Wandsworth Lifelong Learning

DIGITAL POLICY

Aiming to improve the quality of life skills and employability of residents in the Borough, making Wandsworth a vibrant, prosperous learning community

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Name originator/author:	Joss New - Deputy Head of Lifelong Learning
Contact details:	Joss.new@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk T: 020 8871 5372 | M: 07867 151502
Target Audience	All

Content

Digital Policy 2021

1 | Our context/Background

Since April 2020, all provision offered directly the council's Lifelong Learning team has been delivered remotely using Google Classrooms. Most of our subcontractors have been able to deliver their contracts in a similar way. The service continues to work towards a more 'blended' approach, a combination of physical and virtual learning

The service aims to mitigate barriers to learning through all provision, direct and commissioned and it is committed to maximise opportunities for those who are digitally excluded.

The council's six corporate objectives are:

- **Providing the best start in life** - By investing in early years provision, family support, school improvements, mentoring, apprenticeships and skills training

- **Greener, safer, better neighbourhoods** - By working with our community to combat climate change and improve our environment and our neighbourhoods – keeping them green, clean and safe

- **More homes and greater housing choice** - By delivering a range of homes to suit different needs for people who live or work in the borough, particularly for those on lower incomes, while providing more help and support to people who rent either from the council or privately

- **Helping people get on in life** - By helping people secure new job opportunities and encouraging investment in the borough

- **Encouraging people to live healthy, fulfilled and independent lives** - By helping young and old stay safe, active and in control of their lives

- **Value for money** - By maintaining the lowest possible council tax, making every pound go further and ensuring that we live within our means

WCLL Digital Strategy will be to enable the service to maximise inclusion and participation in learning. ICT will now be used as a tool to improve the quality of learning provision with an emphasis on using technology to develop skills for employment and general every-day living. It aims to share and provide the benefits of technology with all learners and enable them to achieve their full potential.

The intent of our Digital Strategy is to:

- prioritise adult learners who have significant barriers to digital learning

- enable those who are most disadvantaged to engage in digital learning so that they can progress in life and work

- provide the education, skills and learning that give adults a second chance and supports their employment prospects and wellbeing, which in turn improves productivity and creates the circumstances for economic success

- support the most disadvantaged to gain essential basic maths, English and digital skills qualifications as well as pre-vocational qualifications, to aid their progression into further learning and sustainable employment

- work with a range of subcontractors to offer an extensive flexible curriculum that helps to promote better health and wellbeing and social integration and cohesion,

- provide learning in response to digital changes which can be beneficial to the family unit in their daily lives and engage and encourage participation from learners of all ages, abilities and backgrounds

- improve access to adult learning by offering online classes which are accessible and manageable to learners who might not otherwise participate in adult learning

This will be achieved by:

- identifying learners who face a barrier to learning through digital poverty

- maximising resources and equipment available to support learners and the workforce

- offering IT Skills courses at a range of levels (starting at a very basic level linking to progression/ more advanced opportunities)

- operating a laptop/tablet/dongle loan scheme to enable participation

- delivering engaging marketing and communications to raise awareness and encourage participation, this will include targeting areas/wards of deprivation within the borough

- operating a highly effective IAG service that quickly identifies barriers to digital learning

- training and developing tutors and stakeholders so that they can use ICT to enhance learning and embed digital skills (where applicable) within all courses

- connecting with other council services, particularly the work of Children's Services, Libraries, Economic Development and Adult Social Services

- connecting with key community groups and stakeholders to broaden the digital offer, this will include working with internal departments as well as subcontractors

- connecting and contributing to other work related to digital development in Wandsworth to maximise impact and avoid duplication

- continuing to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the offer in order that digital provision is appropriate, responsive and relevant

2 | Introduction to the policy

This document provides a framework for the safe and effective use of digital technologies within our service. It provides the parameters for our staff and subcontractors, and is the basis for making decisions about which actions we need to take when developing and delivering our digital provision.

3 | Equipment and platforms, including loans

The service is committed to providing equipment and resources to digitally excluded adults who are not able to fully participate in learning.

Tackling digital exclusion

Where learners do not have the equipment, they need to access learning opportunities, the service will endeavour to provide that equipment, where it is practical and affordable to do so. This could include affordable devices (hardware/software applications) and data services (sim-only, broadband, community fibre).

Loans to staff and learners

We have designed an IT Equipment Acceptable Use agreement, in summary the agreement states:

WCLL aims to ensure that learners should have safe access to digital technologies and devices.

This acceptable use agreement is intended to ensure that:

1. WCLL learners will be responsible users and stay safe while using the internet and other digital technologies.

2. WCLL systems, equipment and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse that could impact the security of the systems.

3. WCLL learners will have good access to digital technologies to enhance their learning and will, in return, expect learners to agree to be responsible users.

Additional documentation includes IT Equipment Learner Assessment Record and IT Equipment Declaration Issue and Return Form. All documentation is saved within Sharepoint.

Safeguarding and Prevent

We will ensure that we provide a healthy and safe learning environment for our learners and staff when taking part or teaching our digital provision. This is also the requirement all our subcontractors. Annex B of WCLL Safeguarding Policy (including Prevent and e-safety) refers procedures and policy to follow in relation to online learning.

4 | The digital curriculum

The aim of our digital strategy is to provide support for digitally excluded residents to develop the confidence and motivation to incorporate 'digital' benefits into their everyday lives.

This could include: providing support to the elderly, young people, people with disabilities and more, to use 'digital' to improve their quality of life in accessing education, health services, employment, goods/services online and more. Establishing a 'digital buddy' programme; and digital work placements. Linking Social Prescribing and Talking Points.

5 | Learners and learning, including communications

The service and our subcontractors will provide high-quality digital skills, that will advance the knowledge and use of digital devices so that they can access services, education, work and the digital demands of everyday life.

This could include: providing a range of 'basic to advanced' training courses; making the training relevant and useful for residents tailored to different age or special interest groups. In addition, training and support will be offered to all learners to ensure that they have the skills necessary to use any digital equipment, platforms and software effectively to support their learning. As restrictions are lifted we will priortise learners/groups that should be invited to attend face to face learning.

The service and our subcontractors will support learners to ensure that they need to know and can carry out their responsibilities in ensuring that our digital learning environment is both healthy and safe. This will include completing LARA's (Learning Area Risk Assessment) which includes an online learning section.

6 │ Staffing and staff training/support

The service and subcontractors will provide staff with training and support to ensure that they have the skills required for teaching online/blended learning provision. This will include:

- keeping track of staff's access to equipment and their skills in using the various digital equipment and platforms

- use this information to provide updates and further training and support

- consider the views of staff on the effectiveness of relevant training

- set up a tutor steering group, inviting tutors from subcontractors and direct delivery to share best practice and identify future improvements and activities to improve online learning

- provide support to tutors to enable them to tackle persistent challenges in delivering online provision, such as technological issues, disengagement of learners

- evaluating how well tutors and support staff have adapted to the different pedagogical requirements for facilitating learning and assessment through conducting OTLA's and reviewing CPD/Development plans

- providing specific training to additional support staff and volunteers relevant to their role in providing learning and personal support.

7 │ Monitoring and reviewing our digital policy

- We will work with our staff, governors and subcontractors to monitor the implementation of our digital policy:

- We will also evaluate and review every 3 months:

- What difference has the policy and relevant action made? Are we meeting our policy objectives? Is the policy statement sill relevant?

Implementation Plan

Progress Key:

🔴 = to do   🟡 = underway   🟢 = achieved

Section	Aspects	Current status	Action needed	By whom	By when	Progress
Context	Develop a Digital Strategy mission statement	Drafted	Consult with colleagues Agree final document	SF/PM	18.1.21	🟢
Equipment	Order Equipment (laptops and dongles)	50 laptops delivered 150 further laptops pending	Update documentation following feedback from KA	SF	1.2.21	🟡
	Design Loan Equipment documentation	Drafted		PM	18.1.21	🟢
	Arrange set up of equipment (ensuring appropriate safety software is installed)			PM	Starting from Jan 21	🟡
	Agree distribution and tracking responsibilities with subcontractors/internal delivery teams			PM	Starting from Jan 21	🟡
Curriculum	Update 2021/22 contracts to include requirement of all subcontractors to comply with WCLL Digital Policy	Commissioning process is currently being updated and this will be added to all relevant documents	Update contract	SF/TA	March 21	🟡
	Deliver additional Essential Digital Skills Courses – including how to use a device, how to apply for employment online	Applied for approval to deliver with Pearson (awarding body)	CIS to be completed for May - July delivery	JN	April 21	🔴

Section	Aspects	Current status	Action needed	By whom	By when	Progress
Staff development	Set up Best Practice Tutor Group for Online Delivery Group		Dates to be agreed and circulated to subcontractors and direct delivery tutors	PB	Feb 21	🟠
	All tutors to complete CPD activity on delivering learning online			JN	March 21	🟠
	Create a staff digital skills matrix and address areas of need accordingly			JN	Feb 21	🟠
Learners	Update process of recording learners at risk and actions being taken to support			JN/PB	Feb 21	🟠
	Develop online learning materials to support learners			JN/PB/ PM	Mar 21	🟠
	Design online safety presentation that all tutors can use within all lessons to increase learner awareness of how to stay safe online		Completed and circulated to all tutors	PB	Jan 21	🟢
QA Monitoring	Complete at least one OTLA per tutor (those delivering online)			PB/PM/ JN	Feb 21	🟠
	Distribute a Wellbeing Online Survey to all learners	Completed and circulated		PB		🟢
	Review course evaluations each month to identify areas of improvement/strengths	Ongoing		PB	Monthly	🟠
	Complete a Self-Assessment Activity with subcontractors and internally with a focus to reflection with online delivery		Design and distribute activity	JN	Feb 21	🟠