

## Blog 1

### Diary of a digital dodo



(Fandom.com, 2025).

Once upon a time, there was a dodo—a digital dodo, which is me! Let's rewind to the 1980s when technology wasn't a major part of our everyday lives (and yes, I am that old). Back then, we had typewriters, Sony Walkmans, and the good old Commodore 64. I'm sorry to say that if you know what these are, then you are old too. There were no remote controls for the TV, no sat navs, or Google Maps. I remember sitting in the car with my Dad, using a map, and let me tell you, that wasn't a great experience. I had a pen pal I would write to, and the closest thing I ever had to a pet was my Tamagotchi.

Some of us were lucky enough to have a telephone at home, but if you didn't, you had to use the public phone box. I remember getting my first mobile phone when I was 10; it was an orange Motorola with an antenna, much larger than the phones we have today. I felt so cool having it, and it was definitely better than my Barbie walkie-talkies.

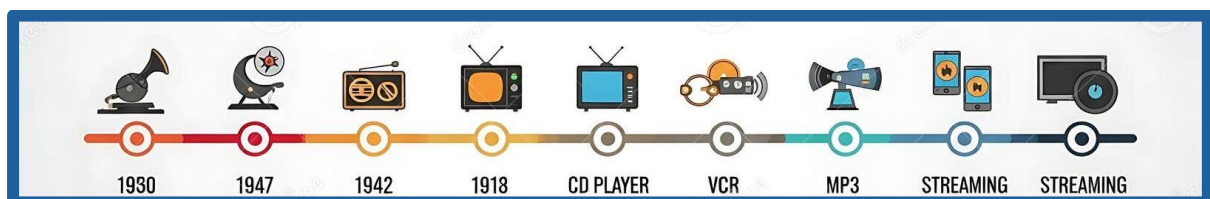


(Mad4toys, 2025).

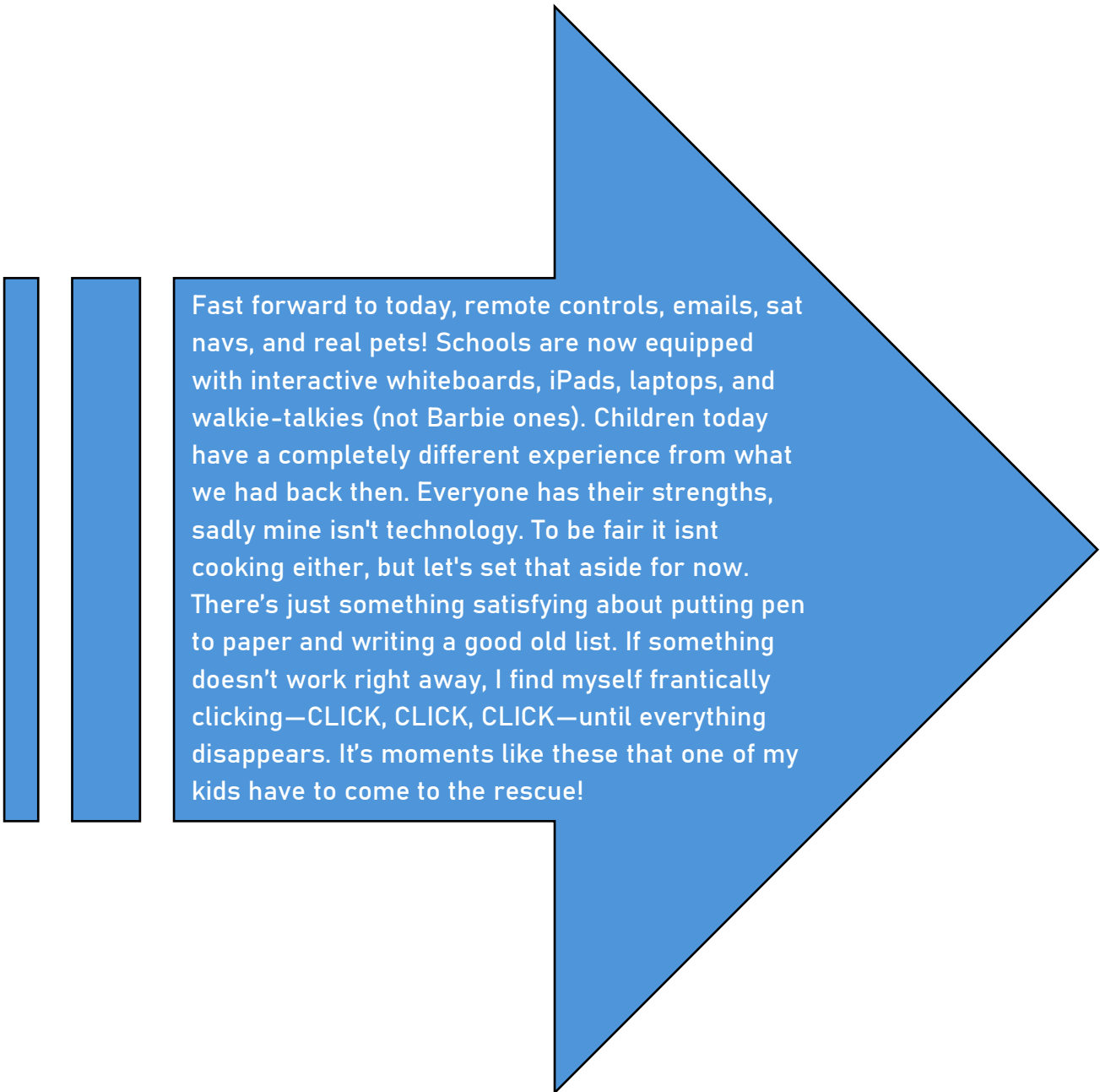


(Wiseman, 2022).

### #Slow to evolve



(Stock, 2025).



Fast forward to today, remote controls, emails, sat navs, and real pets! Schools are now equipped with interactive whiteboards, iPads, laptops, and walkie-talkies (not Barbie ones). Children today have a completely different experience from what we had back then. Everyone has their strengths, sadly mine isn't technology. To be fair it isn't cooking either, but let's set that aside for now. There's just something satisfying about putting pen to paper and writing a good old list. If something doesn't work right away, I find myself frantically clicking—CLICK, CLICK, CLICK—until everything disappears. It's moments like these that one of my kids have to come to the rescue!

**What is digital competency?** Digital competency refers to the ability to effectively use, understand, and critically engage with digital technologies for learning, work, and social participation. It involves a combination of skills, knowledge, and attitudes (Skov, 2016). These are -

- information literacy
- communication
- digital content creation
- safety awareness
- problem-solving (GOV.UK, 2018).



(VectorStock, 2025).

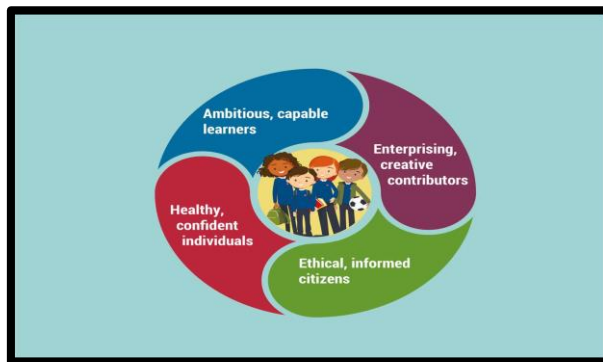
So, why is it so important?

Digital skills are essential for employability, daily living, and personal safety. These skills are crucial for –

- **securing job opportunities**
- **completing tasks such as using specialised software**
- **collaborating online**
- **managing finances through online banking,**
- **communicating via email and messaging apps**
- **accessing various online services** (jon.oshea, 2019).

## What is the digital competence framework, and how does it apply to the new Curriculum?

The need for a comprehensive Digital Competence Framework (DCF) was a key recommendation outlined in Professor Graham Donaldson's report, *Successful Futures*. The report emphasised the importance of equipping learners with essential digital skills to thrive in a world that is increasingly driven by technology. The DCF was introduced in 2016 and became mandatory in the new Curriculum for Wales in 2022. The new Curriculum areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) form a framework for the Curriculum for education in Wales, covering six areas, along with the four core purposes (Welsh Government, 2018).



(McKeown, 2023)



(Donaldson, 2015).

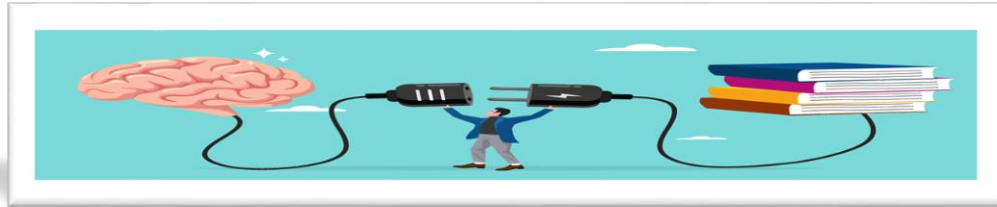
**Let's not forget about digital literacy**



Fostering digital competence means not only learning how to use technology but also understanding its impact on our lives and communities. Together, we can find innovative ways to adapt to these changes and make sure that we all thrive in this digital landscape. By prioritising our digital skills, we can better equip ourselves and future generations for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Let's commit to

this journey and make the most of the digital age (UOTP MARKETING, 2022).

### How do we teach children to be digitally literate?



(Cristina, 2025).

The DCF framework brings an inspiring edge to the curriculum, supported by resilient policies! It's woven into various subjects, empowering students with essential skills like evaluating online information and mastering digital safety. Plus, it offers hands-on experiences that spark creativity and foster collaboration. This enables children to be ready to embark on a learning adventure that prepares them for the digital age! (Welsh Government, 2019).

### What is ICT?

The term ICT means information and communication technology and refers to all technologies and systems used to collect, store, process, communicate, and share data. Some examples of ICT in education and the workplace are -

- Computers
- Laptops
- Smartphones
- Tablets
- Internet
- Wi-Fi
- Databases
- Mobile networks
- Emails
- Social media (Collins, 2018).

### What does it look like in schools today?

How often do we consider the impact of empowering children on their understanding of technology? Today, all children have access to various digital resources that enhance their learning. I suppose you could call them digital natives (digital native, 2022). Groups known as Digital Leaders take the initiative in assemblies, create engaging podcasts, and promote online safety awareness. These children are not just consumers of technology; they help shape digital behaviours in their schools. Through their efforts, schools teach about online risks and responses, fostering a safer digital environment for everyone (SIC, 2022). Classrooms are equipped with laptops, iPads and Chromebooks with interactive learning apps that cater to different learning styles. Teachers use interactive whiteboards (IWBs) to aid teaching and learning, making lessons more interactive. Digital technology is woven into other subjects such as Maths, Art, Geography and Languages (Gov.wales, 2022).

How many digital tools do you rely on each day? I suppose I would call myself a digital immigrant, I've adapted but much later in life (Prensky, 2001). Personally, I frequently use WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram to stay connected with friends and family. For my professional responsibilities, I use Google Docs, Microsoft Teams, and PowerPoint to collaborate with colleagues and create presentations. When it comes to studying, I utilise Canva, along with email and Microsoft to organise my research and assignments.

### **From Playdough to Pictograms**

| Stages of development             | Piaget                                                                                                 | Technology link                                                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sensorimotor (0-2 years)          | Children learn through touch, movement, and senses.                                                    | Touchscreens, musical toys.                                              |
| Pre-operational (2-7 years)       | Children begin to use their imagination and symbols, but they have not yet developed logical thinking. | Story apps and animations, drawing apps, Beebots.                        |
| Concrete operational (7-11 years) | Children begin to develop logical thinking but require real-life examples to aid their understanding.  | Scratch and block-based coding, science experiments, charts, pictograms. |
| Formal operational (11 + years)   | Children can think abstractly, reason logically, and solve problems.                                   | JavaScript, robotics, interactive experiments, data analysis tools.      |

(Psychology Today, 2025).

## Reference list

Collins, P. (2018). What is ICT. [online] SkillsTX | Passion for Potential. Available at: <https://skillstx.com/what-is-ict/> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

digital native (2022). *digital native*. [online] CEDEFOP. Available at: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-glossary/glossary/natif-du-numerique-enfant-du-numerique> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2026].

Donaldson, G. (2015). Successful Futures Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/successful-futures.pdf> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

GOV.UK. (2018). Essential digital skills framework. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/essential-digital-skills-framework> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

Gov.wales. (2022). *Empowering learning through technology - Hwb*. [online] Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/school-improvement-and-leadership/digital-in-education/empowering-learning-through-technology> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2026].

JetLearn (2025). Preparing Children for Jobs That Don't Exist Yet. [online] Jetlearn.com. Available at: <https://www.jetlearn.com/blog/future-skills-for-jobs-that-dont-exist-yet> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

jon.oshea (2019). Digital competence: Improving pupils' digital skills - Estyn. [online] Estyn. Available at: <https://estyn.gov.wales/blog/digital-competence-improving-pupils-digital-skills/> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

TPrensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, Digital Immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 9(5), pp.1–6. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1108/10748120110424816>.

Psychology Today. (2025). Rethinking Piaget in a Tech-Driven Childhood. [online] Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/raising-resilient-children/202504/rethinking-piaget-in-a-tech-driven-childhood> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

SIC, U. (2022). *Empower your students with the Digital Leaders programme - UK Safer Internet Centre*. [online] UK Safer Internet Centre. Available at: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/digital-leaders-programme> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2026].

Skov, A. (2016). The Digital Competence Wheel. [online] digital-competence.eu. Available at: <https://digital-competence.eu/dc/en/front/what-is-digital-competence/> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

UOTP MARKETING (2022). What Is Digital Literacy And Why Is It Important? - University of the Potomac. [online] University of the Potomac. Available at: <https://potomac.edu/what-is-digital-literacy/> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

Welsh Government (2018). *Digital Competence Framework guidance*. [online] Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/337437b8-cfe3-4305-ae32-f47ad82f3e76/digital-competence-framework-guidance-2018.pdf> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2026].

Welsh Government (2019). Digital 2030 A strategic framework for post-16 digital learning in Wales 2019. [online] Available at:

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/digital-2030-a-strategic-framework-for-post-16-digital-learning-in-wales.pdf> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

Welsh Government (2018). Digital Competence Framework Your questions answered. [online] Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/85f69bca-0134-426d-bff1-c46b4c1d067b/digital-competence-framework-your> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].

## Blog 2

### #The Digital Takeover

Let's explore the fascinating impact of how technology transforms our home and school experiences.



(Dawson, 2021).

Technology has revolutionised how we learn and connect, both at home and in schools. Gone are the days of strict traditional learning. Today, we can harness online resources, videos, and educational apps, making learning at home more flexible and accessible than ever before. In schools, technology plays a crucial role, encouraging collaboration, creativity, and interactive learning, helping students stay engaged and build critical digital skills in our technology-driven world (Schincariol, 2024).



(Tzvi, 2015).

In a world where we adapt to the latest changes, it's clear that technology is essential to our learning experience. It plays a key role in how we educate and prepare ourselves for the future (Foroux, 2021).

## Let's dive into some of the key benefits of today's technology for children and young people -

- ☺ Technology in education makes learning more accessible
- ☺ Differentiated learning experiences
- ☺ Improves engagement
- ☺ Promotes digital skills for the future
- ☺ Supports creativity
- ☺ Supports teachers (Team, 2020).

## ...and explore some of the more negative effects -

- ☹ Loss of social skills
- ☹ Privacy/security risks
- ☹ Obesity – due to reduced physical activity
- ☹ Lowers attention span
- ☹ Cyberbullying
- ☹ Mental health concerns (Adeyemo, 2023).

Some may say that technology is changing our lives faster than ever.

I'd love to know what you think? Do you believe the benefits outweigh the negative effects of children as consumers and producers of digital content?



(VectorStock, 2025).

## **What is a global village?**

In our increasingly interconnected world, the idea of a "global village" has become not just relevant, but essential. Created by media theorist Marshall McLuhan (1964), this concept encompasses how electronic and digital communication technologies have transformed our relationships, effectively making the world feel like a small village. With just a few clicks, we can connect with people from every part of the world, developing a sense of connection and community that was once unthinkable. This global trend has changed the way we communicate, share information, and understand one another, emphasising the power of technology to connect people and unite diverse cultures (Musicco Nombela, 2022).



(Logan, 2018).

Here's a look at Marshall McLuhan's Theory of Communication (1964). He believes that -

- **Media shape human perception -** whether its print, radio, television, or the internet- each medium alters not just how we absorb information, but how we see, think, and experience our surroundings.
- **Media serves as an extension of our human senses -** a tv acts like a camera for our eyes. A telephone or music extends our hearing across vast distances. A car enhances our mobility, giving our feet extra speed and strength allowing us to travel much farther than you could on foot.
- **Electronic media connect the world -** this has never been truer! Instant communication and shared experiences foster cultural exchanges and social impact.

- **Media and technology drive social change** – changing behaviour and interactions, shaping culture and values, altering social structures (admin, 2023).

McLuhan's theories invite us to reflect on the profound influence of communication. As we navigate our media-rich world, it's crucial to be mindful of how the technology we use shapes our perceptions, interactions, and ultimately, our society. What do you think? How has media influenced your view of the world? 🤖

### TRUTH OR TRAP ?



(Friedrich Naumann Foundation, 2019)

Fake news is false or misleading information presented as real news. It's often spread on social media, blogs, and unverified websites. Pretty unfortunate for me since I'm here writing a blog! Here's hoping my content isn't fake news! 🤖



Real news is based on verified facts, trustworthy sources, and evidence. It typically comes from reputable news organisations that employ editors and fact-checkers (BBC Bitesize, n.d.).



In today's digital age, having the right skills is essential for children and young people. With these skills, they can see themselves as savvy consumers and creative producers of online content. Learning how to assess whether online information is trustworthy and reflecting on its purpose helps them become more critical thinkers in a world filled with digital overload (UNICEF, 2025).

Mastering the art of responsible posting is a game-changer. It empowers them to recognise their role in shaping the online landscape. As they share their creativity, they also navigate the digital world with confidence and awareness. Encouraging this kind of engagement can genuinely make a difference in how the next generation interacts with technology and each other (Walden University, 2024).

**# Keeping Learners Safe in a Digital World: The Role of Policies and Organisations. Key strategies are -**

**# Set clear rules**

**# Protect personal information**

**# Teach safe online behaviour**

**# Prevent cyberbullying**

**# Guide responsible use of digital tools**

**# Help learners understand risks and stay safe** (NSPCC, 2024).

## **Policies that help keep learners safe -**

Digital Competence Framework (DCF) (2016)

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Online Safety Policy

Keeping Learners Safe (2022)

Safeguarding Policy

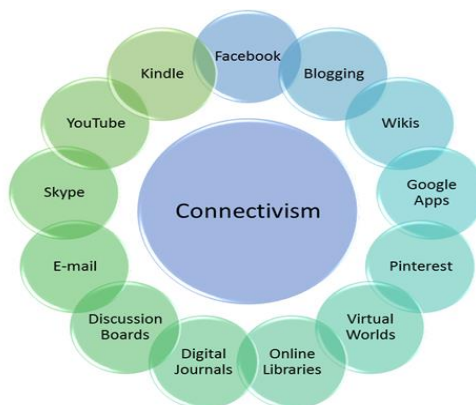
Online Safety Act (2025)

(Gov.wales, 2020).

## **Connectivism?**

### **What is it and why is it important?**

Connectivism is a modern learning theory emphasising that knowledge exists everywhere and is accessible to learners. It focuses on creating connections and developing a network. Part of learning is evaluating the value of information and its usefulness. This approach supports lifelong learning and adaptability in an evolving world (Western Governors University, 2021).



(Bulbapp.com, 2025).

The digital world is here to stay. Let's take a moment to reflect on this. We are all responsible for guiding children and young people to use technology safely, responsibly, and confidently. When used responsibly, technology can be a powerful tool that opens new possibilities. Let's equip our children to thrive in this digital world (NSPCC, 2021).

## Reference list

- Adeyemo, A. (2023). *10 negative effects of technology on education and individual wellbeing*. [online] The Circular. Available at: <https://thecircular.org/10-negative-effects-of-technology-on-education-and-individual-wellbeing/> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].
- admin (2023). *McLuhan.org | Understanding Media: the extension of man (1964)*. [online] McLuhan.org. Available at: <https://mcluhan.org/understanding-media/> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- BBC Bitesize. (n.d.). *Fake news: fact or fiction?* [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z4xvn9q> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- Foroux, D. (2021). *Technology Is Changing The World—Here's How You Adapt*. [online] Medium. Available at: <https://dariusforoux.medium.com/technology-is-changing-the-world-heres-how-you-adapt-1ebff69277a8> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- Gov.wales. (2020). *Online safety policies and procedures - Hwb*. [online] Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/keeping-safe-online/online-safety-policies-and-procedures> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- Musicco Nombela, D. (2022). *THE GLOBAL VILLAGE Globalization, rethinking McLuhan in the 21st century*. [online] Comunicación y Hombre. Available at: <https://comunicacionyhombre.com/en/article/the-global-village-globalization-rethinking-mcluhan-in-the-21st-century-4/> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- NSPCC (2021). *Online safety*. [online] NSPCC. Available at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/> [Accessed 30 Dec. 2025].
- NSPCC (2024). *Online Safety (e-safety) and Schools*. [online] NSPCC Learning. Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety/online-safety-for-schools> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- Schincariol, T. (2024). *Modern technology and how it's changing the way we teach*. [online] Now Education - Adding value at every key stage. Available at: <https://noweducation.co.uk/modern-technology-and-how-its-changing-the-way-we-teach/> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- Team, V. (2020). *5 Benefits of Technology in Education - Virtual Decisions*. [online] Virtual Decisions. Available at: <https://virtualdecisions.co.uk/5-benefits-of-technology-in-education/> [Accessed 23 Nov. 2025].
- UNICEF (2025). *Childhood in a Digital World*. [online] Unicef.org. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/reports/childhood-digital-world> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].
- Walden University (2024). *how-is-digital-technology-changing-our-interactions-with-each-other*. [online] [www.waldenu.edu](http://www.waldenu.edu). Available at: <https://www.waldenu.edu/online-bachelors-programs/bs-in-psychology/resource/how-is-digital-technology-changing-our-interactions-with-each-other> [Accessed 29 Dec. 2025].

Western Governors University (2021). *Connectivism Learning Theory*. [online] Western Governors University. Available at: <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/connectivism-learning-theory2105.html> [Accessed 30 Dec. 2025].

## **Blog 3**

### **#Technology for Everyone**



(Techcessability, 2024).

In this blog, we will discuss whether Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) meet the diverse needs of learners from various backgrounds. Let's explore how these technologies are making education more inclusive for everyone!

#### **What is a diverse learner?**

**A student who learns in ways that are different from the typical approach. Diversity can come from abilities, backgrounds, needs, or experiences** (in, 2025).



(Varthana, 2024).

## Digital teaching and learning

### What is it?

Digital teaching and learning are the use of technology and digital tools to enhance education such as -

- Online courses
- Virtual classrooms
- Mobile apps
- Blended/hybrid learning
- AI
- Asynchronous learning
- Hyflex
- Digital resources (European Education Area, 2025).

### Why is it important?

The vision for developing digital teaching and learning is to create a modern and resilient education system that fosters digital literacy, boosts engagement, enhances outcomes, and prepares learners to thrive in a connected world (Haleem et al., 2022).

### Key benefits of digital teaching and learning

 enhanced accessibility

 flexibility

 personalised education

 boosts engagement

 fosters collaboration and communication skills

 access to vast resources

 digital literacy

 reduce costs

 improve teacher efficiency (Education, 2022).

## What is Digital Inclusion?

In today's fast-paced digital landscape, it's crucial to ensure that everyone can access digital technologies, regardless of their circumstances. Digital inclusion aims to break down barriers that prevent people from fully engaging with the online world. Imagine living in a world where everyone has access to technology. We must work together to ensure that everyone can access the digital world, allowing them to reach their full potential (GOV.UK, 2025).

### **Barriers to digital inclusion**

Many individuals face significant barriers to digital inclusion, such as a lack of access to information and ICT, which can be isolating. Low digital literacy skills and language challenges can further complicate their ability to navigate the digital world, leaving them at a disadvantage. Additionally, socio-economic disparities can create further obstacles, making it difficult for some to fully engage in an increasingly digital society. It is essential that we recognise these challenges and work towards solutions that foster inclusivity for everyone (Good things foundation, 2024).



(Penichet-Khaw, 2023).

## **Innovation for all**

So, how do we put a stop to the digital divide?

We must -

- Improve access for all
- Enhance digital skills
- Foster an inclusive environment
- Collaborate with the Welsh Government and community initiatives
- Use data to target support (Kloza, 2023).

And how can we achieve this?

- Invest in broadband services
- Low cost or free internet for low-income households
- Support community Wi-Fi spaces – libraries, community centres
- Provide affordable technology
- Equip schools with take-home technology for children
- Teach basic digital literacy
- Free or low-cost training
- Create tools for people with disabilities
- Offer content in multiple languages (Vander Ark, 2017).



(WHYY, 2022).

Before the pandemic, the digital divide was often overlooked, mainly impacting low-income families and rural communities. The pandemic made technology essential and revealed unequal access to it (Petrovčič et al., 2024). If I'm being completely honest, before the pandemic, I rarely used much technology other than my phone. However, as the world shifted, I had to learn to master various digital platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Initially, I had no idea how to work these and had to learn fast as I needed to use them for my job. Microsoft Teams allowed me to communicate with my colleagues and navigate the world of remote work. Looking back, I realise that this forced immersion into technology not only helped me professionally but also expanded my skills in ways I never imagined.

### Embracing technology



(Wakefield, 2021).

As a parent, I faced several struggles while trying to teach my child at home, such as technology overload and the challenge of balancing teaching with work.

### Linking theory to the digital age

Developed in the early 20's Vygotsky's sociocultural theory highlights the importance of technology as a key cultural mediator in education.

- Digital tools facilitate collaboration and problem-solving within a student's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).
- Teachers are redefined as learning designers, guiding effective use of technology.
- Technology creates a richer learning environment for the 21st century.
- Educational apps provide scaffolding to help children and young people acquire new skills.
- Collaborative documents allow shared thinking.
- Simulations and virtual labs enable children to explore complex systems within their (ZPD) (Ulla-Maaria Koivula, 2025).

### Linking policy to the digital age - the Seven Core Aims (2002) of education are to develop learners who are -

**Healthy individuals** – benefit from online platforms to learn about health

**Confident individuals** – use digital spaces to share work

**Responsible citizens** – develop digital citizenship skills

**Effective contributors** - online collaboration and teamwork

**Engaged learners** – evaluate online information

**Independent learners** – understanding data and learning at their own pace

**Lifelong learning** – easy access

### The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015)



(Welsh Government, 2015)

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 promotes digital inclusion by promoting equal access to technology. It encourages public bodies to adopt long-term, collaborative approaches, making digital inclusion a key enabler of social, economic, and cultural wellbeing (Centre for Digital Public Services, 2021).

Welsh Government's Digital Strategy for Wales (2022) Mission 2: Digital Inclusion is all about -

1. Making sure everyone can use digital technology safely and confidently.
2. Promoting a basic standard for online access for all.
3. Encouraging local communities to partner up on projects that help close the digital gap.

**Let's support the Welsh Government's Digital Strategy for Wales! Together, we can create an inclusive digital landscape for all in Wales!**

**Reference list**

Centre for Digital Public Services. (2021). *Future Generations Act Wellbeing Statement*. [online] Available at: [https://digitalpublicservices.gov.wales/about-us/how-were-run/future-generations-act-wellbeing-statement?\\_hstc=264108051.2f3f33a24b44870ec4a577029c49e44b.1765324800081.1765324800082.1765324800083.1&\\_hssc=264108051.1.1765324800084&\\_hsfp=3006156910](https://digitalpublicservices.gov.wales/about-us/how-were-run/future-generations-act-wellbeing-statement?_hstc=264108051.2f3f33a24b44870ec4a577029c49e44b.1765324800081.1765324800082.1765324800083.1&_hssc=264108051.1.1765324800084&_hsfp=3006156910) [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

Digital Health and Care Wales. (2024). *Well-being of Future Generations Act*. [online] Available at: <https://dhcw.nhs.wales/about-us/well-being-of-future-generations-act/> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

Education, S.F. (2022). *5 Benefits of Digital Learning for Teachers*. [online] Services For Education. Available at: <https://www.servicesforeducation.co.uk/blog/schools/5-benefits-of-digital-learning-for-teachers/> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

European Education Area. (2025). *About the plan*. [online] Available at: <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/plan> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

Good things foundation (2024). *What We Know About Digital Inclusion | Good Things Foundation*. [online] Goodthingsfoundation.org. Available at: <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/policy-and-research/research-and-evidence/research-2024/digital-inclusion-datasets> [Accessed 30 Dec. 2025].

GOV.UK (2025). *Digital Inclusion Action Plan: First Steps*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-inclusion-action-plan-first-steps/digital-inclusion-action-plan-first-steps> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

Haleem, A., Javaid, M., Qadri, M.A. and Suman, R. (2022). Understanding the role of digital technologies in education: A review. *Sustainable Operations and Computers*, [online] 3(1), pp.275–285. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.susoc.2022.05.004>.

in (2025). *Understanding the Needs of Diverse Learners in the Classroom*. [online] Wilson.edu. Available at: <https://online.wilson.edu/resources/diverse-learner-needs/> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

Kloza, B. (2023). *Solutions to the Digital Divide: Moving Toward a More Equitable Future - Connecting the Unconnected*. [online] Connecting the Unconnected. Available at: <https://ctu.ieee.org/blog/2023/02/03/solutions-to-the-digital-divide-moving-toward-a-more-equitable-future/> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

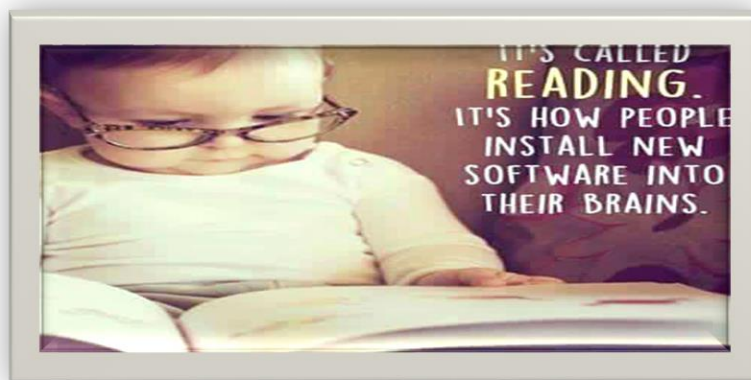
Petrovčič, A., Reisdorf, B.C., Quan-Haase, A., Bartol, J. and Grošelj, D. (2024). Digital inequalities among internet users before and during the COVID-19 pandemic: A comparison from two cross-sectional surveys in Slovenia. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, [online] 209, p.123745. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123745>.

Ulla-Maaria Koivula (2025). *Theoretical Roots of ThingLink: From Vygotsky to Virtual Learning*. [online] Thinglink.com. Available at: <https://www.thinglink.com/blog/theoretical-roots-of-thinglink-from-vygotsky-to-virtual-learning/> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

Vander Ark, T. (2017). *10 Strategies Promoting Digital Access and Equity*. [online] Getting Smart. Available at: <https://www.gettingsmart.com/2017/03/01/10-strategies-promoting-digital-access-and-equity/> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2026].

## **Blog 4**

How important do you think strong reading skills are for success in life?



(Book Marketing Bestsellers, 2016).

### **Level up for life with Lexia**

#### **Closing the Reading Gap: An Effective Solution for Primary Schools**

No, this isn't about a smart speaker; that's an Alexa! I'm talking to you about Lexia Core5, a digital reading programme designed to help children of all ages. Primary schools face the ongoing challenge of varying reading skills among students. To address this, a dedicated reading skills programme offers a trusted, research-proven solution that supports educators in closing these gaps (Brooke, n.d.).

**What is a Reading Skills Programme?** It targets key reading components identified by the National Reading Panel as the 5 Pillars of Reading (Lexia, 2023).

**Phonological Awareness** — activities include identifying, sorting, blending, and changing syllables and sounds in words.



**Phonics** — activities develop the pupil's ability to apply knowledge of letter=sound correspondence to reading and spelling words.



**Automaticity/Fluency** - these skills are developed through a series of activities focused on speed of processing, analysis of sentence structure and timed silent passage reading.



**Vocabulary** – activities in this area help students learn rich and varied vocabulary. They also help students understand how words relate to each other and connect.

Lexia also includes Structural Analysis and spelling and grammar (SPAG) practice and instruction. This is where pupils learn to recognise the parts of multisyllabic words that come from Latin and Greek. This helps them improve their vocabulary and comprehension skills. This area also covers many spelling and grammar (SPAG) activities.

It provides structured support tailored to each student's needs. Early intervention is crucial; studies show that addressing reading difficulties early sets students up for long-term academic success (LexiaUK, n.d.).

### Key Features

1. **Individualised learning:** Meets the needs of students at every stage, age, and ability.
2. **Engaging educational activities:** Interactive resources capture students' interest, fostering a love of reading.
3. **Professional development:** Training ensures educators are equipped with effective strategies.
4. **Progress monitoring:** Regular assessments track student growth and inform instruction.
5. **Structured systematic approach:** Builds upon prior learning (LexiaUK, n.d.).

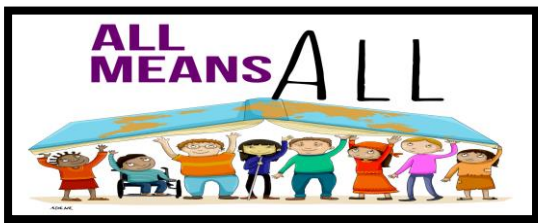
**How are children identified as needing Lexia?**

- Below expected reading levels
- Gaps in phonics
- Learning difficulties, for e.g. Dyslexia
- Assessment data identifies gaps
- GL Ready assessment – online screening identifies pupils at risk of reading difficulties, including dyslexia

### **Benefits for children**

These programmes enhance students' reading abilities, confidence, and overall academic performance.

- Promotes independent learning
- Engaging and motivating
- Age-appropriate content and graphics
- Adapts to individual needs and abilities
- Provides instant feedback
- Accessible from home



(World Education Blog, 2020).

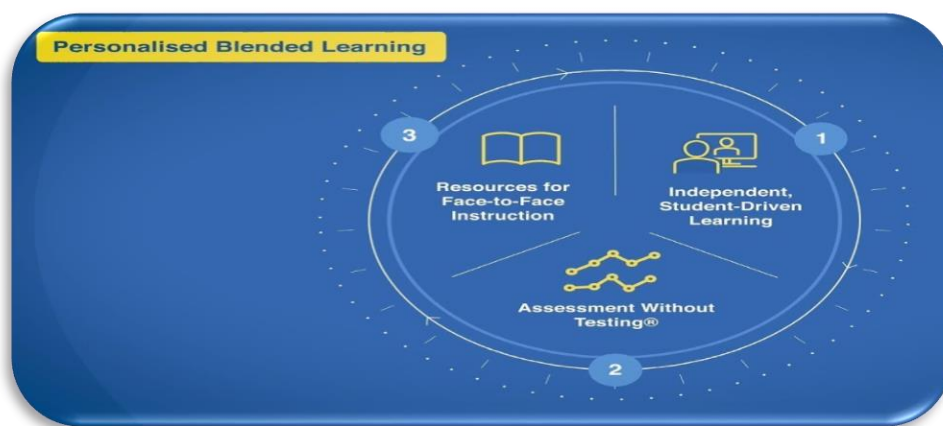
For educators, they provide a practical framework to identify and address learning gaps.

- Easy to use and manage
- Suitable for all ages and abilities
- A comprehensive solution for all literacy needs
- Highly structured and adaptable
- Provides evidence of progress
- Frees up your time to teach (LexiaUK, n.d.).

## Inclusion

All children and young people, including special educational needs (SEN), English as an additional language (EAL) and free school meals (FSM) are supported to reach their full potential (Gov.uk, 2020).

## *Lexia's Personalised Learning Model*



(LexiaUK, n.d.).

1. Students work independently to build critical reading and language skills through personalised and engaging learning paths.
2. Lexia's Assessment Without Testing is a technology used in curriculum programmes that provides real-time data on student progress without interrupting learning to test. This unique approach allows teachers to understand students' current skills and create data-driven action plans based on that information.
3. Teachers can print resources for both face-to-face instruction and independent student practice. Lexia recommends specific resources for individual and group instruction based on data, allowing for flexible integration into existing classroom routines (LexiaUK, n.d.).



(Mair, 2021).

Lexia measures its impact through continuous assessment, analysing student progress data, tracking time-on-task analytics, and generating reports that indicate mastery and risk levels. This supports teachers in monitoring and improving literacy outcomes (Hill, 2025).

### *Linking Lexia software to theory*



(Colaiacono, 2011).

The Lexia programme links to Skinner's behaviourist theory (1938), through operant conditioning principles, specifically the use of positive reinforcement, repetition through drills, and a focus on observable, measurable outcomes to develop and reinforce specific reading skills. As pupils master skills and complete levels, they earn badges and certificates of achievement (Hill, 2025).

Lexia focuses on personalised, self-directed learning, which aligns with cognitive and constructivist theories. However, its core mechanics for skill development heavily depend on fundamental behaviourist principles to achieve explicit, measurable improvements in literacy (Main, 2023).

How does it support the development of skills required for 21st Century citizens?

Lexia supports the development of skills required for 21st Century citizens, aligning with the DCF by developing -

- Strong literacy
- Critical thinking
- Digital competence
- Independent learning
- Inclusivity

Lexia supports the four core purposes, which are -

1. Ambitious, capable learners
2. Enterprising, creative contributors
3. Ethical, informed citizens
4. Healthy, confident individuals

*Lexia achieves these goals by developing core literacy skills through personalised, independent learning. It focuses on language and problem-solving, and improves reading comprehension, while boosting confidence and well-being.*

*I don't think we need to discuss the advantages of Lexia; they are clearly evident. So, what about some of the disadvantages?*

- ☹ Technology limits
- ☹ Cost of licences
- ☹ Time

*Some schools may not have enough devices for children. Licences need to be purchased for each child, which can be potentially expensive. Meeting the recommended usage of 30 minutes per day into an already packed timetable can be challenging.*



(laura, 2022).

So, now that you've heard all about this fantastic resource, what are your thoughts? I know what I'm thinking, and I can't help but wonder why this didn't exist when I was a child. I mean, how much more enjoyable does it sound compared to traditional learning? I'm not

going to lie, but I am a little bit jealous of this generation. Back when I was a child, the only way I could read a book was to read an actual book, no apps like we have today. Don't get me wrong, I love a good book. Although I may have missed out, I am genuinely excited for today's youth.

## Reference list

Brooke, L. (n.d.). *CLOSING GAP THE An Urgent Need For All Students Chief Learning Officer*. [online] Available at: <https://www.lexialearning.com/sites/default/files/resources/Closing%20the%20Gap-%20An%20Urgent%20Need%20for%20All%20Students.pdf> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2026].

Gov.uk (2020). *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020 to 2024*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cma-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2026].

Hill, L. (2025). *LexiaUK*. [online] LexiaUK. Available at: <https://www.lexiauk.co.uk/news/resources/3-powerful-lexia-features/> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2026].

Lexia (2023). *A full breakdown of the science of reading components*. [online] [www.lexialearning.com](https://www.lexialearning.com). Available at: <https://www.lexialearning.com/blog/a-full-breakdown-of-the-science-of-reading-components> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2026].

LexiaUK. (n.d.). *LexiaUK | Literacy Software for Schools*. [online] Available at: <https://www.lexiauk.co.uk/> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2026].

LexiaUK. (n.d.). *Reading Software for Primary School | Lexia Core5 Reading*. [online] Available at: <https://www.lexiauk.co.uk/literacy-programs/core5/> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2026].

LexiaUK. (n.d.). *Why Lexia?* [online] Available at: <https://www.lexiauk.co.uk/why-lexia/> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2026].

Main, P. (2023). *Theories of Reading*. [online] [www.structural-learning.com](http://www.structural-learning.com). Available at: <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/theories-of-reading> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2026].

World Education Blog. (2020). *Open letter from the world's youth calling for more inclusive schools when they re-open*. [online] Available at: <https://world-education-blog.org/2020/08/12/open-letter-from-the-worlds-youth-calling-for-more-inclusive-schools-when-they-re-open/> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2026].