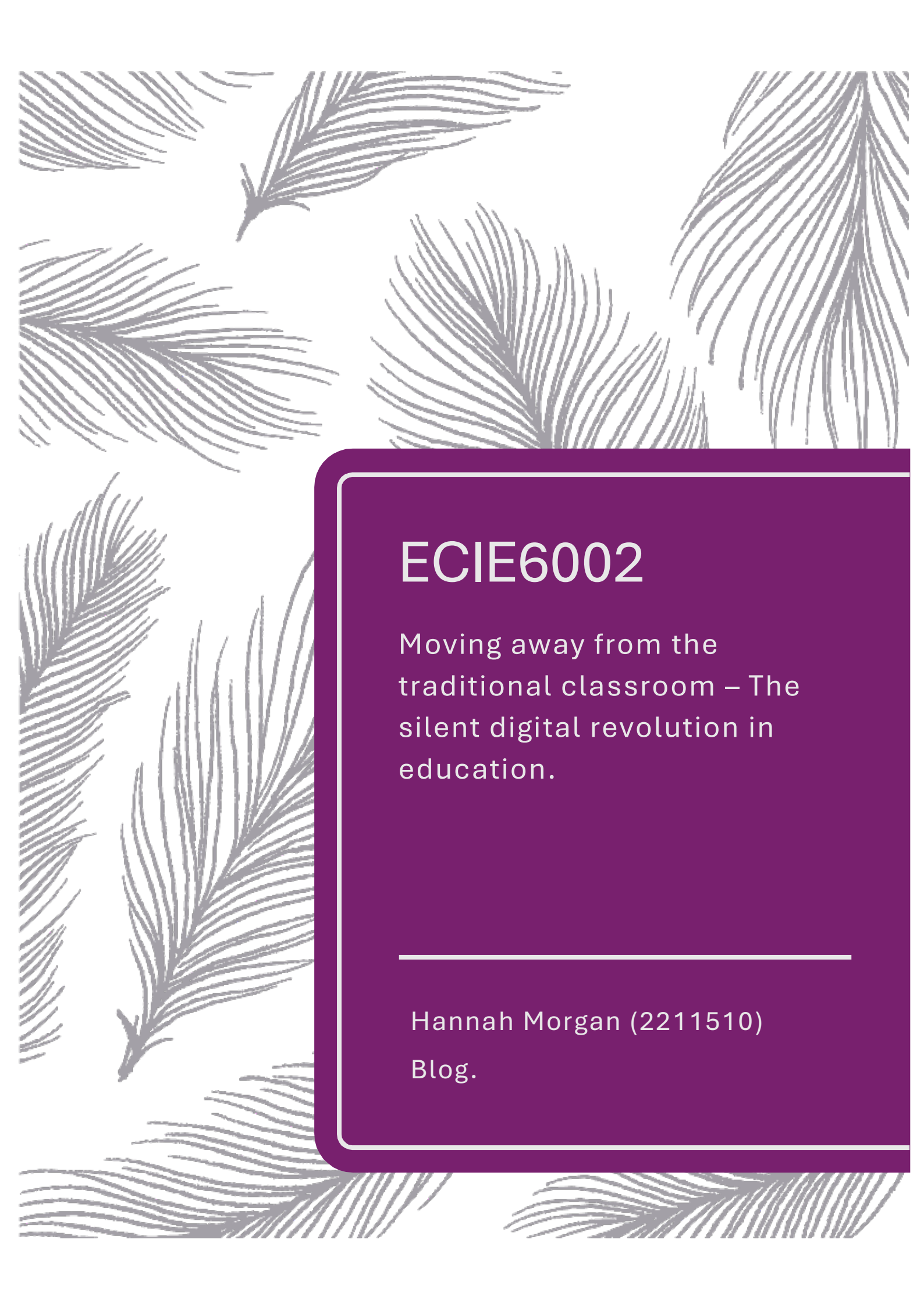




ECIE6002

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

Hannah Morgan (2211510)
Blog.

Contents

Blog One:

The DCF: A Clear Vision for Learning

... Pgs. 2-7

References.

... Pgs. 8

Blog Two:

Digital Realities: How the online world shapes today's youth.

... Pgs. 9-14

References.

... Pgs.15

Blog Three:

Digital Teaching Today: What Works, What Doesn't and Why
Inclusion Matters.

... Pgs.16-21

References.

... Pgs. 22

Blog Four:

Digital Learning in Action: Evaluating the Impact of Seesaw in
education.

... Pgs. 23-28

References.

... Pgs. 29

The DCF: A Clear Vision for Digital Learning.

What is the DCF?

- The DCF stands for The Digital Competence Framework in Wales (2022).
- Aims to develop learners' **knowledge, attitudes and skills** so that they can use technology **confidently, creatively and critically**.
- Aims to develop safe behaviour in the digital and online world.



(The Welsh Government, 2025)

(Senedd Cymru, 2016).

What is Digital Competence?

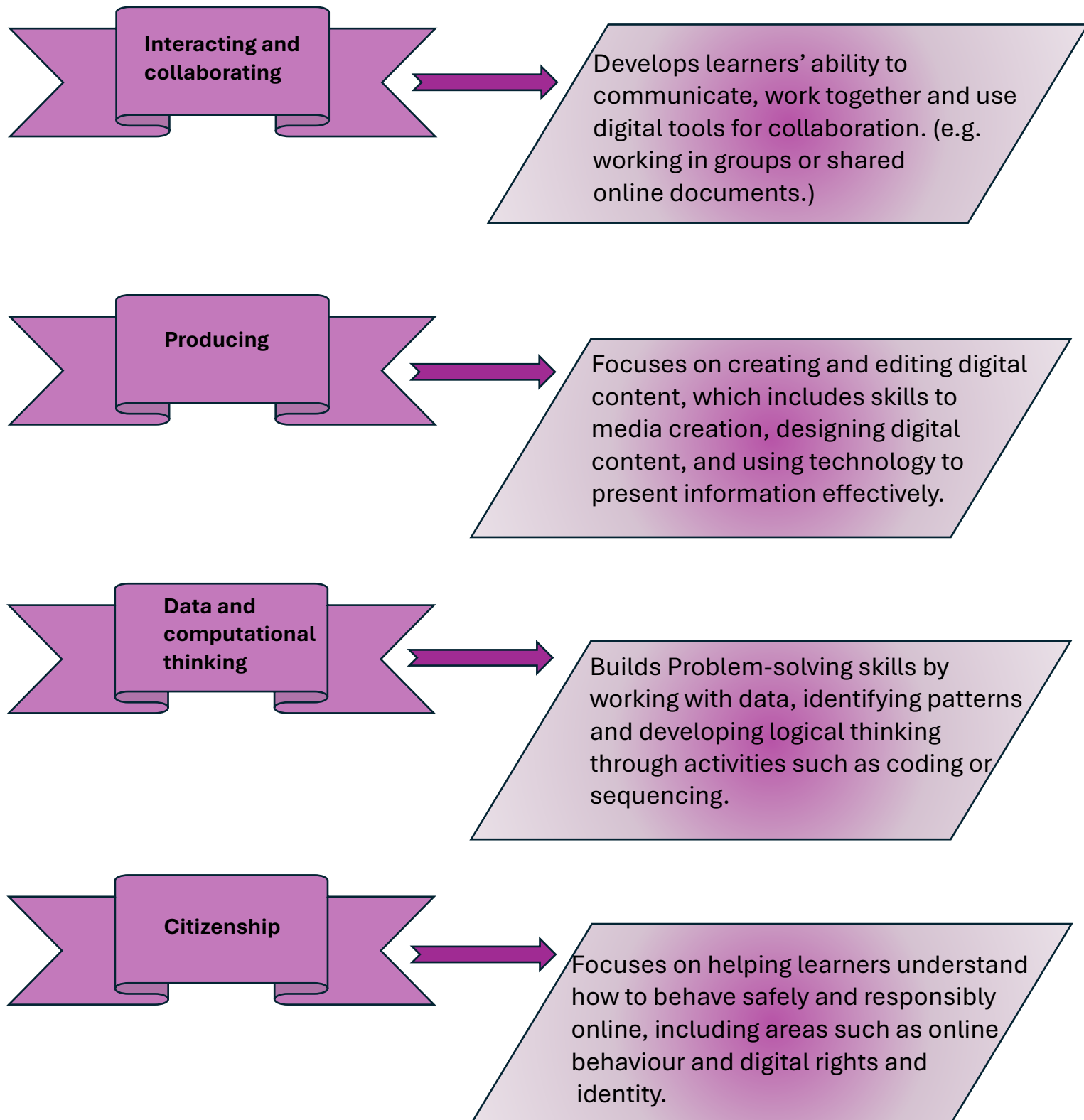
Estyn (2019) defines digital competence as the ability to use ICT tools and technology-related skills. Donaldson (2015), in his *Successful Futures* report, emphasises the need for learners to develop digital skills in order to adapt to an ever-growing technological world. Because digital competence is one of the three cross-curricular responsibilities, the DCF must be embedded in every subject area, allowing learners to apply their digital skills throughout literacy, numeracy, and wider learning across the curriculum. (The Welsh Government, 2019).

The Digital Competence Framework is organised into four strands, as shown in the diagram below, which outline the key areas of digital learning in the Curriculum for Wales.

Citizenship	Interacting and collaborating	Producing	Data and computational thinking
› Identity, image and reputation › Health and well-being › Digital rights licensing and ownership › Online behaviour and cyberbullying	› Communication › Collaboration › Storing and sharing	› Planning, sourcing and searching › Creating › Evaluating and improving	› Problem solving and modelling › Data and information literacy

(The Welsh Government, 2018).

A brief explanation of each strand...



(Welsh Government, 2018).

This blog will evaluate the '*Identity, Image and Reputation*' element within the Citizenship strand, as it provides clear examples of how digital competence develops across subjects and real-life digital situations.

Citizenship: Identity, Image and Reputation

Identity	Image	Reputation
Identity invites learners who they are in online spaces – recognising how their digital persona is constructed through usernames, avatars, posts, interactions and shared content. The DCF emphasises that young people should understand the link between their offline selves, online behaviour and evolving self-concepts across devices, platforms and contexts.	Image focuses on how learners present themselves and how others perceive them online: the photos they share, the content they post, their privacy settings they chose, and the way digital platforms shape identity. The DCF guidance states that understanding rules, consent and how images and personal data circulate is a key part of progression in early years and beyond. As pupils mature the ability to manage and reflect on their digital image becomes critical: it can affect relationships, reputation, reputation and safety.	Reputation encourages learners to consider consequences of their online actions and how their digital footprint can influence how they are viewed now and in the future. The DCF highlights the importance of recognising behaviours such as comments shared, images posted or interactions online contribute to a lasting online trace. Digital traces can impact educational transitions, employment or social relationships, thus making it essential for modern learners in Wales to develop reflective and responsible approaches to reputation.

(Estyn, 2018)., and (Welsh Government, 2019).

Progression Steps.

Each strand of the DCF has separate elements with five progression steps. These steps move from basic awareness in early years to more advanced, independent skills by progression step 5.

The following steps outline how the DCF can develop learners' understanding of identity, image and reputation online.

Step One: Awareness

Learners begin by recognising themselves and others in a digital space, developing a very simple awareness of online identity. At this early stage, children require significant adult support and supervision to achieve this.
(Welsh Government, 2020)

This can be introduced through activities such as learners finding images of themselves and others on school online platforms, talking through how to stay safe online, or creating a simple online safety plan, as shown below.

_____ 's Online Safety Plan

This plan is to help me keep myself safe when I'm using technology at home and at school.

I have coloured in some of the technology I use:



This picture shows my favourite thing to do when I'm using technology:

When I use technology I usually feel...



If I ever feel sad or scared when I use technology, I know I can...

If I ever feel sad or scared when using technology, I know I can...

- ☐ Tell a trusted adult
- ☐ Turn off the screen or device
- ☐ Ask someone who cares for me for a hug
- ☐ Do an activity that cheers me up

(Hwb, 2024).

However, some research from Estyn (2018) suggests there are challenges in delivering the higher progression steps show below, as teachers feel less confident with digital skills or have limited training.

Progression step 3	Progression step 4	Progression step 5
I can understand how to protect myself from online identity theft, <i>e.g. identifying secure sites, phishing, scam websites.</i>	I can understand that I have a digital footprint and that this information can be searched, copied and passed on.	I can build a positive reputation in the context of employment prospects, <i>e.g. use social media responsibly.</i>
I can identify the benefits and risks of mobile devices broadcasting the location of the user/device.	I can discuss the benefits and risks of presenting myself in different ways online.	I can explain the ethical issues of corporate encryption, <i>e.g. building in a bypass system.</i>
I can think critically about information shared online, <i>e.g. the impact of sharing images and videos, metadata of images and videos.</i>	I can use strategies for guarding myself against identity theft and online scams that try to access my personal information.	I can identify and describe the data protection policies of a variety of organisations located in different countries, and how this affects the way that they work.
I can identify the benefits and risks of giving personal information and device access to different software.		I can recognise the risks and the uses of data/services on personal devices, within the terms and conditions of a range of software and web services, and identify how organisations become data compliant when using multi-national products.

(Welsh Government, 2020)

Critical Evaluation

The DCF provides a clear structure for developing digital competence, and the progression steps within “identity, image and reputation” show development from early awareness to advanced critical skills. The DCF supports learners in becoming reflective, responsible digital citizens, aligning with Donaldson’s (2015) call for a curriculum that prepares learners for and increasingly digital society.

However, several challenges limit its impact in practice:

- **Teacher Confidence and Training:**
Teachers lack confidence in the more complex aspects of digital citizenship – without targeted professional learning, the higher progression steps risk being applied inconsistently. (Estyn, 2018).

- **School Policy and Resources:**

Estyn (2019) states that schools that hold strong digital learning policies tend to implement the DCF more effectively. In contrast schools with limited access to devices or poor digital incentives may struggle. This creates inequality for learners' digital competence depending on school context.

- **Application across the Curriculum:**

Although digital competence is a cross-curricular responsibility, The Welsh Government (2020) state that research suggest this does not always happen consistently. Some teachers still perceive ICT as a separate subject rather than embedding it within their teaching, leading to ineffective application.

Conclusion

The DCF offers a clear structure for developing learners understanding of identity, image and reputation online, but its impact is limited by inconsistent implementation. Although the progression steps provide clear transferable, cross-curricular skills (Welsh Government, 2018), many schools struggle with staff confidence and uneven digital resources, affecting delivery across subjects (Estyn, 2023).

The DCF also risks falling behind in the rapidly changing world, Digital initiatives are growing such as Artificial Intelligence, Data tracking and misinformation which Jisc (2019) demands the necessity of more critical digital literacy than the DCF currently holds. Nonetheless, it remains an essential tool for supporting ethical, safe and responsible participation in the digital world, if schools embed it strategically and keep updating practice for digital advances. (OECD, 2019).

References

Donaldson, G. (2015), *Successful Futures*, Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/successful-futures.pdf> (Accessed: 15th November 2025).

Estyn, (2018), *Preparing for the Digital Competence Framework (DCF)*, Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2020-07/Preparing%2520for%2520the%2520DCF%2520eng.pdf> (Accessed: 15th November 2025).

Estyn, (2019), *Digital Competence: Improving pupils' digital skills*, Available at: <https://estyn.gov.wales/blog/digital-competence-improving-pupils-digital-skills/> (Accessed: 15th November 2025).

Estyn, (2023), *Digital and online learning – autumn 2022 insights*, Available at: <https://estyn.gov.wales/improvement-resources/digital-and-online-learning-in-further-education-colleges-autumn-2022-insights/> (Accessed: 26th November 2025).

Hwb, (2024), *Personal Online Safety Plan for 3- to 7-year-olds*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/c3073fa6-dab8-4715-a56c-7caa915e93d9/overview> (Accessed: 26th November 2025).

JISC, (2019), *JSC Digital experience insights survey 2019*, Available at: <https://media-and-learning.eu/type/book-reviews/jisc-digital-experience-insights-survey-2019/#:~:text=Almost%2030.000%20students%20from%20Higher%20and%20Further,attitude%20towards%20technologies%20and%20their%20digital%20learning> (Accessed: 26th November 2025).

OECD, (2019), *OECD Skills Outlook 2019: Thriving in a Digital World*, OECD Publishing.

Senedd Cymru, (2016), *Curriculum Reform: The Digital Competence Framework*, Available at: <https://research.senedd.wales/research-articles/curriculum-reform-the-digital-competence-framework/> (Accessed: 26th November 2025).

The Welsh Government, (2018), *Digital Competence Framework Guidance*, Available at: https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/544888/mod_folder/content/0/digital-competence-framework-guidance-2018.pdf?forcedownload=1 (Accessed: 15th November 2025).

The Welsh Government, (2019), *Cross-curricular skills frameworks*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/cross-curricular-skills-frameworks> (Accessed: 15th November 2025).

The Welsh Government, (2020), *Curriculum for Wales Guidance*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/18d0d2f1-0563-4945-a889-d1548ae24c4e/curriculum-for-wales-guidance.pdf?preview=true> (Accessed: 25th November 2025).

The Welsh Government, (2025), *Shape the future of digital skills in Wales*, Available at: <https://educationwales.blog.gov.wales/2025/06/10/shape-the-future-of-digital-skills-education-in-wales> (Accessed: 15th November 2025).

Digital Realities: How the Online World Shapes Today's Youth.

In today's modern age, the digital world shapes how young people learn, communicate and form their sense of Identity. (Ofcom, 2023). With a world full of celebrities, filters and fake news that even affects adults – How can we expect children to navigate reality?

Online spaces can support creativity and social connection, yet they also expose young people to risks such as cyberbullying, altered self-image and pressure to meet to unrealistic on-line standards. (RSPH, 2017). Although schools actively promote safe and responsible digital use, the accessibility and constant availability of the online world make it increasingly difficult to safeguard children from these wider digital influences.



(Mentally Healthy Schools, N.D)

Using Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which argues that behaviour is learned through observing and imitating others, this blog will examine how these online influences affect Children and Young Peoples wellbeing and behaviour.

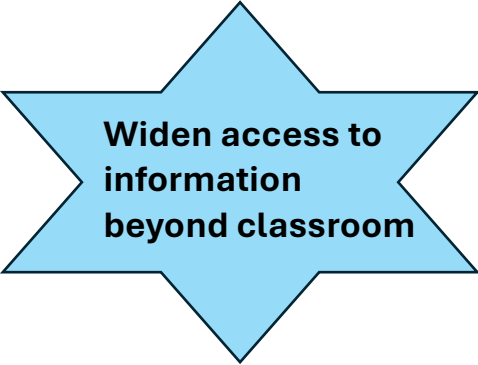
The Good News...

The Digital world can be full of positive opportunities for the children and youth of today, when used correctly.

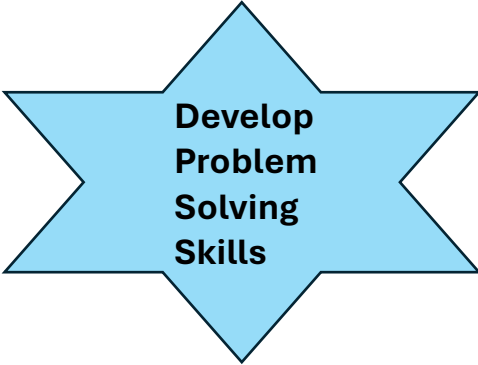
Research from the OECD (2025) indicates that these include:

**Enhance
Learning**

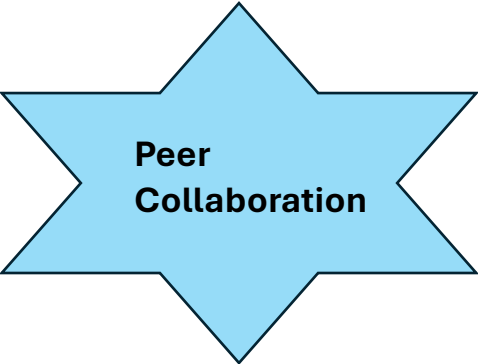
**Support
Independent
Enquiry**



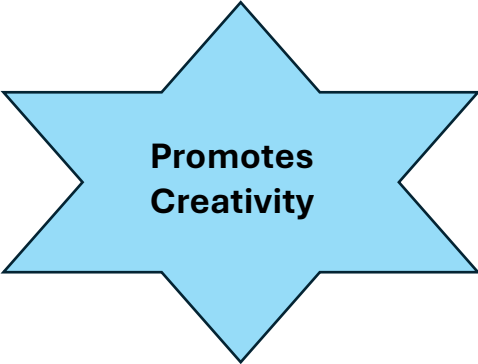
**Widen access to
information
beyond classroom**



**Develop
Problem
Solving
Skills**



**Peer
Collaboration**



**Promotes
Creativity**

All these Activities lead to strengthening digital literacy and support the Welsh Government (2020) aims of the Curriculum for Wales to develop ambitious, capable learners who are confident users of technology.

Risky Business

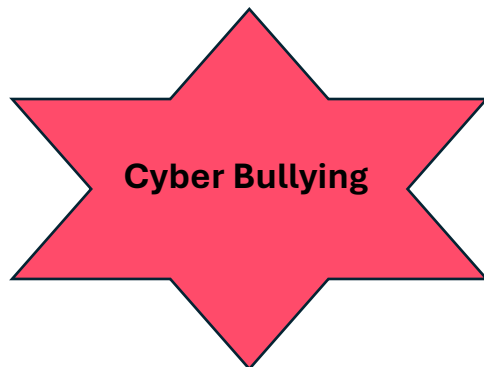
Another benefit can be the inclusivity of online spaces, Children who feel isolated offline can access digital communities that provide support networks for young people. Livingstone et al., (2017) argues that this helps build relationships, explore identity and find shared interests.

However, while these spaces can be supportive, they also pose significant risks. The anonymity and openness of online platforms mean that some communities may have harmful intentions or expose young people to misleading, exploitative, or unsafe interactions.

The Bad News...

Despite the potential benefits, extensive research highlights significant risks associated with young people's online engagement.

Research from the NSPCC (2022) reports that these include:



Beyond the above risks, the Reality of the digital world and online spaces is that it is impossible to be completely safeguarded by any one person – as the internet grants access to anything, anywhere.

The UK Council for internet Safety (UKCIS, 2020) warns that Children and Young People are most vulnerable to harmful content due to their development and limited critical literacy.

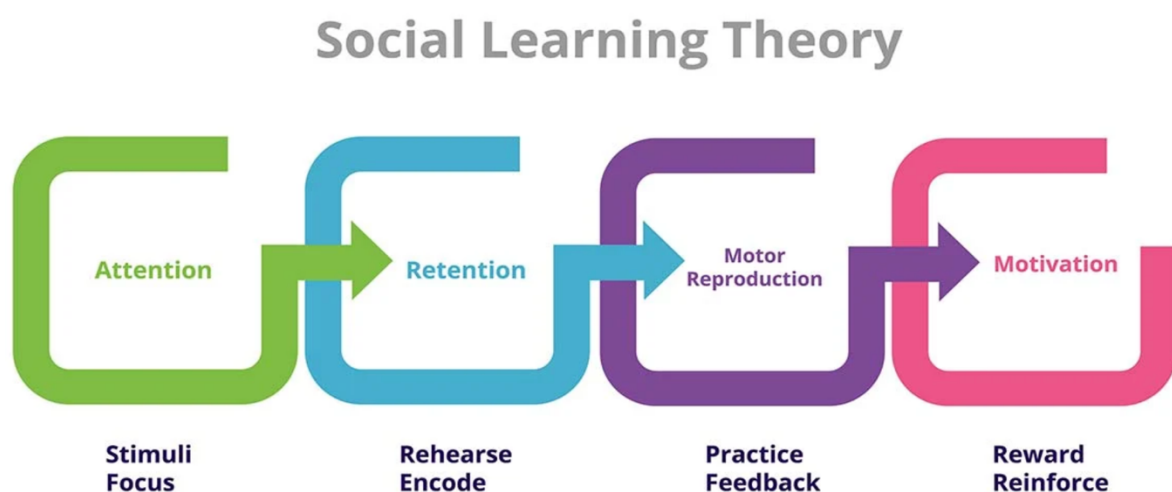
Young people that are constantly online can be influenced to normalise risky behaviour, distort perceptions of safety and lead to emotional harm.

In addition, The Royal Society for Public Health (2017) found a strong link between social media use and negative wellbeing outcomes, describing increased pressure to conform to unrealistic standards set online.

Online Behaviour through Bandura's Theory

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) provides a valuable framework for understanding how the digital world shapes children's behaviour, identity and wellbeing.

Bandura's theory argues that children learn through observing, imitating and internalising the behaviours of others, particularly when those behaviours appear rewarded.



(Mcleod, 2025).

In the online world, the process shown above is amplified as influencers, peers and celebrities provide constant attention and behavioural models, while likes, comments and shares act as reward reinforcement.

This helps explain the rise of issues such as body dissatisfaction, cyberbullying and validation-seeking online. Repeated exposure to filtered and altered images can normalise unrealistic standards, encouraging young people to imitate what they perceive as socially rewarded content. (RSPH, 2017).

Similarly, The National Crime Agency (2023) found that aggressive or harmful behaviour online may be reinforced by anonymity or peer approval, making it more likely to be repeated.

Through Bandura's lens, many negative digital effects are not accidental but are learned responses shaped by the behaviour young people see across digital platforms.

Responding to Digital Risks...

Policies have a crucial role and responsibility to address the risks that young people face online, especially those explained through the social learning theory,

In Wales: The Keeping Safe Online Guidance states-

- Expectations to teach digital resilience.
- Promote safe online behaviour.
- Provide clear reporting procedures for online harm.

(Welsh Government, 2019)

This is also supported by the Curriculum for Wales (2020) which embeds digital competence as a cross-curricular responsibility.

At UK Level: The Online Safety Act places-

- Greater responsibility to reduce harmful content.
 - Reduce Cyberbullying.
 - Educate and limit exposures to grooming and inappropriate material.
- (Ofcom, 2023).

In Practice, schools respond through digital literacy lessons, online monitoring systems, anti-bullying procedures and discussions around self-image and media influence.

Teaching learners to question online content, understand filters, and recognise unhealthy comparison can help counteract the observational learning processes described by Bandura.

Policies have a crucial role and responsibility to address the risks that young people face online, especially those explained through the social learning theory,

To Conclude...

The digital world offers meaningful opportunities for creativity and connection, yet it also exposes young people to significant risks related to identity, behaviour and wellbeing.



(HWB, 2024)

Bandura's Theory helps explain why these effects occur, while policies provide important safeguards. However, effective protection ultimately depends on schools embedding critical digital literacy into everyday practice. Supporting young people to recognise, question and resist harmful online influences is essential for safer and more informed digital participation.

References

- Bandura, A. (1977), *Social Learning Theory*, Prentice Hall.
- Livingstone, S., Davidson, J., and Bryce, J. (2017), *Children's Online Activities, Risks and Safety: A literature Review*, Available at: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/business/consulting/assets/documents/childrens-online-activities-risks-and-safety.pdf> (Accessed: 3rd December 2025)
- HWB, (2024), *Safer Internet Day*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/news/articles/394f4a79-f6da-4121-8e59-581b45b5875c> (Accessed: 9th December 2025).
- Main, P. (2022), *Social Learning Theory – Bandura*, Available at: <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/social-learning-theory-bandura> (Accessed: 30th November 2025).
- Mcleod, S. (2025), *Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory*, Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html> (Accessed: 9th December 2025).
- Mentally Healthy School, (N.D), Internet and social media, Available at: <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/factors-that-impact-mental-health/lifestyle-factors/internet-and-social-media/> (Accessed: 30th November 2025).
- National Crime Agency, (2023), *National Strategic Assessment of serious and organised crime*, Available at: https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/images/NSA_2023_Website_-_PDF_Version_1.pdf (Accessed: 9th December 2025)
- OECD, (2025), *How's Life for Children in the Digital Age?* <https://doi.org/10.1787/0854b900-en>
- Ofcom. (2023), *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report*, Available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/children/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-2023/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2023.pdf?v=329412> (Accessed: 26th November 2025).
- Royal Society for Public Health, (2017), *#StatusofMind: The effects of social media on Mental Health*, Available at: <https://www.rsph.org.uk/our-work/publications/statusofmind/> (Accessed: 26th November 2026).
- The Welsh Government, (2019), *Online Safety action plan for children and young people in Wales 2019*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/a0881328-771f-41fe-93a9-444deb0a7477/online-safety-action-plan-for-children-and-young-people.pdf> (Accessed: 9th December 2025).
- The Welsh Government, (2020), *Curriculum for Wales Guidance*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/18d0d2f1-0563-4945-a889-d1548ae24c4e/curriculum-for-wales-guidance.pdf?preview=true> (Accessed: 30th November 2025).
- UK Council for Internet Safety, (2020), *Education for a Connected World Framework*, Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5efa05b4e90e075c5492d58c/UKCIS_Education_for_a_Connected_World_.pdf (Accessed: 9th December 2025).

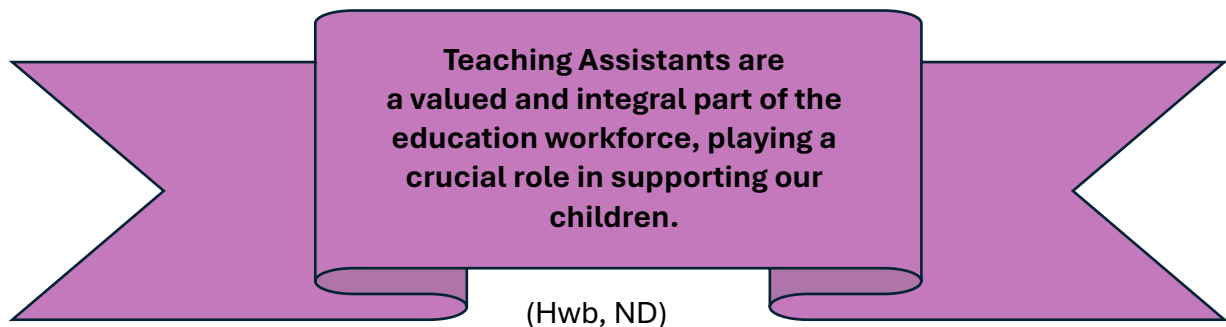
Digital Teaching Today: What Works, What Doesn't and Why Inclusion Matters.

As a Teaching Assistant working across mainstream and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provisions within key stage 1 and 2, I have supported learners using a range of digital tools in face-to-face contexts.

The Modern world requires the change of education, making digital teaching and learning increasingly imbedded within early years, primary and secondary education.

Reflecting on my professional experiences, this blog will explore how digital approaches can enhance learning for children, particularly those with ALN, while also examining barriers and relevant theories and policies.

The Role of a Teaching Assistant



A Teaching Assistant can be seen as much more than just a support line for learning; they often take on extra responsibilities and due to the amount of time spent with individuals and smaller groups tend to form better bonds and connections.

Duties also include:

- Supporting small group / Individuals.
- Covering lessons if needed.
- Assisting with use of digital devices.
- Assist with accessing online platforms.

- Use of Visual supports, interactive learning aps, and speech/audio-based resources.

Digital teaching is used alongside traditional approaches rather than a replacement for them, reflecting a blended model of learning (Welsh Government, 2020).

Research from the OECD (2021) suggests that when digital tools are used purposely, they can enhance participation and inclusion for younger learners, particularly those who benefit from multi model and scaffolded experiences.

However, my experience also highlights variations in children's access to technology at home, little or no safeguarding, differences in children ability and staff confidence whilst using digital tools, which can affect consistency and inclusivity.

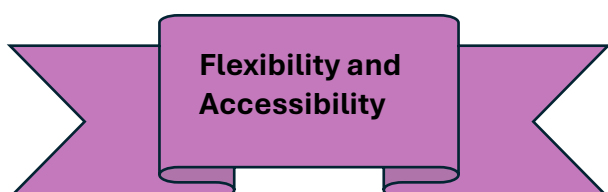
These findings reflect wider national research regarding digital inequality and the need for ongoing professional development to ensure digital learning benefits all learners equally (Estyn, 2021).

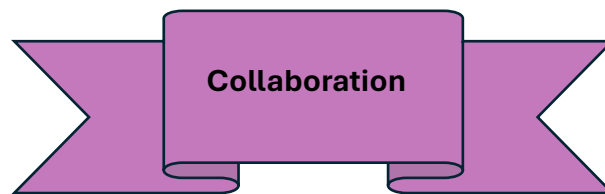
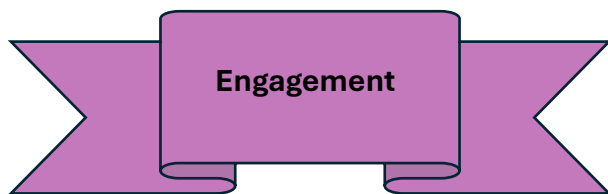
The Benefits of Digital Teaching and Learning

Throughout my journey as a Teaching Assistant in primary schools, digital teaching has offered clear benefits for both mainstream and ALN learners when used purposefully and effectively.

One significant advantage is increased learner engagement. Children growing up in today's digital society are exposed to technology from an early age and often view digital tools as a natural part of everyday life. As a result, when technology is used purposefully within the classroom it can capture interest and motivation more effectively than traditional pen and paper tasks.

Other possible benefits include:





Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) suggests that children learn by observing and imitating others, and digital tools provide strong visual and audio models that can support this process.

Digital learning also supports inclusion and differentiation, particularly for pupils with ALN. Bandura's theory highlights the importance of reinforcement in learning, and digital tools often provide immediate feedback through praise, rewards or progress indicators, which can positively reinforce learning behaviours. (Main, 2022).

In practice, I have seen digital features such as visual prompts, audio instructions and interactive feedback which have been especially beneficial to those with speech and language difficulties or attention needs.

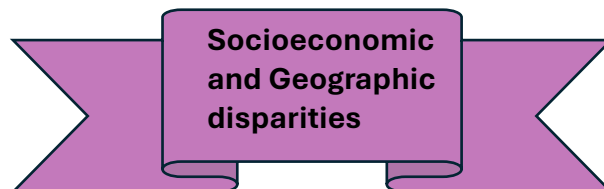
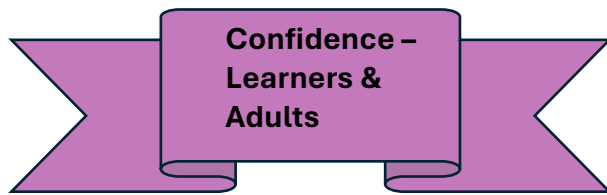
The Barriers to Digital Teaching and Learning

Despite the clear benefits of digital teaching and learning, multiple barriers still limit digital inclusion for children, particularly those with Additional Learning Needs.

One significant barrier is unequal access to digital devices and reliable internet at home. Many learners rely on school-provided technology, and depending on the school may also not have an efficient supply, meaning less opportunities for independent practice or restricted time frames.

Research from Estyn (2021) and Ofcom (2023) highlights that digital poverty continues to affect educational engagement, with learners from disadvantaged backgrounds experiencing reduced access to digital resources and support.

Other possible barriers include:



While many children are familiar with digital devices, this does not always translate into effective or safe use for learning purposes. Younger learners and those with ALN often require structured guidance to navigate digital tools meaningfully.

Banduras Social Learning Theory (1977) emphasises the importance of modelling in learning, therefor when staff lack confidence, opportunities for effective modelling and reinforcement are reduced. It is also impossible to safely govern what children do whilst granted unsupervised access, which can limit the learner's ability to develop digital competence.

These barriers highlight the importance of inclusive design, staff training and whole-school strategies to ensure digital learning supports equity rather than reinforcing existing inequalities. (Welsh Government, 2020).

Overcoming the barriers.

The Curriculum for Wales emphasises digital competence as a cross-curricular responsibility, encouraging schools to embed digital skills within everyday learning rather than treating them as isolated activities (Welsh Government, 2020). This approach supports consistency and ensures all learners, including those with ALN, develop digital skills through meaningful classroom experiences.



In Practice, schools can reduce digital inequality by providing access to devices within the school setting and offering alternative formats for learning where home access is limited. My experience in KS1 suggest that structured adult modelling, clear routines and scaffolded digital tasks are essential for young learners as the range of ability differs greatly from each child.

Estyn (2021) stresses that staff confidence directly affects the quality of digital provision. Professional development enables staff to select appropriate tools, manage screen time effectively and adapt digital learning to meet ALN needs.

To Conclude...

Digital teaching and learning offer valuable opportunities to enhance engagement, inclusion and independence for primary learners, especially learners with ALN, when used thoughtfully.

However, barriers such as digital inequality, safety, staff confidence and accessibility challenges remain significant. Drawing on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, this reflection highlights the importance of modelling, reinforcement and guided support in helping young learners use digital tools effectively.

While policy provides strong frameworks, inclusive digital practice ultimately depends on trained staff, consistent access and purposeful use of technology to ensure all learner's benefit.

References

- Acer, (N.D), Education and Digital Inclusion, Available at: <https://www.acer.com/sustainability/en/inclusive-workplace-and-society/social-engagement/education-and-digital-inclusion> (Accessed: 31st December 2025).
- Bandura, A. (1977), *Social Learning Theory*, Prentice Hall.
- Estyn. (2021), *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales*, Available at: <https://estyn.gov.wales/app/uploads/2024/08/Estyn-Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf> (Accessed: 31st December 2025).
- Hwb, (ND), *Assisting Teaching*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-learning/assisting-teaching> (Accessed: 31st December 2025).
- Main, P. (2022), *Social Learning Theory – Bandura*, Available at: <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/social-learning-theory-bandura> (Accessed: 31st December 2025).
- OECD, (2021), *21st-Century Readers: Developing Literacy Skills in a Digital World*, Available at: https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2021/05/21st-century-readers_26f2b462/a83d84cb-en.pdf (Accessed: 31st December 2025).
- Ofcom. (2023), *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report*, Available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/children/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-2023/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2023.pdf?v=329412> (Accessed: 31st December 2025).
- The Welsh Government, (2020), *Curriculum for Wales Guidance*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/18d0d2f1-0563-4945-a889-d1548ae24c4e/curriculum-for-wales-guidance.pdf?preview=true> (Accessed: 31st December 2025).

Digital Learning in Action: Evaluating the impact of Seesaw in education.

In a world where technology is becoming more and more normalised, keeping children's attention in class can be tough. The benefits digital technology can bring to inclusive practice within primary education are becoming increasingly important.



(Cox, 2013)

In my role as a TA, I have seen how digital tools can enhance accessibility, engagement and communication when used purposefully, or they work adequately.

In my own setting working with children in year 1 and 2, The resources that prove very popular and effective are the use of iPad and The Seesaw software.

What is Seesaw?

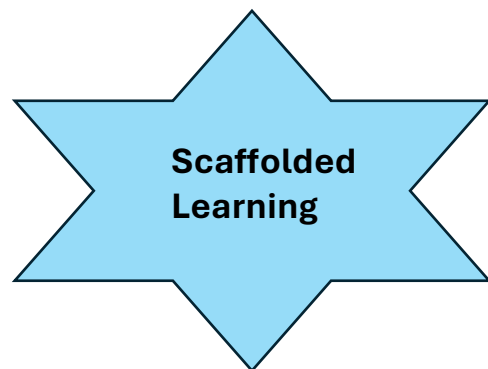
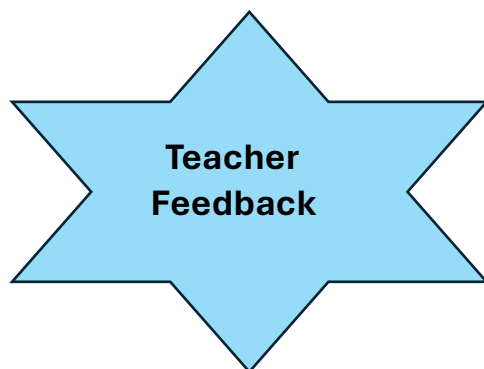
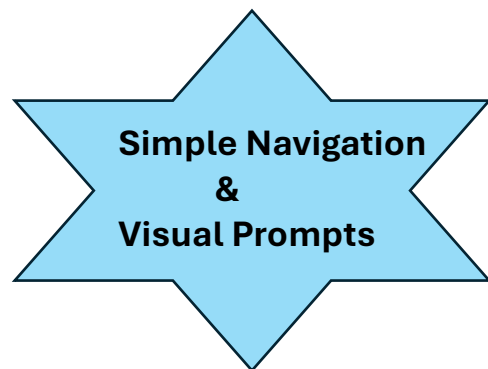
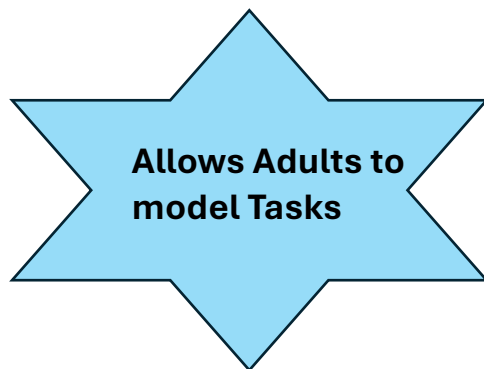
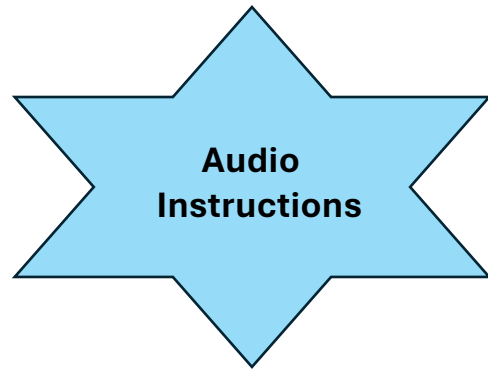
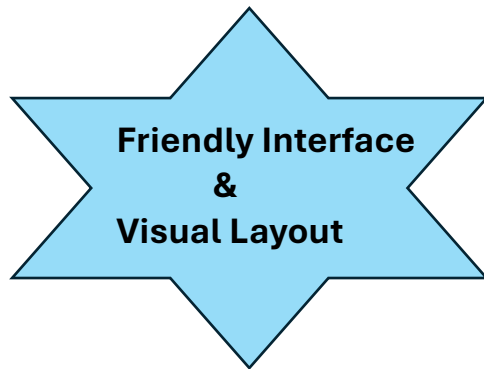
Seesaw is an online learning platform primarily used for early years and primary-aged learners. Seesaw is a software-based tool that is most commonly accessed through tablets such as iPads.



(Huynh, 2018)

Its intended purpose is to allow children to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, including drawing, photographs, videos, voice recordings and any other content they want to display.

Seesaws Functions:



(Seesaw, N.D)

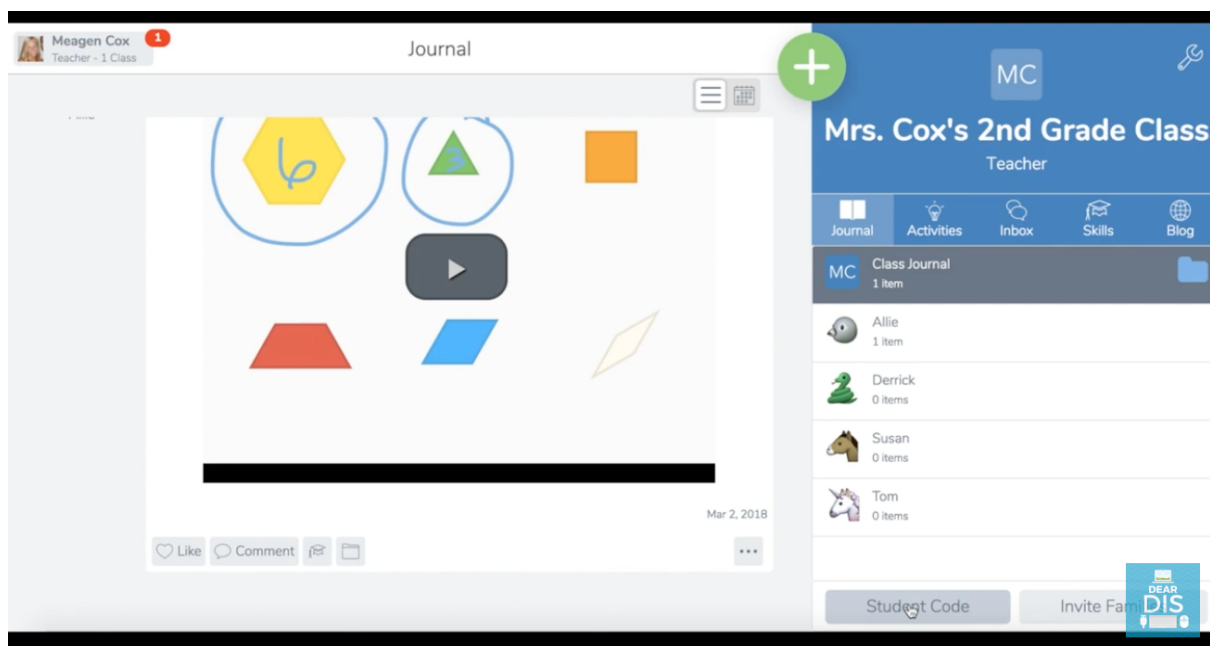
These features reduce barriers for learners with speech and language difficulties, limited literacy or low confidence. In addition, it can enhance teachers and families' views and engagement of children's learning securely.

This feature can strengthen parental involvement and reinforce learning beyond the classroom, although its effectiveness depends on family's access to technology and digital confidence.

Overall, Seesaw is intended to promote engagement, inclusion and learner voice, making it a relevant resource for promoting digital inclusion within the Welsh Government (2018) standards.

In Practice:

For Teachers:

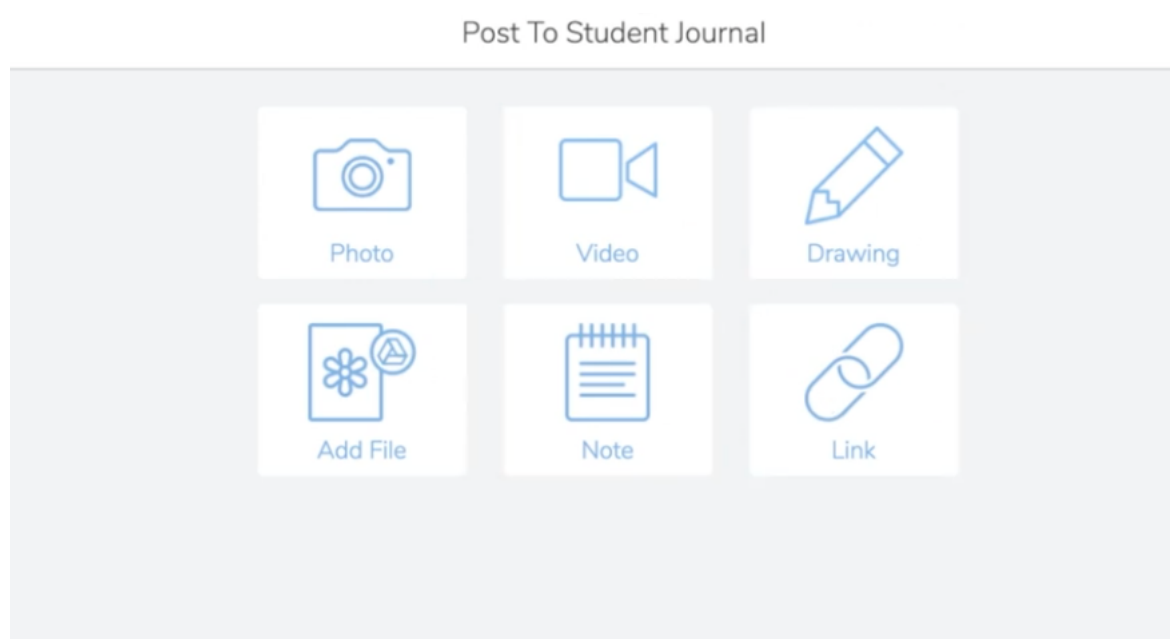


(Dear DISes, 2018)

The Teacher as the facilitator is able to approve what is uploaded, respond and react to uploads and showcase the journal on the interactive whiteboard at the end of the day.

This is done in my own setting and acts as a great motivator to complete and upload work.

For Learners:



(Dear DISEs, 2018)

The Learner is able to upload work as a group or individually, they can also create work and record audio input that will be uploaded to the class journal for the teacher to approve.

How Seesaw can support the DCF

Using Seesaw regularly learners are able to develop skills across all four DCF strands, particularly Citizenship and Producing, as pupils learn to create digital content, share work responsibly and reflect on their learning in age-appropriate ways (Welsh Government, 2018).

In my setting this includes recording voice explanations, uploading images of work or responding to feedback, all of which support digital literacy and responsible online behaviour.

Linking to theory, Vygotsky (1978) argued that cognitive development occurs first on a social level before being internalised by the learner. Seesaw enables adults to scaffold learning by modelling tasks, providing prompts and offering quicker feedback. As support is gradually reduced children become increasingly dependent, demonstrating progression from supported to individual learning.

The Platform also aligns with the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales, especially in supporting learners to become ambitious, capable learners and confident individuals (Welsh Government, 2020).

Through scaffolded tasks, adult modelling and opportunities to view peers work, learners can operate through Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, gradually building independence and confidence (Mcleod, 2025).

The Limitations...

Despite its strengths as an inclusive digital tool, Seesaw also presents limitations such as the decrease of face-to-face interaction and dialogue. Through Vygotsky's (1978) perspective, learning is most effective through meaningful social interaction and digital platforms reduce this.

While Seesaw enable scaffolding through written, visual and audio feedback, it cannot fully replace the effectiveness of face-to-face verbal interaction. This is significant in foundation and younger learner who are still developing language, communication and social skills.

Research from the OECD (2021) suggests that excessive reliance on digital devices may reduce opportunities for sustained talk and collaborative learning if not carefully balanced with in life interactions.

Adult guidance is crucial to the effectiveness of Seesaw, without consistent modelling and purposeful feedback from adults, learners may complete task independently but without actual understanding.

Access and Equity further limit the effectiveness of Seesaw. Not all families have reliable access to internet connection or confidence to engage with devices, which can restrict home to school communication and widen existing equalities (Ofcom, 2023).

These limitations reinforce the need for Seesaw to be used selectively and alongside high-quality educator interaction, ensuring digital technology enhances inclusion without replacing essential social learning experiences.

To Conclude...

The effectiveness of the use of iPads and Seesaw has been evaluated through this blog.

Through Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory, Seesaw can be understood as a mediating tool that supports learning through scaffolding, social interaction and guided participation.



(HWB, 2024)

The features of Seesaw, including voice recording, visual responses and images have been shown to promote engagement and pupil voice, especially for those who experience barriers to traditional tasks.

Seesaw supports the aims of the DCF by developing early digital literacy skills and encouraging safe, responsible participation in digital spaces (Welsh Government, 2018).

This blog has also highlighted important limitations. The effectiveness of Seesaw and such apps is highly dependent on consistent adult guidance, staff confidence and the accessibility of technology. Estyn (2021) research shows how wide the range of digital provision in homes spread.

An over-reliance on digital platforms will always pose risks to face-to-face interactions which are essential for language development.

Overall, Software such as Seesaw is most effective when used selectively, correctly and alongside adult supervision. This ensures that digital technology enhances practice without replacing the social foundations of learning.

References

Cox, J. (2013), *Advantages/Disadvantages of the iPad Classroom*, Available at: <https://www.teachhub.com/technology-in-the-classroom/2013/11/advantages-disadvantages-of-the-ipad-classroom/> (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

Dear DISES. (2018), *Seesaw tutorial for teachers*, Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l231B9sk_nI (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

Huynh, T. (2018), *Seesaw: Capture the Learning*, Available at: <https://tankhuynh.com/seesaw-4/> (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

HWB, (2024), *Safer Internet Day*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/news/articles/394f4a79-f6da-4121-8e59-581b45b5875c> (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

McLeod, S. (2025), *Vygotsky's Theory of Cognitive Development*, Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/vygotsky.html> (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

OECD, (2021), *21st-Century Readers: Developing Literacy Skills in a Digital World*, Available at: https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2021/05/21st-century-readers_26f2b462/a83d84cb-en.pdf (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

Ofcom. (2023), *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report*, Available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/children/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-2023/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2023.pdf?v=329412> (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

Seesaw. (N.D), *Evidence-Based Learning – Powered by Seesaw*, Available at: <https://seesaw.com/resource/evidence/> (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978), *Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, Harvard University DOI: 10.2307/J.CTVJG9VZ4

The Welsh Government, (2018), *Digital Competence Framework Guidance*, Available at: https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/544888/mod_folder/content/0/digital-competence-framework-guidance-2018.pdf?forcedownload=1 (Accessed: 1st January 2026).

The Welsh Government, (2020), *Curriculum for Wales Guidance*, Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/18d0d2f1-0563-4945-a889-d1548ae24c4e/curriculum-for-wales-guidance.pdf?preview=true> (Accessed: 1st January 2026).