**Curriculum and Assessment Policy**

Review: June 2026

**Definitions**

AoLE, AoLEs Area of Learning and Experience within the Welsh Curriculum, and the additional PMLD group in Ysgol Pen Coch

AoLE Group staff group leading curriculum development in school for each AoLE

DCF the Welsh education Digital Competence Framework

Family, Families an adult or adults exercising legally recognised parental duties for a child at Ysgol Pen Coch

Head the Headteacher at Ysgol Pen Coch

HLTA Higher Learning Teaching Assistant

LNF the Welsh education Literacy and Numeracy Framework

MTP medium term plan, produced for each school term

PMLD profound and multiple learning difficulties

Policy Curriculum Policy at Ysgol Pen Coch

Pupil, Pupils a pupil or pupils at Ysgol Pen Coch

RfL Routes for Learning

RSE Relationship and Sexuality Education subject

RVE Religion, Values and Ethics subject

SCERTS Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support assessment tool

School Ysgol Pen Coch

SMT the senior management team at Ysgol Pen Coch

Staff a person or people employed to work at Ysgol Pen Coch, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, agency or contract

Teacher, Teachers a teacher or teachers at Ysgol Pen Coch, discounting the headteacher

**1. Aims of the Policy**

The School caters for pupils from 2-11 years of age with severe, profound and multiple, and complex learning difficulties. Pupils may have a range of co-presenting conditions such as but not limited to autism, epilepsy, genetic conditions such as Down’s syndrome, hearing impairment, visual impairment, health concerns and physical disabilities. The Policy outlines the School’s approach to the curriculum and assessment, which aspires to provide developmentally appropriate learning opportunities for all Pupils, within the structure of the Welsh Curriculum. The School promotes a positive, creative learning environment with an emphasis on wellbeing to give every child, every chance, every day. Staff foster a culture that is reflective, evaluative, collaborative and outward looking to generatre a curriculum that is rich in relevant experiences for the Pupils. All aspects of School life and work, including the application of this Policy are guided by five values: compassion, kindness, respect, teamwork and trust.

**2. Entitlement**

The School is committed to embedding the principles and values of the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child into its culture and practices. This Policy enables Pupils to enjoy their rights during their time in School, especially with regard to the following articles of the convention.

* Article 1 – Every child under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.
* Article 28 – Every child has the right to an education.
* Article 29 – Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full.
* Article 42 – Every child has the right to know their rights.

Every Pupil in the School is entitled to receive a broad and balanced education that covers all aspects of the Curriculum.

Every Pupil is entitled to be offered learning experiences and opportunities that have been planned to meet their individual needs in a motivating and purposeful manner.

**3. Curriculum Content, Planning and Documentation**

3.1 The Curriculum for Wales

The School follows the Curriculum for Wales, which sets out Four Purposes as the overarching goal of compulsory state sector education in Wales, which is to support pupils to become:

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

The Four Purposes are to be secured by delivering learning across six Areas of Learning and Experience:

* Expressive Arts
* Health and Wellbeing
* Humanities
* Languages, Literacy and Communication
* Mathematics and Numeracy
* Science and Technology

Each Area of Learning and Experience is sub divided into What Matters Statements, which set out the key concepts in each area. Progression in skills and dispositions within each Each What Matters Statement is set out across five Progression Steps which equate to what may be expected of a typically developing and achieving 3-16 year old.

3.2 Adapting the Curriculum

The aims, principles and language of the Curriculum for Wales are very supportive of what we do in the School. However it is recognised that most of our Pupils are at early developmental levels working towards Progression Step 1. Teachers will still use the structure of the Curriculum for Wales to inform planning and ensure a broad and balanced curriculum for their classes, but it is imperative that lesson content and pedagogy are both relevant to their Pupils.

Pupils diagnosed as having PMLD will be working at the very earliest developmental levels and therefore require significantly different approaches to curriculum planning and content. They will need a sensory, relational curriculum to develop early communicative and cognitive skills, grounded in the present and immediate knowledge and apprehension of the world. Pupils with PMLD should be assessed using the Routes for Learning framework, which also provides good avice concerning the types of activities that should be planned for.

In addition, all Teachers in Wales must use the LNF and DCF to ensure that literacy, numeracy and digital skills are embedded across the curriculum, making links where relevnt to these skills irrespective of the specific subject discipline focus of any given lesson. However LNF and DCF targets must not be forced into a lesson if there are no natural links to be made.

3.3 Topic Planning

The School operates a 4 year topic cycle:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2023-2024** | **2024-2025** | **2025-2026** | **2026-2027** |
| **Autumn** | Knowing me, knowing you | All creatures great and small | Over the rainbow | Looking up at the sky |
| **Spring** | If I could turn back time | Rhymes, tales and stories | Food, glorious food | The circus is in town |
| **Summer** | Under the sea | Our wonderful world | Helpers and heroes | Journeys and adventures |

Teachers will use the topics as a basis for planning, and will interpret them in a way that is engaging and meaningful to the Pupils in their class. The School does not set specific content or pedagogy for each AoLE, nor by the age of Pupils in a given class. Rather, Teachers are trusted to use their professional judgement to plan and deliver learning activities and lessons that are relevant to and motivating for the Pupils in their classes. The amount of subject knowledge to be taught will depend on the ability and needs of Pupils in any given class. It may be that subject knowledge content is a vehicle to teach other skills, rather than an end in itself. Apart from those classes catering to the needs of Pupils with PMLD, Teachers will plan for coverage across all six AoLEs. Teachers in in classes catering to the needs of Pupils with PMLD will plan relevant learning experiences following good practice guidance from the Routes for Learning resources.

The School will enrich the curriculum offer throughout the school year by providing theme days and weeks such as but not limited to Welsh Focus Week, World Book Day, World Maths Day, British Science Week, Jeans for Genes, Earth Day and diversity events etc. Likewise school or class trips will also be undertaken where possible.

Where possible Teachers will support Pupils to contribute proactively to curriculum planning, giving them opportunities to communicate what they want to learn and how they like to learn. Where Pupils are unable to participate in explicit co-production Teachers and class Staff must use their knowledge of their Pupils to incorporate in their planning content and activities that align with their Pupils’ interests and preferences.

Staff knowledge of the Pupils and their professional experience are valuable resources for Teachers to harness in their planning. Teachers must ensure that their class Staff are enabled to contribute appropriately to planning, eg: during class meetings.

3.4 Planning Doumentation

Teachers will produce a MTP for their class each term. The MTP will set out:

* a class target for each of the Four Purposes, using child friendly language
* a What Matters Statement target for each AoLE, differentiated for Pupils into an “all/most/some children will” format, using assessment points taken from the relevant framework profiles
* the yearly LNF and DCF targets for the class, differentiated for Pupils into an “all/most/some children will” format

There is a School MTP model format that Teachers must use.

Teachers will also produce a document setting out weekly learning activities that ensure AoLE coverage which can be cross referenced with the MTP to identify specific targets for each session. There is a school AoLE planning model format which Teachers are encouraged to use. Whatever format a Teacher chooses to use it must ensure that in their absence a cover teacher, HLTA or supervising TA2, whether internal or supply, will be able to cross reference the two documents to understand clearly what the targets are for the relevant session, and what learning activities they need to deliver to enable Pupils to learn, practice and work towards achieving those targets.

All plans are working documents that Teachers will review and adapt as each term progresses to ensure that content, teaching and learning remain relevant to their Pupils. Teachers may identify a need to focus on certain areas of the curriculum, repeat certain activities to develop skills, focus on areas that they see are especially motivating for their Pupils etc.

SMT will communicate to Teachers within the first fortnight of each term the date by which the planning documents outlined in this subsection must be completed and uploaded to the School’s Teams site. If a Teacher feels they may struggle to meet this deadline they must speak promptly to the curriculum co-ordinator to arrange how to complete their planning in a timely manner.

Planning documents must be uploaded by the given deadline to the Curriculum Planning folder on Teams in following format:

* MTP-Topic-Class-YearTerm, eg: MTP-UnderTheSea-Ravens-2024Summer
* AoLE-Topic-Class-YearTerm, eg: AoLE-TurnBackTime-Frogs-2024Spring

This format enables documents to be located readily, stored in a logical, easy to understand order and immediately identified if they appear in an unexpected folder.

The curriculum co-ordinator will monitor a sample of planning documents from each class each term. Follow up action will be taken as indicated, eg: celebration of and sharing good practice, support and guidance offered. If changes have had to be made, the final agreed planning must be uploaded to the School’s Teams site promptly, and any draft versions deleted.

3.5 Other Planning Arrangements

An HLTA who has a timetabled teaching component to their deployment must produce termly AoLE planning as outlined above for the curriculum areas for which they are responsible. They will use the class Teacher’s MTP planning. An HLTA may work with the class Teacher to incorporate their planning into the Teachers’ documents, or produce a separate document.

Where Teachers and HLTAs have job share or part time arrangements they will work with the relevant colleagues to ensure curriculum planning and delivery occurs appropriately within their class. Responsibility will be fairly apportioned as these staff see fit so long as full curriculum coverage is achieved and documented according to the Policy.

**4. Pedagogy**

The curriculum is based around the development of the skills of communication, literacy, numeracy, creativity, problem solving, critcal thinking, and digital technology. Teachers are responsible for ensuring within their class timetable that balanced AoLE coverage is achieved in line with the needs of their Pupils.

Pupils’ additional learning needs are such that they will invariably be highly idiosyncratic learners. They will need hands on, experiential learning to build understanding and skills. Conceptual or abstract learning will be particularly challenging. They will benefit from play based approaches, time spent outside, physical activity and sensory learning. The use of technology and iPads may provide important support to enable communication or demonstration of skills, scaffolding for learning activities or motiviation to engage. They will need a curriculum that provides opportunities for repetition to secure skills and that accounts for the time needed for generalistaion. They may lose skills and need to re-learn them. The need to learn practical life skills. Developing emotional understanding and self regulation will also be an important part of their curriculum. Their achievements and progress may be erratic, and can be expected to be very modest compared to typical age related expectations. Their achievements and progress may be significantly impacted by their conditions and health. They will benefit from a curriculum that accounts for readiness to learn, eg: health, postural support, use of motivators or breaks, and holds in productive tension high expectations with flexibility to meet their wellbeing needs and learning capacities in the moment. They need specialist approaches such as a therapeutic curriculum and many Pupils will need professional support such as but not limited to physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language services.

The basic tasks of personal needs and daily life, eg: 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, be moved between their chair and stander, concentration span, positioning, time it may take for a child to respond etc, are viewed as teachable learning opportunities within the whole curriculum, will be valued as such and are not be rushed.

Use will be made as appropriate of technology to enhance Pupil’s engagement with and access to the curriculum, eg: computers, iPads, laptops, acquisition of relevant software, switches, communication devices, talking books. Please refer to the School’s Digital Strategy for further detail.

Staff will employ 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 diets. Please refer to the School’s autism profile and sensory support documentation.

The Welsh Curriculum outlines various guiding pedagogical principles:

* maintains a consistent focus on the overall purposes of the curriculum
* challenges all learners by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting expectations that are high but achievable for them,
* means employing a blend of approaches including direct teaching,
* means employing a blend of approaches including those that promote problem-solving, creative and critical thinking,
* sets tasks and selects resources that build on previous knowledge and experience and engage interest,
* creates authentic contexts for learning,
* means employing assessment for learning principles,
* ranges within and across Areas,
* regularly reinforces the cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competence, and provides opportunities to practise them,
* encourages learners to take increasing responsibility for their own learning,
* supports social and emotional development and positive relationships, and
* encourages collaboration.

These principles place learners at the centre of curriculum planning and delivery, which backs up existing good practice in the special education sector. Teachers and Staff should view both curriculum and pedagogy through the lens of each Pupil’s needs. Expectation and achievement are regarded relative to each individual Pupil rather than measuring them unfairly against age related standards. Learning experiences are to be cross curricular and experiential. Wellbeing is central to learning.

The School may in any given year set up autism specialist classes for those Pupils who require the most transactional support to learn and self regulate emotionally. In such classes SCERTS pedagogy will be used to shape those Pupils’ learning experiences both independently and in group sessions.

**5. Curriculum Resources**

Within School budget planning the curriculum co-ordinator will ensure that resources to support curriculum delivery are made available within School. They will co-ordinate ordering consumables for class use, which may be by standard ordering from suitable suppliers or by distributing petty cash, and make recommendations to SMT for larger orders or items. The curriculum co-ordinator will liaise as required with the School finance officer regarding processing orders. They will endeavour to ensure best value is secured when ordering curriculum resources, noting that best value does not always mean the cheapest option.

When class orders are being placed Teachers are responsible for collating and communicating their class requirements. The curriculum co-ordinator retains overall control of the order and will decide how best to meet these requests, eg: purchasing generic rather than branded consumables, purchasing in bulk and sharing out between classes.

Curriculum resources are kept within each class but are to be made available across the School as required. Staff are responsible for keeping the curriculum co-ordinator informed when there is a need to replenish consumable stocks or purchasing new items of equipment is necessary or desirable. The curriculum co-irdinator will establish whether suitable stocks remain available across the school before arranging any order.

Friends of Ysgol Pen Coch raise funds for the benefit of Pupils. They curriculum co-ordinator may approach them with requests. The curriculum co-ordinator is also responsible for putting together funding bids for curriculum resources if such possibilities exist when larger items are being ordered.

**6. Assessment**

Assessment, recording and reporting are considered to be an integral part of the curriculum. Assessment is the practice of telling a story about a Pupil’s attainment and progress. Many different strands of information come together to create this story which include but are not limited to Staff knowledge of the child, observations, attainment data, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing records and contributions from a Pupil’s Family. This Policy deals with formal assessment and data procedures for Pupil attainment and progress in School.

6.1 Assessment Frameworks

Pupils’ attainment will be recorded using assessment frameworks appropriate to their style of learning. The School currently uses three frameworks produced by B Squared, a commercial assessments publishing company:

* Routes to Progression (B Squared’s version of Routes for Learning, a sector leading Welsh government framework for learners with PMLD) – for Pupils working within the first 18 months of typical development,
* Curriculum for Wales (B Squared’s version of the Welsh Curriculum, and incorporating the LNF and DCF) – for all Pupils working beyond 18 month typical development for whom AoLE subject based assessment is relevant, and
* Autism Progress (from B Squared) – for any autistic pupil where AoLE subject based assessment does not adequately account for the nature of their learning due to their autistic profile.

Each assessment framework is subdivided into profiles. Each profile is made up of levels, which in turn contain the relevant individual assessment points. Each assessment point may be marked on an eight point sliding scale which indicates progress within an assessment point. Teachers are only required to indicate which assessment points have been mastered. They may use the sliding scale if in their judgement it is helpful to do so, eg: where a Pupil appears not to be making progress the scale may show smaller steps that are being achieved. A level is deemed complete when 80% of assessment points are marked as mastered.

Pupils assessed on the Routes to Progression framework proceed onto Curriculum for Wales when they have completed the Cognition, Communication, Attention and Expressing Preference profiles in Routes to Progression.

Pupils assessed on the Autism Progress framework may also be assessed on the Curriculum for Wales framework if their Teacher finds this helpful, eg: where an autistic pupil has a particular curriculum profile of strength or interest. In this instance the Teacher concerned must consult with the School’s assessment co-ordinator or autism lead teacher to decide the appropriate course of action.

The School’s assessment co-ordinator is responsible for supporting Staff use of the B Squared frameworks, eg: providing training in its functions, and liaising with B Squared as recuired, eg: contacting the helpdesk when a glitch has been identified.

6.2 Termly Targets

Teachers will set each of their Pupils in their class a target in each of the following areas, taken from the appropriate profiles within the primary assessment framework being used for the Pupil concerned:

* Cognition and learning
* Communication and interactiopn
* Behaviour, emotional and social development
* Sensory and/or physical needs

In addition Pupils whose primary assessment framework is Curriculum for Wales or Autism Progress will be set an annual target from each of the Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence Frameworks. Teachers should break down steps towards the annual target across the three terms.

For each target Teachers will provide to Families brief, clear guidance on ideas to support their child’s learning at home. Teachers must consider what resources and time are available to Families, avoid education jargon, explain jargon that cannot be avoided and include relevant links to resources Families may find helpful.

Where possible Teachers will support Pupils to contribute proactively to target setting, giving them opportunities to communicate what they think their next steps may be or what will motivate them. Where Pupils are unable to participate in explicit co-production Teachers must use their knowledge of their Pupils to set targets that may align with Pupils’ needs and interests.

Staff knowledge of the Pupils and their professional experience are valuable resources for Teachers to harness in their target setting. Teachers must ensure that their Staff are enabled to contribute appropriately to target setting.

SMT will communicate to Teachers within the first fortnight of each term the date by which the individual termly targets outlined in this subsection must be complete and uploaded to the School’s Teams site. If a Teacher feels they may struggle to meet this deadline they must speak promptly to the curriculum co-ordinator to arrange how to complete their planning in a timely manner.

Termly targets must be uploaded to the relevant assessment folder on Teams in following format: targets-FirstnameSurname-YearTerm, eg: targets-SiânJones-2024Spring. This format enables documents to be located readily, stored in a logical, easy to understand order and immediately identified if they appear in an unexpected folder.

The assessment co-ordinator will monitor a sample of draft planning documents from each class each term. Follow up action will be taken as indicated, eg: celebration of and sharing good practice, support and guidance offered. Once the assessment co-ordinator has confirmed to Teachers that their class targets have been completed to the appropriate standard they will be sent home for Family consideration. Families may offer suggestions which Teachers must consider, but are not obliged to act upon. Where a Teacher judges Family contributions will not be acted on they should contact the Family to explain their reasoning. The final targets must be uploaded to the relevant assessment folder on Teams.

6.3 Termly Assessment

Teachers will ensure thorough assessment observations of their Pupils’ work are recorded, which may include but is not limited to Pupils’ work, observation notes and records, photographs and video clips. All Staff in class have a crucial role to play in gathering such observations.

Other sources of relevant assessment information may be Families or personal assistants sending messages on Class Dojo, transport staff or midday supervisors reporting how the Pupil interacts or behaves.

The LNF and DCF are incorporated into B Squared’s Welsh Curriculum framework so Pupil progress tracking in these additional elements is automatically accounted for.

Attainment will be recorded as follows:

* Routes for Learning – across all profiles within the framework,
* Curriculum for Wales – across all profiles within the Health and Wellbeing, Languages, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics and Numeracy AoLEs, the Computing profile within the Science and Technology AoLE and the Welsh as an Additional Language profile, or
* Autism Progress – across the four profiles within the framework, the Computing profile within the Science and Technology AoLE, the Physical Skills profile within the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the Welsh as an Additional Language profiles.

There are two standard data points in the year, at the end of autumn term and towards the end of summer term. In addition the assessment co-ordinator may require a data point at the end of the spring term. For each term where there is a data point the assessment co-ordinator will communicate to Teachers within the first fortnight of that term the deadline by which assessment records must be completed ready for data analysis. If a Teacher feels they may struggle to meet this deadline they should speak to the assessment co-ordinator promptly to arrange how to complete their assessment in a timely manner.

SMT will use end of term data for analysis and communicate results in a timely fashion to each Teacher to help them plan next steps for their Pupils and identify and act on trends within their class. Assessment data will be considered as part of Teachers’ performance development. In addition assessment data will be used by SMT to identify whole school and cohort trends to inform development priorities for the School.

Teachers are encouraged to use the data analytics tool provided within the B Squared assessment packages to analyse attainment, progress and trends within their own class. This will enhance their ability to tailor teaching to the learning needs of their Pupils.

6.4 Baselining

Baselining is the practice whereby Pupils new to the School are given a preliminary assessment to establish their pre existing attainment levels and which assessment framework is the most appropriate to use to help describe their future attainment and progress.

Baselining will be undertaken by a new Pupil’s class Teacher within six School weeks of the Pupil joining the School. They will baseline across all the profiles identified in Section 6.3 above, according to the framework being used for the Pupil concerned.

At the end of the Pupil’s first full term in School their Teacher will review the baselines initially set and adjust them if necessary.

6.5 Moderation

6.5.1 Each term a group of Teachers identified by the School’s assessment co-ordinator will submit an evidence bundle for the LNF, such that across the year every Teacher contributes. The assessment co-ordinator will plan to ensure a balanced coverage is achieved across the LNF profiles. Each evidence bundle relates to one Pupil and achievement of one LNF descriptor. Three pieces of evidence must be produced, evidencing the achievement of the descriptor, one each from a different AoLE.

6.5.2 Each term a Teacher identified by the School’s DCF Lead will submit an evidence bundle for the DCF. The DCF moderation process is similar to that for the LNS, see 6.5.1. However only one bundle of evidence is evidence is required.

6.5.3 For both the LNF and DCF, each term an internal moderation process led by the relevant co-ordinator or lead is undertaken with all Teachers, HLTAs and TA2s peer evaluating all submitted evidence bundles. The strongest evidence bundles are taken forward to regional moderation shared between partner special schools. Feedback is given to Teachers to enable consistency of and improvement in assessment practice.

6.6 Evidence

The School uses B Squared’s Evisense evidence recording package. Each Teacher has a login, and number of licences permitting so too will a second Staff member in each class. Each Pupil has a profile to which write ups, photos and videos can be logged. Where a Pupil is assessed using a B Squared framework evidence can be be tagged to a specific assessment point or points within that framework. Where a Pupil is assessed using the SCERTS framework Staff must indicate in their evidence write up which SCERTS descriptor is being addressed. Photo and video evidence must be accompanied by a brief write up indicating how the Pupil had demonstrated secure, generalised competence against that descriptor.

A single piece of evidence can be logged against multiple descriptors if relevant.

Evidence can also be tagged to one or more of the Four Purposes, and it can be indicated whether the evidence is connected to an Individual Development Plan outcome.

Teachers must ensure that 12 pieces of evidence are uploaded for each Pupil each term. They must ensure that over the school year the total amount of uploaded evidence achieves a reasonable spread across the various profiles with the framework

SMT will communicate to Teachers within the first fortnight of each term the date towards the end of that term by which evidence for the term must be uploaded to Evisense. Uploaded evidence may be used for moderation purposes or to present to governors, Estyn or appropriate external professionals, eg: colleagues in assessment networks, GwE Improving Schools Advisor, educational consultants brought in by the School. If a Teacher feels they may struggle to meet this deadline they must speak promptly to the assessment co-ordinator to arrange how to complete their assessment in a timely manner.

6.7 Reporting to families

Each term Teachers are required to provide a report to Families of Pupils in their class. These reports will include:

* assessment of each individual termly target as achieved or ongoing, and a brief description of what the Pupil can do relative to the target
* for Pupils assessed on Curriculum for Wales or Autism Progress a picture and brief explanatory comment relating to each AoLE
* for Pupils assessed on Routes to Progression a picture and brief explanatory comment relating to each of the following areas taken from the Equals curriculum:

communication, language and social relationships
cognition and learning,
creative and sensory arts,
health and wellbeing, and
sensory science, exploration and experiences.

* a Teacher comment about how the Pupil has got on over the term, including points to celebrate, milestones, wellbeing and where relevant general comments about next steps.

In addition the summer term report will include a year end progress report using data taken from the B Squared assessment tools, and a comment from the Head. The Head will make arrangements for the year end progress report to be produced.

SSMT will communicate to Teachers within the first fortnight of each term the date towards the end of that term by which draft reports will be due. This date will allow for a suitable period for the Head to read reports, request corrections or clarifications and add sections for which they are responsible. The Head will notify Teachers when reports should be sent out. Unless a Family has requested otherwise, reports and any supporting documents will be converted to PDF and sent to Families via Class Dojo.

**7. Area of Learning and Experience**

7.1 Expressive Arts

The Expressive Arts AoLE spans five disciplines:

* art,
* dance,
* drama,
* film and digital media, and
* music.

Although each discipline has its own discrete body of knowledge and body of skills, it is recognised that together they share the creative process.

What matters in this AoLE has been expressed in three statements, which support and complement one another and should not be viewed in isolation. Together they contribute to realising the four purposes.

This integrative and creative area has numerous benefits that include building self-esteem, enhancing communication and growing social skills. In the expressive arts people with additional learning needs have an outlet to explore their creativity, discover new passions, and boost their self-confidence. Importantly, this AoLE makes the expressive arts accessible to all Pupils and expand their horizons. Experiencing the expressive arts can engage learners physically, socially and emotionally, nurturing their well-being, self-esteem and resilience. This can help them become healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

The School’s aim is to provide all Pupils with a wide variety of experiences within all areas of expressive arts. Pupils engage in a broad range of activities tailored to their individual needs such as one to one, small and large group activities along with whole School events and celebrations. Expressive arts provision is regularly enhanced with workshops lead by professional artists and musicians along with collaborative work with theatres and mainstream schools within our local area. Pupils are provided with opportunities to explore, express and create their own ideas within both structured and self-directed activities.

All Pupils experience structured weekly music sessions from a designated professional alongside the regular use of music lead by class Staff to assist learning throughout the school day. There are opportunities for Pupils to become involved in the Sing, Sign, Sensory Choir which meets regularly to learn songs and Makaton signs, which are performed during School celebrations and offsite events.

As with all aspects of our Pupils’ learning a total communication approach enables pupils to engage confidently and creatively to achieve their full potential.

7.2 Health and Wellbeing

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a compulsory part of the Welsh Curriculum that sits within the Health and Wellbeing AoLE, though significant elements of relevant knowledge will also be dealt with within the Science and Technology AoLE. The School will ensure that developmentally appropriate RSE is planned for and delivered to all Pupils, taking ionto account the guidance provided by the Welsh government. This will occur primarily within Pupils’ classes. In addition where deemed appropriate or necessary Pupils may receive individually or in groups enhancement sessions developed to meet their specific needs, eg: puberty, growth and change sessions for older Pupils. It is noted that Families no longer have discretion to withdraw their child from RSE. Please see the RSE Policy for full details.

7.3 Humanities

In School the Humanities AoLE includes:

* geography,
* history,
* Religion, Values and Ethics,
* learning about equality and diversity, and
* cultural events and celebrations.

Humanities is relevant to Pupils as it broadens their horizons, helps them to gain an understanding of their world and to explore their immediate surroundings and beyond. It helps them to learn concepts such as time, change and difference and experience them in safe settings. In addition it helps them to build up an awareness of their own identity.

Humanities will be taught via practical multi-sensory experiences that are relevant to Pupils. This can be in discrete subject based sessions or cross curricular to include cooking, Forest School, local visits, PE etc. Teachers will differentiate learning objectives and activities appropriately and ensure children are suitably challenged.

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) is a compulsory part of the Welsh Curriculum that sits within the Humanities AoLE. However for historic reasons it remains governed by separate legal provisions, including each county maintaining a Standing Advisory Committee for RVE. The School will ensure that developmentally appropriate RVE is planned for and delivered by Teachers and/or HLTAs, having appropriate regard for the RVE agreed syllabus provided by the Flintshire Standing Advisory Committee. It is noted that Families no longer have discretion to withdraw their child from RVE. Please see the RVE Policy for full details.

7.4 Languages, Literacy and Communication

In School the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE includes:

* expressive communication – speaking, non verbal communication, signing, coreboards, writing,
* receptive communication – listening, objects of reference, reading,
* Welsh – expressive and receptive,
* literature, poetry and songs, and
* theatre and performance.

Languages, Literacy and Communication is an essential part of the curriculum. It is important that a rich communication environment is an everyday experience for Pupils. We use a range of methods and approaches at a level appropriate to individual Pupils. We are also proud of our Welsh heritage, language and culture and promote this across all areas of our curriculum.

We are very aware that a Pupil’s ability to communicate effectively can be a significant (possibly the most significant) barrier to learning. Therefore, we work collaboratively with the Speech and Language Team and the Audio Visual Impairment Team at the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to ensure that we focus on communication friendly strategies and an environment that removes communication barriers.

We encourage a total communication approach where communication that is effective is the goal, not forcing Pupils to learn or use particular styles. We want all Pupils to use a communication mode that is within their skill set and functional to their cognitive ability. This may be spoken words (in whatever language), signs (Makaton), symbols (eg: core boards, PECS, visual timetables), physical objects, using augmentative and alternative communication ( eg: eye gaze, a communicator device), non verbal communication and other methods devised or used by the child.

The School uses a range of approaches and resources to support Pupil progress in literacy, such as but not limited to:

* POPAT phonics,
* Oxford Reading Tree series,
* Colourful Semantics to support understanding of grammar and sentence structure,
* Story Sacks,
* sensory stories,
* Tacpac – tactile approaches to communication,
* Story Massage,
* Intensive Interaction,
* Attention Autism (Bucket Therapy),
* Black Sheep Press (speech and language resources), and
* Tedi Tŵt, Dil a Del, Fflic a Fflac – Welsh language resources.

Teachers will use methods appropriate to the ability of their Pupils. It is critical that Teachers establish a communication rich environment in the classroom, fostering lots of natural opportunities for Staff to model communication, scaffold Pupil’s communicative intent and providing plenty of engaging contexts in which Pupils are encouraged to communicate expressively. The daily routine is an excellent way to model communication, eg: using coreboards to make choices at snack time. Work will be individual, paired or in other groupings as appropriate to the task, eg: functioning in a group may be a communicative learning objective in itself.

7.5 Mathematics and Numeracy

In School the Mathematics and Numeracy AoLE includes:

* number
* shape, space and measure
* simple data and statistics
* money
* music and games

Mathematics includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures. Developing mathematical skills enables Pupils to better understand and influence the world around them. Most daily maths is very practical being used for things such as shopping, cooking, journeys, games/ puzzles, play and time. At School we understand how children’s mathematical thinking first develops and how it can be nurtured to ensure real understanding and support essential life skills.

The School uses a range of approaches and resources to support Pupil progress in mathematics, such as but not limited to:

* Boo Zoo,
* RMEasimaths,
* Numicon, and
* HelpKidzLearn.

Teaching maths always starts from a practical basis and when the pupils are ready, taking their learning to a pictorial/representative level and then an abstract level. When teaching new concepts, pupils will return to a practical approach to establish the new concept, such as through hands on experiences and messy play, songs and rhymes, using ICT equipment and everyday therapies, such as rebound and hydrotherapy. Maths is typically a progressive, linear discipline in that new concepts build on previously acquired skills or knowledge. Given the learning style of Pupils it is envisaged that teaching maths will require plenty of opportunities to practice skills in a variety ofcontext, and re-visiting concepts and skills continuously to ensure knowledge is secured. Teachers will ensue that objectives and learning experiences are appropriately differentiated for the Pupils in their class, and that a range of motivating equipment and contexts is used.

7.6 Science and Technology

In School the Science and Technology AoLE includes:

* chemistry – the property of materials,
* physics – the way forces work,
* biology – the living world,
* Relationships and Sexuality Education,
* Forest School,
* computer science, and
* design and technology – DT, cookery, fabrics.

The AoLE helps Pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and how it works, enhances their curiosity and develops their understanding of themselves. It provides motivating contexts for learning, such as practical and sensory work, building and constructing etc. It is important for our Pupils to understand and use a range of technology to communicate and access learning. We are preparing learners for lifelong learning, developing key skills including cognition, communication, collaboration, predicting, producing and computational thinking.

Science and Technology needs to be an immersive and exploratory process for our Pupils. The type of learning experiences that Teachers may plan for Pupils include, but are not limited to:

* water/sand/sensory play opportunities using different materials and tools, making predictions, observing change and working with others,
* using the Forest School area to plant and care for living things, watching them grow and change, expanding understanding of the world around them, taking care of the environment,
* cookery activities measuring, observing, promoting changes in processes,
* building supports understanding of forces, balance, joining items together, properties of materials, using tools,
* interacting and collaborating on technology including iPads, interactive screens, eye gaze and communication devices, exploring the link between inputs and outputs,
* Science Week enrichment activities,
* interactive toys where Pupils activate a range of devices, learn about cause and effect,
* use of iPads, interactive screens, eye gaze, communication aids, VR to furtuer embed digital skills, and
* use of Hwb resources, eg: J2E software, that support digital skills across the curriculum.

7.7 PMLD

In School our “in-house” PMLD AoLE includes:

* communication, language and social relationships
* cognition and learning,
* creative and sensory arts,
* health and wellbeing, and
* sensory science, exploration and experiences.

The Four Purposes have been modified so that they have relevance to the lives of pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities. The Curriculum for Wales is not content prescriptive and therefore allows for those working with these complex pupils to find areas of pupil interest and ability to make it useful and relevant for their lives. Teachers use the Equals Curriculum which explains more fully the unique abilities and ways of learning.for pupils with PMLD.

Focus for learning should always be pupil centred, where the process of learning is deemed more important than the product and all contribution and learning made is celebrated no matter how small the steps may be. The learning will be sensory based, engaging each and every pupil, in order to meet their individual needs and learning style.

**8. Curriculum and Assessment Leadership and Responsibilities**

8.1 Senior Management Team

The Head leads SMT in taking corporate responsibility for setting the curriculum and assessment agenda. The day to day management of these fundamental areas of School practice will be devolved to a curriculum and an assessment co-ordinator, both of whom will be members of SMT. In addition middle managers may have specific input to support these roles. Senior and middle managers are given leadership time, either planned in their weekly timetable or by ad hoc arrangements, to ensure their duties are carried out to a high standard and in a timely manner. The Head may also allocate discrete curriculum and assessment tasks to any Teacher, in which case consideration will be given to the appropriate timeframe for completion of the task and the potential need for non contact time allowance.

The Head is responsible for organising whole School approaches to curriculum delivery and leadership, assessment practice and monitoring processes. They may devolve discharging this responsibility to other staff such as the curriculum and assessment co-ordinators, middle managers or AoLE leads.

Whenever possible a governor should be assigned the role of curriculum lead within the governing body, and another assigned the role of assessment lead. Their role will be as critical friends to the Head and the curriculum and assessment co-ordinators, providing them support, advice and challenge in the pursuance of their curriculum and assessment responsibilities.

8.2 Management Roles

8.2.1 The curriculum co-ordinator (SMT member) will be responsible for:

* organising the AoLE groups and setting the agenda across the year for their work,
* co-ordinating curriculum resource purchases at whole school and class level,
* reviewing and updating planning documents,
* monitoring termly planning,
* sharing planning good practice, eg: delivering INSET sessions,
* supporting Staff to develop their planning practice,
* curriculum reports to School governors, and
* maintaining this Policy.

8.2.2 The assessment co-ordinator (SMT member) will be responsible for

* management of B Squared assessment frameworks and Evisense system,
* reviewing and updating assessment documents,
* monitoring termly target setting,
* LNF moderation,
* sharing assessment good practice, eg: delivering INSET sessions,
* supporting Staff to develop their assessment practice,
* data analysis,
* assessment reports to School governors, and
* maintaining this Policy.

8.2.3 The Autism Lead (TLR, middle management) will be responsible for:

* supporting Staff to develop good practice autism pedagogy, and
* where the School has set up autism specialist classes, supporting Staff in those classes to use SCERTS pedagogy.

8.2.4 The Digital Co-ordinator (TLR, middle management) will be responsible for:

* representing the School on regional DCF networks
* supporting Staff to deliver excellent digital competency teaching, and
* DCF moderation in School and externally.

8.2.5 The Head may adapt these responsibilities to meet the School’s potentially changing needs at any given time. It is expected that this will be done in consultation with the broader SMT and affected parties.

8.3 AoLE Groups

8.3.1 Each AoLE will be lead by Staff teams working in AoLE groups. The curriculum co-ordinator will allocate each Teacher to one of the seven groups, taking into account their qualifications, expertise and personal interests where possible, and in addition any specific request a Teacher may make. TA2s and TA3s will join the AoLE group which their Teacher is a part of. Membership allocation may change year on year or within a year depending as best meets needs at the time.

8.3.2 Each AoLE group will decide which Teacher will be considered to be group leader. Typically this will be the most senior Teacher present in the group, but does not need to be if the group decides there are sound reasons for another Teacher to be group leader. The group leader is responsible for ensuring the group plan is carried out. They are the first point of contact for all Staff for matters relating to their AoLE.

8.3.3 The AoLE groups are responsible for developing their AoLe within the School to secure and enable excellent practice by Staff and will make a yearly action plan to achieve this, setting out objectives, timetables for achievement and success criteria. Action plan tasks will be shared out across group members. The yearly action plan will make reference to relevant priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan for the year. Activities may include but are not limited to:

* putting on focus events within School,
* bringing in external activities to enhance provision,
* planning trips and participating in external activities,
* arranging partnerships with other schools,
* professional networking,
* keeping up to date with developments in the AoLE or subjects within it and disseminating relevant information to colleagues,
* resource audits and ordering resources,
* attending relevant training,
* providing in-house training.

8.3.3 SMT will set aside at least one School development meeting each term to enable AoLE groups to plan and make progress with their work. Group members will also need to plan and timetable how they will ensure progress on their plan is maintained between these times.

8.4 Performance Development

Teachers draft yearly personal objectives as part of their performance development, which are agreed with their supervisor at the first performance development meeting of the year (typically held towards the end of the first half term). As directed by the Head this may include one or more AoLE related objectives, which may contribute to whole School AoLE developments. Teachers will be expected to work on these objectives across the year and report on progress at their termly performance development meetings. Please refer to the School’s Performance Development policy for further guidance.

**9. Review**

This Policy has been approved by the Governors and is made publicly available on the School’s website or upon request from the School.

The Head will arrange for the Policy to be reviewed every two years following the date set out in the Policy, at such other times that the Governors or Head deem necessary or at any time when directed to do so by a body with appropriate authority, eg: Flintshire County Council, Estyn.

The Policy will be reviewed in light of any statutory frameworks or guidance in place that pertain to schools in Wales and sector best practice current at the time.

Following any review and irrespective of whether any changes are made, the Policy must be ratified by the Governors.

Historic versions of the Policy will be archived but remain available for reference as required.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Signed:** |  | (Curriculum Co-ordinator) |  | **Date:** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Signed:** |  | (Head Teacher) |  | **Date:** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Signed:** |  | (Chair of Governors) |  | **Date:** |  |

**Date of next review: June 2026**