



# **A WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS**

**Chair of Governors:**

**Date: November 2022**

**Date of Review: November 2025**

# **A Whole School Policy for Additional Learning Needs**

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## **Introduction**

All schools are required to have due regard to the Code of Practice for Additional Learning Needs when carrying out their duties towards all pupils with Additional Learning Needs. This is a particularly important issue for Ysgol Bryn Derw since the prime purpose of the school is to provide quality educational provision for children described as having Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). At Ysgol Bryn Derw, all of the school population have Additional Learning Needs.

As part of their statutory duties, the governing bodies of all Maintained Schools are required to produce information about and report on the school's policy for Additional Learning Needs. This policy outlines;-

- Basic information about the school's Additional Learning Needs provision.
- Information about how the school identifies, assesses and provides for our pupils all of whom have Additional Learning Needs.
- Information about the school's staffing policies and partnership with bodies beyond the school.

This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff and the governing body. The policy is reviewed annually by the governing body and subsequently is revised and appropriate amendments made. Information is also included in the Governing Body Annual Report to Parents.

At Ysgol Bryn Derw, Additional Learning Needs are considered within the whole school perspective. The school seeks to promote an approach that helps to create an atmosphere of encouragement, security, acceptance, respect for achievements and sensitivity to individual needs, consequently our policy for ALN seeks to ensure that the overall aims of the school are met.

The aims of the school are as follows:

- To provide a rich learning environment with a variety of learning experiences, which are geared towards enabling each pupil to experience success in a happy, caring, secure environment.
- To provide access for every pupil to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which includes the prescribed Curriculum which is suitably adapted and modified as appropriate to age and ability.
- To plan and shape the teaching of the curriculum to be responsive to individual needs and to minimise the effects of any disabilities upon learning.

- To give specific, specialised support to all aspects of development, in order to help each individual pupil progress towards as great a degree of independence as possible. Such support will include a multi – disciplinary approach where appropriate.
- To provide each child with a series of individual education programmes incorporating a progressive and relevant sequence of concepts, skills and knowledge; which are based on individual need, and which build on individual strengths.
- To prepare young people for the transition to adulthood, by providing the opportunity to practice independence skills in real life situations including, where appropriate, vocational training and supported placement in work experience.

This policy for ALN seeks to ensure that these aims are met. Above all this policy seeks to ensure that the school responds to pupils’ diverse learning needs, that suitable learning challenges are set for all pupils, and that potential barriers for learning are overcome.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff at Ysgol Bryn Derw. It aims to promote the following principles;

- An acceptance that all pupils are the responsibility of all staff.
- All staff recognise that everyone is an individual within the community of the school.
- A genuine belief shared by all staff that all children are of equal worth.
- A common policy for identifying any children with Additional Learning Needs.
- Agreed strategies for helping individual pupils.
- A system of individual record keeping.
- A common policy for the involvement of parents.
- Clear and agreed arrangements with external support services.
- Equitable distribution of resources throughout the school.

## **Basic information regarding special education provision at Ysgol Bryn Derw**

ALN Leader                    - Richard Drew (Headteacher)

ALN Governor                - Chris May (LA Governor)

Ysgol Bryn Derw is a special day school which educates children and young people with a primary need of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Some pupils may also have additional forms of Additional Learning Needs, such as visual or hearing impairments, severe learning difficulties, others may display behaviours that challenge.

ALN Register

- All pupils on the school roll are included on the school ALN Register
- The Additional Learning Needs Register is kept up to date via the ICT administration system called SIMS which is a system shared across school, Local Authority and the Welsh Government.

## **SPECIALIST FACILITIES**

As a Special School, Ysgol Bryn Derw offers a range of specialist facilities. These include;

- Access for pupils using wheelchairs; including outdoor facilities.
- Three specially designed multi-sensory soft play rooms to provide pupils with multi-sensory experiences and active play.
- Three multi-sensory rooms specialised multi-sensory equipment and staff who have relevant expertise.
- Low arousal quiet room spaces.
- Two Independent Living Skills rooms.
- Specialist ICT Equipment in all classrooms and dedicated sensory rooms.
- Trampoline to provide Rebound Therapy.

## **Identification, assessment and provision**

### **IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT**

Identification and assessment of pupils with ALN are not viewed as ends in themselves, but as continuous processes which provide information in terms of individual needs so that appropriate provisions, e.g. targets for learning or strategies to enable learning can be established for all pupils. Pupils are identified as having ALN, before admission to Ysgol Bryn Derw. However, the assessment of these needs (which can change over a period of time) is on going throughout their school careers.

Procedures for such assessment include the following;

- By ongoing recorded, structured observations of pupil progress, which serve to inform teacher judgements of best fit levels descriptions of their current attainment and progress over time
- By the use of assessment tools including Routes for Learning, P levels, Foundation / National curriculum level descriptions and National Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence descriptors
- Advice and reports from visiting specialists from the Education, Health and Social Services.
- The measure of individual progress towards specific criteria within curriculum, subject or areas of development, as compared with similar pupils in similar schools via moderation activities

In all of the above – mentioned procedures, teachers (along with the staff who support the pupils in class) are the key. Much rests upon their professional skill and judgement in assessing individual needs within appropriate provision.

Moderation of teachers' judgement are in place via the use of national schemes including PACE as well as moderation workshops across other special schools.

### **PROVISION OF A BROAD, BALANCED AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM**

The whole curriculum at Ysgol Bryn Derw has a distinct character in that each child is placed at the centre of the educational process, with curriculum content being based on each child's individual needs.

Ysgol Bryn Derw fully endorses the entitlement of all pupils to a broadly based, relevant and differentiated curriculum. In the context of an all age school for pupils with ASD and learning disabilities, the frame work for planning, teaching and assessment of the curriculum will differ according to the age of each pupil as well as each pupil's level of development.

See the Ysgol Bryn Derw 'Curriculum for Wales Policy' for details of the curriculum approach at Ysgol Bryn Derw.

## **ORGANISATION AND GROUPING OF PUPILS**

The classes of Ysgol Bryn Derw are organised primarily according to age, and then with regard to their individual needs and group dynamics.

These decisions are made according to each pupil's level of development. The important element is that all our pupils have access to appropriate specialist provision within the school, and benefit from as many experiences within the wider context of school as possible.

## **STATEMENTS OF ALN AND REVIEWS**

As mentioned earlier, all of the school population are included on the school's register for ALN. Many have their needs formally addressed in a Statement of Additional Learning Needs via the ALN Regulations Code of Practice, others have a Local Authority IDP. All pupils will move to a Local Authority IDP by 2024.

Whether pupils have a 'Statement' or not each and every pupil at Ysgol Bryn Derw benefits from an annual review of their individual needs to which parents are invited. An Individual Development Plan is then drawn up to inform future planning.

The purpose of this annual review is as follows;

- To review the special provision made for the pupil, including the appropriateness of any special equipment or support provided.
- To determine the appropriateness of the Statement or Individual Development Plan; including any amendments which may be necessary.
- To establish whether the pupil is achieving the intended progress.
- To set new targets for the coming year: progress towards those targets will be considered at the next annual review in the following year.

A requirement of the Code of Practice for ALN is that the first annual review after the child's 14th birthday is the 'Transition Review' where decisions are made regarding post school options. The agencies which play a major role in the post school years are involved and consideration is given to the range of options available, with advice from a specialist careers' officer. A Transition Plan is prepared following the meeting. At Ysgol Bryn Derw this will usually be concerned with arrangements for a smooth transition to or within the tertiary department, since we hope that nearly all of our 16+ students will elect to stay at school until the age of 19 years. For young people at Ysgol Bryn Derw, the involvement of social care services and health services will be of particular importance.

For all reviews of ALN at Ysgol Bryn Derw, the following protocol is reserved:

- Review dates are circulated to Careers, Social Services, Health Services and the LEA well in advance
- A copy of the School Advice Report is provided for parents at least two weeks in advance of the meeting along with agenda of the meeting.
- Opportunities are provided for parents to contribute in writing to the review meeting.
- Minutes are taken at the review meeting and are forwarded to all present as soon as possible after the meeting.

Currently a range of other professionals who are involved with pupils are provided with the review dates in order that they may attend if so required. This circulation includes the following agencies;

- Careers Wales
- Social Services
- Speech & Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapy
- Community Learning Disability Nurse
- Educational Psychologist

## **THE STRUCTURE OF THE REVIEW REPORT**

The content of the review report is structured to address the objectives within each pupil's Statement of SEN / Individual Development Plan (IDP) and their individual education plan (IEP).

For each pupil the content of school advice will be as follows;

- A statement of the nature of the curriculum taught to the pupil according to that child's age and stage of development, making particular reference to whether it includes the relevant National Curriculum, and /or the 14 – 19 curriculum.
- A comment on a pupil's general learning.
- Progress towards specific targets set at the last review meeting.
- A record of attainment in all key skills areas is also included.

The information in terms of progress made in these areas will address the longer-term objectives contained within the Statement of SEN / IDP and inform decisions regarding future targets.

Future targets for the forthcoming year are also included in the school's advice. In planning these targets, staff will take into account of previous progress and also assessment information.

## **INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLANS (IEP)**

Additional Learning needs can be highly individualised in nature and in order for many of our pupils to progress in terms of overall development, their respective needs are met by means of individualised educational programmes and address particular areas.

The objectives contained within each child's Statement of SEN / Individual Development plan are used to develop each child's IEP. At the annual review of ALN for each child, long term objectives are refined into targets for the forthcoming year. The success of the IEPs will be updated and evidenced on a termly basis by teachers under the monitoring of senior leaders, and can then be evaluated with the parents and in some cases other professionals during the next annual review.

A coherent approach across the school towards developing individual education programmes is in place.

### **INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR PLAN (IBP)**

This plan is created for pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour. Its aim is to ensure a consistent approach is adopted in the management of this behaviour across classes, settings and staff.

The IBP should only be completed after careful observation and assessment i.e. recording the target behaviours, their antecedents and their consequences. To assist with this assessment process, specific behaviour assessments are available to members of staff. IBP development and implementation will depend upon how accurately the assessment of the targeted behaviours has been conducted. The more frequently such assessment is conducted, the more accurate it is likely to be, especially if more than one member of staff is involved in this assessment.

The writing of the IBP is the direct responsibility of the class teacher and the lead teacher for Behaviour. Following review, they will be re-structured accordingly. Each IBP is reviewed continuously by class staff and on a summative basis, at least termly by lead teacher, who reports to the Headteacher.

## **Staffing policies, partnership with parents and external agencies**

### **ARRANGEMENTS FOR IN- SERVICE TRAINING (INSET)**

As a Special School, all of the INSET that takes place at Ysgol Bryn Derw is targeted towards enhancing the educational provisions for pupils and young people with ALN. Details about the school's policy on INSET, as well as the full range of training undertaken during the current Academic Year is managed by the Senior Leadership Team.

As a school, Ysgol Bryn Derw seeks to promote a multi-disciplinary approach towards providing for its pupils with ALN. Ysgol Bryn Derw benefits from a range of visiting professional from Education, Health and Social Services.

Ysgol Bryn Derw is served by visits from Occupational Therapists, who work in close association with teaching staff and other therapists, on a range of activities including helping pupils to be as independent in daily living activities as possible; including aiding good fine and gross motor skills, developing sensory processing skills and supporting the chaining of tasks.

Speech and Language Therapy is provided in partnership with the local education authority and NHS. Some individual children are taught directly by the speech and language therapist or the school's specialist teaching assistant. In other instances, these staff provide classroom staff with specific

information and advice on supporting children with receptive and expressive language difficulties and/or problems with articulation. Advice on feeding difficulties is also part of the speech and language therapist's role. Numerous teachers and teaching assistants are involved in implementation of feeding programmes planned on an individual basis in association with speech and language therapists.

The Educational Psychologist maintains regular contact with Ysgol Bryn Derw with regard to individual pupils, monitoring performance and advising School on appropriate educational provision. Such work will often mean working with both home and school. Psychological input and advice may be available at the Annual Review, and can be called upon as required.

Any of the above mentioned professionals might assist the school in conducting a risk assessment in respect of individual children or activities for Health and Safety purposes.

### **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS:**

At Ysgol Bryn Derw, we believe that we share the task of education with the parents of our children, and we try to establish co-operation in this so as to ensure consistency of standards at the highest possible level. We believe that nothing should be left to chance in the development of a partnership between home and school. We have an "open door" policy at Ysgol Bryn Derw where parents are welcome to discuss their child with the Head Teacher or Class Teacher, by telephoning school to arrange a mutually convenient time. Messages are delivered from school to home and vice versa on a daily basis by means of a message book if appropriate. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, parents are invited as a matter of course to attend the review meetings, and every effort is made to actively involve them in their child's review.

Please refer to the Home School Agreement.

### **PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND COLLEAGUES**

At Ysgol Bryn Derw we see ourselves as being part of the wider community. All of the pupils at Ysgol Bryn Derw are given opportunities and experiences to learn within the locality. Ysgol Bryn Derw is developing links with local mainstream schools and the school's resources are made available to other schools in the locality.

14– 19 pupils attend a range of community facilities to enhance their education, these include, Secondary Schools, Further Education Colleges, local shops and facilities.

### **MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL'S ALN POLICY**

The foundation for evaluation of the success of Ysgol Bryn Derw's policy are the principles upon which it is based, and the extent to which they have been put into practice throughout the school.

The sources used as indicators of the policy's effectiveness are as follows;



- The assessment procedures and the extent that they provide sufficient information for the development of clear, well-structured IEPs.
- The provision made for each pupil and the progress that individual pupils are making towards their established goals.
- The views of the parents who attend the review meetings

As part of the review the parents are asked to respond to the following using a response sheet:

- The extent to which they are satisfied with progress.
- The extent to which they approve of new targets.
- The extent to which they perceive that the provision is meeting their child's needs.

The information arising from this response is also used to monitor school effectiveness.

The Head Teacher or a Teaching and Learning lead chairs the meetings which take place with the parents and this is also an opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES:**

The code of practice requires schools to have clearly stated procedures as to how parents can make a complaint about the provision for ALN for their child at school.

At Ysgol Bryn Derw this procedure is as follows;

Parents/carers can discuss the reason(s) for complaint with the class teachers. If the matter is resolved, the teachers will afterwards make a brief report to the Headteacher. If the matter is unresolved the parent/carer will be referred to the Headteacher.

The parent/carer can approach the Headteacher directly to discuss the complaint. Once the Headteacher has been informed parents are assured of the response within a week, which will enable investigation of the complaint.

The complaint will be registered in a file for that purpose, and the date of complaint is noted along with the date given for a response. Following the investigation of the complaint, the conclusion reached would also be noted.

If appropriate an interview with the parents/carers will be held within one week of receiving the complaint, at which there would be a discussion in order to agree recommendations for action. Once such agreement is reached a brief account of any decision is also written down, signed and dated by the Headteacher and parent/carer as appropriate.

### **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed within a 3 year period of approval, or sooner in the event of changes to legislation