

Re-starting learning model for North Wales

Introduction

On June 3 the Welsh Government (WG) announced that there would be a phased opening of schools from 29th June, 2020 to give all pupils the opportunity to “check in, catch up and prepare.” Welsh Government have published their Learning Guidance [<https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-guidance-learning-over-summer-term>] to provide advice on learning and teaching taking place in schools and settings for the remainder of the summer term and to support practitioners as they prepare for the autumn term.

The WG guidance provided gives schools considerable flexibility to exercise their professional judgement in how they will plan their offer to their pupils. Schools now have an outline framework for planning teaching and learning for the autumn term 2020. Welsh Government will be publishing more detailed guidance and expectations for learning in the autumn term in due course.

The guidance support schools as they re-evaluate learning for the foreseeable future in response to a range of challenges:

- Supporting learners to return to ‘learning fitness’.
- Developing learning which allows learners to continue to progress.
- Ensuring coherence for learners between in school and remote learning.
- Develop appropriate learning while current curriculum requirements have been disapplied.
- Use the ethos, principles and guidance of the new Curriculum for Wales as support to the current challenges, rather than this being an additional burden.
- To encourage practitioners to use and develop their professional judgment to best benefit learners.

Context

- All learners will therefore ‘restart’ their learning during the autumn academic term 2020 following an offer of check in and catch up period in the last three/four weeks of the 2019-2020 academic year;
- Not all learners chose to take part in the three or four week check in;
- 54% of 12-18 year olds were worried about falling behind in their learning;
- Welsh Government have shared an early discussion power-point with ADEW; and
- On June 29th Estyn and the 4 Regional Consortia jointly published a guidance on ‘Developing integrated approaches to blended learning’.

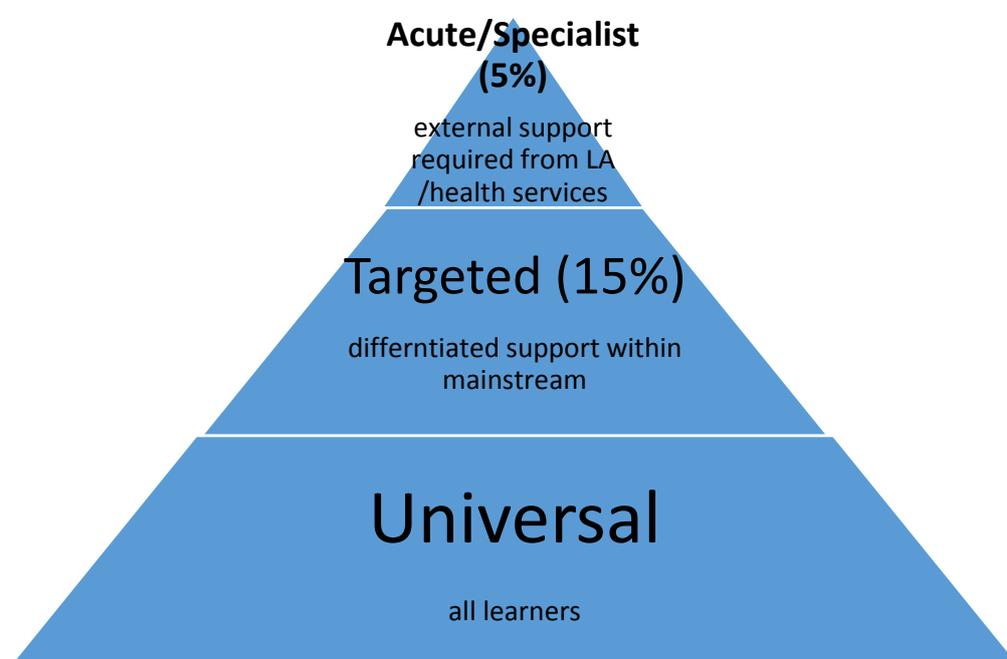
Issues to address

Schools need to assess the fitness of learning of their pupils before introducing new learning.

The school's preparedness or approach to ensure learning for all pupils would initially focus on three inter-related components that would assess pupils' fitness for learning:

- Emotional and mental well-being;
- Health and physical fitness; and
- Core skills of numeracy and literacy, learning to learn, independence skills.

The three components could be divided into the three categories of need in the triangle below:



The model would be made up of the following areas of learning. Schools need to ensure that they can offer provision for their learners against each area to ensure equity and equality. Responsibility for supporting schools to deliver each element would be agreed between LAs, GwE and other agencies such as health. The triangle of need approach raises clear questions for school leaders: What is our universal provision for Emotional wellbeing, physical, literacy, *etc.*; then for those children / staff who need more, what is our targeted provision? (Appendix 1).

Table 1: Areas of learning and categories of need

	Physical fitness	Wellbeing fitness	Core skills fitness
Universal			

Targeted			
Acute/specialist			

Each learner's needs and personalised support required can be identified using the table above. This would be the basis for schools to plan the provision to support 'learning fitness' in the short (September), medium (autumn to July) and for the long term for some learners. However, one of the dangers of this categorising system is children then start to be labelled a 'targeted child' 'he's specialist, acute etc. So there is need for clarity on the triangle that it is not a labelling system and a child's individual profile will be unique to them and based on their support needs within that area – e.g., – might need specialist support for numeracy, but universal for fitness. It's about categorising the support needs not the child. It also avoids schools being able to say "this child has needs that are too complex for us" since the idea is more about how do schools ensure that they can provide a suitable learning environment for ALL pupils. In North Wales a collaborative service of LAs, Consortia and wider agencies could collectively plan appropriate provision to meet all needs of learners. Schools will need to develop clear procedures and require some flexibility within resources to be able to respond to learners' needs as they are identified, understanding that is both a short and longer term approach.

Managing expectations

Expectation of what can be achieved in the short term will need to be managed and schools and setting should consider the following:

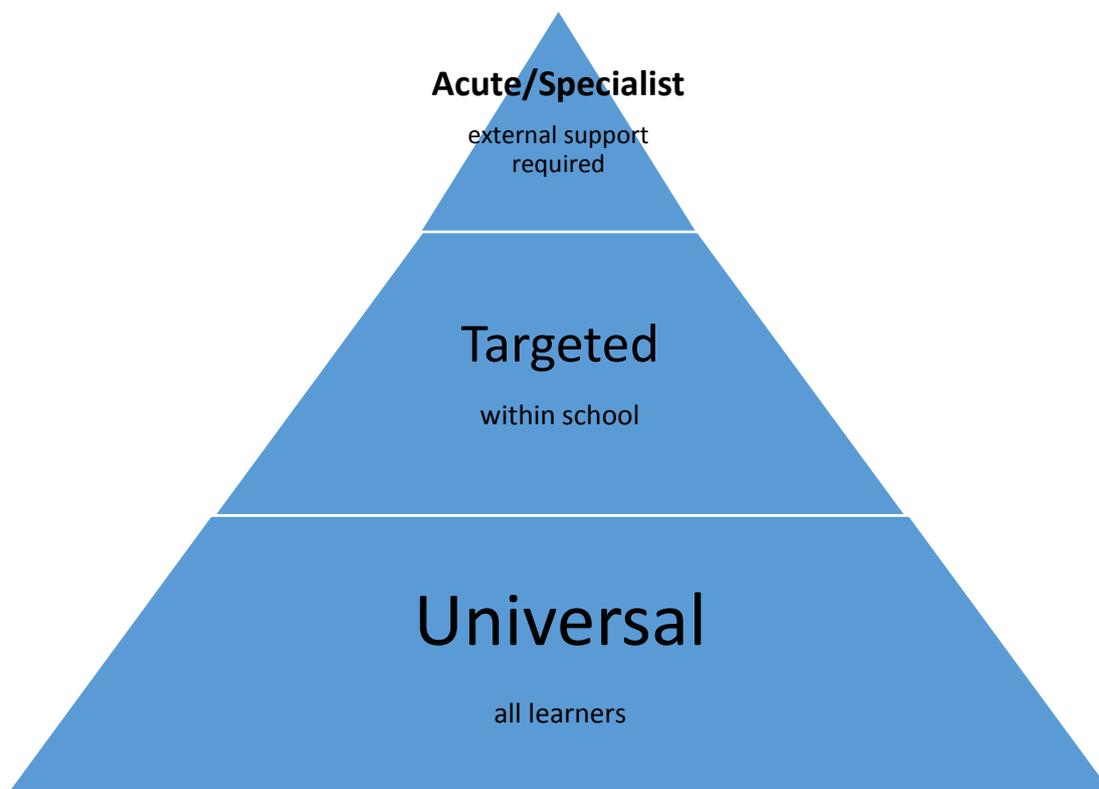
- Time lost is time lost and this cannot be made up without losing energy and time in other areas of learning. There is a likelihood that schools probably won't have the resources to bring in wide ranging catch-up programmes when they reopen. It's reasonable to assume that a -0.1 effect size for a typical summer holiday is likely now to be a cumulatively huge loss in learning, i.e., 3 summer holidays' worth is -0.3, which is approaching a year's worth of typical teaching;
- From Research, there are specific programmes that are proven to be more successful in improving core skills; and
- Current attendance data may be used as a starting point to analyse the extent of the problem.

Further issues to consider

- Every learner needs to restart;
- Time should be taken to evaluate how much engagement with learning each individual undertook in the Summer term of 2020 and their general emotional wellbeing and attitude towards being back in school;

- How do we prioritise resources and support;
- Identifying priority groups also creates non priority groups;
- Extend the School day for targeted and acute support but not necessarily led by school staff;
- Leadership needs to be compassionate, listens and is clear where support will be most effective in developing blended learning models;
- Define the role of parents in blended learning and the support they will need; How will this be achieved?
- Invest in developing community connections to help schools meet learner needs rather than employ extra staff; (voluntary, university, leisure, focussed child care)
- Work with university to ensure a clear baseline is established and progress is captured accurately to inform future planning.
- Is attendance now compulsory or is it still optional?

Identifying Professional Development needs of staff or School capacity to meet learner's needs



A school could use the triangle above as a heuristic for their own self-reflection / professional learning and as a guidance on how they progress. Once they have a clear vision of what the blended learning should be, they could decide what their staff universal professional learning needs are:

- what support do all staff need

- staff that might need targeted support to develop, and
- a small number that will require specialist support to deliver effective learning.

This could include:

- developing a collaborative approach within their clusters to share expertise;
- temporary employment of teachers/extra staff e.g. New Zealand government investing in Health and Wellbeing curriculum leads in their schools for the next phase;
- link in with longer term CfW work and the Health and Wellbeing AoLE as schools consider the development of whole school approach and allow teachers and learners to reconnect positive relationships.

Appendix 1

	Getting ready to learn		
	Physical fitness	Emotional/wellbeing fitness	Core skills of literacy and numeracy
UNIVERSAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overarching 'Be-Active' guidance on high level principles and links to practical resources for teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blended Learning models and exemplars for each Key Stage wellbeing as part of an integrated approach. <p>Documentation on dashboard includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspects for Considerations - Pupil Support & Wellbeing Practical considerations for Wellbeing Wellbeing questionnaire for learners – return to school Reflective activities to support your classroom practice - Welcoming Year 7 students Back to School Social Story resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary and Secondary Teaching and Learning guidance Blended Learning models and exemplars for each Key Stage with focus on Key Skills as part of an integrated approach. Accelerated Learning models and exemplars focusing on boosting literacy and numeracy skills.
TARGETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>Documentation on dashboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the Preconditions for Trauma Anna Freud Centre for Mental Health – Helping Children manage anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and numeracy teaching and fluency materials Remote Instruction of Language and Literacy project EAL Resources for home learning KS3 literacy intervention programme KS3 numeracy fluency materials
MORE ACUTE			
The role of the parent/carer to further support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slimmed down overview of simple activities that can be carried out at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents Tips - Preparing your child for school CAMHS Resources Supporting Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and numeracy teaching and fluency materials for parents

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible development of series of guides using instructional/skill cards (Sports Wales) – shared through social media? Through series of webinars? Leaflets? Short videos? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional CAMHS Resources – How do I explain Coronavirus to my child • Work with agencies to write tips – written by parents for parents? • Series of short video clips of how to support shared on social media? • Access to bulletin/newsletters with links to resources? • Use of wider community to support where possible and in harder to reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with parents to support the learning of pupils who use EAL document • Overarching letter from 6 LAs/GwE to parents explaining approach to blended learning? • Series of short training sessions with practical tips on how to support? • Creation of support loan boxes for home (games/dice to help)
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