



Blended Learning Guidance

June 2020

Blended Learning Guidance

"**Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered**. Pupils can learn through remote teaching. Ensuring the elements of effective teaching are present – for example clear explanations, scaffolding and feedback – is more important than how or when they are provided. There was no clear difference between teaching in real time ("synchronous teaching") and alternatives ("asynchronous teaching"). For example, teachers might explain a new idea live or in a pre-recorded video. But what matters most is whether the explanation builds clearly on pupils' prior learning or how pupils' understanding is subsequently assessed."

Rapid evidence assessment - Distance learning EEF, April 2020

Introduction

On 3 June 2020, the Minister for Education announced that schools would increase operations from 29 June 2020 so that all learners have the opportunity to 'check in, catch up and prepare for summer and September'.

As more learners return to the physical school environment, practitioners will be operating in a very different context. This will continue for the foreseeable future: providing a combination of face to face learning with remote learning – a blended learning approach. Schools and settings will have to develop new learning and approaches to meet the needs of their learners in response to the pandemic. In so doing, practitioners can consider the purposes of learning and weigh up their priorities; flexibly drawing on a wide range of curriculum guidance to support them in this work.

https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-guidance-learning-over-summer-term

Aims

Through this guidance CSC aims to:

- Support the well-being of practitioners in the region through providing research informed guidance on what works in blended learning
- Support school leaders and practitioners to identify the opportunities and challenges of blended learning through strategic questions for consideration
- Provide clear definitions of the terminology associated with blended learning so that the system is speaking the same language
- Provide support for pedagogy and learning to promote a clear vision and strategy within blended learning provision and practice

CSC are able to provide support to schools in blended learning.

Challenge advisers:

- Signpost schools to available resources
- Signpost schools to professional learning available in supporting blended learning
- Provide more detailed support or guidance to schools as required

Strategic advisers:

- Signpost schools to available resources
- Develop professional learning for schools around blended learning
- Provide support to particular phases, departments or practitioners as required in planning for implementing blended learning

Information and resources to support schools with blended learning have been collated and are available on Cronfa. Please click <u>here</u>.

Shared Language

In order for practitioners to plan for and implement high quality blended learning for all learners, and for this be communicated effectively to both pupils and parents, there needs to be a shared language that is known and understood by all.

Blended learning: an approach to learning that combines face-to-face, distance, digital and online learning experiences. The face-to-face learning that takes place should complement the other aspects by using the strengths of each mode of delivery.

Distance learning: allows learning experiences to happen from just about anywhere and may or may not involve a digital device and internet connection. This supports the well-being of all learners, including a choice of learning opportunities for social, physical, emotional development and tasks to promote their resilience. It allows individuals to learn when and where it is more convenient for them. Equitable distance learning does not have to mirror learning as it normally does in school.

Digital learning: any instructional practice that effectively uses technology to strengthen a learner's learning experience. Additionally, digital learning can be used for professional learning opportunities for teachers and to provide personalised learning experiences for learners.

Online learning: education that takes place over the internet. It is often referred to as e-learning among other terms. However, online learning is just one type of "distance learning".

Synchronous learning: teaching where the teacher is present at the same time as the learner(s). This can take place face-to-face or online.

Asynchronous learning: where teaching materials are provided and learners work through them in their own time. This could include a variety of media, including audio and video clips. WG have provided guidance on the use of live streaming.

https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/online-safety/live-streaming-safeguarding-principles-and-practice-for-education-practitioners

Pedagogy: Pedagogy is about more than 'teaching' in the narrow sense of methods used in the classroom. It represents the considered selection of those methods in light of the purposes of the curriculum and the needs and developmental stage of the children and young people. It combines theoretical and practical knowledge and skills with fine judgement about what is required to promote effective learning in particular contexts. It lies at the heart of what it means to be an excellent teacher (Successful Futures, 2015).

Direct instruction (DI): a model for teaching that emphasises well-developed and carefully planned lessons designed around small learning increments and clearly defined and prescribed teaching tasks.

Direct teaching: giving carefully considered explanation, questioning, worked examples, modelling, scaffolding, structured discussion and feedback.

Modelling: providing clear explanation, demonstration and/or and exemplification, often including an explicit narration of thoughts, processes or procedures. Often uses, 'I do, we do, you do'.

Scaffolding: providing structures of support in the early stages of new learning. Scaffolds are temporary and are gradually withdrawn as, through assessment for learning, it is identified that the learner is become more competent and confident in the learning. Scaffolds are reintroduced as appropriate.

Curriculum: includes all the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of agreed purposes of education.

Knowledge: the acquisition of facts, information and skills through experience or education; theoretical or practical understanding of a discipline.

Skills: the ability to undertake activities that require application of knowledge, increasing in expertise and competence.

Experiences: the combination of knowledge and skills in a learning environment to further progress learners towards curriculum purposes.

Disciplinary: teaching relating solely to a specific subject discipline.

Interdisciplinary: a method, or set of methods, used to teach a unit across different subject disciplines.

Independent learning: learners working alone on tasks.

Enquiry based learning: a form of active learning that starts by posing questions, problems or scenarios. It contrasts with traditional education, which generally relies on the teacher presenting facts and his or her knowledge about the subject.

Project based learning: learner centred pedagogy that involves a dynamic classroom approach in which it is believed that learners acquire a deeper knowledge through active exploration of real-world challenges and problems.

Strategic Questions:

- Do all staff have a clear and agreed understanding of the terminology associated with blended learning?
- How much face-to-face teacher contact will a learner experience each week?
- What is the school policy for synchronous and asynchronous learning?
- What is the pedagogical vision of the school?
- What is the instructional model for learners?
- What are the opportunities and challenges for specific groups of learners?
- How can learning be best personalised?

Principles

Blended learning will look different in each school context. Operational decisions will combine with a school's vision for pedagogy to inform practical decisions.

As the school develops its approach it will likely be refined and become iterative as the school makes adjustments in line with their learning of what works in their context.

All blended learning will however share a number of common principles.

Blended learning should:

- Start with the curriculum and school vision for learning and teaching what, why and how we teach.
- Consider the implications for staff and learner well-being when making decisions
- Ensure continued and effective educational provision for ALL learners, providing a broad and balanced curriculum
- Exploit the benefits of each mode of learning, face-to-face, distance and online, taking account of the best place for direct instruction and feedback
- Make best use of face-to-face teacher time
- Be developed to suit different age groups with different approaches to suit different subjects and areas
- Take account of the unique school context and any barriers faced by learners

Contextualisation

Contextualisation and personalisation of blended learning to align to the school's policies and learner demographic of the school will be critical to its success.

The collective vision of the school should be informed by the needs of the learners. This **cohesion of vision and pedagogy** is critical in creating the **culture for blended learning** that will be needed for effective learning and teaching to take place.

Well-being of learners and staff should remain a significant consideration and additional guidance can be found here: <u>https://hwb.gov.wales/distance-learning/supporting-physical-and-mental-well-being-through-distance-learning/</u> and here: <u>https://www.cscjes-cronfa.co.uk/repository/resource/3bf5a1c8-2a7f-40af-bd86-36815d16468c/en</u>

During the longer term arrangements for blended learning (after the summer term period of 'check-in, catch-up and prepare') the **curriculum** of the school needs careful consideration.

In curriculum design, schools will need to consider how they will offer a **broad and balanced curriculum** for all learners. They need to plan for **knowledge**, **skills and experiences** across a range of subjects and/or contexts, increasing depth over time. In the same way that schools would ensure that the **cross-curricular and wider skills** are woven through their offer while in school they must be mindful of this in their blended model. There should be a cohesive approach to provision that is considered through the eyes of the learner as well as the teacher, this may allow schools to consider whether **disciplinary, interdisciplinary or integrated learning** is the preferred approach.

An understanding of **child development** and how this supports the what and how of teaching and learning is delivered should support any decision making. An introduction to child development can be found here: <u>https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/the-science-of-childcare-5-senses-to-stimulate/</u>

When considering **pedagogy** schools should reflect on their current learning and teaching policy. Due consideration should be given to ensuring that opportunities are not lost to reflect on the importance of developing oracy and how this can be achieved through a blended learning approach. More information about pedagogy can be found here: <u>https://www.cscjes.org.uk/pedagogy</u>

Strategic Questions:

- What are the unique characteristics of the school that needs to be considered?
- What are the specific well-being issues facing staff and learners? How will these be addressed?
- What issues for pupil engagement does the school face and how is this planned for?
- What should we teach and why?
- How should we teach it?
- What professional learning and support might staff need to be able to effectively enact blended learning?
- How does blended learning differ from the integration of technology?
- For each learning activity are staff considering the most effective mode?
- What is the best use of face-to-face teacher time?
- Can learners complete work online or at home independently?
- What is the best mode for direct teaching?
- Should direct teaching take place face-to-face or online?
- Could key teachers provide direct teaching for a larger cohort than their class?
- What can be done in the classroom that cannot be done at home or online?
- How does the school ensure time for every learner?

- How does the teacher personalise the learning for each learner?
 - What is the best mode for providing feedback?
 - How will all learners receiving high quality feedback to allow them to improve in a timely manner?
 - How will learners use feedback received in blended learning to improve?

Stakeholders and Roles

For blended learning to be most effective it is important that all stakeholders work together for the betterment of learners. Please note that these roles are reflective of blended learning only and it must be recognised that the current situation means that each stakeholder has a far greater role than is captured here.

Stakeholder	Role
Welsh Government	Provide guidance and support for schools around 'Stay Safe. Stay Learning'
Local Authority	 Ensure the school is equipped with the technology and technological infrastructure to handle the growing tech needs. Work in tandem with schools to anticipate and resolve critical tech issues.
Central South Consortium	 Support schools to successfully enact blended learning. Provide professional learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers around blended learning. Provide bespoke support to schools to enable them to better provide blended learning. Facilitate opportunities for networks of leaders and practitioners to engage in sharing their learning about and experiences of blended learning.

School leadership	 Develop the school level vision and achieve buy-in and engagement among the school community for blended learning. Make strategic decisions based on the unique context in which the school operates that best meets the needs of learners and staff. Provide opportunities for staff to engage with professional learning activities that will equip them to effectively plan for and implement blended learning.
Teachers	 Plan for and enact blended learning for the groups of learners they are responsible for in line with the school vision. Build buy-in among students and parents. Engage in professional learning to further develop knowledge, understanding, skills and proficiency in blended learning.
Learners	 Begin to take greater ownership in their learning process. Be respectful to their community as digital citizens.
Parents	Encourage and support the learning engaging constructively as appropriate.

Strategic Questions:

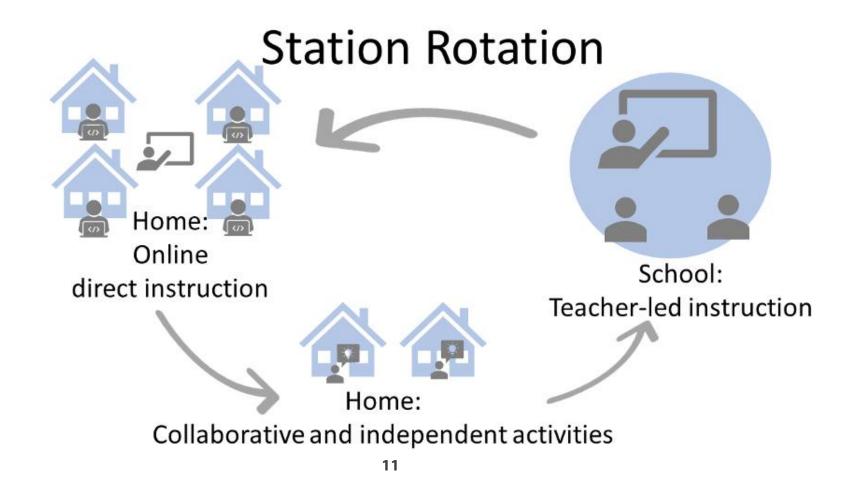
- What are the professional learning needs of teachers to be able to enact blended learning for all learners?
- Are all stakeholders aware of the opportunities available to them?
- How are parents engaged with blended learning?
- How does each stakeholder define 'good' learning and teaching? Do these definitions align?
- How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the blended learning offered?
- Do learners have the digital skills to be able to engage effectively with blended learning?
- Do all learners in a cohort need the same approach to blended learning?

Models

A number of models exist for blended learning. There is **no suggestion that any model is better than another, rather schools should consider the relative benefits and challenges of each model in their context.** It might also be sensible for schools to consider a hybrid of approaches if that is what best meets the needs of their learners and supports safe operating systems.

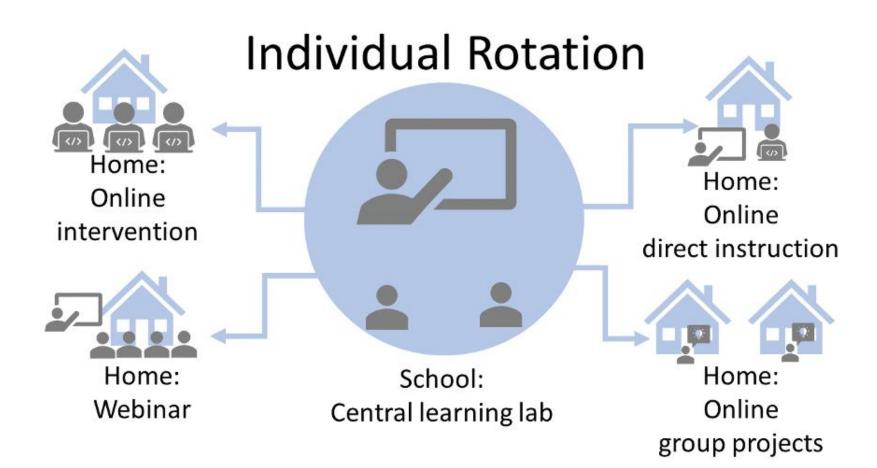
Station Rotation

The Station Rotation model allows learners to rotate through stations on a fixed timetable, where at least one of the stations is an online learning station. This model is most common in primary schools.



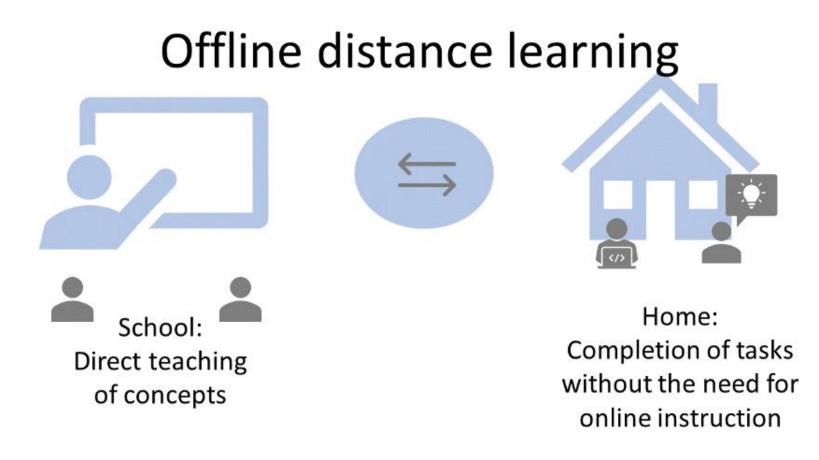
Individual Rotation

The Individual Rotation model allows learners to rotate through stations, but on individual timetables set by a teacher. Unlike other rotation models, students do not necessarily rotate to every station; they rotate only to the activities scheduled for them.



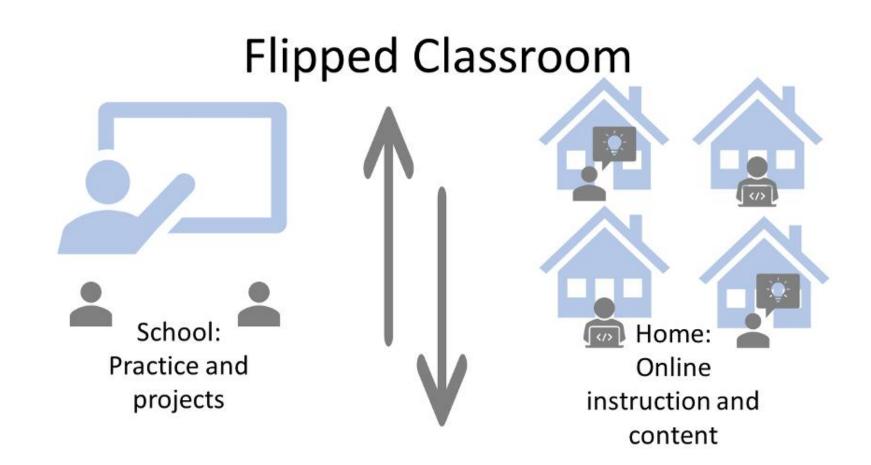
Offline Distance Learning

For some schools they may identify that learners are unable to effectively engage with online learning; this can be particularly true for hard to reach learners. In this instance, during face-to-face time teachers will plan and deliver direct teaching of the experiences, knowledge and skills the learners need to complete the tasks. Learners then engage with these tasks at home without the need for further online instruction.



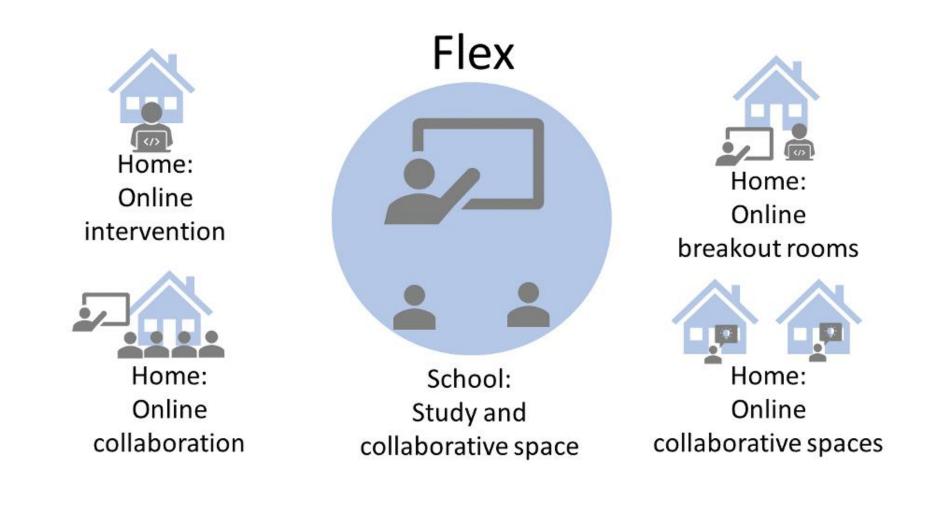
Flipped Classroom

The Flipped Classroom model flips the traditional relationship between class time and homework. Learners learn at home via online work and direct teaching, and teachers use class time for teacher-guided practice or projects. This model enables teachers to use class time to personalise learning.



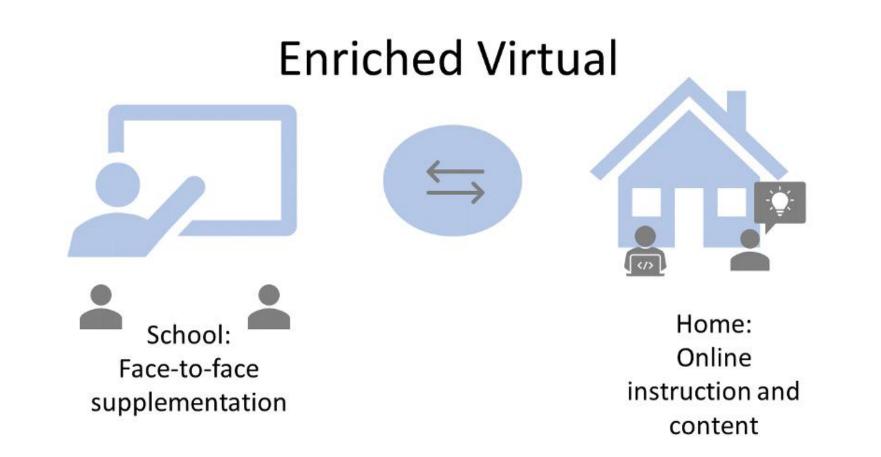
Flex

The Flex model lets learners move on fluid schedules among learning activities according to their needs. Online learning is the backbone of learning in a Flex model. Teachers provide support and instruction on a flexible, as-needed basis while learners work through the curriculum and content. This model can give learners a high degree of control over their learning.



Enriched Virtual

The Enriched Virtual model is an alternative to full-time online school that allows learners to complete the majority of their work online at home or outside of school, but attend school for required face-to-face learning sessions with a teacher.



Strategic Questions:

- Which of the models aligns best to supporting your vision for learning and teaching?
- Would a combination of the models best meet the needs of the school, staff and learners?
- What opportunities do each of the models give for differentiation and personalisation for learners?
- What are the operational challenges of each of the models?
- What information will staff, learners and parents need in order for the selected blended learning approach to work effectively?
- Which blend is most appropriate for each age group and subject area?

Strategies and Approaches

Strategies for and approaches to learning and teaching are as relevant outside of a classroom as they are in, if not more so. Careful consideration should always be given to the 'why' an approach is being selected. Pedagogy, and the impact that it has on learning, should always be the driver for decision making.

In considering the strategy or approach it is important that feedback is always considered so that learning, rather than simply provision, is taking place.

The following table is by no means an exhaustive list but should begin to scaffold thinking and school level discussions around which mode for learning is best suited to each approach or strategy according to learner age and curriculum area and the unique context of each school.

Classroom	Socially distant classroom	Distance online or digital	Distance offline
Sharing information eg. board/ smartboard/TV	Sharing information on the board ensuring that learners are well spaced. <i>Need to consider need to repeat</i> <i>lessons as learners in small groups</i> <i>in classroom</i>	Sharing information through a website or blog. Recording of a teacher sharing information on the board or a voiced over presentation	Printed materials shared with learners. Need to consider whether all learners have access to the materials
Discussion through whole group and small group real time conversations	Discussions through real time conversations ensuring that learners can maintain social distancing	Asynchronous or synchronous written discussion in a class or group space. Video sharing of discussion contributions (eg. flipgrid)	Discussions with family members. Need to consider if this is a viable option for all learners and ensure that it is inclusive of all learners.
Collaboration through small group work at tables	Collaboration through group work. <i>Need to consider how materials</i> <i>are not shared and how learners</i> <i>can maintain social distancing</i> .	Collaboration in google apps or office 365 Need to consider groupings of learners for collaborative activities and set clear expectations for levels of participation.	Collaboration with family members. <i>Need to consider if this is a viable</i> <i>option for all learners and ensure</i> <i>that it is inclusive of all learners.</i>
Creation using supplies available in the classroom (pens/paper/ glue etc)	Creation using supplies available in the classroom Need to consider how materials are not shared and how learners can maintain social distancing.	 Online applications and web tools to create: presentations videos artwork storybooks infographics websites 	Creation using supplies available from home and/or school Need to consider what supplies will be available to learners and how effectively they can engage with them independently.

Classroom	Socially distant classroom	Distance online or digital	Distance offline
Teacher direct teaching to explain concepts	Teacher direct teaching to explain concepts Need to consider that a teacher would need to repeat this to each small group of learners	Video and audio explanations from teachers or external sources Can be accessed and worked through at own pace. Can also allow teachers to share expertise across classrooms and potentially schools.	Instructions are written. Parent or carer explains concept. Need to consider if learner can access the written instructions. Need to consider availability and willingness of parent to do this and time along with expertise needed.
Use of shared texts or textbooks in the classroom	Use of texts or textbooks in the classroom Need to consider how materials are safely used by learners in line with operational guidance	Online book or multimedia resource either made by teacher or from a range of sites	Use of texts or textbooks at home <i>Need to ensure equity of access to</i> <i>texts for learners</i>
Use of workbooks in the classroom	Use of workbooks in the classroom Need to consider how materials are safely used by learners in line with operational guidance	Online space or website for skill building	Use of workbooks at home <i>Need to consider equity of access</i> <i>to workbooks for all learners</i>
Meeting, sharing and discussing learning – oral feedback	Meeting, sharing and discussing learning – oral feedback. Can be feedback to work completed in the classroom or at home. <i>Need to maintain social distancing</i> <i>but presents a real opportunity for</i> <i>quality dialogue with small groups</i> <i>of learners or individuals</i>	Oral feedback through voice/ video recordings on pieces of work submitted	Oral feedback from parents/ carers Need to consider availability and willingness of parent to do this and time along with expertise needed.
Teacher marking as written feedback to work	Teacher marking as written feedback to work <i>Need to maintain social distancing</i>	Online polls to check understanding Online tests or interactive quizzes to check understanding	Opportunity to reflect on and respond to any marking comments received from teacher

Classroom	Socially distant classroom	Distance online or digital	Distance offline
Self-assessment of work	Self-assessment of work Need to consider whether this offers best use of limited classroom time for learners.	Online self-assessment in learning spaces using comments or rubrics	Offline self-assessment of work using set criteria Need to consider how shared back to teacher to complete feedback loop
Peer assessment of work	Peer assessment of work More challenging to maintain operational guidance on sharing of resources and social distancing but can be completed orally	Use of online spaces for peer assessment and feedback Need to consider how learners are supported to make relevant comments and also needs to be monitored.	More challenging to come up with offline solutions of how this can be completed meaningfully
Building relationships and a sense of community	Building relationships and a sense of community whilst adhering to social distancing measures. Consideration needs to be given to learner well-being as maintaining relationships has been a significant challenge for many learners and this provides an opportunity.	Blogging and discussions online Visible teacher/school presence online Class media accounts Team competitions Videoed assemblies	Opportunities to work independently for something that supports a group goal or experience could be beneficial <i>Clear communication to parents</i> <i>and carers about how the school is</i> <i>working to support this is needed</i>
Engaging and motivating learners	Regular contact opportunities in a safe and supportive environment providing feedback and dialogue about learning	Regular contact opportunities in a safe and supportive online environment providing feedback and dialogue about learning	Engagement of learners along with parents/carers Need to consider availability and willingness of parent to do this and time along with expertise needed.

Careful consideration needs to be given to what provision is available to learners and where technology can help or hinder in this in order to maximise the experiences that they have. The SAMR model can be helpful here:





SUBSTITUTION

Technology acts as a direct substitute, with no functional change

AUGMENTATION

Technology acts as a direct substitute, with functional improvement

MODIFICATION

Technology allows for significant task redesign

R

REDEFINITION

Technology allows for the creation of new tasks, previously inconceivable

TRANSFORMATION

ENHANCEMENT

Strategic Questions:

- What is the role of the teacher?
 - When learners are in class?
 - Direct teaching
 - Coaching and guiding the learning that has taken place out of the classroom to provide a personalised experience?
 - Well-being activities that allow learners to interact with their peers and teachers and addresses any issues?
 - When learners are online?
 - Does all online activity have to be from their usual class / subject teacher or should the use of 'experts' be considered?
 - Flexibility in sequencing and pacing of lessons available to learners and their unique home circumstances?
 - Targeting different skills levels effectively through work set?
 - When learners are at home?
 - Are enough opportunities for creativity and physical activity planned for all leaners? How can this be supported safely?
 - Do all learners have the materials needed to engage with any home learning tasks set?
- How do learners receive feedback?
 - How often do learners receive feedback and in what medium?
 - Is feedback followed up to check that it has an influence on future learning?
 - Are learners engaged with and responding to feedback?
- What opportunities are there for groups of learners to be supported with specific tasks?
- Do learners (and their parents or carers) know how to access support and when teachers are available to a provide it?

Tools

The following tools are available to all learners and teachers through Hwb.

Office 365

ΤοοΙ	Description	Suitable for
Outlook	E-mail platform	All learners Staff
One Drive	Cloud storage	All learners Staff
Teams	Platform to facilitate discussion, sharing and collaboration. Can be used to manage learner workflow or to facilitate collaboration between staff including the ability to enable video meetings	Learners - KS2 / KS3 / KS4 / KS5 Staff collaboration and online meetings
One Note	Designed to function as an electronic version of a paper notebook – manage, share and organise information.	Learners - KS2 / KS3 / KS4 / KS5 Staff collaboration
MS Word	Word processor – web based	All learners Staff
MS Powerpoint	Presentation software – web based	All learners Staff
MS Excel	Spreadsheet and data analysis – web based	Learners – KS2/ KS3 / KS4/ KS5
Sway	Microsoft Sway is a professional digital storytelling app that helps express ideas using an interactive, web-based canvas.	All learners Staff
MS Forms	Microsoft Forms allows you to quickly and easily create custom quizzes, surveys, questionnaires, registrations, and more.	All learners Staff

Just2easy

Tool	Description	Suitable for
JIT	7 simple tools for young learners	Learners - FPh
j2e5	Digital paper	Learners – KS2 Staff – Create learning materials
j2code	Learn to code	Learners – FPh / KS2 Staff – ready made lesson plans
j2data	Data handling resource	Learners – FPh / KS2 / KS3 Staff – sharing tasks with learners
j2homework	Set and assign activities to a class.	Learners - FPh / KS2 / KS3 Staff – managing workflow
j2blast	Learn your times tables and practice your spellings	Learners – FPh / KS2 / KS3 Staff – access learners performance data



Tool	Description	Suitable for
Flipgrid	Online community to facilitate discussion, sharing opinions and experiences or to capture fun activities through the use of videos.	All learners Staff



Tool	Description	Suitable for
Google Classroom	Workflow management – set tasks, assignments, share resources, facilitate discussions	All learners Staff collaboration
Google Drive	Cloud storage	All learners Staff
Google Docs	Word processor – web based	All learners Staff
Google Sheets	Spreadsheet and data analysis – web based	Learners – KS2/ KS3/ KS4/ KS5 Staff
Google Slides	Presentation software – web based	All learners Staff
Google Sites	Website design software	Learners KS2/ KS3/ KS4/ KS5 Staff – sharing information
Google Meet	Online video meeting app	Staff

Screencastify

ΤοοΙ	Description	Suitable for
Screencastify	Screen recording software that allows you to create recordings to model, discuss and assess work, resources and activities.	Staff

Further Reading and Reflection

- WG distance learning support: <u>https://hwb.gov.wales/distance-learning/</u>
- CSC support for distance learning: <u>https://www.cscjes-cronfa.co.uk/repository/</u> <u>tree?sort=created&language=en&tags=A%20Resource%20to%20Support%20Distance%20</u> <u>Learning&nodeld=5f0bbe50-850e-427a-aa7d-793c8af346e7</u>
- EEF Distance Learning Rapid Evidence Assessment: <u>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/evidence-reviews/distance-learning-rapid-evidence-assessment/</u>
- Distance learning blog post: <u>https://blogbjmock.wordpress.com/2020/06/11/see-it-from-their-perspective/</u>
- Blended learning website: <u>https://www.blendedlearning.org/</u>
- OU course: Take your teaching online: <u>https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/education/take-your-teaching-online/content-section-overview?active-tab=content-tab</u>
- The Learning Partnership 'Back to School': <u>https://bb-live-bucket.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/</u> resourceFiles/9121592210926.pdf
- ResearchEd Home, videos: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3uPEgDH3pAhQe06533Zebw/videos
- Child development overview: <u>https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/the-science-of-childcare-5-senses-to-stimulate/</u>
- Book: Blended Learning in Action: A Practical Guide Toward Sustainable Change, Caitlin Rice Tucker
- Book: Rosenshein's Principles in Action, Tom Sherrington
- Book: Understanding How We Learn, Yana Weinstein