

Pupil Grouping for Learning Policy

Llanishen High School

This document contains the specific policy and associated information relating to pupil grouping for learning at Llanishen High School



PUPIL GROUPING FOR LEARNING

CONTEXT

At Llanishen High School we strive for the best outcomes for all pupils and aim to identify and nurture each pupil's talents and skills. This is reflected in the school mission statement 'We believe that all can succeed'. Pupils are grouped for learning to ensure they are challenged and supported in the most effective way, to enable them to achieve their maximum potential; to challenge and stimulate them and to create a balanced, well rounded individual, valuing academic, interpersonal, sporting and creative attributes equally.

AIMS

Pupil Grouping for Learning should reflect the student's ability to assimilate new work and to work with one another to make lasting progress. Students should follow pathways which offer equality of opportunity within groups to enable them to fulfil their maximum potential.

SPECIFIC GROUPINGS

Year 7

- When pupils transfer into Year 7 they are organised by their Year Team Leader (YTL) into mixed ability form groups. Each comprises approximately 28-30 pupils. This grouping is determined by a number of factors including an equal distribution of pupils from our feeder Primary Schools and an equal distribution by gender and ability. Relevant information is made available to Year Team Leaders via the LA transfer forms which include teacher assessment and raw scores, along with relevant Additional Learning Needs (ALN) data. Note is also taken of the verbal guidance given by our Primary colleagues regarding social and behavioural issues during scheduled meetings between the YTL and the year 6 staff.
- The rationale behind these inclusive form groups is to attain better pupil progress and positive class dynamics overall. These groups provide a wide range of pupil background and characteristics in keeping with a large inclusive comprehensive school.
- When creating these mixed ability groups consideration and provision is also made to maximise ALN support and support for hearing-impaired pupils and pupils with autism.
- Pupils are taught in these mixed ability groups throughout Year 7. The exception to this is Maths, where pupils are grouped into broad ability bands at the end of the Autumn Term. The rationale behind this is that a lot of topics in Mathematics are not accessible to some learners, and although ample differentiation may take place, it is impossible to differentiate effectively with mixed ability setting.
- Mixed ability forms are broken down into smaller groups where health and safety and resources feature, for example in subjects such as DT and PE.
- Year 7 nurture groups are created, where cohort appropriate. These smaller groups concentrate on gaining proficient literacy and numeracy levels in order to gain access to the mainstream curriculum. Nurture group pupils are identified by the National Reading Test (NRT) data, primary school performance discussions and data, and tests conducted by LHS staff. These nurture groups continue into year 8 where it is felt appropriate.

Setting at Key Stages 3 and 4

- The number of pupils in the class has to be appropriate to the physical environment of the classroom or teaching area in relation to the pupils' work space, resources (such as computers, work benches etc.) and health and safety. It should also allow for a range of engaging teaching methodologies that provide an effective learning environment.
- All teaching colleagues should be allocated a fair balance of ability sets across the Key Stages in order to allow for their professional development and in the context of performance management to demonstrate their practice in teaching pupils with different abilities.
- As far as possible there should be an equal balance of gender to reflect the mixed nature of our school community.
- At Key Stage 4 there are four possible learning pathways. Each provides a different type of curriculum and offers a wide range of choices. Pupils are advised which pathway is best suited to their particular abilities, interests and possible future careers. (See KS4 Learning Pathways Booklet).
- Pupils should be positively set according to their ability and not by behaviour. School data, prior achievement levels and Fischer Family Trust Data targets are used in setting. This ensures that pupils of all abilities have access to teacher time and a properly differentiated curriculum.
- Pupils with behavioural issues are set as appropriate to their ability in order to challenge them. Pupils with behavioural difficulties should not all be placed in the same group.
- Pupils with identified ALN are provided with support to allow them access to an appropriate curriculum. Arrangements are made to meet the needs of individual pupils that include providing support teaching in some subjects and access to an extensive programme of support interventions delivered in withdrawal sessions by trained teaching assistants and specialist teachers.
- Ability setting at Key Stage 4 is determined by Key Stage 3 assessment data, KS4 targets and teacher recommendation.
- The overall class dynamics of each group needs to be carefully analysed and the Year Team leader (YTL) must be consulted to quality assure the process. This minimises any inappropriate dynamics in the groups and maximises learning.

The procedures for setting:

1. Consultation between subject leaders, YTLs and subject staff on student grouping developed within departments and faculties. Subject leaders are responsible for the final setting of subject groups.
 2. Lists of proposed pupil groups are provided by subject leaders to Year Team Leaders and the ALN departments who can then advise on the social suitability of groupings and strategies for teaching certain groups/individuals before the final settings are completed.
 3. Subject leaders then work with the person responsible for creating the timetable to allocate the appropriate staff to the appropriate group.
 4. After this consultation, subject leaders finalise the student groups and the lists are submitted to the pupil support staff. Deadlines for this process are in the school calendar.
- Where pupils have to be placed in the same groupings for more than one subject for timetabling reasons,, there must be full consultation between the Subject and Curriculum Leaders concerned and consideration of the needs of each subject and learner taken into account.

- Careful consideration must also be given to the structure of the class when dividing students into smaller groups and/or individual seating plans. Class teachers must utilise all available prior data and recommended ALN strategies (this information is set out in the individual student provision maps) to maximise the learning of the group.
- In accordance with best practice pupil groups are reviewed regularly (at the end of each half term or after identified assessment tasks) to assess the need for group alterations.