



SCOTLAND'S CURRICULUM
FOR EXCELLENCE
Putting learners at the heart of education

Scotland's Approach
What Matters?
How We Do It

Scotland's curriculum –
Curriculum for Excellence –
helps our children and young
people gain the knowledge, skills
and attributes needed for life in
the 21st century.

This resource has been prepared with and for teachers and other professional practitioners and applies to both English and Gaelic medium education. It re-visits the initial Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) narrative and sets it within the **current context**. It supports the process of engaging with the core principles of CfE and the development of practices that are fit for purpose.





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Scotland's curriculum places learners at the heart of education. At its centre are four fundamental capacities. These capacities reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning. They:

- recognise the need for all children and young people to know themselves as individuals and to develop their relationships with others, in families and in communities
- recognise the knowledge, skills and attributes that children and young people need to acquire to thrive in our interconnected, digital and rapidly changing world
- enable children and young people to be democratic citizens and active shapers of that world



Responsible Citizens

with:

- > respect for others
- > commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life

and able to:

- > develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it
- > understand different beliefs and cultures
- > make informed choices and decisions
- > evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues
- > develop informed, ethical views of complex issues

Successful Learners

with:

- > enthusiasm and motivation for learning
- > determination to reach high standards of achievement
- > openness to new thinking and ideas

and able to:

- > use literacy, communication and numeracy skills
- > use technology for learning
- > think creatively and independently
- > learn independently and as part of a group
- > make reasoned evaluations
- > link and apply different kinds of learning in new situations

The Four Capacities



Confident Individuals

with:

- > self respect
- > a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- > secure values and beliefs

and able to:

- > relate to others and manage themselves
- > pursue a healthy and active lifestyle
- > be self aware
- > develop and communicate their own beliefs and view of the world
- > live as independently as they can
- > assess risk and take informed decisions
- > achieve success in different areas of activity

Effective Contributors

with:

- > an enterprising attitude
- > resilience
- > self-reliance

and able to:

- > communicate in different ways and in different settings
- > make informed choices and decisions
- > work in partnership and in teams
- > take the initiative and lead
- > apply critical thinking in new contexts
- > create and develop
- > solve problems



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As part of their learner journey, all children and young people in Scotland are entitled to experience a coherent curriculum from 3 to 18, in order that they have opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to adapt, think critically and flourish in today's world.



Curriculum is defined as the totality of all that is planned for children and young people from early learning and childcare, through school and beyond. That totality can be planned for and experienced by learners across four contexts:

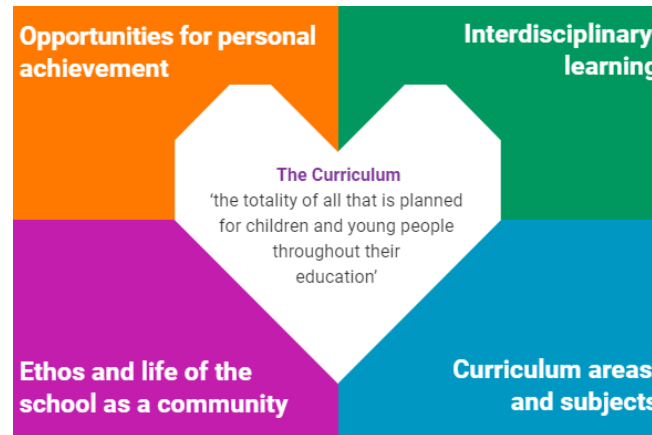
Opportunities for personal achievement

Personal achievement provides children and young people with a sense of satisfaction and helps to build motivation, resilience and confidence. The experiences and outcomes include opportunities for a range of achievements in the learning setting and beyond. All establishments need to plan to offer opportunities for achievement and to provide the support and encouragement which will enable children and young people to step forward to undertake activities which they find challenging. This is one of the key areas where schools need to work closely with a wide range of partners to help young people access information and opportunities and make their voices heard.

Ethos and life of school as a community

The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of respect and trust based upon shared values across the school community. All practitioners should contribute through open, positive, supportive relationships where children and young people will feel that they are listened to; promoting a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure; modelling behaviour which promotes effective learning and wellbeing within the school community; and by being sensitive and responsive to each young person's wellbeing.

Children and young people should be encouraged to contribute to the life and work of the school and to exercise their responsibilities as members of a community. This includes opportunities to participate responsibly in decision-making, to contribute as leaders and role models, offer support and service to others and play an active part in putting the values of the school community into practice.



Interdisciplinary learning

The curriculum should include space/opportunities that enable children and young people to make connections between different areas of learning. Interdisciplinary learning should be stimulating, relevant and challenging. Revisiting a concept or skill from different perspectives deepens understanding and can make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful for learners. It can take advantage of opportunities to work with partners who are able to offer and support enriched learning experiences and opportunities for young people's wider involvement in society.

Effective interdisciplinary learning:

- can take the form of individual one-off projects or longer courses of study
- is planned around clear purposes
- is based upon experiences and outcomes drawn from different curriculum areas or subjects within them
- ensures progression in skills and in knowledge and understanding
- can provide opportunities for mixed stage learning which is interest based.

Curriculum areas and subjects

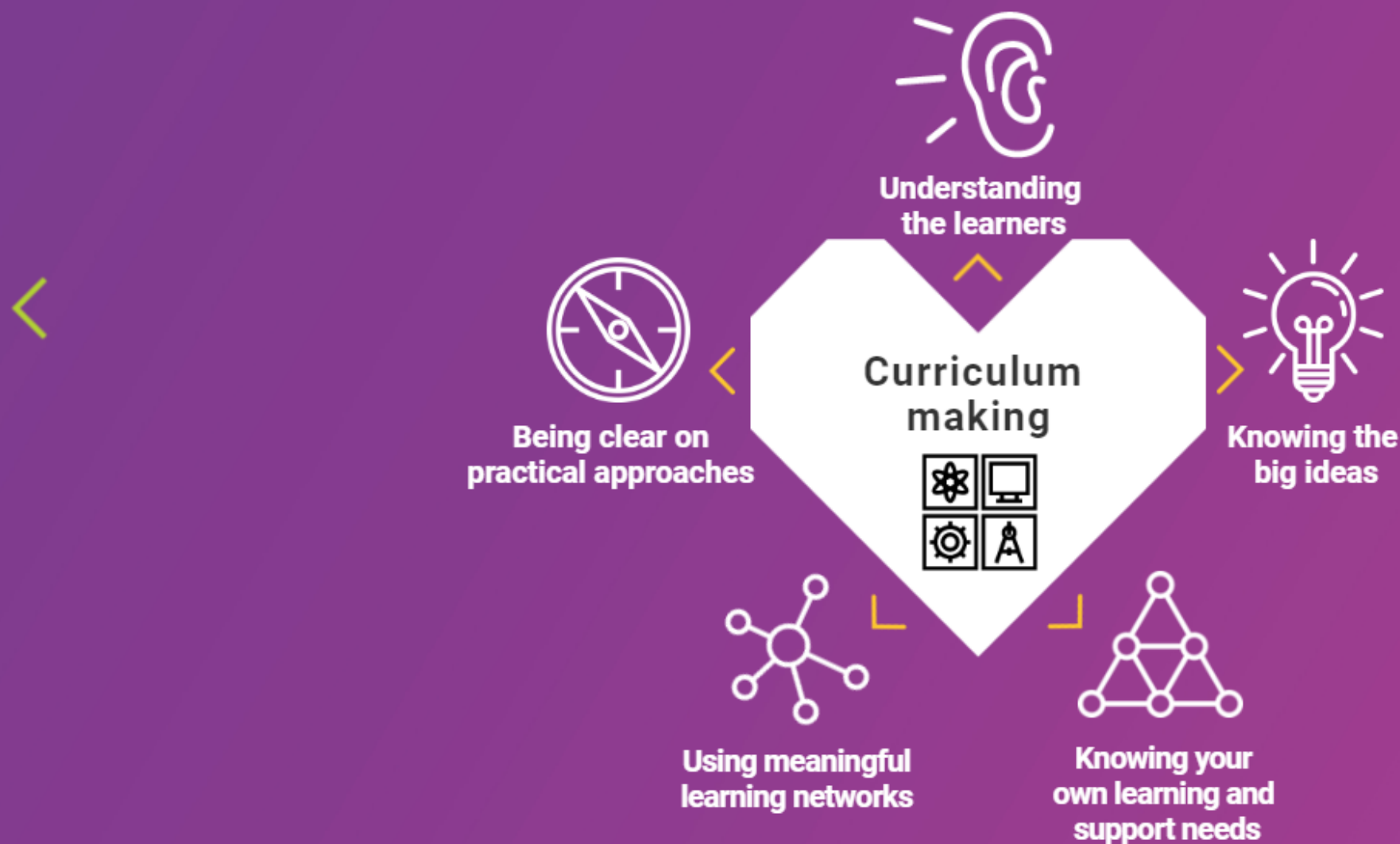
The curriculum areas are the organisers for setting out the experiences and outcomes and contribute to developing the four capacities. There are eight curriculum areas. Curriculum areas are not structures for timetabling; establishments and partnerships have the freedom to think creatively about how they can organise and plan for deep, sustained learning which meet the needs of their children and young people.

Subjects are drawn from the curriculum areas and provide a familiar structure for organising knowledge and skills. As young people move through the broad general education and into the senior phase they will experience increasing specialisation and greater depth, with a wide variety of subjects increasingly being the principal means of structuring learning and delivering outcomes.

Individual settings and practitioners are empowered to make the decisions needed to provide a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum that is adaptable and responsive to the diverse needs of individual learners and which reflects the uniqueness of their communities.

Scotland's Approach What Matters? How We Do It

Taking curricular aims and translating them into practice is a continuous process. Getting this right is critical and this section sets out key considerations, activities and ways of working to support the process of curriculum making.





Understanding the learners

- Knowing children and young people and where they are on their individual learner journeys
- Listening to learners and being informed by their motivations and aspirations
- Empowering learners to have **agency** in their learning with opportunities for personalisation
- Using observations, assessments and feedback to design and develop the learning



Knowing the big ideas

- Maximising opportunities that develop the four capacities for learners, making clear links to future skills, for example **meta-skills**
- Understanding and sharing the pleasure and benefits that come from learning
- Being clear on the knowledge and skills that underpin individual **curriculum areas**
- Being informed by shared vision, **values** and aims, locally and nationally
- Understanding drivers for improvement and how they align at national and local levels
- Being responsible for the development of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the whole curriculum for all learners. This includes digital literacy skills



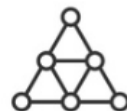
Being clear on practical approaches

- Having clear strategies for delivering excellence and equity for learners
- Agreeing the pedagogies that are best for purpose and the development needs of learners
- Reviewing and refining the curriculum against the **seven design principles**.
- Ensuring learners have clear progression pathways
- Making clear links between learning and the world of work
- Embedding **Creativity** and **Learning for Sustainability** in curriculum design
- Using knowledge of the local community and robust data to inform the curriculum offer
- Articulating and sharing curriculum rationale and narrative



Using meaningful learning networks

- Planning, enquiring and reflecting with other practitioners to optimise impact
- Collaborating with parents, carers, families and the community
- Developing and maximising the opportunities derived from partnerships across clusters, local authorities and **Regional Improvement Collaboratives**
- Building partnerships with colleges, employers, universities, the third sector and others to co-design the curriculum
- Using the outdoors and our built and cultural heritage to support learning
- Sharing, celebrating and reflecting on successes



Knowing your own learning and support needs

- Committing to career-long professional learning based around high quality, rigorous **professional standards**
- Committing to meaningful professional review and development
- Belonging to communities of practice and enquiry
- Developing collaborative practice locally, nationally and globally