

Ysgol Maes y Felin

“Achieve Excellence, Exceed Expectations”



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Learning Continuity Plan

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This document is available in English and Welsh in Microsoft Word and PDF formats in Ariel font size 12 as standard. This document is also available in large print. To request a copy of this document in an accessible format, contact Mrs. Debbie Dickinson (01352) 711366.



Learning Continuity Plan

Rationale

During periods of disruption, it is critical that the learning and well-being of all children and young people in our school is maintained. We know that significant periods away from the classroom has a major impact on children not only in relation to their day-to-day learning and their long-term achievement, but on their physical, mental, emotional and social development.

In order to ensure that learning continuity is planned for, and that the impact of any disruption to the learning of children and young people is mitigated, we have set out our contingencies for learning continuity and have included these within our routine business continuity planning arrangements. Much of this can be found in the Distance Learning Policy.

This will ensure that there are clear and agreed procedures in place for us to follow should a period of disruption to learning take place due to a full or partial closure of the school, or if there is insufficient staffing capacity available to provide learning to the whole school.

We believe that it is critically important that high-quality, face-to-face learning is maintained for all children whenever this is possible. Any disruptions to learning should be the last resort and only happen in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances would include where providing face-to-face learning would be contrary to the Welsh Government (WG) and/or UK Government guidance or where a health and safety or safeguarding risk has been identified for some or all learners within school.

It is recognised that it will not be possible to fully replicate all aspects of face-to-face in-school learning in a remote environment, particularly around learner–teacher and learner–learner engagement, as well as classroom organisation. However, we endeavour to ensure the best quality remote learning which meets the needs of our learners and community, and ensure that this is provided in a timely manner. Having appropriate plans will avoid schools having a deficit-based model for ‘catching up’ what has been missed.

The Welsh Government expects schools to use this learning continuity guidance to develop local plans that best fit their context and which can be used as the basis for responding to each individual period of disruption as it occurs.

Industrial action does not fall under the remit of this document. Existing protocols that local authorities will already have in place would instead take place.

Context

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, particularly during the early stages, resulted in significant disruption to the learning of children and young people across the whole of Wales. Evidence of this impact is still being collated, but initial findings suggest that the disruptions that were caused by the pandemic have had a considerable impact on the learning of children and young people and on their well-being. Therefore, the WG anticipate that a wide range of interventions will need to be

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in place over the coming years to mitigate these impacts and to ensure that the long-term outcomes for children are not permanently affected.

It is the aim of WG to ensure that disruption on this scale never takes place in schools again as the risks to the learning and well-being of our children are too great.

Learning continuity planning should be prioritised in all schools so that if, as a last resort, disruption to learning has to take place for any reason, schools are fully prepared and are able to continue to support the learning of children throughout the period of disruption.

We need to ensure that we build on the excellent practice in digital and blended learning which was accelerated during the pandemic and made available to learners via [Hwb](#). Building on this approach will ensure that any future periods of disruption, which result in the full or partial closure of a school, are managed consistently and that, during these periods, children's access to high-quality learning is maintained.

To achieve this, all schools in Wales are expected to develop learning continuity plans as part of their routine business contingency planning arrangements.

The overarching principles for learning continuity

We have considered the following principles in putting together our plan:

- **Quality** -The quality of virtual learning should be as comparable as possible to the face-to-face learning experiences in the classroom. This is in terms of content, feedback, progress, etc., However, realistically we recognise that remote learning provides a very different context to face-to-face learning.
- **Learning** – will be broad and balanced covering a range of knowledge and skills in line with the Curriculum for Wales. Digital and face-to-face learning provides different opportunities for skill development and the type of learning will be aligned with the type of virtual learning offered.
- **Progress** – our aim is to ensure that learners continue to progress irrespective of the method of learning.

Appropriate to the level and the nature of the disruption

The response to the disruption of learning will be relevant to the circumstances so plans may need to be modified accordingly. We will consider:

- the length of the disruption
- the reason for the disruption
- which learners are affected, their age and their access to devices and connectivity
- learners' individual needs
- the ability of learners to continue with their expected learning
- upcoming external assessments

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Continuity and Applicability

Where possible, we will align the remote learning offer to the existing face-to-face curriculum. We will aim to focus on the normal programme of learning that pupils would have followed if they were in school.

Transition to and from remote learning

Moving to and from remote learning should be as smooth as possible. We aim to keep the gap between systems as minimal as possible.

All learners will have their relevant logins and will be able to access our virtual learning platform so as to ensure that learning will continue without any unnecessary breaks.

Learning activities will be age and stage appropriate and will ensure that any expectations for parent or carer support, and their availability are taken into account.

Well-being, equity and inclusion

Well-being is the basis for high-quality learning and progression. During periods of disruption, we will take a balanced approach to the academic and well-being provision for all learners.

Processes are in place to ensure that learners, particularly the more vulnerable, have regular contact with their teachers. This is via telephone contact or Teams and arranged on an individual-need basis.

When designing remote learning activities, we will consider the impact of such activities on learner well-being and the learners' ability to engage with the directed learning. This includes learners' access to equipment, resources, and support. We will be sympathetic to individual learners' ability to engage with the learning activity, particularly in terms of practical work and study space and how the cost of living will impact on this.

We will consider the impact of remote learning on learners with additional learning needs (ALN). Where possible, activities should be designed to meet the individual needs of learners with ALN. The ALNCO will support teachers in this arena. The ALNCO will also retain contact with pupils who need additional support.

School leaders will continue to work in partnership with GwE and the LA to ensure the best remote learning experiences for pupils. We will engage regularly with them for any advice and support that may be needed. Regular audits of IT equipment and our workforce skills are undertaken as part of our ongoing monitoring.

If any concerns arise about the safety or well-being of learners, schools' normal safeguarding procedures will continue during remote learning.

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The LA should carefully consider how learners who are in receipt of free school meals receive a healthy meal daily during times of disruption.

In particular we will take the following needs into consideration in our offer:

- learners who are digitally excluded
- learners with individual development plans (IDPs)
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic learners
- learners from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- learners who are eligible for free school meals (eFSM) or who are impacted by other socio-economic factors
- learners who are refugees
- Welsh-medium learners
- learners who do not speak the language of their school in their home

Communication

We will ensure that plans and arrangements are communicated to all relevant stakeholders beforehand and we will keep all parties up to date during any period of learning disruption where groups of learners are affected.

Managing workforce expectation and well-being

Teaching staff will be supported to enable them to deliver quality distance learning. This will be part of ongoing professional development. This will include how to plan, deliver and evaluate learning using blended approaches.

We will take a common-sense approach to managing expectations for learning during periods of disruption. This includes learners' entitlement to appropriate learning time, supporting staff well-being and workload expectations. Preparation time for virtual learning will also be taken into account.

Periods of learning

Periods of blended or digital learning will recognise the age and/or progression step of each learner and the minimum periods of independent learning that can be expected of them.

Types of Disruption

Disruption for individual learners

On occasions, individual learners may be absent from school.

When learners are voluntarily removed from school for authorised or unauthorised reasons (for example, term time holidays), schools will not provide work.

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Disruption for groups of learners and the workforce

On occasions, groups of learners or members of the workforce may be unable to physically attend the school site. These occasions could include:

- illness which is isolated to a cohort(s) of learners
- building issues affecting part of the school (for example, a fire, flood or building issues impacting a classroom or block)
- transport issues beyond 1 day that affect learners and/or staff attending school
- safe staffing levels not possible due to illness and lack of supply cover available

Disruption for the whole school

On rare occasions, there may be the need to close the whole school site for all learners and workforce. These occasions could include:

- a local authority/Government enforced closure in the local or national interest – this doesn't include bank holidays but could include widespread illness within the school community resulting in a full closure or safe staffing levels unable to be achieved due to unexpected issues (for example, high rates of illness, severe weather disruption)
- short-term building closure because of safety issues (for example, heating failure, issues with power supply, minor fire or flood)
- long-term building closure because of major safety issues (for example, structure of the building, major fire or flood)

How Schools can prepare for learning disruption

In such instances, we will follow our schools Distance Learning Policy.

Where Digital Learning is not possible or appropriate

Where it may not be possible for learners to access digital resources while at home, we will consider how offline learning can be distributed and collected to and from learners.

Proactively preparing for workforce absence

The Headteacher will explore every possible avenue before considering suspending face-to-face learning and school will remain open wherever this is possible.

The approach taken to managing workforce absence in order to achieve this is for the Headteacher to determine at a local level, based on our own school's context. The local authority or regional consortia should provide advice where this is needed, and all decisions should be made within the requirements as set out in the [School Teachers' Pay and Conditions \(Wales\) Document 2021](#). The well-being of the school's workforce should always be considered in all decisions that relate to managing workforce absence.

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Proactively preparing the workforce in learning design

The professional learning for staff will ensure that teachers are able to develop approaches of teaching and learning design for face-to-face, blended and virtual learning. The curriculum incorporates opportunities for staff to plan blended and virtual learning activities throughout the school year so that learners and staff are familiar with the process prior to having to undertake blended or virtual learning due to a disruption.

Preparing to manage well-being during disruption

We have a duty to ensure learners are kept safe and are able to continue with their learning. For medium- to long-term absence, we will ensure that learners receive regular contact with staff, and the nature and frequency of contact should reflect the learner's vulnerability profile.

If long-term disruption occurs close to critical education milestones, school will consider how activities such as transition, can be provided remotely.

School will also consider how staff well-being can be supported, and procedures for keeping in touch with staff via individual contact, team meetings and associated communication procedures will also be considered.

Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that learning continuity planning is in place as part of the school's routine business continuity planning arrangements.
- Aim for the school's approach to blended or digital learning to be embedded across all aspects of learning and teaching and, through this approach, aim that any transition from face-to-face to remote learning and back again is as smooth as possible.
- Ensure that blended or digital learning experiences for learners are as comparable as possible to the quality of face-to-face learning, recognising that remote learning provides a very different context to face-to-face learning.
- Ensure that where learners need additional support, particularly where there is a risk of digital exclusion, that this is identified and additional support provided wherever possible, and with the support of the local authority if this is needed (for example, the provision of IT equipment or the distribution of printed materials).
- Ensure that staff have the skills and access to the right professional learning to enable them to confidently deliver learning during periods of disruption.
- Ensure that the well-being of both staff and learners is prioritised during periods of disruption.
- Ensure that all blended or digital learning is delivered with learners' and practitioners' digital safety as a priority.
- Ensure that parents and carers are aware of the learning contingency planning and the arrangements that will be triggered during periods of disruption to support learners.

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Teachers will:

- Ensure that all learners understand the importance of engaging with and continuing their learning during periods of disruption.
- Ensure that all blended or digital learning provision delivered across the school during periods of disruption is of a consistent high quality and as comparable as possible to the quality of face-to-face learning.
- Ensure that the learning provision developed for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners is appropriate and accessible.
- Ensure that a range of different learning approaches are developed
- Ensure that systems are in place for checking daily whether learners learning remotely are engaging with their work, and work with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern.
- Ensure that all blended or digital learning is delivered with learners' digital safety as a priority.
- Ensure that the well-being of learners is prioritised during periods of disruption.

Local authorities will:

- Work in collaboration with Headteachers to ensure that learning continuity is embedded into all business continuity planning.
- Ensure that during periods of disruption schools are supported and decisions are made in a timely manner, allowing schools to prepare for the disruption whenever this is possible.
- Ensure that every school's learning continuity plan is signed off by the local authority.

Governors will:

- Ensure that the school's business continuity planning is robust and that all business continuity plans include provision to ensuring that learning will continue for all learners during periods of disruption through the provision of high-quality blended or digital learning provision.

Regional consortia and partnerships will:

- Provide a range of resources to Headteachers and Teachers which will support the delivery of learning continuity through a blended or digital learning approach.
- Provide appropriate professional learning opportunities for practitioners to support the delivery of learning continuity through a blended or digital learning approach.

Estyn will:

- Recognise that learning continuity should be included in all schools' planning arrangements.
- Consider the range of blended and digital learning approaches that should be embedded into a school's learning and teaching arrangements, and how these approaches should also be used to support learners during any periods of remote learning.

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Welsh Government will:

- Provide a range of resources via Hwb to support learning continuity, including guidance, blended or digital learning resources, and case studies.