

What is Curriculum for Excellence?

The national Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) programme has been introduced. It has been developed to improve education for all children and young people and to put their needs at the heart of learning and teaching. In Aberdeenshire we are committed to giving every child and young person the chance to realise their full potential and become successful, confident, responsible citizens who are able to contribute effectively to their learning community. We need to continue to develop close working relationships with parents as key partners in their children's learning. At the present time the Education, Learning and Leisure Service is working directly with Head Teachers and staff in schools and communities to make sure that children and young people in Aberdeenshire receive the best possible education at this time of change.

A Curriculum Framework 3-18 for Aberdeenshire is in place to give clear guidance to schools and communities on the planning and delivery of a meaningful set of curriculum experiences and entitlements that will prepare Aberdeenshire learners for 21st Century Scotland.

www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/parents/carers



Some key factors about CfE:

- The 3-18 curriculum is about ensuring continuity in children's learning and will take account of their strengths, interests and achievements.
- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing will feature across learning and will be the responsibility of all.
- Learning and teaching will have a refreshed emphasis on involving children and young people in the learning process and they will be encouraged to reflect on their progress and be clear about their next steps in learning.
- Curriculum areas are grouped as sciences, languages (English, Gaelic, classical and modern languages), mathematics, expressive arts, social studies, technologies, health and wellbeing and religious and moral education.
- There are 6 curricular levels or stages which clearly set out learning progression for each child from 3 to 18 years through a series of 'Experiences and Outcomes' in each curriculum area.

Early	Pre-school to P1 or later for some
First	P2 to end P4 but earlier or later for some
Second	P5 to end P7 but earlier or later for some
Third and Fourth	S1-S3 (Many young people will be accessing Fourth level in S3)
Senior Phase	S4 to S6 in school, college, workplace or community

- Young people are entitled to have a focus on personalisation and choice in their learning through a range of approaches, not just course choice. This is reflected in the emphasis on broad general education leading into a new and revised system which combines S4 to S6. There will be an extended range of opportunities to develop their skills and understanding further and the number of qualifications and experiences may be greater than in the previous system.

How is literacy being delivered across learning?

Literacy is essential for learning. Children and young people need literacy skills to access learning and to develop and demonstrate their understanding of the world around them. A literate individual has increased opportunities in all aspects of life, including health, work and life-long learning.

“Literacy is the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful.”

Delivering literacy across learning means that all teachers support learners to improve their literacy skills by creating active and engaging opportunities, enhanced by partnership working, which extend their experiences of reading, writing, talking and listening.

There are strong connections between learning in literacy and learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, written reports of scientific experiments and reports of social studies investigations share the same literacy outcomes. There are close links, for example, between the expressive arts and creative writing and the information handling outcomes in numeracy link clearly to the critical literacy outcomes where learners are asked to assess the reliability of information.

Literacy enables children and young people to describe their own understanding of their learning, feelings and thoughts. It equips them with skills for learning, skills for work and skill for life.

Full information on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across learning can be found on the Learning & Teaching Scotland Website: www.ltscotland.org.uk

How is numeracy being delivered across learning?

Being numerate helps children and young people to function responsibly in everyday life and contribute effectively to society. It increases their opportunities within the world of work and lays foundations which can be built upon through life long-learning.

Numeracy is more than an ability to do basic arithmetic. It involves developing confidence and competence in using numbers which allows individuals to solve problems, interpret and analyse information and make informed decisions. These skills are fundamental to the future development of skills for life, work and learning.

Numeracy across learning includes numeracy activities in almost all subject areas. Measuring, calculating and weighing features in activities and subjects as diverse as cooking, craft and design, physics, physical education, chemistry, personal finance and accounting as well as mathematics. Understanding statistics and tables are essential skills across learning, from social studies to health and wellbeing.

Active and contextualised learning experiences, which go beyond timetabled classes and into, for example, enterprise, health activities and special events, provide our children and young people with the opportunities to develop their numeracy skills and equip them to face the challenges of the 21st century.



How is health and wellbeing being delivered across learning?

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge, understanding and skills, which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

“Learning through health and wellbeing promotes confidence, independent thinking and positive attitudes and dispositions. Because of this, it is the responsibility of every teacher to contribute to learning and development in this area.”

Each establishment, working with partners, has a shared responsibility to take a holistic approach to promoting health and wellbeing, one that takes account of the stage of growth, development and maturity of each individual, and the social and community context. Working closely together, all agencies play their part in making sure that every child and young person is Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. Getting It Right For Every Child gives children and young people the best start in life and the support needed to achieve their full potential.

The experiences and outcomes in health and wellbeing reflect this holistic approach and are divided into the following headings:

- Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- Planning for choices and changes
- Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport
- Food and Health
- Substance Misuse
- Relationships, Sexual health and parenthood

The health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes are designed to encourage links with all other areas of the curriculum, in and outside the classroom, to reinforce learning and to provide relevant, enjoyable and active experiences: there are clear connections between science and several aspects of health and wellbeing; between the technologies and food and health.

Health and wellbeing of every child and young person is greatly enhanced through partnership working with families, between teachers and colleagues such as home link staff, health professionals, educational

psychologists and sports coaches who can make complementary contributions through their specialist expertise and knowledge.

www.infoscotland.com/playtalkread

How do we know children and young people are making progress?

CfE is about raising standards for all by actively engaging learners, improving learning and teaching and promoting deep understanding and developing skills. It is vital that assessment approaches (including those related to qualifications) should reflect these aims.

- From ages 3 to 15 (up to the end of S3), this will be carried out within schools. National examples and standards will be used which will be available on the **National Assessment Resource**, a new website portal for teachers in Scotland.
- In order to evidence progress through the **new levels**, children and young people will need to show that they have a breadth of learning, that they have participated in challenging tasks and activities to demonstrate a depth of knowledge, understanding and skills, and that they are able to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar situations.
- Assessment will involve looking at a range of evidence, such as pupil folios of work, rather than concentrating on test results.
- Pupils and parents will be involved in discussing their progress as well as agreeing next steps in learning.

Learners will experience a broad general education up to and including S3. This provides learners with a wider experience and additional maturity prior to planning their senior curriculum. National advice indicates in each year of the senior curriculum learners will have the opportunity to study 5 or more options. By planning the senior curriculum over a 2/3 year period (including the 16 + learning offer) learners will be able to study an extended range of options.

It is anticipated that Aberdeenshire Council's advice, currently under development and reflecting national guidance, will allow for local decision making and not be unduly prescriptive

Assessment of the new qualifications will be appropriate to the subject and level. It will include a combination of practical work, case studies and

examinations. There will be formal recognition of learners' achievements through profiles and qualifications.

From August 2010 pre-school to S1 have been working to CfE guidance and standards. In the current session (session 2010-11), S2 and above will continue to work mainly within the existing curriculum and qualifications system; however, they will benefit from changes in learning and teaching.

The current S1 (session 2010-11) of young people will be the first to take the new qualifications in session 2013-2014.

Revised Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF)

SCQF Level	Current Provision	New Qualification
Level 1	Access 1	Access 1
Level 2	Access 2	Access 2
Level 3	Access 3 & Foundation	Access 3
Level 4	SG General & Int 1	National 4
Level 5	SG Credit & Int 2	National 5
Level 6	Higher Grade	Higher
Level 7	Advanced Higher	Advanced Higher

In the senior phase learners will have the opportunity to take National 4 and 5 qualifications in S4, S5 and S6 or by-pass these and go straight to Higher courses when they are ready. www.sqa.org.uk/timeline

As at present schools, learning communities and partnerships will support all young people to ensure they achieve positive destinations as they move beyond school into employment, training, college or university.

Where Can I Find More Information?

There is a wide range of on-line resources which parents, carers and young people can access to learn more about Curriculum for Excellence.

www.curriculumforexcellence.gov.uk

www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk

On the Learning and Teaching Scotland website you will find information about Parents as Partners, Building the Curriculum, Additional Support Needs, Early Years, Assessment and Reporting.

www.ltscotland.org.uk

National Qualifications: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/34714.html

Additional Support Needs: www.enquire.org.uk

In Aberdeenshire a number of schools are currently piloting the use of Glow, the world's first national intranet for education, with parents.

The following website shares practice on learning through technologies and the use of Glow. www.glowscotland.org.uk

There is a new Government website to stimulate and encourage debate about education for parents, children, young people and educators.

If you have views and suggestions about how Scottish Education is delivered make them know on: www.engageforeducation.org