



POLICY DOCUMENT

for

Curriculum

Headteacher: Mrs D Brill-Williams
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs T Evans Rickards
Assistant Head: Miss S Blackmore
Assistant Head: Mrs C Buck (ALN Service Lead)

Tel: 01495 357755

Email: schooladmin@penycwm.com

Ethos and Values of the School

Vision

To be recognised as outstanding in all that we do.

Mission

To empower and support individuals to be resilient and independent and to develop skills to reach their potential.

Core Values

We are a school defined by a commitment and ambition to be recognised and outstanding in all that we do. Our values are fundamental in ensuring that we achieve our vision and mission.

Introduction

This document is a statement of the philosophy, aims and objectives, teaching and learning strategies of the whole curriculum in Pen-y-Cwm School. It has been developed through a process of consultation with teaching staff and was fully revised in January 2016.

Aims

- Cater for the needs of individual children of both sexes from all ethnic and social groups, including the more able and talented and those who have wide range of additional learning needs
- Facilitate children's acquisition of knowledge, skills and qualities which will help them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and aesthetically, so that they may reach their individual potential in becoming independent, responsible, useful, thinking, confident and considerate members of the community
- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment for all learners
- Ensure that every child's education has continuity and progression (where possible, and depending of medical conditions)
- Ensure that there is a match between the child and the tasks s/he is asked to undertake
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all learners
- Recognise the crucial role which parents play in their child's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the education process
- Treat children in a dignified way at all times

All education staff at the school are focussed on the core principles that all children should:

- Learn: to be adaptable; how to solve problems in a variety of situations; how to work independently and as members of a team
- Develop the ability to make reasoned judgements and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources
- Be happy, cheerful, and well balanced
- Be enthusiastic and eager to do their best – ‘GWNAWN EIN GORAU’
- Begin to acquire a set of moral values: honesty, sincerity, personal responsibility, on which to base their own behaviour
- Be expected to behave well and learn to be responsible for their actions
- Care for and take pride in the school
- Develop tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others in an unbiased way
- Develop non-racist and non-sexist attitudes
- Know how to think and solve problems mathematically and in a variety of situations using concepts of number (algebra) measurement, shape and space and handling data
- Be able to listen and read for a variety of purposes and to be able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately through speech (inc communication aids) and writing for a variety of purposes
- Develop an enquiring mind and scientific approach to problems using technological skills
- Be able to communicate their knowledge and feelings through various art forms, including Art and Craft, music, drama, and be acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity
- Know about geographical, historical, and social aspects of the environment and national heritage and be aware of other times and places and recognise links among family, local, national and international events
- Have some knowledge of the beliefs of major world religions
- Develop agility, physical co-ordination and confidence in and through movement
- Know how to apply the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety
- To make provision for the individual learning needs of each of our pupils as identified by the Statement of Educational Needs.

Pen-y-Cwm School caters for pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties and within its curriculum framework provides learning opportunities for all its pupils at different stages of their development. This includes pupils with severe, profound and complex learning difficulties, hearing and visual impairment and physical disabilities.

For pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder we recognise that this is a developmental disorder consisting of a triad of impairments

- A communication impairment
- A social impairment
- A rigidity and inflexibility

We also accommodate the particular style of autistic learners, acknowledging the:

- Effects on learning of extreme delay in attention switching
- Way in which difficulties in understanding spoken language arise
- Fundamental nature of communication problems in autism
- Lack of "common sense" which may occur in autism
- Difference in the way in which autistic children use memory
- Problems experienced by autistic children in intentionality
- Different sources of stress and anxiety experienced by autistic pupils
- Need to balance within the curriculum the practice and consolidation of skills against the danger of activities becoming compulsive, this failing to extend the pupils
- Need for individual schedules that include objects of reference, words and symbols
- Need for consistency, including consistent strategies for managing behaviour and the use of visual approaches to learning
- Need to use positive behaviour management strategies and to organise the curriculum delivery so that autistic pupils are given the opportunity to learn new skills, followed by the opportunity to rehearse old ones.
- Underpinning the delivery of the curriculum with ASD pupils is the use of the TEACCH philosophy

For children with physical difficulties we recognise that the children have complex and sometimes profound physical and learning difficulties ranging through mild and moderate to severe. The majority of these pupils are wheelchair dependant and have conditions such as cerebral palsy.

We recognise that many of our pupils have:

- Communication problems: expressive and receptive difficulties that require technological communication aids, symbols, computer technology etc.
- Feeding and toileting problems: some of our pupils are totally adult dependent and will remain so for the whole of their time at Pen-y-Cwm. Feeding and toileting programmes are in place for these pupils and these form part of the school's PSHE scheme of work.
- 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. Consistent Handling documents 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.

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 all of which are included within the school's PSHE or subject area schemes of work.

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 Pen-y-Cwm. 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 while those in the 16 plus age group will participate in accredited learning; team enterprise and work experience.

Flexibility in planning

Schools are free to organise and deliver the curriculum in the way that suits their circumstances and needs. There are no constraints relating to time allocation or organisation of subjects.

WAG – Making the most of learning 2008

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 the full range of subjects in the National Curriculum, alongside Religious Education. All of our learning experiences stimulate the senses and promote personal and social development.

At Pen-y-Cwm the core curriculum consists of English, Mathematics, Science, PSHE and ICT. These core subjects form the basis of our whole school curriculum and are taught in appropriate ways for all of our pupils. Schemes of work for each of these core subjects 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 National Curriculum.

Welsh, as a language to be learned and spoken, is offered through Cwricwlwm Cymreig and designated lessons as appropriate. 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. The many aspects of Cwricwlwm Cymreig are reflected in teachers' termly planning, ensuring that all pupils have access to the particular features and culture of Wales. Second language Welsh is taught at levels appropriate to pupils' development - see SOW

However, standing alone, the National 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 etc to practise social skills and develop independence. These valuable learning opportunities are delivered through schemes of work including Personal, Social and Health education, Science and Geography.

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 music, aromatherapy and rebound therapy.

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 Annual Review 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
- 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, Picture Exchange
- Communication System (PECS) etc

- Consistent and sensitive use of programmes to moderate challenging behaviours
- Our commitment to essential therapeutic activities - speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, hydrotherapy, music therapy 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 National Curriculum and for KS4 & 5 accredited units and modules.

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 Pen-y-Cwm. 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 statements and annual reviews 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 programmes of studies from each of the Key Stages utilising QCA Schemes of Work and where necessary upon other priorities from within the whole curriculum. Where possible, arrangements will be made for pupils to access local mainstream schools for particular aspects of their curriculum development.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- A Policy for Teaching and Learning
- A Whole School Policy for Assessment, Recording and Reporting
- A Policy for the Development of Skills Across the curriculum

Partnerships

At Pen-y-Cwm 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.

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

Parents are regularly 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 CA 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.

Teaching staff are divided into phase teams and plan for curriculum development across key stages to ensure balance and breadth.

The curriculum in all primary classes is delivered through topics and units based on the Foundation Phase and the National Curriculum. In secondary classes the curriculum is thematically taught linking units together as appropriate. In some classes the TEACCH philosophy underpins the delivery of the curriculum. The 16-19 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 key skills, communication, numeracy, ICT and thinking skills and these are embedded across the subjects.

The timetable for each class is drawn up to ensure that there is appropriate balance between the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning, National Curriculum, as well as taking account of the sensory/development curricula. The Head teacher ensures that each class has a timetable which provides appropriate breadth and balance.

The Planning Process

The following structure of the school's curriculum planning process derives from Welsh Assembly guidance.

Phase 1 : Overall curriculum policy

Phase 2 : - Key skills form the basis for teaching and learning and has a clear policy. Policies are developed by relevant subject leaders in consultation with the staff team and Governing Body.

Phase 3 : Areas of Learning - these are taken from the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning/National Curriculum for each subject within the context of the whole curriculum and cover the whole school age range; accredited qualifications.

Phase 4 : Schemes of Work - 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.

Phase 5 : Teachers will develop medium term planning from Schemes of Work 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 Programmes of Study
- Resources, access issues and differentiation strategies
- Evaluation criteria

Phase 6 : IEP's are written and reviewed three times a year with targets based on the priorities for individual pupils linked to their statements of education. These targets are generally focussed on the key skills of communication, numeracy; Personal and Social Development and physical development. They may also include a target for well-being (Thrive) and/or an objective to improve a particular aspect of a pupil's behaviour

Phase 7 : Assessment and recording - teachers and pupils monitor and record responses and progress. This evidence will be recorded in the child's Record of Achievement as part of the process of every day teacher assessment. Samples of pupils work are maintained as evidence of progress in Maths, English and Science where appropriate as well as evidence for Foundation subjects

Phase 8 : 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 Pen-y-Cwm 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 is matched to the attainment targets and programmes of study for the appropriate key stage of the National Curriculum and Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase.

Curriculum workshops are held on a regular basis to discuss aspects of the curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach and of standards.

Modifications and Disapplications from the National Curriculum

Any modifications will be reflected within the child's statement of special educational need and supporting annual review documentation.

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 in conjunction with the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Co-ordinator.

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 child'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 future learning objectives.

Teachers at Pen-y-Cwm School 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?

Time Allocation

Planning will take account of the teaching time available during the week. The basic child managements 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.

Pupil Grouping

At present pupils are predominantly based in age-related class groups. We acknowledge that some children 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.

Role and Responsibilities

Planning is a collective responsibility taking into account 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 they are 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.

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. Records of achievement create meaningful access to this process and we guard against giving too little credit for a response or indiscriminately praising everything the pupil does resulting in insufficient challenge. Assessment for learning is actively promoted throughout and particularly at KS2 and above SLD classes.

School Development Planning

School Development planning provides the context for evaluating the planning process in the school. It provides the focus within which the curriculum development 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 (SDP)

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 LEA 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, 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.

Reviewing the policy

This policy has been agreed by the Governing Body.

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with the staff and Governors on an annual basis and in the light of updated legislation.

Head Teacher _____

Date: January 2016

Chair of Governors _____

Date: January 2016

This policy will be reviewed in July 2016 in line with the recommendations of Donaldson.