



CURRICULUM POLICY

Introduction

The aim of Taliesin Education (+centres) is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for its students, which parallels programmes within mainstream schools but also takes into account individual need so that programmes are differentiated according to need.

The curriculum reflects the programmes taking place in comprehensive schools but acknowledges that, given the special and/or complex needs of t+centres' particular client group, the students may need extra time and support and other types of input, for example behavioural and therapeutic initiatives, to enable them to complete academic courses. For those students who are on the autistic spectrum, have Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD or other conditions, the curriculum is significantly adaptive to their needs.

Some students may, for example, need extended timescales to complete courses.

Response to new SEND Code of Practice

Although it is the case that all our students have SEN, we use the new SEND reforms to sharpen our practice and ensure that we give them the best opportunities to make maximum progress and to lessen the gap between them and those without SEN or disabilities. One of the main emphases is that we increasingly seek out and take in to account the students' opinions on a wide range of issues including policy writing and the school's structures as well as developing their awareness of their own academic progress. We also obtain the parents'/carers' views on the choice and effectiveness of the curriculum. We ensure that new students and their parents/carers have the staff and student handbook on entry, so they understand the wide choices available within the curriculum and that we encourage students to request subjects not listed, should they wish to study them.

Client group

The client group for t+centres is students with emotional and behavioural difficulties and associated social and learning difficulties. A wide range of ability may be present within this group, necessitating a flexible approach to the curriculum based on individual needs. Students are taught on a one-to-one basis or in groups of two for academic subjects.

From March 2011, there was a change in the client group to include students who have conditions other than complex needs and ESBD and are, more specifically, on the Autistic Spectrum or with Asperger's Syndrome. Such students have moved the provision into a different area insofar as we have catered for a student with Elective Mutism and deficits in Attention, Motor Control and Perception (DAMP) and ADHD, and there has been a general shift towards clients with problems on the spectrum. This clearly has implications on the curriculum as a whole, with some students following such an individualised programme that it has moved away considerably from a balanced National Curriculum programme, although we still aim to move students towards a broad and balanced curriculum where possible.

Key Stage 3

The aim is to provide a direct parallel with comprehensive programmes with the full range of subjects, although in some cases concentration may need to be on consolidating study from earlier key stages by concentrating on the core subjects, until these are age appropriate.

Subjects offered at this key stage are:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- ICT
- PE
- Humanities
- Modern Foreign Language
- Art and Design
- Food Technology
- Design and Technology
- PSHE/RHSE
- Citizenship
- Music

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, students work towards GCSE or other qualifications. Should GCSE courses be inappropriate for individual students, they will take Entry Level certificates in years 10 or 11.

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All students are offered a range core and vocational of subjects at this level, including:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- ICT
- PE
- RS
- PSE
- Citizenship
- Humanities
- Modern Foreign Language
- Art and Design
- Food Technology
- Design and Technology
- PSHE/RHSE
- Citizenship
- Construction
- Motor Mechanics
- Land Studies
- Business Enterprise

Curriculum mapping

The curriculum is mapped to provide adequate time for core subjects and also offer a range to help students discover and develop individual talents. English, Maths, Science and ICT are given greater weighting than other subjects.

Main areas of the curriculum are based on the following areas of knowledge:

- **Technological – Design and Technology** – Food Technology; construction with wood and other materials; Resistant Materials; motor mechanics
- **Scientific** – general Science or individual Sciences
- **Mathematical** – Numeracy strategy; general Maths
- **Linguistic** – English Language and Literature; Speaking and Listening; Secondary Literacy Strategy
Modern Foreign Language – French or Spanish
- **Aesthetic and Creative – Expressive Arts** – Art and Design, Drama, Music (see above)

- **Physical Education** – a range of activities using local facilities; Outdoor Education: rock climbing and abseiling.
- **Human and Social – Humanities** – History, Geography, Religion, PSE and Citizenship.

Raising basic skills

The school aims, as a priority, to give students basic skills in Literacy and Numeracy if their levels are not age appropriate in these areas. These areas may previously have been weak, resulting in making progress in every written subject very limited, particularly if functional literacy is not established. Many of the students who come here are reluctant to write and need much encouragement and specific programmes to gain confidence to do so. One-to-one lessons with a TA can be used to supplement English and Maths lessons. These are based mainly on remedial reading programmes and basic mental Maths and practise in the Four Rules.

Main curriculum compensatory programmes in basic skills

It is essential that extra help is provided in a discreet way so that the student is not disheartened and in a manner which does not deprive him from the richness and diversity of the whole curriculum experience. We seek to maintain a broad curriculum and are careful not to withdraw from lessons in which the student has a special flair or interest or if they strongly do not wish to be withdrawn. Restorative programmes are specific, in terms of the skills to be acquired and time – limited to ensure dynamic progression which is memorable.

Curriculum support in basic skills

Accelerated programmes and courses in Literacy and Numeracy, Reading, Spelling and Dyslexia programmes are in place to develop these basic tools of the curriculum without delay. We aim for the student to be aware of how his general academic work progresses due to his reading and writing and maths improvement and this is recorded in teachers' planning.

Special needs across the curriculum

Each curriculum area has a policy statement with regard to SEN, gifted and talented students and inclusion. The school believes that all students are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum which is relevant and differentiated according to need and which demonstrates progression and coherence. Whilst all teachers share a responsibility for the education of all students, the need for differing procedures to meet a variety of individual needs is clearly recognised.

Diagnosis of other learning difficulties

We provide for these pupils by one-to-one specialist tuition using multi-sensory teaching methods, along with subject teachers' sensitivity to the needs and the specific learning styles of these students. It is also possible that we may meet other undiagnosed conditions in our pupils

such as ADHD, autistic spectrum disorder, non-verbal and verbal language difficulties, dyspraxia and more generalised learning difficulties. We use relevant professionals to confirm diagnoses and aim to use these labels primarily to inform our practice whilst recognising that each young person is an individual and that labels have a limited use.

Curriculum review

The curriculum is regularly revised and moderated in line with new governmental and other initiatives to keep it relevant and stimulating and to check its suitability for our specific client group. It will adapt to the needs and preferences of the students so that there are very few subjects that we would not be prepared to offer to ensure success.

Induction period

An induction period is used to ease students who may have been out of full time education for a while, back into a full timetable. This consists of breaking the curriculum up into smaller units with in-built play and/or less demanding tasks.

Initial interview and personal education plans

Initially, a student is interviewed and his views considered. At this point it is also useful to gain the student's perceptions of his strengths and developmental needs. The information collected from previous sources and this interview becomes the basis of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) of which every teacher has a copy and which is used as a basis to draw up stimulating and relevant programmes of study. From this, targets are drawn which are worked on for set periods of time.

Curriculum levels

Teachers may adapt programmes for some students (for example a GNVQ in Catering may be more suitable for potential chefs), but in general the main aim is to provide the fullest education possible to equip students for a fulfilling job or career, based on programmes of study leading to accreditation. This is divided into several levels:

- **Entry Level** for those who are working at level 3 (preparation during years 8/9/10) in most subjects including PSHE and Physical Education;
- **WJEC units in Foundation subjects** and 'Pathway' units as part of Functional Skills which accredit a vast range of subjects from textiles and animal care to hairdressing and living skills;.
- **GCSE Short courses** (years 10/11) (whilst still available);
- **GCSE Foundation courses**, or **Higher** if appropriate (year 11).

It is anticipated that all students will be capable of success in one of these areas or may progress through them. Where possible, options are offered for years 10 and 11 within subject departments.

t+centres offers typical Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 programmes, sometimes with the emphasis on work experience and more vocational and living skills programmes in years 10 and 11, where appropriate. In some cases, Key Stage 2 material may need to be accessed where there are significant gaps in skills bases and knowledge.

Work linked programmes

For the student who is older on entry, staff will try to link programmes to the kind of work the student is capable of doing in school and, eventually, as a career, and the curriculum will be slanted to this effect, with basic skills input relevant to the chosen career.

Insofar as many of the students attending t+centres have had interrupted previous education, it is a complex task to assess the courses which the student would most benefit from in their remaining time at school. Some enter the school relatively late, with only a short period of time to achieve examination success and fulfil the varied aims and objectives which we set for them.

- 1) The starting point for a baseline assessment is based on the need to first and foremost gain some control over behaviour and, in some cases, a tendency towards anti-social behaviour.
- 2) We would then need to assess levels of functioning by using tests.
- 3) The young person is encouraged to focus on establishing some ideas about future careers.
- 4) Personal, Social, Moral and Health education as well as particular therapeutic input will be included.
- 5) Overall, we need to present initiatives which will, as quickly as possible, raise the student's self-esteem and self-confidence and move him towards positive achievement.

Vocational Subjects please see appendix 1

Careers / Careers South West

Careers education is offered from year 9 onwards. In years 9 or 10 (if entry is later), a Careers South West Personal Adviser will offer a profile of careers. This is repeated in year 10 when ideas are clearer. Work experience takes place in years 10 and 11, but most frequently in year 11 or dependent on the levels of maturity the student has attained. Work experience placements are set up and supported placements arranged where necessary.

Embedding careers and work experience into the curriculum

With emphasis on Health and Safety and difficulties around insurance, it is not easy to get work experience placements for any young person but even more so for the client group in question who need a transitional stage moving from education to simply trying work experience. To counteract this, we have developed our Key Stage 4 curriculum, to make it partly vocational and tailor it to the needs of the students as they move towards choosing a career path. To meet this need, we opened the TEC (Taliesin Enterprise Centre) in September 2008, in order to offer practical subjects including Design Technology, crafts, vehicle maintenance and construction. We have extended our insurance policy so that individual employers do not have the responsibility.

Students have also had work placements in:

- Hairdressers
- Leisure Centre – Outdoor Education
- Farms e.g. alpaca charity
- Eden Project
- Fast Food Outlet
- Charity Shop

For students whose disaffection is compounded or caused by school phobia, a project approach based on the subjects above to re-engage can be used until they may be able to feel comfortable within a classroom setting and ultimately move towards work experience.

Vocational Subjects

In addition to the standard Technology (Food, Construction and Resistant Materials) we have provision for courses to prepare students for the world of work. These include:

- Trades – painting and decorating;
- Motor mechanics;
- Other trades such as plumbing, electrics, building, by special arrangement with local individuals and companies;
- Catering – in-house or at college;
- General Catering and Food Technology skills e.g. Food Hygiene Certificate.

Tasters

In order to help students find the right career path we offer 'tasters' comprising of one or two days per week or in some cases a full week wherein they can try out areas of study by having 'tasters' of career options:

These include:

- Roofing and construction

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- Plumbing and plastering
- Food production
- Product design and production
- Handyman
- Music workshops

Individual programmes

Personalised timetables and programmes operate to reflect the individual needs of our students. These go hand-in-hand with TAs being given more responsibility on a one-to-one basis, under the direction of subject teachers. The timetables enable them or other teachers to see exactly what is being taught at any time of the day and enables the work to be 'owned' by those leading it.

History and implementation of this Curriculum Policy:

Accepted by SLT in this format:	April 2018
Approved by t+centres Governors:	September 2020
Last revised:	September 2023
To be reviewed:	September 2024

SLT, all staff and governors have read, discussed and contributed to this policy.

The Head of Centre will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.