

Ysgol Acrefair Curriculum Rationale



About Ysgol Acrefair

We are a very happy, caring and forward-looking primary school situated between Llangollen and Wrexham in North Wales. We use our beautiful learning environment to provide exciting, engaging and child focussed learning both indoors and outdoors, with strong links with our local community. We are proud of our local Welsh history, culture and language and enjoy developing our understanding of 'Cynefin' and our place in modern Wales.

We explore, inquire and celebrate!

Our core values of *Aspire, Inspire, Nurture and Respect* run through everything we do.

We have high expectations of and for the children in our care and aim to provide them with the best possible start to their school lives.

We actively foster close partnerships between home, school and community, encouraging all to be involved in the many aspects of school life.

At Ysgol Acrefair:
Every Child Matters, Every Day Counts



Our Core Values

At Ysgol Acrefair, we have four 'Core Values' which underpin all that we do. Our values were formed in collaboration with our school community. They are carefully linked to the Four Purposes which are outlined in the Curriculum for Wales. Our Core Values are demonstrated through our curriculum and all of the experiences that children have as part of our school community.

Aspire

Our Core Value '**Aspire**' promotes opportunities for all children to become ambitious, capable learners.

We are aspirational for all of the children who attend Ysgol Acrefair and endeavour to ensure that our curriculum enables all children to enjoy and achieve their full potential.

Inspire

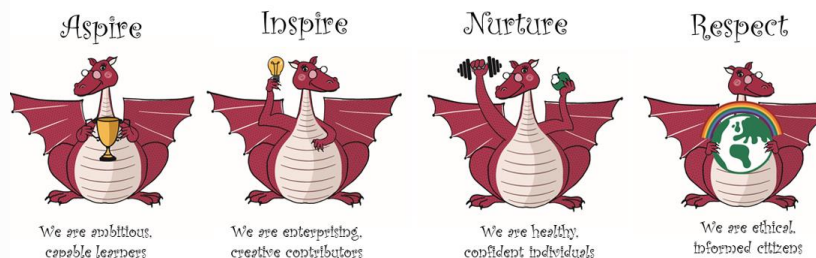
We will plan for learning opportunities which engage and inspire our children. Meaningful and purposeful learning will enable our children at Ysgol Acrefair to become enterprising and creative contributors.

Nurture

By being part of a nurturing environment and learning the importance of being part of a caring community we will enable our children at Ysgol Acrefair to become healthy, confident individuals.

Respect

Developing the Core Value of Respect will enable our children at Ysgol Acrefair to become ethical and informed citizens



Developing our Vision for the Acrefair Curriculum



Curriculum for Wales 2022

The Curriculum for Wales is designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge required to thrive in modern society. It is focused on four major purposes: creating ambitious, capable learners; enabling young people to be ethical, informed citizens; helping students become healthy, confident individuals; and encouraging creativity and innovation.

This curriculum has been developed with thorough research, consultations with experts, and feedback from stakeholders. It aims to create a personalized learning environment suited to each student's capabilities, interests and aspirations.

For your children, this change means that they will be exposed to different learning experiences in a more engaging and creative approach. They will be encouraged to take ownership of their learning and become active participants instead of passive recipients. The new curriculum offers various learning pathways, allowing them to pursue their interests.

At our school, we have begun embracing the changes, and since the publication of the 'Successful Futures Report' (2015) which recommended the review of the Welsh National Curriculum, we have been busy 'Reimagining the Curriculum' to ensure that the Acrefair Curriculum benefits each and every child's academic and personal development. We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment to help your child reach their full potential. The following pages explain how we have developed the 'Acrefair Curriculum' to ensure that this happens.

Reimagining the Curriculum



As part of our work on 'Re-imagining the Curriculum' we asked ourselves, and our school community the following question:

Over the next seven years, I will be at Ysgol Acrefair more than any other place.

What will I experience whilst I am here?

Who will I be, by the time I leave here?

The Four Purposes

The Curriculum for Wales is underpinned by the Four Purposes.

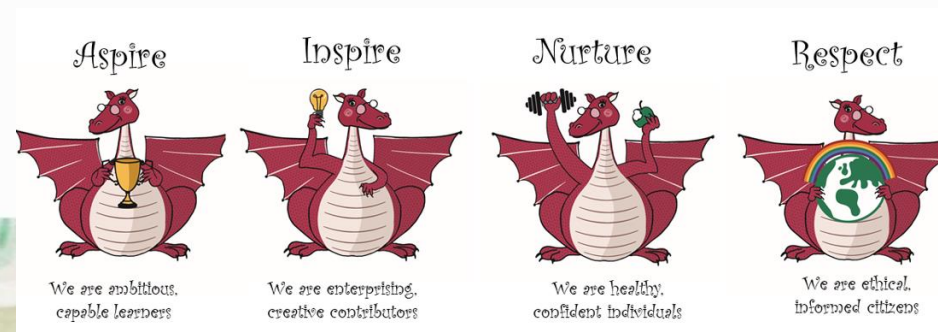
These set out a common mission for teachers and leaders throughout schools in Wales.

In Ysgol Acrefair, the four purposes are closely linked to our school values.

Children throughout the school are given opportunities to develop the skills necessary to realise the four purposes.

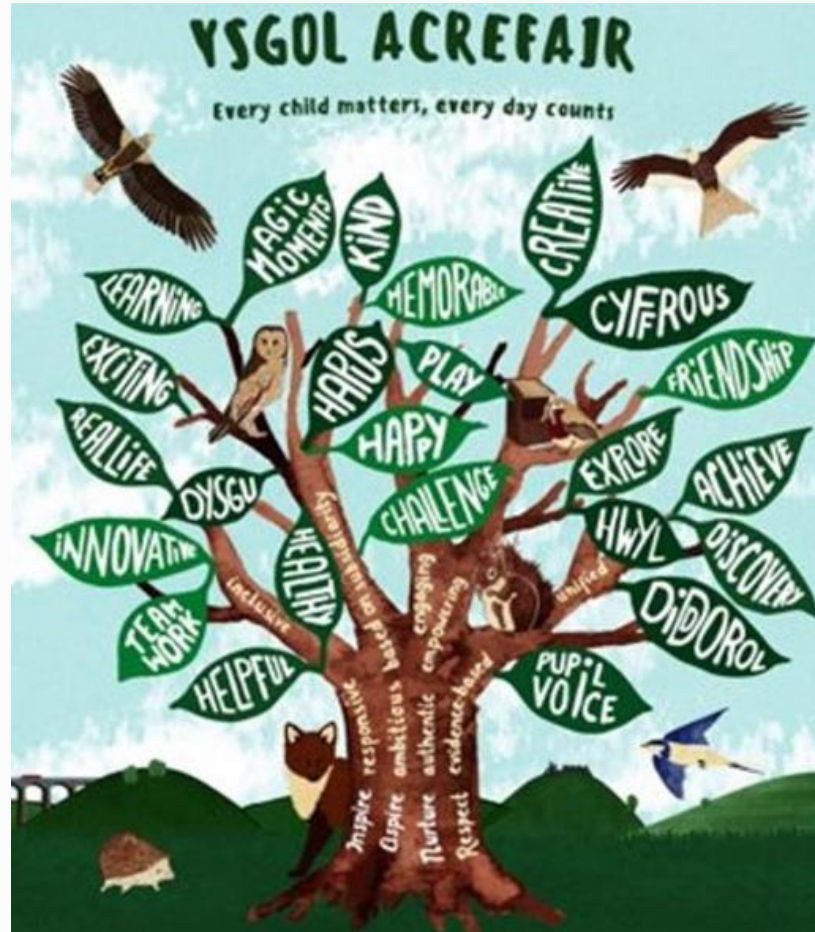
More information about the Four Purposes can be found on our school website. Follow the link below:

[Four Purposes of the Curriculum - Ysgol Acrefair, Wrexham \(acrefair-pri.wrexham.sch.uk\)](http://acrefair-pri.wrexham.sch.uk)



Our Vision for the Acrefair Curriculum

Working with the pupils on our School Council, we created our 'Curriculum Tree' which shows, from the roots up, what children experience when they are in our school.



Building on the Vision

We then built upon this vision and developed the following 'rationale' for a Curriculum for Acrefair which:

- puts the learner and their knowledge and understanding of the world that they are citizens in, at the heart of the learning and teaching
- promotes opportunities for children to experience 'magic moments'- those memorable events which help foster a love for learning
- sets out a road map with 'destinations' that we feel is important for the children to visit along the way – our aim is to ensure that we maintain a balance between pupil voice and the rigour necessary to ensure coverage of each of statement of what matters/descriptions of learning set out in the Curriculum for Wales 2022
- provides learners with opportunities to guide their own learning and take the direction that they choose; supported by pedagogy which encourages and promotes this
- is based around 'rich tasks' where the cross curricular responsibilities are developed and where learners have opportunities to make links between the different areas of the curriculum
- is underpinned by the UNCRC
- promotes authentic links to our local area and Wales and how what we are learning impacts upon our learners and their lives
- is progressive and enables learners to utilise the knowledge, understanding and skills that they developed in the previous phase in their current learning experience
- encourages inquiry-based learning.



Curriculum Design

Planning the Content of Our Curriculum



Class Organisation- 'The Phases in our Learning Journey'

In the knowledge that children will have different needs, depending on their developmental stage, we divided the school into three phases (based on the Progression Steps from the Curriculum for Wales). staff throughout the school work together in phases, as outlined below. The teachers in each phase work closely together to plan and deliver exciting and engaging learning experiences for the children. We then come together as a whole school team to ensure continuity and progression between each phase in the children's learning journey.



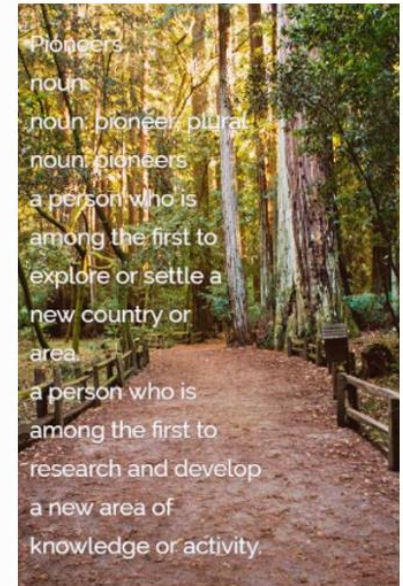
Explorers

Nursery, Reception



Adventurers

Year 1, 2 and 3



Pioneers

Years 4, 5 and 6

A vertical watercolor painting on the left side of the slide. It depicts a landscape with rolling green hills, a blue sky with light clouds, and a foreground with various green and brown tones, suggesting a field or garden. The style is soft and artistic.

Curriculum Design: Planning the content of our curriculum

When choosing topics, themes and inquiry questions, teachers endeavour to ensure that they are:

- Enabling children to develop an appreciation of sustainable development and the challenges facing humanity
- Providing opportunities to develop awareness of emerging technological advances
- Supporting and challenging children so that they are prepared to confidently meet the demands of working in uncertain situations, as changing local, national and global contexts result in new challenges and opportunities for success
- Allowing children to have the space to generate creative ideas and to critically evaluate alternatives – in an ever-changing world, flexibility and the ability to develop more ideas will enable our children to consider a wider range of alternative solutions when things change
- Giving children the opportunities to build their resilience and develop strategies which will help them manage their well-being – they should be encountering experiences where they can respond positively in the face of challenge, uncertainty or failure
- Enabling children to learn to work effectively with others, valuing the different contributions they and others make – they should also begin to recognise the limitations of their own work and those of others as they build an understanding of how different people play different roles within a team.

Our Core Offer

The Curriculum for Wales is made up of six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs). Sometimes it is necessary to teach skills within the AoLEs discretely (as subject disciplines). However, wherever possible we adopt an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach where children utilise skills from across the AoLEs as they are learning.

For each AoLE we have developed a 'Core Offer' which outlines some of the key experiences children will have within this area during their time at Ysgol Acrefair. Creating this Core Offer enables us to ensure that there is continuity between classes and progression the development of skills between each year group and phase.

This can be seen on the one page policy for each Area of Learning and Experience.

The Power of Pupil Voice- Our White Space

Teachers throughout the school work collaboratively to plan and deliver a curriculum which is progressive, challenging and ensures a broad and balanced range of opportunities.

This is enhanced through the Power of Pupil Voice where children have the opportunity to influence the direction of their learning journey and the opportunities that they have within the 'frame' provided by the teacher.

Planning is responsive to the needs and interests of the learner; it is also responsive to current events and affairs enabling children to develop an understanding of the world in which they live.



Curriculum Design: Planning the content of our curriculum

Cross- Curricular Responsibilities

Literacy, numeracy and digital competence are mandatory, cross curricular skills within Curriculum for Wales.

We ensure the development of these skills across all curriculum areas.

We also ensure progression within these skills in each phase throughout the school.

Cross Cutting Themes

Our curriculum design incorporates opportunities for learning and consideration of cross-cutting elements. These allow learners to consider.

- Local, national and international contexts
- Developing understanding of relationships and sexuality education (RSE)
- Human rights education and including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Diversity
- Careers and work-related experiences

Integral Skills

In all of their learning experiences, children are given opportunities to develop the following integral skills:

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Personal effectiveness
- Planning and organising



Curriculum Design: Planning the content of our curriculum

Mandatory Elements of Curriculum

The following elements will be a mandatory part of our school curriculum:

- Religion and Values Education (RVE)
- Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)- Our school's RSE follows the code set out by Welsh Government
- Welsh
- English

Pedagogy: Planning the delivery of the Ysgol Acrefair Curriculum





The decisions that we made about pedagogy and teaching are context and purpose specific. We adapt our approaches to suit the needs of learners and learning environment which meets their needs and enables them to be 'the best they can be'. The pedagogical approaches that can be observed throughout the school are identified on the attached document and explained below:

Good teaching and learning challenges all learner by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting high but achievable expectations.

In our classrooms we:

- Have high expectations of the children
- Give opportunities for children to persevere and develop resilience
- Praise and celebrate the effort that has been made

Good teaching and learning means employing a blend of approaches, including direct teaching.

The correct balance of teacher led learning and pupil led learning is likely to secure the greatest progress for learners. We succeed when we create a bridge between the two!

Our blend of approaches includes:

- Emphasis on inquiry-based learning
- Direct teaching
- Scaffolds to support independence
- Pupil Constructed Learning
- Inquiry Based Learning
- Learning through exploration, experience and play



The decisions that we made about pedagogy and teaching are context and purpose specific. We adapt our approaches to suit the needs of learners and learning environment which meets their needs and enables them to be 'the best they can be'. The pedagogical approaches that can be observed throughout the school are identified on the attached document and explained below:

Good teaching and learning challenges all learner by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting high but achievable expectations.

In our classrooms we:

- Have high expectations of the children
- Give opportunities for children to persevere and develop resilience
- Praise and celebrate the effort that has been made

Good teaching and learning means employing a blend of approaches, including direct teaching.

The correct balance of teacher led learning and pupil led learning is likely to secure the greatest progress for learners. We succeed when we create a bridge between the two!

Our blend of approaches includes:

- Emphasis on inquiry-based learning
- Direct teaching
- Scaffolds to support independence
- Pupil Constructed Learning
- Inquiry Based Learning
- Learning through exploration, experience and play



Good teaching and learning means employing a blend of approaches including those that promote problem solving and critical thinking.

For effective learning, pupils need an open mind and a questioning disposition that embraces uncertainty. Creative thinking skills; those which enable pupils to imagine and improvise, are important life skills. Real-life problems, or those which grow out of learners' own interests, will motivate learners in working towards answers to problems across all areas of learning. Pupils need to be supported towards independence in learning critical thinking skills, giving them the means to plan, carry out, review investigations and draw conclusions from their work. They need to do this in all areas of learning.

Good teaching and learning sets tasks and selects resources that build on previous knowledge and experience, and engage interest.

Children and young people arrive at school with different aspirations, interests and experiences, and so will approach learning in their own ways. Therefore, a precise understanding of prior learning is a pre-requisite for effective progress. A one-size-fits-all approach to learning will not meet this wide range of needs; consequently, learning needs to be varied to provide high challenge for all learners.

Good teaching and learning creates authentic contexts for learning.

It is important that children and young people see the relevance in their learning to the world beyond the school gates, and that opportunities are taken to forge links to that world. Authentic contexts also engage and inspire learners. Visits and visitors can help to bring abstract learning to life. Also, ICT provides immense possibilities to access resources, explore sources and engage with real-life issues. Classroom skills can be applied in school-based clubs and the clubs can also provide opportunities for new skills, including leadership.

Good teaching and learning means employing assessment for learning principles.

Assessment for learning provides practitioners with insight into the effectiveness of learning. It involves providing regular and meaningful feedback and adapting teaching and materials to meet the needs of individuals. It also helps learners raise standards and nurture ambition: learning can be particularly powerful when learners are given feedback/feed-forward that helps them to think through the issues and provides them with guidance on next steps. Similarly, peer collaboration and feedback/feed-forward can provide a safe environment to articulate and test ideas.

Good teaching and learning ranges within and across Areas of Learning and Experience.

A key learning skill is the ability to make connections and transfer knowledge, skills and understanding across different contexts to address unfamiliar problems. High-quality teaching should promote connections and unity within and between the Areas of Learning and Experience. The teacher needs to balance structure and progression with responsiveness to new opportunities, including those stimulated by pupil voice.



Good teaching and learning involve cross-curriculum responsibilities: literacy, numeracy and digital competence.

Good teaching and learning regularly involves cross-curriculum experiences. This is essential for literacy, numeracy and digital competence (DC), where there should be rich and relevant opportunities to practise them and develop independent use of them. The challenge for teaching posed by cross-curriculum learning will be to maintain the focus on these within teaching and learning so that their application becomes natural and authentic rather than an add-on. The three frameworks – Literacy, Numeracy and DC – should be used as key documents that support the principles set out below. Home learning is an additional environment where skills can be deepened. Teachers should seek to maximise the potential of home learning, and reduce the barriers to its use for all pupils.

Good teaching and learning encourages children and young people to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

Learners need to become involved in planning their own learning, through discussions about what they have achieved and how they can best be supported to make further progress. They need a structured process to become independent! Learners need to think strategically and use a structure (for example planning, developing, reviewing), to achieve a goal or solve a problem. Learners also need to be able to stand back and observe their own process of learning, and identify how it can be improved, developing learning-to-learn awareness and skills.

Good teaching and learning supports social and emotional development and positive relationships.

The imperative for pupils to be emotionally secure is a pre-requisite for effective learning. The explicit focus on the positive ethos of the class environment is a key feature of this. Beyond this, teachers need to be sensitive and responsive to pupils' needs. Additionally, approaches that support learners' social and emotional wellbeing provide opportunities for the development of emotional intelligence and metacognition. Learners can thus reflect on their own learning and understand the positive impact that they might have on the learning of others.

Good teaching and learning encourages collaboration.

This principle focuses on the positive effects of peer learning on motivation, problem solving and achievement. In this context, feedback/feed-forward from peers is particularly powerful.

Innovation

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”. -Ralph Waldo Emerson

As a school we aim to **nurture** and develop the creativity of learners so that they achieve their potential, grow as well rounded individuals and are prepared with skills for life. We seek to ensure that in a rapidly changing world, the children in our school, are able to meet the needs of our economy and to thrive within the increasingly challenging environment of day to day life.

We strive to be forward-thinking, outward-facing and innovative in our approach to teaching and learning. We utilise research-based approaches within our practice, and engage with action research in order to continuously improve our learning environment.

Lead Creative School

We believe that creativity is essential to the success and fulfilment of young people; that it is the basis of life-long learning, and that this begins in our school.

The aim of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme is to improve outcomes for children, in literacy and maths, as well as other subjects, through engagement with the arts and creative approaches to teaching and learning. Our team strive to deliver a curriculum which is engaging and motivating for the children that we teach. We hope to provide children with opportunities which help them to develop skills across the curriculum and the skills that they need to understand the world around them.

Our core values are reflected in the way that we approach teaching and learning and in the skills that we aim for our children to develop.



Ensuring Pupil Progress

Steps of Progress

All staff within Ysgol Acrefair take an active role in contributing to and supporting Curriculum Design within the school, ensuring appropriate coverage of the Areas of Learning and Experience and appropriate continuity and progression within each of the three phases and between each of the phases too. This helps us to support all children along the learning continuum as they move between different groups, year groups and settings.

The Principles of Progression in our school are:

- Increasing breadth and depth of knowledge
- Deepening understanding of the ideas and disciplines within each of the AoLEs
- Refinement and growing sophistication in the use and application of skills
- Making connections and transferring learning into new contexts
- Increasing effectiveness

Progression is supported by the descriptions of learning in each AoLE which provide guidance on how learners should progress within each statement of What Matters.



Assessment

We utilise various assessment strategies which will enable us to develop a holistic picture of each pupil in our school.

We prioritise understanding each pupils' strengths, the ways in which they learn and their areas for development in order to inform the next steps in teaching and learning and to enable each individual to make progress at an appropriate pace, ensuring that they are supported and challenged accordingly.

We value ongoing professional dialogue between members of our Team who all work together to support and ensure effective pupil progress.

Our assessments support individual learner progression on an ongoing, day to day basis (Assessment for Learning); identifying, capturing and reflecting on individual learner progress over time; and understanding group progress in order to reflect on practise.

The wellbeing of pupils is an integral part of our processes, recognising the needs of individuals, while also supporting continuity and progression in their learning. The understanding of each individual pupil gained from our assessment strategies is crucial in supporting this process.

See Assessment Rationale



Inclusion at Ysgol Acrefair

We utilise various assessment strategies which will enable us to develop a holistic picture of each pupil in our school.

We prioritise understanding each pupils' strengths, the ways in which they learn and their areas for development in order to inform the next steps in teaching and learning and to enable each individual to make progress at an appropriate pace, ensuring that they are supported and challenged accordingly.

We value ongoing professional dialogue between members of our Team who all work together to support and ensure effective pupil progress.

Our assessments support individual learner progression on an ongoing, day to day basis (Assessment for Learning); identifying, capturing and reflecting on individual learner progress over time; and understanding group progress in order to reflect on practise.

The wellbeing of pupils is an integral part of our processes, recognising the needs of individuals, while also supporting continuity and progression in their learning. The understanding of each individual pupil gained from our assessment strategies is crucial in supporting this process.

Inclusion at Ysgol Acrefair

Universal Provision

The term 'Universal Provision' refers to the range of strategies and differentiation which is available to all learners in a class. This may include reasonable adjustments to provision to ensure that the needs of all learners are met.

Targeted Universal Provision

Where a pupil needs additional support, they may receive 'Targeted Provision', within which they will have personalised 'Small Steps Targets' which they have additional support to work towards inside and sometimes outside of the classroom. Targeted Universal Provision involves time-limited interventions which are delivered by teachers and/or teaching assistants who have received additional support in these areas.

ALN Determination

Sometimes a pupil will need support which exceeds 'Targeted Universal Provision'. They may need a School Individual Development Plan or a Local Authority Individual Development Plan (IDP). In this case, the school works closely with Inclusion Services and any other agencies who are involved in ensuring that a pupil's needs are fully met within the school environment, to write the IDP and to ensure that the appropriate time and resource are available to ensure that the pupil can achieve their full potential within our school.



Inclusion at Ysgol Acrefair

We believe in the importance of community cohesion, which focusses on building a relationship between our school, local community and wider society. We seek to provide opportunities for people to interact and work together, developing positive relationships and making a contribution to our community. Our aim is to develop a common vision and shared value based on equality, diversity and tolerance, ensuring a sense of belonging for everyone who is involved in our school.

Parents and Carers

At Ysgol Acrefair we pride ourselves on the strong relationships we have with our parents and carers.

School Governors

At Ysgol Acrefair we have a strong Governing body.

Staff and Governors work as a team. As a team we ensure the school provides a good quality education for all pupils. Raising educational standards in school is a key priority.

Kiddies World

Kiddies World Playgroup is based on our school campus. It provides provision for children aged 2 years and above. Kiddies World has strong links with our school and this enables the transition from playgroup to school to run as smoothly as possible.



Building Learning Powers at Ysgol Acrefair

Building learning powers is an approach that focuses on developing children's ability to learn effectively and independently. It emphasizes the importance of developing a range of skills, attitudes, and habits that promote learning and enable students to become successful learners.

Research has shown that building learning powers can have a significant impact on children's learning outcomes. For example, a study by the Education Endowment Foundation found that teaching students to develop their learning habits and attitudes had a positive effect on academic achievement across a range of subjects.

Some strategies for implementing a learning powers approach in the classroom include:

1. Modeling learning powers yourself as a teacher and explicitly teaching them to students.
2. Incorporating opportunities for students to practice and develop their learning powers into everyday classroom activities.
3. Providing feedback and support to help students reflect on and improve their learning powers.
4. Encouraging collaboration and teamwork to develop reciprocal learning powers.

Overall, building learning powers is an approach that can help children become more effective, confident, and independent learners. By developing these skills and attitudes, students are better equipped to succeed academically and in life more generally.

A vertical watercolor illustration on the left side of the page. It depicts a landscape with rolling green hills, a winding river, and a mountain peak in the background under a blue sky with light clouds. The style is soft and painterly.

Our Learning Powers

Captain Confidence

Mighty Motivation

Commander Concentration

Chief Cooperation

Professor Perseverance

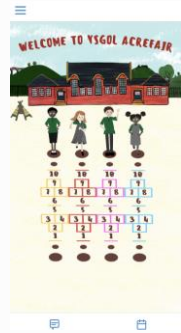
Detective Curiosity

Agent Imagination

Home/School Communication

Class teachers are available to speak to at the end of each school day, or you may contact the office should you wish to arrange an appointment for a meeting.

We recommend downloading the following apps to keep up to date with ongoing information about life in school.



Acrefair School App

Available free on the App Store, our school app is where we share whole school information. It also has a calendar which can be synced with your own calendar to keep aware of upcoming dates. These dates are also available on the school website.



Seesaw Family App

This is the place where your child's class teacher will share examples of their work and some of the adventures from their school day. It's where the class teacher will also post messages that are just for your child's class.



@YsgolAcrefair Twitter

Keep up to date with some of the exciting things that other classes have been up to; place's we've been, exciting projects and more are shared regularly on Twitter.

Important: If you need to report a pupil absence you should always contact the school office.

[Return to Main Menu](#)