



# Curriculum Policy

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Author	Sam Thomas
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## Welcome

Ysgol Y Rhos is an independent day school. It is part of the Unique Care Limited company, which has five pupils' homes locally. The school is registered with the Welsh Assembly Government for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Many of our pupils have a range of complex needs and benefit from a small environment with a bespoke curriculum. We are registered for 24 pupils, aged between 8 and 16 years.

Contact details for the school are;

Administration Office	education@we-are-unique.care	01352 770100
Headteacher -Sam Thomas	headteacher@we-are-unique.care	01352 770100

## Our Ethos

At Ysgol y Rhos we cater for both boys and girls in the age range of 8 to 16 years. We understand that many of the pupils who come to the school have had a turbulent and often disrupted past educational experience. Most have been to a number of schools, have been subject to exclusion, and struggle to maintain their learning in more mainstream settings; often subject to low self-esteem, low confidence in learning and a high level of disengagement from the education system. Further, the risks presented by their Adverse Childhood Experiences, and associated problematic and complex interpersonal skills development, have impaired their ability to be integrated into, and educated by, mainstream schools. Many of our learners come with a range of additional learning needs, some with Statements of Educational Needs (IDP) or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). At Ysgol Y Rhos we seek to offer a fresh start for all our pupils and work to provide an experience of education that is commensurate with each individual's needs and abilities. We support pupils to re-engage, to address gaps in their previous education and empower them to both participate in, and take responsibility for their education, and their future.

## Introduction

This policy will outline the purpose and approach to the curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos its main aims are to;

- Stimulate and support re-engagement with the learning process, using research based, active learning approaches wherever possible and engaging in a significant number of real-life learning experiences.
- Promote accelerated learning in order to compensate for previous missed opportunities and enable young people to gain the best outcomes possible in the time they spend in Ysgol Y Rhos.

## United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Our curriculum policy has also been written with due regard for the UNCRC demonstrating our commitment to the promotion and protection of children's rights ensuring that the voice, welfare and dignity of all our pupils is paramount to the work that we do. Our curriculum policy encompasses the UNCRC in the following ways.

Article	Theme	Links
Article 2	Non-discrimination	The curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos is accessible to all pupils regardless of disability, care status, gender, ethnicity, religion, language, or background.
Article 3	Best interests of the child	Curriculum decisions at Ysgol Y Rhos prioritise pupil wellbeing, safety and developmental needs. The curriculum is flexible in responding to the individual needs of our pupils.
Article 6	Right to life, survival and development	Our curriculum supports pupils intellectual, emotional, physical and social development. Learning experiences are designed to build resilience, confidence, independence and life skills.
Article 12	Right to be heard	Pupils at Ysgol Y Rhos have opportunities to influence curriculum design, topics, enrichment activities and learning approaches. Pupil voice is embedded into the curriculum.
Article 13	Freedom of expression	Our curriculum encourages our pupils to express ideas, opinions, creativity and emotions safely and respectfully.
Article 14	Freedom of thought, belief and religion	Teaching at Ysgol Y Rhos respects pupils beliefs and values. Our curriculum promotes open-mindedness, ethical understanding and respect for difference.
Article 15	Freedom of association	Our curriculum encourages collaboration, teamwork and social learning. Pupils are supported to engage positively with peers through group work and shared learning experiences.
Article 16	Right to privacy	Curriculum activities that involve personal reflection or discussion are handled sensitively. Pupils are not required to share these publicly.
Article 17	Access to appropriate information	Pupils at Ysgol Y Rhos are provided with accurate, age-appropriate and balanced information. Digital literacy and critical thinking are taught so pupils can access and evaluate information safely.
Article 19	Protection from all forms of harm	The curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos actively promotes safeguarding through; Relationships and Sexuality Education, Online Safety Education, Anti-bullying Education, Healthy Relationships.
Article 23	Rights of children with disabilities	Pupils with Additional Learning Needs are supported to access the full curriculum through tailored teaching, specialist support and inclusive planning.
Article 24	Right to health	The curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos promotes physical and mental health through; emotional literacy, physical activity and mental health awareness. Pupils are taught strategies for self-care and resilience.
Article 28	Right to education	The curriculum ensures all learners have meaningful access to education that meets their needs and prepares them for the future.
Article 29	Aims of education	Education at Ysgol Y Rhos develops our pupils; personality, talents and abilities, respect for human rights, respect for others and the environment and prepares our pupils for adult life and citizenship.
Article 30	Minority language, culture and identity	The curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos respects and promotes; cultural diversity, Welsh language and identity and home languages and backgrounds.

Article 31	Right to play, leisure and creativity	The curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos includes opportunities for; play-based learning, creative exploration and outdoor learning.
Articles 34 - 36	Protection from exploitation and sexual exploitation	Through RSE and Safeguarding education pupils at Ysgol Y Rhos are taught; boundaries, consent, online safety and how to seek help if they are worried.
Article 39	Recovery from trauma	The curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos supports pupils who have experiences trauma by; providing structure and stability, embedding nurture and therapeutic approaches and valuing emotional regulation and wellbeing alongside academic progress.
Article 42	Awareness of rights	Pupils at Ysgol Y Rhos are taught about; their rights, children's rights globally and respect, equality and justice.

## Principles

The curriculum is the formal means by which Ysgol Y Rhos translates its aims and values into practice. At Ysgol Y Rhos, we aspire to raise educational standards through a robust vocational, academic, holistic, and therapeutic approach.

The aims of our curriculum are to:

- Provide equal opportunities for all students regardless of gender, skill, cultural, ethnic or religious background.
- Offer a broad and balanced provision to all students.
- Prepare pupils for further study, the world of work and to become active citizens.
- Develop positive personal and social values.
- Provide a variety of activities which bring about effective learning.
- Provide appropriate challenges and lead to achievement for all pupils.
- To provide a curriculum that takes into account abilities and skills as well as individual needs including those stipulated in IDP's and EHCP's
- Provide continuity and progression from the point of transfer to the time of leaving Ysgol Y Rhos
- Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression and enable them to work towards achieving their goals.
- Use a variety of resources to provide our pupils with a holistic educational package to enhance their educational and employment opportunities, and raise their social skills, reducing the risk of social and economic exclusion.

The aim of our curriculum is therapeutic rather than: academic, although every effort will be made to challenge our pupils to improve academic attainment and achievement.

The targets of the curriculum at Ysgol Y Rhos embrace the therapeutic goals and needs of pupils alongside their academic focus. Education will focus on delivery of subjects such as ASDAN, PSE SWEET, Kind Trust Award, Duke of Edinburgh in addition to Functional Skills and GCSE's. Our curriculum will link in with a therapeutic approach, the phases of placement model, delivered by the therapeutic team of Unique Care Homes whom work closely alongside the school.

Safeguarding is paramount throughout our curriculum.

### Curriculum Structures

The curriculum in Ysgol y Rhos School is *needs-led*: it is based on the reality of the assessed needs of the young people that the school serves. It takes account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of all young people, including those with an IDP or an EHCP.

The curriculum is based on progression steps from within the Curriculum for Wales. It is planned in a coherent manner ensuring it meets legal requirements, including those of a broad and balanced curriculum and embraces cross-curricular themes including:

- Career advice and guidance
- PSE (citizenship, Sex education, Welsh Culture and Heritage)
- RSE
- Science
- English
- Maths
- ICT
- Humanities
- Art
- Food Technology
- MFL
- Outdoor Education

Sex Education, Welsh Culture and Heritage, values and children's rights are embedded across the curriculum with bespoke sessions taking place. Therapy will be part of the weekly timetable constructed around each individual pupils need. This is also supported by a cycle of Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings lead by the child's therapist and attended by representatives from both the school and home.

The development of pupils personal, social skills, and their spiritual and cultural development are addressed specifically through the PSE and digital literacy programmes which will be embedded and bespoke sessions. The importance of developing ICT, literacy, and numeracy is recognised by the curriculum's time allocation and a continuing emphasis on developing these skills across the whole curriculum.

Our curriculum aspires to give young people in all Key Stages experience in the following areas:

- Linguistic education – this will be done through English and literacy, reading and developing positive affirmations.
- Mathematical Education - through Maths, Numeracy and Science.
- Scientific - this will focus on Horticulture, Bushcraft, Science, substance misuse, and food technology.

- Technological – Through the use of ICT and digital literacy, social media awareness, and use of the internet.
- Human and social – A focus on health and social, problem solving, working as part of a team positive thinking, being part of the community.
- Physical and aesthetic – physical education, mindfulness, and personal wellbeing.
- Creative education – introducing learners to art, music, graphic design, creative media.

Pupils will benefit from studying topics linked to their social environment along with Exam Syllabus criteria plus vocational options which are reviewed on a regular basis. Our expectations at Ysgol Y Rhos are that all pupils will be entered for examinations like (Entry Level Certificate, ASDAN, Functional Skills, and GCSE), however this depends on their individual needs and age.

Pupils will still be offered programmes of study that link to their individual stage of learning and not just their chronological age.

We take guidance from the Curriculum for Wales.

### **Curriculum Time**

The school week roughly comprises of 45-minute to one hour periods, although this may be adapted to individual pupil needs. Teaching time per subject reflects the need to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum. Generous time allocation is made for English, Maths, and Science reflecting the importance of these subjects for all students at KS3 and KS4. Art and PSE also play an important part of a pupils timetable. More vocational learning such as off-site experiences, Bushcraft, Rights Respecting School, Kings Trust Award and Asdan are delivered during afternoon sessions.

### **Schemes of Work**

A sound and well-developed scheme of work is in place for each subject. It is essential in helping to plan teaching and learning within and across subjects, as well as documenting the curricular activities planned for groups of pupils. Schemes of work also provide a basis for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum as it is a working document. Common headings including:

Schemes of work aim to be made to adapt to the changing cohorts of pupils. We aim to have a bank of specific schemes of work that are highly individualised and reflect our therapeutic approach and would be applicable to new cohorts. A scheme of work is a programme of study that will be adapted to each learner's needs to make it an effective tool. This can be done by taking guidance from an IDP/EHCP or a particular learning style. Staff use a variety of tools to support planning including Taith 360.

### **Individual Learning Needs**

Every student has a Personal Learning Pathway (PLP) that identifies a small number of priority

targets, suited to their individual needs, taken from literacy, numeracy and personal/social development in conjunction with the GL assessment's.

Individual targets reflect the objectives agreed at the Annual Review of the student's IDP or EHCP where applicable. PLP and Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP) targets are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed). They are discussed by the teaching team and then reviewed and revised each term by the pupils tutor reflecting the progress made by the young person.

These will then be considered for intervention sessions where students are taught 1:1 or in small groups depending on need and targets identified. The assess, plan, do, review cycle will then begin. All teachers consider how these targets can be pursued across the curriculum, by reflecting them in their planning for lessons. Where an individual young person has particular needs that cannot be addressed through the breadth of the curriculum, arrangements are made, as far as possible, for individual tuition.

### **Baseline assessment**

Young peoples' access to the curriculum is dependent on individual needs for learning, identified at point of admission to school through a comprehensive suite of baseline and diagnostic assessment tools, covering literacy, numeracy, cognitive skills and personal-social development. These assessments are administered as part of the planned process for induction to school.

Pupils learning programmes are then tailored to meet the individual needs within small-group teaching situations.

### **Inclusion**

Ysgol y Rhos caters for young people with significant and complex emotional, behavioural needs for whom appropriate and effective provision has not been, or cannot be, made in other settings, including in mainstream schools. Ysgol y Rhos School intends to be fully inclusive for all its young people and cater for their needs as follows:

All Young People have equal access to full-time education. The education is designed to be suited to the young peoples' ages, abilities, aptitudes and additional learning needs. The goal is for every student to be actively engaged in effective learning. Every student has a right to involvement in their own Personal Learning Pathway and reviews and TAC meetings alongside access to nationally accredited routes and qualifications.

### **Learning about Learning**

At Ysgol y Rhos we believe the young people should be taught to think about what they are learning because:

- research demonstrates that learning about learning (meta-learning) leads to great retention of knowledge and great understanding, leading to a better ability to apply knowledge in new contexts.
- young people learn to exercise active and positive control over their environment, both now and in the future.



- young people understand themselves as learners; realising they have power as a learner, and in changing their approach to learning they can change their lives.
- young people develop skills to learn, problem solve and think creatively as an independent learner.
- becoming empowered to take responsibility for their own learning, young people are able to make the most of the opportunities presented.

### **Enrichment opportunities real life experiences:**

At Ysgol y Rhos we believe in providing enrichment activities and real-life experiences to young people because:

- young people are able to safely experience learning opportunities in the wider community.
- these experiences exploit interests and talents.
- these experiences increase the probability of success.
- these experiences help build routes to future options.
- these opportunities build self-esteem and confidence in learning in a wider context.
- these opportunities offer different avenues and styles of learning and achievement.

### **Curriculum Bias**

#### English

For many of our children and young people, English represents the most significant barrier to learning. Some have learning difficulties; some have lost ground through having missed education; many react negatively to lessons in which reading, and writing play a part. For all learners, progress in English is essential, in that it plays a part in all aspects of the curriculum and is closely linked to thinking, learning, and employability skills.

#### Rationale

We aim to provide a stimulating, secure, and supportive environment where children and young people are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued. We will provide an environment where students will develop their ability to use language to think, explore, recognise, and communicate their ideas. We will consider how we support students with ALN when planning so that we can provide access to learning experiences across the curriculum that are matched to ability and interest, regardless of the pupil's English level.

#### Principles

1. Literacy is a right for all pupils and a central part of the preparation for adult life.
2. There is a responsibility for all teachers and support staff to develop literacy skills and to approach its development consistently.
3. We will prioritise the development of literacy across all areas of the curriculum.
4. We will make literacy support a key feature of differentiation in all subjects.
5. We will carry out baseline testing on admission to Teresa House School to ensure accurate assessment of need.
6. We will take specialist advice from speech and language therapists, where IDP identifies barriers in this area.
7. We will provide strategies to all staff, to ensure they have accurate information about the literacy levels of all students they teach, and how best to support them, and their targets for development.



8. We recognise that language is central to students' sense of identity, belonging, and growth; and, in turn, to raising students' own expectations of achievement, improving students' confidence and self-expression.
9. Individual reading and reading clubs will be stimulated by allocating set time on our timetables.

## Maths

*'Maths is an essential life skill, and learners need to be able to apply this skill across the curriculum in different subject areas, and in real-life contexts. It is also about identifying and applying numerical reasoning in order to solve a problem and carry out the numerical procedure which enables people to work out and show their solutions'.*

### Principles

We aspire to enable our students to be able to:

- recall mathematical facts confidently.
- calculate accurately and efficiently, both mentally and with pencil and paper, pulling on a range of calculation strategies
- use proportional reasoning to simplify and solve problems.
- use calculators and other IT resources appropriately and effectively to solve mathematical problems and select from the display the number of figures appropriate to the context of a calculation.
- use simple formulae and substitute numbers in them.
- measure and estimate measurements, choosing suitable units and reading numbers correctly from a range of meters, dials, and scales.
- calculate simple perimeters, areas, and volumes, recognising the degree of accuracy that can be achieved.
- understand and use measures of time and speed.
- appreciate the concept of scale in geometrical drawings and maps.
- understand the difference between mean, median, mode and range and the purpose for which each is used.
- collect data, discrete and continuous, and interpret and predict, from graphs, diagrams, charts, and tables.
- have some understanding of the measurement of probability and risk.
- explain methods and justify reasoning and conclusions, using correct mathematical terms.
- judge the reasonableness of solutions and check them when necessary.
- give results to a degree of accuracy to the context.

## Social Skills and Personal Development

- allows young people to explore the dynamics of working with others and develop appropriate and relevant skills to do so successfully.

- allows young people a safe environment in which to explore their own feelings about being with other people and developing relationships; giving them the opportunity to learn skills to enable positive relationship building now, and in the future.
- allows young people the opportunity to explore the reasons for and behind their behaviours and empowers them with the skills to effect change to these behaviours.
- allows young people the opportunity and resources to reconnect with the skills needed to play and learn and the feelings evoked in different situations.
- allows young people to develop a greater understanding of their place in society and the skills needed to maintain and improve this effectively, so that they can make a positive contribution as adults.
- empowers young people with the skills needed to live as independently as possible.

### **Tracking Student' Progress:**

Systems are developing to track pupils' progress using a range of less tangible outcomes, often related to personal social development. These include:

- continuity in full time education, including attendance data
- achievement of targets in Pupil Learning Pathways (PLPs), reviewed on a regular basis.
- progress and success factors identified in Annual Review reports.
- observations and feedback from stakeholders (e.g. at Annual Review meetings); includes personal progress indicators as measured by individual actions on the PEP / One Page Profile.
- regular review and assessment of literacy, numeracy and social skills, using standardised and whole-school approaches.
- success of Work Experience opportunities and other opportunities in the wider community.
- weekly 'in-school' recognition of progress, linked to individual and rewards schemes

Tracking of this progress is recorded through the schools online systems Taith 360 and SLEUTH.

### **Resources**

#### Education Staff

The education staff team comprises qualified teachers and teaching assistants. They have a wide variety of qualifications and experience, including working with young people with Additional Learning Needs.

The school promotes and supports the continuing professional development of its whole group of teaching staff through use of internal training sources and external providers.

The school is currently committed to recruiting additional teaching assistants to support its curriculum delivery throughout 2026.

#### Residential Care Staff

Care staff, known as Support Staff in school, work alongside educational staff to support individual young people with learning but, more particularly, to offer an intensive level of support to help manage incidents that prevent learning taking place.

A growing number of these support staff are trained Teaching Assistants, holding Level 3 qualifications. Some are also training, or have trained, to act as substitute invigilators. There is a significant, in-depth induction package of courses that all new staff are expected to take

part in and regular update/refresher training, particularly focused on different areas of the safeguarding agenda and their role in school.

Daily information exchange between the young person's home and the school is essential in managing the individual young person's programme. Ysgol y Rhos tutorial meetings (staff/young people) focus on celebrating success as well as reinforcing behavioural boundaries. Residential Care Staff support young people in completing tasks set for home-working when a young person is unable to attend school for any reason.

### Time

The school day starts at 9am and finishes at 3pm.

- Tutor Group meetings take place each day and last 15 minutes which is the beginning of the day.
- Most lessons are 45 - 60 minutes in length.
- Two hours per week are spent travelling to off-site activities (Outdoor Education and Games).
- PE is for 90 minutes per week.
- Outdoor Education lasts approximately 2 hours depending on the activity.
- Young People have a morning break of 15 minutes and a lunch break of 30 minutes.

The school is open to teaching staff for 195 days per year, including 6 professional development days and 3 additional days focused on paperwork for individual young people, due to the level of tracking and progress reporting necessary and the loss of PPA time due to focused meetings for each pupil.

The year is divided into 3 terms, with each term being split into half-terms following as far as possible the Flintshire school term plan.

### Resources and Accommodation

Ysgol y Rhos School is set in extensive grounds.

The main school building houses the schools reception an English room, a domestic science / life skills room, a reflection room, the school library, head teacher's office and a staffroom with small staff kitchen.

A second building houses an expressive arts room, and a science room.

The third school building is our dedicated Primary based area with a small kitchen / reception area, 2 classrooms, toilet and its own outdoor space.

The fourth school building is the newest development at Ysgol Y Rhos and currently houses the schools Maths room, an additional classroom and a large multi-purpose room with a fully equipped kitchen which can be used for school lunches, assemblies and indoor PE activities.

Classrooms can accommodate 4 to 5 young people a teacher and two support staff.

### **Home Tuition**

Home tuition can be organised in the following circumstance:

A student is in crisis, and a risk assessment or a re-integration plan advise home tuition in order for the student to have time away from school and facilitate a smooth reintegration when the student is back to baseline.

Home tuition will cover the same subjects as regular school tuition.

In cases of home tuition, Care Staff will be involved in the education process acting in a learning support role as well as enabling group work and discussion and opportunities for shared learning and speaking and listening as well as delivery of vocational parts of the curriculum. The Headteacher will be responsible for effective use of Care Staff during Home Tuition and is also the designated person to establish and maintain strong and robust links with the Carers to enable the delivery, all in cooperation with the Home's Manager.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

A bespoke curriculum will be in place for children with English as an Additional Language. A translator device could be in place to support the teachers and the students. Appropriate qualifications could be embedded within the curriculum. Staff training will be in place in order to support students.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring of the implementation of the school's curriculum intentions, delivery and impact is done via:

- teachers' planning;
- informal visits to classrooms;
- learning walks focusing on a particular aspect of teaching and learning each half term;
- formal learning and teaching observations using set observation criteria followed by critical feedback;
- an annual appraisal system for all teachers linked to TLO and supervision, alongside regular whole-school assessment procedures form the basis for evaluation of performance and progress;
- formal action planning and performance management of staff falling below observed acceptable standards of teaching and learning;
- weekly staff meetings and daily briefings;
- team around the child meetings, whereby a core team of professionals, from care, therapy and education discuss the progress of individual young people and develop strategies to further progress;
- feedback from stakeholders at review meetings;
- termly review and development of supporting documentation, and risk management strategies;
- baseline assessment and continuous tracking of young people' progress;
- analysis of data forming part of evidence base for the school's self-evaluation process.

*This policy is reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. However, where there are changes to legislation/guidance or in response to recommendation from any significant incident, review of the policy will take place immediately.*

Policy Created By	Sam Thomas	05/01/2026
Policy Approved By	Catrin Jones	06/01/2026