

THE MAELOR SCHOOL



Curriculum Policy

Committee Responsible	Standards
Policy Author	KGS
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Curriculum Policy

Introduction

This curriculum policy reflects our school values and provides a guide for development at all levels. The implementation of our school curriculum policy is an essential ingredient to our success as a school. It is underpinned by a School Development Planning process which operates as a central feature of our leadership of change and evolving practice, and involves not only teachers but also governors, parents, and students.

Aims

The school aims to help students to:

- Achieve their potential.
- Gain self-reliance and self-esteem.
- Develop an enquiring mind and be willing learners.
- Behave responsibly and courteously towards others.
- Respect the views and values of others.
- Acquire a range of skills appropriate to the world in which we live, so that they are prepared for the demands of life beyond school.
- Participate in a full range of experiences, including 'formal' and 'non-formal', within lessons and as extra opportunities.

Student Curriculum Entitlement

- That each student is provided with an education which promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development and wellbeing.
- That each individual student has different needs, and the design, context and implementation of the curriculum must meet these needs, providing for progression to meet the next stage of learning.
- That each student should be valued equally and given the same opportunities for progress and development within the educational context irrespective of ability, gender or culture.
- That the curriculum should provide for the personal and social development of all students, both for their transition into adult life and to cope with the influences, expectations and demands of the community and the wider society.
- That each student is encouraged within a happy and secure environment where the emphasis is on rewarding achievement and supporting and guiding progress in learning.
- That the influences of the home and school should be complementary in each student's development.



Curriculum Principles

To provide opportunities which maximise the learning of all pupils, the curriculum should display the following characteristics:

Coherence The curriculum should have a sense of wholeness provided by the inter-relationship of its components. Wherever possible, this should be emphasised.

Breadth The curriculum should bring students into contact with a broad range of learning experiences and areas of learning.

Balance A balanced curriculum should ensure that each learning experience or area is given appropriate attention.

Relevance The curriculum should be seen as meeting the present and prospective needs of students. A relevant curriculum will sustain interest, enthusiasm and motivation and progressively develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for later life.

Differentiation The curriculum should allow for differences in abilities and aptitudes. There should be sufficient flexibility in learning to provide for individual strengths and weaknesses, aspirations and interests, backgrounds, and experiences. This requires a detailed knowledge of students, as well as approaches to teaching and learning, tailored to suit the particular aspect of learning.

Progression and continuity The learning of all students should be a continuous process with smooth transition at all stages.

Progression builds systematically upon existing knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes and ensures that advances in attainment are made over time.



The Statutory Curriculum

The Education Reform Act was introduced to ensure that all schools provide a balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and prepares such students for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

The following curriculum elements are required by law:

1 a) Years 7 - 9; pupils aged 11 - 14, Curriculum for Wales

A balanced curriculum which covers all the Areas of Learning and Experience (AOLEs):

- Languages, literacy and communication - incorporates English, Cymraeg and a modern foreign language (French).
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Science and technology - incorporates design technology and digital learning.
- Humanities - incorporates geography, history, religion, values and ethics and business studies.
- Expressive arts - incorporates art, music, drama, dance, and media.
- Health and wellbeing - incorporates physical education.

Within this curriculum pupils also cover the following cross-cutting elements: relationships and sexuality education (RSE), human rights education and careers and work-related experiences.

b) Years 10 - 11; pupils aged 14 - 16, National Curriculum (Curriculum for Wales)

The core curriculum in Years 10-11 consists of:

English, mathematics, science, physical education, Welsh (second language), religion, values and ethics (RVE) and personal and social education (PSE).

All pupils also choose three option subjects from a range which ensures opportunities in all AOLEs.

As in Lower School, within this curriculum pupils also cover the following cross-cutting elements: relationships and sexuality education (RSE), human rights education and careers and work-related experiences.

The curriculum for each National Curriculum subject is set out in statutory orders.

2 Religion, values and ethics (RVE): Religion, values and ethics is part of the new curriculum for Wales and is a compulsory part of the humanities AOLE. In Years 10 - 11, RVE forms part of our core curriculum offer and pupils follow an agreed syllabus which has been adopted by SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education).

3 Relationships and sexuality education (RSE): RSE is a statutory requirement for all students aged 11 - 16 and is outlined in a separate policy.



- 4 Careers and work-related experiences: This is statutory for all students and is incorporated into the PSE programme. We work closely with Careers Wales, and all students have access to individual careers guidance in Years 10 and upwards via an interview to discuss their career ambitions with specialist staff.

Careers Education is provided to all pupils as an important part of the pupil guidance programme from year 7 onwards. Visits for pupils to Careers Conventions, industrial visits, and mock interviews all feature as part of the Careers Programme followed by pupils.

Curriculum Organisation - the Lower School

On joining The Maelor school each pupil is allocated to a tutor group under the specific care of a form tutor.

The cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competence are taught and assessed in all subject areas.

Within the teaching of AOLEs, pupils are encouraged to develop the integral skills of:

- creativity and innovation
- critical thinking and problem solving
- personal effectiveness
- planning and organisation.

The curriculum also ensures that pupils learn about the cross-cutting elements of:

- relationships and sexuality education (RSE)
- human rights education and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- diversity
- careers and work-related experiences
- local, national, and international contexts.

Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) are supported with their learning and progress in line with our ALN Policy.

Curriculum Organisation - the Upper School

Pupils can choose some of their subjects and the curriculum for years 10 and 11 has been set up to safeguard breadth and balance in each student's programme. All students follow mathematics, English, science, RVE and Welsh. As well as the subjects they have studied in lower school, pupils are able to take up a new subject if they wish to within their option choices, such as business studies, engineering and collaborative courses. The school meets the requirements to offer a choice of thirty courses including five vocational courses.

Curriculum organisation - the Sixth Form

All sixth form students have the opportunity to study three or four AS levels in Year 12 plus the Welsh Baccalaureate at Advanced Level, and this progresses to three or four A2 levels in Year 13. Entry to the sixth form is determined on appropriate GCSE grades as published in the sixth form prospectus as part of collaboration within the 14-19 Network.



RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1 Governors

A Governors Standards Committee operates to review and monitor standards and curriculum work across the school as stated in the School Development Plan, to review and approve policy and proposals relating to the school curriculum and to feed back to the main Governing Body when required.

2 Headteacher

Responsible for decisions on curriculum policy matters and ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of the students across the school.

3 Deputy Headteacher

Responsible for advising the Headteacher on Curriculum policy matters and in ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of students and delivers appropriately across the school.

4 Subject Leaders

Responsible for oversight of a curriculum/subject area and for all aspects of policy and work pertaining to that curricular area. To play a major role in assuring quality and standards through a structured monitoring programme. Responsible for a specific subject within the school either as part of a broader curriculum area or as a separate curriculum unit with direct responsibility to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

5 Subject Teachers

Responsible for all work relating to assigned teaching groups and for contributing to curriculum policy and development within a department or curriculum area responsible for standards of pupils taught.

Details of roles are provided in job descriptions both generic and specific.