



Curriculum Policy

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Signed:  Chair of Governors

Signed:  Headteacher

Please note - where this document states the term "parent" it refers to any such person(s) or body that has legal responsibility.

At Ysgol Hen Felin we strive to

- Create a happy, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment
- Value everyone
- Develop everyone's personal, social, emotional health and wellbeing
- Promote relevant academic and vocational skills
- Meet individual needs through an imaginative and flexible approach
- Enable all pupils to achieve their full potential

Ysgol Hen Felin is an LA state funded school that educates pupils with a wide range of additional learning needs. Within its curriculum framework we provide learning opportunities for all pupils at different stages of their development. This can include, pupils with severe, profound and complex additional learning needs, hearing and visual impairment and physical disabilities.

Some of our pupils may also have complex and sometimes profound physical and additional learning needs ranging from mild and moderate to severe. The majority of these pupils are wheelchair dependant.

We recognise that many of our pupils have:

- Communication needs: expressive and receptive difficulties that require technological communication aids, symbols, computer technology etc.
- Feeding and toileting issues: some of our pupils are totally adult dependent and will remain so for the whole of their time at our school. Feeding and toileting programmes can also be implemented in 'partnership' with parents/persons responsible.
- Short concentration spans: some of our pupils are easily distracted and have poor short-and long-term memory.
- Poor hand function: needing alternative methods to record their work e.g. various specialised switch access, advice from the occupational therapists etc.
- Challenging behaviour due to frustration and emotional factors connected with their conditions. Pupil Support Plans are in place for these pupils.
- Life limiting diseases affect a small group of children. Regression and loss of skills are monitored and problems addressed where possible.
- Social communication difficulties and requiring visual support for learning

The pupils benefit from the multi-disciplinary approach, using therapist, nursing, teaching and care staff working together to maintain or improve their conditions. Some pupils are frequently absent from school due to illness, medical appointments and hospitalisation and this affects delivery of the planned curriculum, timetables and progress through topics.

Flexibility is also needed to accommodate the interruptions in classroom routine, necessary for toileting, care and therapy, much of which is carried out in the classroom setting.

We strive to enable the pupils to reach their full potential in all areas, educational and social. All opportunities are seized for learning, including break/snack times, lunch-times, visits out of school etc.

Aims and Values

- To provide a curriculum which is broad, balanced, relevant and purposeful
- To build upon our children's prior experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding
- To establish clear and thorough planning in order that each child may realise their potential
- To strive for our pupils to experience and demonstrate continuous progress and achievement
- To provide a curriculum which is dynamic and flexible to changing needs
- To make explicit what is to be taught and how the intended teaching and learning takes place
- To ensure provision for equal opportunities and cultural diversity
- To make provision for the individual learning needs of each of our pupils as identified by the Statement of Educational Needs.

A Curriculum Policy Statement – The Whole Curriculum

We are committed to provide access to a broad curriculum for all of our pupils. Alongside this we recognise that the curriculum must be relevant to pupils' individual needs and there must be in-built flexibility in order to ensure continued relevance for all pupils at the various stages of their time at Ysgol Hen Felin. This will mean that not all of our pupils will experience all aspects of the curriculum all of the time, but rather that a balance in the whole curriculum will be reflected in pupils' individual experiences according to the various age-related stages of their school life. For example, children in the Foundation Phase Classes will regularly experience various aspects of play and outdoor education while those in the 16 plus age group will participate in accredited learning; team enterprise and work experience. Some of our post 14 pupils are based at the local college, experiencing the demands and variety of the college curriculum.

Balance across the curriculum will also be dictated by the diverse and complex individual needs of our pupils. We recognise that our pupils benefit from a wide variety of sensory activities and the many forms of therapy which are offered to them and that some of our pupils with very challenging behaviours will need an even greater degree of flexibility in their learning and social programmes.

All of our pupils where appropriate, have access to Areas of Learning within the Curriculum for Wales. All of our learning experiences stimulate the senses and promote the 4 Core Purposes and cross curricular responsibilities.

At Ysgol Hen Felin the core subjects form the basis of our whole school curriculum and are taught in appropriate ways for all of our pupils. Progression Steps frameworks for each of the areas of learning have been developed after full consultation with staff and have been written in such a way that shows progression towards and within the early levels of the Curriculum.

Welsh, as a language to be learned and spoken. This involves many aspects of the Welsh culture: the music/songs of Wales, simple Welsh greetings etc. Welsh legends and folk tales, Welsh places, artists and people, along with the food of Wales. These year-long celebrations culminate in a Welsh Week including St David's Day. Termly planning, ensure that all pupils have access to the particular features and culture of Wales. Second language Welsh is taught at levels appropriate to pupil's development.

However, standing alone, the Curriculum cannot provide the necessary balance, breadth and relevance for all of our pupils. We aim to overcome this by providing a range of other experiences which include access to multi-sensory stimulation, cross-curricular activities, and extra-curricular experiences, such as visits and trips to local shops, parks, places of interest, work experience, travel training etc to practise social skills and

develop independence. These valuable learning opportunities are delivered through the curriculum for Wales.

Pupils also have regular access to therapies provided by our colleagues from health and social services. These therapies include: physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. Other therapies include Hydro therapy and Rebound.

The nature of the balance between the various components of the whole curriculum will vary between individual pupils. The process will involve meeting individual needs, as identified at the pupil's Person-Centred Planning Meeting and also the curriculum plans devised by class teachers to meet the more common needs of pupils at the different stages of development in any one class.

Approaches to planning and recording are consistent throughout the school. Staff meet regularly to discuss approaches, assessment and the learning outcome of classes and of individuals within a class.

Curriculum Access

Due to the diverse and complex needs of our pupils we need to provide additional support in order for the whole curriculum to be accessible to them. With this in mind, we will continue to maintain the conditions most likely to facilitate learning for all of our pupils through:

- The provision of appropriate information technology resources – computers, relevant software, switches, eye gaze, iPad
- Appropriate use of mobility and aids for positioning – standing frames, specialist seating, adapted wheelchairs etc
- An environment which supports total communication using signs, speech, symbols, objects of reference, communication aids, Intensive Interaction, SCERTS, AACs etc
- Our commitment to essential therapeutic activities – speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, hydrotherapy, rebound etc
- The use of strategies to minimise or alleviate sensory impairments, such as access to the sensory areas, specialist equipment such as sound enhancement systems and the use of sensory integration strategies
- Our commitment to collaboration with parents, professionals and agencies, with the community and with the pupils themselves.

The teaching experiences/activities which are detailed in our school curriculum and accompanying schemes of work reflect the programmes of study from Foundation Phase for 3-7 year olds and KS2 and 3 of the Curriculum for Wales and for our 14-19 Department they access accredited units and modules. Please see Appendix 1, 2, and 3 for full Curriculum coverage.

The activities have been developed in detail to allow for continuity and progression as well as to provide age appropriate experiences for our pupils working at the earliest levels of the Curriculum across the entire age range.

Our curriculum plans present a carefully considered view of the relevance, breadth and depth of study appropriate to the current school population, with all teachers providing individually targeted programmes for all pupils in their class.

Some of our pupils will need to revisit fresh interpretations of the same programmes of study, in addition to having regular opportunities to consolidate skills, which have been already acquired throughout their time at our school. For some of our pupils the challenge to achieve will be difficult. It may be that in some cases certain aspects of work will remain inaccessible and in these cases pupils' Individual Development Plans and Individual Education Plans will need to reflect the situation.

We also recognise that from time to time there may be other pupils whose achievements will go beyond the level of the activities in our programmes of study. These pupils will be offered a range of individual enrichment opportunities based upon the curriculum for Wales or an appropriate and challenge qualification depending on their age. In these cases where possible, arrangements will be made for pupils to access local mainstream schools for particular aspects of their curriculum development.

Partnerships

At Ysgol Hen Felin the curriculum is founded on a principle of partnership involving all staff/pupils within the school as well as parents, the governing body, other professional and agencies.

We work together for the benefit of the pupils. For example, teachers plan co-operatively and advise each other according to their expertise.

Parents are consulted and their involvement is sought in the learning process. Parents also receive a termly topic/unit programme so that they are fully aware of the learning opportunities being offered to their child.

Pupils where appropriate contribute towards their next learning objective through AFL strategies.

When appropriate, advice is sought from outside agencies and the LA advisers who visit the school on a regular basis.

The governing body exercises overall responsibility for the curriculum and members have particular subject interests. An open invitation exists for governors to visit the school at their convenience. Learning walks are used to allow Governors to observe the curriculum in action.

Curriculum Management and Organisation

The governing body exercises the responsibility for the curriculum. The Head Teacher has responsibility for the planning process and the day-to-day implementation of the curriculum.

All teachers and HLTA's will have co-ordinator responsibilities which include policy development and review, advising at the planning stage, assessing resources and monitoring the learning, teaching and standards in the subject, which is supported by the Senior Leadership Team.

Wherever possible staff are allocated responsibilities which match their qualifications and expertise, although this is not always practicable.

The curriculum from Foundation Phase to Key Stage Three is delivered through topics and units based on the Curriculum for Wales. The 14-19 curriculum is based on accredited units and modules. Cross-curricular opportunities are sought but the learning objectives for the individual subjects are not neglected. A variety of teaching and learning methods are employed in the delivery of the curriculum, including group work, and at times, whole class teaching. The curriculum is based around the development of the Four Core Purposes, aimed to encourage pupils to become 'ambitious capable pupils,' 'creative enterprising contributors,' 'ethical informed citizens' and 'healthy confident individuals.'

The timetable for each class is drawn up to ensure that there is appropriate balance between the Curriculum for Wales, as well as taking account of the sensory/development of pupils. The Deputy Head Teacher ensures that each class has a timetable which provides appropriate breadth and balance.

The Planning Process

Overall curriculum policy

Progression Steps – these are taken from the Areas of Learning for each subject within the context of the whole curriculum and cover the whole school age range; accredited qualifications.

Themes – these demonstrate long, medium and short-term planning based on key skills and subject skills as appropriate. They document the knowledge and skills concepts to be promoted through specific activities/lessons or half term blocks, linked to a theme based within the Area of Learning.

The Digital Competency Framework and RSE Guidance are included in teacher planning and have a clear policy. Policies are developed by relevant subject leaders in consultation with the staff team and Governing Body.

Teachers will develop medium term planning from themes appropriate to the particular needs of the class. Teachers will record short term weekly/ daily plans, appropriate to the particular needs of the class which include:-

- Assessment and recording opportunities related to the Progression Steps or accreditations.
- Resources, access issues and differentiation strategies
- Evaluation criteria

IEPs are written and reviewed three times a year with targets based on the priorities for individual pupils linked to their individual needs and Individual Development Plan. These targets are generally focussed on the skills of communication, numeracy, literacy, personal development and digital competency.

Assessment and recording – teachers and pupils monitor and record responses and progress. This evidence will be recorded in the pupil's books or evidence files. Samples of pupil's work are maintained as evidence of progress in all six areas of learning.

Review and Evaluation – this will involve a review and evaluation of:

- Short term targets – child's individual education plan
- Short, medium and long term planning
- Policies and guidelines

Continuity and Progression

At our school it is our aim to ensure continuity and progression across the curriculum. To ensure this, all teachers are involved in planning and teaching the curriculum.

Continuity and progression are matched to the attainment targets and programmes of study for the appropriate key stages of the Curriculum for Wales or accreditations

Area meetings are held weekly to discuss aspects of the curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach and of standards.

Modifications and Disapplication's from the Curriculum for Wales.

Any modifications will be reflected within the child's Individual Development Plan and supporting Person Centred Planning Meeting documentation. Disapplication's are discouraged at Ysgol Hen Felin as we strive to deliver meaningful experiences in all subject areas.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment, recording and reporting are considered to be an integral part of the curriculum. All aspects of this work are regularly monitored by members of the Senior Leadership Team.

Assessment informs the teaching and learning process so that tasks can be attached to the individuals' needs and abilities. Assessment is both formative and summative.

Records are kept of a pupil's progress, not only as a matter of reference, but also to inform teachers' future planning.

Where relevant pupils are encouraged to review their own achievements and discuss with their teacher appropriate their success and future learning objectives.

Staff will:-

- Provide a baseline view of pupils' strengths and weaknesses as a starting point in planning for individual pupil priorities and class priorities
- Develop individual education plans showing termly goal and anticipating progress
- Identify termly targets and priorities for individual pupil's learning to be pursued across the whole curriculum
- Maintain a record of achievement and experience, showing the learning opportunities skills which pupils have achieved.
- Note significant new responses, wherever they occur so that progress and achievement can be assessed
- Generate information that can be used to:
 1. Define new short term targets
 2. Review and evaluate curriculum plans and policy
 3. Report achievement
 4. Define whole school targets

For further details see the school's separate policies on Assessment, Recording and Reporting and where appropriate, the individual schemes of work.

Review and Evaluation

Our planning process is subject to ongoing scrutiny. The following questions help to focus our review and evaluation

- Are individual pupils' needs being met?
- Does planning ensure continuity for individual pupils over the time and across the whole curriculum?
- Are the curriculum requirements being met?
- Is there progression across the years?
- How do the curricular areas relate to each other?
- Is there balanced coverage of all areas of the curriculum?
- Are there adequate opportunities for practical work and problem solving?
- The activities relevant to the pupils needs

Time Allocation

Planning will take account of the teaching time available during the week. The basic child management tasks of daily life e.g. moving from place to place, transport, effects of medication, management of seizures, time it takes for a child to complete a meal or be tube fed, concentration span, positioning, time it may take for a child to respond etc. These routines which address personal needs are viewed as learning opportunities within the whole curriculum. Any routine such as toileting and meal times is recognised as a teaching opportunity and in the context of high quality interaction will not be rushed. For some pupils with behaviours that challenge or anxiety issues significant teaching time will focus on PSD, thinking skills and problem solving.

Pupil Grouping

At present pupils are predominantly based in age-related class groups. We acknowledge that some pupils require a unique setting offering predominantly sensory and therapeutic approaches to access the curriculum and the school is, therefore, committed to sustaining resource bases for those children. Class sizes may vary. The school adopts a policy of inclusion for many of our pupils who may spend time in mainstream units/classes.

Environment

Our planning will ensure our pupils experience a wide range of environments in order to motivate their interest and encourage generalisation of skills. Indoor and outdoor settings are included. Use of all settings is managed taking into consideration pupils' sensory differences.

Role and Responsibilities

Planning is a collective responsibility considering staff expertise, subject knowledge and experience. The Governors and Senior Leadership Team assume overall responsibility for leading planning and ensuring links with school development planning, professional review and staff development. Members of the school's teaching staff acts as subject leaders for the whole school. In consultation with the whole staff subject co-coordinators may be responsible for:-

- Leading the development of a subject policy statement which is reviewed regularly and amended as necessary
- Providing advice, support and training opportunities for staff
- Supporting curriculum working parties
- Providing guidelines for curricular implementation with specific reference to the Programmes of Study, the development of schemes of work
- Ordering and maintaining resources and equipment for the subject
- Managing their curriculum area action plan in the School Development Plan and produce an annual report to inform future school development planning
- Monitoring of the delivery of the curriculum through all key stages
- Keeping up to date with developments in the subject and passing on relevant information to colleagues.
- Analysing data

Pupil Involvement

The need to involve pupils in planning, assessment, recording and reporting is well recognised. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning their learning to be made aware of why they are doing an activity, what they are expected to achieve and in the evaluation of their work. Assessment for learning is actively promoted throughout.

School Improvement Planning

School Improvement planning provides the context for evaluating the planning process in the school. It provides the focus within which the curriculum evaluation informs school management, organisation and policy making. Planning priorities are identified through an audit of current curriculum practice and pupils' needs.

Resourcing the Curriculum

It is the responsibility of each curriculum leader to ensure that the resources of the subject are adequate and up to date. Resource requirements are passed to the senior leadership team and a budget allocated accordingly. A general audit of resources is undertaken regularly. This takes the form of an annual co-ordinator's report. These in turn help to inform the school development planning process.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Curriculum

All aspects of the school's work that is the curriculum, teaching and learning, continuing professional development, finance, buildings etc are monitored and evaluated regularly. Evidence from this process is incorporated into the school's self-evaluation report and into the school development plan. The monitoring cycle is set out in the School Development Plan and yearly planner.

The Role of the Curriculum Leader

- Advising and discussing with colleagues
- Supporting colleagues in their planning, selection of activities, resources and evaluation
- Using co-ordination time to monitor and develop aspects of their subjects, look at data and agree areas of strength and development with SLT
- Attending LA training and that provided by outside bodies and providing feedback and support to staff
- Produce a written report on work completed and aspects for development

Role of Individual Teachers

- Through monitoring and evaluating their own teaching plans on a regular basis

The Role of the Senior Leadership Team

- Observing lessons and producing a written report.
- Examining samples of IEPs and IDPs, mid-term, short term planning, schemes of work and discussing continuity and progression during staff meetings
- Analysing data with Co-ordinators to agree strengths and areas for development
- Responsibility for standards in subjects

Governors

Through discussion with the head teacher and curriculum co-ordinators for specific subjects and through the co-ordinators' annual report
All governors are linked to curriculum areas; see "Governors Curriculum Responsibilities" for further details in the School Development Plan.

Appendix 1

Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2/ 3 Curriculum.

The children will access these areas of learning through themes, making their learning exciting, varied and meaningful. Our aim is to develop the whole child in a holistic manner, building on their previous learning experiences, knowledge and skills. All pupils will also be accessing the digital competency framework and RSE in a way which meets their development age.

Organisation

We have an early year's provision at Tonyrefail for some foundation phase pupils – this centre is lead by Assistant Head Teacher Rhiannon Mellor.

Appendix 2

Key Stage 4 and 5 (14-19)

In the 14-19 department, all pupils have an Individual Learning Pathway document.

All learning pathway documents ensure all pupils receive the appropriate balance of learning experience that best suits their need.

Formal

The accreditations pupils achieve are tailored to each individual student; all students are accessing courses at a level both challenging and appropriate to them.

Students working at Pre-Entry Level will achieve an ASDAN accreditation in Transition Challenge.

Students working at Entry Level 1 or above will have the opportunity to study Essential Skills Wales Entry Level qualifications, Essential Skills for Work and Life, ASDAN Transition Challenge or ASDAN Towards Independence . They will also have the opportunity to study for their Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

Non-Formal

Students working at Pre-entry level will have their education and experiences enriched by accessing work related learning and extra-curricular activities.

Students working at Entry Level 1 or above will have access to extended formal work experience in an environment which will help them to develop their work and life skills in a work environment.

Subjects taught at 14-19

The curriculum at Ysgol Hen Felin is a bespoke curriculum that is designed to allow pupils with complex needs and pupils who are working at access levels experiences of Sensory, Pre-Entry, Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3.

All pupils will study the six areas of learning; Literacy Language and Communication, Maths and Numeracy, Science and Technology, Health and Wellbeing, Expressive Arts and Humanities.

In order to encourage independence some pupils can also choose their own options to study each term:

- Journalism - YHF Newspaper, Photography etc.
- Cooking - Budgeting for meals, preparing ingredients etc.
- Arts & Craft Enterprise - Christmas Crafts, Spring Crafts, Textiles etc.

We also ensure all students, and their parents have access to regular careers advice to ensure smooth transition to a post 19 provision.

Some pupils may receive more targeted intervention including THRIVE, Rebound Therapy, MOVE, Physiotherapy or Hydrotherapy.

Pupils working at Entry Level or above will also have access to take part in weekly taster sessions at Coleg y Cymoedd in Carpentry, Painting and Decorating or Hairdressing.

Organisation

We have two provisions for KS4 and KS5 pupils who are based at either YHF or our satellite provision at Coleg y Cymoedd.