

Education, Children, and Young People Committee

29th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6), Wednesday 15 November 2023

Education Reform

Introduction

1. The Education, Children, and Young People Committee has agreed to scrutinise education reform in Scotland.
2. For this session, the Committee will explore the steps that the Scottish Government has taken in implementing the recommendations of the [OECD's report on Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence](#), and how these fit within the context of wider education reform, including several recent independent review processes.
3. At its meeting [last week, the Committee took evidence from academics and policy experts on education reform](#).
4. This week the Committee will be hearing from school leaders, including representative bodies.

Committee meeting

5. At its meeting today, the Committee will take evidence from—
 - Peter Bain, Executive Head Teacher, Oban High School, Tiree High School, Tiree Primary School and Lismore Primary School, President-elect of School Leaders Scotland.
 - Greg Dempster, General Secretary, Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland.
 - Barry Graham, Head Teacher, Wallace Hall Academy, Dumfries and Galloway.
 - Graham Hutton, General Secretary of School Leaders Scotland and former Head Teacher, Grove Academy, Dundee.
 - Pauline Walker, Head Teacher, Royal High School, Edinburgh.

Supporting information

6. A SPICe briefing paper is appended in **Annexe A**.

7. The Committee has received a written submission with appendices from School Leaders Scotland which can be found in **Annexe B**.

**Education, Children, and Young People Committee Clerks
10 November 2023**

The logo for SPICe (The Information Centre) is a purple rounded rectangle with the text 'SPICe' in white. To its right, the text 'The Information Centre' and 'An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh' is written in white on a dark blue background.

The Information Centre
An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh

Education, Children and Young People Committee

15 November 2023

Education Reform

Introduction

This is the second of two sessions on the wider landscape of Education reform. The Committee heard from a panel of academics last week and this week, the Committee will take evidence from school leaders, including representative bodies.

This work builds on work the Committee has undertaken earlier in the session when the Committee took evidence from:

- [OECD team on 8 September 2021](#).
- Professor Gordon Stobart attended [Committee on 10 November 2021](#) on his paper for the OECD, [Upper-secondary education student assessment in Scotland – A comparative perspective](#).
- [Professor Ken Muir, 23 March 2022](#)
- [Professor Louise Hayward and colleagues on the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment, 20 September 2023](#)

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills gave a statement to Parliament on Tuesday 7 November 2023. This set out the next steps in the Government's reform process. This included a consultation on a future bill which is intended to replace the SQA and change the inspectorate.

Headteachers and school leaders have a crucial role in school education. School leaders are expected to be leaders in their school, developing the culture and supporting curriculum development locally. In addition, the head is responsible for supporting the enactment or delivery of local and national policies in their school. The head is also expected to work collaboratively with a range of partners (e.g., the third sector, other schools, social work, universities, etc.) to support a range of outcomes for their pupils.

Enacting the curriculum within an empowered system and collaboration

The briefing paper for last week's session framed the current policy work on school education within a longer timescale of reform. Much of the work to reform school education last session sought to "empower" professionals and to support greater collaboration.

An empowered system

In 2018, the Scottish Government and COSLA agreed a joint agreement on Education Reform. This was predicated on the introduction of a reform Bill. That Bill was subsequently not introduced, and the Government sought to achieve its aims administratively.

The joint agreement had a strong focus on the role of the headteacher. It set out a number of agreed principles around both the wider aims of reform to school education and a Headteachers' Charter. The wider "agreed principles" included—

- Effective system-wide improvement requires strong leadership, collaborative working and clarity of purpose at all layers of the system – school, local, regional and national.
- Headteachers are the leaders of learning and teaching in their school. They are senior officers of the local authority and have operational responsibility for the service they provide, therefore the majority of decisions should be made at school level.
- Schools are empowered to make the decisions that most affect their children and young people's outcomes while being part of a collaborative learning community, the Local Authority and working with others.
- Empowered schools require both strong and distributive leadership, working in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community.
- The principle of headteacher empowerment will be applied consistently across Scotland.
- Local Authorities' duty to provide education for children and young people means that they must be able to intervene in decisions made by headteachers where statutory, financial, or contractual obligations would be breached.
- Local Authorities and their headteachers should have a mutually respectful and supportive relationship with clear processes in place to minimise the need for such intervention.

Shortly afterwards, a suite of guidance materials on [creating an "empowered system"](#) were issued by Education Scotland. This included [the headteachers' charter](#) as well as guidance on [Empowering School Leaders](#).

Both documents cover similar ground to each other, and the agreed principles set out above. The Charter set out the role of the headteacher under three sections: leading, learning, and teaching; empowering the learning community; and making best use of the school's resources. The Empowering School Leaders guidance emphasised the collaborative nature of the role of a school leader. It set out a number of principles to

support the culture of empowering school leaders. These were that school leaders should—

- Be adaptive and creative in their approach to leading learning and teaching and developing learner pathways that meet the needs of all learners.
- Be collaborative and collegiate in their approach, encouraging and seeking views from across the learning community – from parents, children and young people, teachers and support staff, partners, other schools, and the Local Authority.
- Be active partners in multi-agency working to get it right for every child.
- Support, encourage and facilitate children and young people’s participation in decisions about their own learning and the life of the learning community.
- Seek to develop trusting relationships with parents and carers and help foster the home learning environment.
- Be lifelong learners committed to improving their practice by engaging in professional learning, enquiring collaboratively, engaging in and with research and using evidence-informed practice.
- Make an active and valued contribution to local, regional, and national education policy.

The guidance stated that—

“The wider education system – including the Scottish Government and Local Authorities – should provide school leaders with the necessary freedom and support to embed these principles in their practice.”

Supporting capacity

Central to much of the work to support the implementation of CfE is seeking to ensure that schools and teachers have the support, structures, capacity, and agency to implement the Curriculum for Excellence.

The ICEA’s recent report reiterated its view that there should be a balance between structural change, cultural change, and capacity building. It has suggested that there should be more attention on “cultural change and capacity building, especially amid significant structural change.” (p3)

The 2021 OECD report noted that teachers and school leaders “are committed to varied teaching approaches for student learning and have proven their ability to develop schools’ own curricula”. The report continued “curriculum design and continuous improvement require time and professional investment, which schools can only achieve with ongoing support from the system.” (p12) It stated—

“Scotland made great progress in developing and supporting teachers’ capacity to be curriculum makers, and the capacity of school leaders to lead the curriculum process in their schools. This work has become challenging for schools considering the multiple new policy initiatives; and Scotland’s comparatively high rate of teachers’ class contact time and its expectations for teachers to lead and plan curriculum locally.” (p12)

The ICEA's recent report again highlighted "the importance of collaboration among teachers and schools and the need to develop coherent networks to support innovation and improvement across the system." This, the ICEA argues, is necessary to enable knowledge, expertise, and ideas to move around the system. The ICEA Report continued—

"It is crucial that such collaborative working is not a blind act of faith. Rather, activity must be underpinned by systematic enquiry to ensure that evidence informs developments rather than replicating uninformed or out-of-date practice. Building a Scottish Networked Learning System that promotes working across boundaries and is driven by evidence will ensure that all teachers have access to the very best professional learning and resources to impact on pupil achievement."

The ICEA's recommendations in this area suggest that the Government facilitates collaboration that is being led by teachers for teachers. It also recommended that the Government invests in "the technological architecture to support teacher collaboration across curricula, organisational, geographical and professional boundaries".

The 2021 OECD report found evidence that there are strengths in the professional support for teachers and school leaders. It also found that school leaders have strong networks. It also reported that "school leaders see their role as interpreting the policy context for their school to ensure that the school and the teachers are protected from policy incoherence and overload". (p98)

Time is a key resource for both teachers and school leaders. The Government intends to reduce teachers' class contact time by 90 minutes per week, to 21 hours. Any changes to teachers' terms and conditions will need to be agreed by the [Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers](#) and there have been reports that there has been [little progress on this commitment](#).

A recurring theme in discussion around reforming school education in recent years has been on culture change and ensuring that there is capacity (both in terms of resources and competencies). The [International Council of Education Advisers' 2018-2020 report](#) stated—

"The ICEA has consistently underlined how a focus on cultural change, capacity building, and structural change were key elements in securing sustained improvements in Scotland's education system. Developing effective leadership and a robust culture of collaborative professionalism are critical components of such an approach. The previous report noted that capacity building measures were clearly moving in the right direction."

The panel last week noted that where there are additional demands on schools and teachers, and some activity or responsibility should also be removed to prevent overload.

Professor Humes last week suggested that culture change is a long-term endeavour and should start at the top with a proper distribution of power. At school-level, he said that teachers should be encouraged to ask "why questions ... why are we doing this". He also said that teachers should also be encouraged to be creative, experimental, and innovative.

Delivering or enacting the curriculum

SLS' submission to the Committee stated that it "has long been a supporter of Curriculum for Excellence, from a curriculum, methodological and wellbeing perspective."

Last week, the Committee heard from Professor Walter Humes that in his view, when introduced, the CfE lacked clarity – he said it was "under-conceptualised". The 2021 OECD report identified a number of tensions in the delivery of CfE. These were:

“Tensions found between local curriculum flexibility and the need for coherence to achieve system-wide objectives: By design, CfE enshrines the principle of local curriculum flexibility since it gives schools the autonomy to design their own curriculum to best respond to students’ needs. CfE committed to school empowerment in a system already characterised by strong policy leadership from the centre and assertive local governments. At the same time, concerns arise in the public debate about whether the variability that inevitably characterises schools’ curricula effectively provides an excellent education for all learners or if it might increase educational inequalities. This also touches upon the issue of what level and kind of support schools might need to design curricula of high quality while respecting teachers’ and school leaders’ working time.

Tensions in the understandings of breadth and depth of learning: Opposed in the public debate, breadth and depth of learning seem not to have the same definition for the various stakeholders. Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD team tended to reflect this tension in the opposition between Broad General Education and Senior Phase, but the lack of clarity around the concepts poses many questions. For instance: does breadth refer to the number of subjects taken by students, and depth to the time allocated to each; or do they both refer to specific pedagogical approaches; are they exclusive or can they be complementary, and many more.

Tensions in the conceptualisation of knowledge, skills and competencies: Although CfE was developed to promote the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes, the public debate as observed by the OECD team in Scotland throughout discussions, tends to oppose knowledge and skills. Some also observed that while BGE was focused on the combination, the Senior Phase may still be focused on disciplinary knowledge (defined as subject-specific concepts and detailed content). The OECD’s Future of Education and Skills 2030 project describes the integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (integrations referred to as “competencies”) that enables students to perform in ill-defined environments, thus allowing them to navigate a fast-paced and uncertain world. The definition of competencies as integrative and with a broad performance orientation allows the debate to shift away from the traditional “knowledge versus skills” focus by acknowledging the importance of both in learning.

Tensions between curriculum, student assessment and evaluation: There is an apparent (mis)alignment between curriculum, assessment and evaluation policies, especially at the Senior Phase. This tension was raised throughout the meetings of the OECD team in Scotland as one of the key issues that needs to be reviewed for CfE to perform at its best. These policies have complex relationships across numerous education systems, requiring alignment in their design as well as their implementation.” (p34)

Interdisciplinary learning (IDL) was intended to be a key element of CfE. The panel last week discussed IDL and said that take-up had been patchy. Dr Janet Brown suggested that in secondary schools, teachers have not been given time to develop the skillset to develop IDL. In addition, the rigidity of timetables was seen as an issue.

Dr Marina Shapira reported that her research had found that some secondary schools’ BGE curriculum are fragmented with up to 15 subjects in a week. These courses were directed towards the qualifications in senior phase. This appears to be an illustration of the “backwash effect” that the 2021 OECD report observed the current approach to qualifications has to curriculum-making in earlier stages of school.

The panel also discussed the role of knowledge, and different types of knowledge, in the curriculum. The panel expressed the view that both propositional knowledge (e.g., facts) and procedural knowledge (e.g. skills) should be represented. This view reflected the observations and recommendations in the 2021 OECD report.

SLS' submission set out some of the background to the headteachers who will be speaking to the Committee. The submission stated—

“...owing to their long and deep experience as school leaders, took risks with their curriculum. They know their pupils well; the background of the school; and they breathe their school 24/7 in so many ways. They have sought to ensure their curriculum meets the needs of their young people, irrespective of what the common general view might be, or what the view of the Local Authority might be. They have ensured that they provide the courses that suit the horses and to ensure they change the system in their school to suit the requirements of their clientele. They have tried to ensure that the round pegs go into the round holes, the square pegs into the square holes and the quirky pegs go into the quirky holes. They have thought outside the box, have been innovative, adapted the system and sometimes changed the system with clear positive impact for the young people in their care and ensure that their young people achieved a positive attainment record and a positive destination, often one which might not have been the case in the past, had the school stayed within the traditional system. They have felt empowered and have demonstrated to an extent how Head Teachers can nudge the system forward in their own school and try to influence others to move in the same direction.”

SLS' submission concluded—

“These schools have led the way and we often wonder why many others have not followed. The answer is that the risks are high, particularly for schools with lower attainment, but these are precisely the schools whose pupils would benefit most from a more 21st century approach which encompasses knowledge and skills rather than rote learning. We have a unique opportunity now to develop a more empowered system which will ensure we meet the needs of all our young people. The curriculum across Scotland cannot be standardised if it is to meet those young people's needs and desires. We need to seize this opportunity now and ensure we have an education system fit for the second quarter of the 21st century.”

The Finnish system is often cited as an exemplar of curriculum policy. There is a great deal of autonomy at local-, school- and teacher-levels in Finland, but arguably, at least on paper, CfE is less prescriptive than the Finnish system. The Finnish curriculum for basic education (which is a combined stage of primary and lower secondary education) includes broad transversal (cross-cutting) competencies and both core (mandatory) and optional subjects. The Finnish government also decides on the overall time allocation by defining the minimum number of lessons for core subjects. More on the Finnish and other [European systems can be found on Eurydice's resource on National Education Systems](#).

One of the strategic areas identified by the recent ICEA report was on AI. It suggested that there is a need to recognise AI's place in future society and, therefore, for the purposes of education. It said—

“Perhaps, the important point now is to be prepared for a shift in the education paradigm and to ask fundamental questions rather than to be beguiled by the excitement that AI is currently generating. In Singapore, Ng (2023) advocates asking educators to reflect on what real intelligence is (now that artificial intelligence has arrived), and for attention to be directed towards the use of AI to enhance the development of real human intelligence, not just how we can use artificial intelligence

to do our current work more efficiently or effectively. Therefore, policy and practice will need to strike a good balance between the need to move quickly as technological innovation accelerates, and maintaining a firm grasp on the fundamental purposes and values that characterise education in Scotland. If young people develop skills that compete with AI, they will inevitably lose out in the competition for future employment. The challenge for policy and practice is to focus on the unique aspects of human intelligence that can work with and through technology. The importance of a school as a community was highlighted during lockdowns and moves towards greater use of AI should not undermine this crucial social and developmental function.”

School-level spending decisions

Curriculum leadership at a local level may also entail or require resource allocation decisions.

There has been a longstanding policy aim that schools have a significant level of autonomy over their budgets. Devolved School Management (DSM) was introduced in 1993 to enhance and improve the management of resources at school level. 2019 DSM Guidance stated—

“DSM must provide headteachers and schools with the autonomy and flexibility to ensure decisions are made at the most appropriate level. Local Authorities should, within their DSM scheme, provide headteachers with clear information about which areas of expenditure are delegated to them. Whilst headteachers should have flexibility in the budgets required to operate and administer a school, there are also areas of expenditure that are not generally considered suitable for devolution to schools.”

The guidance lists those areas which are not generally considered to be suitable for devolution to the school-level. These include costs in relation to the school estate (e.g., PPI, capital costs, maintenance); school meals, EMA and clothing grants; and corporate support function costs, for example, Finance, HR, and Legal functions.

The [local government finance statistics reflecting the annual accounts of local authorities for the year 2021-22](#) reported that 65% of all gross expenditure on schools in that year was “devolved”.

Pupil Equity Funding provides funding directly to schools for headteachers to use at their discretion for additional staffing or resources that they consider will help close the poverty-related attainment gap. The [current operational guidance](#) says headteachers “should work in partnership with each other, and their local authority, to agree the use of funding.” The guidance also states that “teachers, parents and carers, children and young people and other key stakeholders should be meaningfully involved throughout the processes of planning, implementing and evaluating approaches.” Importantly, from the point of view of supporting culture change, PEF is intended to support local innovation and local evaluation of those innovations in a collegiate and collaborative manner.

Accountability

One of the key tensions is how to support a system where there is a great deal of freedom while at the same time having a system of accountability. One approach at the local-to-national level has been the development of the Core-Plus targets agreed by local government to support closing the attainment gap, where local authorities are involved in setting their own improvement targets. There has also been criticism that too much focus is

placed on attainment results to measure the success of schools (e.g., see the Morgan Review). [A “think piece” that Professor Chris Chapman drafted for ADES in 2019](#) argued that there should be move away from individual accountability and towards “collective responsibility”.

The Committee heard last week from Dr Marina Shapira that, in secondary schools, her research had found a “culture of performativity” whereby curriculum decisions are made to achieve better results rather than for pedagogical reasons. The submission from the SLS stated that—

“[The headteachers giving evidence] took risks concerning the metrics in Insight against which all schools are measured. Although they are all data literate and use data to drive improvement, they are not blinded by it and feel that the traditional focus and obsession with 5+ @ level 5 (national 5) and 5+@ Level 6 (Higher) is not valid nowadays, given the breadth of curriculum being offered with a load of qualifications outwith the traditional SQA catalogue. If Educational reform, as outlined in the current reports on the table, is to be successful, we need more relevant metrics and ones which show parity between vocational and academic, and which have the SCQF framework at the centre.”

Primary schools, clearly, are not judged by the same metrics. There is data around achievement for primary schools – particularly the data produced for ACEL. This focuses on literacy and numeracy.

Dr Janet Brown said to the committee that it is important that what happens in the education system is assessed as a whole as well as whether individual institutions are performing. She argued that in doing so, one needs to be careful as any metric produced on education may be used to address external agendas. Dr Brown also argued that there should be more experimentation and pilots which could lead to comparative assessment and improvement.

Assessment and parity of esteem

One of the key observations of the 2021 OECD review was that the linkage to Senior Phase (S4-S6) and the period where pupils’ learning is certificated is problematic. The report stated—

“The coherence of CfE enactment is less consistent, however, in the Senior Phase (for learners aged 15 to 18 years), where fundamental challenges exist for curriculum and subsequent assessment re-design. Without taking up the task of a re-visioning of CfE in the Senior Phase, the practices in upper-secondary education will keep lagging in its curriculum components (aims, pedagogy and assessment) and will exercise a counterproductive influence on Broad General Education and the transition for students.”

Professor Stobart remarked last week that it is likely that Scottish students are likely to be the most examined in the world. Pupils may have exams every year for three consecutive years which has led to the “two-term dash” and, it is argued, a curriculum in senior phase dominated by qualification specifications.

There are a wide variety of qualifications available in Senior Phase. Nonetheless, there is a concern that there is too great a focus on traditional academic courses which would support entry to universities. Peter Bain gave evidence to the Committee in September along with Professor Hayward on the Review of Qualifications and Assessment. [He said](#) that despite the ambition to provide a more flexible senior phase, there was a “continued pattern of behaviour was that we continued to seek to produce statistics that showed our schools, our

local authorities and the country in a good light by comparing those sitting five or more higher exams in particular, although not exclusively, year on year.”

The ICEA also recommended that the Government should—

“Ensure that parents, carers and family members have a strong understanding of the learning pathways and opportunities available for their children and young people so that they can participate confidently and productively in supporting learning trajectories.”

The SCQF provides a framework to read across both the level of different qualifications (how advanced they are) and the size of the courses (how long they take). Peter Bain told the Committee in September that—

“Gradually, over the past few years, our parent bodies—through the work done online and with additional meetings by ACQF framework personnel, SDS and schools—are becoming more aware of the value of national progression awards, skills for work, baccalaureates and, in particular, foundation apprenticeships, in which a large rise in uptake has been seen because of their value. That is slow, steady and very positive progress. However, you would be right in saying that not everybody fully gets it.”

SQA statistics show increasing numbers of entries into more vocational courses. The submission from SLS stated—

“The Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) programme is crucial for the country’s future and its economic wellbeing. This programme is making a huge contribution to ensuring the curriculum is relevant, broad, deep, enjoyable and has personalisation and choice, and increases the likelihood of better positive destinations for all. We need its structure and support to create links and partnerships to help our young people attain, learn, achieve the four capacities and flourish in their lives. It is the DYW programme which has crystallised CfE in the minds of many teachers.”

The RSE’s submission said of parity of esteem—

“[Achieving parity of esteem] will necessarily involve sparking a profound culture change in which society is prompted to reflect on what it truly values in its education system. Parity of esteem is not just about ensuring that different learning pathways and career destinations are afforded equal respect. It is also about delivering on individual autonomy and dignity. Education fulfils multiple objectives, from driving the economy to empowering individuals to become informed, engaged members of society. The system must honour and support the different ways in which learners choose to interact with it.”

Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment

Following the two OECD publications on Scottish Education in 2021, the Government commissioned Professor Louise Hayward to lead an Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment. The [review began its work in early 2022 and through 2022 and 2023 undertook a number of phases of consultation](#). Its final report was published shortly prior to the summer recess.

Some of the key recommendations in the report are:

- Adopting an SDA (Scottish Diploma of Achievement) as a graduation certificate for all senior phase educational settings.

- Removing exams in all subjects up to SCQF level 5 (e.g., National 5s), examinations may be retained in levels 6 and 7 (e.g., Highers and Advanced Highers).
- a digital profile for all learners which allows them to record personal achievements, identify and plan future learning.

Professor Hayward also stated that the report provides a “longer-term direction of travel for qualifications and assessment in Scotland”. She also touched on implementation—

“What we have learned from the curriculum in Scotland, but also internationally, is that it is not enough to plan for the educational aspect of innovation; there has to be a plan for change. The process of change has to be carefully planned, and, to be effective, it has to be co-constructed. So, everyone who is involved in making it work has to be involved in the process. The pace of putting ideas into practice should depend on the level of resourcing that is available. It is about working through the ideas and being realistic about the investment that can be made as they develop.”

The Cabinet Secretary told Parliament last week—

“Since the conclusion of the Hayward review in June, I have been seeking views on the recommendations pertaining to the national qualifications. We undertook a survey with teachers and lecturers on the report, which received more than 2,000 responses. Although agreement on the need for change was clear, there were varying views on next steps, and on the perceived appetite for radical reform.

“In that context, I cannot ignore the challenges that our schools are currently responding to, and I must balance that reality with any reform of our qualifications system. With that in mind, I propose—subject to parliamentary agreement—to return to the chamber in the new year to debate the proposals fully. In the meantime, I will engage with Opposition spokespeople on the next steps, to ensure that we use any parliamentary debate to encourage greater support for political consensus.”

The panel last week argued full consensus is not possible and not necessarily desirable. They said that the time for discussion had passed and that decisions should be made.

The ICEA’s recent report noted that, internationally, there has been “pushback towards retaining traditional exams despite their potential negative consequences for student equity and well-being”. Dr Janet Brown told the Committee last week that it is important that education changes gain the support of wider society.

National structural changes

As noted above, the Government launched a consultation on a future education bill last week. This set out the rationale for abolishing the SQA and replacing it with an organisation with similar functions – awarding and accreditation. It said—

“The overarching policy objective of establishing a new qualifications body is to ensure that qualifications consistently meet the needs and expectations of their users, the education system, economy, industry and other providers who use and recognise qualifications and awards. A key priority for the new body is that it will involve pupils and students, teachers and practitioners, and wider stakeholders in its decision making. It will be accountable to and transparent with these stakeholders through robust governance and other arrangements.

“As the new body takes shape we will encourage and promote an organisational culture that puts those who rely on its services at its centre. Close collaborative working with the education and skills system in designing the new body will ensure

the organisation can deliver on expectations and add value to the existing system from the outset.”

The Cabinet Secretary wrote to the Committee last week on the consultation. In terms of the inspectorate, she said—

“On inspection, the intention is to strengthen the role inspection plays to ensure it secures accountability, provides assurance and drives improvement. This can be achieved in a number of ways and the consultation seeks views on whether legislation or non-legislative means are the best way to support this. My overarching aim is to ensure there is public confidence in the work of the inspectorate and that there is an appropriate level of involvement from across the education system. It is therefore intended that this part of the consultation seeks further views on the purpose and priorities for improvement of inspection; the establishments and services subject to inspection; and the different possible legislative and non-legislative reform measures to address priority issues within the system.”

The ICEA’s report commented on the Muir Report and reiterated its call for an “independent HM Inspectorate of Education [to] be established as a matter of urgency”. Echoing a number of other reports, the ICEA recommended that greater prominence be given to education professionals and other stakeholders in the decision-making process, that there be clarity in the roles and responsibilities across different levels, that the principle of subsidiarity be pursued and that the Government “create a leadership narrative that highlights the importance of innovation in learning and teaching and of teachers engaging in innovation together within and across their schools to support pupils’ achievement”.

The ICEA said that it is not for it to “prescribe specific changes”. However, the ICEA stated—

“Changes should only be made as an integral and necessary part of a coherent approach to governance across all levels of the education system. Clear beneficial impact on the learning and experience of the young people and their teachers should be the acid test of any proposals. In the past we have argued for “shifting the ownership of change”. Given the need for cultural change in a climate of austerity, this focus is more important than ever.”

And later it stated—

“The ICEA recommends that the overarching theory of change in the short to medium term is not to change structures too much (this is expensive), but to redirect energy to focus on improving teaching professionals, professional development collaboration, and innovation. The idea is to build capacity and remove barriers to grass-roots innovation by identifying points of high leverage.”

A key focus of the various papers on reforms has been a focus on implementation. The panel last week argued that the lessons of the implementation programme of CfE should be learned and that reforms should be fully “scoped”.

Professor Humes argued that the decision to replace the SQA was a “political decision”. He also said that there is a tendency in Scottish education policy to reach for structural reform when problems are encountered. He argued that “the real problems of Scottish education are cultural rather than structural” and that a rebalancing of power is required. In his submission to the Committee, Professor Humes said that culture change “must start at the top”. He continued—

“Politicians (national and local), Chief Executives of national agencies, Directors of Education and senior civil servants need to ask themselves how they will change. This will raise challenging issues about authority, power and responsibility.”

Dr Janet Brown said that it is important to understand what is to be achieved by any structural reform and to be alive to any unintended consequences.

Other stakeholders are keen to see the SQA abolished. After the Cabinet Secretary announced in June that the education bill would be delayed, [the EIS stated](#)—

“Secondary teachers in Scotland will be angered and dismayed at this news. The SQA continues to be a huge driver of workload for Secondary teachers and others who deliver SQA qualifications. Its reputation amongst teachers is in tatters.”

**Ned Sharratt, Senior Researcher (School Education, ELC, and Culture), SPICe Research
9 November 2023**

Note: Committee briefing papers are provided by SPICe for the use of Scottish Parliament committees and clerking staff. They provide focused information or respond to specific questions or areas of interest to committees and are not intended to offer comprehensive coverage of a subject area.

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Annexe B

Submission from SLS

Representatives:

Graham Hutton, General Secretary of School Leaders Scotland and former Head Teacher at Grove Academy, Dundee

Peter Bain, President-elect of School Leaders Scotland, Executive Head Teacher of Oban High School, Tiree High School, Tiree Primary School & Lismore Primary School

Pauline Walker, Head Teacher at the Royal High School, Edinburgh

Barry Graham, Head Teacher at Wallace Hall Academy, Dumfries and Galloway

SLS is represented here by three current Head Teachers and one former Head (now General Secretary of the Association) who have been Head Teachers for some considerable time each and who have led their schools on to a very successful path, particularly with regard to their curriculum. They are school leaders with experience in implementing the curriculum in classrooms and schools, while working within the structures and current policy landscape. Two schools are in an urban setting (Edinburgh and Dundee) and have worked together for many years as Learning partners, sharing good and interesting practice and leading thinking in their schools and within their Authorities. The third school is a large rural High School in Oban and is run by an Executive Head who has linked collaboratively and collegially the schools in Oban and Tiree (and two associated Primaries) and led them forward to success. The fourth school is a 3-18 rural school in Dumfries and Galloway which has a different perspective from the others. All four schools have curriculum which represent some of the best in Scotland on offer to their young people.

The Head Teachers represent an Association which is full square behind the Education Reform plans outlined in the Hayward report, the Withers report and the Muir report. The association made a strong contribution to the work of the OECD and one school was an exemplar case study in that report, demonstrating what a school can successfully offer its young people under Curriculum for Excellence.

The Association has long been a supporter of Curriculum for Excellence, from a curriculum, methodological and wellbeing perspective.

A further bonding link between these Head teachers is that they (along with quite a few others) owing to their long and deep experience as school leaders, took risks with their curriculum. They know their pupils well; the background of the school; and they breathe their school 24/7 in so many ways. They have sought to ensure their curriculum meets the needs of their young people, irrespective of what the common general view might be, or what the view of the Local Authority might be. They have ensured that they provide the courses that sit the horses and to ensure they change the system in their school to suit the requirements of their clientele. They have tried to ensure that the round pegs go into the round holes, the square pegs into the square holes and the quirky pegs go into the quirky holes. They have thought outside the box, have been innovative, adapted the system and sometimes changed the system with clear positive impact for the young people in their care and ensure that their young people achieved a positive attainment record and a positive destination, often one which might not have been the case in the past, had the school stayed within the traditional system. They have felt empowered and have demonstrated to

an extent how Head Teachers can nudge the system forward in their own school and try to influence others to move in the same direction.

All four schools have a strong Rationale for their curriculum, which is a shared rationale with pupils, staff and parents. At the Royal High School the purpose of their school curriculum is to support opportunities for all learners to be successful, provide curriculum pathways which best suit their needs and prepare them for positive destinations post school.

Their motto is "We Belong Here" and their curriculum should meet this vision. This means they provide a curriculum which meets the need of all, celebrates diversity and inclusion and removes barriers to success.

Learners should have the opportunity to access different pathways throughout their schooling which lead to the most appropriate qualifications and experiences which prepare them for leaving school into a successful sustained positive destination.

This means their pathways from S1-6 are planned to meet the needs of all individual learners. Bespoke packages are used through our Wellbeing Hub (anxiety and SEBN learners) and Enhanced Support Base (ASD learners) as well as those requiring additional options as part of their child's planning. They make use of a wide range of partners to enhance the curriculum offering including for example, college, Spartans, SCRAN and a senior phase consortium with the North West secondary schools. This is offered in two columns both as physical and digital options and widens their curriculum options for the senior phase.

They resource to ensure a curriculum for equity and excellence. This means targeting resource and courses where the impact is greatest in terms of preparing young people for their next steps. This may mean for example, capping the numbers at Advanced Higher to allow National 3 & 4 courses to run in S4. Impact on life choices is an important consideration.

Throughout the school additional vocational pathways are put in place including Forest Schools, Barista Café and a range leading to National Progression Awards (NPAs). These are being further developed in all areas of the curriculum. The aim is to ensure every young person has the skills and qualifications necessary to move forward to the very best post-school destination.

The Royal High curriculum is flexible, innovative and changeable and they are constantly evolving to meet the needs of their students and provide the very best curriculum for equity and excellence which embodies We All Belong Here.

These schools also took risks concerning the metrics in Insight against which all schools are measured. Although they are all data literate and use data to drive improvement, they are not blinded by it and feel that the traditional focus and obsession with 5+ @ level 5 (national 5) and 5+@ Level 6 (Higher) is not valid nowadays, given the breadth of curriculum being offered with a load of qualifications outwith the traditional SQA catalogue. If Educational reform, as outlined in the current reports on the table, is to be successful, we need more relevant metrics and ones which show parity between vocational and academic, and which have the SCQF framework at the centre.

The purpose of education is to educate our young people and to widen their knowledge and skills but at the back is an economic necessity to ensure they can in whatever way contribute to the economic productivity of the nation and have a prosperous life where they

can enjoy the fruits of their labour and education. That is why the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) programme is crucial for the country's future and its economic wellbeing. This programme is making a huge contribution to ensuring the curriculum is relevant, broad, deep, enjoyable and has personalisation and choice, and increases the likelihood of better positive destinations for all. We need its structure and support to create links and partnerships to help our young people attain, learn, achieve the four capacities and flourish in their lives. It is the DYW programme which has crystallised CfE in the minds of many teachers.

A good example of this is Wallace Hall Academy, a 2-18 school in Dumfries and Galloway. Wallace Hall has worked hard to ensure that the curriculum reflects their rural location and the jobs that are available in a rural area. The school works on the production of apples, fruit and other vegetables which can then be used in different ways across the school. Students are involved in every aspect of growing, maintaining and utilising the produce.

Throughout the production of the fruit and vegetables, the school works closely with a wide variety of partners including Steilhead Cider and Queensberry Estates. This work allows the students from Wallace Hall Academy to develop a variety of employability skills and these are then used to help find sustainable employment. The school uses its orchard, polytunnels and composting procedures to develop a deep understanding of sustainable food production. The school also works closely with Dumfries House and The Prince's Foundation to further develop the understanding of sustainable food production. Our Food for the Future group were involved in a number of training activities recently at Dumfries House where they were able to meet HM King Charles and showcase the outcomes of their project.

Wallace Hall Academy also delivers a National Progression Award in Agriculture, Livestock and Crop Production. The course is designed to develop a knowledge of a wide variety of land-based industries in the South-West of Scotland. The students are given the opportunity to participate in hands-on practical experiences in a wide variety of rural industries.

Much progress has been made to date in these and other schools (Larbert High School, Preston Lodge HS, Cults Academy, Boclair Academy, to name but a few) by Head Teachers who see the Education reform proposals as positive and have tentatively moved in that direction ahead of the curve. They have experimented and seen that the future works, despite the risks and despite the pull of the current moribund system to pull it back to 5+ Highers and away from what suits the needs of the individual young person. They see the Scottish Diploma of Achievement as a credible alternative to the current system, albeit there are tweaks and adjustments to be made.

There has been experimentation and interesting development along the lines of the Personal Pathway now envisioned by Professor Hayward with a digital Record of Achievement (Grove Academy linking to Global Bridge) which has been warmly received but still needs developing but is now a viable proposition. There has been relevant development of ensuring Equity with regard to Personal Pathways which in The Royal High School means ensuring a Curriculum for Equity and excellence which embodies our vision of We All Belong Here. This includes for example, tackling bigger issues such as racism and gender equality through the curriculum and a significant amount of work has already been undertaken to decolonise our curriculum and embed positive gender issues and allow positive discussion around misogyny. The developing of Learning Pathways is already well rooted in all four schools, as well as many more across the country.

There has been a constant development of another factor of the Hayward proposals for a Scottish Diploma of Achievement - Project Learning – across these schools where pupils in the Senior Phase are seen to be engaged in projects which are focussed on developing a product, which involves skills such as problem solving, communication, teamwork, positive mindset, etc. (e.g. Grove Academy Advanced Engineering Project). Despite not having the entrance requirements for their desired course, some pupils involved in these projects have got accepted for university or engineering posts due to the experience they had on these projects. That is achievement and not the traditional route!

These schools have led the way and we often wonder why many others have not followed. The answer is that the risks are high, particularly for school with lower attainment, but these are precisely the schools whose pupils would benefit most from a more 21st century approach which encompasses knowledge and skills rather than rote learning. We have a unique opportunity now to develop a more empowered system which will ensure we meet the needs of all our young people. The curriculum across Scotland cannot be standardised if it is to meet those young people's needs and desires. We need to seize this opportunity now and ensure we have an education system fit for the second quarter of the 21st century.

Grove Academy – Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce at Grove Academy

Apprenticeship pathways

- Electrical/ plumbing
- Engineering
- Health & Social Care
- Early years education
- Financial services
- Software development

Vocational based qualifications

- College based vocational qualifications
 - College link courses (i.e., hairdressing, vehicle mechanics)
 - HNC courses- Civil Engineering, Building Surveying, Computing
- Skills for work courses
 - Travel and Tourism
- Employability focused qualifications (NPA)
 - Computer Games Design
 - Cyber Security

Industry certification:

- Fitness Industry Training Academy
- Lifeguard qualification
- Fitness instructor qualification
- Coaching Academy
- Coaching qualifications

S1-3

- **S2 IDL projects**
- English and Computing- computer game theme
- Art and Music- computer game theme
- HE/Mod Languages and maths- café/tourism/hospitality theme
- PE and Business- Fitness app theme
- Drama and RMPE- Theatre production theme
- College taster sessions

Future Developments ?

- Employability profile for all pupils (S1-6)
- Employability electives
- LEEO model- employability projects, soft and technical skills, employer mentors
- Extending links with local industry/ firms/ organisations
- Further Vocational/ Apprenticeship options

Grove Academy x globalbridge

globalbridge is a digital learner profile that enables students to record and showcase their talents, skills and qualifications through an interactive, media rich, secure online profile. Learners can upload their academic achievements and also include: a biography, aspirations, photos, sound bites, electronic documents and even video footage such as sporting highlights, drama productions and musical performances. Using a social media-style digital platform, learners can upload 'experiences' and select skills developed in curricular and extra-curricular areas to contribute a 'Digital Diploma of Achievement'.

Within the **globalbridge** platform, learners can be matched to specific work experience opportunities based on the preferences and areas of interest in their profile. At Grove Academy we are piloting **globalbridge** profiles to record learners' academic qualifications, skills development in broader context-based and employability activities and extra-curricular and personal achievements – all of this contributes to a 'digital CV' that learners can share with universities, colleges, employers and their families.

So far S5/6 learners have enjoyed engaging with the user-friendly interface and accompanying app whilst teachers have found the platform straightforward and flexible. Future developments this year will involve all learners (S1-4) developing profiles and sharing these with parents.

[Redacted]

<p>Context and background Catchment Academic & traditional culture High parental expectations Attainment gaps</p> <p>Proximity Developments in local labour market</p>	<p>Objectives More personalised and relevant curriculum Improve attainment, close the gap Increase uptake for vocational options- not an add on Greater coherence Enhancing transitions More engagement through S6</p>	<p>Drivers: Employability & Skills DYW Business feedback/ labour market links Understanding our learners Grove Employability Skills sets IDL / PBL</p>
<p>Outcomes and impact Uptake of vocational options Skills development Notable successes Achievement and deeper learning v Attainment Improved attainment Engaged pupils Addressing bi-level teaching</p>	<p>Growing the Curriculum at Grove Academy</p>	<p>Strategies Pathways Expanded range of qualifications and vocational options Co-constructing curriculum Industry preparation programs Project based approaches FAs Electives program Work based learning BGE pathways Wider achievement</p>
<p>Buy-in and empowerment Clear direction and objectives Engagement of staff and allocation of time Openness to innovation/ risk taking /agency Professional Dialogue across subject boundaries Professional dialogue with partners Quick wins Sharing good practice Looking outward and forward</p>	<p>Challenges Parental attitudes Pupil attitudes Resources Attainment and certification</p>	<p>Infrastructure and partnerships Timetable changes Course Choice changes College links – bilateral College – integrating timetables Links with employers & other partners</p>

	BGE	S4	S5	S6
Engineering & Construction	S1 Girls into Construction S3 Plumbing S3 Electrical	College Options Plumbing Preparation (NPA Plumbing) Electrical Preparation (NPA Electrical)	College Options Civil Engineering FA Year 1	College Options Civil Engineering FA Year 2 Advanced Engineering
Sport & Leisure	S2 Living for Sports S3 professional Development-Coaching & Refereeing S3 IDL –Dundee	College Options Employability Transition Program	College Options SFA Coaching Academy Fitness Industry Training Academy NPA Achieving Excellence in Sport Expanded PE options SQA Leadership Award Level 6	College Options SFA Coaching Academy Fitness Industry Training Academy NPA Achieving Excellence in Sport Expanded PE options SQA Leadership Award Level 6
Hospitality & Tourism	S2 IDL –Tourism S3 Hospitality S3 Modern Languages for Life and Work	College Options Hospitality Preparation(SVQ level 5 & Preparation for Employability Award) Hospitality SFW	College Options Hospitality Electives – REHIS Barista Training Travel & Tourism SFW	College Options Hospitality Electives – REHIS Barista Training Travel & Tourism SFW
Creative Industries	S2 IDL S3 Fundamentals of Cyber Security Scots Language Award iDea Award	College Options NPA Digital Passport	College Options NPA Creative Industries HNC Computing Advertising Photography Units Young Enterprise Jewellery Design	College Options NPA Creative Industries HNC Computing Advertising Photography Units Young Enterprise Jewellery Design
Miscellaneous	Saltire Awards Dynamic Youth Award Bikeability Duke of Edinburgh	Early Education and Childcare Scottish Studies Princes Trust Achieve Award Saltire Awards Skills for Work	SQA Wellbeing Award RME Award (5/6) Work Experience Saltire Awards Commonwealth War Graves Award Communication & Presentation Skills	Science Baccalaureate Social Subjects Baccalaureate Modern Languages Baccalaureate Scottish Studies SQA Wellbeing Award Yoga

<p>Career Pathways</p> <p>Advanced Engineering Program (S6 only) Coaching Academy (SFA) Hospitality Service SVQ Level 5</p> <p>NPA Practical Science Level 5 NPA Digital Media Level 5 NPA Cyber security Level 5 NPA Criminology Level 5 NPA Business and Marketing Level 5 NPA Events Management Level 5 NPA Web Design Level 5 NPA Photography Level 5 NPA Acting and Performance Level 5 NPA Dance Level 5 NPA Rural Skills Level 5</p> <p>Work Experience</p>	<p>Level 6</p> <p>Accounts (Higher) Art & Design (Higher) Biology (Higher) Business Management (Higher) Chemistry (Higher) Engineering Science (Higher) Geography (Higher) French(Higher) Graphic Communication (Higher)</p>	<p>Level 5</p> <p>Art & Design (N5) Business Management (N5) Graphic Communication (N5) Music Technology(N5) French(N5) Physics (N5)</p>	<p>Skills for work</p> <p>Automotive Skills (SFW N4) Construction Crafts(SFW N5/N4) Early Education & Childcare (SFW N5/N4) Engineering skills (SFW N5/4) Hair & Beauty Skills (VTC level 1 equivalent to a national at Level 4) Hair & Beauty Skills (VTC level 2 equivalent to a national at Level 5) Health Sector (SFW N5) Hospitality (SFW N5/N4) Rural Skills (SFW N4) Sports and Recreation(SFW N5)</p>
<p>Foundation Apprenticeships</p> <p>S5 Accounting (Year 1 of 2) S5 Business (Year 1 of 2) S5 Health and Social Care (Year 1 of 2) S6 Health and Social Care (1 year must also choose this option in choice 2 below) S5 Early Education and Childcare (Year 1 of 2) S6 Early Education and Childcare (1 year must also choose this option in choice 2 below) S5 Creative and Digital Media (Year 1 of 2) S6 Creative and Digital Media (1 year must also choose this option in choice 2 below) S5 Networking & Cyber Security (Year 1 of 2) S5 Software an Application Development (Year 1 of 2) S5 Engineering (Year 1 of 2) S5 Food and Drink (Year 1 of 2) S5 Science and Technology (Year 1 of 2)</p>		<p>Level 7</p> <p>French (Advanced Higher) RMPS (Advanced Higher) Biology (Advanced Higher) S5 HNC Contemporary Art Practice (year 1 of 2) S5 HNC Hospitality (year 1 of 2) S5 HNC Photography (year 1 of 2) S5 HNC Computer Network and Ethical Hacking(year 1 of 2) S5 HNC Computer Network and Ethical Hacking(year 2 of 2)</p>	

Oban High School Curriculum Background

Oban and our surrounding rural communities are wonderful places to grow up, but they must also be viable places for future generations and this means that jobs, housing, transport, communications and education must be viewed in a rural context. Oban's unique geographic and cultural location and its function as the 'Gateway to the Isles', combined with its marine resources, world class research, transport connectivity, quality of environment and local produce, represents distinct factors of economic advantage. Our locality has significant economic growth potential in the marine science, tourism, aquaculture and renewable energy sectors, as well as the opportunities to grow associated businesses. We 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 our community.

Vision and Values

Oban High School aims to help our young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st Century. We at Oban High School believe that the school has a responsibility to ensure that all our youngsters achieve the best possible qualifications. We also believe that we need to nurture and develop their social, emotional and vocational knowledge and skills to enable them to fulfil their full potential, throughout their lives. We value compassion, ambition, resilience and respect.

Our approach to the curriculum places learners at the heart of their education. We strive to concentrate and focus on delivering a curriculum that has excellence and equity for all. At its centre are four fundamental capacities. These capacities reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning:

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

Our curriculum design and offer is an opportunity to deliver the vision and values of the school which permeates all of the work that we do in Oban High School. It is our desire to ensure that all pupils engage in an education:

- that challenges and supports them,
- which can be tailored to their own personal, academic and vocational needs and
- that provides a pathway to them into the destination of their choice when they exit our school.

• Successful Learners with:	Confident Individuals with:	• Effective Contributors with:	• Responsible Citizens with:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-respect • a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing • secure values and beliefs <p>and able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Young people's rights and entitlements are central to Oban High's curriculum and every young person is entitled to experience:

- a curriculum which is coherent from S1 to S6;
- [a broad general education](#), including well planned [experiences and outcomes](#) across all the curriculum areas from S1 through to S3. This includes understanding the world, Scotland's place in it and the environment;
- a [senior phase](#) after S3, which provides opportunities to attain and achieve, including to study for qualifications, awards and other planned activities to develop the four capacities;
- opportunities for developing [skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work](#);
- opportunities to maximise their individual potential, benefitting from appropriate [personal support](#) and challenge (including SEN);
- support to help them move into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

Curriculum areas and subjects

The S1-S3 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 are integral in planning curricular experiences; challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, coherence, relevance, personalisation and choice. The S1-S3 curriculum structure should provide clarity as to how learners progress through Levels 2, 3 and 4. Experiences and Outcomes will be delivered in all curricular areas through discrete subject teaching and interdisciplinary learning, providing coherence for the learner. Our S1 and S2 provision ensures pupils have access to all curricular areas, which informs S3 to make a few, limited choices, which will lead to a minimum of 7 subject choices in S4. During S5 and S6 pupils will select 5 courses to study during each year. There are few limitations to learner pathways and they include a wide variety of opportunities at a variety of levels including; National 3, 4 and 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, Scottish Baccalaureate, Skills for Work, NPA's, Foundation Apprenticeships, YASS and a custom-created "Pathways Programme". We offer an additional learning pathway for Gaelic Medium Learners.

The cross curricular themes of Literacy, Numeracy, Health & WellBeing and Skills for LifeLong Learning and Work are the responsibility of all subject areas. While it is anticipated many of these will be delivered by key subjects, all departments should plan meaningful opportunities to deliver and assess relevant outcomes and experiences within their courses. All our staff are responsible for young people's health and wellbeing and for identifying the personal support a young person needs on a day-to-day basis. Staff will work together to ensure learners can learn in a way that works for them, at a pace they can cope with and with enough challenge to stretch them.

Interdisciplinary Learning

All subjects should work collaboratively using interdisciplinary learning to ensure pupils have a cohesive and meaningful learning experience. 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. Departments should ensure interdisciplinary gives the pupils the opportunity to work towards specific outcomes and experiences and should build assessment into their planning.

Wider Achievement

All pupils contribute to the ethos and life of school as a community. They will be given opportunities for wider achievement during their time at Oban High School. Opportunities include;

- Enhancement activities and clubs
- Pupil council and working groups
- Sports and dance leadership
- SPLT and Prefect opportunities
- Schools of Rugby, Shinty, Dance and Traditional Music

- Awards such as Duke of Edinburgh, John Muir Trust, Personal Development, Leadership and Dynamic Youth Awards

Personalisation and Choice

As pupils progress through S1 to S6, the opportunities for personalisation, choice and specialism are provided. Allowing and supporting pupils to make informed choices about their learning should encourage and motivate pupils in their learning. Personalisation and choice can take many forms and is not just about making subject choices. Opportunities for personalising their learning experience will be built into all courses including;

Choice in **what** pupils learn

- Subject choice
- Choice within subjects
- Choice within lessons

Choice of **how** pupils learn

- Active learning
- Different activities offered within learning
- Challenge based – different products or outcomes

Pupils will follow a broad general education during S1-3. However, to facilitate increasing personalisation, pupils will be offered support and guidance as to subject choices at the following points;

- S2 and S3 subject choice within the 8 subject areas
- S4-6 senior course choice for each learner's journey towards national qualifications and planning for a sustained positive destination.

We plan curricular pathways incorporating the Career Education Standards, supporting learners to develop the skills they require for work, to achieve and sustain positive post-school destinations. Supported by our Careers Adviser from Skills Development Scotland, we track the career interests of learners, providing career specific information, guidance and opportunities throughout their learner journey. The Senior Phase provides opportunities for 'blended' learning experiences and personalised learner journeys, which could encompass academic courses, vocational courses (supported by UHI Argyll), Foundation Apprenticeships and work placements. We recognise that to provide our young people with rich learning experiences in a range of contexts it is crucial to work in partnerships with others. Expertise often lies beyond the school and learning opportunities are regularly planned with partner organisations including; statutory and voluntary organisations, as well as employers and the 'third sector'.

Progress and Achievement Tracking

Pupils will be tracked regularly throughout S1-6 through the use of the Progress and Achievement tracking system. During S1-S3, grading will be given to pupils in terms of their behaviour, effort and homework on a regular basis, whilst their level and security within a level will be recorded 3 times a year. Progress Review Reports are issued to pupils and parents/carers on a regular basis and a Full Report is issued once a year. In addition, during S4-6, grading will have a Target and Working Grade given to each pupil to show the potential attainment they have and the progress

towards this potential that they are making. This information is also communicated to parents/carers on a regular basis through Progress Review Reports and also in a Full Report once a year which will also include a teacher comment on pupils' next steps in learning. Participation is tracked through the Guidance team during PSEd to encourage learners to engage with the enhancement programme.

Our rationale has been developed in consultation with all members of our school community. It is dynamic and regularly reviewed. We strive to create a high quality culture of self-evaluation alongside a willingness to learn from local, national and international best practice. This inward and outward looking approach to curricular development is aimed at supporting young people to develop transferable skills that prepare students to be successful within a complex, ever changing employment market in the 21st Century.

Oban High School Curriculum Background

Oban High School is a fully comprehensive secondary school covering ages 11-18. It serves the community of Oban, Lorn and the Isles. To do so we provide a school accommodation service for up to 85 children from our islands and more remote areas. In addition to the wealth of mainstream opportunities we provide over 90 certificated courses by the end of S6. We also provide specialist provision for those children and young people with severe and complex needs. The core curriculum is enhanced through the establishment of four specialist schools programmes where additional tutors are employed to provide bespoke education in the areas of Traditional Music, Dance, Rugby and Shinty. Specialist tutors are also engaged to deliver Foundation Apprenticeships in Business, Engineering, Construction and Hospitality. Uniquely, Oban High School receives direct funding for this, similar to college delivery.

Oban High School works within an entwined leadership and curricular model with Tiree High School, led by an Executive Headteacher. This allows a further degree of curricular expansion through online delivery between the schools ensuring each provides additional choices of subjects and levels. Oban High School also offers and receives similar opportunities through Argyll and Bute Council's online shared courses service.

Argyll and Bute Council has invested significantly in the infrastructure and resources of our school. Our new school was built in 2018 boasts an impressive array of modern facilities that allow this expansive curriculum to be taken forward, supported by partners, most notably, UHI Argyll. Our impressive new school was funded through the Scottish Future's Trust and Argyll and Bute Council.

Oban High School has in recent years gone through a number of HMIE thematic inspections leading to significant recognition for noteworthy practice, particularly in the areas of digital learning, outdoor learning and for our curriculum rationale, design and delivery.

Our school most likely is renowned for our school Pipe Band who have won numerous national and international competitions over the last 15 years: twice World Champions.

Curriculum.

Considerable strategic thought, research and ongoing collaboration between staff, young people, community partners and families, empowers Oban (in association with Tiree High School) to strike a confident and informed balance between national guidance and local needs.

Every young person at Oban High School is entitled to experience:

- a curriculum that is coherent from 11 to 18
- a broad general education (from S1 to S3)
- a senior phase (S4-S6) where he or she can obtain qualifications suitable for any career destination

- opportunities to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, focusing on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities that Curriculum for Excellence can provide
- support in moving into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

Oban High School's Curriculum Rationale was refreshed in 2019 and articulates the totality of what is planned for and experienced by learners across four contexts of learning:

- Curriculum areas and subjects.
- Interdisciplinary learning.
- Ethos and life of the school.
- Opportunities for personal achievement.

The curriculum for Oban High School is underpinned by the 7 design principles:

Challenge and enjoyment

- In most classes, learning is challenging, engaging and motivating. The curriculum encourages high aspirations and ambitions. Nearly all staff and partners are ambitious and expect high levels of attainment and achievement for all learners.
- Learners at all levels of ability experience appropriate levels of challenge. This has been a focus for 18 months as part of our CLPL programme on differentiation (removing the barriers to learning), which we are continuing to focus on.
- Learners have opportunities to achieve their potential and nearly all learners are involved in the process at all stages, through learning conversations, feedback from teachers, etc.
- Where appropriate, learners are given opportunities to show creativity with ideas and processes, e.g. expressive arts, designing science experiments and design and technology lessons.
- Support is given to help sustain effort. through targeted interventions

Breadth

- The curriculum is broad, covering all 4 contexts and all young people experience a range of experiences in the curriculum, balanced across the 4 contexts and curriculum subjects.
- A wide variety of contexts are used for learning and learning takes place within the classroom and through other aspects of school life. This is particularly evidenced through the myriad of opportunities for wider achievement and the very broad list of subjects and qualifications.

Progression

- There is continuous progression in learning from S1 to S6 and each stage builds on earlier knowledge and achievements, as exemplified in languages.
- Learners are allowed to progress at a rate suitable to their needs and aptitudes, progressing through the experiences and outcomes based on a coherent framework using benchmarks and XBRA.
- Options for learners are kept open as long as possible, the options process being personalised and supportive with clear roles for PT Guidance and colleagues from Skills Development Scotland, alongside other supports, e.g. planning for choice, careers events and change and options evenings.

Depth

- As learners progress, they develop and apply increased thinking skills, making connections in their learning and exploring and achieve more advanced levels of understanding.
- Opportunities are given to allow learners to develop their capacities for different types of thinking and learning.
- Personalisation and choice
- The curriculum responds to individual needs and levels of support and individual aptitudes & talents/capabilities; for example. Schools of Rugby, Dance, Shinty and Traditional Music, UHI Argyll Network courses and YASS.
- Opportunities for increasing personal choice are available and there is a combination of learning experiences, which make sense and connect skills learned across the curriculum.
- Pupils are able to follow individualised courses, e.g. Latin (N5), Italian (H) and Mandarin.

Coherence

- The BGE curriculum has a coherent structure, having been mapped during 2021-2022. We are now developing a wide range of assessment tools, using the moderation cycle, to empower collaborative approaches to demonstrate attainment and progression in each subject.
- The curriculum builds up a personal toolbox of skills as well as increasing knowledge and understanding. There is a clear focus on developing skills of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, creativity, digital and employability skills in a progressive way across the curriculum.
- We are continuing to raise awareness and implement initiatives for staff and young people to embed aspects of the CES 3-18.

Relevance

- Many learners understand the purpose of the learning activity – Why am I learning this? Why am I being asked to do this activity? How does this learning relate to my

life? The learning and activity should be relevant to the learner now and in their future life and highlight appropriate aspects of the skills framework.

- Learning for sustainability is becoming embedded across many areas of our curriculum, particularly in Social subjects and aspects of Science, to help learners understand the significance of their choices, now and in the future. Young people run an Eco Club and many take part in learning outdoors which was recently inspected.
- We use our cultural heritage to support learning, for example art, social subjects and science. We celebrate Gaelic language and culture in a number of ways.

Interdisciplinary learning

- The curriculum includes space/opportunities that enable young people to make connections between different areas of learning. This is planned through faculties, e.g. social sciences, technology and expressive arts. We plan by using Experiences and Outcomes and Benchmarks from more than one organiser e.g. S2 History Holocaust unit is planned using Experiences and Outcomes and Benchmarks from People in the Past, People in Society, Literacy and Numeracy.
- Aspects of interdisciplinary learning are stimulating, relevant and challenging. We 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. For example, environmental science working with Scottish Association of Marine Science and BGE Social Subjects with Kilmartin Museum and STEM club.
- Revisiting a concept or skill from different perspectives deepens understanding and can make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful for learners.

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 - promoting a climate in which 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, for example a significant senior pupil-led initiative on mental health.
- Staff and senior pupils seek to build positive relationships with young people and to model behaviour that promotes respect, responsibility and resilience. They also promote the vision and values of Oban High School by leading weekly assemblies and other activities, including podcasts.

- All stakeholders contribute to the rationale, design and ongoing development of the curriculum. We work hard to help everyone understand what the school is trying to achieve through its curriculum. Stakeholders are able to talk about how the unique features of the school community inform the design of the curriculum. For example, our SCQF School Ambassador programme offers the community the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of the SCQF and the wider ways in which it supports learners such as recognising wider achievement, developing Senior Phase learning pathways in line with the Developing the Young Workforce strategy and giving equality between vocational and academic qualifications.
- Young people are 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. For example Senior and Junior Pupil Leadership Teams, volunteering at the Dove Hospice Centre (p6) and work experience at Atlantis Leisure Centre.
- We continue to strive for all staff and partners to be ambitious and expect high levels of attainment and achievement for all learners through the learning, teaching and assessment policy.
- Our curriculum has a strong focus on developing the skills our young people need in the world of work and digital literacy. We make our young people aware of a range of careers and the skills required for them, e.g. through bi-annual business breakfasts, careers events, etc. We challenge gender stereotypes including Business Studies and Administration and IT.
- Our curriculum promotes equity and raises attainment for all young people as evidenced, for example, by our 2022 leavers' data.

Opportunities for personal achievement

- Personal achievement provides young people with a sense of satisfaction and helps to build motivation, resilience and confidence. Examples include a wide ranging enhancement programme, outdoor learning (see thematic inspection Dec. 2021) and opportunities to volunteer.
- The experiences and outcomes include opportunities for a range of achievements in the learning setting and beyond. For example, field work, a wide range of drama, music and art (pp 4-6) opportunities in the community, and international trips and cultural exchanges.
- We plan and offer opportunities for achievement and to provide the support and encouragement which will enable young people to step forward to undertake activities which they find challenging. For example, pupil leadership opportunities, Duke of Edinburgh Award and STEM leaders.
- We offer a wide range of useful vocational pathways and Foundation Apprenticeships to young people. College courses are promoted well as part of the

option choice forms. Young people are supported effectively to make well-informed decisions.

- We work closely with a wide range of partners to help young people access information and opportunities and make their voices heard. Examples include North Argyll Young Carers, LGBTQ+, Active Schools and Youth Intervention Officer (Police Scotland).

Oban High School Subjects Offered (2022-23)

A Broad Curriculum at Oban High School – Subjects Offered for Session 2022-23 (98 OHS + 22 YASS Courses)

Subject	Awarding Body	Subject	Awarding Body
Administration and IT	SQA National 3, 4, 5, Higher	Health and Food Technology	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH
Analysing Media Content	SQA National 3	Health Sector	Skills for Work SCQF Level 5
Application of Mathematics	SQA National 3, 4, 5, Higher	History	SQA National 3, 4, 5, Higher, AH
Applied Science	SQA SCQF Level 5	Home Economics	SQA National 1, 2, 3
Art and Design	SQA National, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Higher, AH	Hospitality FA	SQA SCQF Level 5
ASDAN: Towards Independence	ASDAN	Hospitality: Practical Cookery	SQA National 3, 4, 5
Aquaculture	Skills for Work SCQF Level 5	Human Biology	SQA Higher
Automotive Skills	Skills for Work SCQF Level 4	Internet Safety	SQA SCQF Level 4
Beauty and Make-up Skills	SQA National 5	Journalism NPA	SQA SCQF Level 6
Beekeeping	SQA SCQF Level 5, H	Leadership	SQA SCQF Level 6
Biology	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH	Legal Studies NPA	SQA SCQF Level 6
British Sign Language	SQA National 3	Marine Skills	Skills for Work Level 5
Business Management	SQA National 4, 5, Higher	Mathematics	SQA National 3, 4, 5, Higher, AH
Business Skills	Foundation Apprenticeship	Media Studies	SQA National 2, 3
Caritas	SCES (pupils also gain their SQA Level 6 Religion Belief and Values Award)	Mental Health and Wellbeing	SQA SCQF Level 5
Chemistry	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH	Modern Studies	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH
Childcare	SQA National 5, Higher	Music	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH
Community Achievement	Glasgow Kelvin College SCQF 4-7	Music Technology	SQA National 4, 5, Higher
Computing Science	SQA National 4, 5, Higher	Performance Development	SQA SCQF Level 5
Construction FA	SQA SCQF Level 5	Personal and Social Development Units	SQA National 1, 2, 3
Cosmetology	Skills for Work SCQF Level 4-6	Personal Finance	SQA SCQF Level 4-5
Customer Service: Principles and Practice	SQA SCQF Level 5	Philosophy	SQA Higher
Customer Service NPA	SQA Level 4,5,6	Photography	SQA Higher
Creative Arts	SQA National 2	Physical Education	SQA National 4, 5, Higher
Criminology NPA	SQA SCQF Level 7	Physics	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH
Dance	SQA National 4, 5, Higher	Practical Craft Skills	SQA National 2
Digital Media NPA	SQA Level 5	Practical Woodworking	SQA National 3, 4, 5
Drama	SQA National 4, 5, Higher	Psychology	SQA Higher
Employability	SQA SCQF 3/4	Radio Broadcasting NPA	SQA SCQF Level 5
Engineering	Skills for Work SCQF Level 5	Religion Belief and Values	SQA SCQF Level 5/6
Engineering	Foundation Apprenticeship	RMPS	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH
English	SQA National 3, 4, 5, Higher, AH	Rural Skills – Animal Care	Skills for Work SCQF Level 4
English and Communication	SQA National 2	Rural Skills – Small Animal Care NPA	SQA SCQF Level 5
English for Speakers of other Languages	SQA Higher	Safe Road User	SQA SCQF Level 4
Environmental Science	SQA National 4, 5, Higher	Saltire	Saltire Awards (hours based)
English	SQA National 3, 4, 5, Higher, AH	Science in the Environment	SQA National 2, 3
English and Communication	SQA National 2	Science Practical Experiments	SQA National 1, 2, 3
English for Speakers of other Languages	SQA Higher	Scots Language	SQA SCQF Level 3-6
Environmental Science	SQA National 4, 5, Higher	Scottish Baccalaureate	SQA SCQF Level 7
Exercise and Fitness Leadership NPA	SQA SCQF Level 6	Scottish Studies	SQA SCQF Level 4-6
Fashion and Textiles	SQA National 5	Social Subjects People and Places	SQA National 2, 3
Food Hygiene	SCQF Level 4	Spanish	SQA National 5, Higher
French	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH	Sports Development NPA	SQA SCQF Level 6

Gaidhlig	SQA National 5, Higher, AH	Statistics	SQA SCQF Level 6, 7
Gaelic	SQA National 4, 5, Higher, AH	Travel and Tourism	SQA National 4/5
Games Design NPA	SQA SCQF Level 4-5	Volunteering	SQA SCQF Level 5
German for Life and Work	SQA SCQF Level 4	Wellbeing	SQA SCQF Level 5
Geography	SQA National 3, 4, 5, Higher, AH	YASS – (22 Courses available for candidates)	Open University SCQF Level 7
Graphic Communication	SQA National 5, Higher, AH	Young Stem Leaders Award	SQA SCQF Level 4,5,6
Hairdressing	Skills for Work SCQF Level 4-5		

Oban High School is a fully comprehensive secondary school covering ages 11-18. It serves the community of Oban, Lorn and the Isles. To do so we provide a school accommodation service for up to 85 children from our islands and more remote areas. In addition to the wealth of mainstream opportunities we provide over 90 certificated courses by the end of S6. We also provide specialist provision for those children and young people with severe and complex needs. The core curriculum is enhanced through the establishment of four specialist schools programmes where additional tutors are employed to provide bespoke education in the areas of Traditional Music, Dance, Rugby and Shinty. Specialist tutors are also engaged to deliver Foundation Apprenticeships in Business, Engineering, Construction and Hospitality. Uniquely, Oban High School receives direct funding for this, similar to college delivery.

Oban High School works within an entwined leadership and curricular model with Tiree High School, led by an Executive Headteacher. This allows a further degree of curricular expansion through online delivery between the schools ensuring each provides additional choices of subjects and levels. Oban High School also offers and receives similar opportunities through Argyll and Bute Council's online shared courses service.

Argyll and Bute Council has invested significantly in the infrastructure and resources of our school. Our new school was built in 2018 boasts an impressive array of modern facilities that allow this expansive curriculum to be taken forward, supported by partners, most notably, UHI Argyll. Our impressive new school was funded through the Scottish Future's Trust and Argyll and Bute Council.

Oban High School has in recent years gone through a number of HMIE thematic inspections leading to significant recognition for noteworthy practice, particularly in the areas of digital learning, outdoor learning and for our curriculum rationale, design and delivery.

Our school most likely is renowned for our school Pipe Band who have won numerous national and international competitions over the last 15 years: twice World Champions.

Curriculum.

Considerable strategic thought, research and ongoing collaboration between staff, young people, community partners and families, empowers Oban (in association with Tiree High School) to strike a confident and informed balance between national guidance and local needs.

Every young person at Oban High School is entitled to experience:

- a curriculum that is coherent from 11 to 18
- a broad general education (from S1 to S3)
- a senior phase (S4-S6) where he or she can obtain qualifications suitable for any career destination
- opportunities to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, focusing on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities that Curriculum for Excellence can provide
- support in moving into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

Oban High School's Curriculum Rationale was refreshed in 2019 and articulates the totality of what is planned for and experienced by learners across four contexts of learning:

- Curriculum areas and subjects.
- Interdisciplinary learning.
- Ethos and life of the school.
- Opportunities for personal achievement.

The curriculum for Oban High School is underpinned by the 7 design principles:

Challenge and enjoyment

- In most classes, learning is challenging, engaging and motivating. The curriculum encourages high aspirations and ambitions. Nearly all staff and partners are ambitious and expect high levels of attainment and achievement for all learners.
- Learners at all levels of ability experience appropriate levels of challenge. This has been a focus for 18 months as part of our CLPL programme on differentiation (removing the barriers to learning), which we are continuing to focus on.
- Learners have opportunities to achieve their potential and nearly all learners are involved in the process at all stages, through learning conversations, feedback from teachers, etc.
- Where appropriate, learners are given opportunities to show creativity with ideas and processes, e.g. expressive arts, designing science experiments and design and technology lessons.
- Support is given to help sustain effort. through targeted interventions

Breadth

- The curriculum is broad, covering all 4 contexts and all young people experience a range of experiences in the curriculum, balanced across the 4 contexts and curriculum subjects.
- A wide variety of contexts are used for learning and learning takes place within the classroom and through other aspects of school life. This is particularly evidenced

through the myriad of opportunities for wider achievement and the very broad list of subjects and qualifications.

Progression

- There is continuous progression in learning from S1 to S6 and each stage builds on earlier knowledge and achievements, as exemplified in languages.
- Learners are allowed to progress at a rate suitable to their needs and aptitudes, progressing through the experiences and outcomes based on a coherent framework using benchmarks and XBRA.
- Options for learners are kept open as long as possible, the options process being personalised and supportive with clear roles for PT Guidance and colleagues from Skills Development Scotland, alongside other supports, e.g. planning for choice, careers events and change and options evenings.

Depth

- As learners progress, they develop and apply increased thinking skills, making connections in their learning and exploring and achieve more advanced levels of understanding.
- Opportunities are given to allow learners to develop their capacities for different types of thinking and learning.
- Personalisation and choice
- The curriculum responds to individual needs and levels of support and individual aptitudes & talents/capabilities; for example. Schools of Rugby, Dance, Shinty and Traditional Music, UHI Argyll Network courses and YASS.
- Opportunities for increasing personal choice are available and there is a combination of learning experiences, which make sense and connect skills learned across the curriculum.
- Pupils are able to follow individualised courses, e.g. Latin (N5), Italian (H) and Mandarin.

Coherence

- The BGE curriculum has a coherent structure, having been mapped during 2021-2022. We are now developing a wide range of assessment tools, using the moderation cycle, to empower collaborative approaches to demonstrate attainment and progression in each subject.
- The curriculum builds up a personal toolbox of skills as well as increasing knowledge and understanding. There is a clear focus on developing skills of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, creativity, digital and employability skills in a progressive way across the curriculum.
- We are continuing to raise awareness and implement initiatives for staff and young people to embed aspects of the CES 3-18.

Relevance

- Many learners understand the purpose of the learning activity – Why am I learning this? Why am I being asked to do this activity? How does this learning relate to my life? The learning and activity should be relevant to the learner now and in their future life and highlight appropriate aspects of the skills framework.
- Learning for sustainability is becoming embedded across many areas of our curriculum, particularly in Social subjects and aspects of Science, to help learners understand the significance of their choices, now and in the future. Young people run an Eco Club and many take part in learning outdoors which was recently inspected.
- We use our cultural heritage to support learning, for example art, social subjects and science. We celebrate Gaelic language and culture in a number of ways.

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Wallace Hall Academy

Broad General Education Rationale



Transitions 2 - 18: Building on prior learning

Pupils at Wallace Hall Academy benefit from our close working relationship with Wallace Hall Primary and our cluster primary schools, thus helping to ensure a seamless, coherent transition from stage to stage. Primary staff in all six schools link closely with staff in the secondary to ensure effective pastoral and curricular transitions.

Key features include:

- The PT PS responsible for transitions and our PT ASFL working closely with all cluster primaries to share pupil information.
- Planned transition visits where secondary specialists work with P6 and P7 pupils and are able to focus on almost all areas of the curriculum.
- A P7 Information Evening in the autumn for all prospective pupils and parents.
- All P7 pupils attending WHA for three full induction days where they follow their S1 timetable. Prior to this, pupils from outwith the cluster attend non-cluster transition days in May.
- All new S1 pupils are encouraged to take part in residential visits, such as the Douanans Trip, as part of the induction process.
- Pupils taking part in activities which relate to the outdoor classroom and employability.
- Working groups within Wallace Hall Academy having planned coherent approaches to learning and teaching. We are looking at how to further develop Literacy, Numeracy, Employability and Health and Wellbeing.
- A 2-18 Teaching and Learning Improvement Strategy has been developed by our PT Teaching and Learning
- Pupils at Wallace Hall benefitting from peer support and mentoring.
- Regular cluster meetings and cluster CPD events taking place to ensure consistency across the cluster and that good practice is shared.
- Enhanced transitions for those pupils requiring extra support.
- A number of developments to support the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and our staff.

Purpose of the Broad General Education

As each young person develops the four capacities, they will:

- Experience learning across a broad curriculum covering languages, mathematics, science, social studies, expressive arts, technology, health and wellbeing, and religious and moral education.
- Achieve high levels of literacy and numeracy with opportunities to develop these across the curriculum.
- Develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.
- Experience opportunities for personal development and achievement.
- Experience success.
- Improve their learning and ensure they are appropriately challenged and supported.

Personal support

The school works hard to meet the personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs of every pupil, in order that each pupil can participate fully and gain maximum benefit from everything the school has to offer. Health and Wellbeing conversations are organised for all pupils. There are three Principal Teachers of Pupil Support and a PT of Additional Support for Learning. Pupils have the opportunity to meet with their PT of Pupil Support at least twice per year. Pupils are supported by Health and Wellbeing programmes, the Hub and our House System structure which aims to recognise success, identify next steps in learning, identify areas for improvement and produce plans to support improvements. Further support is made available to pupils through ASFL teaching staff, our Learning Assistants, PEF mentors and by senior pupils who assist in classes. Many senior students are paired readers and take on the role as mentors to younger students.

Skills for Life, Learning and Work

There has been steady progress at developing skills for life, learning and work at Wallace Hall Academy. In almost all courses, pupils are given support in developing their learning skills. These are reinforced in topic work in Health and Wellbeing lessons, with many outside agencies, partners, local businesses and parents. We are also tracking our key employability skills.



Together we grow, learn and achieve with...

Pupils, parents, staff, carers and the wider community
Glasgow University
Queensberry Estates

Employability Team
Gates (UK) Ltd
Parent Council
Local Artists
Halo Trust

Business Mentors
Experience of Work
Dumfries House
Solway Credit Union
Thornhill Rotarians

University of West of Scotland
Dumfries & Galloway College
Community Learning & Development
Partner Farmers
Cample Line

National Improvement Framework

The vision for Scottish education is that we have:

- Excellence
- Equity

Our priority areas to develop this are:

- Placing human rights at the centre of education
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap
- Improvements in Health and Wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and positive destinations

We will achieve these by supporting and improving:

- School leadership
- Teacher professionalism
- Parental engagement
- Assessment of children's progress
- School improvement
- Performance information



Wallace Hall Academy, Primary & ELC

"Together we grow, learn and achieve"

November 2023

Skills for Life, Learning and Work

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- Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- Problem-Solving Abilities and Initiatives
- A Positive Work Ethic
- ICT Skills
- Numeracy Skills
- Literacy
- Valuing Diversity and Difference
- Working Under Pressure and to Deadlines
- Organisational Skills
- Team Working Skills
- Customer Service

(Above skills have been cross-referenced with the SDS meta-skills.)

Purpose of the Curriculum S4-S6: The Senior Phase

By the end of S1-S3, most pupils will have benefited from a wide range of learning experiences through the Broad General Education. They will have progressed at different rates and many will have reached high levels of attainment and achievement. Almost all pupils will have covered most of the third level Experiences and Outcomes and many will have covered those at fourth level. During the senior phase, students will have the opportunity to achieve awards such as, Duke of Edinburgh, City and Guilds, Saltire, Youth Achievement, YASS and Employability in addition to their National Qualifications. Students requiring additional support will have covered a number of early, second and third level experiences and outcomes appropriate to their individual needs and circumstances. They will have built a strong platform for life-long learning and for a successful transition into the senior phase and ultimately towards further and higher education, employment and other sustained destinations.

The purpose of our senior phase is:

- to enable all pupils to undertake a range of national qualifications at the appropriate level to ensure progression into a positive destination
- to further develop the knowledge, skills and qualities to support our pupils to take a meaningful and worthwhile place in society
- to further develop the skills for life, learning and work
- to experience opportunities for personal development and achievement
- to experience challenge and success
- to encourage an active and healthy lifestyle
- to support planning for their future lives, careers & learning

S6 Personal Development

In S6 students will choose at least four options – from any curriculum area / subjects / skills for work courses / college courses / achievement awards programmes. They will also opt into committees that look at charity work, social events, Young Enterprise, library, Rights Respecting Schools and Eco Group. Other opportunities include completing Open University courses and experience of work placements. Pupils are also encouraged to take on leadership roles such as being part of a Prefect Team.

Key Features/Existing Strengths

- S4-6 are timetabled as one cohort to allow for greater opportunities in terms of choice and meeting individual needs.
- At end of S4, pupils will sit National Qualifications in up to seven subjects. Pupils also undertake 2 periods of core PE, and 1 period of PSE and RMPs.
- In S5 & S6 pupils choose five subjects to study (National 4/National 5/Highers/Advanced Highers/YASS/Vocational courses).
- We offer a range of pathways which build on the Broad General Education offering a rich, accessible experience and wide opportunities to meet the needs of almost all learners. The use of local context and employability pathways is evident at all stages. In addition to more traditional courses, we also offer courses such as Photography, Engineering Science, Rural Skills, Cyber Security, Digital Media Animation, Makeup Skills, Barista and Environmental Science.
- Our senior phase model helps to ensure that all young people have the best possible opportunities to move onto positive and sustained destinations. Before any young person leaves Wallace Hall Academy, they are provided with interview training, mock interviews, help with application forms, an experience of work placement and support in developing our 11 key employability skills.



Wallace Hall Academy Senior Phase Rationale

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Our priority areas to develop this are:

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- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
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