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Unit 1: Foundations of Systems Thinking

Week 1 (In-person) | Module 1

WHAT THIS UNIT IS ABOUT

Understanding your school as an interconnected system — how people, processes, technology, and culture interact with and influence each other.

KEY CONCEPTS TO ENGAGE WITH

A system is not a list of parts — it is a set of relationships.

Your school is a system: budget decisions affect staff confidence, which affects classroom practice, which affects student outcomes. Digital initiatives enter this system — they do not stand apart from it.

Leverage points are places in the system where a small change can produce a disproportionately large effect. Identifying them is a core strategic skill.

Systems diagrams are not org charts. They map interactions and influences — not hierarchy.

ASSIGNMENT BRIEF

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

Output: A labelled systems diagram of your own school showing at least 5 components and their interactions

Include at least 5 school components (e.g. leadership, budget, staff development, teaching practice, student outcomes, ICT infrastructure)

Show directional arrows indicating how each component influences others

Label each arrow briefly — what is the nature of that relationship?

Identify at least one leverage point — a place where a change would have the greatest effect

GRADING CRITERIA

Grade	What Your Submission Should Demonstrate
Pass	Main components of your school are identified and shown on the diagram
Merit	Relationships and dependencies between components are clearly shown and labelled
Distinction	At least one leverage point is identified with a clear rationale for why change there would have the most impact

• PEER-LEARNING SESSION PROMPT

Bring your systems diagram to your peer-learning session. Share it with your group. Ask them: 'Is there a connection I have missed? Is there a leverage point I have overlooked?' Use their perspective to test your thinking.

★ CAPSTONE CONNECTION

This diagram is the foundation of Digital School Strategy Section 1. It shows how you understand your school as a system — and where digital transformation needs to engage.