



Curriculum Policy

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1. Curriculum Overview

Orbis schools follow a skills-based curriculum designed around the individual needs of each pupil. We combine the Curriculum for Wales with elements from the Autism Progression Framework to support learners with ASD, and we deliver a trauma-informed strand to support pupils with SEMH and behavioural needs.

2. Curriculum Structure (Skills Areas)

Our curriculum focuses on the following areas, delivered through personalised learning opportunities:

- Essential Skills (Language, Literacy and Communication; Numeracy; Digital Competence)
- Science and Humanities
- Creative
- Health and Wellbeing
- ASPIRE (Autistic Support Promoting Independence, Relationships and Equality)
- FLIGHT (Friendships, Life Skills, Independence, Goals, Health, and Trauma)
- Skills for Life, Independent Living and Employment
- Appropriate qualifications and accreditation (where relevant)

All curriculum areas are underpinned by Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC), ensuring pupils apply skills in meaningful, real-world contexts.



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3. Skills Development (Autism Progression Framework)

Some skills are drawn from the Autism Progression Framework (Autism Education Trust), including:

- Listening and understanding
- Expressive communication and conversations
- Being with others and having positive relationships
- Group skills and play skills.
- Self-awareness and keeping healthy.
- Sensory processing and managing emotions.
- Problem solving
- Life skills (personal care and independent living)
- Work skills (motivation, engagement, routines, independent learning, and job-related skills)
- Community access (personal and road safety, public facilities, coping with change and transitions)

4. Curriculum Delivery

Delivery is structured across four education pathways to ensure learning is matched to pupil readiness and need. Pathways support progression from engagement and early learning, through independence and functional skills, to academic and vocational routes where appropriate. Pupils may move between pathways over time as their skills, confidence and readiness develop. Provision is adapted to meet individual communication, cognition, and emotional readiness. The education pathways support curriculum access and readiness, and where appropriate lead into the Qualifications Pathways model for accreditation and formal outcomes.

Pathway		Pathway Name	Starting Level where applicable	Exit Level	Qualifications	Typical Progression
Engagement Pathway		Pre-Formal / Experiential Learning	Below Entry 1 (Pre-Entry / Engagement Model)	Entry 1		Progression into independence and personal progress
1	Independence and Personal progress	Entry-Level Foundation Skills	Entry 1	Entry 2	ASDAN Lifeskills challenges Duke of Edinburgh	Progression to Entry 3 / Level 1 vocational or employability programmes, skills for work and independence
2	Skills for Work and Independence	Functional Skills & Employability	Entry 3	Level 1	ASDAN Short course English ASDAN short course Science ASDAN Careers and experiencing work short course ASDAN PEQ WJEC Entry pathways Maths Duke of Edinburgh	Progression to Level 2 academic or vocational routes / supported employment
3	Academic and Vocational Progression	GCSE / Level 2	Level 2	Level 2+	WJEC English GCSE WJEC Maths GCSE WJEC Maths Entry level WJEC Entry Level ICT WJEC Entry level Science Duke of Edinburgh	Progression to further education, apprenticeships, or employment

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5. Core curriculum entitlement

While every pupil follows an individual curriculum across an educational pathway, the school also provides a Core curriculum entitlement to ensure coherence, equity, and consistency across provision. All pupils will have planned opportunities to develop each entitlement area weekly, evidenced through planning, assessment, and recorded learning, in the following core areas:

- Communication
- Health and wellbeing, including emotional regulation.
- Independence and life skills
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Community and real-world learning

These entitlement areas are delivered in ways that are appropriate to individual needs and may include alternative communication systems, sensory regulation approaches, assistive technology and differentiated teaching strategies. Minimum expectations for curriculum exposure are embedded within individual curriculum plans and weekly planning.

6. Matching Curriculum/Education pathways to Individual Needs

A baseline assessment is completed when a pupil arrives at school. Progress in skills is tracked consistently from this starting point. A one-page curriculum is created using priorities from each pupil's EHCP/IDP and/or care plan. This is used to set targets and inform planning. Skills are selected from appropriate curriculum areas and progression steps aligned to each pupil's assessed needs and aspirations.

The curriculum is flexible to reflect individual needs. Not all pupils will access all curriculum areas all of the time. Balance is determined through the review process and the curriculum plans devised by staff to meet needs at different stages of development.

7. Assessment, Progression and Attainment

Progress is assessed using the achievement continuum, inspired by ASDAN and adapted for our setting. This enables small steps of progress to be recognised across lessons, social times and learning outside the classroom. Additional codes are used to support analysis: R (Refused), NE (Not yet encountered) and NA (Not applicable).

R	Refused	
1	Encounter	Encounter and embedding phase
2	Awareness	
3	Interest	
4	Supported participation	
5	Active involvement	
6	Development	Development and consolidation phase
7	Exploration	
8	Initiation	
9	Consolidation	
10	Mastered	Mastered

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Attainment is recognised through the mastery and application of curriculum skills, achievement of qualifications or accreditation where appropriate, and readiness for next steps such as reintegration, further education, training, or employment. Progress data is used to inform curriculum adaptations, qualification pathways, and destination planning.

8. Moderation and Quality Assurance

Moderation takes place termly within school and annually across schools to support consistency of judgements. Leaders use moderation outcomes to identify strengths, address variation and plan staff training and curriculum development as part of the school's quality assurance cycle.

This includes the review of achievement continuum judgements alongside evidence such as observations, work samples, and recorded learning. Moderation outcomes inform staff training, curriculum review, and ongoing improvement.

9. Topics and Curriculum Coverage

Topics are chosen to provide meaningful contexts for teaching and practicing priority skills across an education pathway. Topics are decided through pupil voice at whole-school level. Within topics, activities are differentiated and personalised. Where appropriate, a class or individual may follow a different topic linked to special interests.

Teachers review curriculum coverage across the year and plan additional enrichment days and school projects to ensure breadth and balance. Leadership teams complete termly curriculum reviews to ensure areas of learning are covered appropriately in line with pupil needs.

10. Interventions and Targeted Support

A range of interventions support pupil progress. These may include 1:1 and group provision such as occupational therapy programmes, speech and language programmes, therapeutic work aligned to EHCP/IDP priorities, and mental health support from a dedicated wellbeing lead.

Key interventions to support communication and social interaction may include:

- Intensive Interaction
- Zones of Regulation
- PECS and Makaton
- Talk About
- Attention and engagement groups.
- Lego therapy
- Drawing and Talking

11. Literacy and Numeracy

All schools are part of a Read Write Inc. trust plan. Where appropriate, pupils follow the RWI programme to develop phonics, reading fluency, comprehension, co-operative learning behaviours and writing confidence. Numeracy development is supported through White Rose Math's and Numicon, alongside other appropriate approaches.

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12. Skills for Life, Independent Living and Employment

Skills for life, independence and employability are taught through personalised programmes linked to each pupil's destination goals. These may include personal care, internet safety, household tasks, cooking, money management, time management, community access, and work experience opportunities.

13. Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing interventions focus on making healthy choices and developing physical and emotional wellbeing. Pupils may access gross motor activities such as sensory circuits, yoga, cycling, swimming, and community-based physical activities. Therapeutic approaches may include music, messy play, Sensology, aromatherapy, massage/story massage, TACPAC and mindfulness.

14. Learning Outside the Classroom (LOT)

Nearly all pupils take part in learning outside the classroom and in partnership with community stakeholders. This supports the development of life skills, wellbeing, and real-world learning. Activities may include community visits, volunteering, work experience, and access to local facilities.

15. Individual Timetables

Each pupil has a flexible timetable that can be adjusted to meet individual needs. This sits alongside the one-page curriculum and weekly planning documentation.

16. External Qualifications

Qualifications Pathways and Progression

The Qualifications Pathways table is maintained separately and updated termly as part of the school's quality assurance processes.

Where relevant, pupils work towards external qualifications and accreditation as part of their individual curriculum. Qualifications are selected based on individual need, readiness, aspirations, and destination planning. 'Readiness' is determined through engagement, emotional regulation, independence in learning routines and evidence of sustained progress over time.

To support coherence and progression, qualifications are organised into broad pathways which remain flexible and non-linear.

The school uses a Qualifications Pathways model to support appropriate entry, progression, and achievement. Pupils may move between pathways over time as their skills, confidence and readiness develop.

The pathways are:

- Engagement Pathway (Pre-formal / experiential learning): progression into independence and personal progress.
- Pathway 1 – Independence and Personal Progress (Entry-level foundation skills): progression towards Entry 3 / Level 1 vocational or employability programmes.
- Pathway 2 – Skills for Work and Independence (Functional skills and employability): progression towards Level 2 academic or vocational routes and/or supported employment.
- Pathway 3 – Academic and Vocational Progression (GCSE / Level 2): progression to further education, apprenticeships, or employment.

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As part of ongoing development, the school will continue to review and strengthen qualifications provision through:

- Exploration of Essential Skills Wales and how these can be embedded into pathways.
- Further exploration of the new curriculum offering qualifications, including Foundation National

Qualifications;

- Upskilling staff in qualifications and specifications.
- Mapping qualifications and specifications against current programmes (e.g., white rose math's).
- Relaunching the Duke of Edinburgh programme.

17. Equality Impact Statement

All relevant persons are required to comply with this policy and must demonstrate sensitivity and competence in relation to Age, Disability Gender reassignment, Marriage and Civil partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation. If you, or any other groups, believe you are disadvantaged by this policy please contact the Regional Manager for the service.

Orbis will then actively respond to the enquiry.

Review Date: August 2027

Signature:  (Director of Education)

Orbis is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people in our care and expects all staff to share this commitment. This means that we have up to date Safeguarding & associated policies and procedures in place. All staff must ensure that they are aware of these policies and procedures.

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