

The Journey to Excellence

Professional Development Pack

Supporting children and
young people



A RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS AND
EARLY EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

ISBN: 0-7053-1082-5

Professional development pack topics have been chosen to help you plan a journey through popular staff development themes. They provide “guided tours” through some of the resources on The Journey to Excellence website as a window onto excellent practice. Engaging with the associated activities will help you to reflect on and develop your practice purposefully.



'Inclusive education is concerned with the quest for equity, social justice, participation... It is about the removal of all forms of barriers of discrimination and oppression and it is about the well-being of all learners.'

Professor Len Barton, Institute of Education, University of London

Purpose of this activity

This pack has been designed to be used by staff working in all sectors. The activities are generic and can be adapted to suit a range of contexts. The pack provides school leaders, teachers and staff at all levels with opportunities to:

- reflect on their practice in terms of supporting children and young people
- consider ways to improve support for learning in their own establishments.

Learning outcomes

In particular, the pack aims to provide opportunities for you to:

- reflect on your learning community's existing practice in supporting children and young people;
- work collaboratively with all staff to support learning experiences for young people with additional support needs;
- enable you to compare practice in your school or centre with that in other other establishments; and
- encourage a culture of continuous reflection on supporting children and young people.

Who is this for?

This programme is for all members of the learning community. It will explore how they can best support children and young people both within and outwith the classroom. It is relevant to the work of support staff and teachers, and may be of interest to the wider range of partners who work with staff in order to support children's learning.



What will I/we need to work through this programme?

You will need access to the online resource which supports [The Journey to Excellence](#). It may also be helpful to have your copy of [The Journey to Excellence \(Parts 1 and 2\)](#) to hand.

Is this an individual activity or do I need to work with others?

The core activities enable you to work individually at a time and place of your choice. However, there are opportunities to work with colleagues and to discuss and reflect on how learners may be motivated. You will also be asked to implement some of the activities in your own setting and then reflect on their success. You may find it helpful to work reciprocally with a colleague to observe each other's practice and offer mutually helpful feedback and advice.

The programme of study may easily be adapted at stage, department or whole school levels to allow larger groups of staff to work through it collaboratively.

How long will it take?

This programme is designed to be open ended and flexible to the needs of differing learning establishments. The series of connected activities will probably take between 60 to 90 minutes per activity and would benefit from being planned into a series of collegiate times or for a whole in-service day.



Introductory Activity

“To ensure that Curriculum for Excellence is a curriculum for all children and young people, it is essential that support is provided to remove barriers that might restrict their access to the curriculum because of their circumstances or short or longer term needs.”

Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3

“All children and young people need support to help them to learn. The main sources of support in pre-school provision and schools are the staff who, through their normal practice, are able to meet a diverse range of needs. With good quality teaching and learning and an appropriate curriculum most children and young people are able to benefit appropriately from education without the need for support.”

*Supporting children’s learning, Code of practice
Additional Support for Learning Act*



Movie

Setting the scene

Watch the films: [Meeting children’s learning needs](#)

and [Supporting children and young people](#)

In pairs or a small group consider some of the key issues about meeting children’s learning needs and supporting children and young people. On large pieces of paper jot down examples of support for learning in your classroom which offer every single child and young person appropriate support and challenge.



Activity

Consider these carefully for young people with additional support needs.

Each paper should focus on:

- **Learning and teaching approaches.**
- **Addressing barriers to learning.**
- **Providing a variety of planned interventions.**
- **Forms of personal support.**

When you have collated your examples of positive practice consider which areas need to be improved and how you might do this.

Pick one key aspect for improvement and build this into your planning for the learning in your class for the rest of this week/term/session.



Learning and teaching approaches



Movie

'The best teacher explains things really well and helps you when you need it.'
P3 pupil

Watch the film: [Promotion of active learning](#)



Activity

Consider a young person in your class who has additional support needs. How would you ensure that they were able to have access to active learning experiences?

Complete this task using the table below:

Challenges faced in promoting active learning	Solutions

You may wish to consider ways of addressing some particular examples of barriers to learning which learners may have, for example:

- communication needs and how you could create a “communication-friendly” environment
- emotional and behavioural needs and how you might plan consistent approaches to working with learners while supporting individual needs
- mobility needs and how you might maximise learners’ participation in lessons and activities.

You may wish to consider ways of addressing barriers to learning which may exist for learners with additional support needs in your centre or school.

Barriers to learning can arise from factors linked to

- The learning environment
- Social and emotional factors
- Health and disability
- Family circumstances

Using a variety of approaches

“It involves being tremendously imaginative, really getting our lateral thinking antennae out - involving the children and their parents into what they feel would help them to really catch that spark of enthusiasm and be motivated to really achieve at the end of the day.”

Secondary Headteacher

“Excellent schools address learners’ needs through a variety of approaches including:

- *prompt intervention*
- *matching learning and teaching to the needs of individuals*
- *ensuring curricular flexibility*
- *engaging the expertise and resources of all possible partner agencies and organisations including the voluntary sector.”*



The film concentrates on a group of learners who have been supported to engage with learning in a way that they were not able to do before.

[Meeting the needs of young people with difficulties](#)

Movie

Think about your learning community. Consider learners’ experiences across the school or centre, both in and out of class. In pairs or groups discuss how successful you are at engaging less motivated learners. It would be useful to record your findings to share with the larger group.



This film concentrates on including all children in the life of the school through integrating children with additional support needs.

[Supporting children with additional support needs](#)

Movie

How well do you manage to establish an inclusive culture across your learning community?

Relevance



Movie

'Knowing I'll be able to do the stuff and it won't just be a waste of time.'
S3 secondary pupil commenting on what was important for him to be able to achieve.

In the movie below, the headteacher comments on the use of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed) targets in her school. She states that she considers 'relevance' to be of particular importance. This is also a key principle of Curriculum for Excellence design.

[Learning: meeting additional support needs](#)



Activity

With a partner look at a set of targets you have set for a group of young people in your establishment. Think about the focus of the movie you have watched. Which aspects of the targets you have set do you consider most 'relevant?' Consider two or three targets and the approaches you have identified to achieving the targets which could be made more relevant.

How would you do this?

Review and adapt the targets/approaches accordingly.



Partnerships

'Communication is really important - reporting on progress particularly to parents who for varying reasons have limited contact with the school.'

The Journey to Excellence

Working with partner agencies is an essential part of delivering high quality support for children and young people.



Movie

Watch the movie below:

[Working with partners to meet the needs of all children and young people](#)

Consider one learner and the partner agencies involved in planning and delivering their education.

Discuss and record the impact of this partnership working for this young person.

This could be collated under two headings: **STRENGTHS** and **AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**



Activity

Also consider the transformational grid below, which is taken from Part 2 of *The Journey to Excellence* and which you can also find on the online resource.

Supporting children and young people -

A school is good to the extent that...	A school is excellent to the extent that...
Young people who face communication barriers receive the appropriate support needed to interact with staff and with their peers.	Staff use a range of means to meet the communication and other needs of learners and their families. Staff teach children how to understand and communicate with those who have difficulties. They have strong links with staff who provide family learning and literacy support. Information is provided in a number of formats to meet people's needs.
Staff are aware of the need for confidentiality when dealing with sensitive issues except where there are concerns about risk of harm. Approaches to supporting learners provide for a safe and secure environment.	Children have confidence to ask for help when they need it and that adults use their power to help them. Children trust adults in school to respect confidentiality but also share information appropriately to ensure the children get the help they need. They are confident that professionals work together effectively on their behalf.
Clear procedures are used to identify learners' needs.	Staff take positive and proactive steps to ensure that factors, such as the learning environment, family circumstances, health or disability, or social or emotional factors, that may hinder learning are promptly identified

THE JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PACK

	and addressed effectively. Staff regularly review these needs and consider the adequacy of the support.
External agencies are involved in supporting pupils.	Staff address learners' needs through a variety of approaches including: prompt intervention; approaches to learning and teaching matched to their needs; curricular flexibility; deployment of support staff; and engaging the expertise and resources of all possible partner agencies and organisations, including voluntary ones. Effective multi-agency approaches are in place and provide a high level and quality of support to learners and their families through positive, planned intervention.
Most staff know learners well. Individual learners have clear support plans which specify clear targets and timescales. Care and welfare arrangements for learners are effective. Parents know the name of, and have access to, the staff member responsible for supporting their child.	All children know who they can approach with a problem and that they can be assured of effective support. Staff know each learner well. When a factor hindering learning has been identified, key members of staff become responsible for ensuring positive outcomes for individual learners and for working with parents and other agencies. Record-keeping is of a very high quality. Young people and parents are actively involved in planning future support where required.



Effective multi-agency approaches are in place and provide a high level and quality of support to learners and their families through positive, planned intervention. Think about the quality of support available to children and their families.

How successful is your learning community in actively involving young people and their parents or carers in planning future support?



Achieving Success

“Ancora Imparo” (I am still learning) Michelangelo

Look at the box “successful learners” in the chart below.

The purposes of the curriculum

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

confident individuals

with

- › self-respect
- › a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- › secure values and belief
- › ambition

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

To enable all young people to become

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

effective contributors

with

- › an enterprising attitude
- › resilience
- › self-reliance

and able to

- › communicate in different ways and in different settings
- › work in partnership and in teams
- › take the initiative and lead
- › apply critical thinking in new contexts
- › create and develop
- › solve problems



You can read more about the capacities in [Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3](#)

Read



Consider the attributes and abilities of a **Successful Learner** in your learning community. You may want to consider a child or young person who requires additional support to be able to benefit from pre-school or school education.

Attributes

How does **J** :

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

Abilities

How does **J** :

- Use literacy and communication?
- Use numeracy?
- Use technology?
- Think creatively?
- Learn independently and as part of a group?
- Make reasoned evaluations?
- Link and apply her learning?
- Overall how successful a learner has **J** become this term/year?



Activity

Answer these questions briefly for one learner in your class over an appropriate period of time. Record as many achievements as possible which link to that particular young person. Have you been able to assess/evaluate these achievements. For each question consider an appropriate next step and plan for meeting this need.

With your partner pick one of the questions above and record the best possible practice in order to achieve success in this area. You could do this exercise for as many questions as you wish or pick a theme which is relevant to your centre/school/department at the moment.

Record answers in a table similar to the one below

e.g. How does **J show enthusiasm and motivation for learning?**

Teaching for effective learning	Learners' experiences	Planning for positive outcomes
<i>Ensure use of stimulating visual prompts.</i>	<i>Encourage collaborative learning.</i>	<i>Consider carefully the context for achieving targets.</i>

For the same child or young person, consider how well your school is enabling the learner to become **a Confident Individual, a Responsible Citizen or an Effective Contributor**. Similar to the exercise above consider questions based around the attributes and abilities linked to the four capacities?

And finally.....



What have you learned by doing these activities?

It is vital to remember that all you do in terms of reflection and development has to lead to improved learning experiences and outcomes for learners. If you wish to explore the areas of learning and the ten dimensions further, select some more of the movies which present the perspective of leading educationists. These may be accessed on the [About the Journey to Excellence](#) section of the site.

You may also find it useful to study the sections on **Dimension 1 Engages young people in the highest quality learning experiences**, **Dimension 2 Focuses on outcomes and maximises success for all learners** and **Dimension 9 Promotes wellbeing and respect**. **Supporting children and young people** is one of the aspects of Dimension 9. The Journey to Excellence online resource combines movies, research and development resources on current knowledge about learning.

