



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Response by the Portfolio Holder:

Over the course of the first half term, since the inception of the Stay Safe, Stay Learning policy on 20th April, there has been a fluctuation in the number of Powys' children accessing online learning resources. At the highest levels, across Powys, there have been approximately 80% of pupils engaged in learning. The focus of a majority of the learning activities have been to support children's wellbeing. The majority of activities have been off-line activities or active learning opportunities which allow pupils to develop and apply their independent learning skills.

Over the period there has been a fluctuation in pupil engagement. There are a range of reason that engagement has fluctuated. Some of these are:

- Digital Connectivity: at the start of the period there were 880 Powys families without digital devices. Also, 500 families did not have, or experienced, connectivity issues. These have been addressed through loans of laptops and MiFi devices.
- Engaged in other activities: some schools report that children are engaged in other activities through choice rather than those set by schools, for example, farming.
- Diminishing motivation with distance learning: Due to the approaches schools have adopted to distance learning, (ie, sharing of off-line tasks, lack of on-line synchronous teaching, self-motivation to complete tasks), some pupils have become disengaged with learning. Many schools have initiated on-line contact with pupils to check on their well-being. There is an increase in the number of on-line lessons being developed following a change in Welsh Government guidance at the end of the May half term. <https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/online-safety/live-streaming-safeguarding-principles-and-practice-for-education-practitioners/>

At the start of the Continuity of Learning plan, Schools were organised into clusters around their high school to design and agree a cluster Continuity of Learning Plan to ensure a consistent approach to distance learning throughout the cluster. Challenge Advisors were assigned to each cluster to support the implementation of Continuity of Learning plans. The Challenge Adviser Team produced Powys Distance learning plans with defined actions for each of the 12 deliverables on a fortnightly basis. This allowed clear, focused tasks for schools and the Local Authority to implement the Continuity of Learning plan. The School Improvement team produced weekly professional development newsletters to schools, detailing approaches to distance learning and highlighting resources to support these approaches.

The focus over the first half-term has been the establishment of distance learning practices, ensuring that children's wellbeing is at the heart of the learning process. Schools have worked with the local authority to initiate quality assurance process for

learning. Senior leaders have been part of welfare Teams calls to children and have taken part in discussions about learning. Through support from school improvement officers, schools are developing opportunities to use feedback functionality on HWB tools to provide children with written feedback on their learning. This is monitored by senior leaders within schools. Most teachers share planning of activities with headteachers to ensure continuity in learning. This information has been used to inform the cluster Continuity of Learning plans.