



# Polisi Cwricwlwm

## Curriculum Policy

September 2025

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Policy History		
Policy Date	Summary of Change	Review Date
01.09.2024	None – Initial Version	01.09.2025
01.09.2025	Reviewed  Formatting changes made  RARPA  Standardised planning – ALN, UNCRC  Digital Skills added to curriculum, Horticulture removed	01.09.2026

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Amberleigh Therapeutic 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 **purpose** of Amberleigh Therapeutic School is to educate all its pupils to the maximum of their potential. This means offering a curriculum that is fit for this purpose.

The pedagogy being developed applying the principles of epistemic trust and PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy). The focus 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 (Catering and Hospitality; Retail and Enterprise; Craft and Design) 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.

Our **aim** is to equip all pupils in Amberleigh Therapeutic school with the skills and values they need to prepare for the challenges and demands of our rapidly changing world.

Our school "**Stage not Age**" three tier curriculum is defined as everything our pupils experience in pursuit of the four purposes. It is not just what we teach but also how we teach it and importantly, why we teach it.

Our curriculum will:

- Enable all pupils to realise the four purposes and equip them for ongoing learning work and life.
- Build high expectations and enable all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Offer a broad and balanced education, which enables pupils to make links between the different areas of learning and experiences and apply their learning to new situations and to more complex issues.
- Support progression along a continuum of learning.
- Support our pupil's development of knowledge that is the foundation of being an informed citizen.

- Recognise our pupil's identity, language(s), ability and background and the different support they may need given their particular circumstances
- Reflect the diversity of perspectives, values and identities which shape our locality and Wales and develop understanding of the wider world.
- Enable our pupils to make sense of growing up in contemporary Wales and of issues which will be important in the future, including well-being, sustainable development and citizenship.
- Support our pupils to critically engage with a range of information and to assess its value and validity.
- enable our pupils to develop an understanding of their rights and the rights of others.
- Be built in co-construction with our stakeholders (carers/parents' / local authorities, the wider community)

The four purposes are the aspiration for all pupils in Wales. Our curriculum is designed so that all our pupils will be supported to develop as:

**ambitious, capable learners who:**

- set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge
- are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts
- are questioning and enjoy solving problems
- can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English
- can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about
- can use number effectively in different contexts
- understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts
- use digital technologies creatively to communicate, find and analyse information
- undertake research and evaluate critically what they find and are **ready to learn throughout their lives**

**enterprising, creative contributors who:**

- connect and apply their knowledge and skills to create ideas and products
- think creatively to reframe and solve problems
- identify and grasp opportunities
- take measured risks
- lead and play different roles in teams effectively and responsibly
- express ideas and emotions through different media
- give of their energy and skills so that other people will benefit and **are ready to play a full part in life and work**

**ethical, informed citizens who:**

- find, evaluate and use evidence in forming views
- engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values
- understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights
- understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting
- are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past
- respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society
- show their commitment to the sustainability of the planet and **are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world**

**healthy, confident individuals who:**

- have secure values and are establishing their spiritual and ethical beliefs
  - are building their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy
  - apply knowledge about the impact of diet and exercise on physical and mental health in their daily lives
  - know how to find the information and support to keep safe and well
  - take part in physical activity
  - take measured decisions about lifestyle and manage risk
  - have the confidence to participate in performance
  - form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect
  - face and overcome challenge
  - have the skills and knowledge to manage everyday life as independently as they can
- and are **ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.**

The four purposes are the starting point for all decisions around curriculum design our curriculum is planned in a way that supports our pupils to make progress toward them.

The four purposes are also underpinned by integral skills which will be developed through a wide range of teaching and learning within our curriculum.

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Personal effectiveness
- Planning and Organising

Our school curriculum is designed in a way that ensures learning and teaching that encompasses all six Areas of Learning and Experiences (Areas)

- **Expressive arts**
- **Health and well-being**
- **Humanities**

- **Languages, literacy and communication**
- **Mathematics and numeracy**
- **Science and technology**

All Areas have equal status within our curriculum.

**Subject offered include:**

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Humanities
- PSE
- Design Technology
- Catering and Hospitality
- Digital Skills
- Duke of Edinburgh – Bronze, Silver, Gold
- Drama
- Creative Studies
- Retail and Enterprise
- Physical Wellbeing

**Qualifications**

The school is an improved centre to deliver qualifications for:

- Agored Cymru
- NCFE
- WJEC
- Arts Awards
- Pearsons
- AQA
- Duke of Edinburgh Award

The school's Deputy Head teacher, Alison Adams is the Lead Internal Quality Aurer for the school and Rebecca Shennan our Exams Officer.

**Clubs offered include:**

- Welsh Club
- German Club
- Performing Arts Club
- Sports Club
- Horticulture Club
- Minecraft Club
- Workshop Club
- Homework Club

## **Relationships and sexuality education**

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) within our curriculum is planned using the RSE Code and is designed in a way that is developmentally appropriate, inclusive and pluralistic. There is a whole therapeutic community approach which involves close liaison with therapy and care during internal board reviews.

An overview of our RSE policy can be found on our website.

An overview of our RSE scheme of learning/provision map is available on request.

## **Cross-Curricular Skills**

We believe that the mandatory cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competence are essential for pupils to be able to access knowledge. They enable pupils to access the breadth of our curriculum, equipping them with the lifelong skills to realise the four purposes. These are skills that can be transferred to the world of work, enabling our pupils to adapt and thrive in the modern world.

Our curriculum is designed in a way that enables pupils to develop competence and capability in the cross-curricular skills and extend and apply them across all Areas.

Across our curriculum, pupils will be given a range of opportunities to:

- develop listening, reading, speaking and writing skills
- be able to use numbers and solve problems in real-life situations
- be confident users of a range of technologies to help them function and communicate effectively and make sense of the world

## **A curriculum accessible to all**

Through the design of our curriculum, we ensure it:

- is suitable for each pupil's stage, ability and aptitude
- takes account of each pupil's additional learning needs (ALN), if any
- secures broad and balanced learning and teaching for each pupil
- make arrangements for assessing the ability and aptitude of pupils in respect of the relevant curriculum, on entry to a school or setting, to identify the next steps in their progression and the learning and teaching needed to support that progress.

## **Descriptions of Learning**

At our school, we use the descriptions of learning as a planning tool to inform the wide range of knowledge, skills and experiences within our curriculum. Our curriculum also uses the descriptions of learning to inform planning for a range of

contexts for learning across a progression step to create depth and breadth across our curriculum.

The curriculum at Amberleigh Therapeutic 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 and disadvantaging to KS4 studies and examination process delivery. Pupils are resident until they are eighteen both at the home and the school. The majority of these pupils have experienced 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 engagement in teaching and learning, in a positive or meaningful manner – historically preventing a meaningful and positive education from having been able to take place. Nearly all have significant gaps in learning and historical poor attendance.

### **Starting points**

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, within core subject area. Vocational subject areas are tackled using a skill-based checklist method.

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 pupils this could start with a competency based or entry level and progressing to level one and then level two functional skills qualifications. Running in tandem is a vocationally driven curriculum offering Catering and Hospitality, Craft and Design and Retail. 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 Amberleigh Therapeutic 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.

The vocational based element to our curriculum has been developed which revolves Catering and Hospitality, craft and design 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 post 18), alongside enabling internal work experience placements.

#### **Work Experience Placements:**

- Bag Packing, Tesco's Welshpool
- Bag Packing, Morrisons Oswestry
- Retail Assistant, Hope House Charity Shop, Welshpool
- Catering Assistant, OsNosh Community Café, Oswestry
- Oswestry Farmers Market

Bespoke placements linked to the curriculum and pupils future aspirations are established with close liaison with the Careers Lead.

Amberleigh Therapeutic School 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.

Our curriculum places 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.

## **Progression**

Progression in learning is a process of increasing depth, sophistication, engagement and pupil control, rather than of covering a body of content. Progression is not linear and different pupils are likely to progress in markedly different ways. Progression is at the heart of our curriculum design.

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and plays a fundamental role in enabling our pupils to make progress. For assessment to be effective, we recognise that partnerships between our practitioners, our pupils and parents and carers are important.

Tracking, monitoring and evaluation of attainment progress is evidence based on pupils starting points using the CAT data gathered on entry.

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.

Literacy, Numeracy, Digital skills 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 Amberleigh Therapeutic School 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.

### **RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement)**

Amberleigh Therapeutic Schools recognises the importance in assessing the quality and level of achievement of its funded provision. It is important to know that pupils are progressing both personally and within the wider community context as a result of the learning they have invested in and also that our teachers are able to best support them. RARPA is a process which enables us to monitor achievement and progress within learning. We record the pupils journey on progress report whether this is in accredited learning or non accredited learning but the term RARPA is the primary term used relating to the process of recording within non-accredited learning programmes.

RARPA stands for Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement and is a staged approach to ensure that the pupil is at the centre of learning and the pupil's goals are recognised and count towards the success of their learning.

#### **This staged process has been designed to:**

- Focus on and promote the needs of pupils

- Take account of pupil' diverse and sometimes multiple purposes in learning;
- Encourage pupils to reflect on and recognise their own progress and achievement, thus increasing their confidence;
- Promote and support informed pupil self-assessment, peer assessment and dialogue about learning, achievement, and recognition of transferable skills between pupils and tutors/trainers;
- Enable both the achievement of planned learning objectives and learning outcomes not specified at the outset to be recognised and valued;
- Promote good practice in teaching, learning and assessment
- Enhance schools' quality assurance and improvement practices

**This staged approach consists of five elements; these are:**

**1. Aims:**

Have been developed using the following frameworks.

[Literacy Framework](#)

[Numeracy Framework](#)

[Digital Competence Framework](#)

[Boxall Profiles](#)

**2. Initial Assessments:**

To establish a pupil's starting point an initial assessment is completed either at a 1:1 induction or first-class lesson identifying their starting points by subject specific teacher, this is overseen by the trainee ALNCO. The initial assessment period is an ongoing process for the full first quarter of a term when a pupil joins the school. All staff contribute to discussions on progress and areas of need during staff meetings.

**3. Challenging Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

Identification of appropriate objectives for the pupil is an outcome of the assessment process. Depending on the length of the course appropriate medium term objectives may be devised that link well to the long term goals and recorded within the pupils progress report. These are reviewed and updated as appropriate throughout the pupils course. These targets will also help inform targeted interventions required for pupils which will be delivered by form tutors.

**4. Formative Assessment**

Recognition and recording of progress and achievement during the programme takes place for all pupils, through a range of methods. Teachers, pupils, care support and therapeutic staff record progress against medium term objectives. Pupils are supported to record achievements using the provided paperwork

**5. Summative Assessment**

End of programme review of overall progress and achievement. This may include recognition of learning outcomes discussion about 'next steps' for the

pupil. Transferable skills should be celebrated at the end of all courses to empower pupils.

## **Planning**

Standardised Long-Term, Medium-Term Planning and Schemes of Work which show due regard to the UNCRC, and pupils additional learning needs is mapped and developed on an ongoing basis for each subject area for each Golfa Stage. Teachers are responsible for designing a provision map for their subject areas.

Reflecting on a pupil's progress over time will enable our practitioners to provide feedback and plan their future learning, including any interventions, additional support or challenge that may be required. This feedback will include both immediate next steps and longer-term objectives and goals that the pupil should work towards to help keep them moving forward in their learning. This information will also be used as a basis for communicating and engaging with our parents and carers.

Termly meetings are held where teaching staff, house link workers and pupils meet to discuss progress within their Reviews of Learning and to view some of the work pupils have completed over the academic year.

## **Evaluation**

The school will regularly monitor the curriculum through a variety of working groups which include teachers, School improvement advisor, carers and Directors. Appropriate recommendations for change will be made to the Headteacher who will consult the Proprietor before implementing any changes through targets set in the school development plan. Evaluation of the curriculum will be measured against a range of indicators and monitoring activities.

These include:

- learning walks
- listening to pupils
- wall trawls
- work scrutiny with pupils
- whole school indicators
- examination results
- admissions
- destinations of school leavers
- departmental Reports
- Meetings of Directors and Senior Leadership Team
- Pupil surveys
- individual pupil indicators

## **The timetable**

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 Physical Wellbeing and on occasions DofE. First Concern Forms, IDP/EHCP's inform additional ALN interventions whether that be through 1:1 or small group sessions.

Please refer to the following documents for more details on interventions:

- ALN Policy
- Nurture Rationale
- Intervention Rationale

### **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.