



Pontypridd High School

Aspire Policy (More Able & Talented)

'Learning and achieving together'
'Dysgu a chyflawni gyda'n gilydd'

Aspire Policy

Date of policy:	March 2023
Adopted:	Adopted: Standards Committee Meeting, 12 th June 2019 Reviewed : Standards Committee Meeting, 10 th May 2023
To be reviewed:	Summer 2026
Member of staff responsible:	Deputy Headteacher
Committee Responsible:	Standards

Introduction

Pontypridd High School is committed to supporting and challenging all its pupils to ensure they achieve their full potential. The school is committed to providing a diverse breadth of learning experiences ensuring all pupils get the very best learning experiences inside and outside of the classroom. The school has re-branded more able and talented as 'Aspire'. The reasoning behind this is to not only focus on being more able and talented within school but building lifelong aspirations.

There is a clear focus throughout the school on raising aspirations and standards for all pupils, 'Aspire' pupils are tracked and monitored to ensure they reach their best potential. This policy is designed to underpin the school's focus on ensuring that all pupils achieve the very best outcomes both academically and emotionally.

Aspire Pupils

In line with Welsh Government guidance, the school recognises the term More Able and Talented (Aspire) as applying to approximately 20% of pupils who need enriched and extended opportunities to develop to the full their abilities in one or more curriculum areas. Approximately 2% of learners can be described as "exceptionally able", as a school we work to name this discreet group as 'Seren' pupils.

Aims

The purpose of this policy is to

- Highlight the strategies used across the school to support 'Aspire' pupils
- Identify 'Aspire' and 'Potential Aspire' pupils in each year group to ensure robust tracking and monitoring
- Provide a curriculum that extends and enriches the learning experiences for 'Aspire' pupils
- Continue to develop a range of teaching and learning strategies that extend and support their learning
- Ensure that 'Aspire' pupils meet or exceed their target outcomes
- Ensure the right progression for each 'Aspire' pupil as they move between Key Stages
- Provide support, guidance and appropriate challenge for each 'Aspire' pupil.
- Ensure a diverse range of enrichment opportunities are available to 'Aspire' pupils to develop a culture of aspiration

Procedures for Identification

This is a continuous process as pupils progress at different rates. A variety of sources are used to identify 'Aspire' learners, both qualitative and quantitative, including:

- Literacy & Numeracy Scores
- CAT Scores
- Teacher assessment
- Teacher recommendations
- External assessments

Once identified, pupils are placed on the schools 'Aspire' programme and tracked by the Aspire Leader.

Curriculum Provision

The curriculum is designed so that pupils of all abilities have the opportunity to maximise their potential, with each learner having an individual learning pathway which meets their needs. Aspire provision is an integral part of this and is designed to give Aspire pupils clear stretch and challenge in every lesson so as to support the very high expectations we have for them. The school ensures appropriate challenge is in all lessons across the school, this is a crucial part of the learning & teaching provision at Pontypridd High School (Challenge for all).

In addition there should be opportunities for extending and delivering this provision outside of the classroom wherever possible.

Some key principles which are used in curriculum planning for 'Aspire' pupil are:

- extra-curricular provision (lunchtime/after school/educational visits)
- signposted enrichment / extension material for Aspire pupils within schemes of work.
- developing awareness amongst staff of their role in the identification of Aspire pupils based on subject-specific criteria and the need to make the curriculum sufficiently challenging
- effective assessment of pupils' potential and performance
- opportunities for Aspire pupils to work together, this is done by the Aspire leader who uses registration time to promote collaborative working
- recognition, celebration and reward of achievement
- careful grouping of students to allow for curriculum based enrichment
- regular monitoring of MAT pupils by the MAT Co-Ordinator, subject teachers, department heads, and Senior Management
- opportunities to engage with the Seren network and to visit and apply for Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities.

As a school we place huge importance of the emotional and mental wellbeing of our pupils. The 'Aspire' Leader will ensure to 'check in' with aspire pupils at several points in the academic term. Pupils have support continuously from the 'aspire' leader but also have access where appropriate to:

- Eye to eye counselling
- ELSA sessions
- Online courses

Teaching and Learning for Aspire Pupils

Much of the approach to teaching and learning for Aspire pupils outlined below is common to successful teaching and learning approaches for all pupils but is particularly important if Aspire pupils are to be fully engaged in learning and achieve their potential.

- The classroom should offer a carefully structured positive atmosphere in which the contribution made by pupils is recognised, differences acknowledged and enthusiasm for learning is fostered.
- Teachers should provide tasks that promote problem-solving skills associated with clear thinking and a spirit of investigation, pupils should be given opportunity to develop their creative thinking skills.
- Teachers should demonstrate good questioning techniques, ensure pupils can give open ended extensive answers.
- There should be an atmosphere of mutual respect where mistakes are recognised as a significant part of learning (Restorative Approaches)
- Teachers should always consider:
 - What can be incorporated into everyday provision?
 - What needs additional provision?
 - How do I further develop the pupil's thinking skills?
 - How can I accelerate a pupil's learning?
 - How can I develop an independent learner?
 - How can I further develop a pupil's problem solving skills?
 - Different forms of feedback
 - Creating a culture of high aspirations

Monitoring & Tracking

Pupils identified as 'Aspire' are tracked and monitored as part of the schools robust standards systems. Pupils are discussed at individual level in bi-weekly meetings to ensure a diverse range of support is in place to support aspire learning in their studies and emotional wellbeing.

Parents/carers are informed in writing when their child is placed on the schools 'Aspire' programme and this is reflected in their child's progress reports for the relevant curriculum area or areas.

Aspire monitoring & tracking is used to ensure :

- termly monitoring of the progress of pupils who have been identified as 'Aspire'
- enabling staff to identify pupils who have the potential to be identified as 'Aspire' in their subject area and to mentor them accordingly
- checking on the progress of 'Aspire' learners over the longer-term to ensure they are making excellent progress.

Partnership Working

Pontypridd High School recognises that successful provision for 'Aspire' pupils depends on partnership between pupils, home and school:

Pupils

- Aspire pupils are offered opportunities to advance their knowledge through enrichment activities as well as in class. Pupils are expected to strive to be the best they can and to work with staff and other pupils to achieve success.
- Aspire pupils are expected to discuss their future aspirations and interests so that teachers can harness their enthusiasm and address their interests.
- Aspire pupils are expected to put in maximum effort to all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities that will further their aspirations.

Parents and Carers

- Parents and carers are asked to work with the school so as to understand their child's progress, understand the expectations the school has for their child and through the home environment help support their child to excel.
- In future parents and carers will be given the opportunity to get more involved in the aspire area of school life by sharing their expertise and ideas in order to help enrich learning.

Heads of Faculty/Leaders of learning

- Each head of faculty and leader of learner is responsible for aspire learners within their respective areas. This involves ensuring the right provision for 'aspire' learners, monitoring of the provision, tracking of pupil progress.
- Each head of faculty works closely with the schools 'Aspire' leader to ensure a personalised approach to each 'aspire' pupil.
- Termly 'data response' meetings are used to discuss pupil progress and ensure the very best outcomes for 'aspire' learners.

Aspire Leader

The Aspire Leader is responsible for:

- monitoring and tracking the progress of aspire pupils in line with Standards team procedures
- leading staff discussions regarding aspire pupils and raising awareness throughout the school to ensure the very best provision is in place for aspire pupils
- liaising with each HOF and LOL to ensure the very best provision for aspire pupils, completing robust quality assurance processes for aspire pupils
- giving advice and guidance to faculties on extension and enrichment opportunities and links to other agencies.

Teachers

- Teachers with aspire pupils in their classes are expected to discuss the planning for these pupils with their HOF/LOL to ensure their needs are met within the classes.
- Teachers are expected to use a variety of teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of aspire pupils (see the section on Teaching and Learning above).

- Teachers are expected to invite their aspire pupils to talk about their interests in the subject and to build on these interests in developing enrichment and extension opportunities.
- Provide opportunities to develop higher order literacy and numeracy skills
- Provide outstanding differentiation within their classroom to ensure challenge for all
- Provide a variety of feedback and ensure pupils are given opportunities to respond to the feedback and extend their thinking skills.

Governing Body

The governing body is provided with regular updates on the progress of aspire pupils through the schools Standards Committee and full Governing Body Meetings. To enable the governing body to be informed and as necessary provide challenge:

- it receives regular reports on pupil progress - including progress of aspire pupils
- in future the Governors' Annual Report to Parents will comment on the implementation of this policy.

Approved by:

Mr Huw Cripps, Headteacher

Mr Bill Davies, Chair of Governors

Date:

Appendix A – Road Maps for each Year Group



My Year 7 Learning Journey 12 things to achieve before 12



This is your learning journey for year 7. You can customise this yourself to ensure that the experiences work for you. The aim is to collect 12 stars before you turn 12 (or by the end of year 7)

You will have your own folder in Teams, and a Seesaw account which you can put your evidence in.

- ☐ Engage and complete the Seren star Open University challenge (4 stars for all 6 modules completed)
- ☐ Attend a trip to the theatre
- ☐ Get at least 5 'excelling' grades in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Get at least 5 'A' grades in attitude to learning in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Exceed your target grades in at least one subject
- ☐ Showcase your work in a student led conference
- ☐ Read a book from Miss Stickler's list
- ☐ Complete the Maths challenges in form time
- ☐ Take the lead in a lesson by teaching your class a starter, or showcasing your work to them
- ☐ Engage in a mindfulness workshop/course to focus on your own wellbeing
- ☐ Take part in an external writing competition
- ☐ Choose your own Aspire challenge



My Year 8 Learning Journey

13 things to achieve before 13



This is your learning journey for year 8. You can customise this yourself to ensure that the experiences work for you. The aim is to collect 13 stars before you turn 13 (or by the end of year 8)

You will have your own folder in Teams, and a Seesaw account which you can put your evidence in.

- ☐ Engage and complete the Seren star Open University challenge (4 stars for all 6 modules completed)
- ☐ Create your own book challenge
- ☐ Take part in a debate
- ☐ Attend a trip to the theatre
- ☐ Get at least 5 'excelling' in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Get at least 5 'A' in attitude to learning in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Exceed your target grades in at least one subject
- ☐ Showcase your work in a student led conference
- ☐ Read a book from Miss Stickler's list
- ☐ Complete the Maths challenges in form time
- ☐ Take the lead in a lesson by teaching your class a starter, or showcasing your work to them
- ☐ Engage in a mindfulness workshop/course to focus on your own wellbeing
- ☐ Visit a university
- ☐ Take part in the Oxford essay writing competition
- ☐ Choose your own Aspire challenge



My Year 9 Learning Journey

14 things to achieve before 14



This is your learning journey for year 9. You can customise this yourself to ensure that the experiences work for you. The aim is to collect 14 stars before you turn 14 (or by the end of year 9)

You will have your own folder in Teams, and a Seesaw account which you can put your evidence in.

- ☐ Engage and complete the Seren star Open University challenge (4 stars for all 6 modules completed)
- ☐ Take part in a debate
- ☐ Learn a language via the Open University website (3 stars)
- ☐ Speak a different language in a public setting (restaurant etc.)
- ☐ Attend a trip to the theatre
- ☐ Get at least 5 "A or A+" in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Get at least 5 "A" in attitude to learning in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Exceed your target grades in at least one subject
- ☐ Take part in the Social Science SEREN Award project (3 stars) bonus stars awarded for those who gain a 2.1 or above.
- ☐ Showcase your work in a student led conference
- ☐ Read a book from Miss Stickler's list
- ☐ Complete the Maths challenges in form time
- ☐ Take the lead in a lesson by teaching your class a starter, or showcasing your work to them
- ☐ Engage in a mindfulness workshop/course to focus on your own wellbeing
- ☐ Research a course at university that you are interested in studying
- ☐ Visit a university
- ☐ Choose your own Aspire challenge



My Year 10 Learning Journey

15 things to achieve before 15



This is your learning journey for year 10. You can customise this yourself to ensure that the experiences work for you. The aim is to collect 15 stars before you turn 15 (or by the end of year 10)

You will have your own folder in Teams, and a Seesaw account which you can put your evidence in.

- ☐ Engage and complete the Seren star Open University challenge (4 stars for all 6 modules completed)
- ☐ Take part in a debate
- ☐ Attend a trip to the theatre
- ☐ Get at least 5 'A or A' grades in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Get at least 5 'A' in attitude to learning in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Exceed your target grades in at least one subject
- ☐ Take part in the Social Science SEREN Award project (3 stars) bonus stars awarded for those who gain a 2.1 or above.
- ☐ Research a course at university that you are interested in studying
- ☐ Visit a university
- ☐ Engage in fortnightly 'Ted Talks'
- ☐ Showcase your work in a student led conference
- ☐ Take part in the 'don't judge a book' book swap
- ☐ Take the lead in a lesson by teaching your class a starter, or showcasing your work to them
- ☐ Engage in a mindfulness workshop/course to focus on your own wellbeing
- ☐ Enter the Oxbridge writing competition
- ☐ Mentor an Aspire student in KS3
- ☐ Choose your own Aspire challenge



My Year 11 Learning Journey

16 things to achieve before 16



This is your learning journey for year 10. You can customise this yourself to ensure that the experiences work for you. The aim is to collect 16 stars before you turn 16 (or by the end of year 11)

You will have your own folder in Teams, and a Seesaw account which you can put your evidence in.

- ☐ Take part in a debate
- ☐ Attend a trip to the theatre
- ☐ Get at least 5 'A or A*' grades in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Get at least 5 'A' grades in attitude to learning in your reports throughout the year
- ☐ Exceed your target grades in at least one subject
- ☐ Research a course at university that you are interested in studying and make contact with the university
- ☐ Visit a university (residential)
- ☐ Apply for a Summer school university programme
- ☐ Showcase your work in a student led conference
- ☐ Take part in the 'don't judge a book' book swap
- ☐ Take the lead in a lesson by teaching your class a starter, or showcasing your work to them
- ☐ Engage in a mindfulness workshop/course to focus on your own wellbeing
- ☐ Enter the Oxbridge writing competition
- ☐ Mentor an Aspire student in KS3
- ☐ Engage in fortnightly 'Ted Talks'
- ☐ Choose your own Aspire challenge