

Ysgol Gynradd Tairgwaith Primary School



Curriculum Policy

*Paratáu Pob Plentyn am Dyfodol Gwell
Preparing Every Child for a Better Future*

Aims and purposes

Any attempt to continue to raise standards in our school must be focused on the classroom. Continued and sustained improvement is dependent upon sustaining the high quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis. Across our school the expectation is that **all** pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement. At Tairgwaith Primary School our aim is to deliver the Curriculum for Wales in an exciting and challenging way. These statutory documents indicate the revised content range and relevant skill development opportunities within each area of learning, based upon the four core purposes. Supporting these policy documents is the LNF skills documents.

We expect every teacher to be a good teacher – every pupil deserves the best.

Best teachers:

- ☹☹Facilitate the learning
- ☹☹Interact with pupils very often
- ☹☹Encourage pupils to think things out for themselves
- ☹☹Give regular constructive feedback
- ☹☹Organise strong classroom routines
- ☹☹Question pupils at a high level

By adopting a whole school approach to teaching and learning across our school, we aim:

- ☹☹To provide purposeful and engaging lessons.
- ☹☹To provide consistency of teaching and learning across our school.
- ☹☹To enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible.
- ☹☹To enable pupils to learn as efficiently as possible.
- ☹☹To give pupils the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners.
- ☹☹To provide an inclusive education for all pupils regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnicity or religious background.
- ☹☹To learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared.

***Please refer to Appendix 1 “Excellent Teaching: Excellent Teachers” Key elements and principles of teaching and learning across our school – a practical guide**

All lessons across our school should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning. New teachers to our school will undertake an induction period to ensure they fully understand these elements and to enable them to embed them in their everyday practice.

The attributes of good teaching are:

- ❖ Thorough lesson planning
- ❖ Limited introduction
- ❖ Differentiated activities
- ❖ Success criteria
- ❖ Constructive questioning techniques

***Please refer to Appendix 2 “Excellent Teaching: The Key Elements”**

All lessons have Clear Learning Objectives

- ☹☹ Learning objectives are shared orally and displayed when relevant in the pupil’s work books
- ☹☹ All learning objectives are written up and shared orally in pupil friendly language
- ☹☹ Learning objectives are not muddled up with the context of the lesson
- ☹☹ Achievement of the learning objective is made apparent in the marking comment
- ☹☹ Move away from saying “Today we are doing” ... and instead say “By the end of today’s lesson you will all know / be able to / understand” ...
- ☹☹ Make learning objectives specific and challenging
- ☹☹ Use pupil – friendly language, referring to them at the start of the lesson / during the lesson and during the plenary
- ☹☹ Pupils must know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson.

All lessons have Well planned success criteria

- ☹☹ All pupils are clear about how they will achieve the learning objective
- ☹☹ At times, success criteria is displayed for the pupils to follow during the lesson or drawn up with the pupils e.g. steps to success
- ☹☹ Pupils use the success criteria / objective to self - assess their own or other pupil’s work
- ☹☹ Pupils are reminded of the success criteria / lesson objective during the lesson – pupil’s work may be used by the teacher to model / illustrate the success criteria in action

***Consider reflecting upon Appendix 3 “How well do we evaluate the range and quality of teaching approaches? ” (Estyn Self Evaluation and the Common Inspection Framework CIF 2.2.1)**

All lessons are Clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning

- ☹☹ All learners are challenged appropriately, differentiated to the need of the individual learner
- ☹☹ All pupils, regardless of their preferred learning style are given opportunities to engage in a wide range of learning styles that are catered for through the VAK approach (Visual, Audio, Kinaesthetic).

***Please see Appendix 4 “Learning Styles”**

All pupils are Actively engaged in learning and work co-operatively

- ☹☹ Pupils are at ease, motivated to learn and actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account pupil’s concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods of time
- ☹☹ Opportunities to Think / Pair / Share and discussions with a partner are regular features in all classes
- ☹☹ Visuals, artefacts, auditory input are all used creatively as a way to enhance learning

- ☹☹Pupils help and encourage each other
- ☹☹Everyone participates through AFL strategies where appropriate
- ☹☹Pupils explain their ideas clearly and articulately

Pupil books

- ☹☹Exercise books are labelled with first and surname, year group and subject where appropriate

Inside books

- Pupils are responsible for keeping their books neat, clean and properly labelled.
- All work should be titled with a 'I Can...' statement and dated. Titles and date should be underlined with a ruler and dates located in the left hand corner. Date (long for English / numerical for maths)- according to ability.
- The Learning objective is written by the pupil / adult (dependent on age / ability).
- Correct answers are marked with a tick and incorrect answers are marked with a dot in green pen.
- Children are encouraged to edit using a blue pen.
- Pupils are encouraged to write with a pencil with pens being introduced when appropriate, using a 'pen license' initiative.

Learning is improved by Opportunities for pupils to participate in planned talk activities during lessons

When we talk we do more than articulate our current level of understanding. The very act of talking forces us to organise our thoughts and so deepens understanding. It is partly the reason why we remember so much of what we teach each to others. At our school we believe that talking is central to learning. All lessons include planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions and extend Think / Pair / Share and Talk to your partner are regular features in all lessons. Pupils understand that their TALK is valued as much as their written work. Talk is centred on identified vocabulary and questions from Bloom's taxonomy in order to develop higher order thinking skills.

Learning is improved through Effective use of questioning

It is adults who help pupils make sense of information. The frequency and nature of interactions between teacher and pupils is highly significant. We develop understanding by:

- ☹☹Using open ended questions
- ☹☹Providing wait time – (3-5 seconds), pupils need time to think through their answers before replying
- ☹☹Providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as "In two minutes I am going to ask you...."
- ☹☹Allowing pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups. Pupils then respond with "We think that...."
- ☹☹Ensuring pupils fully understand the question.

***Please refer to Appendix 5 "A Guide to Question Setting"**

All pupils receive regular and clear Feedback which enhances learning

- ☹☹Assessment for learning (AFL) is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning
- ☹☹All pupils are clear about how they need to improve
- ☹☹When marking pupil's work, the main focus is on meeting the learning objective, success criteria and / or targets.
- ☹☹Marking identifies next step prompts
- ☹☹Pupils are given regular time to address issues raised in marking.

***Please refer to the School Marking and Formative Assessment Policy**

Learning is improved through The fit – for – purpose use of ICT

☹☹ICT is used to enhance the learning where ever possible. Although it is regularly used at the start of the lesson to engage pupils and at the plenary to consolidate the learning that has taken place, it is also used during the lesson as an aid to the lesson.

Learning is improved through the use of Effective behaviour management

☹☹Effective, positive behaviour management is used to foster a positive learning environment in the classroom. For further details, please refer to the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Learning is improved through the Effective use of additional adults

☹☹Additional adults are clearly directed to support learning

- Teaching assistants are fully engaged with pupils on the carpet and tables during lesson times. They are not photocopying work, sharpening pencils or sticking work in books during learning time!
- They are clear about who they are supporting and why
- Planning is shared in advance with teaching assistants
- They sit next to the pupil / pupils they are working with, quietly engaging the pupils, explaining the task or using other resources in order to facilitate the learning, e.g. number line
- They are involved in assessing pupil's understanding and feeding back to the teacher
- Teaching assistants to annotate in books to indicate support (see Effective Marking and Formative Assessment Policy)

Learning is improved through ... the effective use of a plenary and mini plenaries

- Review what has been learnt
- Reflect on how it has been learned
- Adjust learning appropriately to better match learning need

Reviewing learning is a key to memory and not confined to the end of the lesson.

Teachers review throughout the entire lesson and constantly refer pupils back to the success criteria / objective of the lesson, reinforcing prior learning.

Learning is improved through A great classroom environment

Across our school we aim to ensure that all classrooms, learning areas and whole school areas are spaces that everyone can use to learn and be proud of. All classes across the school must have:

- Quality displays celebrating the pupil's work and interactive displays that relate to current learning
- Clearly defined areas for learning / focus – topic, maths, English, RE and Welsh.
- Target Boards that help to support the learning needs of all pupils

Learning is improved by Well labelled and neatly organised resources

Classroom resources must be well organised and clearly labelled. Pupils should have complete ownership of their classroom and know where to find the resources they need for an activity; thus helping to foster independent learning skills.

Learning is improved through ... Well organised homework

“Well organised homework can play a vital role in raising standards of achievement”

(DfES Standards Website)

Across our school we encourage the partnerships between home and school. One of the ways in which this has been established is through homework activities. These activities have to be

meaningful and interesting, as well as providing useful reinforcement of class work recently undertaken.

Why is homework important?

- It raises pupils' achievement
- It consolidates and extends the work they have done in school
- It helps to inform parents about pupils' school work and allows and gives the opportunity to support their learning
- It is a valuable life skill and develops good work habits

Learning is improved through open communication between all stakeholders

The Role of Parents in Teaching and Learning:

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Holding parents' meetings to explain our school strategies for teaching and learning and to provide information about individual pupil attainment
- Sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the pupils will be studying
- Sending annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each pupil, indicating how their child can improve further
- Explaining to parents how they can best support their children with home / school learning.
- We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We request that parents:
 - Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
 - Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit
 - Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school
- Inform the school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school.
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the Home / School agreement.

The Role of Governors in Teaching and Learning:

- The school's Governing Body determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:
- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school's self – review processes.

The Governing Body at Tairgwaith Primary School are actively involved in supporting and monitoring teaching and learning. They do this in a number of ways. The full Governing Body receives a termly Headteacher's report. Governors also carry out focus visits to school as part of the monitoring cycle.

Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum in progression steps, which are based on a three year cycle per step, which is our long term planning.

We base our medium term plans on ideas around a concept which in turn is fed by learning requests of the pupils, parent input as well as coverage from the progression steps of each area of learning and skills documents. With our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the learning outcomes (the I can statements) and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic.

Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what differentiation, resources, assessment, skills and activities we are going to use in the lesson.

Throughout the school we adopt a topic approach to curriculum planning. We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects required nationally and the relevant learning goals. There is planned progression in all curriculum areas.

We plan exciting topics that are based on a concept such as challenge / adventure / etc. These include school trips to a variety of different places to enhance the curriculum. We organise themed days and special events to bring the curriculum alive.

Our curriculum planning focuses on the 'I can' statements from each area of learning and on developing children's skills and experiences, as set out in this document.

Our school supports the principle that children learn through play and first hand experiences both inside and outside, and by engaging in well-planned and structured activities. Teaching builds on the experiences of the children in their past learning. We do all we can to build positive partnerships with any other pre-school providers in the area.

On entry the teacher makes an assessment to record the skills of each child within the first 6 weeks of attending the school. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child. This assessment is used to assess children's progress termly and at the end of the year.

We are well aware that all children need the support of parents and teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing.

Children with additional learning needs

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. We differentiate the curriculum carefully and will adapt it to meet the needs of individual children when appropriate.

If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the ALN decision making processes: **Refer to the school ALN policy**

- Emerging needs – question if the child does require a provision for ALN
- Identified ALN and Additional Learning Provision – School IDP
- Identified ALN and Additional Learning Provision – LA IDP

We always provide additional resources and support for children with additional needs.

For each of the children who have been identified with having additional learning needs, the school or local authority (depending on level) will provide an individual development plan. This sets out the nature of the need and outlines how the school / local authority will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals. The parents and the pupils are fully involved in this process.

More able and talented pupils

The school recognises, in line with WAG guidance, that *“the term MAT encompasses approximately 20% of the total school population and is used to describe pupils who require enriched and extended opportunities across the curriculum to develop their abilities in one or more areas.”*

Approximately 2% of learners may be described as “exceptionally able”.

The provision of challenging activities must be at the core of the education we offer to MAT learners.

Provision for MAT pupils could include:

- Varying groups to suit tasks.
- Extension opportunities.
- Child initiated learning opportunities.
- Differentiated teacher questioning.
- Targeted use of TAs.
- Visits by experts.
- Use of more able and talented children as tutors and/or mentors.

All more able and talented children will be entered on the school provision map.

Literacy/ Numeracy / DCF Skills

At Tairgwaith Primary School the curriculum ensures there is a systematic approach to the teaching of literacy, numeracy and digital competency skills across all areas of learning for all pupils; ALN and MAT. The curriculum has a clear focus on progression. Children undertake the National Numeracy/ Literacy Test on an annual basis.

Monitoring

We have a named governor for Additional Needs; Mr Dafydd Humphries. The Governor liaises with the SENCO and monitors closely the way the school implements the code of practice.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The Headteacher monitors the lesson plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full National requirements, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.

Equal opportunities

All children will have access to the full curriculum, irrespective of age, gender, race, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief. Individual different opinion and ideas will be respected and valued.

Monitoring of this policy

Members of the senior management team and the chair of the curriculum governor committee will oversee the implementation of this policy.

Appendix 1

RANGE AND QUALITY OF TEACHING APPROACHES

Excellent Teachers

- Have high enough expectations of all pupils
- Have good, up-to-date subject knowledge
- Plan very effectively and have clear objectives for taught sessions and other learning experiences
- Have a range of teaching and training methods and resources to interest pupils and stimulate and challenge them to achieve highly
- Provide demanding work to meet the needs of all pupils, for example those with ALN
- Provide good language models for pupils in all subjects
- Establish good working relationships that foster learning
- Manage pupils' behaviour effectively
- Use learning support staff effectively
- Raise pupils' achievement through assessment of and for learning
- Are very good listeners

Appendix 2

PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EXCELLENT TEACHERS

Excellent Teaching: The Key Elements

- They challenge and support: A commitment to do everything possible for each pupil and enable all pupils to be successful.
- They have confidence: The belief in one's ability to be effective and to take on challenges.
- They create trust: Being consistent and fair. Keeping one's word. They respect others: The underlying belief that individuals matter and deserve respect.
- They have emotional maturity: This is the most important challenge, especially when dealing with children.

Appendix 3

EXCELLENT TEACHERS KNOW THE LEARNING STYLE!

Auditory learners:

- Enjoy talking in different contexts
- Discussing more than writing
- Respond well in pairs, small groups and when making presentations
- Dominate discussions
- Listen carefully
- Ask questions
- Recall tunes with ease
- Prefer music to art
- Easily distracted by noise

Visual learners:

- Enjoy reading
- Spell well
- Observe well
- Are quiet by nature
- Like to sketch and write
- Have good handwriting
- Doodle while listening
- Often forget to repeat messages
- Speak too quickly
- Often plan before doing anything
- Like to know the big picture

Kinaesthetic learners:

- Like to handle and touch things
- Move around a room
- Like to make things
- Stand very close when talking to someone
- Often play and enjoy sports
- Swivel on chairs
- Find it hard to sit still
- Fidget and tap
- Have poor handwriting
- Read adventure-style books
- Enjoy action films

Appendix 4

How well do we evaluate the range and quality of teaching approaches? (CIF 2.2.1)

Questions we should consider about the range and quality of teaching approaches. Ask yourself:

- Do you / we have high enough expectations of all pupils?
- Do you / we have good, up-to-date subject knowledge?
- Do you / we plan effectively and have clear objectives for taught sessions and other learning experiences?
- Do you / we have a range of teaching and training methods and resources to interest all pupils and stimulate and challenge them to achieve highly?
- Are you / we successful in providing demanding work to meet the needs of all pupils, for example those with ALN?
- Do you / we provide good language models for pupils?
- Do you / we establish good working relationships that foster learning?
- Do you / we manage pupils' behaviour effectively?
- Do you / we use learning staff effectively?

Appendix 5

A GUIDE TO QUESTION SETTING

Literal, which requires a pupil to locate facts, ideas, particular information, a sequence of events, similarities and differences, characteristics of a person etc., which are explicitly stated.

E.g.

What is the boy's name?

Who was taller, Susan or John?

Which child was the most polite?

What did the children do at the park?

Reorganisation, which requires a pupil to analyse, synthesise and/or organise the ideas or information which is explicitly stated in the passage.

E.g.

Classifying; placing people, things, places and/or events into categories.

Summarising; condensing the content of the passage, using direct quotation or paraphrased statements.

Synthesising; bringing together ideas or information from more than one source/section of the passage.

Inferential, which requires a pupil to use the ideas and information in the passage, his or her intuition and his or her personal experience as a basis for making conjectures or hypotheses.

E.g.

What else might the author have included to make the passage more interesting to boys?

What sort of person is Mr Jones?

What do you think will happen next?

How would the boy behave if he were in a different place/time/situation?

Why did the girl behave as she did?

Why does the author use the word?

What does the author mean by the phrase, 'foxy eyes' or any other figurative expression?

Evaluation, which requires the pupil to make a judgement based either on the passage alone or on his/her prior knowledge and experience.

E.g.

Could this really happen?

Does this make sense?

What is the author trying to make you think when he says? Is the information accurate? Does it agree with what you have found out from other sources?

Does the boy behave in an appropriate way?

Is the character right or wrong to act as s/he does in view of the situation described?

Is the characters' behaviour right or wrong according to your beliefs?

Appreciation, which requires an emotional and/or aesthetic response from the pupil to the content and style of the passage.

E.g.

How did the passage make you feel?

Which character did you like best/most sympathise with?

Which character would you most like to be? Why?

Which description did you find most lifelike/frightening/effective?

Which words most helped you to imagine what was happening?