Maintaining learning continuity: Template for schools

These templates from Welsh Government have been designed to support schools when considering planning for learning continuity. Schools may use the templates as they are, or they may wish to adjust them for their own use, design and methods to create their own plans. It is advisable that the plans are reviewed yearly, aligned to the school's business continuity plan. Further information found here

Criteria	All schools should consider the following areas and ensure that they are addressed in their learning continuity planning.	Specific school notes
1. Learner access All learners know how to log in, access, complete, upload and log out of schools virtual learning system (for example, Hwb).	• All learners provided with a log in and access to the school's preferred virtual learning platform (for example, Hwb). • Learning design or activities provide regular opportunities for learners to use and become familiar with Hwb tools.	
2. Learner equipment All learners have access to ICT hardware and an internet connection.	• Audit school community periodically. • Monitor learner engagement with digital home learning. • Engage with the local authority to create solutions for those learners who are digitally excluded.	During very rare periods of extended school closure, school laptops/chromebooks supplied.
3. Regular curriculum content Schools' normal curriculum offer, teaching and learning design should provide regular opportunities for learners to be both taught and apply new digital skills in a range of areas of learning and experience. This should happen both in and beyond the school building.	• Long- and medium-term planning identifies opportunities for blended or digital skills to be taught in lessons. • School teaching and learning policy reflects the importance of blended approaches to learning.	

4. Highly skilled workforce All members of the workforce have opportunities for high-quality professional learning to develop their own personal digital skills.	• Audit of staff skills periodically. • Professional learning calendar to identify opportunities to share good practice and develop new skills. • Engagement at regional level to access quality professional learning.	

Learner absence

In addition to the suggestions set out in the table above, all learning continuity planning should address how schools will support learners who are absent. Learner absence should be included in the school's learning continuity plan or within the school's existing planning systems. The table below is designed as a prompt to help to support the planning process.

Individual	Groups/cohorts	Whole school
• Sickness beyond 1 week • Medical reasons resulting in absence from school (for example, hospital stay or recovery period) • School or public transport issues beyond 2 days • Bereavement or compassionate leave	• Illness of a group or cohort beyond 3 days • School or public transport issues beyond 2 days • Unexpected critical staffing levels resulting in partial school closure (for example, high levels of staff illness or severe weather disruption) • Isolated building issues (for example, part of the building unusable so full capacity on site not possible)	• Illness of significant number of learners resulting in full school closure • Community illness and instruction to close whole school • Unexpected critical staffing levels resulting in whole school closure (for example, high levels of staff illness or severe weather disruption) • Significant school or public transport issues beyond 2 days • Poor weather resulting in more than 3 days of school closure

Has the school considered …	Area	School specific notes (if appropriate)
• its preferred virtual learning platform that is appropriate for the age of the learner (for example, Hwb)?	Learner	
• how learners are taught to log in and access the school's preferred virtual learning platform with increasing independence?	Learner	
• how learners access, use and save on the school's preferred learning platform?	Learner	
• individual learners' or families' access to ICT equipment?	Learner	

	Area	
• individual learners' or families' access to connectivity?	Learner	
• how to identify vulnerable learners and develop strategies to manage contact with these learners in the event of absence or closure?	Learner	
• how it would provide continuity of learning to learners who do not have access to ICT equipment and/or connectivity? Has the school considered how it would disseminate and collect this work?	Learner	
• how the curriculum provides appropriate opportunities for learners to access and learn through the preferred virtual learning platform, both in and beyond school, on a regular basis?	Curriculum	
• how its vision and strategy for effective teaching and learning includes opportunities for learners to learn through blended strategies?	Curriculum	
• how suitably staff are trained and confident to effectively use the preferred virtual learning platform in their daily routines?	Workforce	
• how it provides regular, high-quality professional learning to enable staff to deliver high-quality learning experiences both in and beyond the school?	Workforce	
• individual staff access to ICT equipment and connectivity?	Workforce	
• workload management for staff and strategies to support this?	Workforce	

Staff-related absence (unplanned)

In addition to the suggestions set out in the table on pages 1 and 2, all learning continuity planning should address how schools will manage staff absence that is unplanned. Managing staff absence that is unplanned should be included in the school's learning continuity plan or within the school's existing planning systems. The table below is designed as a prompt to help to support the planning process.

Individual	Group	Whole school
• Illness • Bereavement or compassionate leave • Public transport issues	• Illness of groups of staff • Public transport issues	• Community illness across nearly all staff • Severe weather disruption

Has the school considered …	Area	School specific notes (if appropriate)
• developing and sharing a supply cover policy or strategy that is understood by all stakeholders?	Workforce	

• developing a relationship with a preferred supply agency to provide cover for staff absence?	Workforce	
• developing relationships with other agencies to provide additional cover if needed?	Workforce	
• developing a well-understood process for staff to report personal illness early to allow appropriate cover to be arranged?	Workforce	
• developing a pre-arranged strategy to provide short-term internal cover in emergency and 'unforeseeable absence' in line with the requirements as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document 2021?	Workforce	
• developing a system to monitor and support staff well-being during periods of high staffing absence?	Workforce	
• how it adheres to the local authority's attendance and well-being policy to reduce staff absence? Does the school engage with the policy and, where needed, other agencies to ensure a safe and timely return to work for absent staff?	Workforce	
• how the professional learning offer provides staff with the relevant professional learning and skills to deliver virtual learning at a comparable quality to face-to-face learning?	Workforce	
• how will it provide addition planning and preparation time for staff to reflect the additional pressures of delivering virtual learning content?	Workforce	
• how it will communicate with parents, carers and families that sets out expectations for virtual learning, learning time and protected time for staff to plan and monitor?	Workforce	

Other system-related issues

In addition to the suggestions set out in the table on pages 1 and 2, all learning continuity planning should address how schools will manage disruption that is caused by other system-related issues. Managing other system-related issues should be included in the school's learning continuity plan or within the school's existing planning systems. The table below is designed as a prompt to help to support the planning process.

Groups	Whole school
• Fire, flood or other damage in one part of the school resulting in a reduced capacity onsite (for example, within a block of classrooms)	• Fire, flood or other damage to most of the school building resulting in its full closure • Management information system and other online system outages

Has the school considered …	Area	School specific notes (if appropriate)
• how it monitors health and safety, including the condition of the school, and ensuring that statutory checks are completed and update date?		
• who to contact in the local authority in the event of an emergency or routine works? Is this understood by all key stakeholders?		
• how staff can complete routine safety checks (for example, ensuring plugs are turned off at the end of the day in their classrooms)?		
• how the school checks the site's security on a daily basis (for example, ensuring plugs are switched off, taps are turned off, etc.)?		
• how the condition of the school building is widely reported to governors? Is there a named governor for health and safety?		
• how to access support from governors during an emergency to ensure the local authority resolves the issue as quickly as possible?		
• what other appropriate buildings and spaces are available in the local area which could be used to educate groups of learners?		

• how it would handle a management information system (MIS) outage? In the event of a MIS outage how would the school:
  – register learners
  – access learners' emergency contact details
  – access staff emergency contact details?		

• how it would handle an outage of an online payment and management system for school lunches (for example, using a paper-based system, a reduced menu system, asking families to provide packed lunches for the period)?		
• how it would manage an outage of an online safeguarding management system? Is there an agreed plan in place in the event of an outage to safeguarding learners?		
• how it would communicate with parents, carers and families in the event of a technology system outage? Are there protocols in place to provide emergency communications?		