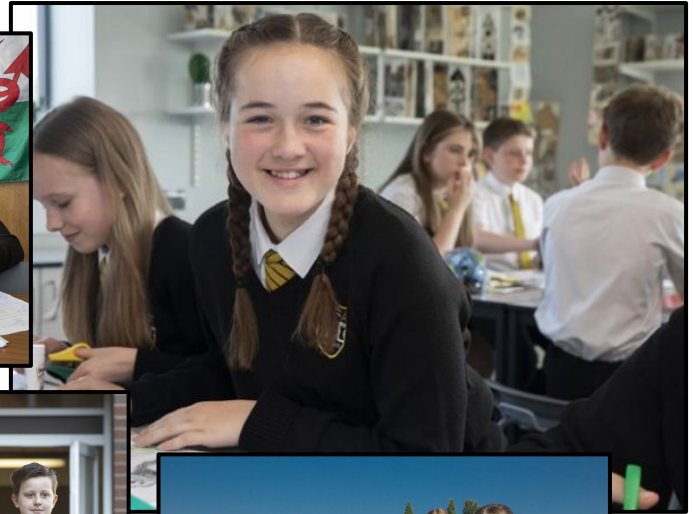




CASTELL ALUN HIGH SCHOOL

CURRICULUM FOR WALES



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

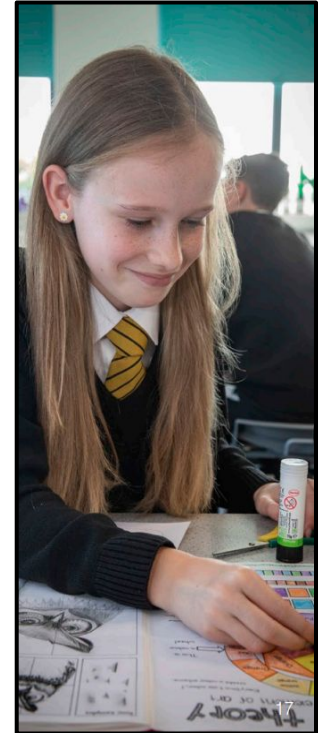
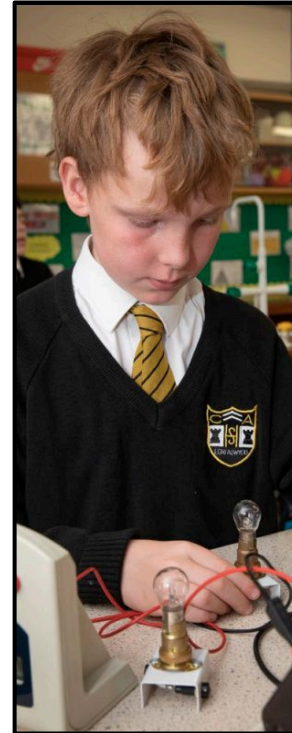


Our Journey Starts here...

Education in Wales is changing and a new curriculum (Curriculum for Wales) is being introduced to years 7 and 8 from September 2023.

At Castell Alun we believe passionately in providing all of our students with the best possible learning opportunities and experiences. Whether it's lessons, trips, sporting events or school productions, our team works tirelessly to prepare the young people in our community for an exciting future.

We have been working on the development of the new curriculum for a number of years and have listened to the views of parents, students, teachers, our community and the governing body to develop a vision and values for the school which encompasses the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales and addresses the needs of our students.





VALUES - GWERTHOEDD

Learning is underpinned by our values of **respect**, **determination** and **honesty**, so that we all thrive and achieve.

VISION

GWELEDIGAETH

The Castell Alun team will work in partnership with our local community and embrace national priorities to provide all students with excellent **learning** experiences that will develop them into **ambitious** and **capable, enterprising** and **creative, ethical** and **informed, healthy** and **confident** young people, who are fully prepared to reach their potential.

At all times we demonstrate:

RESPECT / PARCH



- We treat everyone equally
- We are kind, polite and help others
- We behave appropriately

DETERMINATION / PENDERFYNOLRWYDD



- We are ready to learn and reach for the stars
- We remain positive and persevere
- We never give up; we are 'all in'

HONESTY / GONESTRWYDD



- We take responsibility for our actions
- We are truthful in what we say and do
- We are trustworthy and reliable

The creation of our vision was a collaborative and inclusive process that drew inspiration from the four principles of the Curriculum for Wales.

To begin, we engaged students, teachers, and parents in meaningful discussions and brainstorming sessions. They played a vital role in selecting keywords that resonated with their experiences and captured the essence of what we value as a school community.

Using these keywords as a starting point, we then crafted our school values, which reflect our collective beliefs and aspirations.

Our vision and values serve as a compass, guiding our actions and decisions as we strive to provide an education that develops Successful Futures.



Stakeholder consultation in the development of the curriculum



Leadership Engagement

We attended all regional training courses provided by GwE during the early stages of new curriculum development. Key leaders within the school have also worked on GwE teams, with one assisting in the leadership of Health and Wellbeing across Flintshire and another appointed regional lead for Flintshire schools, with the remit of curriculum design. Research into Claire Hill and Kat Howard's theories on curriculum design was undertaken. Hence, a methodical approach to designing and delivering a curriculum has been used in school, to ensure that all feel part of a collective curricular journey. We also explored the work of Mary Myatt, focussing on whole school as well as subject specific curriculum design.

Learning Managers

This team of school leaders are a driving force in the development of the curriculum and hold regular planned meetings, both together and with their individual teams, which currently focus principally on the development of progression and assessment in the curriculum.

Teachers

We consider professional learning to be fundamental to the development of successful and impactful pedagogical approaches. Key SLT members have attended training days, focussing on curriculum design. Our monthly school meeting schedule makes regular developmental and sharing practice provision for colleagues in all Areas of Learning and Experience during weeks 1 and 3. We are participants in an Assessment Focus Group and one colleague has subsequently based his PHD on the theme of Assessment.

Students

Student feedback is regularly and systematically gleaned through learner voice, school council and further Learning Area quality assurance practices, with key developments being shared with students through whole school and year group assemblies.

Parents

Our parents played a key role in forming our core school values, upon which the curriculum is founded. Parents were consulted widely on key principles which should be evident throughout our school. Regular scheduled and anecdotal feedback continues to allow us to monitor parental views on the development of the new curriculum during its formative years of delivery.

Governors

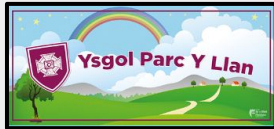
We have provided regular updates on new developments to the Curriculum sub committee. Both challenge and support have been provided in equal measure in order to refine our planning. The school five year roadmap was shared with the full governors' meeting at its inception in 2019.

Primary schools

We held a joint planning event during the early stages of development of the new curriculum on a bespoke training day with our primary colleagues. Progress is discussed during cross phase meetings on a regular basis.

Collaboration with high schools

We held a joint planning event on a county training day in 2022, during which specialists compared plans and practice across all subject areas.



Our Cluster and Transition

We maintain strong links with our cluster primary schools to ensure a smooth and seamless transition. Regular meetings are held on a half-termly basis, where representatives from each school come together to discuss both the academic and pastoral progress of our students.

Collaboration is key as we work together to plan and coordinate the curriculum across the cluster. By aligning our teaching strategies, content, and assessment methods, we ensure that students can continue their learning journey uninterrupted and make consistent progress.

One of the core focuses of our collaboration is student well-being. We recognise the importance of nurturing a supportive and inclusive environment for our students to thrive. With this in mind, the cluster has collaboratively written a three-year plan that places student well-being at the forefront.

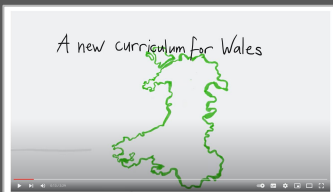
By working closely with our cluster primary schools, we foster a sense of continuity and coherence in education. This collaborative effort not only enhances the educational experience of our students but also strengthens the relationships between schools, creating a unified and supportive community that is dedicated to the success and well-being of every learner.



Our Curriculum

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

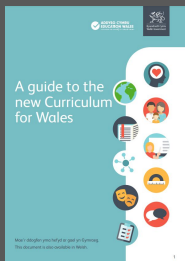


Overview of the new Curriculum for Wales

<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>



Welsh Language and Culture

In accordance with the Government's 'A Million Welsh Speakers by 2050' strategy, we at Castell Alun are committed to maintaining and further developing a bilingual ethos. Education is central to the Welsh government's vision and we support the vision that young people come out of the education system ready and proud to use the language in all contexts.

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. We aim to ensure that staff and students are given the educational incentive to nurture language skills, which will lead to bilingualism. 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.

Cross Curricular Skills

The school appointed a Strategic Skills Lead and have three Skills Leaders who work together to provide whole school provision to progression in the cross curricular skills of:



Literacy



Numeracy



Digital Competence

Cross Cutting Themes

Running through and across each subject is 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 the students development

Our teachers and leaders, using our high levels planning documents, have already mapped where these cross cutting themes occur naturally. As our curriculum develops, year on year, we will refine our approaches. The breadth and depth of topics covered will be age appropriate and increase overtime as students mature and are ready to tackle more complex issues.



RSE - Relationships and Sexuality Education

RVE - Religion, Values and Ethics

High quality RSE and RVE is fundamental in creating a safe school environment and is a positive and protective part of the Curriculum for Wales. It plays a central role in supporting learners' rights to enjoy fulfilling, healthy and safe relationships throughout their lives.

Central to the Curriculum for Wales is an aspiration for every child and young person to achieve the four purposes of the curriculum. A rights and equity based RSE and RVE curriculum helps ensure that all learners can develop an understanding of how people's faith, beliefs, human rights and cultures are related to all aspects of RSE and RVE and how these rights can contribute to the freedom, dignity, well-being and safety of all people. It helps to foster positive attitudes towards gender diversity, equality and respectful relationships.

At Castell Alun we discuss RSE and RVE in the context of children's rights as protected by the United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child. Our students are able to access their key rights of:

Learning – (Articles 13, 28 and 29 UNCRC)

Being Heard – (Article 12, and 30 UNCRC)

Feeling Safe – (Articles 3, 19 and 36 UNCRC)

Feeling Valued – (Articles 3, 12 and 13 UNCRC)

Castell Alun is an Anti- Racism school and are inclusive of diversity. We understand the value in using the rights to underpin the RSE and RVE curriculum.

Learning is organised into 6 Areas of Learning and Experience (AOLEs)



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



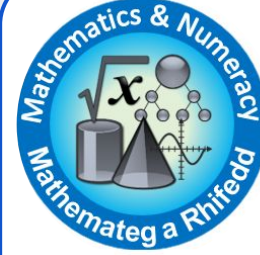
In Languages, Literacy and Communication, students will learn about languages. They'll understand and use Welsh, English and other languages. They'll study and create literature, and communicate in spoken, written or visual ways. This could include poetry, drama and film.



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.

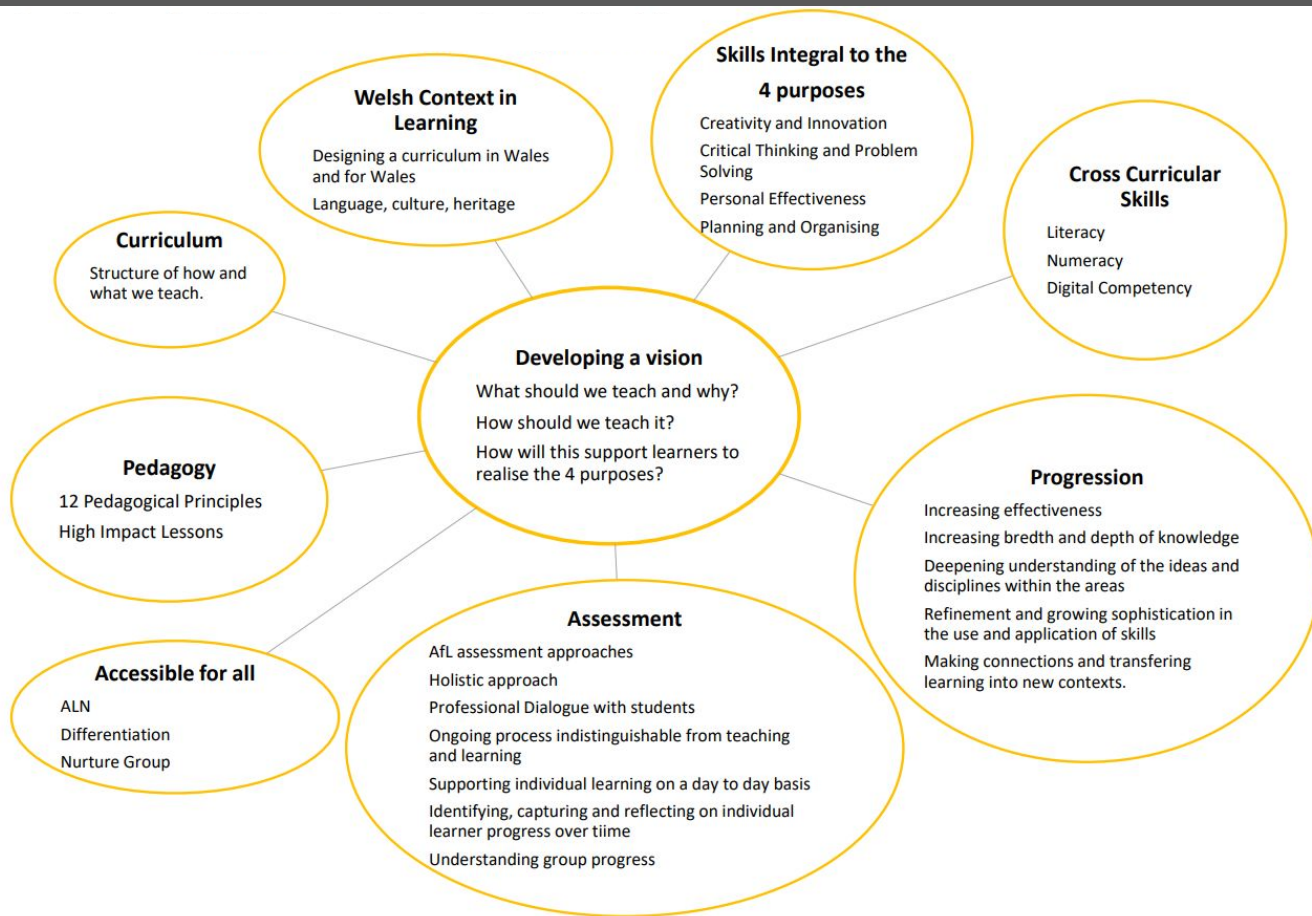


Health and Well-being is about looking after student physical and mental health including emotional well-being. Students will learn about healthy eating and how to make good decisions, deal with influences and develop healthy relationships.



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.

Curriculum Content



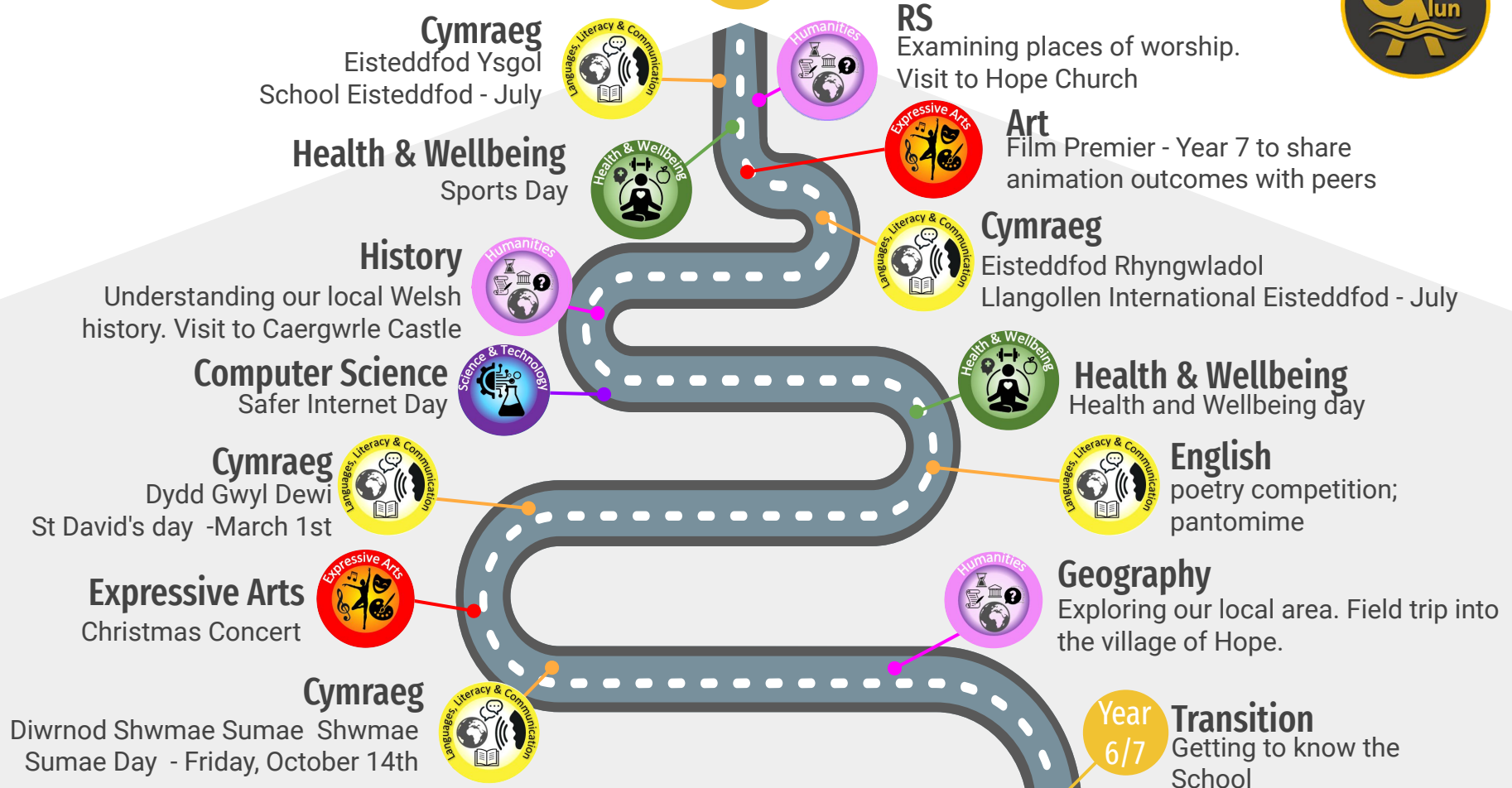
Our curriculum is designed with a clear vision of progressiveness, focusing on key skills such as literacy, numeracy, and digital competency.

We believe that effective pedagogy and high-impact lessons are fundamental to the learning process, ensuring accessibility for all students while reflecting our Welsh culture and heritage.

Additionally, we prioritise careful tracking of student progress to ensure that each individual can achieve their full potential. Our commitment to an innovative, student-centered curriculum drives us to continuously improve and adapt our practices. We believe that education should empower students to become lifelong learners, equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Year 7 Learning Journey

Year 8



Progression and Assessment

Overall, the curriculum for Wales aims to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment that values the diverse abilities and needs of all learners.

At Castell Alun we believe progression and assessment is fundamental to ensuring we achieve our school Vision. Through research and enquiry of leading practitioners such as David Didau, Shirley Clarke, Hattie Donahue and Mike Gershon, we have developed a shared understanding of progression, with progression in learning at the heart of our curriculum design, classroom practice and assessment.

Our curriculum is underpinned by the mandatory principles of progression which describe what it means for learners to progress.

- Increasing effectiveness as a learner.
- Increasing breadth and depth of knowledge.
- Deepening understanding of the ideas and disciplines within Areas.
- Refinement and growing sophistication in the use and application of skills.
- Making connections and transferring learning into new contexts.

The curriculum emphasises personalised learning, where teaching and learning approaches are tailored to meet the specific needs of learners. This ensures that learners can progress at their own pace, receive appropriate support, and are challenged according to their abilities. It provides frameworks and strategies to ensure that both learners with additional learning needs (ALN) and more able and talented (MAT) learners receive appropriate support and challenges.

We use a variety of evidence informed assessment strategies to enable each individual learner to make progress at an appropriate pace. We ensure our processes identify learners who require further support or challenge and provide rich qualitative intelligence for us to inform next steps in learning for individuals and groups of learners. Our assessment arrangements ensure active engagement between learners and teachers exists. It is based on ongoing reflection on where a learner is, what their next steps are and what is needed to help them achieve.

Assessment

- supporting individual learners on an ongoing, day-to-day basis
- identifying, capturing and reflecting on individual learner progress over time
- understanding group progress in order to reflect on practice.

Our assessment approaches in school already provide regular diagnostic verbal and written feedback to students, using a reflect and improve whole school policy which allows them to identify their strengths as well as the next steps in their learning so they can make progress.



The year ahead...

During 2024, we will continue to monitor the delivery and impact of our new curriculum. We will use a whole range of self-evaluation exercises to help us reflect on what is working well and what we can improve. We will also ask students and parents for feedback via regular student voice meetings and parent/carer questionnaires. The curriculum is intended to be responsive to the needs of our students and our regular reviews will focus on where and how we can adapt our curriculum to enable our students to make the best progress they can make during their time with us at Castell Alun High School.

