

Developing Successful Futures



CURRICULUM GUIDE Year 7

2023-2024

Datblygu dyfodol llwyddiannus



*Respect, Determination, Honesty
Parch, Penderfynalrwydd, Gonestrwydd*



WELCOME

Dear Parent,

Whilst I am sure that you are very familiar with your child's Key Stage 2 (Primary) courses, there are, as you would expect, differences in both the content and emphasis at Secondary level. To help you and your son/daughter we have compiled this curriculum information booklet to outline the content of the courses studied in Year 7.

In the course outlines you will find areas where you can assist your child, either directly or by making learning resources and opportunities available to them. There is also a high emphasis on the development of skills across the curriculum.

Our staff at Castell Alun look forward to a positive and fruitful partnership with you, working together to ensure that your child achieves his or her best.

It is essential that your child approaches the new school year in a planned and structured way, and I urge you to monitor the use of the Student Organiser which will be distributed at the start of term.

If you do have a query or concern, please contact Mrs Lisa Allen, Student Development Manager for Year 7, or your son/daughter's group tutor.

Mr C Ellis
Headteacher

Pastoral Structure

Student Development Manager: Mrs Lisa Allen

Senior Leadership Team Link: Mr Craig Stewart

Group Tutors

M - Mrs Sharon Nesbitt

E - Mr David Davies

N - Mrs Rebecca Rowlands

T - Mrs Hannah Hughes

O - Mrs Angharad Evans

R - Miss Amy Pennington

U - Mr David Swale

S - Mrs Miriam Scattergood

The Year 7 Pastoral Team will endeavour to monitor the welfare and academic progress of your child. This we will do in conjunction with all subject staff, utilising a number of other support structures which assist in the monitoring of academic progress. The school also operates an Inclusion Centre and offers extra Literacy and Numeracy Support to certain students.

In all cases, if you have any queries on academic matters, please contact the Learning Area Manager who oversees the relevant subject department, details of which are on the next page. If the Learning Area Manager is not available please contact me directly.

Mrs Lisa Allen

Year 7 Student Development Manager

Academic Structure



Learning Area Managers

Expressive Arts & Technology - Mrs Katy Jones

Humanities - Mrs Gemma Doran

English - Mrs Gemma Blakeley

Modern Foreign Languages - Mrs Ciara Brennan

Science - Mrs Helena Wade

Health and Wellbeing - Mrs Sarah Thomas

Mathematics - Mrs Lindsey Thompson

Equipment

General - Pens, pencils, pencil sharpener, pencil rubber, ruler (at least 15cm)

Maths - Compass, protractor, Scientific calculator - (can be purchased through school)

Art - Sketchbook - purchased through school

Food/DT - Apron - purchased through school

Homework

We consider homework an integral part of education and aim to set our students a range of tasks to consolidate and widen their learning. Each department will set individual homework and will give a suitable deadline to allow students time to complete it. This helps to develop organisational and time management skills in our students, plus it gives them the opportunity to speak to their teacher before the deadline if they require support with a task. All homework tasks will be either posted by teachers on Google Classroom or students will write the task in their Student Organiser.

Extra Curricular

Each department runs extra curricular activities to support and enhance learning in the classroom. The extra curricular timetable will be published in September. All students are encouraged to attend these.

Curriculum for Wales

Our curriculum is centered around the four purposes and through our curriculum we will enable our students to become:

- 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, ready to take part in Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead a fulfilling life as a valued member of society

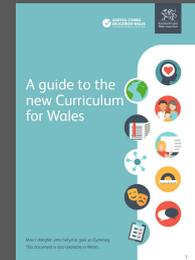


Overview of the new Curriculum for Wales

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCMLnc8IMxE&t=39s>

A Parents Guide to the new Curriculum for Wales

<https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/4e66c555-73aa-44ee-93e5-1e612906f1d2/220208-parents-carers.pdf>



Our Curriculum



In Expressive Arts, students will explore art, dance, drama, film and digital media and music to develop their creative, artistic and performance skills.



In Humanities students will learn about the world, society and events in the past and present. They'll explore the challenges and opportunities that face us, and what ethical action we can take to safeguard the world and its people in the future



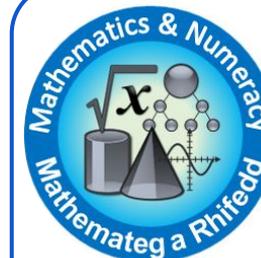
In Languages, Literacy and Communication, students will learn about languages. They'll understand and use Welsh, English and other languages. They'll study and create literature, and communicate in spoken, written or visual ways. This could include poetry, drama and film.



In Science and Technology students will learn about biology, chemistry, physics, computer science and design and technology. They'll learn about design and engineering, living things, matter, forces and energy, and how computers work.



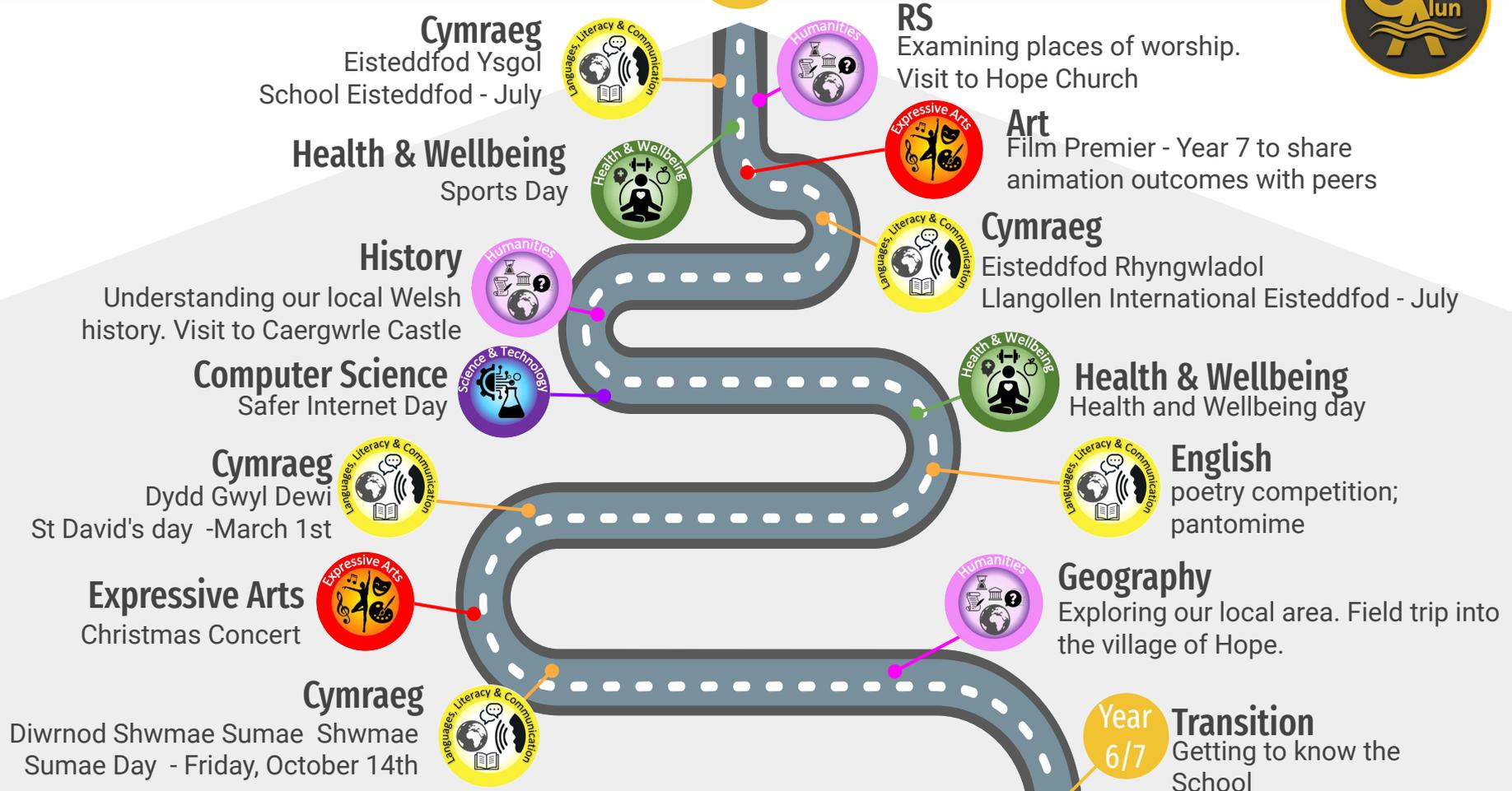
Health and Well-being is about looking after student physical and mental health including emotional well-being. Students will learn about healthy eating and how to make good decisions, deal with influences and develop healthy relationships.



In Mathematics and Numeracy, students will develop their understanding of numbers and use symbols in maths. They'll explore shapes and measurement and learn about statistics and probability.

Year 7 Learning Journey

Year 8



Cross Curricular Skills

Literacy

At Castell Alun, we are committed to improving and developing students' literacy skills. We value the role of reading for pleasure and ask that parents support us in promoting reading as a pleasurable and worthwhile activity. We ask all students to keep a reading book in their school bags and provide students with opportunities to read privately during their English and pastoral lessons. Students are also encouraged to use the Library and the resources and books it houses. The Library is open to students during break and lunchtimes.

An additional resource we use to develop students' literacy skills is the Student Organiser. Towards the back of the organiser writing frames for the different types of writing students will encounter across the curriculum can be found to support students with their writing. The organiser also includes a spelling log; we ask that students record in their spelling errors which they make in their writing and apply the look-cover-say-write-check approach. It would be extremely useful if parents could support us in this by encouraging students to use this resource and also by signing the log pages when they are complete.

Numeracy

Numeracy is a key skill which is necessary to help achieve success throughout secondary education, further and higher education, employment and adult life. Numeracy is the application of mathematics to solve problems in real-world contexts and this plays a critical part in our everyday lives. Castell Alun ensures students have opportunities to develop their numeracy skills through all subjects not just in mathematics. We focus on consistency between subjects, transferable skills and promoting resilience in learning.



Digital Competency

Digital competence is the set of skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable the confident, creative and critical use of technologies and systems. It is the skill set that enables a person to be a confident digital citizen, to interact and collaborate digitally, to produce work digitally, and to be confident in handling data and computational thinking (problem solving).

At Castell Alun we have a clear vision for digital learning, ensuring that digital competence is embedded throughout the curriculum. As digital citizens, our students use the latest technology and software to approach and solve problems in a collaborative and critical way. Every Learning Area shares our vision and passion to preparing learners for working in a digital world.

Wider Skills

Running through and across each subject will be the teaching and learning of:

- Human rights
- Diversity and respecting differences
- Experiences and skills for careers and the workplace
- Learning about things on a local, national and international level
- Relationships and sexuality education appropriate to your development

Welsh Language and Culture

Development of the Welsh language and culture is an important aspect of our school and we see the Welsh language being used and developed across all subjects. The school's curriculum has been created to ensure that the rich history of our local area is taught and celebrated alongside learning about Wales and the world.



Art and Design

Expressive Arts Aim

During Year 7 we aim to provide learners with opportunities to explore a wide range of Expressive Art forms and disciplines. In addition, learners will develop an understanding of others' work, including that of their peers and creative artists, musicians and performers. Learners will be equipped with a critical vocabulary and build confidence when expressing personal ideas and feelings. Through creating their own work learners will also combine imagination, practical skills and knowledge.

Structure of Learning

Unit 1

The visual elements of Art are the building blocks used to create a work of art. During this unit learners will draw from personal experiences and be encouraged to add their own creative ideas to develop their own individual style. Learners will be using a range of media and artist influences to focus on the principal elements of line, shape, space, form, colour, pattern, tone, and texture. The work of abstract artist Patrick Heron will be particularly relevant when inspiring learners to experiment and combine all of the visual elements.

Unit 2

Students will be introduced to familiar folk tales and gain knowledge about the traditions of storytelling. They will understand how narrated tales became children's books and how they were later delivered through the medium of film. The music of composer Sergei Prokofiev - *Peter and the Wolf*, will inform the creative process. Additional sources of inspiration will include; *Revolt Rhymes* by author Roald Dahl and the art work of Quentin Blake and Jayme McGowan. This variety of written, musical and visual starting points will facilitate experimentation and enable learners to use a range of materials and techniques within the creation of their own work.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Tour online galleries to increase knowledge of artists and discuss the artwork - Galleries to get you started: <https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern>, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/>
- Art at home - <https://www.education.com/activity/arts-and-crafts/>



Music

Structure of learning

Unit 1 - This is me

Getting to know the learner's prior experiences of music and current knowledge of musical elements. During this unit learners will listen to various pieces of Music and focus on recognising the use of Musical elements, in particular Rhythm and Pitch. Learners will perform simple rhythmic patterns using body percussion and learn about the drum kit. Learning will sing songs and use melody recognition to transcribe a melody and perform it.

Unit 2 - Instruments

During this unit learners will listen to various pieces of Music and focus on recognising the use of Musical elements, in particular Timbre. Learners will explore different instruments and how their sounds are created and research the symphony orchestra.

Unit 3/4 - Building chords

During this unit learners will listen to various pieces of Music and focus on recognising the use of Musical elements. They will explore and learn the basics of keyboard and ukulele playing and the way chords are formed and provide the foundation for creating music.

Unit 5/6 - Find your voice

During this unit learners will listen to various pieces of Music and focus on recognising the use of Musical elements. They will explore and learn the basics of using the voice and technology to create music and compose music using the voice as an instrument.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Encourage them to listen to as much music as possible from different genres.
- Support them in ensuring they are ready to learn by bringing their own headphones/earphones to every lesson.
- Explore the possibility of them starting to learn a musical instrument:
- <https://www.theatrlwyd.com/take-part/music>



Performing Arts

Structure of Learning

Unit 1 - Folktales from Around the World

This unit focuses on introducing learners to the world of the Performing Arts. They will **explore** aspects of the stage, voice, movement, professional pieces of work and production elements.

Through given stimuli learners will develop their appreciation of different cultures through folktales from **around the world and Wales**.

Learners will **develop their skills** in a range of performing arts roles such as dance, acting, costume design and lighting & sound operations. Learners will develop their **physical, stylistic and interpretive** skills through rehearsal and performance.

Unit 2 - Fairy tales and Storytelling

In this Unit learners will **explore and create** their own performance work.

Learners will **explore** fairy tales and storytelling through the **creation** of a mini production.

Learners will work collaboratively to produce a short performance for a live audience.

All learners will contribute by working in their chosen specialism, such as a dancer, actor, designer or a sound/lighting designer/operator.

Learners will have the opportunity to **watch live performances** from other year groups and professionals outside of school to see what a finished product looks like.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Encourage your child to practise their practical skills at home, such as dancing, singing or learning their lines for the production.
- Support students in joining an extracurricular activity at lunchtimes or afterschool.
- Watch live performances at the Theatre, Cinema or streamed live at home. There will be links to live performances on their Google Classroom page.



Physical Education

Aim

In year 7 students will focus on gaining knowledge and understanding of their own physical health and well-being. The theme is 'Healthy Me' and students will be encouraged to be healthy for life, active for life and safe for life. They will participate in a range of physical activities.

Students will be encouraged to participate in the extensive extra-curricular programme as well as participating in local sports clubs and physical activities independently.

Throughout all units, students will be making connections with PSHE and food and nutrition, as well as developing their literacy, numeracy and oracy through physical activity.

Unit 1 - Healthy Me - Health and Fitness

Students will participate in a range of physical activities that focus on specific components of fitness and methods of training. They will complete baseline assessments of their own physical literacy and fitness tests in specific areas. Students will have the opportunity to improve their own physical fitness and set targets to monitor their progress.

In this unit, the concept of resilience will be the main focus. Students will explore how resilience can impact performances in physical activity.

Unit 2 - Healthy Me - Competitive Games

Students will explore the concepts of communication and teamwork through a variety of competitive games. They will have the opportunity to develop fundamental skills, techniques and tactics through game play.

Unit 3 - Healthy Me - Creative

In this Unit, students will develop their physical literacy through creative aspects of the curriculum, including gymnastics. They will learn to demonstrate resilience and communicate to their peers using feedback and oracy.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities, through school and within the community.
- Reinforce the principles of a healthy active lifestyle, including the importance of a balanced diet.



Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHE)

Aim

Students will be provided with opportunities to explore connections between their physical, emotional and mental health. They will start building resilience that will support their mental and emotional wellbeing. Students will explore the role that social influences can have on their lives. They will start to understand the harm they can cause and develop skills needed to minimise the harmful effects of these influences. Students will look at how healthy relationships have a powerful effect on health and wellbeing. Students will start to look at making the most of their money.

Structure of learning

- PSHE lessons will be taught in a carousel with food and nutrition and students will have 26 hours of lessons over the course of the year.
- The content of the lessons will be led by the students and as experiences could differ, so will the content. Key topics will be safety and basic first aid.
- Students will gain an understanding of their changing body and the impact of healthy habits and routines on their physical, mental and emotional health.
- They will explore at the Equality Act 2010 and start to build confidence in challenging stereotypes. They will deepen their understanding of self worth and the importance of setting clear boundaries when developing relationships, exploring peer pressure and how to avoid the negative influences it can have on their health and wellbeing.
- Students will also be given opportunities to look at social media and appropriate use of these sites as well as online safety.
- They will look at strategies addressing how to make the most of their money and investigating ways of balancing needs and wants together.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Having conversations about their changing body and the importance of maintaining healthy routines.
- Have an awareness of their screen time and their activity online.
- The importance of open lines of communication and seeking support when needed.



Food and Nutrition

Aim

The new curriculum emphasises healthy eating and wellbeing. It focuses on how to apply nutrition within food lessons in order for students to receive and apply the correct food skills and knowledge to lead healthy lives. We offer an environment that can help positively shape how children think about food and eating. Students study the safety, quality and nutritional purposes of foods. The aim is to give the knowledge and science skills needed to understand food processes and meet society's demands for safe and sustainable food products. Each unit contains theory and practical elements.

Structure of learning

Unit 1 -Food Hygiene

Demonstrate awareness of health and safety to produce products in a safe manner. Students follow the 4C'S policy to reduce bacterial contamination to a safe level by chilling, cooking, cleaning and prevention of cross contamination.

Unit 2 - Healthy Me - Nutrition

Students can demonstrate an understanding of what makes a balanced diet, healthy eating and how this is adapted for different diets with a focus on sporty people. Students learn about the importance of nutrition and eating the Government 5 or 6 portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

Unit 3 - Ethics

Students have an understanding of Food Miles and where food comes from as well as how products are produced using seasonal food and Fair Trade fruit and vegetables.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Cook at home as much as possible with your child and encourage them to get involved.
- Ensure they are prepared for practical lessons by weighing their own ingredients at home. They can watch the skills video and read the recipe in advance of their practical lesson.
- Reinforce healthy eating at home where possible



History

Aim

During Year 7 we aim to provide learners with opportunities to develop their skills in chronology, aspects of change and continuity across the medieval period and to evaluate significance of historical events and issues. In addition, learners will develop an understanding of how to set out extended answers and to incorporate evidence to support their points using the point, evidence, explain structure. Learners will be equipped with the skills to peer assess each others work based on set success criteria and to begin to develop the vocabulary for meaningful feedback.

Structure of learning

Unit 1- In the first term, learners will explore the reasons for the Norman invasion with close attention paid to the chronology of events that led up to William of Normandy being crowned King. Students will then assess the impact of the Norman invasion on both England and Wales and identify change and continuity within this time period.

Unit 2- In our second unit learners will focus on life in the medieval period whilst exploring what makes an event or historical issue significant. Learners will study the Black Death, village life, religious beliefs and the crusades with the aim to answer the overarching enquiry question; how significant was religion in the lives of medieval people?

Unit 3- In our final term, learners will study the development of castles in the medieval period with a particular focus on local History. Learners will explore the features of a stone castle whilst developing their decision making skills by selecting the best defensive features for their own castle design. Learners will also develop their oracy skills by presenting to the class where they think the gate should feature on a map of Caergwrlle castle. Year 7 will also be provided with opportunity to visit the castle to find out for themselves at the end of term.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- To support your child's learning in History you can explore websites such as BBC Bitesize, with a focus on Medieval Britain. Alternatively you could read Measly Middle Ages, Horrible History books or look at the Horrible History TV series.



Religious Values & Ethics

Aim

In year 7 we aim to lay the foundations of knowledge and understanding of the 6 main world religions and the Humanist movement. This will contribute to the realisation of the four purposes by beginning more focused studies of philosophy, theology, sociology, psychology and anthropology. The students will be asked to consider big questions about the importance of life and why we are here and will have the opportunity to look at these questions from a variety of perspectives.

Structure of learning

Unit 1 - Origins and Foundations of Faith

In this unit students will be asked to consider the religious character of Wales. They will investigate how and why different religious groups came to Wales and the impact that has had on Wales. They will also look at certain practices such as rites of passage and why these ceremonies hold such value for believers.

Unit 2 - Identity and Belonging

Building on the work on rites of passage from Unit 1 students will now gain an understanding of how faith is celebrated today through festivals and religious symbols and clothing.

Unit 3 - Authority and Influence

In this unit students will look at authority and influence in society and how this translates to a religious perspective. They will look at places of worship and key figures in scripture and outside scripture that influence a believer and non-believer's life.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Encourage them to explore the topics we study and bring this extra research to lessons to share with the class.
- Keep a close eye on the news and anything related to the topics we are studying.
- Have discussions at home about the content to encourage an attitude of respect and tolerance.



Geography

Aim

Our primary aim in Y7 Geography is to stimulate interest and curiosity. Students are encouraged to think, question, investigate and discuss a wide range of concepts and are introduced to the key skills of the geographer. As they start to piece together the complex interrelationships between the physical Earth and human activity they will recognise just how remarkable our planet is.

Structure of Learning

Unit 1 -Our Place in the World

This unit encourages students to think about the Earth and the concept of place. Starting at the macro-level we learn about the important physical characteristics of our planet.

From continents and oceans we 'zoom in' to countries, regions, settlements and communities. Maintaining a Welsh focus we consider where we are from and how our place is connected to the rest of the World. Students experience their first taste of fieldwork when we complete our tour of Hope investigation.

Unit 2 -The Natural World

In order to understand the complex relationships between the physical Earth and living things, we must first understand how the Earth works. In this unit, students decide their route of learning by choosing from 8 key topics: Inside the Earth, Atmosphere, Water, Ice, Oceans, Volcanoes, Living things and Landscapes. Students will learn how the Earth's natural systems impact all living things and how human activity affects the natural World.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Global, national and local news always includes geography-related topics.
- Any opportunities to use maps, help to plan journeys or explore the outdoors are encouraged.
- Additional resources and ideas will be posted on your child's Google Classroom page.



Maths & Numeracy

Aim

The Mathematics programme in Year 7 aims to build on five proficiencies: conceptual understanding, communication using symbols, fluency, logical reasoning and strategic competence. These five proficiencies are intertwined, so no individual proficiency is developed in isolation.

Structure of Learning - Algebraic Thinking

Learners will be provided with the means to abstract important features and to detect and express mathematical structures of situations in order to solve problems and make generalisations. Algebraic thinking is essential for reasoning, modelling and solving problems in mathematics and in a wide range of real-world contexts, including technology and finance. Making connections between arithmetic and algebra develops skills for abstract reasoning.

Learners will develop their understanding of sequences (spatially and numerically), algebraic notation, equality and equivalence.

Structure of Learning - Place Value and Proportion

Numbers are the symbol system for describing and comparing quantities. Knowledge of and competence in number and quantities are fundamental to learners' confident participation in the world. Learners will be provided with a foundation for further study of mathematical concepts. Computational fluency is essential for problem solving and progressing in all areas.

Learners will develop their understanding of place value and the equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Parents can support children by reviewing their exercise books once a week, in particular to check homework is being completed. It is a good idea to talk about the work. Ask what was done during the lesson. Some lessons introduce new ideas whilst others develop and consolidate existing skills. In addition regular practising of times tables will greatly improve overall performance.



English

Aim

In Year 7, we aim to build on learners' skills through a wide variety of activities and lessons. This diverse curriculum provides different opportunities for pupils to learn and demonstrate their reading, writing and oracy skills. This is achieved through the study of literature, the creation of written pieces and regular discussions in pairs and groups during lesson time.

Structure of learning

Unit 1 - Identity

During term one, we aim to encourage students to explore their own identity, and that of others. Through exploring various stimuli, students will learn about cultures both nationally and internationally. Exposure to a diverse range of texts will enrich the students' knowledge, develop their vocabulary, challenge them to identify authors' language choices and literary tools, and decipher the impact it has on the reader. Students will develop their writing skills to create an autobiographical piece which is inspired by a childhood memory.

Unit 2 - Animals

For this unit of work, students will develop their understanding of non-fiction texts. This will be achieved through exploring a variety of animals and the challenges faced by animals across the world. The learners will develop their reading skills through answering a diverse range of questions. They will also complete research and write their own speech raising awareness of issues and charities related to animals.

Unit 3 - The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

Through the reading of "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas," students will enrich their understanding of important historical events and develop their ability to empathise. Whilst reading and discussing the book, students will also explore the world of work and enhance their critical thinking skills as they research professions and industries, and consider gender roles and expectations.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Be a reading role model and ensure your child sees you reading.
- Use the Good Reads app to discover new books for your child to read. You can also leave book reviews and set challenges!
- Build confidence in your child's oracy skills through asking them what they have learned in lessons each day.



Welsh

Aim

Students continue the study of the language acquired at primary school, although the first term offers some opportunity for revision and therefore an introduction to students who have not previously studied the language. Students will develop their receptive and expressive language skills and progress of these skills will be measured. While exploring three broad topics students will develop core skills in-line with the four purposes.

Structure of learning

Unit 1 - Beth sy'n bwysig i mi? -What's important to me

During the first unit we aim to establish and build upon prior knowledge of Cymraeg. Students will refine their knowledge of Cymraeg phonics and build confidence in asking and answering questions. Cultural aspects on a Welsh calendar will also be explored. Students will consider what is important to them and have the opportunity to create their own literature, in the form of a book about themselves.

Unit 2 - Fy llwybr i - My pathway

Students will consider their life path so far and begin to think about their future. Students will acquire language patterns to enable them to discuss their school life in both written and oral form. Additionally, students develop oracy and group work skills when completing the end of unit project - a transition project with year 6 students.

Unit 3 - Cymru yn y Byd - Wales in the World

In this more creative unit students will consider the context of Wales/Welsh in the local community as well as nationally and internationally. Students will learn about traditional Welsh customs as well as have the opportunity to perform and compete in both the Urdd and School Eisteddfod. On an international level students will learn about the international eisteddfod and have the opportunity to visit it.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- To support your child's learning you can review Google Classroom regularly - homework tasks will be set regularly and will consist largely of vocabulary learning and completion of written tasks explained in class. A Welsh Dictionary would be a useful acquisition. The department also offers extra curricular activities to enrich the experience of learning Welsh and to appreciate the Welsh Culture, so please encourage your child to attend.



International Languages

Aim

Students start their language journey and build the foundations of grammar and vocabulary through learning French. They will bring prior knowledge of grammar from English and Welsh and apply this cross curricular knowledge to ensure a sound grasp of the French language. The aim of our lessons is to produce confident and empathetic learners who can use French in context. We will cover the skills of oracy, reading and writing with students becoming aware of the cultural connections between Wales, France and francophone countries. They will become ethical, informed citizens who can communicate effectively.

Structure of learning

Unit 1 -Self & Basic Language In this unit we will lay the foundations of French grammar and vocabulary. Students will be encouraged to learn the basics of French such as greetings, numbers, names, months and days. We assume no prior knowledge of French language learning. The emphasis will be on building confidence and equipping students with the necessary sentence structures to develop oracy. The unit assessment will involve students working in pairs and video recording a conversation, promoting and improving digital competency.

Unit 2 -School Students are given the opportunity to research schools in France and francophone countries, in order to make comparisons to Wales. They will be given the framework to express opinions and talk about their own school experience. In addition students will apply their numeracy skills by telling the time in French. They will be working in groups to design a "Superschool" within a budget and to a given brief. They will be assessed by their peers in the form of a group presentation.

Unit 3 - Freetime In this unit students build on their language knowledge and cover topics such as sports, technology and weather. They continue to express opinions and use more challenging sentence structures, using key verbs in the present tense. The skills focus of oracy, reading and writing will enable students to talk and write about these themes confidently and articulately in French.

Unit 4 - Family & Home Students will be able to talk about pets, family members and rooms of the house. They will apply their knowledge of grammar so that they can use adjectives correctly. They will continue to develop strong linguistic skills and begin to increase awareness of grammatical structures, laying the foundations for their Year 8 work.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- In order to support your child's learning we would encourage the use of online resources such as BBC bitesize, Active Learn and Quizlet. You may wish to encourage them to learn vocabulary, practise conversations at home and even watch familiar cartoons or films in French.



Computer Science

Aim

Computation involves algorithms processing data to solve a wide range of real-world problems. In Year 7 Computer Science we investigate how computational processes have changed the way we live, work, study and interact with each other and our environment. This allows students to create and use digital technologies to their full potential. Students also learn to understand that there are broad legal, social and ethical consequences to the use of technology. This can help students to make informed decisions about the future development and application of technology.

Structure of learning

Unit 1 - Algorithms

Students develop their understanding of what an algorithm is and how we express an algorithm using flowcharts and how we can use algorithms to solve real world problems.

Unit 2 - Data

Students explore what is data and data types. They develop their understanding of how modelling a real world scenario using spreadsheets and databases can be used to solve real world problems.

Unit 3 - Physical Computing

Students apply their skills developed from Unit 1 to the physical world of computing. By applying their understanding of problem decomposition and computational thinking they develop solutions to real world problems using sensors (temperature, light, humidity) and outputs (motors, servos, displays, sounds).

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Any additional coding experience would enable students to further develop their skills in the lessons. [Code.org](https://code.org) and [Scratch.mit.edu](https://scratch.mit.edu) are engaging resources aimed at students.



Science

Aim and Structure of Learning

Physics

Year 7 students will be provided with the opportunity of learning about the key physical principles of forces, energy, magnetism and waves, and how these principles are used to describe the behaviour of everything: microscopic to macroscopic. Students learn through investigation and apply their knowledge to make predictions about the behaviour of our surroundings.

Chemistry

During year 7 we introduce the concept of matter. We identify the types of matter, how they interact, what they consist of and how they can change from one type to the other. We will move this concept to examine how it has developed over time by studying the work of Dmitri Mendeleev and the Periodic table. We will include mathematical concepts to show how elements can join to make compounds and how these differ to mixtures. We examine a variety of separation methods as well as physical and chemical reactions and the ideas surrounding conservation of mass.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Parents can support children by asking what they have learned in Science that lesson and by reviewing their blue books periodically. Some lessons introduce new ideas whilst others develop and consolidate existing skills. Parents should be aware that the assessment work of students can found within a separate book which stays in school. The assessment book is regularly marked and provides feedback to students about their progress and how to improve. Blue books are an excellent way for students to copy key information, perform classwork tasks and therefore should be used to prepare for tests. In addition, parents can check on the completion of homework tasks – within the blue book or on Google classroom.

Biology

Year 7 students will recognise how diverse life on Earth is and consider how living things interact with their environment. They will explore the conditions and resources organisms need to survive and that they may have to compete with other organisms to do so.

They will understand that as humans our decisions and actions can have a significant impact on the diversity of life. Students will look at the structures and functions of living things in order to understand how they grow, develop and reproduce successfully.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) topics

Curiosity about science and technology leads us to ask questions about the world around us. Year 7 students will be encouraged to use logic, evidence and creativity, during two STEM topics. These topics provide a link to scientific inquiry by formulating questions answered through investigation, to inform the student before they engage in the engineering design process to solve problems.

Students will be supported to investigate and apply scientific knowledge to further understand and apply scientific knowledge to further appreciate how our world works. The units of work are: Solar cell design, making and testing a model solar cell, plus Racing boat design, 3D modelled using tinker CAD, tested in a virtual wind tunnel, as a challenge to produce a boat with the lowest drag coefficient.



Design Technology

Aim

In Design Technology, the KS3 Curriculum content has been chosen to engage our students using topical environmental and social issues and a range creative design challenges. In addition to this, we will be developing core principle skills and knowledge within each year of KS3 to build a foundation of knowledge across the key stage with the overarching objective that our students will begin to develop culturally rich understanding of the subject that can encourage learning in KS4 and in STEM careers in the future.

Structure of learning

Unit 1-Forces structures and mechanism

To introduce students to the technical principles of material stresses, applicable forces and mechanical motion. Lessons contain both practical and theory elements, designed to support/scaffold previously acquired knowledge, whilst helping to develop skills such as problem solving and teamwork.

Unit 2 - PHONE STAND

- Develop students materials knowledge (specifically timbers)
- Students to become safe and capable learners
- Students become inspired by design classics

Unit 3 - Introduction to Computer Aided Design

CAD is one of the essential tools for allowing students to be creative in both 2D and 3D formats. During this unit, students will learn to develop, practise and master the skills needed to create their own unique designs.

How can I help to support my child's learning?

- Install and utilise free CAD design software such as Tinkercad and develop some of the basic principles of design before starting the new year
- Involve students in any DIY/practical activities at home, flat pack furniture assembly (including translating the instructions)
- Encourage students to be curious, question why/how things work

More Able and Talented

At Castell Alun we believe in creating an inclusive learning community that celebrates the uniqueness of all children. The school will promote stimulating and challenging experiences through a broad balanced curriculum that also offers quality learning activities that focus on the particular needs and talents of the children. We are also committed to identifying and meeting the needs of these children as early as possible in order to enable them to achieve their best.

At any one time, Castell Alun may have a number of More Able and Talented students. We recognise that these students have specific learning needs that must be addressed. Following identification, opportunities for extension, enhancement and enrichment are provided to allow our More Able and Talented students to flourish and achieve their potential.

We work closely with our consortium of schools to ensure a smooth transition for More Able and Talented students from primary to secondary. All talents are recognised and celebrated and all learning areas are committed to providing high quality learning experiences.

Additional Learning Needs

At Castell Alun the principles underpinning Additional Learning Needs provision are those upon which the whole ethos of the school is based. We strive to be an inclusive school, engendering a sense of community and belonging by recognising, rewarding and valuing diversity among our students. In addition, we believe that maximum success and progress can only be achieved by the joint cooperation, understanding and planning of staff, parents, students, governors, support services and the Local Authority.

The Learning Support Department plays a major role in the identification, assessment, monitoring and provision for students with Additional Educational Needs. In doing so the department works according to the Code of Practice for Additional Needs and liaises closely with colleagues, parents, primary schools and external agencies.

Provision for students with Additional Learning Needs is a whole school issue. Central to the work of every class and every subject is continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessment and evaluation that takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the students.

The majority of students will learn and progress within these arrangements. However, for students with Additional Learning Needs it may be necessary to provide an enhanced level of provision that supports and develops their learning abilities. Those students identified may receive their English and Mathematics lessons in small groups, or follow individual programmes, which allow for greater scope in delivering the National Curriculum according to individual needs and permits a high degree of teacher attention.

Resources are generally allocated according to a hierarchy of need and support may take one or more of the following forms:

- The use of differentiated learning materials and / or specialised equipment.
- Teaching assistant support for individuals or group work.
- Access to external agencies, including support for individuals in mainstream lessons. Local Authority Services, for targeted support of individual students and / or advice on strategies, equipment and training.
- Withdrawal from mainstream lessons for Basic Skills support.
- 'Catch Up and Buddy Reading' - a highly structured remediation scheme.
- Placement in the Nurture group.

The Additional Needs Department consists of two full-time teachers, two nurture group teachers, a full time Basic Skills teacher and a team of teaching assistants. Staff share a wide range of expertise in ALN, including experience in teaching students with emotional and behavioural difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties eg dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism spectrum disorders and physical and sensory impairment. The department is located in a well-resourced teaching and support area that provides for small groups or individual programmes of study, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Nurture

'Nurture' offers small group teaching sessions to students who struggle with their learning or with social/emotional aspects of school.

Students work with specially trained staff on activities designed to develop their learning in Languages, Humanities and Science.

The sessions are also designed to develop students' speaking and listening skills, their social skills and their ability to deal with difficult situations and emotions.

The aims of our Nurture group are to:

- reduce , and where possible, remove barriers to learning by equipping and empowering students in core learning skills and habits.
- Provide strategies that help vulnerable students cope with the emotional and social demands of a large school community, namely relationships with adults and peers.
- Improve the attainment, and in turn the longer term prospects, of those students at greatest risk of underachievement and exclusion.