



TALOCHER SCHOOL

Curriculum

POLICY

POLICY DOCUMENT

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Introduction

The objective of this policy is to disseminate vital information to a diverse audience including staff, proprietors, professionals, families, and other stakeholders who share an interest in the educational journey of our pupils at Talocher School.

Our curriculum is guided by our mission and vision. It is underpinned by the professional learning offer to staff, with a clear focus on pedagogical principles and a universal approach to developing Speech Language and Communication skills of all learners. The purpose of our curriculum is to enthuse, motivate and enable all learners to have appropriate foundations and adaptability to be successful in an ever-changing world.

Background

Talocher School is an Independent Special School that provides full-time education for learners between the ages of 7 and 19, placed by Local Authorities from within England and Wales. Learners who attend Talocher are unable to attend a mainstream educational provision as their needs could not be met within a mainstream setting. Our learner community at Talocher School is characterised by individuals who have encountered significant disruptions in their educational experiences, alongside notable personal challenges. In response, our role is to establish an equitable educational environment. Here, the adversities our learners have faced do not serve as barriers but rather stepping stones towards a breadth of opportunities awaiting them. The curriculum at Talocher School is created for pupils who are supported by an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) or an Individual Development Plan (IDP), specifically tailored for Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs (SEMH). Furthermore, our pupil population includes those with complex needs, encompassing Autism and ADHD.

Talocher School Vision

Our school envisions excellence in education through collaboration, professionalism, and high standards, prioritising learner well-being and their individual needs

Talocher School Mission

Empowering learners through meaningful and engaging learning experiences, developing their independence, resilience and communication skills.

Aims

Talocher School is committed to implementing a structured yet adaptable framework for curriculum access. This approach underscores the significance of a timetable access to learning, coupled with the provision for an individualised plan that is informed by the specific requirements of each learner. Our curriculum is designed to offer:

- A broad, balanced, and pertinent education that considers individual differences and ensures continuity and progression.
- A tailored learning experience that meets our pupils' unique needs. Admission paperwork is explored by our referral's coordinator, ALNCo and SLT and information on teaching and learning needs of new pupils shared with staff.

- Access to a variety of qualifications, including GCSEs, BTEC's, Awards, Entry Level and Functional Skills.
- Compliance with the Wales Independent School Standards 2024.
- Scheduled curriculum access ensuring a well-organised and consistent access to learning opportunities, structured around a comprehensive timetable that facilitates optimal educational engagement for all pupils
- Individualised learning pathways where the needs of a pupil, dictate a tailored educational approach. Bespoke plans can be created to support the unique educational journey of each pupil.
- The development of essential literacy, numeracy, and digital skills across all subjects.
- Opportunities to cultivate wider skills like resilience, critical thinking, and effective communication.
- A robust framework for careers education and work-related experiences.
- Comprehensive coverage of relationships and sexuality, alongside personal, social, and health education.
- Experiences that foster a sense of global citizenship learning about local, national, and international contexts
- Development of mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs and in particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.
- Careers education and employer experiences which are both discrete and linked directly to the curriculum planning to enhance learning in a real-life context.
- A better understanding of human rights as well as corresponding responsibilities

Our Teaching and Learning Philosophy

At Talocher School, our teaching and learning philosophy is based upon 12 pedagogical principles Wales which we have adapted to meet our learners needs and are designed to enhance the effectiveness of our curriculum. These principles aim to ensure that learning is engaging, meaningful, and relevant by:

- Create authentic contexts for learning
- Encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Foster social and emotional development alongside positive relationships.
- Promote collaborative learning experiences
- Motivating learners to achieve high, yet attainable goals through sustained effort.
- Utilizing a diverse array of teaching strategies to cater to different learning styles.
- Encouraging problem-solving, alongside creative, and critical thinking.
- Build on previous knowledge & experience to engage interest.
- Aligning with the four core purposes of the Wales curriculum.
- Implementing assessment strategies that enhance learning progress.
- Make connections within & across Areas of Learning & Experience.
- Emphasising Cross Curricular responsibilities including literacy, numeracy, and Digital Competence.

Curriculum for Wales

At Talocher School, we have adopted and adapted the Curriculum for Wales so that it best meets the needs of each of our learners. Our vision and values complement the 'Four Purposes of Learning' which underpin Curriculum for Wales. The Four Purposes are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person in Wales and they are at the heart of our curriculum. They are the starting point for all decisions on the content and experiences developed as part of the curriculum to support our learners in becoming:

- ambitious, capable learners ready to learn throughout their lives
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

The curriculum is organised into 6 Areas of Learning and Experience:

- Expressive arts
- Health and well-being
- Humanities
- Languages, literacy, and communication
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Science and technology

Cross curricular Foundations for Success:

Learners must be given opportunities across the curriculum to:

- develop listening, reading, speaking and writing skills
- be able to use numbers and solve problems in real-life situations
- be confident users of a range of technologies to help them function and communicate effectively and make sense of the world

When planning each curriculum pathway for our learners, their needs, voice and interests are at the centre of our curriculum model and therefore each learner's curriculum offer is designed and bespoke to them.

Curriculum Implementation: Assessment (please see AFL policy)

At Talocher School, we are committed to provide a curriculum that is broad, balanced, enriching and supports the learners' needs. The curriculum is flexible, adaptable and is dictated by each individual's needs. Learners are referred to the school by their Local Authority. Referrals made to the school are considered by the ALNCo and referrals coordinator in the first instance and then discussed with the entire SLT. If needs can be met, a placement will be offered, and a transition planned. Any useful and relevant information and documentation regarding the learners' background, academic attainment, strategies that work well and history will be gathered, including the EHCP/Statement/IDP. The school will choose a relevant initial pathway and class for the learners, this is achieved by baselining learners at the earliest of opportunities using.

- WRAT 5
- STAR Reader
- STAR Maths
- TALC
- PBVS
- GL assessments CAT

As learners progress through the school, they are assessed on a 6 monthly basis so that data can be monitored, and further areas of need can be identified, this specific data capture and measure of progress will be overseen by the ALNCo. Subject teachers will also base line test at the beginning and end of a new topic as a minimum, with formative assessment taking place regularly within lessons.

When placing a learner, we also take into consideration the relationships between learners and staff and the suitability of the environment for each learner.

If learners need to change a class or pathway, then a decision would be made through one or more of the following processes:

- Learner voice
- Changes in additional learning needs
- Assessment reviews
- Statutory Annual Review
- Discussions at Education Team meetings and/or Senior Leadership Team meetings (inclusive of the Engagement Team)
- Consultation with learners, parents/carers, and local authorities

Curriculum Implementation: Pathways & Offer

Lower School (primary stage and age)

At Talocher School, we are committed to delivering a dynamic and engaging primary curriculum through a thematic approach that captivates the curiosity of our learners. Each term, learners explore a variety of topics, each complemented by career workshops and practical experiences that bridge theoretical learning with real-world application. Daily literacy and numeracy activities ensure progress in these vital skills a priority. Our curriculum is designed to foster cross-curricular skills, ensuring that literacy, numeracy, digital competence, and other essential skills are seamlessly integrated into daily learning activities. Central to our teaching is the alignment with the Curriculum for Wales, emphasising its four core purposes to provide a holistic and forward-thinking educational experience.

Learners are supported to become:

- Ambitious, capable learners by ensuring that learning opportunities are well planned, sequenced and supports metacognition

- Healthy, confident individuals by allowing learners to discover and explore new ideas and strategies that help them learn and teach learners that it is ok to make mistakes.
- Enterprising, creative contributors by identifying and celebrating success and achievement, whilst encouraging learner to think for themselves, share ideas and make choices.
- Ethical, informed citizens by providing meaningful boundaries, adult role modelling appropriate responses, addressing misconceptions and allowing learners to explore their own views and the views of others in a mutually respectful way.

The approaches used to access learning are through practical, active, kinaesthetic style and/or sensory approach using Trauma Informed practice and PACE to provide support for learners' social and emotional development and engagement.

Upper School (Secondary and post 16 stage and age)

In year 7 through to year 9, our objective is to offer a rich and varied curriculum that not only engages learners but also prepares them for the transition to year 10 and year 11. We provide a comprehensive education in the core subjects of Mathematics, English Language, and Science, fostering a deep understanding and development of key academic skills. Our approach incorporates numeracy, literacy, and digital skills across all areas of study, as well as daily literacy and numeracy activities, reflecting our commitment to equipping learners with the vital skills required for success. Furthermore, our curriculum is enhanced by regular careers workshops, challenges, and activities, ensuring learners are exposed to a variety of career pathways and the practical applications of their learning. In addition to the core subjects, learners in years 7, 8 and 9 will explore a wide range of foundation subjects, including Arts and Music, History and Geography, Religious Education, Personal, Social and Health Education (including Sex and Relationships Education where appropriate), ICT, Physical Education, and Welsh. This broad curriculum is designed to cultivate a well-rounded knowledge base, encourage personal growth, and support the development of a diverse set of skills and interests.

Talocher School's year 10 and Year 11 curriculum is designed to cater to the evolving educational needs of our learners as they advance towards their final years of secondary education. The school Our curriculum at this age and stage range is expansive, offering learners a diverse range of qualifications (see below). This robust academic offering is designed to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to excel and achieve their full potential. A key component of our Year 10 and year 11 curriculum is the emphasis on real-world experience. This is facilitated through work experience and college placements during Years 10 and/or 11, which are instrumental in providing learners with invaluable insights into the workforce and further education sectors. Furthermore, Talocher School is committed to ensuring that our learners have a clear pathway to post-16 education or employment. This is achieved through our dedication to employer engagement, inputs from Careers Wales, and activities related to further education, thereby equipping our learners with the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to navigate their future career paths successfully.

Talocher School's post 16 curriculum is based upon the academic needs of each learner and their chosen pathway for future aspirations and progression. There is a high emphasis on gaining experiences that prepare them for adult life and their transition onto either further training, employment or college. Learners within our post 16 groups are offered the opportunity to re take examination subjects if relevant to their chosen pathway. Furthermore, Talocher School is committed to ensuring that our learners have a clear pathway to further education or employment. This is achieved through our dedication to employer engagement, inputs from Careers Wales, and activities related to further education, thereby equipping our learners with the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to navigate their future career paths successfully.

The Upper school and post 16 curriculum does have a focus on the four purposes, learners are supported to become:

- Ambitious, capable learners by ensuring that learning opportunities are well planned, sequenced and develops metacognition skills within all learners
- Healthy, confident individuals by allowing learners to discover and explore new ideas and strategies that help them learn, developing learners' resilience so that they can reflect and evaluate their own learning and be able to learn from mistakes.
- Enterprising, creative contributors by identifying and celebrating success and achievement, whilst encouraging learner to think for themselves, share ideas and make positive contributions within the school community and in their own.
- Ethical, informed citizens by providing meaningful boundaries, adult role modelling appropriate responses, addressing misconceptions and allowing learners to explore their own views and the views of others in a mutually respectful way.

The Upper School curriculum provides classroom-based 'on-site' opportunities and vocational and enrichment 'off-site' opportunities for learners to develop their skills, knowledge, and gain qualifications. Classroom based subject learning consists of:

- English
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science
- Art and Design
- Humanities
- Design Technology
- Digital Competency
- Physical Education
- Outdoor Education
- Home Cooking Skills
- PSHE
- Welsh Language Skills

There are appropriate programmes of activities provided through the vocational curriculum to enrich learners to develop their skill-set and knowledge as well as gaining

accreditation and/or qualifications, enabling them to develop their learning in formal and informal contexts. Vocational placements consist of:

- Animal Care through Second chance
- Equine Therapy
- Employability Skills
- Bushcraft
- Sport and Art at Sgiliau
- Adventure education through Skylark
- Hair and beauty, mechanics and construction through ACT

Vocational placements assist in developing the learner's independence, self-confidence and the opportunities to socialise in different settings, as well as gaining practical, hands-on experiences in real-world situations.

Careers and Work-related experiences (CWRE)

Talocher School works closely with Careers Wales who provides support and advice to our Welsh learners from KS3 onwards. The Career Advisor is invited to all annual reviews of KS4 and Post-16 learners, to support and provide opportunities towards work-related learning, as well as supporting and advising on curriculum pathways, training and career opportunities. In addition to this, our Transition Officer works with learners who will be transitioning from Talocher onto their next steps; they also attend the Annual Reviews. The Transition Officer arranges individual meetings with each learner to discuss potential options for their 'next steps' and then offers support throughout the application process for whatever courses they may choose to apply for. To develop the learners' understanding of Post-16 Education, visits to potential colleges are arranged, Careers Fairs are attended, and guest speakers are invited into school.

Curriculum Implementation: Whole School Offer

Therapeutic Curriculum: The school adopts a Trauma Informed approach using the knowledge of attachment theory and child development to support our learners social and emotional development and behavioural needs. The school has a trained TIS member of the SLT who is able to support all staff implement TIS approaches.

PACE underpins the curriculum, so that learners can develop a sense of belonging within a safe learning environment which has a high emphasis on:

Playfulness

- A light-hearted, relaxed and playful attitude. Helps the child feel connected within their relationship. Helps the child experience fun and love.

Acceptance

- Accepting the child for who they are and not what they achieve is very important. It is important to make the child aware that it is their behaviour that is unacceptable not them as a person. The child needs to feel liked and accepted for who they really are.

Curiosity

- Figuring out what is going on. Understand the meaning behind the behaviour.
- Wonder about the child.
- Wondering with the child.
- Make best guesses about the inner experience of the child.

Empathy

- One of the most important aspects of the PACE approach.
- To understand a child's needs you have to be able to "step into their shoes".
- Empathy allows an individual to feel their feelings and know that their feelings have been heard and are valid. You may not agree with their feelings and opinions, which is ok but by listening you are supporting them to not suppress their feelings, which is crucial to positive mental health.
- Think about your relationships in your own life. Do you open up to people who are harsh and do not listen to you? Or people who listen, are accepting of you, and value you as a person?

Therapeutic and Wellbeing Team

To ensure the therapeutic needs of all our learners are met, we have a Therapy team who are overseen by the ALNCo, who identifies all therapeutic need highlighted in learners Statement/IDP/EHCP and this is put in place. In addition, staff can refer learners for therapy and or intervention they feel may be beneficial and the learners themselves are encouraged to access therapy in line with Welsh assembly guidelines. This can be on an informal basis or as a weekly session.

Therapy offers currently available to learners:

- ELSA
- Art Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- SALT

Learner Voice

At Talocher School, we believe that learners should have a say in their education and future. We listen to learner's voice and involve learners in planning and decision-making throughout their journey at Talocher. Learners can develop their metacognition by being

involved in planning their learning and are made aware of why they are doing an activity, what they are expected to achieve and in the evaluation of their work.

This is achieved and facilitated by:

- Teachers' guidance through formative assessments

Talocher School in house accreditation offer		
AoLE	Level	Board
Language, Literacy and Communication	GCSE/ Entry Level	WJEC – Entry Level English WJEC – GCSE English Language
Maths and Numeracy	GCSE/Entry Level	AQA-Entry Level WJEC-Mathematics and GCSE Numeracy
Science and Technology	GCSE/ Entry Level	WJEC/ Pearson
Health and Well-being	BTEC Level 1/2 Personal Growth and Wellbeing BTEC Level 1/2 Home cooking skills Entry Pathways PE GCSE PE	Pearson
Expressive Arts	GCSE AQA Unit Award certificates	WJEC
Humanities	Entry Pathways/GCSE/AQA Unit Award certificates	WJEC

- Marking and Feedback (See Marking and Feedback Policy)
- Termly learner Council meetings
- Learners' views presented at meetings – Annual Reviews and PCP meetings
- Where applicable, a say in Positive Behaviour Support plans
- IDP days

Accreditation

The curriculum is accredited through nationally recognised qualifications, and in the achievement of key skills and employability skills. All accreditation is at an appropriate level in each subject for the learners so that they leave with acknowledgement of their achievement

Learning Environments

Teacher's planning will ensure all learners experience a wide range of learning environments to motivate their interest and encourage development of skills. Indoor and outdoor settings are included along with community-based learning opportunities

Health and Well-being

The curriculum at a whole school level provides PSHE and RSE in line with CfW guidance. This is taught on a weekly basis across the school. The Upper School and utilise Sweet Education resources which allows learners to achieve a BTEC Level 1 or 2 qualification in Personal Growth and Wellbeing. The resources are mapped against the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the new RSE curriculum in Wales. This programme promotes mental health and wellbeing, and teaches learners how to become happier, healthier and more successful young adults.

The Lower School follow the JIGSAW curriculum for PSHE. The expectations set out in the Health and Wellbeing AoLE are comprehensively covered through Jigsaw's spiral curriculum, ensuring that learners develop the fundamental components of this Area; physical health and development, mental health, and emotional and social wellbeing. Jigsaw aims to educate learners, to recognise that good health and well-being is important to enable successful learning. With mindfulness philosophy and practice woven throughout, Jigsaw is a unique, progressive and effective scheme of work for this area of the curriculum.

Subject areas and collaborative approaches

Each teacher is responsible for delivering the full curriculum for their subject/phase. Each member of teaching staff has their own areas of expertise and takes responsibility for leading on subjects delivered to our learners, this being more predominant in Upper School. However, as a small team, we are all responsible for delivering any area of the curriculum as and when needed. As a whole school approach, Numeracy challenges and Literacy tasks are delivered on a weekly basis to our learners by all teaching staff but planned by our Literacy and Numeracy specialist teachers who have the responsibilities to disseminate this across the school.

The Education Team meet daily to discuss the needs and progress of our learners and this communication is essential in ensuring that the curriculum maintains the flexibility and adaptability required to ensure we meet the needs of our learners. Where concerns are raised, these will be discussed collaboratively, and learners' plans adapted.

As a school, we are passionate about developing further our curriculum to provide authentic opportunities to engage in the Four Purposes and AoLEs.

Roles and Responsibilities

As an Education Team we aim to:

- Plan, monitor and assess learners' learning and provide effective feedback to help them make progress
- Provide learning environments where young people feel secure, safe and respected
- Support learners' learning by providing a balanced, relevant and flexible curriculum
- Encourage learners to acquire knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and a rapidly changing world

- Encourage learners to achieve or be working towards qualifications
- Offer regular opportunities to acquire and develop social and communication skills
- Provides a whole school approach and focus on learning achievement, where all staff have knowledge and understanding of SEMH/ASD
- Use a range of diagnostic tools, including assessments to support development, planning and implementation of learner's learning programmes
- Plan and implement appropriate targets encompassing specific learner targets directly linked to a learner's Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Statements/IDPs.

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- All statutory elements of the curriculum and other subjects, which the school chooses to offer, including those taught off-site by other providers.
- Ensuring the amount of time provided for teaching the curriculum is adequate.
- Ensuring where appropriate, the individual needs of some learners are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from the National Curriculum.
- The procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements and learners and their parents/carers receive information to show how much progress the learners are making and what is required to help them improve.
- Ensuring the 'Areas of Learning and Experience' leaders/groupings for the whole school are supported and provided training opportunities to ensure they are up to date with curriculum changes and new initiatives.
- Monitoring the delivery of the curriculum throughout the school.
- Keeping up to date with curriculum developments and passing on relevant information to colleagues.
- Observing lessons to inform curriculum delivery.

The Classroom Teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.
- Ordering and maintaining resources and equipment for their subject and/or AoLE.
- Planning well sequenced teaching and learning opportunities and delivering structured, engaging lessons to meet the needs of the learners, evident through planned schemes of work and curriculum overviews.
- Evaluating lessons to ensure the purpose of the curriculum is met and the needs of the learners.
- Reporting to parents or carers on learner progress, ensuring that next steps statements are in place.
- Reporting to ALNCo and SLT on the intent, implementation and impact of their subject

- Identifying progress of all learners by the tracking and monitoring of learner progress, use of formative and summative assessments, identifying where learners are not making expected progress and liaising with ALNCo to identify whether additional interventions are required.
- Know learner aspirations and develop a progression pathway that enables learners to work towards their future aspiration through gaining the most appropriate accreditation by the time they leave Talocher school.

Monitoring

Progress is both academic together with social, emotional and personal development.

- Each learner has 4 individualised IDP targets based on the objectives outlined in their Statement/IDP/EHCP. These targets are SMART targets which are reviewed termly by key tutors, learners and their parents/carers during the timetabled IDP days
- At each progress and reporting point, academic progress is monitored and analysed, and new targets set where appropriate
- Academic assessments are updated termly
- Monitoring of learner work and engagement
- Learning walks, lesson observations and work scrutiny

The Impact of our curriculum

At Talocher, we use several ways to regularly demonstrate and review the impact of our curriculum. This includes the following:

- Termly assessment data and progress reports
- Termly IDP days
- Annual Reviews
- Learner, Staff and Parent/Carers Voice
- Monitoring of learner work
- Internal and External progress checks, assessment and moderations.
- Learners moving on to positive leaver destinations. Our staff work closely with each learner to ensure a seamless transition, leveraging partnerships with colleges, Careers Wales, training providers, and specialist colleges. By offering a spectrum of opportunities tailored to the complex needs of our learners, we aim to facilitate their successful progression into further education, training, or employment.