



Curriculum Policy

Review Date: March 2025

Next Review Date: March 2026

Curriculum Policy

The Curriculum at the Gwenllian Education Centre (GEC) meets the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024 in that it provides pupils with experience in the following areas:

- Language & Communication
- Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Humanities
- Health and Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts

The curriculum is designed specifically to meet the needs of our pupils with autism and related conditions. We endeavour to provide our pupils with enjoyable and positive experiences that will enable our pupils to be motivated to learn, will accept and enjoy the educational experiences, will develop independence, and therefore develop as social and communicative individuals. The curriculum is individualised and tailored to each pupil's ability and pays particular attention to communication, language development, daily living skills, and social skills.

The GEC aims:

- To provide a curriculum that is broad, balanced, relevant and purposeful.
- To ensure that every learner, parent/carer and member of staff can make a positive contribution to an environment in which they are kept and feel safe and valued through the promotion of health, achievement and enjoyment.
- To enable pupils to develop the skills that they need for future life
- To build on pupils' prior experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding.
- To strive for our pupils to experience and demonstrate continuous progress and achievement.
- To effectively assess pupils to inform the learning needs.
- To provide a dynamic and flexible curriculum to meet changing needs.
- To make explicit what is taught and how the intended teaching and learning takes place.
- To provide stimulating learning environments.
- To create effective partnerships with carers, parents and other professionals.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to celebrate success and achievement.

Assessments

All pupils are assessed on entry using a wide variety of assessment that are developmentally appropriate. This information and the information provided from the pupil's previous school(s) is used to develop bespoke educational programmes for each pupil.

Assessments for some or all pupils were relevant, include:

- The Welsh Progressions Steps and Pre-Progression Steps
- The Verbal Behaviour Milestones and Placement Program (VBMAPP)
- The Assessment of Basic Language and Learner Skills – Revised (ABLLS-r)
- The Assessment of Functional Living Skills. These include:
 - i) Basic Living Skills Assessment
 - ii) Home Skills Assessment
 - iii) Community Participation Assessment
 - iv) School Skills Assessment
 - v) Independent Living Skills Assessment
 - vi) Vocational Skills Assessment
- The Essentials for Living (EFL)
- The Social Skills Assessment (Socially Savvy)
- The Autism Progress Assessment
- Big Maths
- Relationship and Sexuality Education
- Test of Abstract Language Comprehension (TALC)

This ongoing cycle of information gathered is used to ensure that relevant educational plans are maintained by teachers, in liaison with the departmental Behavioural Analysts. Regular meetings with relevant professionals including the Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, and contributions from parents, all contribute to the individualised curriculum experienced by pupils.

For further information about our ARR procedures, please refer to the ARR policy.

Programmes of Work

We recognise that we provide education to pupils with a wide age-range, 5 through to 19 years old. We support pupils with a wide range of educational requirements. Many pupils will follow programmes to enable them to master prerequisite skills to learning, prior to progressing to more academic type lessons, while other pupils will follow more traditional academic programmes.

The needs of the pupils can be quite diverse, including their educational priority areas. We therefore operate 2 educational departments in the school (Adran Las and Adran Borffor) to allow us to implement programmes of study that are relevant to the needs of pupils in each department. However, some aspects may be relevant to all pupils in both departments.

Each pupil's programme is tailored to their individual needs. By developing efficient systems and practices within each department, we ensure that resources are allocated and utilised effectively for all pupils.

Adran Las

Adran Las provides education to children and young adults with a Severe Learning Disability (SLD). The identified priority areas for all pupils in Adran Las includes:

- Learning-to-learn skills
- Cooperation with adult-led tasks
- Reducing Behaviour that Challenges
- Visual Performance
- Receptive Language
- Imitation
- Speaking/echoing
- Communication
- Labelling
- Answering basic questions
- Spontaneous Vocalisations
- Syntax and Grammar
- Play and Leisure
- Social Interaction
- Group Instruction
- Following Classroom Routines
- Generalised Responding across People, Settings and Stimuli
- Reading Skills
- Math Skills
- Writing Skills
- Spelling
- Dressing Skills
- Eating Skills
- Grooming
- Toileting Skills
- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills
- Sex and Relationships

Target skills and programmes of work are developed for pupils based on their individual assessments. The programmes are also developed in liaison with key therapists, parents and the departmental Behaviour Analysts. In addition to the individualised programmes, pupils in KS1 to KS3 will access activities based on the new curriculum for Wales. We have developed a 4-year cycle of relevant and engaging themes that form the basis for our long-term curriculum plan. Teachers use this planning to develop cross curricular activities/lessons for all pupils to access. Whilst pupils are taught 1:1 throughout a large part of the day, many pupils will access the theme-based lessons/activities as part of a group. For pupils who have not yet developed the pre-requisite skills for group learning, time is spent on developing their skills in this area e.g., learning to communicate, wait, take turns, imitate others, respond to instructions etc.

Group activities/lessons are an opportunity for pupils to gain exposure to a wide range of interesting topics, and to generalise their skills from their individualised programmes into the group setting.

EQUALS scheme of work is also available to all teachers to assist with ensuring breadth and balance is achieved when exploring the teaching of theme-based activities/lessons.

Adran Borffor

Pupils in Adran Borffor typically present with advanced levels of language and cognition. Pupils may also present with behaviour that challenges that require additional support to manage. Pupils typically have a history of disrupted schooling, and although cognitively-able to perform on par with their same-aged peers in some subjects, pupils have missed a significant amount of education in comparison to similar-aged peers in mainstream school.

Pupils in Adran Borffor work on developing their social skills, daily living skills, academic learning, and access to the community and the world of work. All pupils in Adran Borffor are provided with an individualised programme of learning based on their baseline assessments, liaison with parents, and other relevant professions. A proportion of the pupil's learning is subject-based (based on the new curriculum for Wales), and lessons are developed using the EQUALS scheme of work at KS2, KS3, KS4 and KS5, in preparation for accredited courses in KS4 and KS5.

A significant proportion of the curriculum allows pupils to develop functional living skills and work experience. This is delivered using the Equals Moving on Curriculum. Other resources are also utilised including the Assessment of Functional Living Skills.

Pupils in Adran Borffor are able to follow GCSE courses and sit examinations at GEC. Pupils will follow aspects of the curriculum through 1:1 lessons, and/or as a group, where appropriate.

All pupils access Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) that is delivered at suitable stages of development and need, as well as accessing a programme to support their awareness of feelings, emotions and relationships. Pupils that require support in this area will be provided with a relevant and suitable RSE programme following discussions with parents and the team surrounding the pupil.

All pupils in Adran Las and Adran Borffor, from the age of 12 years on, can access ASDAN courses that are suitable for them, and have the opportunity to gain ASDAN certificates and credits.

All pupils in Adran Las and Adran Borffor also have the opportunity to gain both internal and external work experience in an area that interests them. These experiences may take place in school and with local businesses.

Teaching

All pupils in Adran Las are taught using the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) using discrete trial teaching, natural environment teaching and incidental learning.

Pupils in Adran Borffor are taught through more traditional-type lessons that match that of mainstream, but ABA is also utilised for teaching social skills and reducing and behaviour that challenges.

Developing positive teacher-pupil relationships is the foundation upon which our pupils develop trust and motivation to learn. This is achieved through conducting various preference assessments that allow teachers to find out what motivates the pupil. Staff will then pair themselves with positive reinforcement by delivering the pupil's preferred activities and items and making themselves fun and engaging.

Teaching of the curriculum/skills may be delivered in groups (where appropriate) and/or through 1:1 lessons, natural environment teaching, incidental learning opportunities and cross curricular lessons. ICT is also widely used for teaching the curriculum.

Some pupils are taught in individual or communal classrooms. There is a significant emphasis on developing pupil's motivation to learn, therefore learning takes place in all permitted areas of the school e.g. (classrooms, trampoline, garden, swings etc.) and in the community e.g., during shopping trips, walks, educational visits etc. All pupils also have access to their own reinforcers that are delivered to shape skills to independence, or when work is completed to an achievable and specified standard.

Post-16

Pupils who enter post-16 may continue with their individual programme, but an emphasis is placed on preparing pupils for life after school and further developing skills around a special interest. Each pupil's programme is individualised to meet their needs.

Pupils may be taught 1:1 or in a group where appropriate, and learning may take place in the community and/or in school.

Some pupils will follow GCSE pathways in subject areas of their choice using the EQUALS GCSE schemes of work, and when necessary, can progress to studying for A Levels. GCSE and A Level courses are delivered by trained subject teachers via online learning platforms which pupils can access during the school day. All pupils are supported by their TA to access the courses and to prepare for examinations.

Pupils at the end of KS4 are given the opportunity to access college open days in order to prepare them for college life.

Pupils at post-16 continue to access work experience opportunities and ASDAN courses and qualifications.

Community Participation

Our curriculum includes opportunities for community engagement through visits from external professionals who teach our pupils about various careers, life skills, and community roles. These visitors provide valuable insights and hands-on learning experiences that align with our curriculum's focus on functional and socially significant skills. Additionally, pupils regularly access the community to practice and develop their community participation skills. These real-life experiences, such as visits to local shops, parks, and other public spaces, help reinforce the skills learned in school and support the pupils' ability to engage meaningfully with the world around them.

Work Experience

As part of our curriculum, we provide pupils with tailored work experience opportunities that allow them to gain practical, hands-on experience in various work environments. These placements are designed to enhance pupils' employability skills, foster independence, and promote an understanding of different career paths. By working alongside professionals in real-world settings, pupils develop important skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. These experiences are integrated into the curriculum to ensure they align with each pupil's individual learning needs and aspirations, helping to prepare them for future employment opportunities.

Recording Progress

Progress of pupils in Adran Las is assessed and recorded daily through specific data collection methods (such as trial-by-trial data and/or probe data). Trial by trial data involves recording the pupil's response for each trial that is presented to them, whereas probe data records only the first response of the day for each skill area. Pupils are exposed to a high frequency of trials per day where prompts are used to help the pupil to respond. Prompts are faded out over successive trials until the pupil has mastered the skill. A mastery-criteria is set for each skill and progress is graphed daily. If progress is not made within 5 data paths, teaching strategies are reviewed and changed until the skill is mastered.

For pupils in Adran Borffor, progress is assessed at the end of each lesson through plenaries and the marking of work, as well as written assessments at the end of each unit. If pupils are struggling with a particular area, they will receive 1:1 sessions with their teacher where more time can be spent on acquiring the skills/knowledge.

Health and Wellbeing for some pupils is taught through timetabled sessions either individually or as a group, and for others, it is embedded throughout their day. Self-help skills, daily living skills and promoting independence are also targeted through incidental learning opportunities and throughout the school day.

Inclusion

Pupils have the opportunity to interact with each other in the school, and although there may be a significant range in pupils' ages, pupils may be taught and supported to access learning and social activities based on their educational, social and behavioural skills, rather than by age, if appropriate.

All pupils have the opportunity for inclusion providing it can be managed safely and positively.

When suitable, we are always considerate that some of the school pupils may develop skills and learn to manage their behaviour to a level that allows them to experience or re-integrate in to mainstream school. Therefore, we ensure that links with local mainstream schools are fostered when required.

Resources and Shared Best Practices

We also ensure that our resources, teaching strategies and ideas for best practice are available to other independent and state schools, and organisations in the community. We welcome all aspects of inclusion within the school and community, and promote these opportunities to provide worthwhile experiences for all pupils whenever possible.

At the Gwennlian Education Centre, we encourage a willingness to grow and develop. We will always embrace new ideas and review procedures as new guidelines become available that may benefit the pupils and the school in accordance with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.