



Ysgol Penmaes

Curriculum Policy

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as detailed in the school's policy review cycle. It may also be necessary to review and amend it sooner to reflect both local and national changes.

Ratified by Governing Body	Signature	Date
Headteacher: Angharad Bryn-Jones		27.09.2023
Chair of Governors: Clancy Brett		27.09.2023
Next review date: Sept. 24 or sooner pending curriculum developments		

Our Vision is: At Ysgol Penmaes we continually strive to do more than just educate, it is our aim to offer every learner the opportunity to achieve their full potential in a safe, secure and enriching environment. We offer a curriculum that promotes ambitious, capable and informed learners at a developmentally appropriate level. Penmaes places a strong focus on the well-being of all, facilitated through highly effective communication processes. Learning is delivered in a way that

facilitates an immersive multi-sensory curriculum that is fun and provides real life authentic experiences which help to build resilience; positively impacting development, whilst ensuring the promotion of collaboration and independence. As a special school, we ensure a common language for learning along with celebrating and embracing Cynefin/place whilst planning, teaching and learning ensures a broad, balanced and creative curriculum promoting the 4 purposes of the Curriculum for Wales and encouraging learners to be the best they can be.

Our Mission Statement is: Successful Healthy Individuals Nurturing Excellence

Our School Values are fundamental:

- Friendship and kindness
- Resilience and perseverance
- Empathy and trust
- Communication and respect
- Responsibility and teamwork
- Positivity and creativity
- Tolerance and trust

All of our values promote healthy, positive relationships. By modeling the values we aim to raise learners' self-esteem and confidence in learning, whilst creating a positive school community environment for all.

Rationale

This policy will provide an overview of the principles and practice of teaching and learning at Ysgol Penmaes, as well as providing an outline of the curriculum delivered across the school. Penmaes is a lead enquiry school (NPEP) for the new curriculum developments and fully incorporates the new curriculum for Wales 2022 which has been 'designed by teachers, built for children'.

The new curriculum for Wales states:

'Curriculum for Wales 2022 seeks to allow for a broadening of learning, supporting settings and schools to be more flexible in their approaches, and provide education leaders and practitioners with greater agency, enabling them to be innovative and creative.'

At the heart of this are the Four Purposes of the curriculum, setting out the aspirations for all children and young people by the time they leave school, enabling them to be successful learners, who play an active part in their community and wider society, and who are prepared to thrive in an increasingly complex world.'

The curriculum at Ysgol Penmaes is continually being developed by staff to reflect the individual and holistic needs of our learners. Ensuring that all learners, regardless of their abilities and needs, make progress and have access to exciting and stimulating experiences during their time at school.

We have included statutory and non-statutory guidance and have adopted a broad range of principles to ensure the curriculum at Ysgol Penmaes is relevant to all. As a school we recognise that our learners need access to a range of experiences which include multi-sensory environments, therapeutic input and educational visits (when restrictions allow). All of these, in turn, provide blended and real life authentic learning experiences which are essential to ensure inclusivity for all.

The curriculum at Penmaes is fully inclusive; all learners irrespective of race, gender, culture, sex, colour or additional needs have equal access to the very best learning experiences and opportunities.

Our curriculum at Penmaes takes account of Welsh Government guidance regarding the use of the Curriculum for Wales (CfW), Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF), The Digital Competence Framework (DCF), Foundation Phase Framework (FPF) and Routes for Learning (RFL). We understand the importance of providing cross-curricular experiences for our learners and ensure that Literacy, Numeracy and the DCF are fully promoted throughout learning.

The 4 Purposes of the 2022 Curriculum

The Curriculum for Wales 2022 makes it explicit that the new curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales will be fully inclusive and:

“easily understood by all, encompassing an entitlement to high-quality education for every child and young person and taking account of their views in the context of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and those of parents, carers and wider society.”

At Penmaes the Four Purposes are at the heart of the curriculum and we are fully engaged and committed to translating, developing, implementing and embedding these in a meaningful way for learners with complex Additional Learning Needs (ALN) within a special school setting. Penmaes has translated the Four Purposes into pupil friendly statements that are accessible in the learning environment.

At Penmaes we want all of our learners to become:

- Ambitious, capable learners ready to learn throughout their lives;
- Enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in life and work;
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world;
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

More information regarding the Four Purposes can be found using the following link:
<https://hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/a-guide-to-curriculum-for-wales-2022/#the-four-purposes-of-the-curriculum>

Curriculum Entitlement

At Penmaes all of our learners have access to:

- a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum;
- an engaging and exciting curriculum irrespective of need;
- highly skilled and qualified staff who deliver holistic, quality teaching and learning which recognises individual learning styles;
- opportunities for inclusion;
- partnership working with parents/carers and other stakeholders in order to utilise their knowledge to build individual learning programmes which develop and shape learners learning
- Learning opportunities that are provided in a happy, safe, secure and stimulating school environment where all learners are encouraged to enjoy learning.
- Celebrations of achievements.
- The culture of Wales and the wider world throughout their curriculum including a focus on bilingualism.
- Having their voices heard and being included in decision making in regards to their learning and the wider school environment.
- Effective strategies in order to promote positive behaviour enabling learners to engage and learn.
- Encouragement to foster and build positive working relationships.
- A positive learning environment and staff who are committed to pupil's learning needs.

Curriculum Structure

The structure, content and delivery of the curriculum at Penmaes is tailored to meet individual learning needs. Penmaes embeds and promotes pupil centered planning throughout all learning experiences. Learners have access, where required, to a therapeutic curriculum which includes physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and the support of specialist trained staff in emotional literacy, Thrive, ELSA and Mental health First Aid..

Learner progression tracking is completed 3 times a year and a learning journey eportfolio (see appendix 1) which is on-going and also captures progress. This is a new way of collecting and recording data from Autumn 2023 and is inline with Powys and CfW progression planning guidance. Where required some learners' progression journeys are mapped against the RfL map. Class Dojo is a home-school communication system, however it also allows for the recording of learners' skills and achievements. Penmaes has a newly introduced behaviour and safeguarding system called CPOMS which provides supporting information on why a learner may not be making as much progress as they could be due to behaviour barriers. Learner progression updates whether curriculum or non-curriculum based are provided for the governing body to challenge as necessary as well as regular meetings with the governor with the lead for curriculum and progression.

The curriculum offered at Penmaes includes a wide range of learning opportunities that cover the 6 Areas of Learning and Experience:

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

Expressive Arts

Through expressive arts our learners are encouraged to develop their skills in five disciplines: **art, dance, drama, film and digital media and music**. They are given rich opportunities to explore, refine and communicate their ideas through a wide range of multi-sensory approaches. Expressive arts provide inspiration and motivation to bring learners into contact with the creative processes, performances and the productions of others.

Health and Wellbeing

Learners at Penmaes need to experience social, emotional and physical wellbeing to thrive and engage in their learning. The health and wellbeing AoLE helps them to build the knowledge, understanding and skills that supports the development of positive and appropriate relationships, deal with some of the issues and decisions they face and wherever possible, equip them with the skills to live independently.

Humanities

At Penmaes humanities provides exciting contexts for our learners to learn about people, places, time and beliefs. It helps them to understand historical, geographical, political and economic and societal factors. Learners have access to opportunities to learn about ethics, beliefs, religion and spirituality.

Religious Education sits within humanities as well as history, geography and social studies.

Languages Literacy and Communication

Language is the essence of thinking and is integral to effective communication, learning, reflection and creativity. This AoLE provides the building blocks for different forms of communication, literacy and learning about language.

Being able to listen and speak or use non-verbal communication effectively are crucial attributes in learning and beyond. Developing the skills to express ideas through speech and augmentative methods is of central importance to both thinking and learning.

At Penmaes, Languages Literacy and Communication develops learners' communication skills and includes the effective use of digital technologies. Wherever possible, any pupil with Welsh as their first language will have access to a Welsh speaking member of staff.

Mathematics and Numeracy

Mathematics and Numeracy is concerned with developing a good understanding of mathematical concepts and the confidence to use and apply numerical skills in everyday life. It includes experiences that enable our learners to develop their broader numeracy and money skills by exploring relationships in quantities, space and data, and to apply them to real life situations where possible.

Science and Technology

Science and Technology are closely linked. Science involves acquiring knowledge through experimentation and observation and technology applies scientific knowledge in practical ways. Science and Technology develops learners' curiosity about the natural and physical world through investigating and understanding.

Learners at Penmaes also have opportunities to learn how to design and make things, as well as developing their skills using digital technology.

Cross-curriculum Links

All staff are responsible for developing learners skills in Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence.

The LNF and Digital Competence Framework (DCF) are curriculum guidance tools to support teachers in embedding literacy, numeracy and digital competence into their teaching and across all AoLEs. The LNF and DCF provide guidance on the skills learners are expected to develop over time.

Routes for Learning (RfL) identifies progression steps along a route map for learners with severe and complex learning needs who are working at the earliest stages of development.

The Curriculum

At Penmaes all planning is progression based and is aligned with the 6 AoLEs as well as inclusive of the Four Purposes and What Matters Statements.

Although the Penmaes curriculum is set out in phases with an approximate age as a guide, all learners at Penmaes, regardless of their age range, work at a level appropriate to their developmental needs as opposed to their age.

Our 3-7 year old learners use CfW and the Developmental Pathways which focus on rich experiential, investigative and directed play activities which are thematic in their approach. Staff are highly skilled in the way in which they achieve the appropriate balance between self-exploration and more adult led activities. Staff at Penmaes challenge learners to reach their potential and encourage all of them to access opportunities for independent learning. Penmaes pupil centered approaches allow learners to develop their independence and make progress in line with their needs and abilities.

At Penmaes 8-13 year olds follow the curriculum for Wales 2022 which involves progression planning in accordance with an identified key concept. Clear links are made to What Matters Statements, 4 purposes as well as skills, knowledge and experiences.

The curriculum for 14-19 year olds follows WJEC Pathways for some AoLE's along with ASDAN qualifications.

- WJEC Pathways- Entry 1,2, 3 and Level 1
- ASDAN- Transition Challenge, Towards Independence and Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.
- ASDAN Careers- Work Awareness and Employability Modules
- Duke of Edinburgh Award- Bronze, Silver and Gold (the level offered is dependent on the cohorts of learners)

14-19 year olds at Penmaes get access to impartial careers advice and guidance and this takes place virtually as well as face to face.

14-19 years olds complete suitable Literacy and Numeracy WJEC Pathway qualifications and or units. Penmaes has gone through a review of accreditations and therefore WJEC is very early in its infancy. Learners from year 10 and above have the opportunity to choose options which they carry out three times a week.

Penmaes has a commitment to encouraging all learners to achieve their potential so they are better equipped for adult life.

Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

IDPs have replaced Statements of Special Educational Needs for many learners in accordance with the mandated year groups. IDP's will outline meaningful learning intentions as well as the Additional Learning Provision (ALP) required. Where applicable some learners will have learning intentions and ALP linked to Speech and Language Therapy and Physiotherapy programmes.

Individual Support Plans (ISPs)

All learners at Penmaes have an ISP or an ISP+ which provides information on what is important to the pupil, how best to support them, any challenging behaviours and strategies on how best to deal with these. These plans also include information on Team Teach physical intervention techniques that may need to be used with individual learners. ISPs follow a graduated approach depending on behaviours and these are reviewed three times a year or sooner if required by the behaviour lead for the school who then liaises with relevant staff and professionals.

Further details about ISPs can be found in the school's behaviour policy.

Equal Opportunities

Characteristics including age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation places a duty on schools towards present and prospective learners to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote positive attitudes and equal opportunities.

Penmaes uses approaches that support ethnic and cultural identities of all learners and reflects a range of perspectives, to engage learners and to prepare them for life as ethically informed citizens.

Assessing, progression and recording

At Penmaes school assessing and progression procedures allow staff to:

- monitor learners' individual progress in order to support next steps;
- ensure consistency in terms of progression outcomes;
- recognise and celebrate learners' achievements;
- inform parents/carers, governors and the wider community about learners' achievements;
- comply with statutory regulations.

Recording and reporting systems at Penmaes ensure that we comply with all statutory guidance and also demonstrate learners' progress and achievements over time. In line with the CfW Penmaes has moved away from assessing against set criteria and now reports on individual learner progression and what they actually can do that is relevant to their individual needs. This again is in its early infancy and will continue to be developed and refined through collaborative practices.

Penmaes processes ensure that staff:

- make effective use of learners' records to review progress;
- set challenging next steps in learning ensuring sequential learning takes place;
- have relevant information to share with parents/carers at parents' afternoon/evening;
- inform termly learning journey e-portfolios.

The records Penmaes keep include:

- Routes for Learning assessments where applicable
- Learning journey e-portfolios
- Accreditations for learners 14-19
- IDPs and ISPs
- Records of learner progress e.g. tracking documents
- Progression planning based on a key concept
- Statutory IDP reports
- Weekly celebration assembly certificates
- Attendance records
- External agency reports
- termly achievement cups and nomination certificates
- learners' work
- photographs and video evidence
- teacher observations
- behaviour log reports- CPOMS
- parent/carer comments
- Class Dojo reports and messages
- School visits with the School Improvement Adviser (SIA)

Our learner progression reports to parents are aligned with the New Curriculum for Wales 2022 and staff report under the 6 AoLE headings as well as recording progress in learners' chosen option groups. Learning journey e-portfolios provide information on pupil progress, achievements and personal successes as well as identifying next steps. In the summer term of each academic year they also contain learners' own evaluations and photographs. As learners progress through the school, the previous years' work is kept in order to show evidence of progress and to support the academic transition to the next class.

In all classes where it is applicable learners have responsibility for marking their own work to evaluate their own progress and success. Teachers mark learners' work against the learning intention/outcome as well as noting the level of support required. Self- and peer assessment procedures are in the process of being reviewed and updated.

Full details of our assessing, recording and reporting arrangements can be found in the ARR policy.

Planning

Staff at Penmaes collaboratively plan for progression in AoLE groups (Appendix 2) according to an identified key concept. This is a newly introduced way of planning and therefore is an on-going process. Progression plans last for a term. Class teachers and HLTAs then differentiate further if required so that it is suitable for the individual needs of all learners in their classes.

Through the planning process staff reference the 'what matters' and '4 purposes' statements from the New Curriculum for Wales 2022 against learning intentions outlined. Learning intentions are outlined on planning and are highlighted on learners' work. Assessment for, and of, learning opportunities are currently under review and are being developed within school and the cluster.

All planning can be found on the shared progression planning drive on Google <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Bvq4gCrVhByEN55nmyyJ6AyXByG-90sz>

Learners are also involved in leading learning as they are provided with a termly opportunity to decide on a theme for a project week. This then develops over the space of the week with every learner having an opportunity to learn about something related to the chosen project.

Teaching and Learning

At Penmaes, school staff believe that learners learn most effectively when there is a stimulating, friendly and safe learning environment. Intrinsic to this are high expectations, consistency and praise combined with clear and shared learning goals.

At Penmaes learners are guided and taught behaviour that enables them to be ready to learn. Behaviour strategies are designed to promote positive attitudes and relationships ensuring that learners are respected and actively involved in self managing their feelings and behaviours, wherever possible.

In order to develop excellent teaching and learning staff are expected to:

- know learners' individual needs and abilities, based upon detailed assessment procedures;
- have relevant subject knowledge and skills;
- have excellent classroom management which includes consistent behaviour management strategies;
- know what social and psychological factors affect learners' learning;
- have a wide range of practical and well established strategies to engage and motivate learners;
- develop learners' independence, social and communication skills through learning experiences, both within and outside the classroom;
- listen to learners and build positive relationships based on individual rewards;
- use a total communication approach personalised to individuals needs;
- share and develop learning goals with learners, parent/carers and any other professionals involved;
- Communicate with parents/carers working in partnership to achieve shared targets.
- Work collaboratively across the school and with other professionals in order to be reflective practitioners.

Whole school leadership at Penmaes supports staff to develop highly effective classroom practices to ensure all learners achieve and make progress in line with their abilities, age and learning needs.

Effective leadership at Penmaes demonstrates:

- respect and a shared vision with staff;
- development of reflective practice;
- effective and collaborative working relationships;
- recognition of pupil and staff achievements;
- effective succession planning

All staff at Penmaes work collaboratively to ensure all learners have access to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum. Our curriculum meets all individual needs and abilities and through the learning experiences provided, all learners can make progress.

At Penmaes we ensure that all learners have access to teaching and learning opportunities which are of a consistently high standard by:

- ensuring excellent teaching through the provision of highly trained staff and high quality resources;
- ensuring excellence through an appropriately differentiated curriculum, IDPs and careful delivery of individual programmes from other agencies;
- providing a variety of situations for learners through which they can practice, develop and refine skills acquired;
- using formative and summative assessments purposefully, giving accurate feedback to learners and parents/carers;
- working closely with parents/carers and external agencies to achieve consistent approaches.

Definitions

Excellent learning is demonstrated when learners:


- are motivated, interested and are keen to participate in their learning;
- behave positively and respect others;
- make consistent progress in line with their abilities and learning needs;
- where applicable and appropriate can plan, review and achieve their targets;
- where applicable and appropriate can apply their learning in a variety of situations;
- where applicable and dependent on needs and abilities, understand what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.

Key principles of excellent teaching include:

- staff maintaining a consistent focus on the overall progress of the curriculum;
- staff having excellent subject knowledge as well as thorough knowledge of abilities and needs of each individual pupil;
- a relevant context for learning which encourages all learners to connect;
- using an extensive range of activities, strategies and resources to engage learners;
- maintaining a focus on the development of LNF and DCF skills;
- promoting and developing the what matters and 4 purposes throughout all aspects of learning and development;
- Providing challenge for all, whilst encouraging the development of problem-solving, creative and thinking skills;
- effective planning processes and shared learning objectives;
- the development of excellent working relationships with all stakeholders;
- involvement of learners, where possible and appropriate in planning, delivery and evaluation of themes and lessons;
- using accurate formative and summative assessment of learners achievements to inform and improve teaching and learning;
- effective multi-agency working with a person centered approach.

14-19 Internal verification and external quality assurance

Teachers and staff who lead with external qualifications record, collate and cross-reference evidence of each pupil's progress against stated criteria, using specified proformas. This evidence is presented for internal and external quality assurance.



Internal standardisation takes place as outlined on the Quality Assurance calendar whereby staff meet to ensure the assessing of work is consistent and unbiased. Staff provide relevant feedback and where necessary, outline any action points to address.

External quality assurance verifies that the necessary processes, resources and staffing are in place to effectively manage and support the valid award of accredited units.

Pupil Involvement:

Penmaes learners are involved in all aspects of school life from supporting whole school improvements to showing visitors around the school. learners have first hand learning opportunities from the moment they enter the school, some of these opportunities involve:

- Helpwr Heddiw roles
- pupil senior leadership roles
- involvement in interviews
- school council input
- Criw Cymraeg
- UNCRPD Pilot working
- Regular SER activities
- Eco-Schools

The above roles provide opportunities for the development of pupil independence skills.

Learners are also involved in contributing to their ISPs where appropriate and do so with the support of staff. Pupil voice is at the forefront of school life at Penmaes and is very much celebrated.

Person Centered Planning:

Person Centered Planning is embedded into everything we do at Penmaes. We actively follow the principles of PCP where we listen and learn about what is important to and for each pupil; both now and in the future.

IDP reviews previously referred to as Annual Statement reviews are continually developing in line with the ALN/ALNET transformation at Penmaes and allow us to explore what is happening from the learners' perspective and from the perspective of others at the review meeting. Each learner or teacher attending the review shows the learning journey e-portfolio during the review or completes a questionnaire as this ensures their voice is heard..

Roles and Responsibilities:

All aspects of planning, which includes thematic plans, developing IDPs, ISPs etc. are seen as collective responsibilities which take full account of staff skills, expertise and subject knowledge and experience.

Class teachers, working with their class teams, are responsible for all aspects of planning within their class following whole school collaborative planning. The TLR holder may provide support to staff should the need arise.

All teachers have been assigned to, where applicable, an AoLE based upon their subject knowledge and skills set. Full details of these teams can be identified in appendix 3

Leaders of AoLE (TLR holders and class teachers) are responsible for:

- developing, implementing and evaluating the impact of policies, particularly those that cover their AoLE;
- Developing an AoLE plan in collaboration with other members of the AoLE term outlining targets, timescales, resources, funding including a termly evaluation outlining any progress and any areas for development.
- helping to develop, support and challenge staff;
- developing relevant guidelines/resources etc. to support curriculum implementation, with particular reference to the skills learners need to require in that specific AoLE;
- working collaboratively to develop and maintain e-portfolios of work which show learners' work and achievements in their AoLE;
- supporting relevant groups or professional networks where applicable to support curriculum review and development.

TLR Holders are responsible for:

- working collaboratively with staff in their departments to ensure high quality teaching and learning;
- developing plans for grant expenditure linked to AoLEs and where appropriate within their departments ensuring value for money and impact measuring.
- providing first hand evidence for the self-evaluation report and ensuring that future developments for their departments are included in the school improvement plan;
- working with other senior leaders to monitor and evaluate the delivery of the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning throughout their department.

Senior leaders (Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher) are responsible for:

- the overall quality of teaching and learning across the school;
- whole school accountability;
- ensuring the self-evaluation report is accurate, based on a solid evidence base and any areas requiring improvement are carried forward to the school improvement plan;
- ensuring realistic budgets support areas requiring further improvement.

Self-evaluation and school improvement planning:

At Penmaes we have well-established procedures that support our whole school self-evaluation and planning. Self-evaluation systems are effective and take into account the views of many stakeholders; these include: learners, parents/carers, staff, governors, as well as external agencies in health and social services.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as detailed in the school's policy review cycle. It may also be necessary to review and amend it sooner to reflect both local and national changes.



Appendix 1

Link to learning journey e-portfolio template:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/11bH0eUnuA6vr3j1pNDLnZRsunKoKdMr2E1JB9phE8M/edit#slide=id.p>

Appendix 2

Link to an example of Progression Planning:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YelraRAvjRU9cb3dTPB1XrMMvVW_9f-S/edit

Appendix 3

AoLE Teams Link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iz9X84K74Yq3pDfOMzFkG-gjr-gqzRqrgLmoDYQz7eA/editn>