

The Potteries School

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POLICY: Curriculum Policy			
COMPILED	IMPLEMENTED	COORDINATED	REVIEWED
02/12/2016	01/11/2017	Andy Joynson	20/01/2026

THE POTTERIES SCHOOL: CURRICULUM CONSIDERATIONS

Culture, ethos and mission

The Potteries School is one of the key elements in an integrated, tripartite model of care, education and therapy for learners experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties (S.E.M.H.) based in mid-Wales. All our learners are Looked After Children and present complex needs with regard to interpersonal, emotional and social issues.

The Potteries School provides a positive, supportive and child-centred educational environment for all its learners. Through a process of creating a safe learning space, building effective teacher-learner relationships and precision identification of individual learning need, the School supports learners to achieve and attain and prepare for the next steps on the educational ladder.

Many of the learners have a history of school exclusion or had limited access to learning prior to admission. Most have been unable to manage in a formal educational setting and often the risks their behaviours present has impacted on their ability to be educated alongside large peer groups.

The education offered at the Potteries School seeks to reengage learners in a creative and meaningful curriculum, assisting them to catch up on missed learning and an assessment programme that identifies their learning needs accurately. All learning is offered in an inclusive environment and delivered by education professionals with an understanding of the needs of the learners, working to build self-esteem and learning confidence, develop peer relationships and progress independent learning skills.

At the Potteries School we would like our learners
to restart their educational experience with
confidence and establish a pattern of learning so
they can progress, attain and achieve.

Our educational aims are to ensure that every learner is able to:

- Experience bespoke learning in a safe and secure environment
- Access opportunities to compensate for missed school experiences
- Develop positive social interaction skills with their peers and adults
- Be supported in managing their behaviour to progress and achieve

- Establish patterns and routines of learning for their next step in education

The Right Way PRINCIPLE	THIS MEANS:	ORGANISATIONS WILL:
EMBEDDING	Putting Children's Rights (UNCRC) at the core of planning and the delivery of services for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make links to Children's Rights (UNCRC) in their plans. ○ Agree on a structure of how they make sure children's rights are taken into account at all levels of decision making. ○ Make sure that leaders and staff have a good knowledge of children's rights (UNCRC), and help them understand how it can benefit their work.
Equality and NON-DISCRIMINATION	Ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to be the best they can be and that no child has to ensure poor life chances due to discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make sure staff have up-to-date knowledge of the Equality Act and receive training to increase their awareness of different groups of children and young people's needs. ○ Give information to children in a language or format appropriate for their age, culture, or ability. ○ Analyse data and consider which groups of children are not accessing your services, and why - can use our a children's rights impact assessment.
EMPOWERING children and young people	Giving children the knowledge and confidence to use their rights and hold organisations and individuals that affect their lives to account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Give children the information they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g. simple language reports). ○ Involve children and young people by giving them the opportunities/ training/ information they need to influence decisions that affect them. ○ Build relationships with groups of young people to allow them to regularly give ideas and feedback. E.g. youth groups/forums.
PARTICIPATION	Listening to children and taking their views seriously (as guaranteed by Article 12 — UNCRC).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop clear targets to listen to children and young people from marginalised groups. ○ Involve children directly in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services they receive (this can include involving children in recruitment of staff). ○ Adopt Wales' National Participation Standards for Children and Young People, to make sure when children participate, their experience is a quality one.
ACCOUNTABILITY	Organisations and individuals should be accountable to children for the decisions and actions which affect their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Publish an accessible annual update showing how they've worked towards making children's rights a reality. ○ Feedback regularly to children in a suitable format. ○ Provide children with accessible information on how to provide feedback about services or to how to make a complaints and hold staff to account.

The Right Way

What the curriculum aims to be

The Potteries School curriculum is the sum total of all the subjects, areas of learning and aspects of personal and social development that are organised and taught by the Headteacher and education support staff. The curriculum aims to provide breadth, balance, continuity, progression, differentiation and relevance. Each of these aims is mediated by the context of the school and the particular features of its learners. The School is not exempt from the National Curriculum framework but must find innovative ways to articulate this to meet the needs of its learners and help them progress, attain and develop. The curriculum should be:

- **Needs-led** and based on the assessed needs of the learners the school exists to serve
- **Nationally** guided to meet requirements, expectations and good practice
- **Dynamic** so that it is continuously evolving and improving
- **Structured** by decisions about organisation, timetabling, staffing and learner grouping
- **Purposefully** orientated for the learner to gain skills, knowledge and understanding

The learners that access the curriculum

All the learners who attend the school are resident at The Potteries home and are Children who are Looked After (C.L.A.). The admission criteria for the home is therefore the initial point of compatibility with Welsh Assembly Government registration. The most contemporary statement of purpose notes that:

The Potteries provides a specialised provision for young adolescent males between the ages of 10-17 (upon admission). Many of the young people referred have extensive unmet needs, troubled individual and family histories and significant experiences of placement instability. The criteria for admission includes individuals who have experienced significant neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Young people placed with us present complex needs, ranging from ADHD through to moderate mild learning disabilities. We are unable to provide care for young people who present with or are subject to:

Following thirteen years of education at the school and in spite of the myriad of different behaviours presented, there are strong congruences across the cohorts with regard to difficulties with learning and behaviour dysfunction. These similarities mean that nearly all learners:

- **Struggle** with the perceived imposition of boundaries, routines and structure to ensure the conditions are in place to ready them for learning;
- **Present** trauma-driven behaviours that act to interfere with establishing the pattern of learning essential for progress;
- **Have** a history of school non-attendance, exclusion and disruption that have adversely affected their learning producing tangible gaps in knowledge;
- **Exhibit** an impaired ability to be educated alongside large groups of learners or in a formalised education setting;
- **Express** their feeling of not being safe in school by attempting to control their education programme and exert negative influence over other learners;
- **Mask** their non-chronological academic ability behind a façade of inappropriate behaviours that often means their assessed levels are inaccurate;
- **Fail** to access the curriculum fully thus depriving them of making meaningful progress and gaining nationally-recognised qualifications.

INTENTION: What the curriculum aims to do

Although the school far from unique in terms of learner intake, provision to meet need and educational outcomes, it is unusual in that the curriculum intention is defined around a small set of quite singular goals. The learner profile detailed in the previous section shows that a formal mainstream-type curriculum model would not be suitable to meet need. In addition, although the school must endeavour to meet regulation (and must do so according to the

registration criteria set by the WAG), its singular nature means that curriculum aims must be *clear, meet purpose and serve the needs of all learners*.

Commitment: Establish a pattern of learner participation, engagement and progress

First and foremost, *the curriculum at this school serves to promote, encourage and reinvigorate learner participation and engagement*. Precision evaluation of school history for former cohorts shows that the main barrier to progress for nearly all learners is attendance and its accompanying commitment to full-time education. There are a myriad of different reasons why young people affected by trauma are absent from school or have difficulties with engagement and these factors are compounded by those who inhabit the Looked After world. All indices of school performance from attendance through levels of literacy to examination accreditation are compromised for children in care. This explains why most strategic-level work focusses on a culture of proactive commitment to ensure that at every age looked after children achieve educational outcomes comparable to their peers. At our school, the need to establish a *pattern of learning* is the paramount factor to assisting learners on their education journey.

Commitment: Provide a bespoke, coherent curriculum that meets all learner needs

It would be safe to say that a conventional approach to designing, delivering and evaluating the curriculum would be almost impossible to implement with the learning cohort enrolled at the school. *This is not due to low expectations of learner capability but on an accurate reflection of their past inability to manage the demands of a mainstream-type provision*. Alongside establishing a pattern of learning through the maintenance of boundaries and structures, the curriculum at the school attempts, through trauma-informed practice, to offer a programme where health and wellbeing and emotional literacy are addressed alongside more academic and vocational subjects. This is particularly pertinent to precision work around attachment difficulties. If the school has a mantra alongside its mission statement and objectives, it would be this:

*Our minds are continually shaped by emotions, experiences, relationships, opportunities, attitudes, values and beliefs, knowledge and genes. However, **there is an instinctive priority of attachment over the brain's exploratory system – feeling safe and secure is more important than learning***. (National College for Teaching and Leadership, 1997.)

Commitment: Determine learner education potential and current working levels

Directly linked to the first commitment above, high levels of absenteeism lead directly to school work being non-sequential, information recall haphazard and patterns of learning fractured. This is further compounded in that the resultant behaviour stemming from the trauma behind the absenteeism often results in formal school exclusions, informal social isolation from school peers and an inability to re-access channels of education. The whole process becomes very tangled and learners often left in limbo as to where they are on their own educational path and what might be needed to improve. The school therefore acts as an assessment placement to give learners the opportunity to learn with minimal distraction and with teaching staff who employ trauma-informed practice to meet need. The 18-week programme encompasses

academic, vocational, cognitive and emotional literacy assessments and readies the learner for the transition to a new placement.

Commitment: Implement a framework that supports social interaction and independence

With these considerations in mind, it is our intention that the school will be able to fulfil the standards required by the inspection programme as other schools do but more importantly, the school will particularly help its learners by:

- **Building** on previous educational experience whilst helping them to move away from negative experiences and stereotypes engendered in past schooling;
- **Providing** a breadth and balance of curriculum to aid engagement in learning;
- **Offering** linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative learning experiences;
- **Developing** personal, social and health education in line with the school ethos;
- **Enabling** the acquisition of skills in speaking/listening/literacy/numeracy;
- **Meeting** the requirements of stakeholders and objectives of special educational needs;
- **Focusing** on identifying individual learner need and assisting with remedial support;
- **Providing** a curricula balance between academic work and personal development;
- **Accommodating** individual learner interests and learning styles;
- **Improving** learner self-esteem and confidence to establish a pattern of learning;
- **Encourage** the exploration of working with other learners and developing the appropriate and relevant skills to do so successfully;
- **Introducing** a safe learning environment conducive to developing positive relationships that produce collective learning success;
- **Supporting** learners in exploring their own narrative and how this story shapes all facets of their life as well as their learning;
- **Fostering** learner understanding of their roles in society so that they can make a positive contribution as adults;
- **Empowering** learners with the skills needed to live independently.

IMPLEMENTATION: How the curriculum works

Pre-placement considerations

The education pathway for all learners runs alongside the care placement for up to twenty-six weeks. The initial eight weeks are deemed a **stabilising** period; weeks 8 - 26 a **strengthening** time; and weeks 26 – 39 a **transition phase**. Once a referral been through the compatibility, regulatory scrutiny and registration suitability process necessary for both the home and school, the Headteacher seeks pre-placement information from the learner's home authority. The material sought is:

- National Curriculum Levels gleaned from testing in Year 2, 6 and 9;
- Statement of Individual Development Plans or Education, Health and Care plan;
- School reports, accreditation and teacher commentaries;

- Educational psychologist summative reports;
- Risk assessments, I.E.P. and P.E.P. where appropriate;

Initial education meeting

Following the first week of placement where stabilising behaviour and establishing boundaries within the home is a priority, an initial education meeting is undertaken by new learners. This produces a more comprehensive picture of the learner than documentation alone and more often than not, means that idiosyncratic detail that is often missed from the big picture (and that is often key in helping a learner begin to re-engage) comes to light and assists in informing the learner's profile. The areas discussed in the interview are:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| • Previous schooling | chronology and transitions; |
| • Educational experience | relationships, teachers and extra-curricular; |
| • Difficulties and behaviour | triggers, patterns and solutions; |
| • Curriculum consideration | likes, performance and qualifications; |
| • Comparison profiling | pre-placement, risk assessment and reflection. |

Frameworks for learning

The key to successful participation, engagement and progress for all learners is to make the school a safe, structured environment for learning. Previous experience of a chaotic home scenario, disconnected schooling and a turbulent interpersonal world means that building a pattern of learning is difficult for all learners and often produces amplified, resistant behaviours initially. To support learners with their initial apprehension, the home has a robust daily routines programme before, during and after school that stabilises their tumult and begins to provide the structure needed for meaningful learning. The expectational protocols and boundaries that this framework are built on are mirrored between the home and school and requires a level of compliance on behalf of the learner **before** education starts to ensure that the negative effects of the circumstances above are ameliorated. If learner behaviour is deemed not fitting with expectation, is non-compliant with boundaries or the learner is refusing to attend, the day stops and support is offered to promote reengagement. Discussion between the headteacher and support is ongoing throughout the day to check learner recovery and agree mutually on how to reboot the school programme. The daily routines are outlined below:

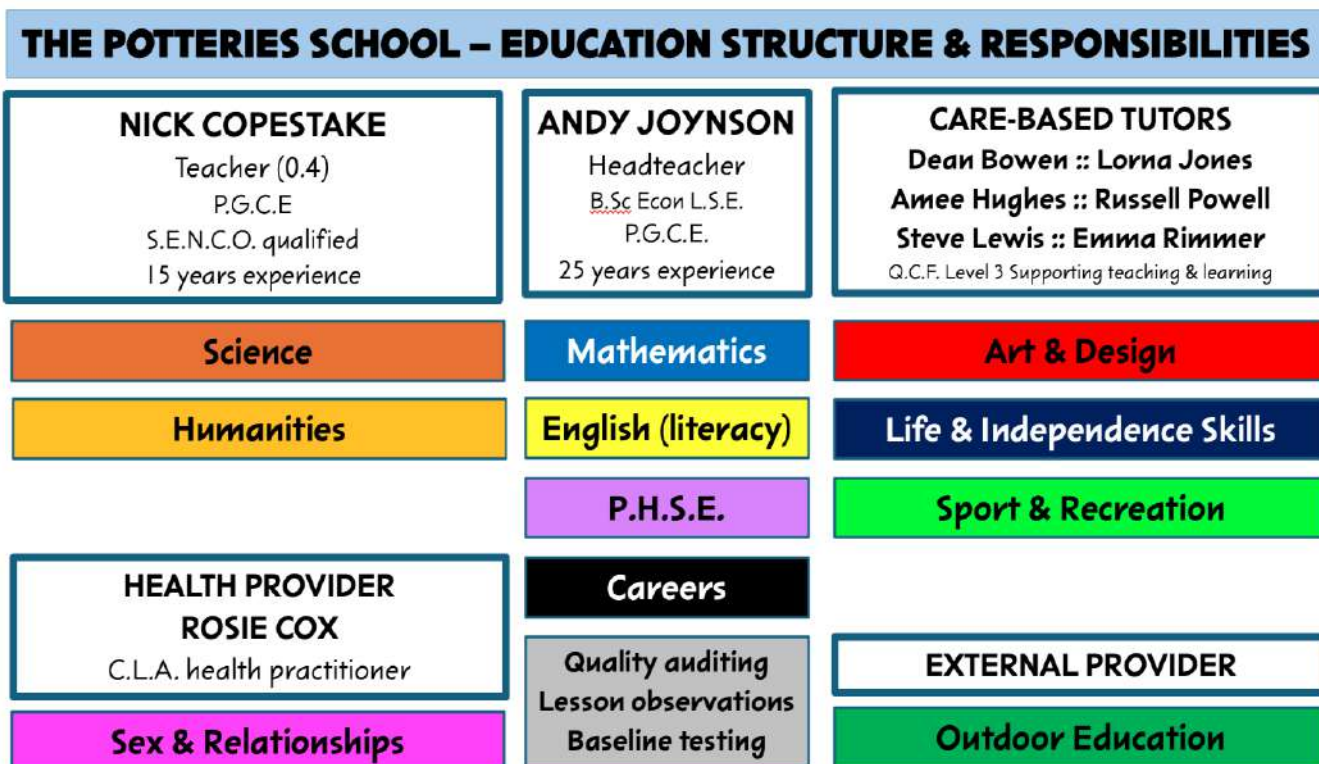
Curriculum detail offer

The current curriculum at the Potteries School is structured so that it aims '*to give learners of compulsory school age experience in the following areas of learning: linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative*'. (The Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024). It does this by ensuring:

- All learners have access to 23.5 hours per week of education;
- The learning is matched to the learner age, abilities, aptitude and S.E.N;
- The goal is for every learner to be actively engaged in meaningful learning;
- All learners right to an individual educational pathway is met;

- Involvement in individual education planning has the learner at the centre of the process;

Curriculum structure and responsibilities



Curriculum offer

THE POTTERIES SCHOOL – THE CURRICULUM OFFER		
CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECTS	ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS	EXTRA-CURRICULA UNITS
MATHEMATICS Entry Level Certificate (1 – 3) Functional Skills (Levels 1 & 2) G.C.S.E. Preparation G.C.S.E. Accreditation	HUMANITIES History Entry Level Certificate (1 – 3) G.C.S.E. Preparation G.C.S.E. Accreditation Geography Entry Level Certificate (1 – 3) G.C.S.E. Preparation G.C.S.E. Accreditation	DIGITAL LITERACY iDEA – Enterprise award E.L.C. 3 – Digital literacy
ENGLISH (Literacy) Entry Level Certificate (1 – 3) Functional Skills (Levels 1 & 2) G.C.S.E. Preparation G.C.S.E. Accreditation	ART & DESIGN A.Q.A. Unit Awards Scheme	SPORT & RECREATION A.Q.A. Unit Awards Scheme
SCIENCE Entry Level Certificate (1 – 3) G.C.S.E. Preparation G.C.S.E. Accreditation	P.S.H.E. A.S.D.A.N. Short Course	LIFE & INDEPENDENCE SKILLS A.Q.A. Unit Awards Scheme
		INDEPENDENT MODULES First aid Certificate Food hygiene – Level 1 Work experience – A.Q.A.

Subject provision

Mathematics

Following the completion of baseline assessments and achievement of curriculum levels, the maths programme focusses on both remedial work (addressing weakness in learning) and progression of learning (towards accreditation). The lessons are discrete elements on the timetable and the transferable skills are also used in other subjects across the curriculum.


For years 7 – 9, the Collins New Maths Framework is used to organise programmes of study and is levelled from 3 – 7 on the National Curriculum framework. Entry Level Certificate work is utilised where levels do not meet this threshold. Preparation towards ELC, FS and GCSEs is offered for years 10 and 11 with accreditation through our sister school, Branas Isaf.

English

Akin to mathematics, following the completion of baseline assessments and achievement of curriculum levels, the English programme focusses on both remedial work (addressing weakness in learning) and progression of learning (towards accreditation). The lessons are discrete elements on the timetable and the transferable skills are also used in other subjects across the curriculum.

Skillbuilder is used to assist with literacy for Entry Level learners; KS3 & KS4 literacy schemes of work are followed to deliver appropriate learning and activities for all learners.

Bedrock is our newly introduced literacy development programme:



Teachers: What is Bedrock Learning?

Vocabulary	Grammar	Mapper
<p>Learners need to add 2–3000 words to their vocabulary every year to keep up with the increasing language demands of the curriculum. Bedrock helps schools develop language consistently for all learners in a way that is personalised to them.</p> <p>Vocabulary and Grammar form what is known as our Core Curriculum. Learners earn points as they progress through their personalised curriculum. We recommend that they earn 20 points a week (approximately 30 minutes).</p> <p>In vocabulary, learners take a short test and are placed in one of our 10 blocks (a block is equivalent to a school year level). In each block, learners are explicitly taught a range of Tier 2 vocabulary. The learner algorithm targets gaps and reteaches the words they have not yet mastered, checking that they are in their long-term memory. A full view of all words and topics can be found here.</p> <p>In grammar, learners begin by taking a short assessment, which gives teachers specific insights into their grammar knowledge. They then progress through our mastery-driven curriculum and are assessed again to demonstrate their progress. All instructional videos are available in your Classroom Hub.</p>	<p>Mapper is an enormous repository of over 38,000 subject-specific, key stage and exam board-aligned terms.</p> <p>You can select and sequence the more powerful knowledge you want your learners to master.</p> <p>You can then easily check completion and identify the words that their learners are struggling with.</p> <p>You can also use our Classroom Hub to search and teach words whenever you like on your whiteboard.</p>	

Accreditation will be offered for 10 and 11 with examinations at our sister school, Branas Isaf.

Science

Scientific learning will be delivered on a modular basis with levels determined during baseline assessments. The online learning package through both keystages used is Developing Experts. The work will closely follow national curriculum guidelines but with obvious adaptations to accommodate additional learning needs. The accreditation offered will be Entry Level Certificate and G.C.S.E.



Suggested Unit Teaching Order and Overview

Unit order	Unit title	Number of lessons	Unit order	Unit title	Number of lessons
1	Cells & Organisation	8	13	Nutrition, Health & Digestion	8
2	Atoms & Particles	6	14	Chemical Reactions 1	5
3	Energy & Heat 1	7	15	Chemical Reactions 2	5
4	Energy & Heat 2	6	16	Photosynthesis	6
5	Skeletal & Muscular Systems	7	17	Materials	7
6	Pure Substances	7	18	Waves 1	5
7	Forces & Motion 1	5	19	Waves 2	8
8	Forces & Motion 2	5	20	Ecosystems & Evolution 1	6
9	Reproduction	9	21	Ecosystems & Evolution 2	6
10	The Periodic Table	6	22	Electricity & Magnetism 1	6
11	Matter 1	5	23	Electricity & Magnetism 2	6
12	Matter 2	6	24	Earth & Atmosphere	7
			25	Space	5

Humanities

History and geography have been newly introduced to the curriculum and will be delivered using the Oak Academy schemes of work and assessment programme. Examples are shown below:

Year 7 units

[View interactive sequence online](#)

1 Geography: what makes a geographer?	2 Weather and climate: how do they vary?	3 Population: where do people live?
4 Coasts: what shapes life at the coast?	5 Forest biomes: why are forests so important?	6 India: a global superpower?
7 China: a global superpower?		

Year 10 units

[View interactive sequence online](#)

1 Geographical skills	2 Natural and tectonic hazards	3 Weather hazards
4 Climate change	5 Ecosystems, biomes and the biosphere	6 Tropical rainforest
7 Hot desert and cold environments 2 unit options	8 UK physical landscapes	9 Coastal, river and glacial landscapes 3 unit options
10 Patterns of global urbanisation	11 Jakarta: case study of a major city in a Newly Emerging Economy	12 Liverpool: case study of a UK city

Year 7 units

[View interactive sequence online](#)

1 The Christian Church: how completely did the Great Schism transform Christendom?	2 11th-century Islamic worlds: how similar were the regions of the Islamic world?	3 The Norman Conquest: how do we know about the impact of the Conquest on England?
4 The Crusades: did Europeans go on crusade to capture the 'holy land'?	5 Medieval women: what can we learn from Matilda about women in medieval England?	6 England under Henry II: how successfully did Henry reassert royal authority?
7 Magna Carta: how did Magna Carta survive?	8 Edward I: What stopped Edward uniting all of Britain?	9 Local history: how similar were medieval lives in Norwich?
10 Medieval West Africa: why was medieval Mali so successful?	11 The Black Death and the Silk Road: how connected was the medieval world?	12 The Peasants' Revolt: why do historians disagree about its causes?

Year 10 units

[View interactive sequence online](#)

1 British Depth Study: Norman England, c1066–c1100	2 Historic Environment: Norman England 6 unit options	3 Thematic Studies 2 unit options
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Art and design

The art curriculum is delivered by Dean Bowen (QCF Level 3 in supporting teaching and learning) and is project based initially to stimulate development and progress creative skills. A.Q.A. Unit Awards will be offered as accreditation and further qualifications as the curriculum develops.

P.S.H.E.

Personal, social and health education is delivered through the ASDAN Short Course. The elastic nature of the course means that it can be individualised to learner need although most learners undertake modules 1 and 2 as a matter of course as these are areas that always prove difficult for them to manage their behaviour around. The course outcomes are accredited and the level of qualification dependent on how many modules are completed.

- Module 1 Emotional wellbeing
- Module 2 Keeping safe and healthy
- Module 3 Social media
- Module 4 Alcohol
- Module 5 Tobacco and drugs
- Module 6 Sexual health
- Module 7 Respectful relationships
- Module 8 Families and parenting
- Module 9 Financial choices
- Module 10 Careers and your future
- Module 11 Living in modern Britain

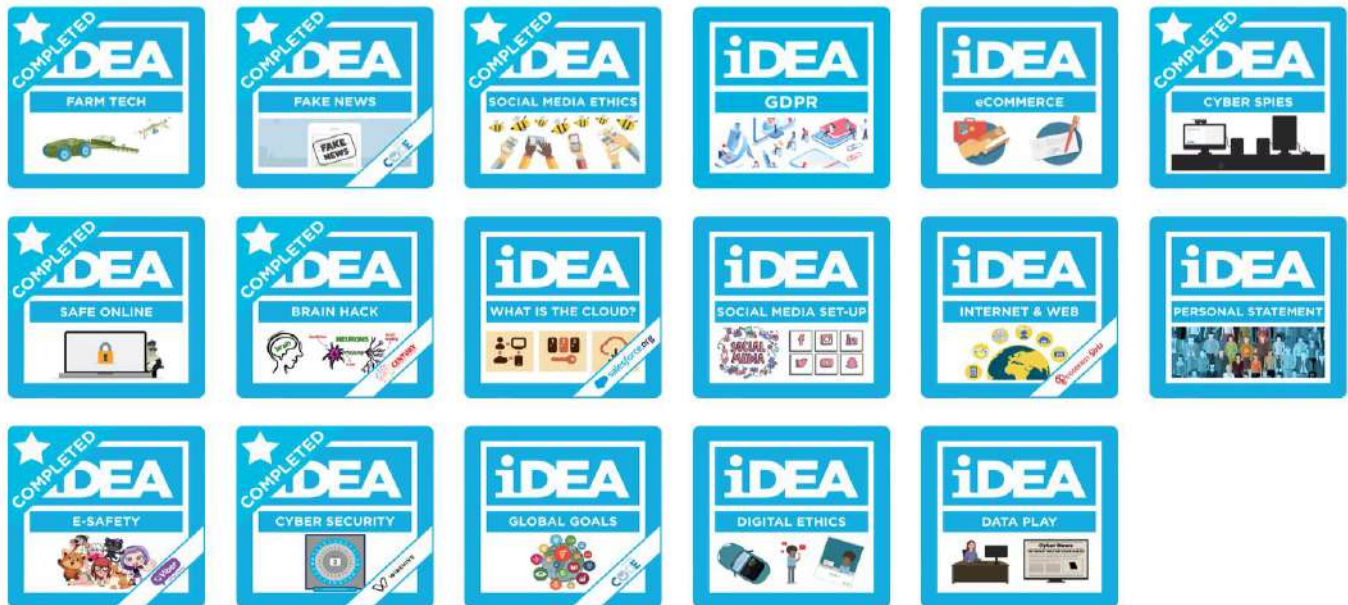
In addition to developing **Rights Respecting Schools**, the curriculum also includes a small section of rights work through the **Rights here, right now** scheme. The modules are detailed below:

Lesson Plans and Resources		
 Lesson 1	School rules!	21
 Lesson 2	The human rights story	28
 Lesson 3	Human rights in focus	36
 Lesson 4	Human rights in the UK	46
 Lesson 5	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	54
 Lesson 6	Balancing rights	63
 Lesson 7	Taking responsibility for human rights	76
 Lesson 8	Human rights issues: Identities, diversity and common values	81
 Lesson 9	Human rights issues: Homophobic bullying	87
 Lesson 10	Human rights issues: Focus on participation	94
 Lesson 11	Human rights issues: Child poverty	100
 Lesson 12	Taking action for human rights	109

Digital literacy

The school applies digital literacy across the curriculum but also uses iDEA to deliver information technology in key areas:

The Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award, known as iDEA is an international award winning programme that helps you develop digital, enterprise and employability skills for free. Through our series of online challenges, you can win career-enhancing badges, unlock new opportunities and, ultimately, gain industry-recognised Awards that help you stand out from the crowd.



ACTIVITY PASSPORT

Sport & Recreation

An emphasis is placed on improving physical fitness and accessing community facilities to develop self-esteem, interpersonal skills and learner confidence. With limited space at the Potteries School, most activities are delivered offsite or by external providers. All sport and recreation activities are accredited through the AQA Unit Awards Scheme. Sports and recreational activities include:

Badminton	Cycling	Geocaching	Hillwalking	Swimming
Bowling	Fishing	Golf	Kayaking	Table tennis
Circuit training	Football	Go Karting	Snooker	Tag rugby
Climbing	Footgolf	Gym training	Squash	Tennis

Life & Independence skills

The negative domestic environment experienced by many of the learners that attend the Potteries School means that fundamental components of everyday living are often absent from their skills repertoire. From personal hygiene through healthy eating to home maintenance, often learner knowledge and ability to undertake these activities is undeveloped at best. With this in mind, the school places a significant emphasis on life and independent skills as an essential component of the curriculum. This applies in discrete lessons and as an augmentation

to work in the home outside of school. Life and Independent activities are accredited through the AQA Unit Awards Scheme and those areas in which the school offers accreditation are listed below:

Community involvement	Food technology	Home maintenance
Employment skills	Project skills	Horticulture

Relationships and sex education

In light of the fact that most (if not all) learners at the school present behaviours connected with trauma and abuse, this area requires specialist delivery and this is undertaken by the Powys C.L.A. nurse (Rosie Cox). She runs workshops each term and delivers specialised R.S.E. modules to each learner individually. A recent session followed this plan:

- Ground rules for the discussion
- How puberty starts in boys/girls- names of hormones, how these hormones cause physical changes and emotional/behavioural changes
- Stick person exercise- to find out the stages they are aware of, discussion around top to toe body changes
- Video clip- [PSHE KS2: Operation Ouch! How are babies made? Puberty - BBC Teach](#)
- Top tips/hygiene/intimate hygiene.

It is envisioned that these workshops will become embedded in the education programme and occur on a more regular basis in the future.

In concert with two sessions with the CLA nurse (and very much in case the learner missed these opportunities) the R.S.E. curriculum is also augmented with direct work within the P.S.H.E. programme. The ASDAN programme offers the following modules to compliment the programme:

- Module 6 Sexual health
- Module 7 Respectful relationships
- Module 8 Families and parenting

In addition, more specialised work may be undertaken within the therapeutic intervention programme delivered by Studio 3 on a fortnightly basis. It may be that the work requires a more sensitive approach that offered by the two provisions above.

Careers

All learners are entitled to be fully involved in an effective careers programme, learning about employment and the world of work. Using Xello, an online learning platform, learners will be able to:

- Glean the support they need to make the right career choices
- Access up-to-date and unbiased information on future learning and training
- Participate in encounters with representatives from the world of work

- Visit a range of education and training providers
- Secure an opportunity to relate what they learn in lessons to life and careers beyond school

Careers lessons are included as part of the timetable and all learners will have the opportunity to access work relating to salaries, job searches, interviews, career options, college guidance and in years 10 & 11, undertake work experience.

SMSC

A thematic S.M.S.C. calendar is being developed and will be matched to events and activities on the two-week timetable programme. Lessons and learning activities will incorporate these themes.

Progress tracking

All learning activities are monitored by the headteacher using a learner tracker matrix. This enables progress to be identified and then improvements included in planning. Alongside baseline assessments, the tracker keeps a lesson-by-lesson evaluation of performance and is based a RAG grading system. An example is indicated below:

MATHS PROGRESS TRACKER				
DATE	LEARNING OBJECTIVES:	KEY:		
		Blue: Exceeds target expectations Green: Meets target Amber: Working towards target Red: Not meeting target		
24/02/2025	Assessment session: Ten Ticks 4.15 Number pyramids SATS Yr.9 Paper 1 (4 - 6)	Blue		
26/02/2025	Assessment session: SATS Yr.9 Paper 1 (4 - 6)	Blue		
06/03/2025	Assessment session: Ten Ticks 5.111 Long multi/division SATS Yr.9 Paper 1 (4 - 6)		Green	

Assessment Methodology

Assessment has been defined as 'activities undertaken by teachers and by their learners that in assessing themselves which provides information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. In order to maximise the precision of assessments and minimise learner resistance to 'tests' (as they are often seen as), the assessments are incorporated into the weekly timetable. These can take the form of:

- Discrete lessons solely for testing subject knowledge and areas for improvement;
- An element of the planned lesson to confirm learning during the plenary;
- A sequence of lessons with time devoted to formal assessment;
- Teacher-assessed work or activity-based commentary.

The process requires skilled judgement from the Headteacher as to the likelihood of success for the learner. Marking is immediate and a feedback session ensues following the assessment. This is good practice as it prevents learners with amplified levels of anxiety and arousal becoming more nervous due to the perceived uncertainty of their performance. Qualitative assessment of behaviour in the classroom is carried out by day-to-day observation, critical reflection and morning handovers with care staff. In order to have a gamut of strategies that assist a learner learning in the classroom with children who display complex, oppositional behaviour, it is necessary to build a 'toolbox' of strategies that so that a learner will feel safe enough to learn in a structured but nurturing environment.

The assessment data for all learners is recorded in the individual learner planner which records raw scores, the relevant National Curriculum levels where appropriate and ELC/GCSE grades if applicable.

Both during and following on from the assessment phase and after identifying the priority areas of academic need (and behaviour management), the Headteacher begins to build the dynamic document that organises learning, the **Individual Education Plan**. This sits alongside the **Personal Education Plan** but where the latter document is concerned with target setting and educational outcomes for learners, the I.E.P. is conceived from assessment data (formative, summative and teacher-led), positive learning strategies (determined from close work with learners) and behaviour management frameworks (implemented by support staff). This in turn allows quality information to be available for interim and summative assessment reports.

In contrast to mainstream provisions, learner programmes of study are not based on rigid schemes of work following examination timelines but formed in response to individual learning need. In some cases, a more mainstream model of progress is appropriate but even then, the delivery and outcomes are mediated by the particular context of the School and the behavioural needs of the learners. This flexibility allows for learners to progress and develop at their own tempo rather than that prescribed by mainstream frameworks.

At the level of presenting behaviours that elicit readiness for learning, at week six **Individual Learning Targets** are introduced based on the priority need of the learner. They are taken from quality of life indicators that encompass areas of emotional wellbeing; interpersonal wellbeing; self-determination; community participation and inclusion; physical wellbeing and personal development. These targets:

- Apply to all learning activities across the curriculum;
- Enable support staff to deliver quality educational experiences;
- Facilitate the accurate recording of learner outcomes;
- Are compiled at the end of every day through a report matrix completed by support staff;
- Become **the** driving guide for learner progress and success.

Independent of individual life experience, the artefacts and effects of trauma and physiological/neurological factors, **all** learners attending the school present a congruent set of difficulties with learning to one extent or another. Education support staff alongside the headteacher employ a number of strategies that assist with progress;

- Provision of consistent, close support for classroom and outdoor activities;
- Short, highly structured tasks broken down into manageable steps;
- Frequent visual and verbal reminders of education expectations;
- Reward-based systems to increase participation and engagement;
- Sensitive assistance to help stay on-task, focus, concentrate and complete work;
- Encouragement in following home routines to be ready for learning;
- Guidance on helping to build healthy, appropriate relationships with support staff;
- Direction on positive interaction with peers during school time;
- Experience of asking appropriately for help when activities become difficult;
- Navigating the community services to take advantages of the resources they offer;
- Exploration of an emotional lexicon so as to marry words to feelings;
- Using timeout areas productively in order to reengage with an interrupted activity;

IMPACT: How does the curriculum help learners

In essence, to evaluate if the curriculum offered is fit for purpose and meets the needs of **all** learners, it is necessary to examine carefully the outcomes for the learners. Moreover, it would also be pertinent to outline how that information is imparted to the learner, their local authority and other professionals.

The quantitative and qualitative outcome information collated looks at **eight** discrete areas of progress across the curriculum in summative form at week 26. These areas are:

- **Attendance:** Nearly all learners have historically experienced difficulties with attending school either through absence or exclusion. Establishing a stable, consistent pattern of learning is **the** leading barrier to progress. The school has been very successful with helping learners improve their attendance, participation and engagement. The combined present and authorised attendance figure (Estyn approved this method of accounting) for 2024 - 2025 was **93.5%** and although this does not meet the national expected standard, it is a remarkable level of improvement on previous efforts.
- **Attainment:** Each learning experience is evaluated and scored against the five school expectations –
 - (1) Arrive for school on time;
 - (2) Show respect and tolerance towards others;
 - (3) Make some effort to learn;
 - (4) Do the work set;
 - (5) Stay in class.

Although a relatively unsophisticated grading system, it nevertheless allows all education staff to produce a quantitative summary of attainment for each learning experience that is clear and understandable to learners. The average score for learners in the 2024 - 2025 cohort was **89.4%**.

- **Assessment outcomes:** Referring back to the curriculum commitments, gleaning accurate, current working levels is a boon for both learners (so they can compare themselves with peers) and for future provisions (so they can hit the ground running without need for further assessment). More often than not, learners have not been able to (due to behavioral complications) to undertake meaningful assessment. **All** learners in the cohort from last academic year completed assessments in the core subjects and then went on to undertake remedial work in those areas where their skills were less developed.
- **Wellbeing measures:** This area is concerned with how learners move away from previously harmful and inappropriate behaviours and the negative effect of these on their learning. The sub-groups monitored are absconding; bullying; verbal abuse; physical aggression; S.H.B.; property damage; self-harming; anxiety and mood volatility; problematic vehicle use and non-compliance. These behaviours sit alongside attendance as being the main disruptors to attainment and achievement. Again in last year's cohort, nearly all learners reduced their priority behaviours by over 50% and in most cases a little more.
- **P.E.P. targets:** These targets are compiled with LA social workers and learners within thirty days of placement. In essence, they specify what the LA would like for their learners to achieve during the assessment but more importantly, set the bar for school expectations of learners. The targets are S.M.A.R.T. and reviewed twice during placement. The targets for 2024 – 2025 cohort were met fully 47.3% of the time, partially 47.3% and failed to be met 5.4%
- **I.L.T progress:** Individual learning targets are introduced into the assessment programme at week six once a priority set of objectives has been identified. They are based on Quality of Life indicators are include evaluation against areas of emotional wellbeing, interpersonal wellbeing, self-determination, community participation, physical wellbeing and personal development. The average score for the 2024 - 2025 cohort was **87.1%**
- **Accreditation:** A.Q.A. Unit Awards are the school's key form of accreditation for learners. Across both academic and non-academic elements of the curriculum, learners for the most recent cohort averaged **20** individual awards over their enrolment period.
- **Interventions:** There were **4** restrictive physical interventions in the last academic year.

Formative and summative report (Weeks 8, 18 and 26)

All local authorities request frequent, contemporary feedback on their learners both as good practice and to confirm attendance, achievement and attainment. The school follows the timeline of the home in compiling two formative, interim reports (at week 8 and 18) that outlines:

- Progress in the core subjects with assessment scores;
- A description of strategies that have assisted learning;
- An outline of sport activities, L & I skills and education visits;
- Observations of behaviours in the classroom and offsite;
- Plans for future learning and development.

These reports are sent to the learners' social worker, education representatives (usually the virtual school and (if requested) parents of the learner. These interim education commentaries then feed into an integrated assessment report compiled by the Registered Manager (Care), consultant psychotherapist and education. The report is a comprehensive assessment of need across all three areas of placement and serves to act as a benchmarking tool for future placements to use for planning a package of education for the learner. This report is presented at a LAC review that coincides with the end of the 18-week assessment period for each learner.

Resourcing the school

The Potteries School has one full time member and one part-time member of teaching staff, The Headteacher (Andy Joynson) who is responsible for planning, delivering and assessing all areas of the curriculum. Andy spent the early part of his working life running a busy landscape design and construction business in London. He then trained apprentices at a local college in NVQ qualifications in horticulture, construction and surveying. He also tutored in Information and communication Technology in the early 1990's.

On moving to Wales in 1998, he completed his PGCE and has worked at three ESBD Special Schools in the local area for the last dozen years. He has assisted in setting up two schools through to full (successful) ESTYN inspections; taught Mathematics, I.C.T. and Science through Keystages 2 – 4 and to GCSE level. He has experience in delivering vocational, Outdoor Ed. and A.S.D.A.N. programmes through to full accreditation. He is a qualified Rugby Union coach.

Andy holds the following professional qualifications: Post Graduate Certificate of Education (1999); B.Sc (Econ:LSE) Politics and Sociology; TDLB Assessor Awards D32, D33 and D34 (upgraded to V1 2007); IRB Level 1 Coaching Rugby Union Award; WRU Level 1 Rugby Union Referee Award.

The education support staff assist in delivering the Sport and Recreation and Life and Independent Skills elements of the curriculum, planning and monitoring being undertaken by the Headteacher. The education support staff wait in a designated area during lessons and support where necessary with timeouts, transitions and classroom breaks.

The School has additional health and well-being support from:

- Studio 3 Psychology and Counselling service by CareTech (fortnightly)
- Rosie Cox Local Authority Care Nurse (with new placements)

The content of the school timetable:

- The school day for learners starts at 09.15 and ends at 15.30;
- The teaching day is divided into 6 lessons;
- Lessons are 45 minutes in length;
- There is a short fifteen-minute break between each lesson for each learner to reflect on their learning and prepare for the next lesson. Lunchtime is a break of 45 minutes;
- The total amount of teaching contact time each day is 4 hours 30 minutes. This equates to 22 hours and 30 minutes per week;

- The school is open for 193 teaching days per year. The year is divided into four terms of ten weeks with each being split into two five-week half-terms. There are seven days per year allocated as teacher INSET days.

The Potteries School: Review

This policy and procedures will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure continued compliance with The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014, the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2024 and relevant guidance issued by the DfE and Welsh Government.

This document will be next reviewed on 20/01/2027