

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT COMMITTEE
21 May 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Curriculum for Excellence
Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport

SUMMARY

This report updates members on progress regarding the implementation of the Curriculum for Excellence which represents the most radical educational reform in Scotland for a generation and has major implications in learning and teaching, the curriculum, assessment and qualifications and the continuing professional development of staff. This ongoing development is a major contributor to a number of key commitments to Strengthening the Highlands - the programme of the Highland Council 2009 - 2011.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Curriculum for Excellence is a major programme for ensuring improved learning and teaching in nursery, primary and secondary schools together with improved learning and achievement in wider contexts. This development is a key component of the *Getting it Right for Every Child* agenda which demands that we work together to ensure that each learner feels safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected and responsible and included.
- 1.2 The final guidance on what pupils should experience and achieve from the early years to the end of S3 has now been published by Learning and Teaching Scotland. This gives us a rounded picture of the expected experiences and outcomes and a clear basis for further work. A series of working groups will help take the experiences and outcomes forward throughout the service.
- 1.3 In the early stages of this development the Authority focused on the themes of Achievement and Transitions. Schools were encouraged to ensure that pupils experienced learning and achievement through the whole life of the school and on learning in the community. The continuing success of Health Promoting Schools and the growth of Eco Schools, Active schools, Youth Music and Arts Education Programmes give examples of this.

In supporting these developments schools have been encouraged to work collaboratively as an Associated Group of primary and secondary schools and their wider learning community to develop aspects of curricular transition at the three key stages of schooling – from nursery to primary, primary to secondary and secondary to post school.

The transition from School to Work has been significantly improved through the development of Skills for Work Courses, Vocational Pathways, Work Experience and a number of related projects under the Determined to Succeed umbrella.

The ECS Service responded in detail to the government consultation of the next generation of National Qualifications and key decisions in this area are awaited. A

major challenge ahead will be in realising the responsibility of every teacher in the areas of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing.

2. Learning and Teaching

2.1 The Service is presently updating its Learning and Teaching Policy and has engaged in a Future Learning and Teaching Project to develop appropriate principles behind effective learning and teaching and to disseminate good practice from case studies.

2.2 The Service has significantly supported literacy development over the last four school sessions and progress in the schools involved has shown improved learning and teaching of literacy. Evidence of this improvement is shown in Parts 2 and 3 of the Standards and Quality report. The literacy project started in primary schools is now moving to engage with secondary schools as pupils move through the curriculum.

The project has explicitly adopted collaborative learning approaches to ensure that all learners are engaged, active and increasingly independent in their learning, making clear the connections between listening & talking, reading and writing.

2.3 With the appointment of the Education Development Officer for Gaelic, the embedding of the experiences and outcomes will be further progressed. There has been comparatively little change from the draft to the final outcomes in literacy and Gàidhlig. There has been a recent release of resources from Learning and Teaching Scotland and from Stòrlann for Gaelic learners.

2.3 A Highland Numeracy Group trialled a numeracy strategy across three pilot Associated School Groups focusing on transition and numeracy across the curriculum projects. The group is in the process of developing exemplar themes and supporting resources for use in schools.

2.4 All Highland schools are Health Promoting and a Group has been established to take the agenda for Health, Wellbeing and personal and social education forward.

2.6 A range of secondary subject and other groups will be taking specific areas forward to support schools and other parts of the Service in embedding the experiences and outcomes into practice.

3. Curriculum and Assessment

3.1 A small working group of early years quality assurance staff held twilight sessions over the past year to keep staff updated and to gather feedback on what is happening in pre-school to move forward with the new curriculum.

Many centres are already taking into account the principles of the curriculum and the four capacities of *successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors* and *responsible citizens* when planning and assessing children and some have looked at the draft outcomes and experiences to explore what these

might mean in practice. Within both local authority nurseries and voluntary and private provision, centres are at different stages in this process. The working group is preparing guidance and further materials for centres.

- 3.2 A working group of Primary staff has developed guidance and support in: learning and teaching; engagement with the experiences and outcomes and related planning; and assessment. Schools are discussing and exploring some of these including:

Assessment, recording and reporting, the move from 5-14 to a curriculum for excellence and the involvement with parents.

The Assessment and Reporting Group has developed primary reporting options and support materials and these have been agreed and received by schools.

- 3.3 Work on Secondary Curriculum and Assessment has involved the examination of timetabling models and variations in subject teaching. Present practice is highly varied and innovative where schools have gone down particular routes to deliver the best service for their young people. A number have significantly extended cross – year teaching, early achievement of qualifications, interdisciplinary work and a significant expansion of vocational education. At the senior level, the success of the Open University YASS Pilot is notable.
- 3.4 Whole service groups are presently working on Outdoor Learning, together with Environment and sustainability and a range of other cross – cutting themes as part of the Curriculum experienced by our young people.
- 3.5 The development of formative assessment in schools has been highly significant – giving young people a real and active role in evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses and developing appropriate learning targets. This will be made much more efficient through the development of tracking in the Phoenix e1 project.

4. Continuous Professional Development

- 4.1 There have been a number of events for head teachers and others in the service updating staff on overall progress and expectations in relation to Curriculum for Excellence. Schools in particular have devoted a number of sessions to considering the experiences and outcomes and working on how they might make them a reality in their school.

Specific courses on learning and teaching (including conclusions from the Future Learning and Teaching Project), on literacy, and on Leadership for Learning at various management levels have been very helpful in taking the agenda forward.

- 4.2 A continuing series of co-operative learning academies have been enthusiastically received by teachers. These have played a significant role in taking forward active learning in schools and establishments.
- 4.3 Glow is presently being piloted in the Mallaig associated schools and will also be accessed by key groups of professionals. Lessons learned will be rolled out to the

service as a whole.

5. Expectations for 2009 – 10

- 5.1 The Service will complete its revision of the learning and teaching policy and toolkit and promote high quality training approaches aimed at giving pupils greater responsibility for their own learning. All establishments will be expected to have considered the implications of the experiences and outcomes together with the role of active learning, literacy and numeracy at all stages and will have made appropriate changes to practice and further development.
- 5.2 The Service will produce a 3-18 Curriculum Guidelines Policy complemented by a dissemination of good practice. It will evaluate the new primary reporting format and produce draft guidelines for secondary reporting. Establishments will be expected to have considered the implications for curriculum organisation and to have planned appropriately.
- 5.3 The Service will develop appropriate guidelines once the outcome of the consultation on the next generation of National Qualifications is known.
- 5.3 The Service will run a 'sharing of good practice in CfE' set of workshops in the autumn term for all staff. It will maintain a close contact with national developments and communicate these effectively to staff.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are invited to note the above report and comment on the service implementation strategy and seek further reports as appropriate.

Signature:

Designation:

Date: 11 May 2009

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Ref: HF/TMcC

Background:

Working groups on the Curriculum for Excellence.

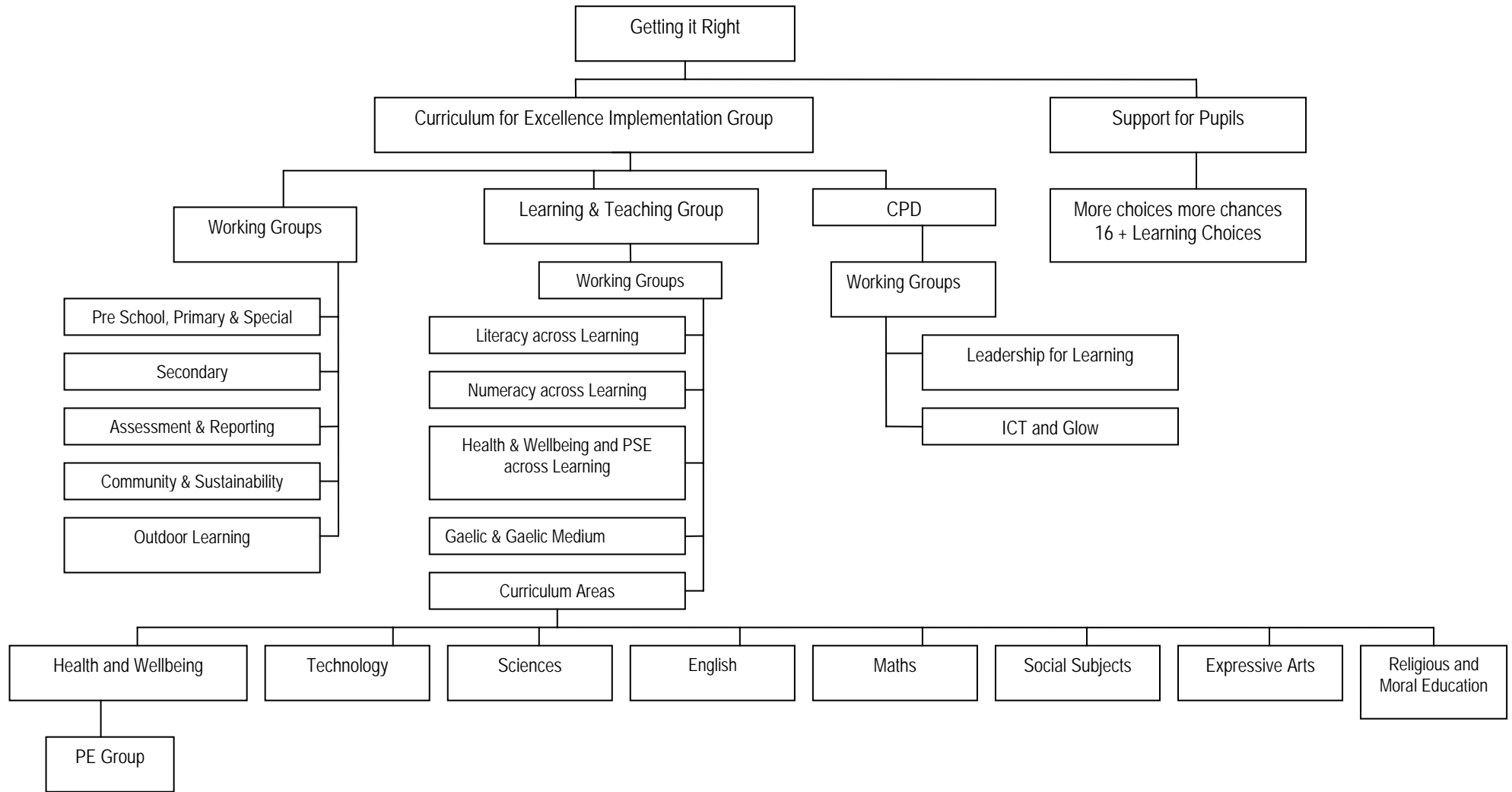
Guidance on what children should learn – presented through experiences and outcomes:

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/index.asp>

Curriculum for Excellence - the Implementation Plan (work in progress)

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/supportforschoolstaff/cfe/>

Rationalising Curriculum for Excellence Development in Highland



Though many of the areas may overlap, chairs and officers will be members of the more strategic groups in order to rationalise and integrate.

Groups and People

Group	Chair	Members	Officer Support	Notes
Curriculum for Excellence Implementation	Tony McCulloch	John Port, Calum MacSween, Graham MacKenzie, Graham Watson, Margaret Barclay, Terry Kerr Peter Finlayson, Mairi Robertson, Angela Cryans Linda Schubert, Shona Kelly, Moira Shearer Sue Bate, Katie Elder. Bob English, Eddie Broadley	Peter Finlayson Dave McCartney Susan Belford	Meet 6 times per year large group to reflect on the strategic issues governing the whole implementation.
Curriculum and Assessment		Graham Watson, John Port, Leanne Gardner, Gus MacKay, Alison MacDonald,	Peter Finlayson	
Learning and Teaching	Calum MacSween	Terry Kerr, Karen Ross, Eilidh Grant Clifford Cooke, Amanda Tevendale, Kevin Logan, Autumn MacAulay.	Dave McCartney	
CPD	Graham McKenzie	Terry Kerr, Viv Goodall, Eva Faber, Sarah MacKay, Anne Campbell,	Bob English	
CA: Preschool, Primary and Special	Margaret Barclay	Julie Barton	Moira Shearer	
CA: Secondary	John Port	Moira Forsyth	Peter Finlayson	
CA: Community & Sustainability	Graham Watson	Barry Northedge	Julie Barton	Including sustainability, Eco schools, Partnerships. Graham to convene & draw up remit.
CA: Assessment and Reporting	Shona Kelly	Rebecca Raynes, Moira Shearer, Tracey Barbour, Linda Cook, Ken Crossan, Moira Shearer, Terry Kerr, Joan Esson, Angus Gray, Jane Baines, Alison Whiteford, Fiona Jamieson.	Dave McCartney	Including wider achievement,
CA: Outdoor Learning	John Considine	Graham Watson, Donnie MacDonald, Kip Clark, Lorna Crane, Brian Dziennik, Cath Rutledge,	Graham Watson	
LT: Literacy		Lorna Sim, June Ranscome, John Howieson	Clifford Cooke	
LT: Numeracy	Susan Belford	Deidre Murray, Michael Aitchison, Topher Dawson, Sandra Nesbitt, Lynne Hunter, Kip Clark.	Susan Belford	
LT: Health and Wellbeing & PSE	Moira Leslie	Karen Carson / Linda Thomson, Ian Murray Cathy Steer, Karen Cormack, Susie Hoggarth Graham McNab, Rebecca Raynes, Rita Karikas	Louise Jones Barry Northedge	
Curriculum Areas			Peter Finlayson	
LT: Gaelic and Gaelic Medium		Sarah Fraser	Norma Young	

CPD: Leadership for Learning			Terry Kerr Margaret Barclay	
CPD: ICT and Glow	Robert Quigley	Joyce Watson, Mike Jones, Mairi MacKinnon, Glynne Williamson	Jim Henderson Alan Cowie	
16+ Learning Choices	Moirra Forsyth	Graham Watson Bill Alexander	Norma Young	