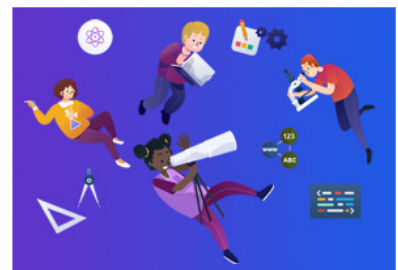
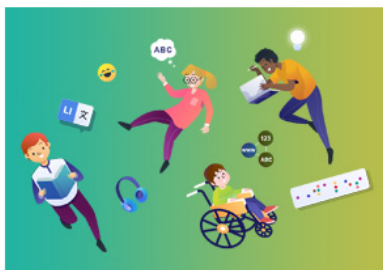
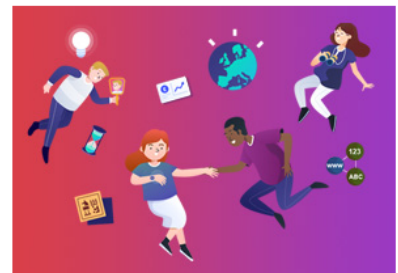
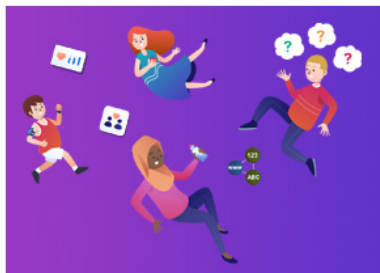




# Curriculum for Wales

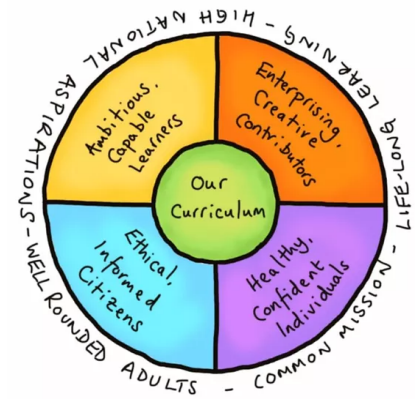
Information for Parents and Carers

September 2023



# What is the Curriculum for Wales?

Within Wales one of the most significant developments in education over the last few years has been the introduction of the **Curriculum for Wales**. All schools in Wales are required to implement a new approach to the curriculum (what a school teaches and what students learn). The aim of the new curriculum is for all students to become:



- ★ Ambitious, capable learners
- ★ Enterprising, creative contributors
- ★ Healthy confident individuals
- ★ Ethical, informed citizens

These ambitions are known as the **Four Purposes**.

Schools are expected to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that cover six **Areas of Learning Experience**. Subjects have been grouped together under each of these Areas of Learning Experience .

Areas of Learning Experience	Subjects
<b>Expressive Arts</b>	Art, Performing Arts (drama, music & media)
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	PE and Personal Development and Skills
<b>Humanities</b>	Geography, History and Religious Studies
<b>Languages, Literacy &amp; Communication</b>	English, French, Spanish and Welsh
<b>Mathematics and Numeracy</b>	Maths
<b>Science and Technology</b>	Science, IT and Technology

A defining feature of the new Curriculum for Wales is that schools are required to design their own curriculum and assessment arrangements which are unique to their school community.

## How have we designed our curriculum?

At St Julian's School, our mission is to be **'a school for all, where everyone succeeds'**. We aim for all our students to leave school having personally developed into healthy, well-rounded young people; having gained knowledge, skills and experiences they will remember for life; having achieved qualifications that reflect their potential; and having secured a future pathway in education, employment or training. Central to our mission is the school's curriculum.

At St Julian's School, we have spent the last few years working on the design and content of our own curriculum. We launched the teaching of the new curriculum for our current Year 7 students in September 2022; this means that all subjects are currently delivering new or updated schemes of learning (plans of what we teach) to students in this year group. We are now rolling out progressive schemes of learning to these students in Year 8 and then in Year 9 in 2024. By the end of 2025, our new curriculum will be fully embedded across all year groups in Key Stage 3.

If we are to nurture well rounded, skillful and knowledgeable young people, ready for the world beyond St Julian's School, then how the students learn is of equal importance to what they learn. Therefore, careful consideration has been given to both learning and teaching at the design and development stage for the new curriculum.

We have used this opportunity to think in depth about how we can best support the progression of our students and what content is right for our school and community. We have therefore not only shaped our curriculum around the Four Purposes but also around our beliefs about learning and our purpose as a school.

**Our learning definition:** *Learning is the long-term retention of new knowledge and the ability to transfer it to new contexts at a later date.*

**Our purpose:** *To ensure students learn knowledge and skills that are needed for life and to ensure students gain qualifications that enable them to access education, training or employment.*

Our definition for learning comes from a firm belief that students need to remember what they have been taught. Therefore, our curriculum embraces ideas from **cognitive science** about how to develop memory. We have designed our curriculum in a way that promotes **remembering** and allows students to store knowledge in their long-term memories so that they can later **apply** it and use it to be successful at St Julian's School and beyond.

Our curriculum has been designed and will be delivered as **separate subject disciplines**, covering all six Areas of Learning and Experiences. This is because we feel strongly that students will gain a greater depth of knowledge and understanding if they are taught by specialist teachers with specialist knowledge. This approach will better support them in developing the knowledge, skills and understanding required for external exams and beyond.

The starting point for our curriculum design in each subject has been the identification of the

**concepts** (the big ideas) and the **conceptual knowledge** and skills that we believe our students need to know and understand. We then planned the best **contexts** (topics) through which to deliver these concepts and finally, we have drilled down to **contextual knowledge** (subject specific topic knowledge) that students need to know.

The same concepts and conceptual knowledge may be reinforced several times throughout a subject's scheme of learning but may be delivered through different contexts and the learning of different contextual knowledge.

The two key questions we have asked ourselves throughout this process are: Why should we teach that and why then? This is because we know that effective selection and sequencing of learning is crucial when it comes to supporting and deepening learning over time.

A key feature of our planning has been being clear about what exactly students will learn, i.e. what they will know or be able to do by the end of each topic. This is what we will be assessing in each lesson and through formal assessments which students will complete at key points during the year. We place considerable value on assessment as this is a key tool for supporting progression as it helps students to understand where they are in their learning and how they can improve and develop.

We plan for meaningful and authentic links across different subjects and Areas of Learning Experience. However, the research tells us that it's more important to prioritise the development of concepts within the same subject over time (terms and years) in order to deepen and build upon students' learning.

Along the way, we have engaged the views of stakeholders. For example, we have sought feedback from Governors and worked in partnership with primary colleagues to ensure we have a curriculum which has carefully considered how to support progression in key conceptual knowledge from the ages of 3-16. All teachers across the school have also had the opportunity to input into curriculum design and work collaboratively at a subject level. We will continue to work in collaboration with primary colleagues within our cluster, students, parents and governors to jointly plan and evaluate our work.

## **How do we deliver and develop the cross curricular skills?**

The three cross curricular skills that we aim to develop are:

- Literacy: Listening, speaking reading and writing skills
- Numeracy: Number and problem solving skills
- Digital Competence: Digital skills

We believe that developing students' literacy, numeracy and digital skills is crucial as it enables students to access the content of the curriculum and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in lessons and assessments. These skills also equip students with the lifelong skills needed outside of and beyond their time at St Julian's.

Whilst these skills are developed in depth in English, maths and ICT, every subject across the school provides students with further opportunities to develop and practise these skills so that students build in confidence and competence in applying them.

## **How do we deliver and develop knowledge of the cross cutting themes?**

As part of Curriculum for Wales, there are five cross cutting (cross-curricular) themes which students should develop knowledge of. Three of these are mandatory elements of the curriculum (\*).

They are:

- local, national and international contexts
- relationships and sexuality education\*
- human rights\*
- diversity
- careers and work-related experiences\*

These themes have been considered at the planning and design stage and we will be developing knowledge and understanding of different themes in different ways. For example diversity, local, national and international contexts will be explored across the curriculum; and knowledge of themes such as relationships and sexuality education and careers and work-related experiences will mainly be developed through Personal Development and Skills lessons (embedded within our curriculum), assemblies and the tutorial programme.

## **What are our assessment arrangements?**

New assessment arrangements have been devised and will be implemented for Year 7 students only during the academic year 2022-2023. Year 8 and Year 9 students will continue to be assessed using National Curriculum Levels; and students in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 will be assessed against external examination grading criteria.

The new assessment arrangements for Year 7 will focus on assessing the expected knowledge and skills that have been taught in each subject and ability class (set). Students will need to demonstrate the long term retention of their learning and its application to written and/or practical work. Students' demonstration of their learning in each subject will be reported through one of the following four evaluations:

- The student has demonstrated their learning in **nearly all** the key knowledge and skills taught this term.
- The student has demonstrated their learning on **most** of the key knowledge and skills taught this term.
- The student has demonstrated their learning in **around half** of the key knowledge and skills taught this term.
- The student has demonstrated their learning in **less than half** of the key knowledge and skills taught this term.

## **How will we monitor, review and evaluate the new curriculum?**

We are committed to ensuring that what we deliver is effective and supports students' learning and progress. Curriculum development is therefore a key aspect of our School Development Plan and will be closely monitored, reviewed and evaluated (MRE) to ensure that it is highly effective. Ongoing MRE processes such as discussions with students, learner work reviews, data analysis and stakeholder feedback will enable us to identify our strengths and areas for development and will be used to inform refinements and adaptations.

As part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring that our curriculum effectively supports learning and progression, we along with 19 other schools in Wales will be participating in a national research programme with the Welsh Government, focused on the impact of the new framework on learning.