Respect. Communicate. Enjoy.

Teaching and Learning Policy

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Next Review date:	June 2029

Signed Date

Chairperson schools governing body, on behalf of the Governing Body

Signed Date

Headteacher

Distribution: Staff, governors, pupils, parents/carers and interested parties.

1. Vision and Principles

At Ysgol Ty Coch, learners are at the centre of everything we do. We are committed to providing an inclusive, structured and nurturing environment that enables every pupil to achieve their full potential. We view challenges as opportunities to grow and innovate, ensuring that every pupil, regardless of their complex needs, is provided with high expectations and a calm, purposeful environment and our pedagogy is designed in reponse to our learner needs, rooted in predictability, sensory regulation, and a "Total Communication" approach.

We recognise that:

- Every learner is unique, with individual communication and sensory needs.
- High expectations, consistency and teamwork are essential.
- Communication is fundamental to learning. When communication is effective, learning becomes accessible, meaningful and empowering and pupils feel safe, understood and motivated.

Aims

Through our teaching and interactions with pupils, all staff aim for the following:

- To raise standards and pupil achievement in all areas.
- To have high expectations of each pupil.
- To develop independence, confidence and increase self-esteem.
- To develop a stimulating learning environment
- To enable pupils to communicate effectively in a variety of situations, in whichever way is appropriate for their individual needs.
- To motivate the pupils to want to learn.
- To develop appropriate assessment strategies, which impacts and informs the teaching
- To develop pupil voice.

Objectives

- To provide pupils with a variety of new and different situations through which they can practice and develop skills.
- To create a whole school learning environment rich with learning opportunities.
- To value and include each pupil in the class through adaptive teaching /differentiation of teaching style or activity.
- To use Assessment for Learning in “real time”, correcting misconceptions and promoting deeper learning and understanding.
- To use formative and summative assessment purposefully, using quantitative and qualitative assessment to inform teaching and give feedback to pupils and parents.

- To work closely with parents and multi – professional colleagues so that a consistent approach is achieved and optimum learning secured.
- To develop and sustain community links to ensure that our pupils gain knowledge, experience and understanding of the local community in which they live.

Role of the Teacher & The Four Purposes

In alignment with the Curriculum for Wales, our pedagogy is designed to support the holistic development of every learner, ensuring that teaching strategies directly contribute to the realisation of the Four Purposes.

The Four Purposes at the Heart of Pedagogy

The Four Purposes are the shared vision and starting point for our curriculum. Our teaching and learning strategies ensure that all pupils develop as:

- Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives, supported by high and clear expectations from the class team.
- Enterprising, creative contributors who are ready to play a full part in life and work, encouraged through open-ended play and proactive, flexible staff support.
- Ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world, supported by a rights-respecting environment that promotes dignity and safety.
- Healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society, fostered through a learning environment that supports regulation and independence.

The Role of the Teacher

The teacher is the lead professional in the classroom, responsible for orchestrating a cohesive team, creating meaningful, purposeful learning for the individual learner and a personalised learning journey.

Core Teaching Principles

Teaching at our school is:

- Personalised.

  Teaching is tailored to individual needs, interests and developmental levels.

- Structured and predictable

  Staff use tools such as schedules, routine to provide clarity, promote independence and reduce anxiety,

- Inclusive

  Staff ensure all pupils can access learning

- Communication-led

  Staff always use a Total Communication approach to ensure effective teaching and learning

<u>High Expectations and Cohesive Teamwork</u>

Effective learning is driven by a unified class team.

- Staff Roles:

  All staff (Teachers and TAs) must work as a cohesive unit with shared understanding of learner-focused roles.

- Proactive Engagement:

  Staff are expected to be flexible and responsive, ensuring pupils are consistently motivated and supported.

- Classroom Management: Consistency in approach is vital to ensure learners do not become confused or withdrawn.

Total Communication Approach

Communication is the foundation of all learning. We employ a multimodal strategy:

- Modalities:

  The use of Signalong, visuals, Objects of Reference, and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is embedded in the learning.

- Modelling:

  Staff must model these communication strategies, adjusting their verbal delivery to match the pupil's receptive language level. Communication must be promoted.

- Pupil Voice:

  Lessons must be planned to maximise opportunities for pupils to express choices and initiate communication using their preferred methods.

Scaffolding, Stretch, and Challenge

Lesson must support learners to make progress by using teaching models and theories which increase understanding and promote independence

- Blank's Levels of Questioning:

  Teachers must use Blank's Levels (1–4) to pitch questions accurately to a pupil's individual language profile.

- Scaffolding:

  Tasks are broken down using visuals, task ladders, and adult prompting to promote success and eventual independence. Teachers must be aware of using the appropriate amount of scaffolding and fade out prompts, using guided practice,

(Rosenshine, 2012) “I do, We do, You do “ (Fisher and Frey, 2027) and the principles of Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development to inform teaching.

- Teachers use chunking to break learning into more manageable units, checking for understanding, reducing the cognitive load (Sweller, 1988) and reducing overwhelm. Using knowledge of Cognitive Load Theory (Wiliam D, 2017) can reduce the mental load and improves retention.

- Prior Learning:

  Every lesson must meaningfully build on prior knowledge, using a sound knowledge of individual assessment data and pupil interests to drive progression. Building on Prior Learning reduces the cognitive load due to reducing the pressure of working memory and the act of retrieval supports this. The building of prior learning allows the learner to process larger, more complex concepts than previously. Lesson which are sequential, promote the building of prior learning. Ensuring that learners have secure prerequisite knowledge before teaching new content is essential to reduce cognitive load (Wiliam D). All classes will have a learning journey each term, which builds on the pupils learning and is used as an instructional tool.

Stretch and challenge is provided to learners, using scaffolding, modelling, adaptive teaching and assessment for learning.

<u>Assessment for Learning (AfL)</u>

AfL is not a standalone event but a continuous process.

- Real-Time Adjustments: Staff must use AfL strategies to assess progression in real time and reshape teaching in response to pupil feedback. Staff must use the whole school approach to AFL and use the AFL “Green for Great” continuum, which is then

adapted to the learner needs and responses. Effective AFL is used throughout the session, checking for misconceptions and moving learning forward.

- Personalised Feedback: Feedback must be specific, constructive, and accessible to the learner (e.g. using symbols or physical cues).
- Planning: Future planning must be informed by Individual Development Plans (IDPs), assessment data, and the pupil's own voice.

Role of Teaching Assistants (TAs)

TAs are highly effective partners in the learning process.

- Active Support**:**

  TAs will be proactive in providing adaptive scaffolding and checking for understanding.

- Reporting:

  TAs provide insightful feedback that informs both real-time adjustments and future lesson planning.

- Communication Support:

  TAs must incorporate the specific communication modalities (e.g. Signalong, use of PECS) which are always used by the learners in their class and support communication, to give effective feedback.

Learning Objectives and Learning Intentions

Learning objectives must be appropriate meaningful and purposeful for the learner. They describe the knowledge, understanding and skill the pupils will acquire by the end of the lesson.

Learning Intentions focusses on the process of how pupils learn the skill, what is going to be learned.

The Learning Environment (The "Third Teacher")

To support teaching, regulation and independence, the environment must be deliberately designed.

- Zoning and Structure:

  Classrooms must feature clear zoning for group work, independent tasks, and regulation.

- Visual Clarity:

  Displays must be purposeful, high-contrast, and uncluttered to reduce "visual noise" that can dysregulate ASD learners.

- Predictability:

  Visual schedules, cues, and objects of reference must be embedded and personalised to help pupils anticipate routines, promote independence and reduce transition anxiety.

- Sensory Support:

  Sensory regulation must be proactively planned and seamlessly integrated into daily routines rather than used reactively.

Role of the Teacher

- To teach in accordance with Ysgol Ty Coch's policies and planning protocols
- To make learning enjoyable, using a variety of approaches.
- To provide a classroom environment rich with independent learning opportunities.
- To teach through a multi-modal approach encouraging communication through the Total
  Communication approach.
- To promote independence and functional skills
- To incorporate individual pupil needs into lessons using the curriculum as a vehicle for learning.
- Use differentiation and adaptive support to ensure pupils needs are met.
- To develop appropriate routines and structure, promoting the teaching of functional skills to reduce the need for behaviour management strategies. This then reduces the occurrence and impact of behaviour that challenges
- To celebrate and praise pupil achievements.
- Liaising with multi-disciplinary teams
- The teacher is responsible for pitching questions at appropriate levels, specifically matching individual Blank's Levels to extend language and thinking.
- Teachers must design activities where scaffolding (visuals, adult prompting, task breakdowns) is seamlessly embedded and supports meaningful progress.
- The teacher must plan appropriately, ensuring that resources are appropriate for the learners and the lesson, where possible physical resources are promoted
- To assess the pupil, adapt teaching, plan for learning and next steps. The teacher must ensure all planning is informed by Individual Development Plans (IDPs), assessments, and Pupil Voice.
- Teachers must use Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies to assess progression in real time and adapt teaching in the moment to address misconceptions.
- The teacher is responsible for ensuring lessons are not standalone but build meaningfully on prior knowledge and pupil interests.

- Use the Effective Lesson Guide to improve lessons

Professional Standards and Growth

Teachers at our school are committed to continuous innovation and self-reflection.

- Self-Improving

  Teachers will regularly use the feedback from the Pedagogy Rubric and Pedagogy Profile to build on their progress against the 2025 Estyn Report areas.

- Innovative Practice:

  Staff are encouraged to see challenges as opportunities to grow and improve their instructional strategies for learners with complex needs.

  Teacher Champions support teachers through coaching, inset and micro-training to improve pedagogy

Key Features of Effective Learning

Engagement

Engagement is high when:

- learning is motivating and linked to pupil interests
- Activities are meaningful and purposeful
- Learners can respond in their chosen communication modality

Independence

Independence is promoted when

- there is a gradual reduction of adult support
- there is the development of functional life skills

Emotional Safety and Regulation

Emotional safety and regulation are promoted when

- there are calm, predictable environments
- sensory strategies are embedded
- respect for dignity and wellbeing is promoted

How Learning is Supported

Learning is facilitated through:

- Scaffolding and structured support
- Multisensory approaches
- Play and exploration
- Repetition and reinforcement
- Clear routines and expectations
- Appropriate communication strategies to facilitate clear feedback and pupil voice

Sensory Integration and Learning

We recognise that a regulated learner is ready to learn and as such:

- Sensory needs are proactively planned for
- Sensory strategies are embedded in daily routines
- Pupils are taught to recognise and manage their needs

The impact of effective sensory support is that it improves attention, engagement, which benefits behaviour and improves learner outcomes.

Measuring and Celebrating Progress

Progress is:

- Holistic – academic, social, emotional and communicative
- Often incremental and personalised

We use:

- Assessment for Learning
- Observation and evidence gathering
- Pupil voice
- Individual Development Plans
- Target setting data
- B squared
- Salford reading and comprehension
- OCR Life and Living Skills qualifications

- Pyramid data for pupils who are on Pyramid phases

Success is seen when pupils:

- Communicate more effectively
- Engage independently
- Show confidence and regulation
- Apply skills across contexts

Monitoring and Review

The policy is monitored through:

- Classroom observations
- Staff feedback and collaboration
- Assessment outcomes
- SLT review and evaluation

Continuous improvement is driven by:

- Reflective practice
- Professional learning
- Innovation in teaching and communication strategies

This Policy should be read alongside:

Curriculum Policies

Marking and Feedback policy

Assessment for Learning Policy

Assessment and Progression Policy

Monitoring Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Communication Policy

Classroom Environment Policy

Resources Policy

Professional Learning Offer

Health and Well-being Policy

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Effective Lesson Guide- What Makes an Effective Lesson?

Teaching & Classroom Practice

- ☐ Model enthusiasm and a love of learning to promote engagement.
- ☐ Know your learners well—sensory, emotional needs inform teaching
- ☐ Create a calm, organised, welcoming classroom , use space purposefully
- ☐ Clearly communicate what pupils are learning and why, using accessible language and success criteria.
- ☐ Total Communication is fully embedded, multimodal, and tailored to individual needs - 2 ways are better than 1!
- ☐ Strategies support independence and transitions using scaffolds, schedules.
- ☐ Use a clear lesson structure tailored to learner needs.
- ☐ Well-informed TAs promote learning , assessing understanding and adapting scaffolding.

Curriculum Learning Experiences

- ☐ Plan meaningful, effective lessons with clear objectives using exciting, engaging curriculum content. Focused and continuous provision activities, providing authentic learning that build skills and spark curiosity, engaging learners
- ☐ Differentiate tasks, according to pupil need, informed by IDPs and assessment; support all pupils including MAT learners. Use adaptive teaching
- ☐ Make deliberate links to prior learning to deepen understanding.
- ☐ Resource lessons well using practical, high-interest, authentic learning materials.

Assessment

- ☐ Give timely, stage-appropriate feedback, assessment informs next session.
- ☐ Embed Blank's Levels throughout lessons, personalised to learner, adjusting questions in real time. Use questions that stretch and challenge; all staff check for understanding and feedback to teacher
- ☐ Use AFL strategies throughout to identify and correct misconceptions; promoting self-assessment when appropriate .Use "Green for Great!"
- ☐ Collect evidence for Seesaw unobtrusively, using it to inform planning.

Pupil Voice

- ☐ Involve pupils in shaping what and how they learn using their interests.
- ☐ Plan time for pupil voice throughout the session, allowing space for communication and processing.
- ☐ Pupils are encouraged to express understanding, using Pupil Voice and participate using their preferred mode