

CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE UPDATE

March 2010

Improving learning by implementing Curriculum for Excellence

In implementing Curriculum for Excellence in Midlothian there are five streams of work:

- Building our Curriculum
- Learning and teaching, including implementation of curricular experiences and outcomes
- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- Assessment, recognising and reporting achievement
- Skills for learning, skills for life, skills for work

This Update will draw together what is being done across Midlothian to improve learning in the first three of these streams. Future updates will feature Assessment, recognising and reporting achievement; and Skills for learning, skills for life, and skills for work.



Nursery pupil at Gorebridge Primary taking responsibility for looking after plants.

Building Our Curriculum

The primary group has produced guidance for schools to assist staff in developing curriculum maps. The group also produced an electronic tool which can be used to develop curriculum plans in schools. Various sample timetables – yearly, block and weekly have been gathered as exemplars and are available electronically via GLOW.

Further work is needed on transitions and this will be developed in the New Year – nursery-P1; primary-secondary.

The secondary group has been looking at how curriculum structures can best deliver the entitlements of pupils outlined in Building the Curriculum 3. Consideration has particularly focussed on how to deliver a broad general education in S1 to S3.

Learning and Teaching including implementation of curriculum outcomes and experiences

Each Cluster ASG has set up a project, with teachers from primary and secondary, to provide a framework for one curricular area at Early, First and Second Levels :

- Beeslack: Social Subjects
- Dalkeith: Science
- Lasswade: Health and Well-being
- Newbattle: Expressive Arts
- Penicuik: RME
- St David's HS: Technologies

A group of teachers, drawn from schools across Midlothian, is looking at Modern Languages.

The aim of the groups is to produce a framework for their curricular area which will:

- tease out depth and progression in content and skills within and across levels
- highlight opportunities for active learning approaches
- highlight opportunities for Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Well being.
- facilitate smooth transitions across sectors allow schools to create their own programmes of study to best meet the needs of their pupils.

Draft frameworks should be available for consultation across Midlothian later this term.

First Steps for Secondary Subjects

Secondary Subject Leaders having been working with Principal Teachers and other staff to plan first steps for implementing the new experiences and outcomes. Subject departments across Midlothian are working together to share ideas for and approaches to improving learning in line with the 4 capacities.

In-service sessions on the afternoon of 26th October helped take the steps forward, and there will be another session in February.

Literacy

The Literacies Strategy Steering Group has produced a draft strategy which will be ready for further circulation in December 2009, following updates from MALANI and updated action plans from task groups.

There are 4 task groups:

Group 1 focussing on developing literacy and numeracy in the community and on the effective communication of the literacy strategy. The group is looking at the links between MALANI, parent and family support programmes and work in schools. A working group will also focus on how key messages from the strategy can be communicated to all stakeholders – e.g. elected members, staff, young people, families, community members.

Group 2 focussing on literacy and numeracy development in the early years. This group is taking a research-based approach to work with parents and early years providers, incorporating links with MALANI, CSCYP, Libraries and Health.

Group 3 focussing on literacy development in primary schools. The group has three main streams of work at present:

1. supporting the development of consistent approaches to the development of reading in primary schools; training has taken place for all primary teachers and booklets on the teaching of Active Reading have been produced
2. reviewing and producing guidance on approaches to early intervention – identifying barriers to learning and strategies to overcome them; a meeting has taken place with PTs SfL in primary and they will spend two days in December producing guidance which will then be shared with staff in schools via staff development
3. supporting literacy co-ordinators in primary schools; a meeting is planned for January 2010

Group 4 focussing on literacy development in secondary schools. The group is focussing on gathering approaches to developing literacy across the curriculum with a view to sharing effective practice.

Richard Havill is seconded one day per week to develop literacy across learning in secondary schools. He is visiting each secondary school to gather information on current practice. Guidance will be produced to support secondary teachers in developing literacy across the curriculum.

Literacy updates

- Midlothian Literacies Strategy in final draft stages is to be launched in March
- Active Reading guidance and support materials in place
- Writing criteria created for early/first/second level- third level in process
- Moderation of writing procedures in place
- Literacy champions identified and has met to take forward literacy
- Projects ongoing demonstrating the literacy links with expressive arts, social subjects, etc.

Glow

Midlothian GLOW groups will help staff keep in touch with what is happening in Curriculum for Excellence. These include Early Years, Expressive Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and English, Numeracy and Mathematics, Religious and Moral Education, Sciences, Social Studies, and Technologies.

Within these groups further GLOW groups for each of the ASG projects have been created. Groups can upload documents and engage in discussions relating to progress relating to the development of curricular frameworks.

Health and Wellbeing - Progress to date

Seven projects were completed last session linking with the draft experiences and outcomes in Health and wellbeing. A project booklet was produced and distributed to all schools. A copy of the booklet is available in schools and on GLOW (Midlothian Health and Wellbeing Group).

Appointment of Development Officers - Janet Donaldson – P7 teacher Paradykes PS (Primary) and Olwen Gardiner – PT Guidance St David’s HS (Secondary) were appointed as CfE Development Officers with specific responsibility for taking forward Health and Wellbeing and cross curricular/ interdisciplinary working and cross cutting themes.

Lasswade ASG project - Lasswade ASG has had twenty three working groups unpicking the H&WB outcomes. The ASG first looked at the Responsibility for All outcomes and linked the outcomes to current practice. The lead members of staff from each working group will meet on January 29th to ensure there is consistency, in format, approach and finalise tasks to be completed.

LTS - The Development Officers and Sue Fitchett met with lead officers in H&WB to share the work Midlothian was undertaking in H&WB. LTS were impressed with the way ASG’s were working collegiately to unpick the outcomes. LTS will produce a pod cast of some of the work completed by Lasswade ASG and will speak to pupils about their experience.

PE x 2 hours - Olwen has surveyed primary and secondary schools about their deliver of two hours PE and is working on how best to support schools to ensure all pupils experience two hours of physical education per week.

Meeting with all guidance teams - Sue Fitchett and Olwen are currently meeting with guidance teams to discuss and support their progress in delivering the H&WB outcomes.

Health coordinators meeting - A Health coordinators meeting was held on Jan 14th to support schools in planning the delivery of CfE and ensure compliance with the Health Promotion and Nutrition Act Scotland. Other agenda items included Staff Health and Wellbeing as well as the FSA ‘Eatwell Plate’ resource which will be available in February.

Let’s Talk Science and Health and Wellbeing Packs linked with CfE - Linda Sinclair (Literacy DO) and Janet are supporting schools with these resources. They are currently in schools who attended the launch in November. Packs cover: Alcohol and the Liver; Diet, Diabetes and Obesity, also Vaccines and Vaccination. They are aimed at second and third level, specifically P6-S2 and support teachers to broach more sensitive issues with their classes.

Substance Misuse Education - Janet, Sue and Olwen have met with John Cowan (Drug Awareness officer Lothian and Border Police), John Thayers (Substance Misuse Strategy coordinator) Gina Rotherford (Substance Misuse DO) and Paul Hunter MYPAS, to review the delivery of Substance Misuse Education and ensure links are made with CfE. Recommendations will be made to the Director and in due course, support materials and training packages produced.

Subject Leaders PE, H.Ec and Guidance - Subject Leaders (Secondary) with responsibility for the above areas have produced their ‘First Three Steps’ documents in engaging and delivering CfE outcomes.

ECO Schools - Janet is working to support and encourage schools on their path to Green Flag. A recent CPD saw Green Flag schools providing advice and ideas to others hoping to achieve Flag this year.

Curriculum for Excellence in the Early Years

All nursery classes are engaging with the outcomes and experiences Early Level. While a holistic approach is taken to the curriculum, using the outcomes and experiences for planning, assessment and recording is helping staff to become more familiar with and comfortable in their use.

The four capacities are now well established in staff and children’s thinking in relation to learning, as they have been referred to a lot in classroom practice and recording , for example in ‘learning stories’. The principles of personalisation and choice have always been a feature of nursery education, but a more focussed approach is now advised in the compiling of children’s folios. These illustrate a child’s progression of learning across the early level, and are shared with children staff and parents. Planning guidelines have been issued to schools and include information to support transitions. Improved consultation with children has provided opportunities for active learning and depth in learning and teaching. This has been supported by the use of floor books, mind mapping and the Learning Wall .These have been offered as CPD opportunities for staff, along with early numeracy and outdoor learning. It’s very exciting to see many nursery and primary 1 staff and children starting to work together in a variety of ways.....



Numeracy and Maths

The majority of Primary Schools in Midlothian have introduced the Midlothian Understanding Number Programme, which aims to give a clear progression in number work, drawn from the outcomes and experiences. Staff from most schools in the authority attended training on the implementation of MUNP, and some schools are employing the maths planners, also produced by teachers in the authority. A series of courses in using active learning to support maths and numeracy have been run across the authority, and attended by a number of teachers, and also the use of Interactive whiteboards. A group of teachers have drawn up guidelines which explore the many facets of maths teaching according to CfE, and these are now available on GLOW. A maths co-ordinator has been identified from each school, and these people have attended training from LTS in the teaching of maths. Currently there are sharing and update sessions for maths co-ordinators across the authority. Many schools have developed contextualised learning in the form of 'Money week' and/or other aspects of maths.

Assessment

Building the Curriculum 5, a framework for assessment, was published in January. Full details are available at <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/assessmentandachievement/index.asp>

SSA (Scottish Survey of Achievement) - First CfE SSA will take place in May / June 2010. This is a pilot numeracy survey where the new assessment materials will be trialled in schools. A Reference Group of practitioners has been established to ensure their views are reflected throughout the implementation process.

Literacy Group has also been established to consider the range and types of tasks that should be included within the SSA.

NAR – 100 nursery, primary and secondary schools have agreed to develop assessment material to populate the National Assessment Resource (NAR). A further 64 schools will also become involved over the next few months. Each of the establishments will plan assessment materials based on the experiences and outcomes from literacy, numeracy or health and wellbeing across learning in one curriculum area. The assessment evidence will be locally moderated and annotated examples of the assessments will be gathered to assist in populating the NAR. These should be available online from August 2010. Midlothian has 5 schools participating in this initiative.

GLOW – A National Assessment GLOW Group has recently been established. All members of the Assessment Community can upload examples of interesting practice, contribute to discussions and gain access to up-to-date news and documents on assessment in Scotland.

Skills

Building the Curriculum, skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, was published in October. Full details are available at <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc4/index.asp>

16+ Learning Choices - The recently launched 16+ Learning Choices , which has been devised to support young people in making the right decisions as they reach their school leaving age is now being rolled out across Scotland. Supporting young people into positive and sustained destinations is an entitlement of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence. There has to be a clear commitment to young people about the routes on offer to education, employment, training and other positive activities.

If schools are to maximise the opportunities for young people, including those in need of more choices and more chances, then the role of their partners becomes increasingly important. The skills, experiences and contacts of partners such as Skills Development Scotland, FE colleges, Community Learning and Development, other training providers, employers and the voluntary sector will be invaluable to schools as they plan rich, broad and deep learning experiences.

Midlothian through the 16+ LC and MCMC Co-ordinators will be coordinating a series of meetings with schools and supporting partners throughout the next few months. The aims of these meetings will be to provide two way information which will help support the young people and schools make an effective transition from school into positive post school provision.

MCMC Co-ordinator (More Choices More Chances) - Martin McNaughton has now taken up the above post. Based at Fairfield House, within the Schools Section, Martin's role will be to work within the 16+ LC strategy/plan to help improve the education, employment and training outcomes for young people in Midlothian

Martin will be working closely with the schools, businesses and employers , colleges and local training providers to increase the positive destinations for young people.

Martin's previous role was Principal Teacher of the PAVE programme and he has experiences of working in partnership with the above groups.

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