

Presentation to the Partnership 2030 Delegation

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Government



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Context of the Scottish education system

- 705,500 pupils, 54,000 teachers, 2,500 schools
- Pupil teacher ratio of 15.3 in primary, 12.5 in secondary and 13.2 overall
- Around 4% of children attend independent/private schools
- Scotland's 32 local authorities spent around £7.5bn on education in 2022-23
- 73% of primary school pupils achieving expected CfE levels for literacy; 80% for numeracy
- 88% of S3 pupils achieving expected CfE levels for literacy; 90% for numeracy
- 85% of school leavers achieving 1+ qualifications at SCQF L5 or better
- 58% of school leavers achieving 1+ qualifications at SCQF L6 or better
- 96% of school leavers in initial positive destinations (3 months after leaving)



Learning Directorate: In the service of Scotland's children and young people



Our mission

We work together to improve the lives of children and young people in Scotland striving to achieve excellence and equity for all children and young people:

- Excellence through raising attainment and improving outcomes: ensuring that every child and young person achieves their fullest potential in literacy and numeracy as well as the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to shape sustainable future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors;
- Achieving equity: ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

The National Improvement Framework sets out our short and long term strategy and priority activity to help achieve this mission and our aim to empower education professionals to make the best decisions to meet the needs of all children and young people. We aim to promote attendance and engagement at school and to recover and accelerate children's attainment, achievement levels, reducing the variation in outcomes achieved in different parts of the country at present.

Our business plans set out how we will achieve the Government's priorities for children and young people in a manageable and sustainable way, which develops the skills, talents and wellbeing of our colleagues. Our business plans detail how we will deliver the business of Government through our services to the public,

such as responding to correspondence and sharing information. We work together across early learning and childcare, schools and lifelong learning in the service of Scotland.

Our vision

The learning directorate puts the people we serve at the heart of everything we do. We will respect, protect, and fulfil the rights of every child and young person in order to ensure they are incorporated fully across the Scottish education system. We use creative, innovative approaches and digital thinking to strengthen our work and provide a better service. We are driven by our values, always searching for new ways to learn and improve and to enhance wellbeing. All in the service of Scotland's children and young people.

Our values

Our values guide how we act, the decisions we take and how we work together, to improve the lives of children and young people in Scotland through education.

Our values are:

- we act with integrity
- we are inclusive
- we are collaborative
- we are innovative
- we are kind

The learning directorate will continue to seek to enact these Scottish Government values, with respect, in all of our actions, including with stakeholders.



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Role of the SG Learning Directorate

- Support Ministers in setting the Education Priorities for Scotland
- Support Ministers with advice, briefings, visits etc.
- Develop policy and strategy to deliver education priorities
- Develop legislation where required to ensure priorities are met (e.g. new agencies)
- Distribute resources to support these priorities - £4.8 billion
- Engage with a wide range of stakeholders
- Monitor and report on progress - national publications
- Respond to questions and queries on all education matters addressed to ministers – communications, FOIs, PMQs



First Minister priorities

- The new First Minister, John Swinney MSP, was elected on 7 May 2024.
- The FM delivered his first Programme for Government on 4 September 2024. His four main priorities are:
 - Eradicating child poverty
 - Growing our economy
 - Tackling the climate emergency
 - Improving public services



Our vision for education in Scotland: excellence and equity

- Excellence through raising achievement and improving outcomes: ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to shape a sustainable future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.
- Achieving equity: ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.



National Improvement Framework

The key priorities of the National Improvement Framework are:

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.



Impacts of long-term policies

We continue to see positive results in Scottish education.

- Record levels of literacy and numeracy attainment at primary school level, and improvements in secondary. (ACEL data, 12 Dec)
- Record low attainment gap in literacy for primary pupils, and reductions at Secondary level between proportion of primary pupils from the most and least deprived areas achieving expected ACEL literacy levels (ACEL data, 12 Dec).
- Record high positive school leaver destinations (95.9%). The Poverty-related gap has reduced by three quarters since 2009/10.
- Scotland has the highest level of spending per pupil in the UK, and the best teacher-pupil ratio. We invested £8,500 per school pupil last year in Scotland.



Current priorities

- Improving attendance and attainment
- Improvement belonging, relationships and behaviour
- Improving curriculum and assessment
- Reforming education bodies



Current priorities: improving attendance and attainment

- £1bn Scottish Attainment Challenge programme to close the poverty related attainment gap:
 - This includes Pupil Equity Funding for headteachers, direct funding for all 32 local authorities and additional funding to support care experienced children and young people's attainment and wellbeing.
 - Targeted Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) sampling work with over 100 schools, seeking to draw out the key learning and seeing:
 - A focus on high quality learning and teaching
 - Leadership development throughout schools – and for pupils
 - Engagement with a range of partners and services to support children and young people's readiness to learn – youth work, family link work, breakfast clubs etc.
 - Listening to children and young people on what they need to learn, working with Young Scot and Child Poverty Action Group to hear directly from children and young people.
- Programme with Education Scotland to improve attendance and engagement, and to tackle persistent absence



Variation in local authority outcomes

- Education Scotland targeted support and challenge improves educational attainment and tackles unwarranted variation.
- Stretch aims in place for each local authority – set by local authorities themselves
- If realised, compared to 2016/17, we would see the poverty related attainment gaps in primary school literary and numeracy narrow by around 30% over the lifetime of the Scottish Attainment Challenge.
- Significant variation in outcomes across local authorities, which is not all poverty-related



PURPOSE OF REFORM



excellence and equity



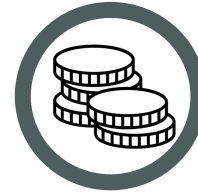
equity of access and opportunity



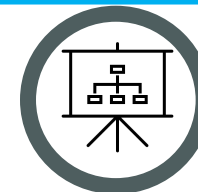
alignment to need



valued professional education and skills workforce



best value and maximum impact



sustainable national public body landscape

Underpinned by evidence from a series of independent expert reviews & Scottish Government publications



CHANGES TO SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL EDUCATION BODIES

- The Scottish Government is committed to improving the education system in Scotland to better support children and young people, teachers and practitioners.
- To facilitate that we are making changes to the education body landscape, through the Education (Scotland) Bill - introduced to the Scottish Parliament in June 2024. The Bill will:-
 - create **Qualifications Scotland**, a new qualifications body which replaces the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
 - create an independent **HM Inspectorate of Education in Scotland**, by removing the inspection function from Education Scotland.
- In addition, **Education Scotland**, Scotland's education agency, will have a revised focus on the curriculum - improving education outcomes for young people through the Curriculum for Excellence Improvement Cycle.
- We are also establishing the **Centre for Teaching Excellence**. This will primarily focus on research and evidence, building networks and space for collaboration for registered teachers across Scotland, to help further develop their teaching practice.



Supporting the profession – Centre for Teaching Excellence

- ✓ Announced in October 2023 by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, in line with evidence from reports on Scottish education that there should be increased focus on learning, teaching and assessment.
- ✓ Core purpose is on research and evidence, building networks and space for collaboration for registered teachers across Scotland, to help further develop their teaching practice.
- ✓ The Centre will work collaboratively with teachers to identify and support areas of priority, addressing recognised gap between research, evidence and teaching.
- ✓ Co-designed throughout early 2024 with teachers, unions, professional associations and national education bodies.
- ✓ Advice provided from co-production group used as basis for grant documentation.
- ✓ Scottish Education institutions who offer ITE and have education research capacity are invited to apply for grant funding to host the Centre.
- ✓ The first stage of applications opened Monday 9 September 2024, closing Monday 7 October 2024.
- ✓ Expect to announce host of the Centre by end of this year.



Education Scotland

Louise Glen - Senior Education Officer, Languages and International Education

Dr Lynne Robertson - Senior Education Officer, Social Studies and International Education

Education Scotland : established 2011



... an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government (*operates independently and impartially, whilst remaining directly accountable to Scottish Ministers for the standards of its work*) tasked with improving the quality of the country's education system through:

- leading and supporting the curriculum
- building the capacity of education providers and practitioners to improve their own performance
- providing high quality professional learning and leadership
- stimulating creativity and innovation
- providing independent evaluation on the quality of educational provision
- providing evidence-based advice to inform national policy

Education Scotland :



Inspection :

- Providing assurance and public accountability
- Promoting improvement
- Informing the development of educational policy and practice

Support :

- Professional learning (CPD), leadership and curriculum development
- Resources for learning, teaching & assessment
- Leading national networks
- Disseminating guidance on curriculum matters, based on research & evidence

Support for :

Curriculum,
Learning,
Teaching and
Assessment 5-18

Early Learning
and Childcare 0-5

Community
Learning and
Development
(CLD)

Gaelic Education

Advice and
support to
Scottish
Government

Professional
Learning and
Leadership

Embedding
Inclusion,
Wellbeing and
Equality

Delivering the
Scottish
Attainment
Challenge

Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005

- **Royal Assent 1 June 2005, Commencement 13 February 2006**
- An Act of the Scottish Parliament to establish a body ...securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language ...
- Section 9 (Guidance on Gaelic Education) amended in 2016 by Scottish Education Act 2016



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National Gaelic Language Plan

- Drawn up under the 2005 Act
- 2023-2028 Plan consultation recently completed

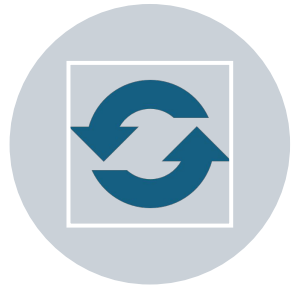


The central purpose of the Plan is to encourage and enable more people to use Gaelic more often and in a wider range of situations. The key messages, aims, priorities and new commitments contained in the Plan all contribute to achieving this increased use of Gaelic.

Principal amongst these are the following:

- Gaelic belongs to the whole of Scotland
- Promoting a positive image of Gaelic
- Increasing the learning of Gaelic; and
- Increasing the use of Gaelic.

OECD Report 2021: key recommendations



Introduce systematic cycle of Curriculum Review



Clarify position of Knowledge



Consider alternative frameworks



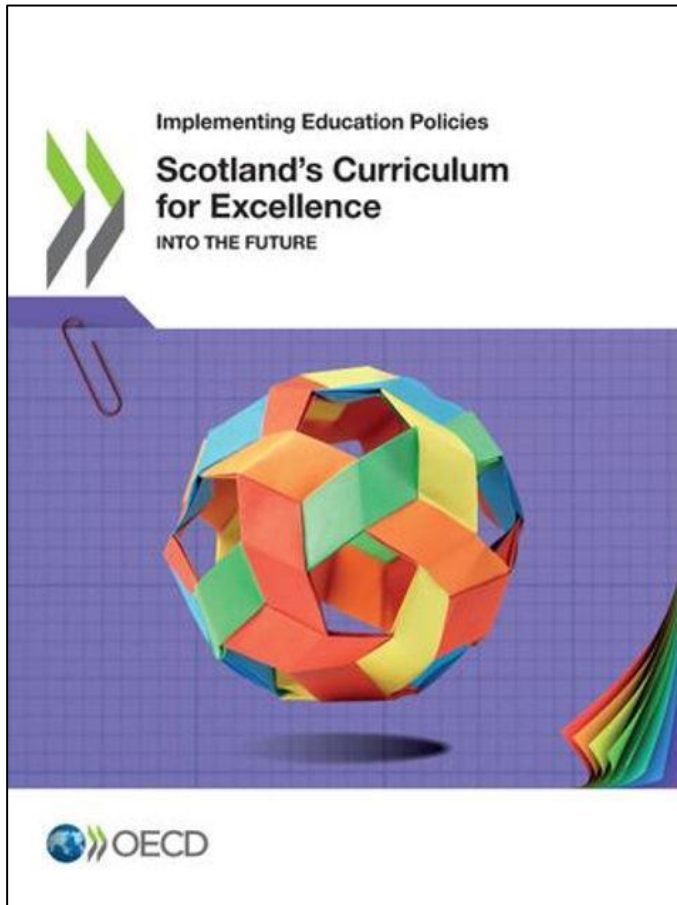
Build capacity for curriculum design and development



Scotland's Curriculum Framework
curriculum improvement cycle



scotlandscurriculum.scot



3.4 Develop a systematic approach to curriculum review: Scotland could consider establishing a **systematic curriculum review cycle** with a planned timeframe and specific review agenda, led by the specialist stand-alone agency.



Scotland's Curriculum Framework curriculum improvement cycle



1

Review evidence and feedback on how the curriculum is working in practice for children and young people from a wide range of relevant sources to identify areas for closer focus.



analysing

2

Use the findings from analysis to plan changes needed.
Work with co-design partners to develop and test relevant workstreams.



engaging and co-creating

4

Monitor and evaluate impact and effect of changes as they are being made.
Gather feedback in order to support improvement as part of the ongoing cycle.



mobilising, monitoring and evaluating

3

Work with co-design partners to build capacity and develop professional learning at different levels of the system from place-based to national.

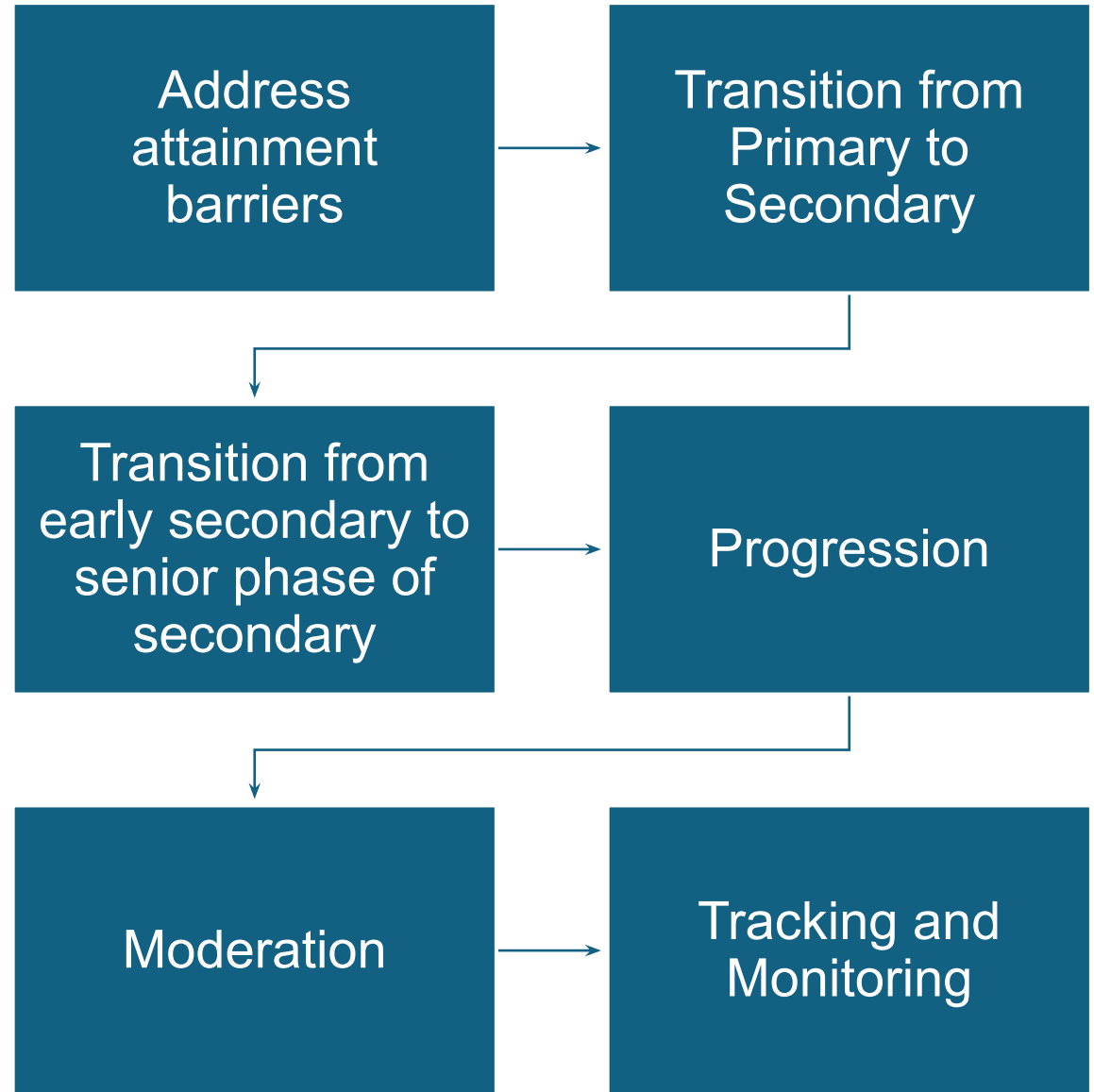


sharing, learning and adopting

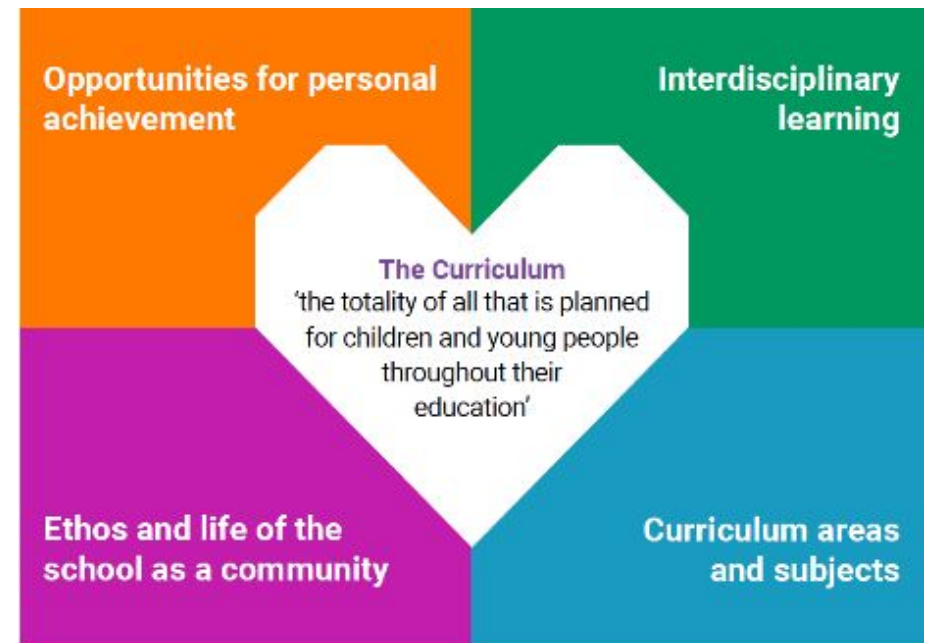
Holistic review of Scotland's Curriculum once every 10 years - e.g. a National Discussion type exercise



Key structural opportunities:



We are not
starting
from
a blank
piece
of paper



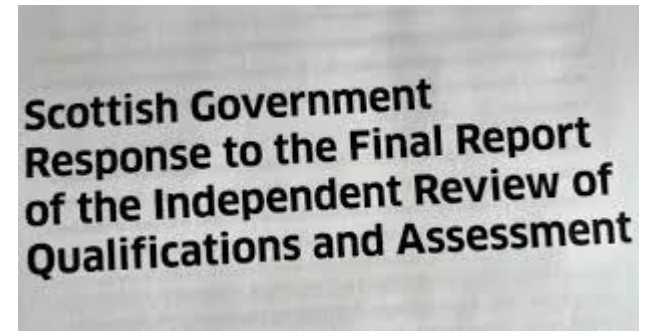
Independent review of qualifications and assessment: Professor L Hay



1. What we assess
2. How we assess
3. When we assess – 16? / continuous / moderation
4. Alignment between assessment and pedagogy
5. Vocational / Academic qualifications

Hayward Review - the response from Scottish Government

1. Changes in the approach to assessment
2. Project learning/interdisciplinary learning
3. Personal pathways and digital profile
4. Leaving certificate
5. Parity of esteem
6. Support for teachers
7. Artificial intelligence and digital education
8. Engagement



Education Scotland -all change in 2025 ...

**His Majesty's
Inspectorate
of Education**

**Education
Scotland**

