equipping them with the lifelong skills to realise the Four Purposes. These skills can be transferred to the world of work, enabling our learners to adapt and thrive in the modern world. Our curriculum is designed to help learners develop competence and capability in these cross-curricular skills and extend and apply them across all Areas.

Across our curriculum, learners will be given a range of opportunities to:

- *Develop listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills*
- *Use numbers and solve problems in real-life situations*
- *Be confident users of a range of technologies to help them function and communicate effectively and make sense of the world*

5. Areas of Learning and Experience

The six Areas of Learning and Experience bring together familiar disciplines and encourage strong and meaningful links across them:

The six areas of learning and experience are:

- Expressive Arts
- Health and Well-being
- Humanities
- Language, Literacy, and Communication
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science and Technology

All Areas have equal status within our curriculum. In Years 7, 8, and 9, we have guiding themes to draw our curriculum together. Teachers are expected to plan collaboratively to identify meaningful links and exploit opportunities to deepen learning.

6. Statements of What Matters

Our school curriculum provides opportunities for our learners to engage with, and develop, their understanding of the key concepts within all the statements of what matter. Our curriculum uses the statements of what matter to guide the selection of all curriculum content.

Specifically, they are used to:

- *Select the range of experiences, knowledge, and skills enabling learners to make sense of the ‘big ideas’ and key principles within each statement*
- *Support learners’ progression within the ‘big ideas’ and key principles, enabling them to develop increasingly sophisticated understanding and application*
- *Explore topics and ideas through different lenses, revisiting concepts through different statements of what matters*
- *Help learners develop a coherent understanding of a range of information*

7. Descriptions of Learning

The Descriptions of Learning are used as a planning tool to support the selection of a wide range of knowledge, skills, and experiences within our curriculum. They help plan a range of contexts for learning across a progression step, creating depth and breadth. Our curriculum does not use the Descriptions of Learning to create stand-alone tasks, assessment activities, or interim reports to judge learner outcomes at specific points on the continuum.

8. Progression

Progression in learning involves increasing depth, sophistication, engagement, and learner control. It is not linear, and learners progress in different ways. Progression is central to our curriculum design. When selecting curriculum content and assessments, we use the principles of progression for each Area to inform our approach.

9. Mandatory Content

In accordance with the Curriculum for Wales Act 2021, our curriculum:

- *Enables learners to develop as described in the Four Purposes*
- *Provides appropriate progression in line with the ‘Progression Code’*
- *Is suitable for learners of differing ages, abilities, and aptitudes*
- *Is broad and balanced*
- *Encompasses the concepts set out in the ‘Statements of What Matters Code’*
- *Provides for learning and teaching across all Areas of Learning and Experience*
- *Includes Welsh, English, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE), and cross-curricular skills*

In Years 10 and 11 the above principles are adhered to, however, our curriculum provides learners with a choice of learning within each Area. For learners in year 10 and year 11, our curriculum will secure learning in all the Areas although not everything from the statements of what matters for each Area will be covered.

10. Cross-Cutting Themes

Our curriculum is designed and developed to ensure that opportunities to explore cross-cutting themes are clearly identified and thoughtfully integrated. As a result, our curriculum enables learners to:

- *Consider local, national, and international contexts*
- *Develop an understanding of relationships and sexuality education, human rights education, diversity, and careers and work-related experiences*

Human Rights Education

We believe that learning about human rights empowers learners as rights-holders. This enables our learners to critically examine their own attitudes and behaviours, and to develop the skills to become ethically informed citizens of Wales and the world, who can advocate for their own rights and the rights of others. Our curriculum incorporates opportunities for learners to:

- *Learn about human rights by understanding what human rights are and their historical foundations, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)*
- *Learn through human rights by developing values, attitudes, and behaviours that reflect a commitment to human rights principles*
- *Learn for human rights, which inspires social action, active citizenship, and the advancement of respect for the rights of all*

Diversity

Our curriculum recognises and celebrates the diversity within our school community, the communities we serve, and society as a whole. We want our learners to understand and respect the characteristics of others; treating everyone with compassion, empathy, equity, and understanding, regardless of their differences. As learners progress through our curriculum, they will become increasingly aware of a range of characteristics that shape identity, including sex, gender, race, religion, age, disability, and sexuality. Our curriculum incorporates opportunities for learners to:

- *Develop empathy and compassion for others*
- *Celebrate diverse backgrounds, values, and characteristics*
- *Develop their own values and sense of identity*
- *Understand people with different beliefs and perspectives*
- *Challenge stereotypes and prejudices*

Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE)

We believe that learning about CWRE is fundamental to developing essential skills for work and life. Our curriculum provides opportunities for CWRE that inspire our learners to:

- *Understand the purpose and value of work for both individuals and society*
- *Become aware of the wide range of opportunities available to them, broadening their horizons*

- *Develop the attitudes and behaviours needed to overcome barriers to employability, career management, and lifelong learning*
- *Appreciate the growing importance of the Welsh language in the workplace*
- *Explore opportunities through a variety of meaningful experiences in learning, work, and entrepreneurship*
- *Build resilience and adaptability in response to the challenges, choices, and responsibilities of work and life*

Local, National, and International Contexts

Local, national, and international contexts provide key perspectives for our learners and play a vital role in helping them realise the four purposes of our curriculum. Our curriculum incorporates opportunities for learners to:

- *Engage with learning through a range of places and events of significance*
- *Build links with local communities and organisations*
- *Learn about the contributions and experiences of diverse individuals who shape each context*
- *Understand different identities, histories, cultures, perspectives, and values that shape communities and societies*
- *Recognise and engage with local, national, and international factors and their economic, social, and environmental impacts*
- *Develop an authentic sense of cynefin, building knowledge of different cultures and histories and understanding how their own identity connects to wider influences*
- *Understand their role as citizens and the structures of government that affect them at each level*
- *Critically analyse and respond to contemporary issues and challenges that affect their lives and the lives of others*
- *Understand sustainable development and the challenges facing the environment and society, engaging in efforts to promote sustainable citizenship*
- *Recognise Wales' diverse linguistic heritage and cultural connections with the wider world*
- *Understand the interconnectedness of local, national, and international contexts and how they shape and influence one another*

11. Learners with Additional Learning Needs

Ysgol Aberconwy has well-established arrangements for identifying and providing for individual learners' additional learning needs. It is our policy to assess learners' needs as early as possible.

After careful diagnostic testing, learners follow individually-tailored programmes. Where learners have needs which require the co-operation of outside agencies, it is the responsibility of the school ALN co-ordinator to take the necessary contacts.

During all stages in the provision for a learner's additional learning needs, we seek to work closely with parents, and emphasize the importance of good working relationships between the school and home.

12. Home Learning

We believe home learning is an essential part of the school programme, encouraging independent study and varied activities such as written work, learning, and research. An after-school home learning club, staffed by teaching assistants, is available every night.

13. Collective Acts of Worship

We foster high moral and ethical standards and encourage learners to reflect on issues with a caring approach. Assemblies are held in year groups and daily acts of reflection and collective worship take place daily during tutorial time. There is no parental right to withdraw from RVE under Section 71 of the Curriculum for Wales Act 2021.

14. Personal, Social, and Health Education

Our PSHE programme is central to developing the 'whole'. Delivered by form tutors during extended registration, it focuses on positive character development, including leadership, organization, resilience, initiative, and communication (LORIC). The programme covers careers education, RSE, and well-being education, supported by external providers.

14. Language Policy

We aim to support learners' bilingual development, enhancing their comprehension and employment opportunities. A first-language Welsh group exists in every year group, completing the First Language GCSE Welsh in Year 11. Welsh language promotion is supported through lunchtime activities and school events like the Eisteddfod and 'Cymraeg Bob Dydd' project.