

Curriculum Policy

Ysgol Uwchradd Llanidloes High School



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Section 1: Context

In their publication, 'Education in Wales: Our national mission' published in September 2017, Welsh Government (WG) suggested the new 'curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life', for all year groups, could be available to schools for final feedback by January 2020. All maintained settings will be using the new curriculum by 1 September 2022.

They envisage that schools would have some flexibility in determining how and when they begin first teaching of the new curriculum. WG expect some schools to be ready to start this transition soon after the new curriculum is made available, others will want to take a little longer. Working with practitioners WG committed to reflect on what this means for learners who are part way through a course of study leading to a qualification.

Estyn's guidance handbook for the inspection of secondary schools published in September 2017 contains the following reporting requirements for the inspector of 3.2, The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum:-

'Inspectors should approach innovation and flexibility of approach in a positive way when schools have tried to be creative and imaginative in taking forward well-considered curricular initiatives for the benefit of pupils. In the light of current national developments, inspectors may find that schools are part of the pioneer school programme. Other schools not identified formally as part of this programme may still be involved informally in this work through collaboration with pioneer schools, or through regional consortia groups.'

In response to this WG and Estyn steer, Llanidloes High School engages fully in the national debate around the new curriculum. In particular, we will facilitate opportunities to:

- explore how pioneer schools are applying the principles underpinning 'Curriculum for Life' to their curriculum design;
- engage in practical, collegial collaboration between local curriculum managers to ensure each participating school's curriculum plan is subject to rigorous external and expert scrutiny;
- debate with colleagues how 'Curriculum for Life' can be applied taking into account each school's local context, helping to secure a degree of future proofing.

Through this policy and associated training we also: explore the current statutory framework for curriculum planning; consider wider principles and practicalities underpinning effective curriculum planning; review the implications of current performance measures; and the guidance provided in Estyn's new common inspection framework.

Section 2: The current curriculum – a brief overview

Wales has arrived at its current curriculum and assessment arrangements through a series of reviews following the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) introduced by the then Government in Westminster. The ERA introduced the basic curriculum which at the time consisted of the national curriculum and religious education (RE). It focused on providing a legislative framework designed to ensure the quality of teaching and learning and consistency of opportunity and standards.

Before Professor Donaldson's review, since the Education Reform Act 1988 there were three further curriculum reviews in Wales. The most recent review (2008) included a stronger emphasis on skills, cross-cutting themes, flexibility and future-proofing the curriculum to make it relevant to the twenty-first century.

The following table sets out current requirements with respect to curriculum provision in schools in Wales.

National Curriculum requirements for Wales		
Foundation Phase		
National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)	Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory)	Seven Areas of Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity – Language, Literacy and Communication Skills – Mathematical Development – Welsh Language Development (English-medium schools) – Knowledge and Understanding of the World – Physical Development – Creative Development and a framework for the basic curriculum (in maintained schools) for RE.
Key Stage 2		
National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)	Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory)	Programmes of study for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects) – Welsh second language (English-medium schools), design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music and PE (foundation subjects) and frameworks for the basic curriculum – PSE, RE, and sex education.
Key Stage 3		
National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)	Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory)	Programmes of study* for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects) – Welsh second language (English-medium schools), design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music, PE and modern foreign languages (foundation subjects) and frameworks for the basic curriculum – PSE, RE, sex education and careers and the world of work.
14–19		
	Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory) other skills including WBQ	Programmes of study for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects) – PE and Welsh second language (English-medium schools) (foundation subjects)

		and the basic curriculum – PSE, RE, sex education, and careers and the world of work.
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*Programmes of study specifying what learners should be taught for each subject in the national curriculum for Wales and, for Key Stages 2 and 3, the expected standards of learners' performance can be found at:

<http://learning.gov.wales/resources/collections/key-stages-2-4?lang=en>

Section 3: Current statutory requirements

At Llanidloes High School we are committed to implementing all statutory curriculum requirements in full. The documents listed below are a combination of regulations, measures and circulars, and are provided as a reference for schools. The list is not exhaustive and is provided only as a reference resource. Schools need to be aware that regulations and measures are statutory documents.

Regulation / measures / circular	Summary of curriculum related content
School Government (Terms of Reference) (Wales) Regulations 2000	The head teacher will formulate a policy for the secular curriculum of the school ("the curriculum policy") for adoption by the governing body. The head teacher will review the curriculum policy every school year and formulate changes to the curriculum policy for adoption by the governing body (with or without modifications). The governing body will: consider and, if they see fit, adopt the curriculum policy (with or without modifications); monitor, evaluate and review the implementation of the curriculum policy.
The Education Act 2002	Requires the curriculum for every maintained school in Wales to include a Basic Curriculum comprising religious education, sex education (in secondary schools and in special schools for pupils provided with secondary education) and the National Curriculum for Wales. The Act also provides powers for the National Assembly to add further requirements to the Basic Curriculum.
The School Curriculum in Wales (Miscellaneous Amendments) Order 2008	The legislation extended the age range for work-related education so that it also applies to those pupils in key stage 3, and omits the 'technology' and 'art' subjects and replaces them with 'information and communication technology', 'design and technology' and 'art and design'.
The Education (National Curriculum) (Attainments Targets and Programmes of Study) (Wales) Amendment Order 2015	The purpose of the Order was to put into effect the Programmes of Study for English, Welsh, Welsh Second Language and mathematics for key stages 2 to 4 from 1 September 2015, and to keep the existing attainment targets commonly referred to by practitioners as Level Descriptions.
The Education (National Curriculum)	The legislation specifies the list of languages that may be taught at key stage 3. This Order provides that any modern foreign language is a modern foreign

(Modern Foreign Languages) (Wales) Order 2008	language, and any question of whether a foreign language is a modern foreign language is to be determined by the Welsh Ministers.
National Exemplar Framework for Religious Education for 3 to 19 year olds in Wales 2008	This document contains exemplar programmes of study for each key stage, together with level descriptions.
Collective Worship (Schools Standards Framework, 1998, section 70), circular 10/94, Religious Worship and Collective Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secure provision of RE and daily collective worship for all pupils (paragraphs 8; 16-23; 50-67; 141-146). - Collective worship in county schools ... must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, though not distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. It must ... contain some elements which relate specifically to the traditions of Christian belief and which accord a special status to Jesus Christ. - All registered pupils (paragraph 11) attending a maintained school should take part in daily collective worship (see paragraph 82-87 for the parental right of withdrawal). The timing and organisation of daily collective worship can be flexible. - Worship ... should be taken to have its natural and ordinary meaning. That is, it must in some sense reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power. However, worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. - Taking part in collective worship implies more than simply passive attendance. The act of worship provided must be one to which the pupils are capable of responding, according to family background, age and aptitude, even though on a particular occasion some of the pupils may not feel able actively to identify with the act of worship. - For county schools, RE must be in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus of the LEA in whose area they are situated. - Give effect to parent's request to withdraw child from RE or collective worship (paragraphs 82-87). A school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from RE, unless the child is lawfully receiving religious education elsewhere. - Make the RE syllabus available on request (paragraph 124). - Report to parents on child's progress in RE (paragraphs 124-125). - Recommendation that approximately 5% of total curriculum time at key stage 4 be allocated to RE. The actual time allocated to RE is a matter for each school to decide.
Personal and Social Education (PSE) and Work Related Education (WRE) in the	The Order adds two new requirements to the Basic Curriculum - Personal and Social Education (PSE) and Work-Related Education (WRE).

<p>Basic Curriculum (Circular 13/2003)</p>	
<p>Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In relation to the local curriculum or curricula for students aged 16 to 18, the governing body of a secondary school maintained by a local authority must take all reasonable steps in order to maximise the availability of courses of study included in a local curriculum for that local authority's area. • Post-16 learners (i.e. learners older than compulsory school age) are offered a choice of at least 30 level 3 subjects. Five of these subjects must be vocational and five must be general. The vocational courses will fall across a minimum of 3 domains, one of which will be mathematics, science and technology. • The quality of the learning experience should be a fundamental consideration when planning the local curricula. • The promotion of linguistic continuity of study should be an integral part of the planning of local curricula for students aged 16 to 18. It is therefore essential that local curriculum planners should take all appropriate steps to ensure that a young person who has followed some or all subjects through the medium of Welsh at Key Stage 4 should be given the opportunity to do so at 16 to 18. • No action should be taken that would unfavourably affect the existing proportion of Welsh-medium courses within Welsh speaking schools. Any increase in local curriculum courses offered via a Welsh speaking school should therefore entail an increase in Welsh medium course provision. • All courses included within a local curriculum must be accessible to the learners covered by that local curriculum. This includes travel arrangements where necessary. However curriculum planners should fully explore the potential to use modern technologies to avoid learners having to travel, and also the movement of course deliverers in the first instance. Where planners conclude that travel is necessary to achieve wider choice, they should seek to limit any travel requirements through planning of full or half day blocks where possible. • Learner interest and demand should be a key factor in determining the local curriculum. • Headteachers and governing bodies must assist with planning the local curriculum or curricula • Student in key stage 4 and 5 are entitled to follow their elected courses from the local curriculum unless specific exceptions apply. For example, the head teacher or principal may remove this entitlement if: as a result of the student's level of educational attainment, the course of study is not suitable; as a result of other elections made by the student, it is not reasonably practicable to follow the course of study; the amount of time likely to be spent travelling to the place at which the course is likely to be delivered would be detrimental to the student's education; disproportionate expenditure would be incurred if the student were to follow the course of study; the student's or another person's health or safety would be placed unacceptably at risk if the student were to follow the course of study. • A head teacher must provide students of the school with a learning pathway document, recording his or her learning pathway, including the courses of study the student is entitled to follow and any learner support services to be provided.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing partnerships and co-operative arrangements may show Welsh medium, bilingual or faith institutions working together. Curriculum planners should be sensitive to choices made by learners to attend these institutions and promote local curricula arrangements that reflect these choices.
The Education (Local Curriculum for Pupils in Key Stage 4) (Wales) Regulations 2014	<p>Provision made as to the formation of the local curriculum, the elections a pupil may make, the head teacher's decision as to entitlement, and the head teacher's decision to remove an entitlement. These Regulations amend the 2009 Regulations so that the minimum number of courses that a local authority must include in its local curriculum are 25, of which 3 must be vocational (regulation 2(a)). These Regulations also repeal regulations 5 to 7 of the 2009 Regulations so that there is no longer a requirement for courses of study in the local curriculum, nor for a pupil's choices of local curriculum courses, to have a minimum points value (regulation 2(b)).</p>

Section 4: Current performance measures and related information

At Llanidloes High School we take into account Welsh Government priorities expressed through performance measures that incentivise curriculum planning that puts key skills at the heart of what we deliver. The intention behind publishing performance measures at a school level is to provide an overview of performance to help secure strong self-evaluation and school improvement. However, quantitative performance data is only a starting point when considering the performance and effectiveness of a school in achieving the best outcomes for individual learners.

The Welsh Government (WG) produces many different measures broken down and presented in several ways. Which of these is used or reported on, and the sort of data or analysis needed, will depend on the questions being asked and the local context. WG will continue to publish measures alongside each other in the All Wales Core Data Sets, on My Local School and in school comparative reports including SSSPs.

Recent changes to performance measures that still apply from September 2017	
Change	Year introduced (for reporting)
1. <u>Use of whole year 11 cohorts as the basis for reporting</u> , rather than pupils aged 15 at the start of the year. This change helps reflect more accurately the reality of school attainment levels. January PLASC is used for the data collection the Welsh Government uses to capture cohort information for Key Stage 4 and Post-16 school performance reporting.	2016
2. <u>The maximum equivalence rating for any non-GCSE qualification at 14-16 is two GCSEs</u> . Those level 1 or 2 qualifications that count as equivalent to more than two GCSEs have their performance points value capped at the equivalent of two GCSEs. This impacts on level 1, level 2 and level 2 inclusive threshold measures, the capped points score and, from 2017, the Welsh Baccalaureate measures. <i>Note: The policy in Wales differs from that in England where the equivalence value is limited to one GCSE.</i>	2016

<p>Where caps are being applied to the GCSE equivalence volume of qualifications in threshold measures from 2017, the distinction is in the qualification type, i.e. whether it is a GCSE or not. Therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational GCSEs will be counted as GCSEs; • Non-GCSEs that are classed as general qualifications will be subject to the cap on non-GCSEs that can contribute; • As non-GCSEs, the Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications will be subject to the cap on non-GCSEs that can contribute. 	
<p>3. <u>Non-reformed/'minority subject' qualifications in Wales.</u> In a small number of instances, where a qualification is not being reformed in Wales, Qualifications Wales may designate a qualification designed to meet criteria in England for delivery to learners in Wales. Such qualifications can count towards performance measures (subject to the usual discounting arrangements, an appropriate age range for the cohort in question and designation and certification dates). Please contact awarding bodies or Qualifications Wales directly with any queries around the approval/designation of qualifications.</p>	2016
<p>4. <u>A new capped points score is introduced.</u> It uses the existing scoring methodology, which attributes different scores for each grade and takes into account the size of the qualification. The new score has a number of significant differences from the previous capped points score:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) The score is based on nine rather than eight qualifications. ii) Five of the nine qualifications used to calculate the score are: GCSE English Language or GCSE Welsh Language (whichever is the learner's best); GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy and GCSE Mathematics; the learner's best two science qualifications (from 2018, their best two science GCSEs). iii) The other four qualifications are the learner's best (highest grade) other qualifications. These could be GCSEs, vocational qualifications or the Skills Challenge Certificate (the core of the new Welsh Baccalaureate). 	2017
<p>5. <u>The Capped 9 and the Level 2 inclusive/Welsh Baccalaureate measures will hold similar status.</u> The Cabinet Secretary decided that WG would no longer focus on the revised Capped Points Score, the 'Capped 9', as the headline indicator when it was introduced. Instead, it will be captured as part of the whole suite of Key Stage 4 measures, retaining the additional lens it will provide on learner attainment and aiding schools and local authorities in their self-evaluation and improvement planning. This means that there is no one main measure to be focussed on at a school level. A suite of measures should be used to consider schools' performance from different angles.</p>	2017
<p>6. <u>Core Subject Indicator no longer published</u> (but data available)</p>	2017
<p>7. There is a <u>limit of 40 per cent on the contribution of non-GCSEs to the Level 1, Level 2 and Level 2 inclusive threshold measures.</u> There is no limit on the contribution of non-GCSEs to the new capped points score.</p>	2017

<p>8. Use of <u>new GCSEs in English Language/Welsh Language as the literacy elements of Level 2 Inclusive measure</u>. Literature qualifications no longer count towards literacy element.</p> <p><u>Either of the new mathematics GCSEs to count as the numeracy requirement</u> (the best result will be taken where both qualifications are awarded to a learner).</p> <p>The literacy and numeracy specific components of measures require the new specification versions only of English or Welsh language (not English or Welsh literature), Mathematics – Numeracy and Mathematics in the 2017 reporting year and in future years. This applies regardless of the year in which the award was attained.</p>	2017																	
<p>9. <u>Essential Skills Wales and Wider Key Skills qualifications do not attract any performance points</u> (threshold or capped points score). From 2017 these qualifications were no longer approved for pre-16 delivery. However, Essential Skills Wales/Wider Key Skills qualifications <u>will still count for a year 11 cohort where they were attained by a learner in an earlier year</u>, but no longer hold any value for KS4 measures if awarded in the 2017 reporting year or later. Early entries will continue to count once the learner is in the year 11 cohort being measured, even where the certification end date has since passed.</p>	2017																	
<p>10. WG are aware that concerns have been raised about schools possibly moving away from English and Welsh Literature. Schools should continue to guide learners towards those approved qualifications that best meet their needs. <u>Literature qualifications will not count towards the specific literacy requirements of measures from 2017 but can still count towards the non-subject specific components.</u></p>	2017																	
<p>11. <u>Guided Learning Hour (GLH) parameters</u> In 2017 the parameters are changing for qualifications worth a 0.5 GCSE. This means that some qualifications currently worth 0.5 GCSEs will move to the 0.25 GCSE equivalence bracket, and some qualifications currently worth 1 GCSE will henceforth be worth a 0.5 GCSE. The table below summarises the changes.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="113 1491 1241 1722"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">GCSE equivalence</th> <th colspan="2">GLH parameters</th> </tr> <tr> <th>2016</th> <th>2017 onwards</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0.25</td> <td>1-44</td> <td>1-59</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0.5</td> <td>45-89</td> <td>60-119</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>90-104</td> <td>120-144</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>105 upwards</td> <td>145 upwards</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Where a GCSE equivalence has been reduced for 2017, due to the change in parameters for Guided Learning Hours (GLH) determining the equivalence, an award that was attained in an earlier year by a current year 11 learner will carry the historic value for the purpose of calculating measures. All other awards in the same qualifications that were attained in the 2017 reporting year will carry the updated, reduced value.</p>	GCSE equivalence	GLH parameters		2016	2017 onwards	0.25	1-44	1-59	0.5	45-89	60-119	1	90-104	120-144	2	105 upwards	145 upwards	2017
GCSE equivalence		GLH parameters																
	2016	2017 onwards																
0.25	1-44	1-59																
0.5	45-89	60-119																
1	90-104	120-144																
2	105 upwards	145 upwards																
<p>12. <u>Which qualifications count in Key Stage 4 performance measures?</u></p>	2017																	

<p>a) <u>Entry level qualifications</u> - These are below Level 1 qualifications on the Credit and Qualifications framework for Wales (CQfW) - They will not count towards the Level 1 threshold (Welsh Bacculaureate (Foundation) from 2018) or the Level 2 threshold measures (Welsh Bacculaureate (National) from 2018) - They can contribute towards the Capped Points Score measures.</p> <p>b) <u>Level 3 qualifications</u> Level 3 qualifications can count towards Key Stage 4 measures providing they are approved/designated for delivery to pre-16 learners.</p> <p>c) <u>Essential Skills Wales</u> See point 9 above.</p> <p>d) <u>Qualifications with a partial GCSE equivalence</u> Qualifications that are equivalent to less than 1 GCSE in size can still contribute towards both the threshold measures (Level 2 inclusive, Level 2 and Level 1) and the Capped Points Score, and a combination can be totalled to achieve the desired overall volume. The WJEC has confirmed such qualifications cannot contribute towards the award of the Welsh Bacculaureate qualifications (WBQs).</p> <p>More information on the award criteria for the WBQs can be found at: http://qualificationswales.org/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/?lang=en and within the WJEC's WBQs specifications.</p>	
<p>13. <u>QiW</u> - (www.qiw.wales – the online database of all approved/designated qualifications in Wales)</p> <p>QiW is owned by Qualifications Wales. It <u>replaces the old system DAQW</u> in publishing details on all the approved and designated qualifications for delivery in Wales.</p> <p>The Welsh Government has worked in partnership with Qualifications Wales to include associated performance measurement information for qualifications held in QiW. This database is where to check for performance information attached to qualifications in the first instance.</p> <p>Previous performance measures data has been refreshed, filling in gaps and correcting some errors identified. You may now wish to check information for relevant qualifications once again. When you find the correct qualification and click on 'Performance and Curriculum Information,' remember to enter the <u>correct reporting year</u> to get the correct information.</p>	2017
<p>14. <u>Qualification contribution values</u> Providing they are still approved/designated and within the certification period, <u>qualifications will count with the same values attached except where WG have previously specified changes are being applied in 2017.</u> These changes are:</p>	2017

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Essential Skills Wales and Wider Key Skills no longer approved for pre-16 delivery; and - Qualifications with a mean guided learning hours (GLH) value of up to & including 59 will have a 0.25 GCSE equivalence, 60 up to & including 119 GLH a 0.5 GCSE equivalence, 120 up to & including 144 GLH a 1 GCSE equivalence and all qualifications with 145 GLH or above will have a 2 GCSE equivalence (see section 6 above). Where a GCSE equivalence value will be reduced for a qualification in 2017 onwards, the points attached to grades will be reduced proportionally. 	
<p>15. Early entries will continue to count once the learner is in the year 11 cohort being measured, even where the certification end date has since passed.</p>	2017
<p>16. Pupils arriving from England with a 9-1 GCSE in English or Mathematics at the start of Year 11 will be expected to also complete the new Welsh specification GCSEs in English/Welsh and Mathematics and Mathematics - Numeracy. However, if they arrive part way through Year 11, they can be classed as FEWBES and be disaggregated from school performance measures.</p>	2017
<p>17. Welsh Baccaalaureate (WBQ) measures replace current threshold measures (Level 1, Level 2 and Level 2 Inclusive). The new more rigorous WBQ with elements of the award being approved qualifications in their own right, complete with grading structure and associated, independent performance measurement contribution values. These values can be found on QiW (www.qiw.wales – the online database of all approved/designated qualifications in Wales) for each qualification, including the various Skills Challenge Certificates.</p> <p>If you have any further queries regarding the Welsh Baccaalaureate Qualification then please email 14-19@wales.gsi.gov.uk</p>	2018
<p>18. Use of GCSEs only in relation to science requirements (following introduction of new science GCSE suite for teaching from Sept 2016). Non-GCSE science qualifications no longer count towards science components but can count towards a learner's 'other 4' best qualifications.</p>	2018
<p>19. The 2016/2017 list of discount codes remained in place for 2018. These are published on the WG web pages and can be found here:- http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolhome/schooldata/ims/usingdataeffectively/?lang=en</p>	2018
<p>20. Performance points for individual qualifications Awarding Organisations have been working with regulators, Qualifications Wales, as part of a data cleansing exercise to update the guided learning hours on QiW where appropriate. This will only reduce performance points and thresholds for very few qualifications. However, these changes will only come into practice for qualifications awarded in 2018-2019 and so the current performance information will remain unchanged until this time. A list of the qualifications that will see an increase/decrease in performance measure values due to awarding organisation updates to GLH can be found below. Note that where a qualification has</p>	2018-2019

increased its guided learning hours, the associated increase in performance measure values has taken immediate effect and is reflected on QiW

Qualification Number	Qualification Title	Previous GLH	New GLH
500/3476/5	City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate in ICT Systems and Principles	160	95
500/4992/6	Pearson BTEC Level 1 Award in Business Administration	60	50
500/5525/2	Pearson BTEC Entry Level Award in Business Administration (Entry 3)	60	50
500/7339/4	Pearson BTEC Level 2 Award in Retail Knowledge	67	30
500/9150/5	Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in IT	775	720
501/0075/0	Pearson BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Applied Science	110	130
501/0193/6	Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles	627	438
501/0248/5	Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Competence	680	528
501/0277/1	City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma in ICT Systems and Principles for IT Professionals	452	315
501/1585/6	City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma in ICT Systems Support	514	489
600/7354/8	Cskills Awards Level 2 NVQ Diploma in Interior Systems (Construction)	180	134
600/8697/X	SFEDI Awards Level 3 Diploma In Manufacturing and Production	420	390
601/2115/4	Agored Cymru Level 2 Certificate in Personal and Social Education	137	146
601/3630/3	City & Guilds Level 1 Extended Award in Employability Skills	74	49
601/3641/8	City & Guilds Entry Level Certificate in Employability Skills (Entry 3)	121	93
601/3643/1	City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in Employability Skills	113	77

21. **Early entry**

From 2019, only the results of the first entry of a qualification will count towards performance measures. Qualifications Wales will also be removing the resit restrictions from the November series from 2018 to allow schools the option to enter any learner for English and Welsh Language GCSEs. This is currently only available for GCSEs in Mathematics and Mathematics-Numeracy.

This change will encourage schools to enter learners when schools are confident they are ready to gain the best possible result. It does not prevent a learner resitting should a school or learner wish to attempt to improve their results, but the resit result would not count towards school performance measures, even when the outcome is higher.

This change applies to all qualifications taken by a learner regardless of when they were taken. For example, ***if a year 10 learner first sits GCSE Mathematics in November 2017, their result will be counted towards that school's performance in summer 2019***, because the November 2017 sitting would be that learner's result from their first entry for maths. No subsequent entries in the same subject will be counted towards the performance measures, even where these entries result in a higher grade. The learner will still be able to use their best result to access further learning and employment.

Making these changes to how school performance measures are calculated should not discourage schools from using early entry for those learners where it is in their best interest. That is why schools will have greater flexibility to use first entry for English and Welsh Language in November 2018.

For November 2017 exams, WJEC has confirmed that, if requested by a school, they will withdraw the entry and not charge the entry fee for students in Year 10 and below only. Schools had until Thursday 26th October, 2017 to make this request by contacting entries@wjec.co.uk.

2019

Please email WG at ims@wales.gsi.gov.uk with any further queries on school performance reporting.

The revised Capped Points Score - 2018 onwards

A school average of the total points attached to the top nine GCSEs, or equivalent volume of qualifications, for each learner in the cohort, including subject specific requirements.

1	Welsh/English language	New specification GCSE only
2	Mathematics – Numeracy	New specification GCSE only
3	Mathematics	New specification GCSE only
4	Science (1 of 2)	New specification GCSEs only
5	Science (2 of 2)	
6	Top other qualifications capped at 4 GCSEs or equivalent volume of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Welsh and English literature qualifications can count here ○ Skills Challenge Certificate can count here ○ Entry level up to Level 3 qualifications (where age appropriate) can count ○ No cap on the total volume of non-GCSE qualifications that can count
7		
8		
9		

How are 'top' results calculated for the Capped Points Score?

For each learner:

1. Isolate the qualifications relevant to the calculations:

i.e. remove the qualifications counting towards the subject specific requirements when calculating the 'other 4' top results

2. Standardise the points for all relevant awarded qualifications:

Calculate proportional points for each qualification at a volume equivalent to one GCSE (= total actual points for the qualification divided by its GCSE volume equivalence)

3. Rank qualifications by standardised points:
Place in order from highest to lowest

4. Sum the GCSE equivalence volume of qualifications from highest to lowest as ranked until the specified volume cap is reached

5. Total the actual points for qualifications from highest to lowest as ranked until the specified cap is reached:

The boundary may lay part-way through a qualification, in which case the fraction of points proportional to the volume needed to complete the cap should be included in the total.

Points for the 5 subject specific GCSEs for a learner and their top 'other 4' GCSEs/equivalent volume of qualifications are summed. The mean for all learners in the school's cohort is then taken.

A worked example of the revised capped points score is not yet available, however, the underlying logic in calculating the measure is not changing from existing capped points score measures. A worked example of an existing version of the measure can be found in the National Categorisation guidance document for schools, LAs and consortia, which can be found here:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/raisingstandards/schoolcategorisation/?lang=en>

For more information please contact ims@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Section 5: Curriculum for Life

At Llanidloes High School we are committed to engaging fully with the national programme of curriculum change, 'Curriculum for Life'.

1) What's changing?

The whole approach to developing young people aged 3 to 16 will change. The new curriculum will have more emphasis on equipping young people for life. It will build their ability to learn new skills and apply their subject knowledge more positively and creatively. As the world changes, they will be more able to adapt positively.

They will also get a deep understanding of how to thrive in an increasingly digital world. A new digital competence framework is now introducing digital skills across the curriculum, preparing them for the opportunities and risks that an online world presents.

Meanwhile teachers will have more freedom to teach in ways they feel will have the best outcomes for their learners.

The central focus of assessment arrangements will be to ensure learners understand how they are performing and what they need to do next. There will be a renewed emphasis on assessment for learning as an essential and integral feature of learning and teaching.

The purpose of the new curriculum is to support our children and young people to be:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives

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

What is the Pupil Offer?

At its heart, the Pupil Offer is about finding successful ways of igniting interests, stimulating passions and increasing confidence in our children and young people. It is about finding more effective ways to deliver the curriculum, communicate high expectations, raising an individual's aspirations and ambitions to succeed in everything they choose to do. It is about schools and practitioners working with a wide range of partners to develop a breadth of opportunities and activities that expand horizons within and beyond the traditional learning environment of the classroom. It is not necessarily about doing more. It is about partnerships beyond the school, where partners multiply the impacts of each other's efforts. Schools can already start to think about developing their own Pupil Offer and how they can support their learners' engagement and broaden their experiences in line with the four purposes. Below are some practical suggestions in this area:-

Ambitious, capable learners: **Higher and further education** (ensuring that learners are aware of future routes for learning and how they contribute towards the achieving of career ambitions). **Science and digital technology** (including in school and outreach activities which bring the curriculum to life for learners). **Welsh language** (including opportunities within and outside schools for learners to use the language in a social and informal context).

Enterprising, creative contributors: **Arts** (including expressive, creative, literature, media, visual, performing and culinary). **Businesses and entrepreneurship** (to learn about the range of career options available to them). **The third sector** (including volunteering opportunities or access to direct support from organisations).

Ethical, informed citizens: **Local and national culture and heritage** (including museums, galleries, historical/faith sites, participation in local and national eisteddfodau, national parks, libraries and archives). **Other cultures** (including learning languages, foreign exchange trips, visits to faith sites). **Rights and responsibilities** (including participation in debates, learning about local authorities, National Assembly of Wales, Westminster, Brussels, Strasbourg and the United Nations).

Healthy, confident individuals: **Clubs, associations and groups** (including working with the Urdd, cadet forces, scouts and guides, brigades, environmental groups, hobbies and areas of personal interest). **Sports** (both within the school and more widely).

It will have six 'Areas of Learning and Experience'.

- Expressive arts.
- Health and well-being.
- Humanities (including RE which should remain compulsory to age 16).
- Languages, literacy and communication (including Welsh, which should remain compulsory to age 16, and modern foreign languages).
- Mathematics and numeracy.
- Science and technology.

It will also include three cross-curricular responsibilities: literacy, numeracy and digital competence.

Assessment is a continuous process and takes place on a daily basis in schools. Progression reference points help learners, teachers, parents and carers to understand if appropriate progress is being made. They will set out expectations for learners in each area of their learning relating broadly to ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.

2) Why is it changing?

Now more than ever, young people need to be adaptable to change, capable of learning new skills throughout life and equipped to cope with new life scenarios.

Advances in technology and globalisation have transformed the way we live and work. These changes have profound implications for what, and how, children and young people need to learn.

Schools and teachers need more flexibility to respond to this environment, using a new curriculum which will promote high achievement and engage the interest of all children and young people to help them reach their potential. The new curriculum will bring this about by making learning more experience-based, the assessment of progress more developmental, and by giving teachers the flexibility to deliver in more creative ways that suit the learners they teach.

This new approach was informed by Professor Graham Donaldson's independent review of curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, 'Successful Futures' <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150317-successful-futures-en.pdf>, in February 2015 which provided the foundations for a twenty-first Century curriculum shaped by the very latest national and international thinking.

Professor Donaldson also took note of a range of independent reports connected with education and skills which suggested a need for change, from the qualifications review to an industry-orientated ICT Steering Group.

3) How's it happening?

The new curriculum is being developed by teachers and practitioners through a network of Pioneer Schools.

The Pioneer Schools Network is working as part of an all-Wales partnership in collaboration with Higher Education Institutes and key partners including Qualifications Wales and Estyn. Regardless of their initial focus, all Pioneer Schools work closely together and with their clusters, networks and wider stakeholder groups, to involve as many schools as possible in this exciting work. The Pioneer Schools Network, working with local authorities and their regional consortia, will provide practical support and expertise for all schools to develop the pedagogical and leadership skills crucial to successful implementation of the new curriculum.

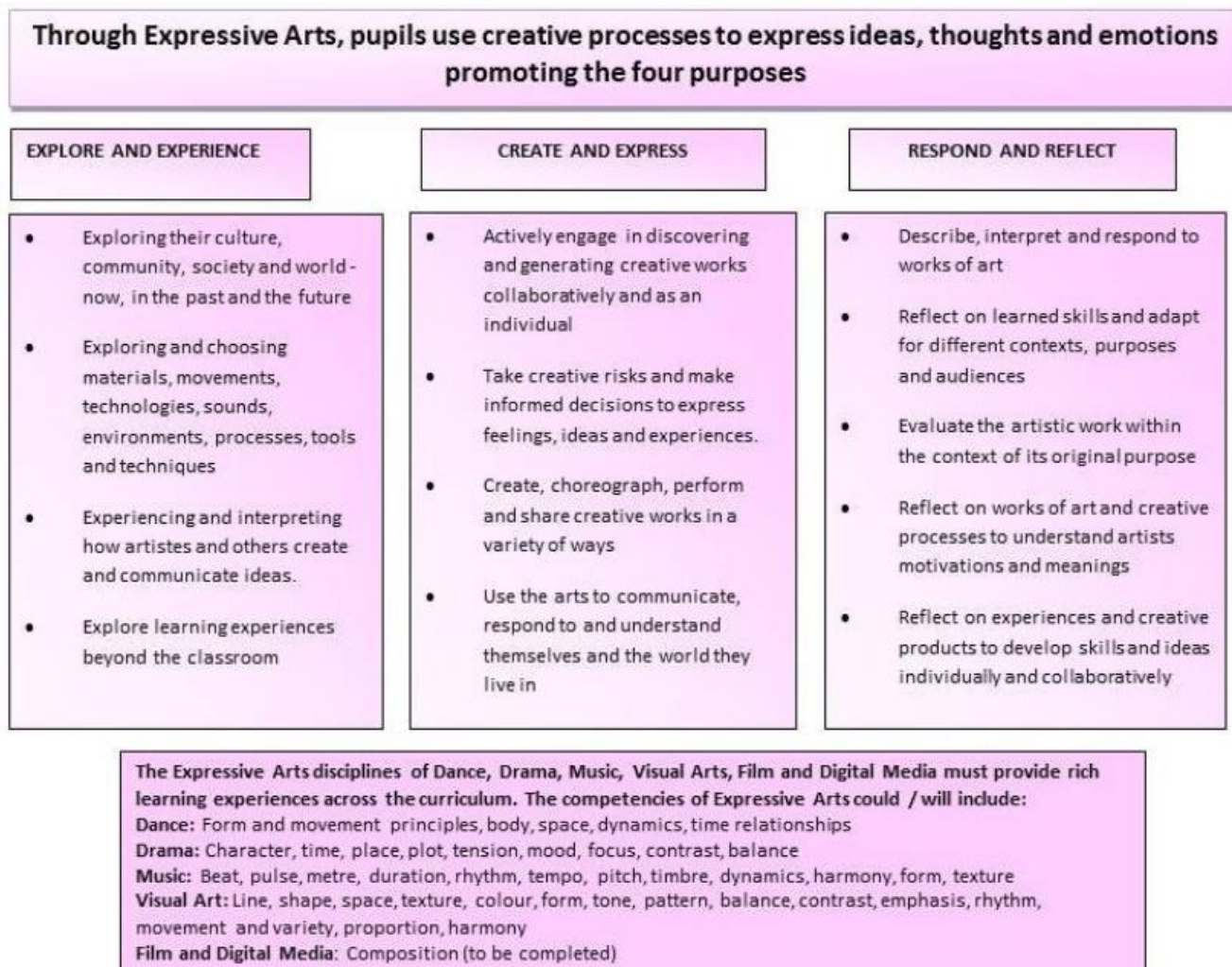
During the strategic design stage (Strand 1) the Pioneer Schools focussed on the core principles of the new curriculum framework. The outcomes from this work will be embedded in the thinking for the new curriculum and tested as part of the peer review cycle. The design and development of the six Areas of Learning and Experience (Strand 2) began in January 2017. Useful executive summaries have been produced that provide the latest thinking of each group:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/170707-new-curriculum-for-wales-story-so-far-en-v2.pdf>.

The more detailed development (Strand 3) began in the autumn term 2017.

4) Update on the six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs)

Expressive Arts



The Expressive Arts AoLE guidance will include a number of generic competencies and specification of core content. Schools will use the 'Model' (first draft above) as guidance to develop their own curricular models – as long as disciplinary concepts and content remain visible so that progression and coherence are visible.

Progression in the Expressive Arts equates to increasing complexity and sophistication by describing at each milestone key aspects of the Expressive Arts disciplines that form the context within which broad achievement outcomes are pursued, applied and achieved. Going forward the group will be exploring the development of a knowledge and skills progression continuum, in line with Successful Futures' milestone steps, and looking at the availability of case studies (both print and digital), to provide exemplification.

Health and Wellbeing

The focus of the work has been purpose-driven and not content-driven. However, a range of thematic areas will help shape day-to-day delivery of this part of the curriculum. The following six indicative thematic areas were defined by the group:

- Personal Care and Development
- Healthy Choices
- Learning to Learn
- Relationships and Emotions
- Keeping Safe
- Physical Activity (delivered in order to promote positive attitudes towards lifelong participation in physical activities)

The group is currently in discussions with Public Health Wales with a view to aligning the curriculum areas as far as possible with the framework headings in the Healthy Schools National Award, which are currently under review.

The group's preference is for a low level of specificity to allow schools to autonomously shape their curriculum to suit locally and nationally identified needs. However, the curriculum and its associated assessment may need to become increasingly prescriptive post-14. It is therefore proposed that under each of the six themes content can be arranged in three layers:

1. Specific 'non-negotiable' core content. This content may require a scheme of work.
2. Overarching ideas which may form contexts for learning.
3. Information on possible whole-school approaches and pedagogical models.

Humanities

The Humanities AoLE will include the study of history, geography, religious education, business and social studies. By exploring big ideas and key concepts in the humanities, learners will also have opportunities to explore elements of citizenship, classics, economics, law, philosophy, politics, psychology and sociology. The importance of learners acquiring knowledge about, exploring, experiencing and contributing to aspects of society at a local, national and global level will be reflected in the content of the AoLE.

Key knowledge/concepts, skills and competencies for each discipline are being identified along with overarching 'big ideas' and concepts that stretch across the disciplines.

The group aim to ensure a good balance between knowledge, skills and the development of the four purposes. They will also ensure greater choice for practitioners to select appropriate disciplinary content to reflect their local context.

Languages, Literacy and Communication

Every learner will have an entitlement to learn Welsh, English and an international language at primary school. Schools will also help pupils make the most of their other languages (home languages, British sign language etc).

The curriculum will be based on 'what matters', the essential in languages, literacy and communication knowledge and skills. This allows teachers the freedom to be creative and facilitates innovation to ensure pupils are enthused and have the opportunity to enjoy a rich language learning environment. The balance between teacher autonomy and adequate support will be carefully considered when deciding on specific knowledge, skills and pedagogy.

This will be supplemented by a continuum for communication and language acquisition and learning. The continuum will encompass productive/expressive skills (speaking, presenting and writing) and receptive skills (listening, viewing and reading). It will encompass Welsh (for Welsh

medium, bilingual and English medium settings and schools) English and EAL, international languages and non-verbal communication. The progression steps will include early language acquisition and will be inclusive for all stages/ages (including those starting a new language later in their school career).

Mathematics and Numeracy

The aim is to develop mastery approaches that allow pupils to acquire deep learning and conceptual understanding through problem solving. In order to accommodate a mastery approach the current mathematics curriculum needs to focus on “what matters” in order to give pupils a richer and deeper learning experience. This will also allow more opportunity to develop greater understanding of not just the “what”, but also the “how” and “why” underpinned by a suitable balance of knowledge and skills.

Science and Technology

The Science and Technology AoLE will include elements drawn from; biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, design technology (including food technology, textiles and product design) design, computer science and IT. It will include domain-specific content as well as the technology, and design’ skills and principles arising from these. The scope of the AoLE will be considered “live” and allowed to develop as new technologies emerge and domain specific knowledge is uncovered.

The AoLE will be structured around a number of “big ideas” or a single thought, idea or sentence that encapsulates a fundamental component of the AoLE. The approach will promote interdisciplinary, cross-curricular and subject specific learning. Each big idea would be supported by a “Key focus” – an amplified description of the big idea or statement and a “Journey” that details stages of progression within the AoLE. This would also include skills that to be developed through the progression. Some big ideas/statements will cover the entire range of progression, whereas others may start and finish at age-appropriate positions within the Journey. Likewise, some will cover all disciplines within the AoLE whereas others may not.

The group also recognises the need to provide sufficient scope for interpretation and flexibility for practitioners at each progression level. The group does not envisage that big ideas/statements will include a highly detailed prescriptive exemplar list of content but also recognises the need for some commonality to allow for progression. The group also recognises the need for a number of big ideas/statements which is manageable.

5) **When is it changing?**

Work on developing the new curriculum is well underway, but this is not a process that will be rushed. The key milestones on the journey are set out below.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the framework for the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) including the key requirements for moving towards a language continuum for Welsh. • Ensure that resources that we commission are developed in English and Welsh at the same time to support our new curriculum. • Develop approaches to professional learning to ensure that all schools are better able to plan for curriculum change. 	Autumn 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the phasing-in of adaptive personalised assessments (to replace paper-based reading and numeracy tests). 	During autumn 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make available for final feedback new curriculum and assessment arrangements for schools. 	By Easter 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final curriculum. 	By January 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All maintained settings and schools are using the new curriculum. 	By 1 September 2022

Schools will have some flexibility in determining how and when they begin first teaching of the new curriculum. WG's ambition is that by 1 September 2022 settings and schools will be using the new curriculum to underpin learning and teaching for children and young people aged 3-16. A professional learning offer for the Education Workforce will equip education professionals to deliver the new curriculum.

A plan for designing and developing the new curriculum and assessment framework has also been developed in collaboration with Pioneer Schools and key stakeholders.

6) **The Digital Competence Framework**

The first element of the new curriculum to be developed was the Digital Competence Framework <http://learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/digital-competence-framework/?lang=en>. The framework introduces and develops the skills needed to live and work in an increasingly online and digital world, ranging from communicating and collaborating to problem solving and handling online bullying.

Like literacy and numeracy it will apply across all subjects, developing skills and confidence in learners that make them adaptable to changes in technology over time.

The framework has four strands of equal importance. Each has a number of elements which explore the detail within it. The strands are:

- Citizenship – which includes the elements of ‘Identity, image and reputation’, ‘Health and well-being’, ‘Digital rights, licensing and ownership’, and ‘Online behaviour and cyberbullying’
- Interacting and collaborating – which includes the elements of ‘Communication’, ‘Collaboration’, and ‘Storing and sharing’
- Producing – which includes the elements of ‘Planning, sourcing and searching’, ‘Creating’, and ‘Evaluating and improving’
- Data and computational thinking – which includes the elements of ‘Problem solving and modelling’, and ‘Data and information literacy’.

Following its launch in September 2016, settings and schools are now responsible for familiarising themselves with the framework, agreeing their strategic vision for cross-curricular digital competence and considering how to translate this into practice. By September 2018, settings and schools will be expected to have made good progress in using the Digital Competence Framework.

Section 6: Estyn guidance on the curriculum

At Llanidloes High School we are committed to taking advantage of the current freedom to engage in well-considered curriculum innovation and development.

Estyn's guidance handbook for the inspection of secondary schools published in September 2017 contains the following reporting requirements for the inspector of 3.2 (the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum):-

'Inspectors should evaluate the extent to which learning experiences across the school stimulate and challenge the full range of pupils so that they engage fully in their learning and make the best possible progress..

Inspectors should consider whether the curriculum gives pupils individual learning pathways with a broad and balanced range of experiences. They should consider how well the curriculum combines formal, non-formal and informal elements, including work-focused experience and community participation. Inspectors should consider how well the school gives pupils the opportunity to obtain appropriate qualifications and equal access to options that meet pupils' interests and abilities.

Inspectors should consider the school's strategic approach to planning the curriculum and the extent to which it helps pupils to become ambitious, confident, aspirational and well-informed individuals.

Inspectors should approach innovation and flexibility of approach in a positive way when schools have tried to be creative and imaginative in taking forward well-considered curricular initiatives for the benefit of pupils. In the light of current national developments, inspectors may find that schools are part of the pioneer school programme. Other schools not identified formally as part of this programme may still be involved informally in this work through collaboration with pioneer schools, or through regional consortia groups.

Inspectors should evaluate how well the curriculum builds systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills as they transfer from key stage 2 and as they move through the school. They should consider to what extent the school provides pupils with a suitably wide range of experiences to develop their interest and skills across a range of subjects and areas of learning.

Inspectors should consider teachers' planning, schemes of work, pupils' work and observation of work in classes in coming to a view on the quality of the learning experiences provided. They should consider how well the learning experiences meet the needs of all pupils no matter what specific models of delivery they choose to organise and deliver the curriculum.

Inspectors should evaluate how well the school’s curriculum provides for specific groups of pupils, especially those with advanced skills and understanding, those with additional learning needs and pupils with English as an additional language. In Welsh-medium or bilingual schools, this might include provision for pupils with little prior knowledge of the Welsh language. In schools with pupils receiving part of their education off-site or on-site in nurture groups or inclusion provision, inspectors should evaluate how well this curriculum is meeting their needs.

Inspectors should consider the extent to which teachers and learning support staff take full account of individual pupils’ learning needs in the planning of the curriculum and in the delivery of individual lessons and sequences of lessons. Inspectors should identify where pupils have learning targets and consider how well teachers and other staff take note of these and provide a suitable programme of work to help pupils to meet them. Inspectors should consider the effectiveness of any support provided for pupils within the classroom or in withdrawal groups to develop their skills.

Inspectors should examine arrangements for grouping pupils through setting or mixed-ability grouping and consider whether the arrangements have a positive impact on the pupils’ learning and experiences.

Inspectors should consider the ways in which the school develops a curriculum that fully reflects the nature of the school’s context, including designing learning activities that reflect the cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity of Wales and the school’s local area.

Inspectors should consider the nature, extent and effectiveness of learning outside the classroom that links directly to the planned curriculum, for example extracurricular visits, to support pupils’ understanding of a specific subject or learning area. (Pupils’ involvement in clubs, after-school activities is a focus within Inspection Area 4).’

At Llanidloes High School we are committed to curriculum design founded upon careful evaluation of our current and prospective practice. To this end we consider the following questions before finalising our curriculum plan each year.

Prompt questions for evaluating our performance in 3.2 in the new common inspection framework (CIF)	
1	To what extent do learning experiences across the school stimulate and challenge the full range of pupils?
2	What is the quality of options at key stage 4 and the sixth form, with reference to Learning Pathways 14-19?
3	Does the curriculum provides individual learning pathways that are broad and balanced, that combine formal and informal elements, including work experience and community participation?
4	How well does the school give pupils the opportunity to obtain appropriate qualifications and equal access to options that meet pupils’ interests and abilities?
5	How strong is school’s strategic approach to planning the curriculum and to what extent does it helps pupils to become ambitious, confident, aspirational and well-informed individuals?

6	Where applicable, how effectively has the school engaged with the pioneer school programme, either formally as a pioneer school, or informally through collaboration with pioneer schools, or through regional consortia groups? To what extent has the school been creative and imaginative in taking forward well-considered curricular initiatives for the benefit of pupils?
7	How well does the curriculum build systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills as they transfer from key stage 2 and as they move through the school?
8	To what extent does the school provide pupils with a suitably wide range of experiences to develop their interest and skills across a range of subjects and areas of learning?
9	To what extent does teachers' planning encompass the statutory requirements in appropriate ways and for a suitable period of time in each stage of learning?
10	To what extent does the curriculum provides for specific groups of pupils, especially those with advanced skills and understanding, ALN and EAL? In Welsh/bilingual schools, this might also include pupils with little prior awareness of the Welsh language.
11	In schools with pupils receiving part of their education off-site or on-site in nurture groups or inclusion provision, how well is this curriculum meeting their needs?
12	To what extent do teachers and support staff take account of the individual ALNs of pupils in the planning of the curriculum and in individual lessons?
13	To what extent do teachers and staff take note of pupils' learning targets and provide a suitable programme of work to help pupils to meet these targets?
14	To what extent is the support provided in class or in withdrawal groups effective in developing pupils' skills?
15	How effectively do arrangements for grouping pupils through setting or mixed ability groupings have a positive impact on pupils' learning and experiences?
16	To what extent does the school develop a curriculum that reflects the school's context, including designing learning activities that reflect the cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity of Wales and the school's local area?
17	To what extent does the school offer a wide enough range of experiences to develop pupils' interest, including the creative arts, humanities, science and technology?
18	To what extent does the nature of learning outside the classroom, including activities, clubs and extra-curricular visits, contribute to pupils' learning?

Section 7: Principles underpinning effective curriculum design

At Llanidloes High School we are committed to applying principles of best practice when designing the curriculum. Curriculum for Life suggests that any proposed structure should satisfy a number of criteria. The structure of the curriculum should:

- reflect directly and promote the curriculum purposes
- embody the entitlement of all children and young people, including those with severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties, to a high-quality, broad and appropriately balanced education throughout the period of statutory education
- promote progression in children and young people's learning
- encourage depth of learning and provide appropriate challenge in ways that will raise overall standards of achievement
- promote coherence and encourage children and young people to make connections across different aspects of their learning
- enable children and young people to apply in unfamiliar contexts what they have learned
- promote sustained attention to the development and application of knowledge and skills in literacy, numeracy and digital competence

- ensure appropriate emphasis on the Welsh language and culture
- encourage stimulating and engaging teaching and learning
- be as simple and straightforward as possible
- be understood by and have the confidence of parents, carers and teachers.

The curriculum, learning and teaching need to enthuse children and young people about learning in ways that include both the vital contribution of discipline-based learning and the knowledge, skills and dispositions that will help them to meet the needs of today and the challenges of tomorrow.

When formulating proposals for the curriculum and assessment, Professor Donaldson and his team developed a set of principles for curriculum design as follows. The curriculum should be:

- **authentic**: rooted in Welsh values and culture and aligned with an agreed set of stated purposes
- **evidence-based**: drawing on the best of existing practice within Wales and from elsewhere, and on sound research
- **responsive**: relevant to the needs of today (individual, local and national) but also equipping all young people with the knowledge, skills and dispositions for future challenges as lifelong learners
- **inclusive**: easily understood by all, encompassing an entitlement to high-quality education for every child and young person and taking account of their views in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and those of parents, carers and wider society
- **ambitious**: embodying high expectations and setting no artificial limits on achievement and challenge for each individual child and young person
- **empowering**: developing competences which will allow young people to engage confidently with the challenges of their future lives
- **unified**: enabling continuity and flow with components which combine and build progressively
- **engaging**: encouraging enjoyment from learning and satisfaction in mastering challenging subject matter
- **based on subsidiarity**: commanding the confidence of all, while encouraging appropriate ownership and decision making by those closest to the teaching and learning process
- **manageable**: recognising the implications for and supported by appropriate assessment and accountability arrangements.

Section 8: Practicalities of effective curriculum planning and timetabling

At Llanidloes High School we are committed to applying good practice in the area of effective timetabling. These are wide-ranging, but include the following:-

1. Apply statutory requirements.
2. Take into account each pupil's choices and aspirations; pupil surveys may highlight substantial and viable demand for a new course.
3. Draw upon a secure evaluation of previous plans/timetables. Understand the rationale underpinning previous timetables; seemingly anomalous aspects of previous curriculum plans may have a sound explanation and help secure effective provision for a particular group of pupils.

4. Complete a curriculum design/timetabling schedule for the year and keep to deadlines. An adaptable example of such a schedule is provided below.
5. Adopt a team approach.
 - a. Gather feedback from governors and your senior leadership team.
 - b. Your network manager needs to be kept informed of your progress and can ensure, where applicable, SIMs and Nova T are kept up-to-date.
 - c. Your site manager can inform you of building work that may act as a constraint on your rooming/resourcing of lessons.
 - d. Your administrative team often have useful insight from using previous timetables. Where applicable, they may be able to transfer information into Nova T and assign pupils to classes.
 - e. Heads of department will choose subject courses and provide valuable feedback on previous timetables.
 - f. Your options coordinator will help you shape option blocks.
 - g. The exams officer can let you know what exams level are assigned to each class to facilitate use of the course functionality in SIMs.
 - h. Your SIMs/Data Manager may be responsible for changing rooming and staffing in SIMs throughout the year and will have ideas both on what works and a suitable protocol on processing updates/changes.
 - i. Your cover manager may have valuable insights as they deal with staff absence and timetabling issues throughout the year.
6. In particular, find out SLT and teachers' needs and preferences, including:
 - a. Guided learning hours detailed in course specifications to ensure discussions around teaching periods allocated to each course are objective, informed and equitable;
 - b. Specific groups allocated to particular staff. For example, senior leaders may ask that the maths teacher with the highest value added residual be assigned responsibility for raising the performance of pupils in a key Year 10 group that will likely determine whole school Welsh Baccalaureate performance in two years. Senior leaders may also challenge and overrule subject leader requests that involve cherry picking top sets or overloading an NQT with more challenging classes.
 - c. Some courses will require access to certain rooms/resources such as kitchens, IT suites, gyms and science labs.
 - d. Timing. It may not be ideal for all Year 11 maths lessons to occur on the last period of the day. Pastoral managers may also be able to inform you of 'hot spots' where certain combinations of classes, teachers and periods of the day have not worked well.
 - e. Singles, doubles or triples? For example, some practical subjects may prefer to have concurrent lessons to ensure practical work/controlled assessments involving the setting out of technical equipment can be completed in one sitting.
7. Take into account prompt questions arising from 3.2 of the new Common Inspection Framework (CIF) that are available in section 5 of this booklet.
8. Take into account Welsh government performance measures (available in section 4 of this booklet). For example, does your suite of options at key stage 4 make suitable provision for pupils who wish to pursue vocational pathways contributing to the 'other 4' in the capped 9 performance indicator?
9. When timetabling, know your constraints. For example, what suite of options is financially viable, travel constraints between split sites and part time staff who are only available on particular days. Departments may be able to let you know about pre-arranged off site activities and the limited availability of IT suites and labs and other rooms.

10. Check all courses on the Qualifications in Wales website, including the performance points and course expiry dates. It is not unknown for teachers to have inadvertently delivered legacy specifications that cannot be accredited, resulting in students being unable to access the career/university of their choice.
11. Don't make promises to colleagues as you may not be able to keep them and they may remove much needed flexibility when timetabling. Indeed, all staff should be aware that it is highly unlikely that all requests can be met when drawing up the timetable due to competing and conflicting requests. For example, some staff are going to have to teach on a Friday afternoon!

Possible Curriculum Design/Timetabling Schedule

Date	Event
Oct	Consult with all stakeholders (inc. pupils, teachers, senior leaders, Governing Body, LA, ERW, partner Pioneer schools). Review curriculum and performance measure updates from Welsh Government. Check accredited courses on Qualifications in Wales website (e.g. course end date, performance points etc.)
Nov	Begin curriculum modelling. Complete first draft
Nov/Dec	Complete staff skills audit
Dec	Arrange sound careers guidance for pupils from Years 9 and 11 (including consideration of Russell group university course requirements / advice)
Early Jan	Complete staffing calculation checks/staff the curriculum
Early Jan	Complete straw polls with Year 9 and 11 to gauge demand for each option
Mid Jan	Revise curriculum plan based on pupil interests
End Jan	Begin initial construction (e.g. in NOVA T6)
End Jan	Option booklets updated
Early Feb	Options booklets distributed
Early Feb	Faculty staffing/rooming requests gathered
Mid-Feb	Deadline for faculty/subject staffing/rooming requests to be received
Early March	Deadline for return of pupils' options requests
March	Resolve issues relating to discrepancies with straw poll feedback (e.g. over-subscribed or non-viable classes). Liaise closely with pupils, parents and staff
Jan/Feb/Mar/April	Timetable construction (interim timetable if year groups move up in June)
Mid-April	First draft interim timetable to head, governors and staff
Early May	Interim timetables printed (e.g. from NOVA T6) and distributed to faculties/departments for discussion and feedback
Mid-May	Deadline for feedback on interim timetable
Early June	Interim timetable distributed to students and rolled out
Mid-June	Year 7 info given to heads of faculty/department for placing in classes in accordance with the whole school setting policy where applicable
End of June	Deadline for class list info to be returned for inputting into data management system (e.g. SIMS)
Early July	Deadline for new Year 7 timetables printed for Year 6 taster days where applicable
Mid-July	Preparation for new academic year

Mid-July (school closes)	Complete preparation for new academic year – print off new student timetables etc.
Aug	Liaison between office and curriculum manager to check and make final alterations for Sept timetable

9. Research supporting evidence-based curriculum design

At Llanidloes High School we are committed to applying the findings of robust educational research when determining the shape and design of the curriculum. For example, the Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit is an accessible summary of educational research which provides guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. In this section we detail their analysis of interventions relating to curriculum design: ability grouping; block scheduling; reducing class size; and setting/streaming.

1. Ability grouping

What is it?

Pupils with similar attainment levels are grouped together either for specific lessons on a regular basis (setting or regrouping) or as a class (streaming or tracking). The assumption is that it will be possible to teach more effectively or more efficiently with a narrower range of attainment in a class.

How effective is it?

The evidence is consistent that while there may be some benefits for higher attaining pupils in some circumstances, with an average impact of about two additional months progress, these benefits are largely outweighed by the direct and indirect negative effects for mid-range and lower performing learners. In particular the longer term negative effect on the attitudes and engagement of low attaining and disadvantaged pupils is clear. There is some evidence that effective and flexible grouping for particular tasks can be beneficial, or when high-performing teachers are assigned to low attaining groups but, more routine setting arrangements tend to undermine low attainers' confidence and the belief that effort is more important than ability. This is a clear example of what not to do if you want low-income pupils to benefit, as they are more likely to be assigned to lower attaining groups. Some reviews indicate that the overall impact on low attaining learners is negative (i.e. delaying their progress by about two months over the course of a year).

How secure is the evidence?

The evidence is robust and has accumulated over at least 30 years of research. Although there is some variation depending on methods and research design, the conclusions are relatively consistent. One issue is that the language of 'ability' can imply that ability is a fixed construct and reduce effort. We know from other research that it is important for pupils to believe that they can improve and succeed if they work hard.

What are the costs?

Ability grouping is an organisational strategy which has few, if any, financial costs associated with it.

What should I consider?

The key issue is ensuring that any ability grouping is beneficial for all learners, particularly low-attaining or disadvantaged pupils. It will be important to monitor the impact on pupils' attitudes and beliefs about themselves as successful (or unsuccessful) learners. Schools should consider how

differences in grouping will support more effective teaching, such as small group intensive support for pupils who are falling behind or cross-age peer tutoring where older pupils tutor their younger peers.

- Groups should be based on learners' needs rather than organisational convenience.
- Flexible within-class grouping is preferable to tracking or streaming.
- Where pupils are organised in groups by attainment it is important that these groups are regularly reorganised on the basis of progress made and that success is attributed to effort, not to ability.
- The impact on low achieving pupils' attitudes to learning and self-esteem need to be addressed over the medium and long term to mitigate the likely negative effects. • If higher ability groups just move at a faster rate through the same curriculum their progress may be restricted once they have 'reached the end'.
- Evidence suggests that the impact of setting is most detrimental to low attaining pupils in mathematics who do better in mixed attainment groups. The effects appear to be less evident in other subjects, though negative effects are reported for low attaining pupils across the curriculum. The evidence indicates ability grouping particularly affects upper primary and lower secondary education.

2. **Block scheduling**

Block scheduling is an approach to school timetabling in secondary schools. It typically means that pupils have fewer classes (4-5) per day, for a longer period of time (70-90 minutes). The three main types of block schedules found in the research are:

- 4x4 block scheduling: 4 blocks of extended (80–90 minute) classes each day, covering the same 4 subjects each day. Students take 4 subjects over 1 term, and 4 different subjects in the following term.
- A/B block scheduling: 3 or 4 blocks of extended (70–90 minute) classes each day, covering the same 3 or 4 subjects on alternating days. Students take 6 or 8 subjects each term.
- Hybrid: a hybrid of traditional models and 3/4-class-per-day approaches. Students have 5 classes per day, of between 60 and 90 minutes.

How effective is it?

There is no consistent pattern in the evidence. A 2010 systematic review concluded that the 4x4 pattern seemed to produce higher overall achievement than traditional schedules, though this may mask differences between subjects. More detailed analysis suggests that in science the A/B block scheduling approach resulted in higher results than traditional schedules (two to five months of additional progress). In mathematics and English the evidence was unclear with studies showing both better and worse results for any type of block scheduling compared with traditional scheduling.

The evidence suggests that how teachers use the time they are allocated is more important than the length of lesson or the schedule of lessons, and hence that the introduction of block scheduling is unlikely to raise attainment by itself. It may also be that when different timetable patterns are introduced, the changes will only be beneficial if teachers alter the way they teach to get the best from the time allocation. Teachers and students often perceive that timetabling changes are beneficial, especially when it appears to increase one to one interaction. However, these perceptions are not clearly linked with improved learning outcomes.

How secure is the evidence?

There are two recent meta-analyses which have looked at the evidence of the impact of timetabling and scheduling changes on students' learning but these rely on a small number of studies which have limited security.

Timetabling mainly affects secondary schools, though the time spent on different areas of the curriculum is also relevant at primary level. The research has mainly looked at impact on mathematics, English and science.

What are the costs?

The costs of making alterations to the timetable are mainly in terms of organisational effort and time and involve minimal financial outlay.

What should I consider?

Before you implement this strategy in your learning environment, consider the following:

- Timetabling changes alone are not sufficient to improve learning.
- Teachers need to alter the way that they teach, and should plan and organise different kinds of learning activities to obtain benefits.
- Have timetabling changes been matched to curriculum goals and teaching and learning objectives (such as longer lessons for science experiments)?
- Have you considered how longer lessons may provide opportunities for other promising approaches, such as improving the amount of feedback that students get from the teacher or from each other?

3. Reducing class size

As the size of a class or teaching group gets smaller it is suggested that the range of approaches a teacher can employ and the amount of attention each student will receive will increase, improving outcomes for pupils.

How effective is it?

Reducing class size appears to result in around 3 months additional progress for pupils, on average. Intuitively, it seems obvious that reducing the number of pupils in a class will improve the quality of teaching and learning, for example by increasing the amount of high quality feedback or one to one attention learners receive. However, overall the evidence does not show particularly large or clear effects, until class size is reduced substantially, such as to below 20 or even below 15 pupils. It appears to be very hard to achieve improvements from modest class size reductions above 20, for example from 30 to 25.

The key issue appears to be whether the reduction is large enough to permit the teacher to change their teaching approach when working with a smaller class and whether, as a result, the pupils change their learning behaviours. If no change occurs then, perhaps unsurprisingly, learning is unlikely to improve. When a change in teaching approach does accompany a class size reduction (which appears hard to achieve until classes are smaller than about 20) then benefits on attainment can be identified, in addition to improvements on behaviour and attitudes. In some studies, these benefits persist for a number of years (from early primary school through to at least the end of primary school).

There is some evidence that reducing class sizes is more likely to be effective when accompanied by professional development for teachers focusing on teaching skills and approaches. Some

evidence suggests slightly larger effects are documented for lower achievers and, for very young pupils, those with lower socio-economic status.

Smaller class sizes may also provide more opportunities for teachers to develop new skills and approaches.

How secure is the evidence?

There are a number of issues in interpreting the evidence about class size as many countries or schools already teach lower-attaining pupils in smaller groups. Overall, there is a relatively consistent finding that smaller classes are associated with slightly higher attainment when other factors are controlled for and when class sizes have been deliberately reduced in experimental evaluations.

The strongest evidence comes from research into primary schools in the USA where the benefits appear to be sustained for 3-4 years when classes are reduced below 18. There is some evidence that pupils in disadvantaged areas in the UK benefit from classes of fewer than 20 pupils in primary schools.

What are the costs?

Reducing class sizes to a level where a significant benefit is likely is expensive. The evidence suggests that typical classes would need to be reduced to between 15 and 20 pupils. The additional teacher costs of splitting a class of 30 pupils into two classes of 15 pupils would be around £1150 per pupil. This does not take into account the cost of additional classrooms. Overall, costs are estimated as high.

What should I consider?

1. Small reductions in class size (for example, from 30 to 25 pupils) are unlikely to be cost-effective relative to other strategies.
2. Reducing class sizes for younger children may provide longer term benefits.
3. Smaller classes only impact upon learning if the reduced numbers allow teachers to teach differently. Have you considered how you will adjust your teaching strategies and what professional development will be required?
4. The gains from smaller class sizes are likely to come from the increased flexibility for organising learners and the quality and quantity of feedback the pupils receive. Have you considered how you will organise learning in smaller classes and how you will improve feedback to your pupils?
5. As an alternative to reducing class sizes, have you considered changing the way you deploy staff (both teachers and teaching assistants) so that teachers can work more intensively with smaller groups?

4. Setting or streaming

Pupils with similar levels of current attainment are grouped together either for specific lessons on a regular basis (setting or regrouping), or as a whole class (streaming or tracking). The assumption is that it will be possible to teach more effectively or more efficiently with a narrower range of attainment in a class.

How effective is it?

Overall, setting or streaming appears to benefit higher attaining pupils and be detrimental to the learning of mid-range and lower attaining learners. On average, it does not appear to be an effective strategy for raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, who are more likely to be assigned to lower groups.

Low attaining learners who are set or streamed fall behind by 1 or 2 months per year, on average, when compared with the progress of similar students in classes with mixed ability groups. It appears likely that routine setting or streaming arrangements undermine low attainers' confidence and discourage the belief that attainment can be improved through effort. Research also suggests that ability grouping can have a longer term negative effect on the attitudes and engagement of low attaining pupils.

In contrast, studies show that higher attaining learners make between 1 and 2 additional months' progress when set or streamed compared to when taught in mixed ability groups. This is unsurprising: studies of targeted interventions for pupils identified as "gifted and talented" show that they benefit from a range of different kinds of grouping, including pull-out classes, accelerated classes and promotion (where high attaining pupils move up a year). However, research into gifted and talented schemes rarely records the impact of the schemes on the students not identified as gifted and talented, who are more likely to be from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is possible that, as with setting and streaming, those not identified as gifted and talented experience a negative impact.

Though the average impact of setting or streaming on low attaining pupils is negative, evidence suggests that certain types of grouping are more effective than others. Some studies have shown that reducing the size of the lowest attaining groups and assigning high-performing teachers to these groups can be effective, as can providing additional targeted catch up support.

How secure is the evidence?

The evidence on setting and streaming is fairly consistent and has accumulated over at least 30 years of research. The majority of the evidence comes from the USA, and there are few rigorous UK studies. Although there is some variation depending on methods and research design, conclusions on the impact of ability grouping are relatively consistent.

What are the costs?

Setting and streaming are organisational strategies that have few associated financial costs. Additional resources may be needed if setting or streaming resulted in greater numbers of classes. Overall the costs are estimated as very low.

What should I consider?

1. For low attaining pupils, flexible within-class grouping is preferable to tracking or streaming.
2. It is important to recognise that a measure of current attainment, such as a test, is not the same as a measure of potential.
3. How will you ensure that your setting or streaming approach enables more effective teaching for all pupils, including lower attaining pupils?
4. How will you monitor the impact of ability grouping on pupil engagement and attitudes to learning?

Section 10: Useful contacts and links

ERW	Contact details
Administrative team	01267 676840 admin@erw.org.uk
Central team	http://www.erw.wales/about-us/central-team/
Dave Barry (strategic lead for Curriculum for Life)	07920 366033 dave.barry@erw.org.uk
Qualifications	
Qualifications in Wales	https://www.qiw.wales/ 0333 077 2701 enquiries@qualificationswales.org
WJEC	029 2026 5000
Discounting codes	http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/schooldata/ims/usingdataeffectively/?lang=en
Post 16	
Russell group overview	http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/
Russell group guidance to making decision about post 16 guidance	http://russellgroup.ac.uk/media/5457/informed-choices-2016.pdf
Current curriculum	
Foundation Phase	http://learning.gov.wales/resources/collections/foundation-phase?lang=en
Key stages 2-4	http://learning.gov.wales/resources/collections/key-stages-2-4?lang=en
Subject guidance	http://learning.gov.wales/resources/collections/subject-guidance?lang=en
New curriculum	
WG 'A curriculum for Wales – A curriculum for life'	http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en.pdf
New curriculum – the story so far (July 2017)	http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/170707-new-curriculum-for-wales-story-so-far-en-v2.pdf
Post of the four purposes	http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-poster.pdf
Welsh Government	
WG curriculum development unit	CurriculumDesignandDevelopmentUnit@wales.gsi.gov.uk
School performance reporting enquiries	ims@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Policies and strategies	http://learning.gov.wales/resources/improvementareas/curriculum/?lang=en
Curriculum research	
Sutton trust toolkit	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit
WG research and analysis	http://learning.gov.wales/resources/improvementareas/curriculum/?lang=en

Curriculum Pioneer Schools

Updated January 2017 (Bold type = new Pioneer Schools)

School name	Region	Sector
Crickhowell High School	ERW	Secondary
Crynallt Primary School	ERW	Primary

Gwernyfed High School	ERW	Secondary
Gwyrosydd Primary School Glyncollen Primary School	ERW	Primary
Llandybie Primary School	ERW	Primary
Llandysul School	ERW	Primary
Llanidloes High School	ERW	Secondary
Llanrhidian Primary School Waunarlwydd Primary School	ERW	Primary
Mount Street Junior School Mount Street Infant School Cradoc Primary School Llanfaes Primary School	ERW	Primary
Parkland Primary School Olchfa School	ERW	Primary/ Secondary
Pembroke High School	ERW	Secondary
Plascrug Community Primary School	ERW	Primary
Pontarddulais Comprehensive School	ERW	Secondary
Portfield School	ERW	Special
Radnor Valley CP School	ERW	Primary
St Joseph's Roman Catholic School, Port Talbot St Joseph's Catholic Junior School St Joseph's Catholic Infant School	ERW	Secondary/ Primary
The Hollies School Heronsbridge School Ysgol Heol Goffa	CSC/ERW	Special
Trallwn Primary School	ERW	Primary
Welshpool High School	ERW	Secondary
Ysgol Bryngwyn Ysgol Glan-y-Môr	ERW	Secondary
Ysgol Cedewain	ERW	Special
Ysgol Dewi Sant	ERW	Secondary
Ysgol Gyfun Bryntawe Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr	ERW	Secondary
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin	ERW	Secondary
Ysgol Gyfun Preseli	ERW	Secondary
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera	ERW	Primary/Secondary
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lôn Las Ysgol Bryniago	ERW	Primary
Ysgol Penboyr	ERW	Primary
Ysgol Pen y Bryn Ysgol Hendrefelin Ysgol Maes y Coed Ysgol Crug Glas Swansea	ERW	Special