



EDUCATION LEARNING AND LEISURE COMMITTEE – 29 AUGUST 2013

CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE – SENIOR PHASE IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1.1 note ongoing developments with Curriculum for Excellence.

2 Background / Discussion

2.1 At the Education, Learning and Leisure (EL&L) Committee on 6 December 2012 (Item 2, Page 1383), elected members requested that progress reports on the implementation of the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence be brought to future EL&L Committees. This report outlines progress since the last Committee on 21 May 2013.

2.2 National Picture

There have been no national changes to developments by Education Scotland or the Scottish Government. An updated inspection advice note has been issued to schools to reinforce national expectations of the Broad General Education, assessment and senior phase elements.

Education Scotland has reported on positive progress with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. A national implementation plan for 2013-14 has been produced. It comprehensively covers areas of work for all aspects of Curriculum for Excellence and forms the basis of planning in Local Authorities. This includes ensuring that the schools should plan and implement developments that do not take valuable time away from learning and teaching, for instance through over-complicated planning or unnecessary assessment arrangements.

Secondary schools are now implementing the senior phase across Scotland. Education Scotland continues to support an evolutionary approach. It recognises that there is a strong pattern where schools are offering six or seven subjects at the start of S4.

2.3 Senior Phase

The Senior Phase of the revised curriculum is now being implemented in our secondary schools.

The service has continued to work constructively with colleagues at Education Scotland and will continue to do so over the coming year. In addition, the Senior Phase Working Group has continued to meet to discuss implementation.

Dr Alasdair Allan, (MSP), Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages visited the region to attend an event organised by local National Parent Forum representatives and also to meet with parents, young people and staff at Ellon Academy. The Director and Head of Service (Education and Staff Development) have met with local representatives of the National Parent Forum and will continue to meet and work constructively, in particular to support effective communication with parents. In addition, further approaches to engage with businesses and employers are being developed.

All young people in S4 are now undertaking the new national qualifications in the senior phase. The majority of schools are implementing revised curriculum models, with a small number of schools finalising revised plans during the course of this term for implementation in session 2014/15. It continues to be important for young people to reflect on their experiences. Head Teachers will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the senior phase with young people, staff, parents and other partners.

Throughout session 2013/14, the service will support schools' planning and next steps. This will include curriculum planning, approaches to assessment and moderation, tracking pupil progress and profiling. It will be important to continue to develop Curriculum for Excellence in a manageable way and to enable teachers to focus on learning and teaching. Furthermore, the next phase of the new national qualifications, including Higher Level, will be supported through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and identified budgets. It will be important for Head Teachers to ensure that parents are informed and advised about progress.

This session, further involvement of Community Learning and Development (CLD) in the development of Curriculum for Excellence and young people's entitlements will also be a priority.

Overall, the national expectations of progress will be implemented in Aberdeenshire, with the EL&L guidelines for schools continuing to be implemented. Schools will continue to plan their curriculum to provide appropriate flexibility for young people in line with the expectations of the service. The implementation of the Senior Phase is carefully monitored and will continue to be a focus of quality assurance in our secondary schools.

3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

- 3.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because this report provides an update on reports from previous Committees.
- 3.2 There are no staffing or financial implications directly arising as a result of this report.
- 3.3 The Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services and the Head of HR&OD have been consulted on the contents of this report and have no adverse comments.

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