



Curriculum Policy

Review date	Reviewed by	Amendments	SGT review of amendments
29/9/24	EH	Reviewed and updated	
29/8/25	EH	Review and amendments to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6.9 - breakdown of class groups and focus	

Date for next review: September 2026

1. Context

- 1.1. Nant-y-Cwm Steiner School practises a curriculum adopted by approximately one thousand schools around the world. It has been implemented and adapted to different global contexts for over ninety years. We are committed to offering an education designed at every level to meet the needs of the pupils at their various stages of emotional, intellectual and physical development.
- 1.2. The fundamental principles of the curriculum arise from the understanding of human development espoused in the lectures by the philosopher Rudolf Steiner. This describes how the individuality of the human being's development gives rise to developmental needs which can be met by an education that brings the most appropriate content, experiences and approaches at each stage of development.
- 1.3. As one of only two Steiner-Waldorf schools in Wales, we aim to ensure that our curriculum reflects the culture, language, history and geography of Wales.

2. Introduction and aims

- 2.1. The Curriculum Policy aims to outline our understanding of child development from Kindergarten (age 3-6) to Class 8 (age 13-14) and describe how the curriculum is designed to meet the developmental needs of the child at each stage of their education.
- 2.2. The overall aims of the Steiner-Waldorf curriculum are to:
 - 2.2.1. Work for all children irrespective of academic ability, class, ethnicity or religion;
 - 2.2.2. Take account of the needs of the whole child – academic, physical, emotional and spiritual;
 - 2.2.3. Develop a love of learning and an enthusiasm for school;
 - 2.2.4. See artistic activity and the development of the imagination as integral to learning;

- 2.2.5. Enable pupils to be able to contribute in unique ways to the society in which they live.
- 2.2.6. Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- 2.2.7. Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- 2.2.8. Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- 2.2.9. Allow Kindergarten children to naturally learn in an environment that provides strong routines and rhythms as well as opportunities for learning through free play and imitation of purposeful activities such as gardening and domestic tasks.
- 2.2.10. Develop older pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for the next step of their education.

3. Legislation

- 3.1. This policy is written with reference to the requirements of the Independent School's Standards Part One, 2.1 and 2.2.b
- 3.2. It also reflects the requirements for inclusion and equality detailed in Equality Act 2010.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1. **The Board of Trustees** will monitor the effectiveness of the policy and hold the School Manager to account for its implementation.
- 4.2. **The Board** will ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is constructed by staff and that appropriate standards are maintained in provision of Literacy, Numeracy and Science.
- 4.3. **The Board** will ensure that proper provision for pupils with ALN is provided.
- 4.4. **The School Manager and Management Team** will ensure that the policy is adhered to and that:
 - 4.4.1. All required elements of the curriculum reflect in their objectives the aims of the School.
 - 4.4.2. That provision is made for pupils with ALN within the classroom and through intervention where necessary.
 - 4.4.3. That there is ongoing review of the curriculum and how it is delivered to meet the needs of all pupils.

5. The Curriculum

- 5.1. **Kindergarten (age 3-6)** is structured around a strong daily rhythm (routine) that balances free play and exploration with structure activities.

5.1.1. The Early Years curriculum supports and values the benefits of an unfettered childhood. The children are not rushed or over-stimulated and are allowed space to develop physical coordination and personal, social and cognitive skills.

5.1.2. The focus is on child-led play with simple props to encourage creativity, ingenuity and problem-solving skills.

5.1.3. Free play is balanced with more structured, hands-on activities with an emphasis on domestic, artistic and craft activities to emulate a lively extended family where children can learn through imitation – the easiest and most natural way for the young child to learn. Activities include:

- 5.1.3.1. Singing, rhymes, stories (pre-literacy/numeracy, music)
- 5.1.3.2. Movement, eurythmy and circle time (gross-motor skills)
- 5.1.3.3. Painting and drawing (fine-motor skills, art)
- 5.1.3.4. Seasonal crafts (fine-motor skills)
- 5.1.3.5. Handicrafts including sewing, weaving, threading, whittling (fine-motor skills and technology through simple tools)
- 5.1.3.6. Baking, preparing vegetables and fruit (fine-motor skills and technology through simple tools)
- 5.1.3.7. Gardening, outdoor activities (eg. Gathering fruit from the orchard)
- 5.1.3.8. Stories, puppet shows and festival celebrations

5.1.4. The Kindergarten curriculum is based on the understanding that:

- 5.1.4.1. Imitation and activity are the natural way for young children to learn
- 5.1.4.2. Experiencing the natural world and sharing responsibility for caring for the environment fosters responsibility and self-reliance.
- 5.1.4.3. Participation in stories, songs, festival celebrations inspires a sense of awe and wonder about the world.
- 5.1.4.4. Fine and gross motor skills as well as speech, awareness of others and self-regulation are developed holistically and not through overt 'teaching.'

5.2. **The Main School (age 6-14)** curriculum emphasises the developing pupils' artistic expression, social capacities and analytical modes of understanding.

5.3. The core subjects of the curriculum are delivered through the Main Lesson blocks – a two hour lesson at the start of each day that focuses on one topic continuously for around three weeks.

5.4. The Main Lesson aims to:

- 5.4.1. Develop the habit of sustained concentration on one topic
- 5.4.2. Allow for in depth exploration
- 5.4.3. Be multi-disciplinary
- 5.4.4. Provide a wide range of activities and ways of engaging pupils
- 5.4.5. A strong rhythm that meets all pupils' natural energy patterns.

- 5.5. The Class Teacher delivers every Main Lesson to their class, whom they should teach from Class 1-8.
- 5.6. Subject Teachers deliver subjects such as Handwork, Woodwork, Permaculture, Eurythmy and Languages. These are taught in the two lessons following break time and the two lessons in the afternoon.

6. Curriculum Content

- 6.1. For the full content of the curriculum, see documents held on the school drive (both vertical and horizontal curriculum). Parents who wish to view these documents can request them from the School Office.
 - 6.1.1. **Class 1** – Reading and writing numbers up to one hundred. Introduction to addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
 - 6.1.2. **Class 2** – Mental practice and longer exercises, moving on to larger numbers, number bonds, odd and even numbers, place values and simple geometry.
 - 6.1.3. **Class 3** – Practice of all 12 tables continues; column calculations , including carrying over will be introduced in Class 2 or 3. Long multiplication and long division will be introduced by Class 3, together with money handling and change, and various forms of measurement involving linear dimensions, liquids, solids and time.
 - 6.1.4. **Class 4**– Introduction of fractions; measurements and area work continue
 - 6.1.5. **Class 5** – Compass geometry are introduced, also the decimal system
 - 6.1.6. **Class 6** – Percentages, profit and loss, simple interest and proportion and ratio, negative numbers; geometry lessons with precision instruments, data handling
 - 6.1.7. **Class 7** – Graphs and algebra, geometry
 - 6.1.8. **Class 8** – arithmetic, including simple and compound interest, power and roots, algebra, linear and curved graphs, equations, integers, geometry: the five Platonic solids, Laws of Enlargement
- 6.2. **Literacy** is also delivered through Main Lesson alongside subject lessons.
 - 6.2.1. **Class 1** – Recognise sounds, shapes and names of capital and lowercase letters. Writing simple sentences, in upper and, later, in lower case to describe a simple narrative. Write and read common, simple words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words. Recite, in chorus, simple poems and verses.
 - 6.2.2. **Class 2** – Read and write high frequency words and use digraphs in spelling. Write longer descriptions of stories with a sense for when a sentence ends. Begin to use some elementary punctuation and recognise the basic structure of

literature - beginning, middle and end. Recall, in speech, the main parts of a story and recite a short verse alone.

- 6.2.3. **Class 3** – Identify and use verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs. Extend knowledge and usage of punctuation. Write about an event in the correct sequence and write short dictated passages. Read unfamiliar texts using contextual, semantic, grammatical and phonetic knowledge.
 - 6.2.4. **Class 4** – Read simple chapter books independently. Begin using dictionaries to explore word meanings and spelling. Have individual lines in a drama. Write in different tenses. Use commas, exclamation marks and know that speech is separated by quotation marks. Plan, research and write text to accompany an individual project.
 - 6.2.5. **Class 5** – Correct use of apostrophe. Take down a dictation with reasonable accuracy. Write in different styles and moods and edit own text. Write from own research on a given main lesson topic. Read aloud with expression and deliver a presentation in front of the class using notes. Use a thesaurus.
 - 6.2.6. **Class 6** – Understand the main parts of a sentence. Write a formal letter, notes from a presentation and an accurate account of a practical task, e.g science demonstration or a recipe. Give a project presentation using notes only as a prompt. Give constructive feedback after listening to peers. Recite a poem on own.
 - 6.2.7. **Class 7** – Compose poems with specified structure and mood. Begin using essay writing structure in response to a specific topic. Write up clear descriptions and explanations of scientific experiments and demonstrations. Compose short stories using various styles of writing. Give a presentation to the class without notes and answer questions.
 - 6.2.8. **Class 8** – Accurately observe and record scientific phenomena. Plan, record and self-evaluate achievement in preparing an extended, self-chosen project. Take part in a major drama production
- 6.3. **Humanities:** A rich immersion in the humanities begins in Class 1, as each day children listen as the teacher tells a fairy tale or nature story. Progressing through the classes, the children absorb the legends of saints, multicultural folklore, Native American tales, Norse mythology and sagas; stories of Ancient India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece; the History of Western civilization from Rome through the Middle Ages, the rise of Islam, the Age of Exploration, the Renaissance and Reformation.
- 6.3.1. In the early years, by “living into” these cultures through legends and literature, children gain flexibility and an appreciation for the diversity of mankind.
 - 6.3.2. The study of geography as a separate subject begins in Class 4 and starts with a study of the immediate environment, broadening out in the following years to regional, national and global studies.
 - 6.3.2.1. **Class 4** – Project work based on the study of the geography of the local area.
 - 6.3.2.2. **Class 5** – Geography of the British Isles. History: The culture and religion of early civilisations of India, Persia, Babylonia and Egypt, moving on to classical ancient Greek history.

- 6.3.2.3. **Class 6** – European physical and human geography. History: Roman Empire, Roman Britain; field trip to Roman site, the rise of Christianity, Saxon and Danish invasions of Britain, William the Conqueror.
- 6.3.2.4. **Class 7** – World geography, including focus on one continent and looking at the cultural, material and economic conditions of specific societies. History: the Middle Ages and the transition from feudalism to the Renaissance, and the Age of Discovery with the great voyages of the 15th to the 17th centuries
- 6.3.2.5. **Class 8** – Geography, including meteorology; history – western culture from the 17th Century to the present, examining in particular revolutionary periods, including the English Reformation and Civil War and the revolutions in America, France and Russia. Biographies of inventors, industrialists and social reformers;
- 6.4. **Modern Foreign Languages:** From Class 1 onwards, children learn Welsh and from Class 3 Welsh and French. They begin by learning vocabulary and short phrases through songs, verses, poems, recitation, games and cultural activities. The written language is introduced towards the end of Class 3 or beginning of Class 4 where pupils also begin to gain an understanding of the grammar, spelling, phonics and structure of the language.
- 6.5. **Technology, Woodwork and Permaculture:** Pupils are introduced to a wide range of simple technologies through their practical creative work starting with cooking and sewing. As they get older this develops to include building, woodwork, pottery and other crafts available. In these activities they use an increasing range of hand tools, and learn how mechanical tools function. E-safety is introduced towards the end of the Lower School when the pupils have developed an understanding of a range of mechanical technologies in the broad context of other disciplines.
- 6.6. **Religious Education:** The moral and spiritual well-being of the children is nurtured by developing a strong sense of belonging for all children whatever their faith background. This is achieved through a calendar of seasonal festivals that the school celebrates together. A sense of reverence and an attitude of tolerance and respect towards each other is encouraged and modelled by the teachers and reinforced by verses said at the beginning and end of the day. Studies of world religions are embedded in Main Lesson blocks.
- 6.7. **Eurythmy** is an art of movement that engages the whole human being. It aims to harmonise the child physical well-being with their feelings or emotions. Regular eurythmy practice lessons help children to become more coordinated, graceful and alert and to be more at ease with themselves. In the eurythmy lesson the children move to poetry, prose text and live instrumental music and this experience deepens their aesthetic appreciation of literature and music and complements other aspects of the curriculum. Eurythmy also requires the children to work in groups which develops spatial awareness and a capacity to sense the movements of the group as a whole, while also concentrating on their own movement.
- 6.8. **Games/physical education:** There is both integrated and discrete physical education. Integrated physical education includes the movement exercises that come at the beginning of Main Lesson to help the pupils to settle their focus for learning. The use of rhythm and movement may come into many lessons, such as maths where pupils, for example may throw and catch beanbags as they recite

times tables. Weekly games lessons include a wide range of team games. In the younger classes games are often introduced with a story so that the physical activity has an imaginative focus. During Class 5 the ancient Greek Olympic events are introduced: running, jumping, discus and javelin. Ball games are introduced with rules tailored to the age group.

6.9. **Science** is introduced through a series of Main Lessons.

6.9.1. **Class 4:** In 'Human and Animal' the class is presented with a project that focuses on the creatures that move in and around the earth. The children will learn about the special adaptations that animals have developed to help them master survival in their environment/habitat. Then the animal theme is continued looking at animals that are native to our islands.

6.9.2. **Class 5:** the focus in the science Main Lesson shifts one step closer to the earth itself with the study of the plant kingdom where children learn about the life cycle of a plant, fungi and edible plants in the local area.

6.9.3. **Class 6:** the focus moves on to the earth itself, with Mineralogy. In these Main Lessons the scientific approach stresses the activity of the senses rather than the activity of dissecting and analysing the parts, because children at this stage learn most through what they can see, hear, smell, taste or touch. The aim is to bring the children's senses to life and school their ability to make observations about natural phenomena.

6.9.4. **Class 6 and 7:** science lessons nurture the children's ability to observe and question these phenomena. They will observe and take part in demonstrations to show the properties of light, heat, sound, magnetism and static electricity.

6.9.5. **Class 7:** In class 7 students study mechanics as well as learn about the workings of the major organs of the human body and connect this with an understanding of how to keep their body healthy.

6.9.6. **Class 8:** In the final year of lower school, students study human anatomy, chemistry, and hydraulics.

6.10. **Music** is taught in an integrated way and as a separate subject. Singing and recorder playing is used in Main Lesson in a wide variety of contexts and all children sing daily. In the weekly music lesson all pupils learn musical notation and pupils have the opportunity to learn other musical instruments.

6.11. **Art** is taught in an integrated way and as a separate subject. Artistic work is an integral part of the Main Lesson and in a wide variety of contexts. Pupils have opportunities to learn a wide range of art techniques in weekly art lessons.

6.12. **Handwork** is an integral part of the curriculum for all children from Class 1 to Class 8. It provides a balancing element to the intellectual activities experienced elsewhere in the curriculum and is designed to aid the harmonious development of the child. The scheme of work is taken from Rudolf Steiner's indications, which outline examples of activities that match the developmental stage of the child, ensure progression and are tailored to suit the needs of the teaching group. Examples of Handwork skills that are taught in the weekly lesson include sewing, knitting, crochet, weaving, tailoring, dyeing and felting, with importance placed on the use of high quality, beautiful and natural materials in order to enhance the artistic and creative development of the child.

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Pupils at Nant-y-Cwm are taught in mixed age group classes (two age groups per class) and so each class will cover a range of the Main Lesson topics from each relevant class group.

The above policy and procedures have been agreed by:

The School Management Team	The School Governance Team
<i>Emily Hopfinger</i> Signature	 Signature
EMILY HOPFINGER	
Date: 29/9/25	Date: