



**Pentrepoeth Primary School  
Blended Learning Strategy and Policy**



# Pentrepoeth Primary School

## Blended and Distance Learning Strategy and Policy

### 1. Purpose and Introduction

#### Background:

The 2020 pandemic, unprecedented and unplanned for, has brought about challenges for primary teaching and learning. The sudden need to adapt to distance learning allowed limited time for teachers to implement detailed procedures; however, as schools reopen to more pupils from the 29 June 2020, there is a requirement to ensure a more consistent, formalised and structured approach to blended and distance learning.

Welsh Government guidance (<https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-guidance-learning-over-summer-term>) states that as we begin to think about learning and teaching for the next school year, schools should consider, “a blend of ‘in school’ and ‘out of school’ learning driven by a single curriculum: learners should not expect or experience two parallel curriculums, but practitioners will need to think how learning outside the classroom supports the valuable and limited contact time.”

#### Statement of Intent:

This policy will outline the types and methods of blended learning; provide guidance on the approach to blended learning that should be taken by staff, pupils and parents; and, aim to ensure consistency of approach across our school. Consequently, Pentrepoeth Primary School will continue to provide engaging, exciting and challenging learning opportunities, both in school and at home, which result in ambitious, capable learners, committed to lifelong learning. Additionally, the well-being of pupils and staff is a significant consideration; it is recognised that learning can give a sense of purpose and achievement which is good for mental well-being. The policy aims to ensure a seamless and efficient blend of in-school and at-home learning, thus allowing pupils to make progress while staff workload remains manageable.

#### Definition of Blended Learning:

"At its simplest, blended learning is the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences." [Garrison and Kanuka, 2004]. At Pentrepoeth, this means that time spent learning in the classroom will introduce key concepts, new content and skills; address misconceptions; answer questions; and, set clear expectations and guidelines for the work to be completed at home. However, it should be noted that the learning that takes place at home will take a variety of forms and will not be restricted to online provision.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all teaching, learning support and achievement staff at Pentrepoeth Primary School.

### **3. Guidance**

#### **Types of Blended Learning:**

##### **A. Face-to-Face Time with Pupils**

This is the most traditional form of teaching and learning. It is a 'teacher-centred' method of education and takes place in school, in person. Pupils benefit from increased levels of interaction with their peers, as well as with their teacher, and are allowed the opportunity to bond with fellow pupils. In face-to-face learning, students are held accountable for their progress at the specific time the lesson is taking place, for example, through the use of AfL techniques.

##### **B. Flipped Learning**

In the traditional approach to teaching and learning the teacher is the primary source of information. By contrast, the flipped learning model deliberately shifts instruction to a pupil centred approach, where in class time is dedicated to: exploring topics in greater depth; introducing complex concepts; answering questions; addressing misconceptions; setting clear expectations around work to be completed at home (online or paper based); and, creating rich learning opportunities. As a result, pupils are actively involved in knowledge construction as they participate in and evaluate their learning in a manner that is personally meaningful.

##### **C. Online Learning**

The School's platform for sharing online resources and setting work will be Google Classroom for years 2 to 6 and See Saw for Nursery to Year 1. Pupils will also be able return/submit completed tasks through this platform. The continued use of these platforms is consistent with this policy and to be encouraged. Activities are signposted via the school website [www.pentrepoethprimary.co.uk](http://www.pentrepoethprimary.co.uk) and more detail is obtained via the platform.

##### **I. Asynchronous Learning**

Asynchronous learning is learning that doesn't necessarily happen at the same time for the teacher and the pupils. There is no real-time interaction; the learning resources are created and made available for pupils to use later on. The main features of asynchronous learning are:

- resources and activities delivered online, e.g. through Google Classroom;
- recorded lessons/video instruction/podcasts, where children may repeat the recording if they find the task difficult
- flipped learning - pupils engage with material before discussions in class.

##### **II. Synchronous Learning**

Synchronous learning is teaching and learning that happens where the teacher is present at the same time as the pupils, meaning that there is real-time interaction between them. The main features of synchronous learning are:

- live, streamed lessons (see information below).

The School Teachers' Terms and Conditions Document 2019, and other important legislative policies and procedures, do not currently provide a sufficiently robust framework for these types of lessons to be considered in the best interests of staff and pupils. Indeed, there is evidence from ESTYN and others that show the limited impact on outcomes for learners. Therefore, PPS teachers are not

expected to deliver live, streamed lessons until appropriate policy, legislation, secure technical hardware and software is available. Appropriate consultation with teachers and Trade Unions will also need to take place at a local and national level before any change to the School's position is considered.

- live online/ telephone pastoral/achievement team check in sessions will be considered using Microsoft Teams where the school has been working with no face to face contact with pupils for more than 14 days.

#### **D. Hard Copy Physical Resources**

We have issued all children with a Home / Blended Learning book. There may be occasions where we deem it appropriate and in line with the whole school Covid Risk assessment that we send home

- paper packs and work booklets;
- textbooks;
- resources needed for projects, games and activities, for example, music, art, D&T, etc.

#### **Digitally Excluded Learners**

The school will ensure that there is equity and that we regularly survey to ensure all children have access.

We will utilise school resources and hardware where appropriate.

#### **Methods of Blended Learning:**

The Education Endowment Foundation recommends the following metacognitive methods to enhance learning:

Activate	Prompting pupils to think about what they have learnt previously, that will help them with their next steps
Explain	Explicitly teaching strategies to pupils and helping them decide when to use them.
Practise	Pupils practising strategies and skills repeatedly, to develop independence
Reflect	Pupils reflecting on what they have learnt after they have completed a piece of work
Review	Revisiting previous learning after a gap.

A planning framework is available here:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/support-resources-for-schools/#closeSignup>

#### 4. Responsibilities

Individuals	Responsibilities
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of the Senior Leadership Team is to:</li> <li>• develop, monitor and evaluate the whole school strategy for blended and distance learning;</li> <li>• communicate with, and provide support to staff, pupils and parents, to</li> <li>• ensure effective implementation of blended and distance learning;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for appropriate CPD training to ensure that staff are able to deliver blended and distance learning effectively;</li> <li>• ensure accountability of the blended and distance learning process, through self evaluation.</li> <li>• The role of the Subject Leader/ AOLE Teams is to:</li> <li>• lead and support the area of learning in liaison with year group teachers in the design and development of high-quality blended and distance learning experiences for pupils.</li> <li>• monitor and evaluate the provision of blended and distance learning through self-evaluation;</li> <li>• communicate with pupils and parents, as appropriate, as per the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, to ensure engagement and progress with the blended and distance learning experience;</li> <li>• disseminate excellent practice amongst colleagues, both formally and informally</li> </ul>
Phase Professional Learning Forums/ Staff Meetings	<p>The role of all staff in Phase Learning forums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research, trial and develop excellent practice and new innovation, using varied strategies for blended and distance learning; and informally;</li> <li>• provide a forum for colleagues to discuss, trial and implement strategies to: improve the quality of blended and distance learning; share good practice; develop ideas; and reflect on teaching and learning;</li> <li>• work towards helping to create a proactive school culture where the quality of blended and distance learning is openly observed, discussed, challenged and</li> <li>• enhanced within a supportive and non-judgemental environment;</li> <li>• promote high quality blended and distance learning, using the elements of the school's agreed learning and teaching policy.</li> </ul>
Teachers	<p>The role of the teacher is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to strive to deliver consistently excellent lessons in accordance with the Teaching &amp; Learning policy;</li> <li>• engage with CPD training to ensure proficiency in delivering effective blended and distance learning;</li> <li>• collaborate with colleagues to design and develop high-quality blended and distance learning experiences for pupils, in accordance with agreed school plans</li> <li>• plan and deliver blended and distance learning experiences for all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, taking into</li> </ul>

	<p>account Individual Development Plans and ensuring that pupils' needs are fully catered for, including statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate with, and provide timely feedback to, pupils in line with the School's Marking and Feedback Policy;</li> <li>• carefully monitor pupils' work completion and deadline compliance;</li> <li>• communicate with pupils and parents, as appropriate, as per the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, to ensure engagement and progress with the blended and distance learning experience.</li> </ul> <p>Teachers will not be able to respond to multiple requests for assistance. Questions can be asked at the next face-to-face session with the teacher. If unsure about what to do with a task, pupils should: read questions and instructions carefully; research the answer to the question; or, collaborate with a friend/another pupil/classmate. If, while learning at home, a pupil has a problem that cannot be solved contact can be made with the teacher through either Google or See Saw only.</p>
Learning Support Staff	<p>The role of learning support staff is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist the teacher with feedback on pupil work</li> <li>• provide support and assistance to teachers, in accordance with the Additional Learning Needs Policy;</li> <li>• assist with implementation of pupils' Individual Development Plans so that their needs are fully catered for through blended and distance learning.</li> </ul>
Pupils	<p>Pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• record tasks set at the end of each face-to-face lesson in school, noting the due date for completion;</li> <li>• dedicate appropriate time to distance learning, in order to complete the tasks, set by the due date;</li> <li>• check Google Classroom and See Saw for information on tasks, assignments and resources daily, throughout the school week;</li> <li>• identify a comfortable and quiet space to study/learn;</li> <li>• engage in all learning set with academic honesty;</li> <li>• submit all tasks and assignments in accordance with provided timelines and/or due dates;</li> <li>• appreciate that when working at home, teachers will be delivering lessons every day at school.</li> </ul> <p>Teachers will not be able to respond to multiple requests for assistance. Questions can be asked at the next face-to-face session with the teacher. If unsure about what to do with a task, pupils should: read questions and instructions carefully; research the answer to the question; or, collaborate with a friend/another pupil/classmate. If, while learning at home, a pupil has a problem that cannot be solved they should contact the classteacher via Google and See Saw.</p>
Parents/Carers	<p>Parents/Carers should support their child in their learning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing an environment conducive to learning;</li> <li>• engaging in conversations about resources, tasks and assignments provided/posted;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring time spent engaging in online and offline learning;</li> <li>• helping to provide emotional balance through ensuring ample room and time for reflection, physical activity, conversation, rest and play.</li> </ul>
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## 5. General Guidelines and Expectations

The Education Endowment Foundation, in its report on distance learning during school closure, highlights the following:

- 1. Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered;**
- 2. Ensuring access to technology is key, particularly for disadvantaged pupils;**
- 3. Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes;**
- 4. Supporting pupils to work independently can improve learning outcomes.**

Therefore, it is important that everything put in place meets the four guidelines referenced above and that we have clear expectations for blended learning.

### Expectations:

- Establish a Google Classroom (Years 2-6) and See Saw (Nur – Year 1) for each individual class and ensure it is used in the most effective and efficient way. The establishment of the Google Classroom and its effective use is the responsibility of the class teacher;
- Ensure that the title/label of the Google Classroom/ See Saw clearly identifies the class and teacher so that pupils can easily identify and quickly access classrooms;
- Recognise the need for one 'work stream' - the work completed during face-to-face learning will complement and consolidate the work completed by pupils remotely, and vice versa;
- Consider and plan for the 'work stream' to be completed, anticipating likely questions and problems that pupils may encounter;
- Ensure face-to-face learning incorporates:
  - the introduction of new concepts;
  - the explanation of difficult concepts;
  - problem solving;
  - explicit teaching of new skills;
  - tasks that complement and consolidate the learning that takes place at home;
  - interactive discussion;
  - practicals (as/when appropriate);
  - the use of class time to personalise learning.
- Ensure at-home learning incorporates:
  - tasks that complement and consolidate the learning that takes place in the classroom;

- tasks that pupils can complete to enhance learning that takes place in the classroom, for example, research of/reading about a new topic to be introduced;
  - tasks that allow pupils to practise new skills learnt during face-to-face time in school;
  - note-taking, summarising and formation of questions in preparation for face-to-face time in school.
- ‘Chunk’ work that is to be completed. Masses of content should not simply be ‘dropped’ into Google Classroom with a completion date. Teachers should consider learning objectives for periods as set via the school website and ensure that all tasks to be completed (both in school and at home) allow pupils to meet these objectives;
  - Clearly communicate learning objectives, for each two-week period of work, to pupils so that they know exactly what is expected of them and what they will be doing in school and at home;
  - Make deadlines for work completion clear to pupils. Make explicit the method of how pupils can submit completed written work (e.g. during face to face lessons on paper/ books, by uploading to Google Classroom etc.);
  - Provide clear instructions for how the work set can be completed. These instructions can be delivered during the face-to-face time with pupils but should also be available for pupils to access at home, either by uploading them to Google Classroom/ See Saw / School website or by including them in the paper resources provided;
  - Consider how videos/podcasts can be used effectively to supplement, complement, and assist with the completion of, work set.

### **On the Boil platforms**

The school will also ensure pupils have access to regular ongoing and further independent learning activities via the website and other platforms e.g Mathletics, Abacus, Bug Club

### **Marking, feedback and assessment**

In line with the School’s Marking and Feedback Policy, not all submitted written work needs to be quality marked in detail by the teacher; however, it is important that work completion is tracked so that pupils who are not engaging with the work set can be appropriately supported. It is important to remember that feedback is considered so that learning, rather than simply provision, is taking place. The nature of marking and feedback given will depend on the type of work completed and the method of submission.

The School’s Marking and Feedback Policy should be followed as the overall framework on which to base our approach.

Staff should consider how pupils can be formally assessed so that progress can be effectively monitored and intervention can be put in place where necessary.

Self-assessment may be an integral part of a blended learning approach; however, in order for this to be effective, pupils must be able to accurately and confidently self assess their work and progress.

### **Engagement**

For a blended learning approach to be effective, it is of critical importance that all pupils engage with the process. Therefore, pupils must have a secure understanding of what they have to do and by when.

Differentiation, a comprehensive overview and clear instruction will be of critical importance, to enable pupils to balance work completed in school and at home.

We expect that all pupils will engage with this approach to teaching and learning and exceptional levels of engagement can be celebrated. It needs to be made clear to pupils that work is not “optional” and we expect tasks to be completed. Clear deadlines should be set to give pupils an explicit understanding of what is required, by when.

If pupils do not engage appropriately, our normal procedures coordinated by Mrs Jenkins will apply. However, we must recognise that pupils may be having difficulty in adapting to the new way of working or are struggling with barriers to learning, e.g. lack of space to work at home; unreliable broadband or limited ICT provision; etc. Therefore, it is important to try and establish what these barriers are and how we might help to remove them.

Established lines of referral (Class Teacher – Mrs Jenkins) should be used as necessary. Communication with pupils in school and with parents at home will be an important way of addressing these issues.

If a pupil still fails to engage, then the usual agreed wellbeing and pastoral care proceedings will be invoked by Mrs Jenkins or Mr Taylor.

## **Training**

To ensure that pupils can make the most of blended and distance learning, they may require training and support on:

- the effective use of Google Classroom:
  - how to navigate the Classroom;
  - how to access material provided by the teacher
  - how to submit work;
  - how to keep track of tasks/assignments.
- how to ensure the Classroom is the main source of setting and receiving work;
- how to organise Google Classroom and, in particular, classwork into categories; to photograph their work rather than upload a ‘Word’ document) within Google Classroom;
- how to create a quiz/assignment on Google forms;
- the effective use of PowerPoint including;
- creating and embedding podcasts and video clips into PP;
- use of hyperlinks to bring pupils from PP to necessary documents.

Teachers may use time not spent teaching to:

- source/create podcasts/videos relevant to SoWs for use when pupils are working at home;

- create prescriptive self-assessment templates for use with pupils, especially for tasks that will be completed at home that would not otherwise be teacher assessed.

## **6. Content and Timing**

With 100% in-school capacity, home learning should comply with the school's agreed Home Learning policy – (reading, spelling, tasks assigned by the teacher)

However, if in-school capacity is less than 100%, the following guidance should apply. Research indicates that pupils cannot be expected to replicate the school day when learning at home; therefore, it is unrealistic to expect pupils to engage in five hours of independent work per day that they are at home. However, in order to ensure that pupils gain maximum benefit from the blended learning experience, teachers should set tasks that allow for the lesson objectives to be met; the activity content to be completed; and, the time spent learning in school to be as productive as possible. As a guide, pupils should allocate their time spent learning at home as per the previous example timetable sent out in lockdown.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

Blended Learning will be monitored weekly during the autumn term.