



BRYN CELYNNOG

Comprehensive School

Nurturing Success

BLENDED LEARNING POLICY

**LAST APPROVED BY GOVERNORS:
NOVEMBER 2020**

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Blended learning policy

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it necessary for schools to adopt a blended learning approach in order to ensure that teaching and learning can take place effectively in any instances of school closures, or of student self-isolation. Blended learning refers to a blend of in-school and home learning. In this way the current curriculum/ examination courses can be delivered in a more flexible manner, using traditional teaching/classroom approaches, supported by an online delivery platform (in the case of Bryncelynog Comprehensive School our online delivery platform is Microsoft Teams).

The current approach to blended learning being used at Bryncelynog does not include synchronous learning, where the teacher conducts live lessons that are streamed. Our blended learning model uses Teams to make tasks, advice and resources available to students. This is supported by the Chat feature on Teams, and by other communications such as email, in order to support learning and to provide feedback. Teachers may use other resources, such as audio lectures, podcasts and PowerPoint presentations with audio commentary, and subject specific software packages in order to enhance learning. Where blended learning can be planned in advance, hard copies of resources may be provided, in order to enable students to access their work in a manner similar to that that they would experience in the class room.

Roles and responsibilities in relation to blended learning

SMT will:

- Develop (in consultations with key staff) the whole-school approach to blended learning
- Communicate this policy to staff, student and parents
- Provide suitable training to staff and to students to enable effective blended learning to take place
- Conduct an annual review of blended learning and communicate this to staff

Heads of Faculty/Heads of Department will:

- Determine, in consultation with their Faculty/Department, which approach(es) to blended learning best suit the needs of their Faculty/Department
- Trial and implement suitable approaches to blended learning
- Monitor the impact of these approaches to blended learning

Heads of Learning will:

- Monitor the engagement of students in their year group with blended learning
- Provide appropriate non subject-specific interventions when needed

Classroom teachers will:

- Implement the use of Teams with their classes in line with their Faculty/Departmental approach
- Deliver blended learning content and activities that take into account the needs of all students
- Monitor the work completed and submitted by students.
- Mark/assess the work submitted by students via Teams.
- When needed, communicate with individual students via Teams in order to address any issues and concerns that may arise with their work.

Minimum expectations

The review of Microsoft Teams completed in November 2020 sought to establish how different Faculties/Departments had been using Teams since the first lockdown in March 2020. It identified a great deal of good practice. The following are the minimum expectations expected of staff in their use of Microsoft Teams:

- Every teaching group will have access to a Team for every subject
- Teams will be used to set work for students who are self-isolating
- In the Sixth Form there will be Year 12 and 13 Teams, a Student Leadership Development Team, and a Seren Hub Team
- Staff will use the Post facility on Teams to inform students of the work and the tasks/activities undertaken in that lesson, along with access to suitable resources (for students who are absent or self-isolating). This will be updated regularly to ensure that students who are not in school can keep up to date with their work
- Staff will use the Chat facility to communicate with students when needed
- Staff will use the Files section to store resources necessary to support blended learning

Further usage

A number of Faculties and staff are using Teams in a more advanced manner, including the use of Assignments and Class Notebook. Staff training will be provided in the more advanced use of Teams in order to disseminate good practice throughout the school.

Student engagement

In such uncertain times, student engagement with blended learning needs to be monitored. This should be monitored by classroom teachers, but also by Heads of Faculty/Heads of Learning examining data on Teams usage by each student. Interventions must take into account any barriers to learning that may exist, difficulties in adapting to new ways of working, and the anxiety and uncertainty that is currently affecting so many students. It is expected that all students engage in their blended learning activities, meet deadlines, and submit work of an appropriate standard. It is the role of classroom teachers, Heads of Department/Faculty, and Heads of Learning to support students in this. Interventions should therefore be targeted at the specific needs of each individual student, taking a holistic approach, and involving suitable communication with parents/carers.

Monitoring and review

Heads of Faculty should monitor their use of blended learning through the whole-school review process, which will be amended to include blended learning provision, and through their annual Faculty reviews. This policy will initially be reviewed every 3 months given the ever changing current situation in schools.