

Newtown Hub Schools

**Abermule Primary
Brynlywarch Hall
Hafren Junior
Ladywell Green Infant
Maesyrhandir Primary
Newtown High
Penygloddfa Primary**

**Saint Mary's Catholic Primary
Saint Michael's CIW Primary
Treowen Primary
Ysgol Cedewain
Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd**

Continuity of Learning Plan for the Newtown Cluster

'... we believe the most important thing in this time of unprecedented change and disruption is the safety and well-being of our children and our workforce and doing all we can to support the physical and mental well-being of our children and young people throughout this period.'

WG Stay Safe, Stay Learning April 2020

Key guiding principles

- During the closure for COVID 19, the primary focus for the Continuity of Learning Plan in the Newtown Cluster is the **well-being of children, staff and families**.

This will be achieved through:

- Maintaining contact with families – via phone, text, email or Facebook. Ensuring that ways of contacting staff are shared, and that contact is welcome, and queries acted upon. This would also include being a listening ear, and a friendly, reassuring voice.
 - Sharing information and resources on wellbeing through the school website, or as a hard copy for those who cannot access the internet. This may consist of ideas of how to structure the day, how to cope with behaviour, and will include at all points that wellbeing is the most important aspect.
 - Ensuring that activities provided by school are fun and engaging, and that parents/carers feel confident in the power of learning through play, and do not feel pressured.
 - Provide 'how to' guides to support parents – e.g. letter and number formation, accessing Hwb
 - Identifying families who are more vulnerable, or who are having difficulties, and supporting them with signposting, or making a referral (e.g. food bank).
 - Where a safeguarding concern is raised, following the Wales Safeguarding Procedures to ensure that children are safe and protected from harm. This includes participation in Child Protection conferences and core groups, seeking advice from the Powys Front Door Team, and making referrals where required.
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- There is no expectation that a normal school timetable will be recreated at home.
 - Families with no ICT capacity will be supported via a loaning scheme for hardware – laptops have already been sent home to families who requested one. Families without home Wifi will be provided with MiFi so that they can access the internet from home.

- All activities and tasks shared are suggested not expected in order to minimise the pressure on our families during this time.
- Meaningful tasks will be set by each school, equating to no more than 2-3 hours per day. This will reduce for younger children who will need to do more learning through play and practical activities.
- Some tasks will involve the use of ICT but not all tasks.
- We will make use of indoor and outdoor learning, which is appropriate to gardens and small spaces.
- Each school will suggest activities for their pupils which can be completed on their own. This will foster independence. We recognise that many parents are working from home themselves and are unable to assist for long periods of time.
- Learning activities must suit the age and capabilities of the children. Each school staff will use their own knowledge and understanding of cohorts to ensure this.
- Variety is key. Tasks will be given in 'bite size chunks', timed suitable to age and ability.
- A list of flexible tasks that cover different areas of the curriculum allows pupils to choose the tasks that interest them e.g. Genius hour. KS3, KS4 and Post 16 learners might be able to carry out more open-ended, independent work, but structure and guidance is still required.
- Live video lessons are not expected. However, staff may like to use teams for check ins, for explanations etc.
- All staff must adhere to the policy for safe internet use at all times to safeguard themselves and pupils.
- Staff will give feedback as appropriate using the means established by each school.
- All schools will ensure that parents and pupils are fully aware of the means of communication to use with staff e.g. email addresses.

Suggested weekly activities for Primary school pupils

- ✓ Well-being
- ✓ Literacy (including Welsh)
- ✓ Numeracy
- ✓ Science
- ✓ Creative
- ✓ Challenges
- ✓ Outdoor activity

Weekly tasks for secondary pupils

Pupils at Newtown High School complete a wide variety of learning activities through learning platforms. As a combination, these enable teaching staff to maintain meaningful contact to monitor the progress pupils make. Newtown High School have produced a document 'What does remote learning look like?'

For Year 6 pupils, a transition project is currently being designed and will be implemented after May half-term. This is expected to take around two weeks to complete and is seen as an important bridging opportunity for pupils to begin to adjust to High School learning experiences. In the meantime, the High School has produced a Q&A sheet for parents and pupils.

Whole cluster activities

Where feasible or useful, whole cluster activities will be shared to enhance well-being and connectedness. These can be suggested by any teacher, agreed by cluster heads, prior to circulation.

Transition arrangements

1. High school to collect information from primary schools via spreadsheet emailed out
2. High school transition team to meet Year 6 teachers via teams in June to discuss pupils in greater detail. Additional meetings will be organised for ALN.
3. Transition project to start in Summer 2 and be completed with tutors in September - topic to be decided. This will be launched by High School via Teams.
4. Year 8 'Buddies' to be placed in new Year 7 tutor groups during first half term
5. Initial letter sent to all parents and shared with feeder schools detailing transition email addresses, reassurances about uniform and next steps.
6. High School Transition specific email address set up for parents/pupils to send questions in (nc-transition@newtown-hs.powys.sch.uk) DHT responding to every email we receive.
7. Digital Transition Guide to be sent to Year 6 pupils and parents via email addresses that are being supplied to the transition email addresses. A copy of this will also be sent to all feeder schools. This guide will include:
 - Virtual tour of the High School
 - Videos introducing members of staff
 - "What will your learning look like"
 - FAQ/worries
 - Case studies of how support can relieve anxiety
 - What your first day could look like
 - The variety of support available to all students.
 - Video of a student talking about how the transition process worked for him
 - Videos of remote learning to show what the school is currently doing.
7. Digital Smooth Moves course to be sent out to parents once collated
8. Year 6 Newsletter during Summer 2
9. Virtual Sports Day and Virtual Eisteddfod

Assessment

The cluster will follow the guidelines shared by ERW. (Appendix 1)

Expectations for continued learning in the Hub

In order to further support the children of key workers and vulnerable children, they will be allowed to undertake home learning tasks/activities in the hub. Staff will facilitate this only. It is not expected that staff will teach.

Assessment

The cluster will follow the guidelines shared by ERW. (Appendix 1)

Distance Learning Principles and Considerations for Planning, Assessment and Feedback [Draft for consideration]

PLANNING

During this period, the health and wellbeing of learners, teachers, support staff and their families is the priority. The National Curriculum is suspended and this offers schools the opportunity to consider working in a different way to consider skills and experiences and move away from planning for individual subjects as they consider what learning is appropriate to their learners based on:

- time for maintaining and developing literacy and numeracy skills;
- building resilience and reflection on personal wellbeing; and
- offering opportunities to maintain connections with teaching staff and peers during this period of potential social isolation.

Through careful consideration of the points above, schools are now developing their whole school distance learning strategy to decide the most appropriate form of distance learning. In developing a consistent whole school approach and by sharing responsibilities for delivery, the planning workload and demands of individual teaching staff could be reduced as they work from home and support their own families. It is suggested that providing opportunities for learners to engage independently in their own time is possibly best at this time. In this way, teaching staff are able to create a range of experiences for learners to work through at their own pace.

There are many approaches to effective distance learning **and exemplar models will** be shared to show how schools can continue to consider how best to plan for effective delivery.

ASSESSMENT

The focus of the assessment during distance learning should be on formative assessment and providing feedback to learners. It is not appropriate at this time of National Curriculum suspension for schools to use summative assessment for the tracking of individual pupil progress against targets. It is not expected for schools to monitor the progress of their learners as they would do under normal circumstances. Distance learning aims to ensure that the learners continue to learn, but not by trying to re-create the usual classroom conditions and routines within the home. Schools should keep things simple regarding the tasks, assessments and feedback shared with learners. It is important to balance the need to ensure the continuation of their education and their health and wellbeing.

FEEDBACK

Communication between the teacher and the learner, and between learners is important in ensuring wellbeing, and both written and verbal feedback can contribute to this. Because of the varied nature of the tasks set for learners, it is not always possible or necessary to provide 'formal' feedback on the work that is set. For some short tasks, *e.g. physical exercise, wellbeing, independent reading, research*, etc., feedback is unnecessary, but teachers could, if appropriate, share and celebrate the work which would in turn support self-esteem. For more extended tasks, feedback is central in helping the learning and is an

opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the effort and success of the learners. The feedback should be guided by the teacher's professional judgement following their evaluation of the learning needs of learners and the nature of the activity being undertaken. It is important that the expectations for teachers and learners regarding feedback are fair and reasonable and reflect the family situation of learners and teachers alike, *e.g. access to technology and resources, the demands of work, caring for other members of the family, etc.*

Considerations for schools:

Every school will benefit from establishing and agreeing on its own procedure for giving and receiving feedback within its local context. Due consideration should be given to:

- Staff, learner and parent/guardian wellbeing;
- Safeguarding policies and procedures, ensuring full understanding and implementation by all staff;
- Avoid live video streaming and any direct contact with learners;
- Communicating the expectations regarding feedback frequency and methods to all staff;
- Ensuring a common understanding and agreed procedures for the effective and appropriate use of technology (when possible) in facilitating any dialogue between the teacher and learner;
- Ensuring that teaching and support staff have clear guidance on how the school will work with partners to support those learners not engaging

The purpose of feedback within the context of distance learning:

- Keep in touch and maintain positivity;
- Acknowledge and appreciate learners' efforts, to celebrate their work and offer encouragement;
- Support the learners to ensure that they understand the tasks and respond to any misconceptions or misunderstanding that they may have;
- Provide the teacher with as much information as possible of the learners' current knowledge and understanding and the ways in which they can be supported in the next steps of their learning; and
- Help parents to support their children's learning.

The nature of the feedback given:

- Clearly present and explain the tasks set for agreed period giving clear expectations;
- Be guided by the teacher's professional judgement following their evaluation of the learning needs of learners and the nature of the activity being undertaken, how any feedback, including marking, is given;
- Communicate clearly, simply and concisely when providing individual or whole group verbal or written feedback;
- Correct common misconceptions and misunderstandings; and
- Provide learners with opportunities to keep in touch and communicate with their peers, and to see and celebrate each other's work so that they learn from one another.