



## **Curriculum Policy**

### **Aim:**

Ysgol Caban Aur (YCA) strives to provide an opportunity for each learner to develop greater self-confidence, through strengthening their belief in their personal abilities and potential for learning, whilst nurturing their aspirations, so that they may progress towards a wider choice of more fulfilling opportunities, of which they deserve.

### **Introduction:**

Ysgol Caban Aur is a small (registered for 4 pupils aged 11-16 years), independent, specialist school, that is within the organisation of Afon Goch Children's Home Ltd (AGCH). This organisation provides residential care with a therapeutic practice.

Learners who attend YCA have usually faced considerable barriers to learning, for diverse reasons, and have often experienced challenges in their lives that are greater than those of many of their peers. YCA's curriculum is composed of broad opportunities to successfully engage in learning. YCA works in close collaboration with the Afon Goch Children's Home ethos of; 'Relieve pain, restore hope and bring beauty to the world'. The therapeutic focus on each resident's care, by AGCH, is also intrinsically linked and integral to the school's practice.

### **Inclusivity:**

Inclusivity is increased by focusing on the individual needs of each learner - considering any additional learning needs (ALN) - which enables them to progress towards further education, training, or the world of work. Frequently, the consideration for any 'Behaviour, Emotional, Social Difficulties' (BESD) is initially prioritised.

### **Mainstream schooling:**

If a child is placed with AGCH that the placing authority wants to support the learner with continuing to attend their current local authority school, to continue with all, or part of, their education, then YCA and AGCH can accommodate for this as agreed in the placement arrangement. If a child has attended YCA exclusively for a period of time, and then returns to mainstream school provision, YCA ensures that all assessments are forwarded on, as well as subject reports and any ALN provision documentation.

### **Virtual &/or Blended Learning:**

YCA successfully maintained full education during the Covid lock-down, through 1:1 on-line, virtual teaching. This provision was enhanced by the use of visualisers, by both staff and learners, to clearly share work undertaken, or the use of printed, or scribed resources. The use of graphic tablets also enabled clearer presentation by the staff. Each learner was constantly supported by a member of the care staff during these on-line lessons.

**Tutors:**

If a child requires a specialist subject teacher, that is outside the provision of YCA, then YCA has previously used vetted tutors. This has been done either through on-line virtual teaching - but again with a member of the care staff in attendance - or with the tutor visiting the learner on the premises of YCA/AGCH. Safe-guarding procedures are followed.

**Reporting:**

The care staff receive daily feedback of each learner's progress in each lesson. Termly (5 week) subject reports are written for the attention of the care staff, social worker and any other approved, responsible adult. The reports also include attendance. Summary reports are provided for LAC reviews, or on transition to another school/college.

**Post-16:**

Ysgol Caban Aur has close links with the 'Head of Learning Services' at Grwp Llandrillo-Menai (Coleg Menai). YCA has had previous learners, transferring successfully from YCA into local college courses. AGCH and YCA have liaised closely so that the choice of courses and the transition into college is suitable for each individual. AGCH is registered for children aged 11-18years, so that residents have the opportunity to benefit from the educational provisions of YCA and then college whilst maintaining the security of their placement at AGCH.

**Curriculum design:**

Ysgol Caban Aur (YCA) is an independent, special school, as such, it follows the *Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003 (made under the Education Act 2002)* requirement to follow the seven 'areas' of; *Linguistics, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Humanities and social science, Physical exercise and Aesthetic and creative*: The curriculum allows for a broad and balanced education, tailored towards the individual learner's needs.

- **Linguistics** – *To develop learner's communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, and reading.* Where suitable, this may be partly delivered through the medium of Welsh, for the Welsh first language learners. Linguistics is delivered through designated English language and literature lessons in both KS3 & KS4. However, the emphasis of Linguistic skills is developed throughout the whole curriculum, emphasising the necessity for clear expression at appropriate levels.
- **Mathematics** – *To make calculations, to understand and appreciate patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly.* YCA approaches the learner's development of mathematical knowledge and understanding by being diligent to work from the learner's level on registration at the school. The context of delivery will be matched as appropriately as possible, for the developmental maturity of the learner.
- **Science** – *To increase the learner's knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces, through the process of practical enquiry, where possible.* Because scientific concepts rely on re-requisite body of knowledge and understanding, the scheme of work chosen and its delivery, will be informed by the learner's current level, as well as age.
- **Technology** – *To teach technological skills of developing, planning and communication ideas, working with tools, equipment, ICT and materials to produce products and evaluating outcomes.* ICT is used where appropriate for delivery, enquiry, measurement, recording, creating, communicating and displaying across the seven areas and is part of the development of the learner's digital competence. Practical construction tasks undertaken during the Gardening programme gives opportunities to develop technology skills. Food technology may be approached through 'Life Skills'.
- **Humanities and social science** – *To consider people, their environment and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions.* This could be developed through history, geography, and religious studies in KS3 and KS4. Sociology is available for KS4.

- **Physical exercise** – *To develop the learner's physical control and coordination, improving upon and evaluating their performance and to acquire the basic principles of fitness and health.* The Outdoor Education programme primarily delivers this area of the curriculum.
- **Aesthetic and creative** – *To develop the process of making, composing and inventing.* Art and literature are the primary subjects for encouraging and developing the personal, imaginative, and practical responses.

Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils.

Programmes of personal and social education (PSE) are used in both KS3 and KS4 education which addresses many of these issues. These programmes may also be developmental maturity dependent. The schemes for religious education and sociology also assists in addressing this developmental area. However, to also support this, consideration is given to these issues, when an appropriate opportunity arises in the other areas of the curriculum.

The Welsh culture is supported through the use of the expansive local history and its sites, the use of Welsh as a first language in lessons where practicable, and following a Welsh linguistics programme, if appropriate. The cultural diversity that has influenced the Welsh nation promotes racial acceptance. Mental health is at the forefront of consideration in managing behaviours and learning anxieties, aspects of which are addressed in PSE programmes. Programmes of 'Life Skills' are also used to promote social development.

**Outline curriculum structure:**

YCA's curriculum aims to satisfy the principal requirement of being '*broad and balanced*', through its provision of learning and experiences across the seven areas, both within YCA and through using carefully selected, certified external agencies if appropriate and suitable.

YCA's curriculum offers flexibility, which aims to allow individual learners to benefit from engaging in a wide range of learning experiences and settings, so that they are more likely to engage in their education. This flexible curriculum strives to help learners to address and overcome those barriers that have prevented them from accessing and participating fully in education, so that they are then able to access the curriculum that is most suitable for each individual learner.

In order to be suitable for different ages, abilities and aptitudes, YCA's curriculum covers working across Key Stages 3 and 4 (age 11-16). The curriculum provides access to their education through provisions that may range from 'Essential Skills entry level' to Higher tier GCSE standards. Practical 'challenges', 'topic work' and work orientated experiences/training, could also cater for other aptitudes. If necessary, a curriculum that is more suitable for a learner working below chronological age 11, will be provided.

YCA, through its curriculum and practice, will also strive to ensure that the school's curriculum is sympathetic to the Curriculum for Wales aim to; '*enable learners to make progress towards the four purposes*':

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives – through trying to instil self-confidence in learning and developing aspirations beyond their original expectations.
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work – through encouraging and celebrating their achievements, supporting through advice and guidance to strive towards a more fulfilling future life of work, study, or family.
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world – through exposing them to consider and develop their own opinions, thoughts and actions towards issues that are impacting on themselves, the local national and global community and environment.
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society. – through providing opportunities to develop a healthier approach to their own life and development and to have a considered and prepared plan and experiences for post-16, independent living.

**Assessment and progression:**

This curriculum is supported by ensuring that the general requirement to provide for appropriate progression for learners and include a range of provision to ensure this, is satisfied by scrutinising any records of ability and attainment assessments prior to placement, from the referral documents. For each new learner, there are assessments at the beginning of placement at YCA, and periodically during their educational programme, which allows YCA to ensure that an appropriate level, and range of the curriculum, is provided. YCA uses the referral information and some 'baseline' assessments on arrival to be informed of abilities on arrival, and then uses early summative assessments, as well as some formative assessments, to judge if the initial curriculum, and the level of work, is suitable for the new learner.

Formative and summative assessments will be used to help gauge progress in learning, and to support learner progression and inform teaching. The frequency and level of detail for these assessments will be matched to the needs to the individual learner, taking into account the developmental stage and any barriers to learning, and ensuring that each learner is able to demonstrate progress in line with their individual ability. Formative assessments provide quick feedback to the teacher, so that adjustments can be made in the lesson itself, they are part of an ongoing process that is embedded within day-to-day practice and is fundamental to the learning process. Assessments would be used based on the level of work the learner is accessing. This should consider the developmental stage and any barriers to learning, ensuring that each learner is able to demonstrate progress in line with their individual ability. GCSE level work will have subject tests (eg end of specific topics), using past GCSE questions from the WJEC examination board's question bank. These would be used proportionately to the needs of the individual pupil. As part of the teaching, staff aim to develop an understanding of how each learner learns, and what their attitude and approach to learning is, to support their continued progress and to foster commitment to their learning. Assessments helps the teachers to develop their understanding of progression, as well as inform future learning and teaching. Assessments also provide the information required as part of the need to keep parents and carers informed. Assessments are part of the self-evaluation process of the school, which give one form of indication of any need for improvements in the structure and delivery of the curriculum.

**Qualifications:**

In Key Stage 4, learners can be entered for:

- WJEC GCSEs
- AQA Entry Level Certificates in; Science, Mathematics and English
- AQA unit award scheme certificates (the Unit Award Scheme (UAS) is a unique way to record learner achievement. Its 'can do' approach is used to boost student confidence, engagement, and motivation.)
- John Muir Award
- Princess Trust 'Achieve'; 'Award' qualification, up to level 1 'Diploma' equivalent to 2 GCSEs (92 Performance Points).
- Personal Growth & Wellbeing; BTEC level 1 and level 2 certificates and awards, which could lead to the equivalent of up to 2 GCSEs. Level 1 subsidiary award = 6.25 Performance Points up to Level 2 Extended Certificate = 92 Performance points.
- London Institute of Banking & Finance (LIBF) leading to 'Lessons in Financial Education Award/Certificate'

## **Curriculum subjects:**

### **Key Stage 3:**

Outdoor Education; 'In-house' provision by the Outdoor Education hub of Afon Goch Children's Home Ltd; Climbing (indoors and outdoors), Mountaineering and hill walking, Navigation, Orienteering, Geocaching, Cycling, Mountain biking, Paddle-sports (canoeing, kayaking, Standing Up Paddle-board)

Mathematics; 'Mastering Mathematics'

Science; 'Science Progress'

English; 'Cambridge Checkpoint'

Art

Geography; 'Progress in Geography'

Welsh; 'Tanio'r Targed' (for Welsh first language learners)

Religious Studies

PSE

Personal Growth & Wellbeing

Careers; 'World of Work'

Therapeutic Projects; gardening, woodcraft, music, craft

Topic Work; - delivered as required

### **Key Stage 4:**

Outdoor Education; 'In-house' provision by the Outdoor Education hub of Afon Goch Children's Home Ltd; Climbing (indoors and outdoors), Mountaineering and hill walking, Navigation, Orienteering, Geocaching, Cycling, Mountain biking, Paddle-sports (canoeing, kayaking, Standing Up Paddle-board) leading to AQA unit award scheme certificates. Advanced skills could lead to a recognised qualification or award from the relevant sporting body.

Mathematics;

WJEC GCSE 'Mastering Mathematics'

AQA Entry Level Certificate

Science;

WJEC GCSE Double Award, or Single Award

AQA Entry Level Certificate

Welsh;

WJEC GCSE Welsh Language

WJEC Entry and Language Pathways

English;

WJEC GCSE English Literature and Language

WJEC GCSE English

AQA Entry Level Certificate ‘Step Up to English’

Geography:

WJEC GCSE Geography

Art:

WJEC GCSE Art & Design

Sociology:

WJEC GCSE Sociology

Religious Studies:

WJEC GCSE Religious Studies

PSE:

BTEC level 1 & level 2 in ‘Personal Growth & Wellbeing’

‘Get Ready for Adult Life’, BWISE, ‘Healthy Relationships’

London Institute of Banking and Finance (LIBF)

Prince’s Trust ‘Achieve’ award

John Muir awards

Therapeutic Projects: gardening, woodcraft, music, craft

Careers: ‘World of Work’ and/or Careers Wales, Work experience (if appropriate and available)

**References:**

*The Independent Schools Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003*

*Independent schools registration and operation guidance – information document 165/2014*

*Equality Act 2010*

*Welsh Government: The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021*

*Education Act 2002*

**Revised November 2021**

**Revised June 2022**

**Review: August 2023**