

Moving away from the traditional classroom- The silent digital revolution in education

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Unlocking the Digital Door to a Successful Future

We live in a digital world where nearly every aspect of our daily lives relies on technology. From how we work, learn, and connect with others. Digital skills have become an essential part of everyday life and personal success. It is hard to believe that just 10 years ago, a report by the European Commission (2016) found that nearly half of Europeans lacked the digital competence needed to benefit from these digital opportunities.

Recognising this, Donaldson's Successful Futures report (2015) stated:

"Full participation in modern society and the workplace already demands increasingly high levels of digital competence and that process can only continue into a future that we cannot imagine"

That future is now today's rapidly developing digital world. This message is more important than ever!

Developing strong digital competence is no longer optional; it is the key to unlocking the door to a successful future.



(Canva, 2025)

But what is Digital Competence?

Digital competence is much more than just knowing how to operate gadgets. It encompasses the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable people to confidently, creatively and safely navigate technology and digital systems. This includes thinking critically and applying cognitive skills, such as problem-solving, to use technology effectively and responsibly in the workplace, education and everyday life (Asagar, 2025; Welsh Government, 2018b).

Far more than just clicking buttons or following a set of instructions, it involves critically assessing data to find trustworthy and reliable information,



communicating clearly, collaborating meaningfully and creating effective digital content, making the most of what technology has to offer in this ever-evolving digital world (Asagar, 2025; Vuorikari et al., 2016).

(Tech News, 2021)

To equip the children of Wales and open that digital doorway, Donaldson (2015) introduced the *Digital Competence Framework* (DCF) (Welsh Government, 2021). As part of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021), the DCF, alongside literacy and numeracy, is a mandatory cross-curricular set of skills designed to embed digital competence across all areas of learning (Welsh Government, 2020). It is designed to support children to become enterprising, creative contributors who can thrive in an increasingly digital world, aligning with the Welsh Government's (2015) vision of a prosperous, resilient and innovative Wales.



(Canva, 2025)

What does the Digital Competence Framework (DCF) include?

WHAT DOES DIGITAL COMPETENCE MEAN?

- It is the set of skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable confident, creative and critical use of technologies.
- It is a cross-curricular theme and it is the responsibility of teachers to include it in the lessons they teach.
- It is distinct from ICT, but they are closely inter-related.
- In secondary schools, there will be some overlap between the DCF and Computer Science, for example coding will primarily feature in Comp Science.

WHAT IS ESTYN'S APPROACH TO THE DCF?

Where schools have tried to be creative and imaginative in drawing on the DCF to develop their practice in ICT for the benefits of learners, inspectors will approach innovation in a positive way.

Aspire 2Be.
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The Digital Competence Framework

There are 4 strands:

- 1 Citizenship**, which includes:
 - identity, image + reputation
 - health + wellbeing
 - digital rights, licensing + ownership
 - online behaviour + cyberbullying
- 2 Interacting + Collaborating** which includes:
 - communication
 - collaboration
 - storing + sharing
- 3 Producing**, which includes:
 - planning, sourcing + searching
 - creating
 - evaluating + improving
- 4 Data + Computational Thinking** which includes:
 - problem solving + modelling
 - data + information literacy

WHY DO WE NEED IT?

The need for a comprehensive DCF was a key recommendation of Professor Donaldson's report 'Successful Futures', where it is noted that digital competence is as important as literacy + numeracy.

HOW IS THE DCF STRUCTURED?

- The DCF has year on year progression statements, similar in structure to the National Literacy + Numeracy Framework (LNF).
- It is designed to recognise that not all children progress in the same way, but the statements provide clarity about learner progress for planning purposes.
- Some learners will progress further or faster in some aspects than in others and that learning will often span several years.

#teachmetuesday

Info from: learning.gov.wales

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(Aspire2Be, 2022)

The DCF is organised into four strands:

[Click here to find out more about the four strands](#) (Welsh Government, 2018e).



It's not a test of your digital competency!! Just hold the Ctrl button and click the link!

(Canva, 2025)

Within the four strands are five progression steps designed to support skills development, each step building on the last to ensure learners' continuous development.

Let's look at the collaboration skills within the Interacting and Collaborating strand:

Through these elements learners will look at methods of electronic communication and know which are the most effective. Learners will also store data and use collaboration techniques effectively.					
Element	Progression step 1	Progression step 2	Progression step 3	Progression step 4	Progression step 5
Collaboration	I can work with others to produce digital work.	I can use online collaborative platforms to create and edit a file, e.g. word processing, presentation tools and spreadsheets.	I can work with others to create an online collaborative project for a specific purpose, sharing and appropriately setting permissions for other group members, e.g. editing, commenting, viewing.	I can independently select and use a range of online collaboration tools to create a project with others in one or more languages, e.g. making use of online technology to share and present ideas to others.	I can reflect on choices of collaboration solutions, use them appropriately and comment on how this could be improved to meet aims of tasks.

(Welsh Government, 2021)

Look at the benefits.....



(21k School, 2024)



Collaboration is a skill that goes beyond the classroom. When children collaborate, they are not just sharing tasks, they are learning to communicate effectively, listen, share ideas and develop critical thinking (Raj, 2024). These are all crucial skills for lifelong success and align with the goals of *The Well-being of Future Generations* (Welsh Government, 2015).

(Canva, 2025)

As Bandura (1977) social learning theory suggests, we learn by observing and modelling others. Vygotsky (1978) also argues that with appropriate scaffolding from teachers and peers, learners can achieve higher levels of understanding than they could independently. Digital collaboration builds on these principles by providing opportunities for learners to communicate, experiment, problem-solve, reflect and support one another.

I'm sure you agree.....

These are essential skills not just for digital competence but for a successful future.

However, while the DCF is a mandatory cross-curricular component of the *Curriculum for Wales* (Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021), its design and delivery are non-statutory (Welsh Government, 2022b). Each school is responsible for creating and implementing its own approach to digital learning.

On one hand, this flexibility encourages creativity and allows schools to design and embed these skills in a way that suits school priorities and learners' needs (Knight and Crick, 2021).



On the other hand, this can lead to inconsistencies. With some schools developing exciting and innovative digital projects which engage and inspire learners, other schools face challenges due to teacher confidence, training or a lack of resources (Crick, 2022; Estyn, 2019). This disparity risks creating a digital divide across Wales.

(Canva, 2025)

So, we are left with the question...



Is the DCF alone an effective way to develop digital skills for children in Wales?

OR

Is it the digital competence and confidence of teachers that influences how effectively children develop their digital skills?

(Canva, 2025)

If schools get this right, the DCF can equip learners with the vital skills needed to communicate, collaborate and create responsible content in this rapidly changing digital world, helping to foster a generation of critical thinkers who can support Wales's future. If not, without consistent training, support and investment in teachers, the opportunities risk becoming nothing more than a postcode lottery, going against Wales's commitment to *The Well-being of Future Generations* (Welsh Government, 2015).

If you want to learn more about the DCF strands, you can try these videos:

(Remember... **Don't Panic!** - Just hold the Ctrl button and click the link!)

[Citizenship](#) (Welsh Government, 2018a)

[Data and computational thinking](#) (Welsh Government, 2018b)

[Interacting and collaborating](#) (Welsh Government, 2018c)

[Producing](#) (Welsh Government, 2018d)

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(Canva, 2025)



Wired or Inspired

The world we once knew has transformed! Children's lives are shifting from playgrounds and toys to screens and digital experiences. Their world is no longer filled with outdoor adventures but confined to a screen. In this digital age, children can explore the world without ever leaving their rooms, unlocking the door to a wealth of information and learning opportunities.

Preparing children for a digital future

Research suggests that screen time can support cognitive, social and emotional development by fostering imaginative play and reinforcing learning, especially in children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Canadian Paediatric Society, 2017; Mack, 2019; Swider-Cios, Vermeij and Sitskoorn, 2023). It can help bridge educational gaps by building digital literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Muppalla et al., 2023). Hamzat (2025) finds that screen use promotes social and emotional development while encouraging creativity, curiosity and a lifelong love of learning. Equipping children with these skills prepares them to thrive in a digital world, contributing to individual development and to broader economic growth in line with the goals of *The Well-being of Future Generations Act* (Welsh Government, 2015).



(Canva, 2025)

Connectivism - Learning in the digital age

Siemens's (2005) theory of Connectivism highlights that knowledge and learning are social, shaped by connections across a wide variety of interconnected networks. Learning isn't just about absorbing information, it is about continually accessing, evaluating and responding to new information, maintaining connections to keep learning. The theory emphasises the crucial role of developing the necessary skills to critically assess the value and credibility of information as well as the ability to form and respond to connections within these networks (Goldie, 2016).



(Canva, 2025)

The Global Village

Digital interactions allow children to learn about the world, explore new cultures, develop social skills and interact with peers from diverse backgrounds, fostering inclusivity, empathy and healthy relationships (Hamzat, 2025). This reflects Marshall McLuhan's (1964, cited in Living Internet, 2019) concept of the "Global Village", a world where media and technology remove physical boundaries and connect people worldwide, creating a connected global community or "village".



(Canva, 2025)

However, as McLuhan (1964, cited in Living Internet, 2019) and Dixon (2008) remind us, despite having benefits, not everyone gets along in the "Global

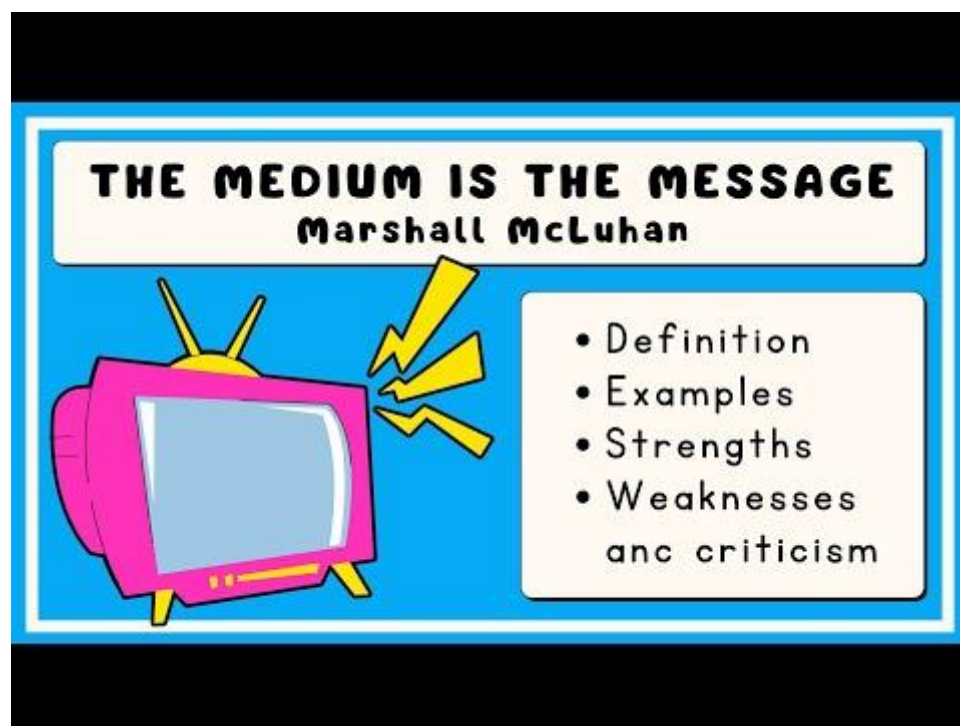


Village", and such connectivity can have its challenges. Misunderstandings, conflicts and misinformation can spread quickly and widely. For children navigating this complex digital world, developing critical thinking to assess vast amounts of information, determining what is credible, useful and trustworthy is essential in this ever-evolving online world (Dixon, 2008; Musicco Nombela, 2022).

(Canva, 2025)

Why do McLuhan's Ideas Still Matter?

It's hard to believe that Marshall McLuhan (1964, cited in Living Internet, 2019) theory of the "Global Village" and "The medium is the message" were developed in 1964, long before the internet or social media even existed! Yet his ideas remain highly relevant today as digital platforms shape how we connect, communicate and interact with the world around us. To find out more about Marshall McLuhan's theories, why not watch these videos?



(Helpful Professor Explains!, 2024)



(Simplified In Short, 2024)

The Power and Pitfalls of Technology

Technology is reshaping the way our children think, communicate and go about their daily lives. In a world overflowing with influencers, advertisements and misinformation, it's becoming harder than ever for kids to work out what information is reliable and credible. With so much content at their fingertips, technology can powerfully influence young minds and their perceptions of reality!



(Canva, 2025)

Technology offers amazing opportunities for learning, creativity and connection (Mack, 2019), but there is also a downside...

Long hours in front of a screen can have serious consequences on both mental and physical health. The mental health risks are well-documented, with studies linking excessive screen use to increased risks of anxiety, depression and behaviour problems (Plackett, Sheringham and Dykxhoorn, 2022; Presta et al., 2024; Przybylski, Orben and Weinstein, 2019). Overexposure to screens can impair children's ability to manage stress, control impulses and connect with others. Additionally, associated sedentary behaviours reduce opportunities for

fresh air, exercise and outdoor play, contributing to a rise in childhood obesity (Canadian Paediatric Society, 2017; Przybylski, Orben and Weinstein, 2019).

Heavy engagement with digital content is also associated with cognitive difficulties, including reduced working memory and problems with focus and attention. (Muppalla et al., 2023). The overstimulation from rapid-fire content can lead to challenges in concentration, making it harder for children to focus on anything that is not instantly rewarding or engaging (Swider-Cios, Vermeij and Sitskoorn, 2023). This overstimulation, often described as being 'wired', can disrupt their ability to self-regulate both attention and emotions (Presta et al., 2024; Przybylski, Orben and Weinstein, 2019).



(Canva, 2025)

How Technology Shapes the Brain



(Canva, 2025)

A study by He et al. (2023) revealed that heavy screen exposure can even alter the brain patterns linked to cognition, sensory processing and emotional regulation. Przybylski, Orben and Weinstein (2019) further argue that digital media is reshaping how we think, pay attention, communicate and even sleep. This aligns with Marshall McLuhan's concept of "the medium is the message", illustrating how technology itself can shape our experiences (Living Internet, 2019).

So, do we stop screen time?

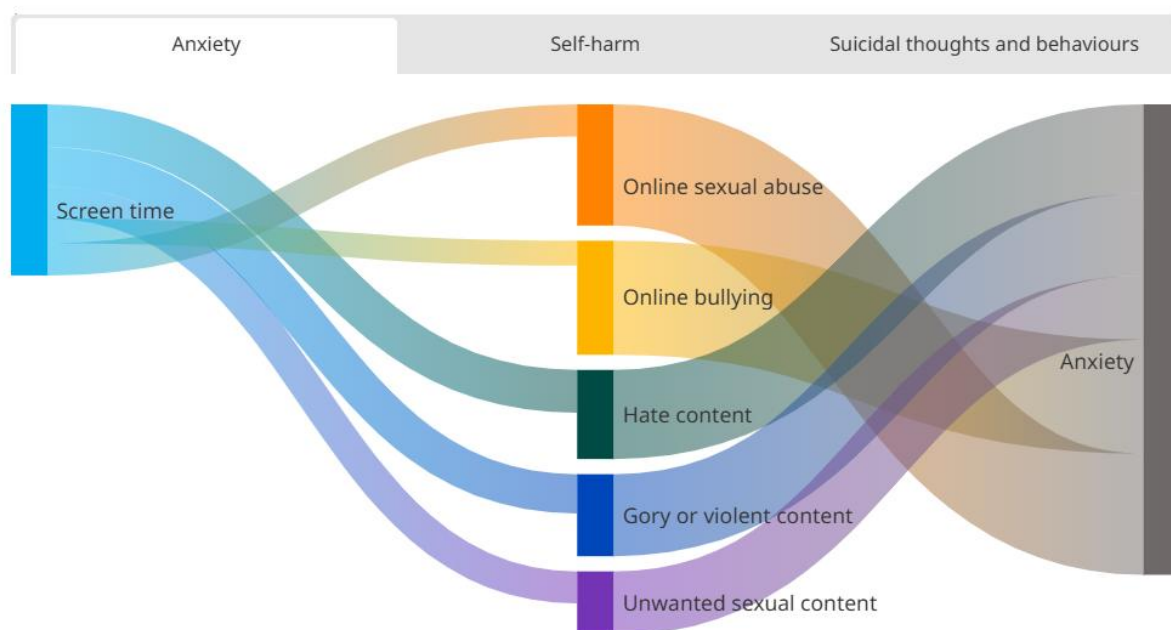
As Unicef (2025) explains, managing these issues is complex. It is not just the amount of screen time children have that matters, but also the context and quality of the digital experiences.

This can be seen in Unicef's (2025) report [Childhood in a Digital World Screen time, digital skills and mental health](#)



(Canva, 2025)

The effects of screen time, harmful content and abusive experiences on children's mental health



(Unicef, 2025)

Protecting Children Online: Wales' Approach

Teaching children digital competence and equipping everyone, from parents to government, with the tools to manage online risks is crucial. Welsh schools use a multi-layered approach combining education, policy and technical controls to safeguard children, which is supported by frameworks and legislation and each school has their own E-safety policy. To find out more, you can explore the following:

[Welsh Government Online safety policies and procedures](#) (Welsh Government, 2020)

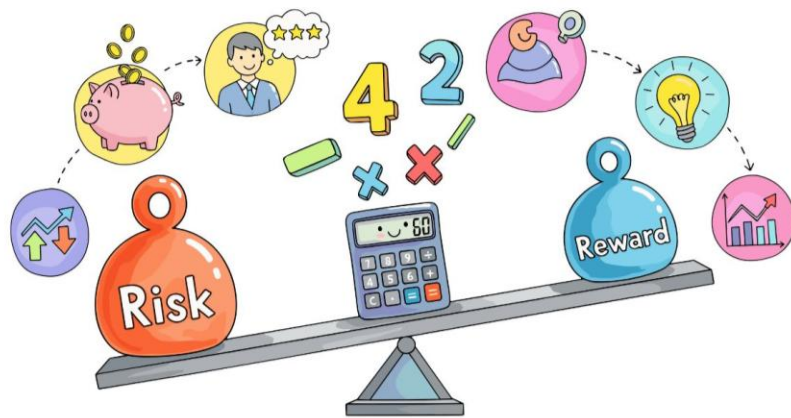
[New rules for a safer online generation of children online](#) (Ofcom, 2025)

[Digital Competency Framework](#) (Welsh Government, 2021)

[Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020](#) (Wales Safeguarding Procedures, 2020)

[Online Safety Act 2023](#) (2023)

Balancing Risk and Reward



Despite the risks, technology brings a wealth of rewards. By embracing Siemens' (2005) Connectivism theory, promoting digital safety and literacy through frameworks such as the *Digital Competency Framework* (Welsh Government, 2021), we can teach children both technology and essential critical thinking skills, enabling them to verify and recognise misinformation. Managing screen time effectively is equally important for building a balanced and healthy relationship with technology. These combined approaches can maximise benefits while minimising risks (Muppalla et al., 2023). With careful guidance and supportive policies, we can help children become not "Wired" but truly "Inspired".



(Mental Floss, 2016)

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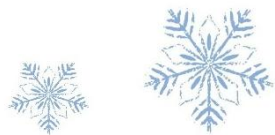
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Crossing the digital divide



As the snow falls and confirmation of a snow day lands on my mobile with notification of online classrooms at 9 am, I have an instant flashback to Covid times.

(Canva, 2025)

Working in education settings, I am no stranger to teaching and learning. My professional role involves facilitating family learning courses and activities in primary schools, ensuring that educational programmes run smoothly and effectively. I provide essential support and guidance to adults and children throughout these activities, helping them to engage fully and maximise their learning experiences. As a working mother of three, I would often find myself playing a similar role at home, facilitating homework whilst cooking tea or folding laundry!

During the COVID pandemic, when school closures began, with just a few days' notice, our face-to-face family learning activities shifted online. After a crash course in Microsoft Teams and Big Blue Button, I was juggling online family learning courses, virtual schoolwork for three children of different ages, cooking and folding laundry - Often at the same time!



(Canva, 2025)

The shift from face-to-face to digital was a steep learning curve. For the first time in a long time, I found myself on the other side of the fence in the learning camp, trying to master Teams, Big Blue Button, Google Classroom and Hwb in the space of a week! Until then, other than a few online training courses at work, online learning was not something I'd really taken any time to think about. Yet there I was, online on **Teams**, learning how to use **Teams** for online learning through **Teams**!



(Microsoft, 2025)

Fast forward to today and the thought of online classrooms at 9 am doesn't seem so bad! Since COVID, things have shifted; online is more the norm and most schools are now equipped to move online at the touch of a button. My digital skills and attitude to online teaching and learning have certainly changed!



(Canva, 2025)

Online learning offers many benefits; courses can be accessed at anytime, anywhere in the world, removing traditional barriers to teaching and learning (Zou et al., 2025). In addition to flexibility, online and blended learning can also improve accessibility for diverse learners by accommodating different abilities and learning styles through varied content and technologies (Culduz, 2024).

However, online learning presents challenges. The reduction in immediate feedback and support from a more knowledgeable other can weaken crucial scaffolding needed for effective learning, as promoted by Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the [Zone of Proximal Development](#) (Helpful Professor Explains!, 2024). This lack of timely support can adversely affect motivation and learning outcomes, making it essential that both students and teachers develop the skills required to engage effectively in online learning (Haleem et al., 2022).

In addition to cognitive challenges, Culduz (2024) and Photopoulos et al. (2022) highlight concerns that reduced social interaction and relationship building can negatively affect social and emotional well-being. Photopoulos et al. (2022) recommend blending learning, combining online learning with face-to-face interaction to better support students' overall learning experience and wellbeing.

From a personal perspective, studying for a degree via blended learning has been invaluable. Balancing studies with a busy family while maintaining the flexibility to rewatch lectures has enabled me to enhance my cultural and digital capital.



(Canva, 2025)

However, working in a deprived area of Wales, I see significant barriers that prevent people from accessing and benefiting from the digital world. Data poverty, caused by a lack of devices and poor internet connectivity, is a major challenge. Pembrokeshire County Council (2023) reports that 11% of the county's population is not online and a staggering 41% of people aged over 75 do not use the internet.

In addition to access issues, socio-economic factors such as rural isolation, low income and unemployment intensify the risk of digital exclusion (Welsh Government, 2020a). Inclusivity challenges, including language barriers, Welsh



(Canva, 2025)

language needs, learning difficulties and disabilities, further add to these barriers. Low digital literacy skills, along with fear and mistrust of the online world, make digital inclusion a complex issue (Welsh Government, 2023).

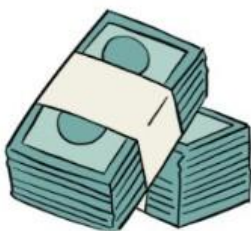
As I often see in my role and as Bourdieu's (1986) theory explains, economic capital, cultural capital and social capital shape opportunities.

Bourdieu's Capital Theory

Capital provides advantages and resources that increases 'success' / 'social mobility' in a given society.



Social capital: networks, connections and relationships.



Economic capital: salary, savings and assets.



Cultural capital: interests, accent, mannerisms, education.

@ClassClinPsych

(ClassClinPsych, 2025)

Watch this video to find out more (Sociology Live, 2015)



Many individuals lack the economic capital to afford devices and reliable internet (Welsh Government, 2021b). However, as Ignatow and Robinson (2017) argue, simply providing access to technology is not enough to bridge the digital divide.



(Canva, 2025)

Often, the children I see who lack digital skills and confidence have parents with similar low confidence and limited digital skills. This reflects Bourdieu's (1986) theory that cultural capital is transferred across generations, shaping the way people engage with technology. Verwiebe and Hagemann (2024) suggest that cultural capital strongly influences digital literacy, confidence and

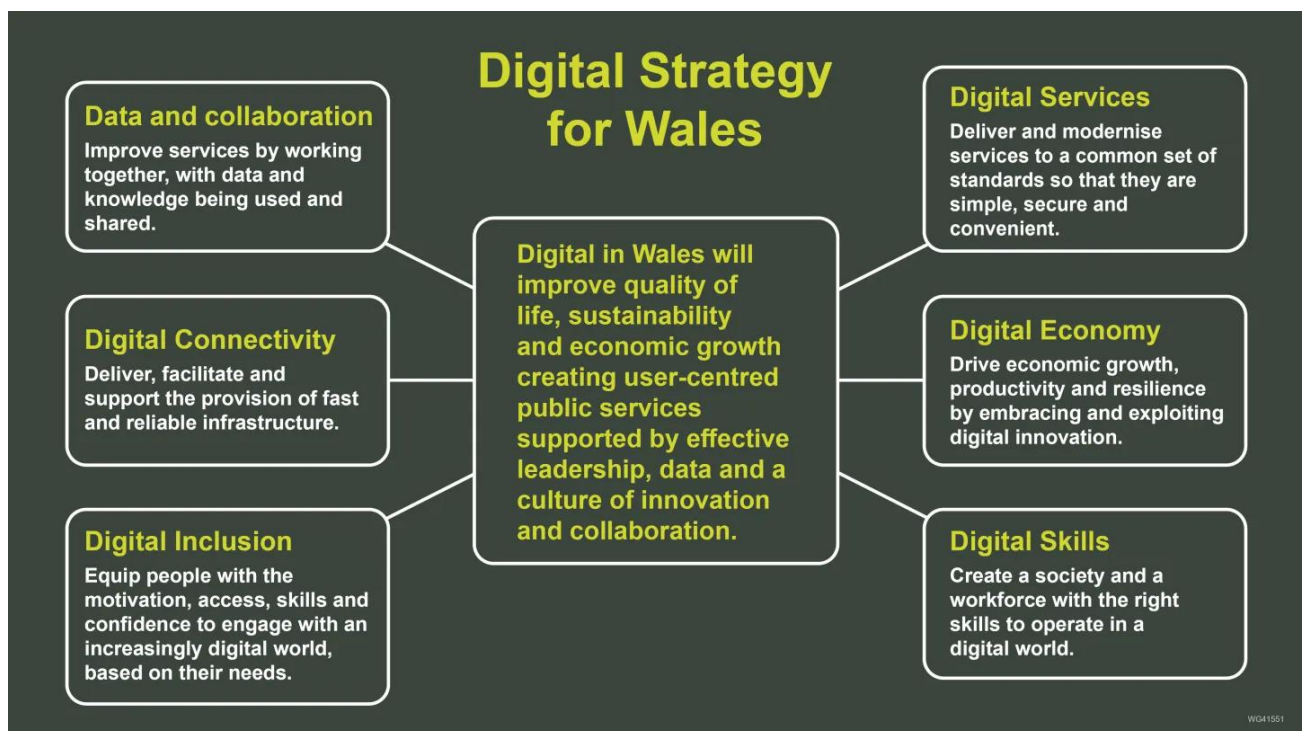
engagement, with Merisalo and Makkonen (2022) describing how low levels of cultural capital restrict the ability to fully benefit from online opportunities, reinforcing existing inequalities.



(Canva, 2025)

Many families lack social capital and do not have the networks or relationships to provide support and encouragement for digital learning, often struggling to access crucial support and guidance (Feng and Tan, 2024). Verwiebe and Hagemann (2024) emphasise that digital capital is unevenly distributed, with upper social classes possessing greater digital capital, experiencing increased social status and opportunities compared to middle and lower classes.

To support these needs, the Welsh Government (2021b) has developed six core missions aimed at enhancing digital capital across Wales, supporting Wales' wellbeing goals for a more equal, prosperous and resilient society.



(Welsh Government, 2020b)

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. The Welsh government (2025) recently introduced the Welsh Minimum Digital Living Standard, which outlines essential digital access, skills and confidence needed to fully participate and benefit from the digital world.

A minimum digital standard of living includes, but is more than, having accessible internet, adequate equipment, and the skills, knowledge and support people need.

It is about being able to communicate, connect and engage with opportunities safely and with confidence.

The Minimum Digital Living Standard



(Critical Research, 2024)

Reflecting on my experiences working in education and as a learner, it seems clear that the digital revolution presents both opportunities and challenges. The Welsh Government's (2021a) [Digital Competency Framework](#) and the [Curriculum for Wales](#) (Welsh Government, 2022) play a vital role in nurturing a digitally skilled generation and increasing digital and cultural capital as described by Bourdieu (1986). Ensuring access to affordable devices and connectivity, especially in rural areas, alongside designing inclusive technology that considers the needs of the Welsh language and people with disabilities, is essential. Providing accessible training and ongoing skills development within communities to build confidence and strengthen digital competence (Welsh Government, 2023) has the potential to increase economic, cultural and social capital, reducing the digital divide and providing opportunities for social mobility. By continuing to invest in digital education and inclusive access, Wales can empower learners and communities to thrive in this ever-changing digital world.



(Canva, 2025)

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Hwb and Family learning - The Missing Piece



(Canva, 2025)

Being a parent and working in education, it surprises me how little parents know about Hwb. Many families are unaware of how to grow their child's digital skills, and their own! This powerful platform is designed to do just that, supporting children's learning by providing both children and families access to a wealth of digital learning tools and materials. These resources help develop the essential digital skills needed to thrive in this digital age.

What exactly is HWB?

Hwb is the Welsh Government's (2022a) own digital learning platform, designed to support learning and is available across all maintained schools in Wales. The platform is a government-led initiative which provides secure access to a wide range of bilingual digital learning tools and resources for ages 3 - 16 to support the [Curriculum for Wales](#) (Welsh Government, 2022b).



(Welsh Government, 2015b)

What can it do?

Hwb offers a safe, secure space to build digital skills and competencies linked to the curriculum, aligning with the [Digital Competency Framework](#) (DCF) (Welsh Government, 2021a) and the [Digital Strategy for Wales](#) (Welsh Government, 2021b).

Hwb provides free access to many different digital learning tools and resources.

Here are just a few:

- ❖ [Google Workspace for Education](#) (Welsh Government, 2025a)
- ❖ [Minecraft for Education](#) (Welsh Government, 2021c)
- ❖ [Just2easy: creativity tools and games based learning](#) (Welsh Government, 2025b)
- ❖ [Britannica Education encyclopaedia](#) (Welsh Government, 2019)
- ❖ [Microsoft 365](#) (Welsh Government, 2025c) downloadable on up to 15 devices for **FREE!!!**

Areas of Hwb such as [Keeping Safe Online](#) (Welsh Government, n.d.) can also support schools, children and us not-so-tech-savvy adults to find out more about how we can keep safe online. It includes information about digital resilience covering a wide range of topics from managing screen time to bullying, data privacy, advice and guidance on popular apps, games, social media and even AI. Why not take a look...



(Welsh Government, nd)

With a range of different tools and resources, Hwb can be used at home to support learners not just with digital skills but also with other areas of the curriculum. Relevant resources and tools can be accessed depending on learner needs. This can be a valuable resource for parents looking to support their children's education and even their own!

Why not learn digital skills together?



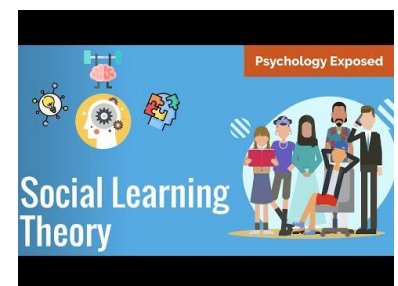
(Shutterstock, 2023)

Family learning is one of the most powerful ways to enhance cognitive development, improve behaviour and boost academic outcomes (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003; Education Endowment Foundation, 2021; Shang et al., 2025).

Here are a few theories to explain:

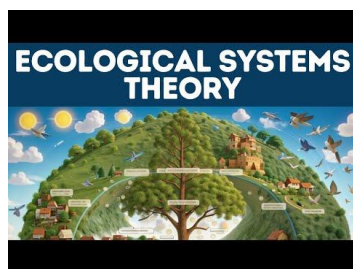
Bandura's (1977) Social Learning theory - We copy what we see

When parents and children use Hwb together, these shared learning experiences reinforce the positive digital skills and behaviours essential for future success (Farrell, 2025; Giannoutsou et al., 2024; Ortiz-Colón, Rodríguez-Moreno and Agreda-Montoro, 2025).



(Psychology Exposed, 2023)

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems theory - Children do better when home and school work together

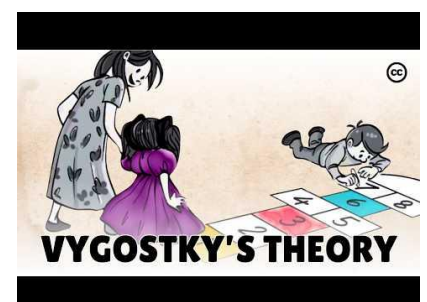


(3 Minute Psychology, 2024)

Positive collaboration between home and school microsystems can enhance children's digital skills and knowledge, providing the necessary skills needed for this digital world (Farrell, 2025).

Vygotsky (1978) - Children learn more with support

Providing scaffolding within the Zone of proximal development helps children achieve digital skills more effectively than they would independently.



(Sprouts, 2020)

Bourdieu (1986) – Skills and knowledge shape life chances.



Socioeconomic status and the sociocultural environment we live in significantly shape our opportunities and life potential through cultural capital - the skills, knowledge and qualifications that can open doors to better education, jobs and social mobility. When families grow their digital skills together, they build cultural capital supporting Wales's strategy for a more equal, prosperous society (Feng and Tan, 2024; Welsh Government, 2015a)

(Helpful Professor Explains!, 2015)

All sounds good, doesn't it? But there are barriers.

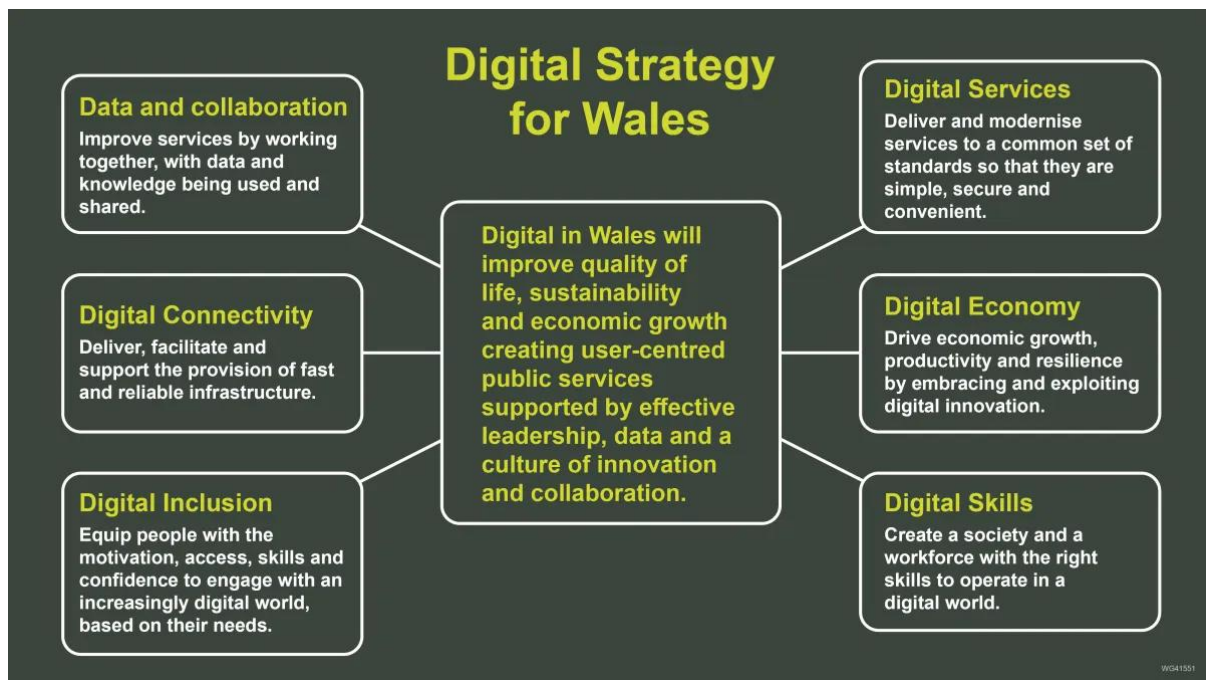
Barriers to digital success

Figure 1 Factors affecting the impact of ICTs in education



(Giannoutsou et al., 2024)

Working in family learning in primary schools in deprived areas in Wales, I see many of these barriers. The Welsh Government's [Digital Strategy for Wales](#) (2021b) outlines six missions to tackle these challenges to foster a more inclusive, prosperous and thriving Wales.



(Welsh Government, 2020)

Despite education underpinning these key missions, they cannot be achieved by just upskilling children alone.

The digital divide

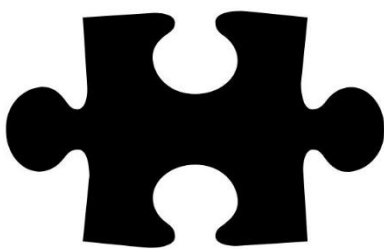
Qualter (2024) and Giannoutsou et al. (2024) highlight how socioeconomic status and sociocultural environments disproportionately affect digital skills and competence among disadvantaged groups. In my experience, disadvantaged families have limited access to devices other than mobile phones. This digital divide limits both parents' and children's digital skills and confidence, negatively impacting education and social outcomes (Giannoutsou et al., 2024).



(Canva, 2025)

By providing families with digital skill through platforms like Hwb, addressing inequalities through the Minimum Digital Living Standard (Welsh Government, 2023), alongside the missions outlined in the Digital strategy for Wales (Welsh Government, 2021b), the DCF (Welsh Government, 2021a) and the Curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2022b), we can help raise digital competence and support Wales's broader goals (Welsh Government, 2015a).

The missing piece



(Canva, 2025)

Despite all the benefits of strong family-school partnerships, Farrell (2025) notes that policymakers often overlook the critical role of engaging families in children's digital education. Unfortunately, the *Digital strategy for Wales* (Welsh Government, 2021b) is missing a fundamental piece of the puzzle by not including family engagement. Without resources and support at home, many of the vital digital skills taught in school risk going underutilised (Farrell, 2025).

Recognising gaps in adult digital skills and working collaboratively to enhance digital competency across the whole family increases cultural capital as Bourdieu (1986) suggests (Feng and Tan, 2024), bridging the gap. Improving knowledge, skills and qualifications within families is essential for digital success, aligning with Wales's broader goals as stated in *The Well-being of Future Generations Act* (Welsh Government, 2015a)



(Canva, 2025)

To achieve digital success and meet Wales's broader goals, we need to raise the cultural capital of the whole family unit, supporting the systems around the child, as Bronfenbrenner (1979) points out. Love it or hate it, the digital world is here to stay. Unfortunately, the Welsh Government's (2021b) Digital Strategy for Wales (Welsh Government, 2021b) is missing a fundamental piece of the puzzle by not including family learning.



(Welsh Government, 2014)

Despite this, Hwb offers a safe, secure, bilingual platform to grow digital skills, aligning with the [DCF](#) (Welsh Government, 2021a), the four purposes of the [Curriculum for Wales](#) (Welsh Government, 2022b) and offers digital learning resources, information and guidance for children, families and educators. It provides a safe way to explore the online world while fostering the essential digital skills to support future success.

Why not try it with your family at home?

Log in at <https://hwb.gov.wales> (Welsh Government, 2014) and see how it can benefit your family and raise your cultural capital.



(Canva, 2025)

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