



**Amberleigh Therapeutic School,  
Golfa Hall, Welshpool  
Curriculum Policy  
Jan 2023**

# **Amberleigh Residential Therapeutic School**

## **Curriculum Policy**

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## **Context - Amberleigh Care, Golfa Hall, Welshpool**

Golfa Hall is our specialist outcome driven residential care, education and therapeutic service for looked after young boys. Based in Welshpool, Powys. Golfa Hall is a centre of excellence for young boys aged 11-18 who exhibit sexually harmful or inappropriate behaviour and who may have been subject to abuse and/or neglect, from all ethnic and social groups, including the most able and those who are experiencing learning difficulties. Full-time education is provided for up to 20 boys aged 11-18 at Golfa School.

### **Curriculum Overview**

Golfa Hall School aims to have a positive ethos based on the principles of a therapeutic community where respect and trust is based on open, shared values; staff act as positive role models and encourage supportive relationships where children feel safe and secure, listened to and are involved in decision making. This is in a culture of high expectations and aspiration for learning and behaviour.

The 'Age not Stage' three tier curriculum is routed firmly in the 'Welsh Curriculum' taking into consideration its four purposes of 1. Ambitious capable learners 2. Enterprising, creative contributors 3. Ethical, informed citizens 4. Healthy, confident individuals. Within this we have considered and applied the national policy of subject specific 'statements of what matters', 'principles of progression' and the 'descriptions of learning' and integral steps/stages into our curriculum and assessment policies. Tracking, monitoring and evaluation of attainment progress is evidence based on pupils starting points using the CAT data gathered on entry.

All children/young people have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. The curriculum at Golfa Hall School is based firmly within the National Curriculum for Wales but is modified appropriately to meet the specific educational and personal developmental needs of all its pupils in an independent manner. The curriculum at Golfa Hall School recognises that pupils are admitted to the school, aged often in the later stages of the KS3 timeline or in the middle of KS4 (13 -15,16) which is especially disruptive to KS4 studies and examination process in terms of curriculum delivery. Pupils are resident until they are eighteen both at the home and the school. The majority of these pupils have adverse childhood experiences (ACES) along with the associated trauma and further disassociations - many if not all are therefore hyper vigilant and struggle to regulate emotionally. All or most have missed meaningful engagement in their experience and their engagement in the process of teaching and learning in any positive and meaningful manner in the past - preventing

a meaningful and positive education from having been able to take place. Nearly all have significant gaps in learning and historical poor attendance.

Pupils are baseline tested on arrival at Golfa Hall School for English and Maths ability via a cognitive ability test which is recorded and viewed as standardised scores. These baseline standardised scores enable each pupil to be then placed in their appropriate learning group where all teaching and learning is differentiated appropriately and accessed via a KS2/3, KS3 or a KS3/4 based curriculum.

A **stage not age** based approach to the curriculum is taken by Amberleigh Therapeutic School, Golfa Hall. Each pupil's attainment and progress is targeted and informed by standardised baseline score data. It is expected that each pupil makes at least two sub levels of progress over each and subsequent academic year within a two year framed curriculum.

Where appropriate to the pupil's stage and ability English and Maths are given priority to achieve a functional skills qualification level or and GCSE. Where appropriate for learners this could start with a competency based or entry level and progressing to level one and then level two functional skills qualifications. F/S level two Science, PSHE, the humanities, the creative arts form the main curriculum. Running in tandem is a vocationally driven curriculum offering Catering and Hospitality, Horticulture and Retail and Arts & Crafts. These are available up to level three where this is an appropriate target for the pupil in terms of ability and time frames.

The 'Stage not Age' approach to the curriculum is currently structured on a third of all pupils falling within the low to very low of the ability and attainment range and undertaking 'Entry' level qualifications. The remaining cohort falling between the low to middle attainment ability range and the higher range. Where these pupils have the potential to achieve the equivalent of 5 GCSE's in a functional skills format they are offered levels one, two and three qualifications and is also dependent on their situation/time remaining. Suitability for which qualification path is directed is governed by their baseline data and their attainment target for each subject, decisions may also be based in light of therapeutic issues and the time left before they reach 18.

The curriculum at Golfa Hall School is divided into three separate 'stage' based areas known as the Golfa Stages these are 'Golfa Stage 1' equivalent to KS1/2, 'Golfa Stage 2' equivalent to KS3 and 'Golfa Stage 3' where pupils can consolidate the knowledge base of KS3 and undertake more formal based qualifications.

Literacy, numeracy and nurture intervention is given a high priority where lagging skills are boosted through daily 'focused' catch up time allocated for all pupils. Alongside 1:1 intervention where the need is identified. Reading for enjoyment is a valued part of the culture of Golfa Hall in which pupils are encouraged to engage with in and out of school. For those pupils which have a strong SEMH profile and

struggle with regulation of their emotions, attachment difficulties an individually tailored nurture intervention strategy is put in place – This is delivered through the vocational curriculum and the running of the schools social enterprise business ‘Golfa Hall Preserves and Home’.

The vocational based element to our curriculum has been developed which revolves Catering and Hospitality, Horticulture and Retail - The growing and making of artisan based products for sale or retail through our ‘Golfa Hall Preserves and Home’ social enterprise allows us to offer a real world experience and skills building tool for pupils which has a large impact (especially post18), alongside enabling internal work experience placements. Attainment and progression is assessed through a curriculum which teaches and assesses initially in a competency format in the areas studied leading to a level 1 and 2 and possibly level three Functional Skills qualifications. These courses and curriculum are closely linked to the Gatsby initiative. Placing a great emphasise on the developing pupils knowledge and understanding of employment or and work. We also place a strong emphasis of community links with business large and small in the local area. The aim being to encourage and develop all pupil’s self-worth, esteem and confidence within the context of being able to play a full and valid role in society and be supported to have the skills to be independent within it – Meaning they will be able to successfully gain employment through these developed skills with confidence in society and be literate and numerate.

The curriculum is also designed to deliver a focus and intent around pupils being aware of and able to develop and build on their ‘Determination, Resilience, Creativity and Imagination’, alongside of promoting ‘Ambitious, Confident and Reflective’ individual learners. The skills gained being able to be developed throughout life as ‘Lifelong Learners’. The arts are given a high regard and encouraged and enabled to a high degree provided for through a creative studies program.

Golfa Hall School places a high value on all forms of achievement and inclusion which is reflected in the wearing of school uniform and high expectations for classroom work and behaviour. The curriculum at Golfa Hall is all-encompassing and encourages pupils to develop skills and interests in lifelong learning. We believe in helping pupils develop and achieve their potential by broadening their experiences and development of capabilities and skills. All pupils are encouraged to:

- Enjoy learning
- Become confident individuals who are proud of their identity and able to make healthy life choices
- Responsible citizens who get on well with others and engage with their community

## **Curriculum Aims**

Golfa Hall School aims to be a Therapeutic community-based teaching and learning environment immersed in the principles of and the wider therapeutic community of Golfa Hall – The pedagogy being developed applying the principles of epistemic trust and PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy). The focus is to identify and direct pupils on their own appropriate learning pathway formed via an understanding of the pupil's adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and associated trauma and further disassociation. This is done through a mix of traditional curriculum subjects, literacy and numeracy interventions and a vocational element to the curriculum which offers all pupils the opportunity to build 'soft skills' offered in a range of areas (horticulture, catering, manufacturing and retail) which will enable them to confidently find a place as part of the working economy successfully.

The therapeutic aspect will build on their knowledge, skills and personal qualities to help individuals develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and aesthetically, so they may become independent, responsible, confident and considerate members of the community. Further enabling pupils to become fully contributing members of society.

Golfa Hall School will:

- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- Ensure that each pupil's education has continuity and progression in order to appropriately meet the learning needs of each pupil
- Be nurturing of pupils' talents and skills
- Provide active and experiential learning opportunities
- Recognise the difficulties pupils may have faced prior to admission to Amberleigh
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum with high expectations for pupils
- Treat pupils in a dignified way

Through the curriculum, Golfa Hall School aims for pupils to:

- Develop and improve lagging literacy and numeracy skills
- 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, well balanced and healthy
- Be enthusiastic and eager to put their best into all activities

- Acquire a set of moral values, such as honesty, sincerity, personal responsibility, on which to base their own behaviour
- Be expected to behave in a dignified and acceptable way and learn to become responsible for their actions
- Care for and take pride in their school
- Develop tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others in an unbiased way
- Develop non-sexist and non-racist attitudes
- Know how to think and solve problems mathematically 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 be able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately through speech and writing for a variety of purposes
- Develop an enquiring mind and scientific approach to problems
- Have an opportunity to solve problems using technological skills
- Be capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/craft, music, drama and be acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their innovative skills and creativity
- Know about geographical, historical and social aspects of the local 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 different cultures and the beliefs of the 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

## **Curriculum Content**

Golfa Hall School has a curriculum which is based firmly upon the National Curriculum of Wales. However, it is recognised that, because of the specific criteria attached to pupil admission to the school. For some pupils their alternative learning needs may be recognised in, and directed by, their Statements of SEN/EHCP as well as the effects of their adverse childhood experiences, trauma and the associated behaviours, subsequent generated lagging skills and delayed development.

**Academic Subjects delivered include:**

English

Mathematics,

Science,

ICT (embedded within all other subjects where possible),

Catering,

Humanities,

Design and Technology,

Physical Education,

PSHE and Ethics

**Vocational Subjects delivered include:**

Catering and Hospitality

Retail, Enterprise and Business Studies with:

- Horticulture
- Arts and Crafts

in addition to these areas pupils are able to build vocational skills in farming/animal care and the growing of crops, catering and manufacturing through a retail based lens and in some circumstances work experience. This will enable all pupils to have skills and experience in order to compete and increase chances of gaining successful employment at a later date.

The curriculum is divided into three Golfa stages (1,2 and 3) which allows for all pupil's attainment needs and progress to be appropriately met according to their 'stage not age'. These stages are designed to develop and build upon all pupil's skills, knowledge and understanding, and positively impact attitudes to learning that extend beyond the classroom and contribute to the whole life and ethos of the pupil and the school and wider therapeutic community.

Golfa Hall School has embraced a careers programme which includes both classroom taught and work experience components, is an integral part of the curriculum, and is augmented by the use of the 'Gatsby Careers Initiative'. Pupils are encouraged and supported to participate in voluntary work experience, particularly with local charitable organisations. The pupils' wider developmental needs are additionally catered for by an extra-curricular programme which includes physical activities, off-site visits, visiting speakers and whole school activities e.g. end of year



school plays, sports day, football tournaments. *Currently the Covid 19 pandemic has negatively impacted upon this element of the curriculum.*

All programmes delivered at Key Stage 4 are to Functional Skills Level 1,2 or 3, NCFE. In some cases, where appropriate pupils cognitive and emotional stage and whose age/time allows may be able to study for full GCSE's in English, Maths, Science, Geography and Art. In all cases the aim is for pupils to achieve their potential and gain a range of qualifications appropriate to their level of ability. The range of accreditation available enables outcomes to more closely match the actual performance of pupils with a range of quite specific learning and personal developmental needs. Progression at eighteen is matched to the appropriate college or employment pathway and is facilitated with close communication with the pupil's relevant local authority – Links formed and planning begun at an early stage where ever they may be based in the country to ensure successful transition.

The curriculum is delivered within a time-table of full time education, with pupils attending school for 25 hours each week for 190 days a year. The week is made up of daily tutor time (15 minutes) followed by Literacy and numeracy intervention twice daily at school start and immediately after lunch and prior to lessons. Pupils are taught in small groups for core subjects and larger groups for Social Communication, creative subjects of Performing Arts and Music. Life skills and additional learning support is given on both an extraction (1-1) basis, intervention sessions, as well as within the group itself. Additionally, on four weekdays the school day ends with a community meeting.

### **Attainment, Assessment and Monitoring**

Pupil attainment progress is tracked, assessed and monitored by all teaching staff and shared through discussions at whole school staff meetings regularly and is stored and available via Ambertrack. All pupils are baseline standardised score assessed on admission – This score is transposed to a corresponding curriculum level and from there targeted and monitored throughout their time at Golfa Hall School. Each subject area will focus assess each pupil twice in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. In turn each pupil is RAG rated as part of the monitoring process to enable timely intervention.

Long Term, Medium Term Planning and Schemes of Work for each subject is mapped and developed on an ongoing basis for each subject area for each Golfa Stage is established.

Termly meetings are held where teaching staff, house link workers and pupils meet to discuss progress within their Golfa PCPs, (IDP's from Sept 2021) and to view some of the work pupils have completed over the academic year.

### **Therapeutic Community Meetings**

Therapeutic Community Meetings are central to community life, they involve all members of the community (young people and staff) coming together on a regular basis. It provides the forum for any democratic decision making to occur, the opportunity to reflect on recent events in the community, and it enables members to give and receive feedback and to explore the dynamics present within the milieu at any time. Community meetings also allow the opportunity for staff to model appropriate interactions, empathy and perspective taking. This can enhance the development of these skills in young people. They can also aid the development of healthy attachments with both staff and peers.

### **Good Lives Model**

At Golfa Hall School we apply evidence based frameworks to inform our practice. Our approach to understanding and responding to Harmful Sexual Behaviour is the Good Lives Model (GLM). The GLM is a strengths based model of intervention based on the principles of positive psychology. The Good Lives Model conceptualises that individuals are predisposed to seek a number of 'primary goods' (needs) which if achieved will increase their wellbeing. Primary goods are obtained by various means that are referred to as secondary 'goods'(means). For example, a primary good could be the sense of belonging and the secondary good is harmful sexual behaviour.

The GLM identifies the following range (11) of primary needs to be met. The assumption is that people are more likely to function well if they have access to these types of goods. However, when people lack the means or external support to achieve these types of goods they can use inappropriate means to ensure their needs are met. Our aim within this framework is to assist young people in gaining the skills, ability and support to meet their needs in a healthy and pro social way.

<b>Policy Reviewed By:</b>	<b><u>Signature</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
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