

## **CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM (CSC)**

### **REPORT FOR JOINT COMMITTEE**

**16<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

#### **JOINT EDUCATION SERVICE**

#### **REPORT OF THE DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR – PROGRESS IN DIGITAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

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##### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To update members on the professional learning provided by the Digital team of Central South Consortium and to acknowledge progress to date.

##### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that Members

- Review and accept the progress report; and
- Consider any further activity CSC should undertake to support schools across the region

##### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

3.1 During March 2020, in response to Covid-19, planned support for professional learning was adapted to respond to school needs. Throughout the summer term, the digital team continued to provide support to schools with previously identified digital needs. In addition, bespoke support was offered to all schools across the region to ensure continuity of learning.

3.2 In light of increased demand for service support, the digital team was expanded to include a further Lead Practitioner (0.6 FTE). A comprehensive recruitment process took place and a candidate appointed for the remainder of the financial year. The remainder of the team is comprised of the Strategic Lead for Digital Education (Full-time) in addition to three digital officers (Full-time / 0.6 FTE / 0.4 FTE).

3.3 Professional learning, planned for in-person delivery, was adapted into an online format in order to support all schools across the region. Direct school support was provided online from March 2020.

3.4 Over the course of the Summer term 2020, the digital team worked to support Welsh Government's 'Continuity of Learning' programme. This included providing guidance to parents and carers, raising the profile of tools in the system and utilising the Hwb platform to share good practice.

3.5 The digital team supported schools in the use of online collaborative platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Google Classroom. Frequent support requests were made as schools adapted to the needs of isolated learners and potential disruption.

Between March and July 2020, the team directly supported over 70 individual schools.

#### **4.0 SUMMARY OF SUPPORT PROVISION**

- 4.1 Since September 2020, the team has directly supported 54 schools (46 Primary / 5 Secondary / 3 Special). The nature of support requests has been context driven with the majority of support request (38) directly linked to blended learning provision. The remaining requests focused on developing digital learning across the curriculum and supporting middle leaders in schools. Support packages have been tailored to suit the particular needs of each setting following an initial scoping meeting. The vast majority of support sessions have been conducted through video conferencing due to the impact of local and national lockdowns, and in compliance with the latest guidance. Additionally, guidance was published to support schools to plan for continuity of learning, and the team continued to respond to ad-hoc support requests through email correspondence and telephone conversations.
- 4.2 Termly primary and secondary digital network meetings have continued. During the autumn term, 12 schools were represented at the secondary digital network meeting with a further 44 engaging with the primary network. Timings were reduced to reflect the added pressure on engagement resulting from the pandemic. These meetings gave opportunity for schools to share their approaches to blended learning and to celebrate effective practice.
  - 4.2.1 A series of webinars have been scheduled to support Newly Qualified Teachers in the use of the Hwb platform a total of 60 NQTs engaged with further 100 engagements with the recorded sessions. Further supporting webinars focusing on direct teaching provision have been made available to practitioners.
  - 4.2.2 Materials to support a variety of approaches to direct teaching have been uploaded to the [Knowledge Bank area of the CSC website](#) and have had 218 views to date. These materials illustrate the range of tools available to practitioners as they make provision for isolating learners.
  - 4.2.3 The online [Professional Learning Offer](#) contains a range of supporting playlists to provide guidance in the use of Hwb applications to develop blended learning approaches. These materials will be supplemented by further practitioner developed materials focusing on digital leadership and pedagogy with modular releases over the course of the financial year.
- 4.3 Welsh Government and the cross regional digital advisors' group has developed and shared a range of blended learning materials to support senior leaders, practitioners, parents and carers. These materials are available via the [Hwb platform](#) and provide guidance and video tutorials to support stakeholders during the current pandemic.
  - 4.3.1 Additionally, in collaboration with Welsh Government, the regional consortia have developed a [digital self-review tool](#), hosted on Hwb, to support practitioners in assessing and further developing their current digital strategy. This tool is currently available to all Hwb users as a beta version. Pilot schools from across Wales are informing further improvements to the tool.
- 4.4 CSC have engaged with Local Authorities as part of the EdTech programme through attendance at digital strategy group meetings. Additionally, the digital team continue

to develop closer links with each LA and the termly regional digital meeting will take place during November 2020.

- 4.5 Regional guidance was produced in response to the needs of the system. Guidance provided synthesised research to schools and ensured consistency in the use of language across the region. In line with the Central South Wales Challenge (CSWC) and our regional strategy for empowering schools, all documents have been produced to provide schools with a number of solutions and strategies, rather than a singular approach. Improvement partners and strategic teams use these with schools to support decision making and broker professional learning and support as required.

Publication	Date
<a href="#">Distance Learning Considerations</a>	May 2020
<a href="#">Web based Professional Learning Guidance Published</a>	May 2020
<a href="#">Blended Learning Guidance Published</a>	June 2020
<a href="#">Web Based Professional Learning Guidance published</a>	July 2020
New website section for <a href="#">Blended Learning</a> (was initially Distance Learning)	June 2020
New website section for <a href="#">Professional Learning</a>	June 2020
<a href="#">Continuity of Learning during Covid-19 guidance</a>	October 2020

- 4.6 In direct support of the situation arising from COVID-19 a number of professional learning opportunities were specifically developed in response to school needs. These focused on well-being, pedagogy and distance/blended learning.



Strategic Area	Specific PL to support well-being and distance & blended learning
<a href="#">Digital</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating playlist to support learning</li> <li>• Developing Interactive quizzing webinar</li> <li>• Google classroom: An introduction</li> <li>• Adobe Spark for Direct teaching (November 2020)</li> <li>• NQT webinar: The Power of Hwb (November 2020)</li> </ul>

4.7 DCF in-depth cluster training materials are in the final stages of development and a pilot has been planned for December 2020. The digital team will work with clusters of schools to further enhance understanding of cross-curricular skills development and to support cluster working.

## 5.0 IMPACT TO DATE

Items of progress to note include:

- Following direct support, schools have been upskilled in the use of Hwb platform applications to support distance learning
- Schools shared approaches and considerations for blended learning at Network meetings
- Hwb platform usage has increased significantly (Appendix A)
- Publish guidance has supported schools to review and adapt distance learning provision

Case Study A	
Case Study B	

## 6.0 NEXT STEPS

Short term priorities include:

- Complete the DCF in-depth cluster pilot
- Publish Computational Thinking Unplugged to support professional learning
- Support schools in utilising technology for direct teaching
- Respond to emerging school needs and national policy changes

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

CSC continue to support schools and respond to the challenges presented by the pandemic. The digital team have provided bespoke support for an increased number of schools. A growing [e-professional learning offer](#) continues to provide further support and guidance to practitioners across the region.

## APPENDIX A: HWB ENGAGEMENT

Between February and March 2020, 93.78% of schools in the Region saw an increase in the number of logins to Hwb, with 24 schools not seeing any increase in this time period. 369 schools saw an increase in total logins when comparing their average pre-covid logins (Sep 19 – Feb 20) to their logins in March 20.

Local Authority	Jun 20 - Sep 19
<b>Bridgend</b>	751.8
<b>Vale of Glamorgan</b>	472.8
<b>RCT</b>	291.3
<b>Merthyr Tydfil</b>	273.2
<b>Cardiff</b>	552.4
<b>CSC</b>	483.3

Table 1: The % increase in logins from September 2019 to June 2020.

When student logins are compared, just under 90% of schools saw an increase in student logins from February 2020 to March 2020. The average student logins per month has already increased substantially between pre-covid months and March 2020 onwards:

Download Month	Student Logins Total	Student Accounts Total	Average Student Logins
Sep 2019	58630	122527	0.48
Oct 2019	20982	123125	0.17
Nov 2019	113235	125097	0.91
Dec 2019	82110	98364	0.83
Jan 2020	106438	97201	1.10
Feb 2020	124898	98515	1.27
Mar 2020	452246	106677	4.24
Apr 2020	362863	109630	3.31
May 2020	356907	110914	3.22
June 2020	400224	111681	3.58
July 2020	194027	112488	1.72
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2272560</b>	<b>1216219</b>	<b>1.87</b>

Table 2: Student logins from September 2019 to July 2020

It should be noted that the figures for April may be reduced due to the Easter holidays and Spring Bank holiday might have reduced the figures for May also. July may also be impacted with the end of terms towards the end of the month.

Figures for the use of Google or Office 365 software show a significant increase in schools utilising the Google suite. This pattern developed in line with school closures and continued towards the end of the Summer Term 2020. Nearly 80% of schools in the region had Office 365 as the most used suite of software in September 2019, with an increase to approximately 85% of schools in February. This fell to just under 60% of schools in July.