

# Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw

## Curriculum Policy 2015 – 16



### A. School's Aims and Objectives

The school's curriculum is based on the following principles:

1. The school's priority is that pupils learn in a safe environment.

To encourage every student to foster pride in their language, country and loyalty towards their community and roots.

To give every student the opportunity, to the best of his/her ability, to develop by learning skills, to foster an opinion, by sharing skills and deepening their understanding, which will be of relevance to them in life after they leave school, so that a solid foundation is in place for life as an adult in an ever changing world.

To expect and insist on high standards from every member of the school.

To give the child's instinctive curiosity an opportunity to develop in an inquisitive mind, and the ability to argue reasonably, to end an argument and to make his/her own decisions.

Ensure that every student develops the art of bilingual communication, orally and in writing.

To foster a family atmosphere at the school which welcomes every member of the community.

To promote respect towards others, towards religious, moral and spiritual values, and to foster tolerance towards different races, beliefs and attitudes, be it socially, economically or politically.

To encourage the students to be confident and encourage them to contribute towards society according to their ability and talents by ensuring plenty of opportunities for service, leadership and self-expression.

Assisting the students to appreciate the achievements and hopes of mankind.

To give every student the opportunity to understand the world and how individuals, groups and nations depend on each other. This is done in the school's provision of a wide and balanced curriculum, which conforms with all statutory requirements. A variety of opportunities are provided for pupils outside the classroom, based on the subject curriculum and outside the formal curriculum

## General Attitudes

The curriculum is wide, balanced and relevant, and the arrangements should facilitate moving students between teaching groups, if needed. We ensure that there is a balance between teachers specialisms and experience across the age and ability range. During the first three years, the curriculum is the same, more or less for learners of all abilities, but with differentiation in subject methodology. The basic skills group in year 7 follow a Welsh and Humanities course (CAD) which emphasises the development of the learners basic Literacy skills as well as presenting subject Knowledge in the Humanities. Examination courses are available for every student in years ten and eleven. Included are the G.C.S.E courses and the Entry Level Certificate. Included also are the Vocational and Work Skills Courses. At Key Stage 5, a wide choice of 'AS' and 'A2' courses are offered, as well as the BTEC Vocational Qualification and CACHE at level 2 and 3. Curriculum time is given to essential skill development within the BAC. Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw (due to a working partnership with Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni) met the skill measure early on. We offer 32 subjects at KS4 (30 at level 2), 7 of these vocational, and at KS5 30 subjects at Level 3, 6 of these vocational. Level 2 subjects are also offered for students in year 12 who have not gained qualifications to match 5 GCSEs.

## STATUTORY EDUCATION

This is the education that is compulsory for everyone between the age of five and sixteen.

## ACADEMIC YEAR

This is one period of the students' education. The academic year starts in September and ends in August.

e.g. Academic Year 7  
Starts in September 2015 and ends in August 2016.

## YEAR GROUPS

A student's year of education is defined according to the statutory education year.

Students start at this school after six months of statutory education in nursery and primary schools. A student in his/her first year of statutory education in this school is in year 7.

## KEY STAGE

Students' progress is assessed at the end of a key stage. There are four statutory key stages but students start at this school having already been through two key stages.

Year	7	8	9	10	11	1	1	1
Key Stage	3	4	5*					
Final	Levels	Vocational GCSE	Advanced Level					

Assessment		Vocational Level 1 and 2 Entry Level	LEVEL U2 BTEC Level 2 and 3 CACHE
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\* Key Stage 5 is not statutory

## **C. The Curriculum at Key Stage Three**

### **a. Subjects taught**

The curriculum provided at KS3 is in accordance with the 2008 curriculum requirements. It is regularly revised. All National Curriculum subjects are taught: Welsh, English, Mathematics, Science, Technology, History, Geography, Art, Music, Modern Languages (French and Spanish) as well as Religious Education, Physical Education, Personal and Social Education. In addition, Information Technology and Drama is taught in Years 7, 8 and 9. The basic skills groups in year 7 follows the Welsh and Humanities course. (CAD)

### **b. Length of Lessons**

The weekly total of hours taught is 25. A 5 day timetable is taught, and every lesson lasts for 30 minutes, except for the first lesson which is 35 minutes long.

### **(c) Differentiation**

Successful teaching depends on a variety of factors, but differentiation in teaching which meets the needs of all the pupils' needs is a very important factor. What accounts for these differences? Ability, enthusiasm, social background, gender.

### **ch) Able Children / Able and Talented**

MAT pupils must be stretched by offering them challenging work – however every student must be challenged and high expectations are expected from all pupils.

### **(d) Grouping of Students**

Many methods are used for pupil grouping.

## **HOUSES**

When students join the school they are placed in a house, and they remain in that house throughout their time at school in Key Stage 3 and 4.

Ebwy  
Llwyd  
Rhymni  
Wysg

## REGISTRATION GROUPS

When students join the school, registration groups are placed in a House. There are three combined registration groups in year 13 and four in year 12.

Year	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Registration Group	Ebwy 1 and 2 Llwyd 1 and 2 Rhymni 1 and 2 Wysg 1 and 2	Ebwy 1 and 2 Llwyd 1 and 2 Rhymni 1 and 2 Wysg 1 and 2	Ebwy 1 Llwyd 1 and 2 Rhymni 1 and 2 Wysg 1 and 2	Ebwy 1 and 2 Llwyd 1 and 2 Rhymni 1 and 2 Wysg 1 and 2	Ebwy 1 and 2 Llwyd 1 and 2 Rhymni 1 and 2 Wysg 1 and 2	Barlwm Gwyddon Sirhywi Tyleri	Barlwm Gwyddon Tyleri

### ***Setting***

It is believed that setting is an effective way of ensuring high achievement. Students are setted in Mathematics in year 7, and in Mathematics, Welsh, English and Science in Years 8 and 9. The Humanities and Modern Languages departments set together. There is one additional Special Educational Needs class, and Bridging classes. This year, in year 7 there is one strong bridging groups, one weaker group, a Special Educational Needs group and a group of students known as the MAT / "Able and Talented"

### ***Special Educational Needs***

To ensure that students with additional educational needs follow a full, balanced, detailed and relevant curriculum, statement pupils are taught in the most suitable group in their year. A subject specialist teaches them for every lesson, in sets wherever pupils are placed in sets, and they are fully integrated for Technology, Information Technology, Art, Music and Physical Education. The Special Educational Needs group and bridging class have French lessons in year 7, 2 lessons; Spanish in year 8 (with an additional lesson of Welsh and English) and study Spanish in year 9 (with an additional lesson of Welsh and English).

### ***Mirror Banding***

Students in years 7,8 and 9 are split into two bands and mixed ability groups or sets are arranged within the two bands, if departments wish to set. Two thirds of lessons will be in groups according to bands/sets. For the remaining third of the week, namely the practical lessons (Music, Art, DT and ICT) pupils will be in mixed ability groups. Detailed consultations have taken place with the junior schools before the pupils are placed in sets.

## Year 7

Pupils study the subject as a teaching group.

YEAR	Islwyn	Machen
7	Ystrwyth Gwyddon & Pencarn & a Sirhywi *	Tyleri Brynar Carn Caio

- Special Educational Needs group & bridging group

For some subjects, we will combine teaching groups to create teaching groups that are more suitable.

e.g. Physical Education and Technology, Music, Art, Information Technology.

Physical Education (KS3)	e.g Combining Islwyn to create three or four teaching groups
Technology (KS3)	e.e. Combining Islwyn to create three or four small teaching groups

## Years 8 and 9

Pupils study a subject as a teaching group and follow the same pattern as year 7.

### **Banding in Core Subjects**

Every student is placed in a set for every core subject within the appropriate band and attend lessons during a specific period.

#### Year 8

<b>Welsh / English / Science / Mathematics</b>	
Islwyn	Set 1 - 4 (Separate)
Machen	Set 1 - 4 (Separate)

#### Year 9

<b>Welsh / English / Science / Mathematics</b>	
Islwyn	Set 1 - 3 (Separate)
Machen	Set 1 - 4 (Separate )

Modern Languages, Religious Studies, History and Geography place students in specific sets and they attend lessons during a specific periods. These sets do not interfere with pupil distribution in any other subjects. It is the school's wish that every pupil studies French in year 7, that the majority in year 8 and 9 study French and Spanish, and the bridging sets and SEN pupils study Spanish in years 8 and 9.

## Practical Lessons at Key Stage Three

Pupils receive several practical lessons in every year group during KS3.

Year	Additional Subjects	
	<b>Design and Technology</b>	
7	Design and Technology (2)	Art (2) Music (2) Information Technology (2)
8	Design and Technology (2)	Art (2) Music (2) Information Technology (2)
9	Design and Technology (2)	Art (2) Music (2) Information Technology (2)

## Ch. The Curriculum at Key Stage Four

### The Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The KS4 curriculum is based on a combination of compulsory external core subjects, optional foundation subjects and statutory non-examination courses. The school had committed to the Entry Level 14-19 principles and together with the groundbreaking partnership with Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni has established a range of suitable vocational courses for the students. This has led to a rise in the number of pupils returning to the sixth form, and has resulted in an increase in our 5 A\*-C results – the next target is to increase the capped points score.

### (ii) Courses

#### ***General Certificate in Secondary Education***

The following GCSE courses are taught: Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics), Mathematics, Welsh, English, History, Geography, Religious Studies; French and Spanish, DCT Graphics, DCT Design, and DCT Food / Catering, Information Technology, Art, Drama, Music, Psychology and Physical Education\*.

\* *Th* for Physical Education (GCSE) on the Curriculum Plan

#### ***Entry Level Certificate***

Entry Level Subjects are taught in the following subjects: Mathematics, Welsh, English, History, Catering. It is the school's intention to increase this provision.

Special Educational Needs pupils are integrated within mixed ability classes for many subjects.

### **Vocational Courses- First Certificate Level 1 and 2**

Vocational Courses at First Certificate Level 2, worth one or two GCSEs, are taught in the following subjects: Science, Construction, Business, Health and Social Care, Work Skills and Travel and Tourism.

### **(iii) Teaching Groups**

Pupils are placed in sets whenever practically possible with regards to the timetable and staffing. Science, Mathematics, Welsh, English is taught in sets according to ability. If taught in more than one class, Heads of Departments of foundation subjects are also encouraged to set their students. If there is only one class, that particular class will be taught as a mixed ability group.

The three highest bands in year 11 are taught separately. Double Science is taught to the remainder of the year group. In Year 10, separate science is an option for more able pupils.

#### **Year 10**

	<b>Ma/Sci A</b>	<b>Ma/Sci B</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	Set 1 -3	Set 4 -6
<b>Science</b>	Set 4 -6	Set 1 -3

	<b>We/Eng A</b>	<b>We/Eng B</b>
<b>Welsh</b>	Set 1 -3	Set 4 -6
<b>English</b>	Set 4 -6	Set 1 -3

#### **Year 11**

As Above

Pupils' curriculum has been split into statutory, core and optional certificate. The curriculum structure is set out below.

	<b>SUBJECTS</b>	<b>TEACHING GROUPS</b>	
<b>CORE (32)</b>	Welsh (8) Applied Science (8) Level 2 (8)	English (8) GCSE Mathematics (8)	Setted according to ability in the subject
<b>STATUTORY (2)</b>	PSHE Non-Timetable Days Religious Education Careers Sex Education Citizenship	Physical Education (2)	Half the year group taught core Subject e.g. Year 11: English
<b>OPTIONAL (16)</b>	<b>Humanities</b>		

4 x (4)	Religious Education Psychology	History Geography	According to option order.
	Travel and Tourism Level2		
	<b>Languages</b>		
	French	Spanish	
	<b>Technology /Creative</b>	If many students have opted for the subject it may possible to set according to ability.	
	GCSE Physical Education GCSE Information Technology	Drama Music	
	Design and Technology Graphics Construction Art and Design	Catering Health and Social Care Level 2	
	Business Level 2 Construction Level 2	BTEC Work Skills Level 2 and 1	

#### (iv) CHOICES

To ensure a balanced curriculum, pupils are advised to make wise choices.

This way, a wide, balanced and relevant curriculum is ensured. With regards to advising pupils, the following arrangements are adhered to:

- Meeting with parents in the Spring, leaflets distributed, discussions and meetings with teachers, students met.
- Approximately a month later, information is collected and the first version of the groups are created, teacher consultation, students who have made unsuitable choices re-contacted, parents contacted.
- Second draft with changes so that groups are balanced.
- During the summer all parents are contacted in writing, choices noted and any suitable advice noted.
- For a two week period at the start of year 10 situation is monitored and necessary changes made. We do not refuse option changes but everything depends on class sizes, pupil ability and how much work has been missed.

#### ch. Key Stage 5

The majority of pupils now decide to continue with their post 16 education. They see it as an advantage to gain further qualifications- Levels A2 / AS / CACHE / BTEC- which could in turn lead to University Degrees. By now, we see that approximately 60% of students in Year 11 decide to come back to the Sixth Form at this school. This has gradually increased from 56% in 2006 to approximately 70% in 2012.



The school has a good reputation with regards to examination results;

In 2015, 99% of students who sat their AS courses at school managed to achieve grades A to E; also, over 83% of them managed to achieve grades A to C. A large majority of them managed to win a place at University and in Further Education Establishments.

In 2014, 99% of students who sat their AS courses at school managed to achieve grades A to E; also, over 79% of them managed to achieve grades A to C. A large majority of them managed to win a place at University and in Further Education Establishments.

Students need a lot of support and personal advice to succeed at school. In the Sixth Form, as in the rest of the school, we emphasise the need for pupil support, pupil concern and pupil advice. This very advantageous if a student is to eventually succeed. We will give regular information to students and parents with regards to their progress in their subjects.

As a school we emphasise the importance of the pupils' individual development. This encompasses not only their academic achievement but also their social success. Whilst we remember the school's social, cultural and sporting achievements, it comes as no surprise that the school has much to offer future sixth form students.

### **Which Courses To Take?**

Detailed advice is given to students who show an interest in returning to study at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. During the Easter Term in Year 11, a Sixth Form handbook is distributed to students. A questionnaire is carried out to discover who intends returning to the Sixth Form, which subjects they intend studying, and which students intend leaving school after 16 years of age. A special Year 11 parents meeting is arranged so that Sixth Form courses may be explained. Heads of Departments attend the meeting and advise students' suitability for various courses. The pastoral team and the Curriculum Deputy undertake further work, and sources such as information from the Russell University Group is given sensitively and firmly. Following these consultations, Option columns are created and the information is posted to every Year 11 student. A further consultation period takes place.

The school is able to offer a wide range of courses- Level AS/A2/BTEC courses. There are many paths open. AS subjects or BTEC courses may be studied only, CACHE courses only, or AS and BTEC courses may be combined. Every student who returns to school to study have an option review interview. Usually, a wide range of subjects are offered and timetable changes made.

### **AS Level**

AS level courses are taught in the following subjects: Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Welsh, English, History, Geography, Religious Studies; French, Spanish, Design Technology, Information Technology; Art, Art Photography, Drama, Music, Psychology, Sociology, Law, Economics, Politics and Physical Education.

### **BTEC Level 2**

Travel and Tourism, Health and Social Care, Business (Eight timetabled lessons with a teacher and four additional timetabled lessons of personal study in a specialized room) and the Classroom Assistant CACHE.

### **BTEC Level 3**

Travel and Tourism, Health and Social Care, Business, Hospitality, Science and the Classroom Assistant CACHE.

### **A2 Level**

A2 level courses are taught as a continuation of AS Courses.

### **The Welsh BAC**

Every pupil at Key Stage 5 study the Welsh BAC.

Updated by RhWD 8/10/15

Date of Policy Approval by Governing Body:	January 2016
Chair of Governors Signature:	
Headteacher's Signature:	
Period before Review:	One year
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