




Ysgol Penmaes

A Whole School Thrive 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		8.2.23
Chair of Governors: Clancy Brett		8.2.23
Next review date: February 2024		



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.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to outline the Thrive approach which is being utilised at Ysgol Penmaes and to ensure that it is applied consistently. We believe that children have the right to understand, regulate and manage emotions, to apply thinking between feeling (sensation and emotion) and action, and to increasingly show empathy and understanding to others. This is core to our learning.

We seek to provide opportunities for pupils to experience challenges, succeed in their learning and have a sense that learning can be fun and relevant to their lives; to become independent, self-aware learners – socially, emotionally and academically, to be enthusiastic and foster a willingness to take risks.

From the earliest opportunity pupils will be encouraged to build tolerance, make good choices and take responsibility, in readiness for them taking their place in society.

Through providing positive experiences pupils gain a sense of pride, they build self-awareness through planned and incidental social and emotional learning; this is intrinsic to the ethos of our school.

What is Thrive?

- A dynamic developmental approach to working with all children; although the Thrive approach is based on the Science of working with children with developmental trauma. The programme provides physical strategies to address children's emotional needs.
- Is an approach based on relationships with caring, consistent adults
- Finds the earliest missing experience and fills the gaps in the developmental stages
- Recognises that if children do not get experiences positively they will seek them negatively

The Development of the brain

Thrive identifies 6 developmental building blocks of healthy brain development:

- **Being 0 – 6 months**
- **Doing 6 – 18 months**
- **Thinking 18 months – 3 years**
- **Power and Identity 3 – 7 years**
- **Skills and Structure 7 – 11 years**
- **Separation and Sexuality 11 – 18 years**

For pupils who are operating within the:

- **Being** stage of development, the key foci are: being safe; having needs met and being

special. The adult takes the role of co-regulator/container, providing a positive experience of dependency and mediating the child's experience of the world.

- **Doing** stage of development, the key foci are: exploring and experimenting, experiencing and learning about options and engaging and doing. The adult takes the role of co-adventurer, inviting the child into sensory exploration. Accompanying the child in seeking and exploring and ensuring safe boundaries for physical play.
- **Thinking** stage of development, the key foci are: expressing a view, learning about cause and effect and thinking about feelings and problem solving. The adult takes the role of co-creator of meaning. Naming and creating opportunities for the safe expression of feelings. Lending their adult thinking brain to help the child develop language and make sense of what is happening.
- **Power and Identity** stage of development the key foci are: Developing an identity, distinguishing between fantasy from reality and exploring power with responsibility. The adult's role is to facilitate the child's individuality. Helping the child to learn responsibility for their behaviour and to distinguish between fantasy and reality. Role modelling how to use power in relationships.
- **Skills and Structure** stage of development the key foci are: Motivation for developing skills, developing morals and values and understanding the need for rules. The adult's role is encouraging and supporting the extension of skills. Introducing the child to diverse experiences and people. Acting as a role model for the exploration of values.
- **Separation and Sexuality** stage of development the key foci are: Establishing independence, connecting with peers and exploring identity and gender. The adult's role is to provide a secure base for the child to leave and return to so the child learns responsibility for self, independence, and to explore their sexuality safely. Providing a resource for information, values and support. Setting clear values and boundaries for the child to test themselves against.

The Vital Relational Functions (VRFs)

In all interactions with pupils, staff endeavour to use the VRFs outlined in the Thrive Approach. These are drawn from the teachings and findings of leading commentators on emotional, psychological and child development (Sunderland, Kohut, Stern). These skills provide a relational basis for a child's emotional, social and neurological development.

They are:

- **Attunement** – demonstrating an understanding of how they are feeling by “catching and matching” their emotional state.
- **Validation** – demonstrating that their feelings are real and justified.
- **Containment** – Offering their feelings back to them, named and in small pieces.
- **Soothing** – Soothing and calming their distress repeatedly.
- **Regulation** – Communicating the capacity to regulate emotional states by modelling how to do it.

The relationship between a child and a significant adult can be an under-recognised and under-used resource so, by using Thrive, this relationship is enhanced. It can help a child get ready to learn and enhance their learning, build positive relationships between a child and their peers and it can improve attainment.

Purpose


Our purpose at Ysgol Penmaes is to provide a secure caring place of trust and stability, giving all children the necessary support and guidance for their social and emotional development.

Implementation and Impact

See our behaviour procedures, in our Behaviour Policy and our Safe Touch Policy.

Approaches to developing positive behaviours:-

- High quality, differentiated education which involves pupils, builds on success, ensures progression and involves and informs parents;
- For social, emotional and academic learning to be recognised, planned for and with explicit descriptive feedback across the day, within the classroom and during transitions and at play times;
- For whole class and individual THRIVE screenings and online tools to enable a strategic response to individual, group and cohort development, and therefore plan next steps.
- Personalised interventions will be used as rich opportunities which are part of all areas of school life and learning;
- To encourage pupils to recognise sensations and therefore emotions, to manage their feelings by separating feelings and actions and allowing opportunities for thinking to take place between the two;
- For pupils to become increasingly self-aware, taking responsibility for themselves and their actions in cognitively appropriate ways;
- Where need is identified for structured, tailored group and individual programmes, creative activities and outdoor learning to be incorporated into action plans;
- Any individual plan of action is agreed and shared in a working partnership with parents and carers;
- The way we reinforce positive behaviour choices to be based on our positive, clear and consistent responses within boundaries that offer safe containment*;
- Supporting pupils appropriately may require adults to develop and employ new skills;
- Pupils need to know explicitly what behaviour is expected in different circumstances;
- The consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour choices to be agreed and known to all involved.
- Individual Support Plans (ISP) for individuals can support this;
- Adults to be observant, open and inclusive, act as role models, particularly in how respect is shown, and to be co-regulators as needed;
- Reward positive behaviour, identify inappropriate behaviour and set achievable targets for development;
- THRIVE is a dynamic, developmental approach to working with pupils that supports their emotional and social wellbeing. It is based on the latest research in neuroscience, attachment theory and child development, drawing on research into the role of creativity and play in developing emotional resilience.
- Knowledge of the social and emotional learning that takes place age/cognitively



appropriately supports the school in planning experiences, activities and opportunities to underpin each one.

- It reinforces our understanding that learning happens across the whole day, especially in break times and playtimes where there are less structured interactions and experiences. This enables pupils to develop their social and emotional learning and apply skills that are vital for healthy development.
- Life events can introduce episodes which become interruptions in some pupils' development.
- The Thrive programme supports staff in creating a differentiated provision in response to need with reparative strategies as part of systematic, carefully planned actions.
- Thrive is timetabled for a specific afternoon a week as well as being incidentally embedded.
- Action plans will be reviewed in line with the annual school quality assurance calendar.
- Our THRIVE base is to support the THRIVE provision facilitating and offering supportive programmes for pupils in a variety of ways across the school day. So that they can feel safe, kind and as happy as they can be.

*In the Thrive Approach, Containment means 'offering their feelings back to them, named/labelled and in small pieces.'