

S1 - S3 Curriculum Architecture

Position Paper 3: October 2009

1 Context

This position paper seeks to assist Secondary Schools within the City of Edinburgh in developing revised S1-S3 curriculum structures.

Building the Curriculum 3 provides the strategic framework on which curriculum design should be based. This paper provides specific guidance for the S1 stage. Further guidance will be provided for the S2 and S3 stage. In order to ensure a level of consistency across schools, this position paper seeks to provide further strategic guidance while supporting autonomy within schools to develop experiences appropriate to their local context.

2 Planning Curricular Change

2.1 Rationale for curriculum changes

Any curriculum change should have a clear and well thought through rationale based on the principles of Building the Curriculum 3(p13). It should have a clear focus on outcomes for learners in respect of maximising learning, attainment and achievement.

2.2 Consultation with Stakeholders

The extent of consultation will depend on the nature of the changes planned however schools should ensure that comprehensive consultation of key stakeholders is well informed and provides stakeholders with sufficient and relevant information.

2.3 Well planned implementation

Curriculum changes should be reflected in school and departmental plans. Particular attention should be given to align resources to priorities and plan appropriate staff development activities.

2.4 Self-evaluation and quality assurance in curriculum changes

There should be rigorous procedures in place which ensure that any curriculum change is carefully monitored and evaluated. Progress on any change should be considered on a regular basis and the outcomes shared appropriately. Self-evaluation and quality assurance activities should relate directly to the intended outcomes stated in the rationale for change. Schools should have a clear understanding of what quantitative and qualitative measures will be used in monitoring and evaluating processes.

3 Key Principles

3.1 Transition

In order to provide coherence at the stage of Primary-Secondary transition, Cluster Headteachers should be involved in proposed curricular changes. Engagement of parents of pupils in the upper stages of Primary, particular those in P7, should be planned and changes to the S1 curriculum from August 2010 should be shared.

3.2 S1-S3 Curriculum

The curriculum comprises the ethos and wider life of the school, curricular areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning and planned opportunities for personal achievement. The 7 principles of curriculum design as outlined in BtC 3 are integral in planning curricular experiences:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

The S1-S3 curriculum structure should provide clarity as to how the Level 3 Experiences and Outcomes will be delivered in all curricular areas through discrete subject teaching and inter-disciplinary learning, providing coherence for the learner.

3.3 Personalisation and Choice

Most pupils will follow a programme of study which provides broad coverage of the level 3 experiences and outcomes across all areas. This should provide a solid base for future personalisation and choice. **In S1**, there is likely to be little opportunity for personalisation and choice at course level. Personalisation and choice throughout this year will therefore be delivered through choices in **approaches to learning**.

Different scenarios of choice could include:

- *The context for learning*
- *The tasks or methodology for learning*
- *The source or resource for learning*
- *The outcome of the learning*
- *The support or partnership for learning*

Good choices should serve to motivate and encourage pupils in their learning by developing ownership and independence. This should be informed by opportunities to reflect on their learning, through formative assessment, self and peer evaluation and personal learning planning.

In S2-S3, personalisation and choice will include choices at course level and within contexts for learning.

3.4 Inter-disciplinary Learning

Interdisciplinary learning allows pupils to see, make and understand links between discrete subject areas or disciplines.

Effective interdisciplinary learning is a collaborative piece of work, project or course which is planned and coordinated between disciplines and which delivers one cohesive piece of learning or area of study.

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*¹

See Appendix 1 for further advice on planning interdisciplinary experiences.

3.5 Development of Skills

BtC 4 – Skills for learning, Skills for life, Skills for work provides further guidance on development of skills.

Skills for Learning

In delivering the outcomes and experiences, all young people will be involved in the development of skills specific to subject areas. Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing will be delivered across learning. Approaches to learning and teaching, based on Assessment is for Learning and Active Learning approaches will ensure young people develop skills in learning.

Skills for Life

In designing curriculum experiences S1-S3, schools should give consideration to where the range of skills for life will be developed. Eg. through planned opportunities for achievement, inter-disciplinary learning

Skills for Work

Partnerships with employers, colleges and others provide additional opportunities for schools to develop the skills that young people will need throughout their life and in their work. Formal programmes such as Your Turn, College Inductions, and others can be complemented by integrated projects and enterprise activities (such as school banks, employer input to enterprise events etc) that develop pre-vocational and employability skills.

¹ Scottish Government (2008), *Building the Curriculum 3*, p21

4 Planning the S1 Curriculum

4.1 Planned Opportunities for Achievement

Further guidance will be available following the publication of the evaluation of the National Pilot in Recognising Achievement.

Achievement can be seen as the progress young people make in developing the range of attributes and capabilities which contribute to the four capacities. Recognition of achievement, which the young person can contribute to, will report on progress being made and inform future learning plans.

The process of recognising achievement encourages children and young people to recognise, reflect on and articulate the learning and skills gained from activities rather than being overly focussed on the activities themselves. This will help children and young people to apply the learning and skills that they have developed in different contexts.

The recording of a young person's achievement will be undertaken in a range of ways, including profiling. This approach will give young people the opportunity to consider and record their achievements to date. It will also provide the opportunity to reflect on their progress and plan for the future. It is expected that the S3 profile will include information on the range of the young person's achievements including the development of skills and progress in curriculum areas in the whole range of contexts and settings in and out of school².

4.2 Curricular areas across learning

Literacy across Learning

It is expected that all students in S1 will experience learning in literacy across all curricular areas from August 2010 and that these experience will be explicit and co-ordinated. It is also anticipated that each school will have a designated literacy co-ordinator who will promote the Edinburgh Implementation Plan for Literacy Across Learning .

In particular it is expected that

- *all staff are familiar with the principles and practice for teaching literacy and with the experiences and outcomes*
- *prior learning from the primary school is disseminated and used by staff in the secondary school*
- *all experiences and outcomes in literacy are addressed*
- *there is a consistency of practice across the school*
- *different levels of ability are catered for and that progression routes are in place*
- *staff can access appropriate resources and examples of good practice*
- *methods of gathering evidence of progress and attainment in literacy are established*

Whilst **all** curricular areas have a responsibility for offering opportunities to develop literacy skills, it is recognized that some areas will have a lead role.

Schools should refer to the Literacy across Learning Secondary Implementation Plan which was distributed to schools in August 2009.

² CfE Management Board Paper, *The Senior Phase*

Numeracy across Learning

Further guidance will be issued to schools regarding implementing Numeracy across learning in line with the City of Edinburgh Curriculum for Excellence Plan. It is recommended that schools undertake an audit in preparation for implementing Numeracy across learning.

Health and Well-being across Learning

Further guidance will be issued to schools regarding implementing Health and Wellbeing across learning in line with the City of Edinburgh Curriculum for Excellence Plan. It is recommended that schools undertake an audit in preparation for implementing Health and Wellbeing across learning.

4.3 S1 Curriculum

The guidance below outlines the **minimum entitlement** for S1 pupils.

- The S1 curriculum should provide opportunities for the continuation of study in subject areas in order to provide broad coverage of level 3 experiences and outcomes across all areas and deliver the principles of **breadth, progression and depth**.
- Well planned interdisciplinary learning opportunities should account for a minimum of 20 hours of the S1 experience with a view to expanding this balance of discrete subject teaching and interdisciplinary experiences in future. delivering **coherence, challenge and enjoyment and depth**. Opportunities may exist within inter-disciplinary learning for **personalisation and choice**.
- Opportunities for personal achievement should be planned and delivered as part of the S1 experience. Schools should give consideration as to how this will be recorded.
- **Personalisation and choice** in S1 – see section above.
- All pupils in S1 should have 2 hours of quality Physical Education each week in order to meet the expectations set out in the experiences and outcomes for health and wellbeing.
- Religious Education should be covered through the experiences and outcomes for Religious and Moral Education in non-denominational schools. Children who attend denominational schools will experience Religious Education through the perspective of the school's faith community. There are no longer specific input requirements in terms of time allocations in this area however delivery remains a statutory requirement.

All schools should provide planned opportunities for Religious Observance for all pupils during the school session. Circular 1/2005 on the Provision of Religious Observance in Scottish Schools outlines expectations in this area.

4.4 Appendices

- 1 Interdisciplinary learning
- 2 Planning tool – implementing CfE S1-S3
- 3 Useful References

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Appendix 1 - Interdisciplinary learning

Interdisciplinary learning allows pupils to see, make and understand links between discrete subject areas or disciplines.

Effective interdisciplinary learning is a collaborative piece of work, project or course which is planned and coordinated between disciplines and which delivers one cohesive piece of learning or area of study.

Effective interdisciplinary learning:

- *can take the form of individual one-off projects or longer courses of study*
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For interdisciplinary learning to be effective teachers should:

- plan for the delivery of the piece of work within an agreed time frame;
- agree which subjects will lead on which aspects of the study;
- ensure that ideas, skills, knowledge, approaches and subject content are cross-referenced and that such cross-referencing is given a high priority in the planning and learning process.
- Agree appropriate success criteria

Examples of interdisciplinary learning

- History and English collaborate on the study of the Russian Revolution and Animal Farm as an allegory;
- Science and mathematics collaborate on the impact of energy efficiency in the home;
- Art, drama and media studies collaborate on the use of product placement in advertising.

Scope of interdisciplinary learning

- As well as linking different disciplines, interdisciplinary learning can also cross sectors, i.e. it can take place between secondary subject departments and cluster primary schools;
- Some examples of cross-curricular work do not constitute interdisciplinary learning. For example, a themed week in which each subject department studies something from their own discipline linked to a common theme is **not** interdisciplinary learning. This model lacks the required collaboration and cohesion.

³ Scottish Government (2008), *Building the Curriculum 3*, p21

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Appendix 2 – Planning tool for S1-S3 curriculum

Leading Curriculum Planning	Yes	Partly	Not yet
Undertaken an audit against 4 capacities – whole staff			
Engaged all staff in BtC 3			
Engaged all pupils in understanding Curriculum for Excellence			
Engaged middle managers further on BtC3			
SMT/PTs are aware of recent assessment announcement			
SMT/PTs are aware of recent paper on senior phase			
SMT/PTs are aware of recent paper on professional development			
SMT/PTs are aware of statement on National Qualifications			
Identified who in SMT is leading on curriculum change			
An in-school curriculum planning working group is in place			
This group have considered curriculum principles in depth			
This group have considered Transition Primary-Secondary as part of a coherent curriculum			
This group have identified personalisation and choice for S1			
This group have defined interdisciplinary learning			
Curriculum group have developed high level curriculum map (S1-S3) based on the totality of the curriculum; ethos and wider life of the school, curriculum areas, interdisciplinary learning, planned opportunities for achievement			
Curriculum map has been shared with Cluster			
Areas being delivered through interdisciplinary learning have been agreed with staff			
Areas being delivered through ethos and wider life of the school have been identified			
Planned opportunities for achievement have been considered			
There is a shared understanding of what achievement is			
Staff are prepared to deliver an S1 curriculum based on the experiences and outcomes			
Skills for learning, for life and for work have been considered by all staff			
Negotiations have taken place with staff on changes to time allocations			
Literacy across learning – an audit has been completed staff feel ready to deliver this			
Numeracy across learning – an audit has been completed staff feel ready to deliver this			
HWB across learning – an audit has been completed staff feel ready to deliver this			
Opportunities for religious observance have been considered			
2 hours quality PE has been considered			
RME is planned for in line with statutory requirements			

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Appendix 3 – Useful References

National

www.ltscotland.org.uk

CfE main web-site. Contains good practice on Building Your Curriculum, Sharing good practice in Secondary, links to HMIe good practice, key documents:

1 Building the Curriculum 3

Provides strategic framework for curriculum design

2 Paper – Strategic Vision and Principles of Assessment Sept 2009

Interim statement on Assessment. FAQ paper also available on web-site.

3 Paper – Senior Phase Discussion paper Sept 2009

Paper includes Achievement and assessment, Partnership Working, Future Qualifications, Positive and Sustained Destinations.

4 Towards a Professional Development Strategy Sept 2009

Outlines responsibilities of a range of partners in ensuring there is a coherent approach to Continuing Professional Development.

5 Building the Curriculum 4 – Skills for Learning, Life and Work

Future Papers

6 Building the Curriculum 5 - Assessment

Local Authority

Web-site revised and updated will be available beginning of November 2009.

Will contain the following:

1 Strategy

3-18 Steering Group membership, meeting dates, minutes, progress reports

Position papers

Project Document for Project Board

Communication strategy

2 Curricular areas

3-18 Curricular Steering Groups membership, meeting dates, minutes, progress reports, dates and times of Subject leaders meetings

3 Sharing practice

Examples of good practice in implementing CfE in a range of areas

4 CPD

CPD opportunities through subject links on web-site. CPD opportunities for school leaders and SMT.

5 Sections/links for Parents, Determined to Succeed, More Choices, More Chances, College partnerships

