



Ysgol Gyfun

PENYRHEOL
Comprehensive School

Curriculum Policy

BELONG
PARCHU

THRIVE
DYHEU

ASPIRE
FFYNNU

RESPECT
PERTHYN

Our Vision

“To achieve you need to believe”

The progression curriculum at Penyrheol is an evidence-informed, bespoke, authentic curriculum, carefully designed to support and inspire every learner. Our engaging, ambitious, and knowledge-rich curriculum provides a strong foundation of knowledge and understanding, which pupils can apply, explore, and interrogate across different concepts, experiences, and perspectives. This approach helps learners make sense of their learning and skills, view experiences through multiple lenses, and recognise the value of learning itself.

The curriculum also allows pupils to experience their own progress, building confidence and a sense of achievement. We aim for all learners, regardless of background or prior experience, to leave our school as confident, creative, ethical, and informed young adults, ready to lead fulfilling lives as members of their community, Wales, and the wider world

1. General Aims:

- Penyrheol is a happy, caring school which works and grows in co-construction with learners, their families and the wider community;
- Penyrheol School allows all learners to thrive and progress through skills and knowledge development that enables them to become active citizens and effective lifelong learners;
- The Penyrheol School Community fosters an environment where all members feel safe and valued and learn to help, support and work with one another;
- Penyrheol School provides the care, guidance and support that our learners need as they develop as lifelong learners;
- Penyrheol School supports our learners to be aspiring and ambitious, focussing on their strengths and planning for successful and fulfilling futures;
- Penyrheol School helps our learners 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;
- Penyrheol School recognises the differences that exist in our learners' identity, language, attainment and background and we ensure that pupils are recognised as individuals and supported as individuals;
- Penyrheol School values the importance of diversity and respect and we support our learners in their spiritual, moral, social, physical and cultural development.



2. Curriculum Aims

- The Penyrheol Progression Curriculum provides an ambitious, broad and balanced education for all pupils that is coherently planned and sequenced towards growing knowledge for skills and future learning and employment;
- Our progression curriculum enables all learners to develop in the ways described in the four purposes:
 - We enable all learners to develop as ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives,
 - We enable learners to develop as enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work,
 - We enable learners to develop as ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the World,
 - We enable learners to develop as healthy, confident individuals, ready to live fulfilling lives as valued members of society;
- The progression curriculum ensures equal access to learning for all learners, with high expectations for every learner and appropriate levels of challenge and support;
- Our progression curriculum creates authentic and relevant contexts for learning in order to inspire and interest our learners and teach them about the world around them;
- Penyrheol Progression Curriculum explicitly supports learner progression within subject disciplines, and within and across areas of learning;
- The Penyrheol Progression Curriculum builds on our learners' previous knowledge and experience, using the vital interconnected networks of this background information to develop their schema and their ability to link and develop their knowledge;
- At Penyrheol, we break down learning into achievable steps to allow us to tailor support and challenge for our learners;
- Our progression curriculum is designed so that we constantly monitor the progress of our learners using a variety of assessment for learning strategies;
- Our school community works together to enable learners to make links within and across the different areas of learning and apply their learning to new situations and to more complex issues.
- Penyrheol Progression Curriculum develops learners' use of Literacy, Numeracy and ICT in their lives;
- Our progression curriculum develops our learners' ability to be creative and innovative, to cope with change and embrace challenge;
- The Penyrheol Progression Curriculum develops learners' ability to understand the benefits of failure, to think critically, question and argue rationally and solve problems, to enable pupils to cope with and shape their own lives;



- Penyrheol promotes cooperation and represents diverse voices;
- Penyrheol's Progression Curriculum emphasises the positive aspects of all cultures and recognises that learners themselves are often the most important multi-cultural resource within the classroom and their experiences are valued and shared;
- Our progression curriculum equips learners to be the best that they can be through teaching strategies that challenge, guide and support our learners.

3. Legislation and Guidance

The Penyrheol Comprehensive School Curriculum Policy has been developed in line with the legislation from the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act (2021). It also considers relevant guidance on:

- The Education Act 1996;
- The School Government (Terms of Reference) (Wales) Regulations 2000;
- The School Government (Terms of Reference) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2002.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governors and Headteachers

The Governors of Penyrheol Comprehensive recognise their corporate responsibility to provide a curriculum that meets the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. The headteacher and governing body must ensure the curriculum:

- enables learners to develop in the ways described in the four purposes;
- is suitable for learners of differing ages, abilities and aptitudes;
- takes account of each learner's additional learning needs (ALN), if any;
- is broad and balanced;
- Makes provision for learning and teaching that encompasses each AoLE, including all statements of what matters;
- Secures appropriate progression for each learner, informed by the principles of progression in the Progression Code.;
- Develops the mandatory cross-curricular skills of Literacy, Numeracy, and Digital Competence
- Provides learning and teaching that accords with the RSE Code and is developmentally appropriate.
- Provides learning and teaching of RVE in line with curriculum design requirements.



- Provides those learners moving from year 9 into year 10 with a choice of learning within each Area in line with the requirements of this Framework guidance;
- makes ongoing assessments arrangements to support learner progression throughout the school year;
- makes arrangements for assessing the ability and aptitude of learners 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;
- makes provision to develop the mandatory cross-curricular skills;
- Promotes learners' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development.
- Prepares learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The headteacher and governing body keep the curriculum under review and will revise it if it no longer complies with the design requirements. They may revise it at any time but if they do they must publish an updated summary.

Additional Responsibilities:

The governing body:

- must hear formal complaints from parents and others about the school's curriculum, according to procedures set up by the LA.
- **The headteacher:**
 - Must design a curriculum for their school's learners
 - May determine temporary disapplication of certain curriculum elements for individual learners under the 2021 Act
 - May decide that the curriculum will not apply, or will apply differently, to an individual learner for a temporary period.

5. Assessment

The Governors and Headteacher must ensure that the assessment arrangements that are made:

- require the ongoing assessment of every learner throughout the school year by the relevant practitioner
- require practitioners to assess the progress made by learners
- require practitioners to assess the next steps in their progression



- require practitioners to assess the learning and teaching needed to make that progress
- are suitable for learners of differing ages, abilities and aptitudes
- are implemented.

Assessment arrangements must be made at the same time as the curriculum is being designed.

Schools must ensure that the arrangements for assessing on-entry:

- require the assessment of abilities and aptitudes of learners against the relevant curriculum to determine the next steps in their progression and the learning and teaching needed to make that progress
- are suitable for learners of differing ages, abilities and aptitudes
- include arrangements for assessing learners'
 - numeracy and literacy skills
 - physical, social and emotional development
- take place within 6 weeks of the learner first beginning in the school.



The Progression Curriculum (Years 7-9)

Penyrheol Progression Curriculum is constructed vertically, ensuring the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum by the preservation of each subject discipline. The Penyrheol Progression Curriculum is designed so that knowledge builds on prior knowledge and provides the foundation of what is to come. It sets out, and models, the journey that our learners need to go on in order to progress and get better at each subject.

Articulate and meaningful links are made between subjects within the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) and across the breadth of the AoLEs, where appropriate. These areas are:

Maths and Numeracy

Languages, Literacy and Communication:

English, Welsh and International Languages

Science and Technology:

Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Design Technology, ICT

Expressive Arts:

Art and Design, Music, Drama, Dance

Humanities:

History, Geography, Religion Values and Ethics

Health and Well-being:

Physical Education, Food Technology, PSHE

In our planning, we ensure that the experiential journey our learners take adds value to their learning and enables them to deepen their understanding of their learning, their community, the wider world and of their role as active citizens in society.

The teaching of powerful knowledge and skills relies on the expert subject knowledge of specialists. Our curriculum is taught by teachers who are experts in their field and use their subject networks to develop their craft continually. Teachers use their specialist subject knowledge and networks to deliver powerful learning, including experiential opportunities beyond the classroom, developing resilience, independence, and active community participation.



Inclusivity

At Penyrheol, pupils learn in an inclusive and nurturing environment where wellbeing is central and effort is valued as highly as attainment. Our curriculum is ambitious, broad, and balanced, carefully designed and sequenced to provide a rich and varied learning experience for every pupil. It embodies the principles of the Curriculum for Wales, ensuring coherence, progression, and purpose from Year 7 through to Year 11.

Cross-Curricular Skills

The cross-curricular skills of Literacy, Numeracy, and Digital Competence are embedded across all Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs). These skills are developed purposefully through a range of disciplines and contexts to ensure pupils can apply them confidently, creatively, and independently.

Literacy

Pupils are supported to communicate effectively through speaking, listening, reading, and writing across all subjects. They learn to adapt their language for different audiences and purposes, fostering clarity, accuracy, and creativity.

Numeracy

Pupils apply mathematical reasoning and problem-solving in authentic contexts, making connections between subjects and understanding the role of numeracy in everyday life and future careers.

Digital Competence

Pupils develop the confidence to use digital technologies responsibly and effectively. They learn to create, collaborate, and communicate using digital tools, while understanding online safety, data literacy, and the ethical use of technology.

Overview

Our curriculum nurtures curiosity, independence, and a love of learning. It supports pupils in becoming ambitious, capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy, confident individuals — the four purposes at the heart of the Curriculum for Wales

The following key competencies are developed throughout the curriculum:

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

The curriculum provides learners with opportunities to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Pupils are encouraged to question, analyse and evaluate information, enabling them to make informed decisions and develop as independent, reflective learners.



Creativity and Innovation

The curriculum promotes creativity and innovation by encouraging pupils to think imaginatively, generate new ideas and explore different approaches to learning. Pupils are supported to take risks, experiment and develop original solutions in a range of contexts.

Planning and Organisation

The curriculum is carefully planned and organised to ensure progression, coherence and balance. Pupils are supported to develop strong planning and organisational skills, enabling them to manage their time, resources and tasks effectively.

Personal Effectiveness

The curriculum supports the development of personal effectiveness, enabling pupils to work independently, build resilience and manage themselves effectively. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, develop confidence and form positive relationships with others, preparing them for future learning and life beyond school.

Bilingualism

In line with the Curriculum for Wales and the Siarter Iaith, Penyrheol is committed to promoting and normalising the use of the Welsh language across all aspects of school life. We actively encourage the natural use of Welsh in everyday communication, including during assemblies, school events and informal interactions.

The school ensures that, where possible, signage, displays and communications are bilingual, reflecting our strong commitment to the Welsh language and culture. Pupils are provided with meaningful opportunities to develop and apply their Welsh language skills across the curriculum, supporting their confidence and fluency.

We also encourage pupils to take ownership of their use of Welsh and to recognise its value both within school and in the wider community. As part of this commitment, the school is working collaboratively with pupils, staff and the wider community to achieve and sustain the Siarter Iaith awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold), through the setting and ongoing review of clear, language-focused targets

Careers and Work-related Education

Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop awareness of the world of work. Learning experiences build skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and resilience, helping pupils to make informed decisions about their future pathways.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)



RSE is delivered in line with statutory guidance and supports pupils to develop healthy, respectful relationships. It promotes understanding of identity, wellbeing and diversity in an age-appropriate and inclusive manner.

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE)

RVE provides opportunities for pupils to explore beliefs, values and ethical issues. Pupils develop respect for different perspectives and are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others.

Health and Wellbeing Programme

The Health and Wellbeing programme supports pupils to develop physical, emotional and social wellbeing. It promotes positive relationships, resilience and healthy lifestyles, ensuring pupils are equipped to thrive both now and in the future.

UNCRC

The curriculum is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Pupils are supported to understand their rights and responsibilities, fostering respect, participation and a strong sense of justice.

14-16 Curriculum

At Penyrheol, our guiding principle “To achieve you need to believe” shapes every stage of our curriculum. In Years 10 and 11, pupils build on the strong foundation of our 11–14 curriculum. The challenge and opportunity of 14–16 is to help each pupil believe in their potential, make informed choices, and achieve success that opens doors for future learning, work, and life.

Our Year 14-16 curriculum is designed around the Curriculum for Wales and reflects the national vision for coherence, progression, and purpose. In years 10 and 11, our focus is to:

- Sustain the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales.
- Provide real choice to follow pathways reflecting interests and strengths.
- Deepen learning through mastery, enquiry, and application.
- Connect learning to life, work, and post-16 destinations.
- Promote equity and aspiration.
- Embed learning within local, national and international contexts

Curriculum Design and Alignment



Our 14–16 curriculum ensures pupils:

- Continue learning across all Areas of Learning and Experience.
- Gain recognised qualifications in literacy and numeracy.
- Experience breadth and balance.
- Engage in wider learning including cultural and community experiences.
- Participate in reflection, guidance, and post-16 planning.

Cross-cutting themes

Cross-cutting themes such as Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), Careers and Work-related Experience, Human Rights and Diversity are addressed throughout the curriculum. These provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences that help pupils connect their studies to the wider world—encouraging them to understand their place within their community, Wales, and the global society. While these themes are embedded across a range of subjects, they are also explored through fortnightly Health and Well-being lessons, dedicated Health and Well-being Days, Progress and Well-being sessions, assemblies, and a variety of extracurricular activities. This integrated approach ensures that pupils engage with these important areas in a structured and consistent way, supporting their personal development, global awareness, and understanding of the world, in line with the principles of the New Curriculum for Wales.

Curriculum Structure and Option Pathways

Pupils at Penyrheol are offered a wide range of subject options to suit their interests and future aspirations. Available options include:

Creative & Arts:

- Art
- Photography
- Drama
- Music
-

STEM & Technology:

- Computer Science
- Digital Technology
- Design & Technology: Product Design
- Constructing the Built Environment
- Triple Science

Humanities & Social Sciences:

- Geography
- History
- Business
- Religious Studies



Vocational & Practical Subjects:

- Hair and Beauty
- Health & Social Care
- Hospitality & Catering
- Public Services
- BTEC Sport
- GCSE PE
- Media Studies
- Hospitality and Catering
- Fashion and Textiles

Languages:

- Spanish
- French

Option Selection Process:

Pupils are initially presented with all available options and, following their first choices, three option pools are created to ensure that the majority of pupils can select their preferred subjects. This approach supports the development of a broad and balanced curriculum, enabling pupils to explore a wide variety of disciplines, build essential skills, and make informed decisions about their future learning pathways, in line with the principles of the New Curriculum for Wales.

The New National 14–16 Qualifications

From September 2025, in line with Welsh Assembly guidelines, Penyrheol began the phased introduction of the new *Made-for-Wales* GCSEs and 14–16 qualifications, overseen by Qualifications Wales. These qualifications feature a balanced approach to assessment, combining examinations, coursework, practical elements, and digital components. They are designed to promote digital readiness through the use of onscreen assessments and ensure coherence and progression from the 3–14 curriculum. In addition, they offer broader pathways for learners, including GCSEs, VCSEs, Foundation qualifications, and the Skills Suite

Implementation Timeline

- Wave 1: Sept 2025 (Art, Business, Computer Science, Drama).
- Wave 2: Sept 2026 (Science, PE, Health & Social Care, Design & Technology, History).
- Wave 3 / VCSE: Post-2027 (Constructing the Built Environment, Public Services).

Implementation and Support.

Penyrheol is committed to ensuring a smooth transition to the new qualifications. To support this, the school will provide clear information to pupils and families, ensure



ongoing professional learning for staff, use assessment for learning alongside mock cycles to prepare pupils for examination conditions, provide access to digital resources where appropriate and relevant, and monitor outcomes, pupil uptake, and feedback on an annual basis.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

We will review effectiveness each year through:

- Analysis of pupil progress and outcomes.
- Pupil and parent voice.
- Staff evaluation and curriculum review.
- Alignment checks with national guidance.

This ensures Penyrheol's curriculum remains forward-looking, inclusive, and rooted in belief — empowering every pupil to achieve their best.

