# The ADES CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT & QUALIFICATIONS NETWORK

## 28 August 2020

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT UPDATE

### C-19 EDUCATION RECOVERY GROUP (CERG)

The C-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG) was formed in April 2020, comprising key stakeholders from across the childcare, early learning and education sectors to provide leadership and advice to ministers and local government leaders in developing the strategic approach to the response and recovery of the ELC and education system.

The CERG have met 21 times to date, overseen 10 workstreams, and delivered a range of practical guidance to support the full-time reopening of schools and ELC. Now that all settings are fully open the CERG will continue to meet on a weekly basis, focusing on monitoring the full time return to schools, the bedding in of the guidance, and outbreak management. This will be supported with appropriate analytical evidence, and ongoing scientific advice from the Advisory Sub-Group on Education and Children's Issues.

Further information on the CERG, including minutes of its meetings, can be found here: https://www.gov.scot/groups/covid-19-education-recovery-group/

Further information on the advisory sub-group, including advisory notes, can be found here: https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advisory-sub-group-on-education-and-childrens-issues/

**Contact:** cerg@gov.scot

## NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications team continues to support actions around the awarding of results in 2020, including working with HE and FE colleagues over entry to courses, as well as working with Professor Mark Priestley, who has agreed to conduct an independent review of the events following the cancellation of the exam diet. The remit, methodology, timeline and membership for the review have been published by the SG following agreement with Professor Priestley https://www.gov.scot/groups/rapid-review-of-national-qualifications-experience-2020/. A preliminary report from the review will be submitted to the SG by 15 September and the final report will be published by 30 September. The team are also working with the SQA on the release of the updated results on 31 August, and are using SQA data to support a new EQIA. The team is also working through a substantial volume of correspondence and FOIs, reflecting the significant and ongoing interest in this area.

The qualifications team are also working with the SQA as the consultations concerning the approach to assessment of the National Qualifications in 2021 conclude. We understand there has been significant interest and engagement with the consultations, and a need to understand the responses is being balanced with a need to provide direction for the system. Members of the group will most likely be aware that this issue will be discussed at the meeting of the CAB on 9 September.

The team are also working with the CfE review team and are in the process of agreeing a way forward with the OECD, that will provide an in-depth analysis of assessment and qualifications at the earliest opportunity, without detracting from or delaying the wider review of CfE.

**Contact:** *Nikki Milne, Learning Directorate, National Qualifications Team*
*nikki.milne@gov.scot (07881 359315)*

## REVIEW OF CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

### PROGRESS TO DATE

#### Postponement

In light of COVID-19 and the response at all levels in the system to this, it was agreed that engagement work on the CfE review should be postponed until Autumn 2020 but that work should continue on planning the review and developing the initial evidence base.

#### Initial evidence base

In collaboration with Education Scotland, SQA and ADES, an initial draft evidence base for the review was submitted to the OECD in early July. The document was developed in line with the guidelines provided by the OECD and provides a range of evidence from sources including national attainment statistics, the National Improvement Framework, HMIe Inspection Evidence, feedback from research and engagement work with practitioners, Curriculum & Assessment Board papers, evidence emerging from the Education & Skills Committee Inquiry and key policy documents. It also includes a range of examples of emerging practice at school and local authority level. This will be finalised over the course of the summer.

## NEXT STEPS

### Scottish Practitioner Forum

The first meeting of the Scottish Practitioner Forum took place yesterday (27 August). Tony McDaid, Executive Director of Education Resources for South Lanarkshire Council is Chair of the Forum. This group will ensure that current educational practitioners play a key role in the Review process and will guide the work of the Review and discuss progress and deliverables. We expect it to meet regularly throughout the engagement phase and to support the Review by:

- Engaging with the OECD team on current curriculum practice in Scotland;
- Helping shape the development of the Review;
- Meeting the OECD team during the visit and engaging in follow up discussions with the team;
- Facilitating stakeholder engagement.

### Stakeholder engagement visits

We have also started mapping stakeholder engagement which will require agreement from the OECD and Scottish Practitioner Forum.

The key milestones for this are:

- Visit 1: National Stakeholders – 28 September - 2 October 2020
- Visit 2: Schools, practitioners and learners – 2-6 November 2020
- Visit 3: Engagement on preliminary findings – early March 2021
- Publication of final report – June 2021

We are currently working on the assumption that both the September and November engagement activities will be conducted on-line, given current circumstances and travel uncertainty. However, we are mindful that a great deal of progress is being made on recovery and, subject to scientific advice at the time, we will if possible look to switch the November engagement with practitioners and learners to a face to face visit. We certainly intend for the March 2021 engagement to be done in person.

### Widening the existing remit of the OECD Review

Responding to the 2020 SQA results, the Deputy First Minister confirmed to Parliament that we would work with partners at the OECD with a view to extending the remit of the Curriculum for Excellence Review to included recommendations on how to transform the Scottish approach to assessment and qualifications. Discussions are underway with OECD.

**Contact:** *Julie Anderson,* National Co-ordinator: OECD Review of Curriculum for Excellence
*julie.anderson@gov.scot (07780492404)*

## SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE

### Attainment Scotland Fund

Our mission to reduce the poverty-related attainment gap remains central to our plans. We know lockdown has been particularly difficult for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. A return to full-time schooling in August will help to enhance the life chances of children and young people and start to reverse any damaging impacts of recent months. That is why we are continuing with our commitment to invest £182 million from the Attainment Scotland Fund in 2020/21. The Scottish Government is providing Local Authorities and Headteachers with flexibility on the use of Attainment Scotland Funding in order that they can best support our most vulnerable children.

On 1 May 2020, for the first time, Pupil Equity Funding allocations were confirmed for two years, with over £250 million committed to schools across 2020/21 and 2021/22. This will help to provide more certainty for headteachers. Schools know their learners best and, in providing Pupil Equity Funding for two years, we are giving headteachers clarity to assist them in their planning and decision making, in the short and longer term, to help raise attainment.

It was announced, on 10th June 2020, that pupils living in Scotland's most deprived communities will benefit from targeted funding of £50 million from the Attainment Scotland Fund in 2020/21 to help close the poverty-related attainment gap. Nine local councils with the highest concentrations of deprivation in Scotland, known as "Challenge Authorities", will share £43 million of investment from the Attainment Scotland Fund. In addition, a further £7 million will be shared from the Schools' Programme between 73 additional schools with the highest concentration of pupils from areas of deprivation.

On 21 August, it was announced that, for 2020/21, £11.6 million of Care Experienced Children and Young People funding Allocations is being allocated to local authorities. Projects as diverse as mentoring programmes and outdoor and play-based education were supported through the Care Experienced Children and Young People fund last year. Funding was also used to provide looked after children with laptops to support their home learning during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Local authorities will work with Chief Social Workers and Directors of Education to decide how this year's funding will be used. Care experienced young people from birth up to the age of 26 are eligible for support.

**Contact:** *Chris Gosling, Scottish Attainment Challenge Policy Unit*
*Chris.Gosling@gov.scot*

## DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE: SCOTLAND'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

### Foundation Apprenticeships

We remain committed to Foundation Apprenticeships this coming year and await feedback from SDS, at the Foundation Apprenticeship Collaboration Team meeting (28th August), on early indications of the 2020 uptake. Circa 5000 places were available.

The first phase of the Education Scotland Foundation Apprenticeship evaluation is close to completion. Although the next phase, which includes direct stakeholder engagement, will be

more challenging in light of COVID-19, it is still anticipated that the final report will be completed by Easter.

**Contact:** *Aileen Tinkler, Senior Phase Unit*
*aileen.tinkler@gov.scot*

## CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE (CfE)

Considerations relating to general curriculum and assessment policy continue to be discussed by the Curriculum and Assessment Board (CAB). At the CAB's last meeting on 26 June 2020 the board discussed a range of issues including:

- progress on planning curriculum design and delivery during the COVID-19 education recovery phase;
- assessment of national qualifications in 2020/21; and
- the Curriculum for Excellence review

The Curriculum and Assessment Board is due to meet again on 9 September 2020.

**Contact:** *Liam Cahill, Curriculum Unit*
*liam.cahill@gov.scot (0131 244 8495)*

## EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (ELC)

### COVID-19 response – Childcare

During the COVID-19 pandemic all childcare settings were closed apart from those providing critical childcare to key workers families and vulnerable children. Some childcare providers (fully outdoor settings and childminders) were able to open from 3 June and from 15 July all childcare providers could reopen if they wished to do so. Many more childcare providers have opened in August in line with their usual term-time arrangements and in line with schools reopening. Public health restrictions remain in place and published guidance for all registered childcare settings must be followed. Guidance can be found here –

- Guidance for early learning and childcare services
- Guidance for childminding services
- Guidance for out of school care services
- Guidance for fully outdoor childcare services

### The ELC Expansion

On Wednesday 1 April, The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Modification) (No. 2) Revocation Order 2020 was approved by the Scottish Parliament. The order revokes the change to the 2014 Children and Young People's Act that requires education authorities to secure 1140 hours of ELC provision for all eligible children from August 2020, rather than 600 hours. It effectively means that there will be no statutory duty to provide 1140 hours from August.

On 30 March 2020, the Minister for Children and Young People and COSLA spokesperson for Children and Young People issued a joint statement about the early learning and childcare expansion.

**Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard**

Quality is at the heart of the delivery of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) entitlement. To ensure that funded ELC entitlement is delivered in high quality settings, the sector has been working towards the introduction of Funding Follows the Child. This was to have been introduced alongside the statutory roll out of 1140 hours of funded ELC entitlement in August 2020.

Funding Follows the Child is 'provider neutral' and is underpinned by a National Standard that to be a funded provider – regardless of whether they are in the public, private or third sector, or childminders – settings will have to meet. The criteria of the National Standard focuses on what children and their families should expect from their ELC experience, irrespective of where they access their funded entitlement. In light of the delay to the statutory roll out of 1140 hours, it is no longer feasible to set a national requirement for all funded ELC providers to meet all aspects of the National Standard from August 2020.

To understand what aspects of the framework are deliverable at a national level the Scottish Government has worked with partners including COSLA, local authorities and provider representative bodies to review the Funding Follows the Child principles and National Standard criteria.

Following this exercise the Scottish Government published interim guidance on the requirements for ELC settings and local authorities regarding the delivery of Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard on 30 July. The guidance has been designed to support local authorities and providers to work in partnership to enable the delivery of as much of the National Standard criteria as possible, and to highlight where flexibility may be required. A new timetable for the full implementation of Funding Follows the Child and the underpinning National Standard will be agreed alongside the new timetable for 1140 implementation.

**Outdoor Learning**

We have funded Living Classrooms (CIC) to deliver a Virtual Nature School programme for the ELC sector. The programme is designed to help practitioners support children who cannot attend their setting during COVID-19. All practitioners who attend the course receive training on the pedagogy and practice of outdoor play. This is then put into practice with practitioners delivering nature based play sessions, via an online platform, to a group of children and families from their setting who are not currently able to attend. The VNS can support up to 2,000 practitioners and 20,000 families over 2 cohorts between 1 June and 18 September 2020. More information is available at www.virtualnatureschool.scot If you need any further information get in touch.

**Access to Childcare Fund**

On 6 July 2020 the Access to Childcare Fund opened for applications. This new £3 million fund (£1.5 million allocated for 2020-21 and £1.5 million allocated for 2021-22), administered and hosted by Children in Scotland, aims to strengthen access to school aged childcare for low income families. The Fund closed for applications on 27 July and we received over 100 applications. Successful projects will hear shortly and we will look to share learning and practise from these projects across Scotland over the course of 2020/2021.

**Sharing of best practise**

We have been working with Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate to support Childcare sector in the recovery from COVID-19 and with the reopening of childcare services. We are capturing practise, stories, quotes and videos and sharing them on social media and through other stakeholder and communication channels. Follow us on Twitter @ELCScotGov

**Contact** *Sheree McAlpine, ELC Communications and Engagement Manager*
*Sheree.mcalpine@gov.scot*

## HOME EDUCATION

A review of the current Home Education guidance is under way with a discussion paper issued to interested parties last summer.

The current published statutory guidance, last updated in 2007, requires updating to reflect the changes to education policy and legislation over the last decade. The consultation will aim to assess whether the current published statutory guidance is fit for purpose, or whether it should be amended or improved to further enhance and build on the support available.

The purpose of the guidance is to encourage local authorities and home educators to work together to develop trust, mutual respect and a positive relationship that functions in the best interests of the child. The guidance will aim to do this by clearly setting out the legislative position, and by providing advice on the roles and responsibilities of education authorities and home educators. This should help to ensure a consistent approach to home education across Scotland.

The current statutory guidance can be found here: https://www.gov.scot/publications/home-education-guidance/.

Revised guidance will be prepared for a formal consultation later this year, with the aim of publishing updated guidance in 2020.

**Contact:** *Jerry O'Connell, School Organisation*
*jerry.o'connell@gov.scot (0131 244 8261)*

## LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

On 19 June 2019 the Scottish Government launched the Learning for Sustainability Action Plan. This sets out how the Scottish Government will implement the recommendations of the Vision 2030+ report over the next 3-5 years. It has been informed by consultation with a number of relevant stakeholders and delivery partners.

The Learning for Sustainability Policy and Stakeholder Network, convened to aid delivery of the action plan, collectively supports the delivery and promotion of Learning for Sustainability. Its second meeting, held on 28 January 2020, coincided with the official launch of a literature review into the impact of Learning for Sustainability on educational outcomes.

## COP26 CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT

ADES CAQ members will be aware that Glasgow will be hosting the above summit, now scheduled to take place in November 2021. Curriculum Unit officials Craig Flunkert and Liam Cahill will be the main SG Learning Directorate policy liaison for the summit. The Scottish Government COP team is keen to ensure that links to schools, to school pupils and to Learning for Sustainability are fully realised.

The SG Team is in touch with ADES policy support to explore ideas on how to ensure that we take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the COP26 summit.

**Contact:** *Liam Cahill, Curriculum Unit*
*liam.cahill@gov.scot (0131 244 8495)*

## STEM STRATEGY

### Strategy Annual Report

The second STEM Strategy Annual Report was published on 11 March 2020 demonstrating good progress being made across the actions under the Strategy.

Due to COVID-19, the May round of governance meetings were cancelled and formal monitoring of STEM Strategy activity suspended while staff resources were diverted to COVID-19 priorities and planning for education recovery. Informal monitoring and discussions with partners has continued and indicates that a reasonable level of engagement and activity is still being progressed. We anticipate progressing with the September round of governance meetings on a virtual basis to consider the impact of COVID-19 on activity and whether any revision or redirection of actions is required moving forward.

**Contact:** *Sara Lightbody, Curriculum Unit*
*sara.lightbody@gov.scot (07554 332 291)*

## LITERACY AND NUMERACY

### PISA

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 results were published on 3 December 2019. The results showed that Scotland's scores compared to 2015 had improved in reading and were similar in maths and science. Compared to the OECD average, Scotland was above average in reading and similar to the average in maths and science. A copy of the national report can be found here: https://www.gov.scot/publications/programme-international-student-assessment-pisa-2018-highlights-scotlands-results/.

The Scottish Government will publish a national report on the PISA 2018 Global Competence assessment alongside the OECD international report in October 2020. This will look at topics such as awareness of global issues, attitudes to people from different cultures, and teaching of global issues in schools.

The PISA 2021 Field Trial is taking place in March 2020 in around 40 Secondary Schools in Scotland. We are grateful for the support that we have received in raising awareness of the Field Trial in schools.

**Contact:** *Keith Dryburgh, Learning Analysis*
*keith.dryburgh@gov.scot (0131 244 5310)*

## NUMERACY AND MATHEMATICS

The Education Scotland Numeracy and Mathematics Team have published a revised suite of professional learning and support materials that can be accessed here and a series of webinars are scheduled to provide additional opportunities to explore effective learning, teaching and assessment approaches.

Maths Week Scotland takes place this year from 28 September to 4 October 2020, more information can be found here.

**Contact:** *Laura Ross, Curriculum Unit*
*Laura.ross@gov.scot (0131 244 0616)*

## MODERN LANGUAGES LEARNING (1+2 LANGUAGE POLICY)

The Scottish Government is committed to improving language learning in the schools broad general education through its 1+2 languages policy. Since 2013, we have provided £33.2 million in development funding to local authorities to support the implementation of the policy. This includes £3 million funding for 2020-2021 which was confirmed to local authority Directors of Education in early March.

Discussions with ADES, COSLA and other members of the Languages Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) on how best to maintain the momentum for language learning in schools beyond the end of the current commitment to the policy which runs up to 2021, are on-going as part of the work of the group. The SIG last met in January. A May meeting was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19. The next meeting is expected to be held late September but is still to be confirmed.

We have provided the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee with the final report on the 2019 survey of local authorities on 1+2 implementation. Although the principles of the 2020 survey had been agreed by ADES, COSLA and the SIG, questionnaires were not sent to local authority language officers due to COVID-19 reprioritisation. We are currently looking into a revised schedule for taking this forward.

**Contact:** *Helene Cornu, Curriculum Unit*
*helene.cornu@gov.scot (07920 297999)*

## PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT / EMPOWERMENT

**"Learning Together" Action Plan on Parental Involvement and Engagement**
https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvement-parental-engagement/

Work continues to implement the three-year national action plan which was published in August 2018. It forms an important part of the national policy implementation relating to the parental engagement driver within the NIF and the Education Reform Programme.

A steering group has been set up to co-ordinate implementation of the action plan involving ADES and COSLA as well as wider partners.

Parental empowerment remains an important element within the broader school empowerment guidance.

**Strengthened statutory guidance: consultation now live:** A key development in January 2020 was the publication of refreshed statutory guidance on parental involvement for consultation, which will continue up to end April 2020. Local authorities and ADES are encouraged to respond to the consultation and to encourage schools and parent councils in their area to do likewise. The guidance will then be finalised and issued formally to local authorities in academic year 2020/21.

**Parental Involvement and Engagement Census:** Data from the first year of the new Parental Involvement and Engagement Census is now available on the Scottish Government website. A total of 24 local authorities took part in the Census. The remaining 8 authorities stated that they had already undertaken their own survey of parents/carers earlier in the 2018/19 school year.

The total number of responses received from parents/carers for each school sector were as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Primary: | 28,380 responses | 67% of the total |
| Secondary: | 13,696 responses | 32% of the total |
| Special: | 597 responses | 1% of the total |

For context, the number of pupils in each sector are provided below:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total Pupils | | |
| Primary: | 400,276 | 58% of the total |
| Secondary: | 286,152 | 41% of the total |
| Special: | 6,823 | 1% of the total |

Key learning points from the Census were as follows:

- Across many of the key measures and themes, **parents of primary school children reported higher levels of parental involvement and engagement compared to parents of secondary school children.**
- There is a **need to improve the communication from Parent Councils to Parent Forums** but there was a positive view of the impact of Parent Councils in decision making in both primary and secondary.
- **Schools are generally very good at being approachable**, responding to issues and telling parents about things.
- There is **further room for improvement in involving parents in policies and improvement planning** from the outset.
- **Awareness and confidence in family learning is still fairly low** compared to other forms of involvement or engagement.

**Local authority parental involvement and engagement strategies** will continue to play a vital role in supporting and encouraging good practice and appropriate arrangements across schools.

### School handbooks

ADES CAQ members will be aware that there have been issues with the quality of **school handbooks** and the extent to which they meet the requirements under legal regulations. Scottish Government is grateful to ADES members for their work to highlight the importance of School Handbooks to all headteachers, and ask that Directors and support staff continue to remind schools of their obligations on school handbooks.

### Pupil enrolment forms

Pupil Enrolment Forms and ensuring that a consistent set of standards for these forms remains an issue which is being highlighted by stakeholders. The Deputy First Minister has asked officials to work with local authorities to highlight good practice in pupil enrolment and to ensure that all forms being used in Scottish schools are designed in ways which the prevent more than one parent from being fully involved and engaged in their children's school and learning. We hope to work with ADES CAQ members to ensure that no parent is unintentionally excluded from school communication and decision making due to the design of enrolment forms and intend to highlight practice examples of pupil enrolment forms and best practice guidance to local authorities with the assistance of ADES CAQ shortly.

**Contact:** *David Leitch, Curriculum Unit*
*David.Leitch@gov.scot (0131 244 2977)*

## PUPIL PARTICIPATION

Work continues at national, local and school level to further embed and improve pupil/learner participation which is an important aspect of the Education Reform Programme. ADES CAQ members were previously made aware of the development of the Scottish Learner panel, a group of 30 children and young people between the ages of 3-18 working to reflect the views of learners, sharing their own (and their peers) opinions and perspectives, in order to shape school-level, local and national education policies. Scottish Government is currently finalising plans for Learner Panel 2020/21.

**Contact:** *David Leitch, Curriculum Unit*
*David.Leitch@gov.scot (0131 244 2977)*

## GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD

### What is happening now?

Scottish Government confirmed in 2019 that it will no longer pursue legislation to underpin the named person and child's plan; and, reaffirmed its commitment to getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) as Scotland's approach to helping children get the right support at the right time.

Since this announcement the priority has been to cascade key messages to give confidence and assurance to practitioners about the ongoing commitment to the GIRFEC National Practice Model to promote and support continued good practice. Scottish Government has proactively engaged with stakeholders to promote key messages around ongoing commitment to, and continuity of, GIRFEC, including a named person, a single planning process, and the child's plan. An open letter was issued on 11 October 2019 by senior leaders from education, health and social work including ADES (Maureen McKenna) and Education Scotland (Gayle Gorman).

Scottish Government is developing updated Policy and Practice Guidance to provide organisations and practitioners with confidence, clarity and practical support to deliver GIRFEC, underpinned by necessary, relevant and proportionate information sharing. Scottish Government also aims to develop guidance and information for children, young people and parents on how the GIRFEC approach can provide support and benefits, while ensuring that their rights are respected. We are proposing to develop a policy overview and separate practice guidance which covers named person, assessment of wellbeing, child's plan and information sharing. Work to develop this guidance and engage with practitioners and stakeholders was commenced, but is currently paused due to COVID-19 pressures. We have established an external steering group, which includes representation from ADES, to oversee the development of a suite of products. The group met in March 2020, and further meetings have currently been paused due to COVID-19 pressures.

The GIRFEC Leadership Programme was also paused in March 2020 due to COVID-19 pressures. Work had been taken forward in the trial sites of Argyll & Bute and Fife, and 4 regional seminars had been held and well received. Work is underway to produce an interim report to share learning, outputs and outcomes from the work of the programme to date.

A workstream within the GIRFEC Unit has also been established to improve planning and support for disabled children, young people and families, with a priority focus on transitions.

We are currently working with Association for Real Change (ARC) Scottish Transitions Forum to trial the implementation of their transitions framework, Principles of Good Transitions 3.

The GIRFEC Unit continues to host the Disabled Children and Young People's Advisory Group, in order to promote best practice and to work in partnership with existing stakeholder groups, to ensure that the voices of disabled children, young people and their families features strongly in our policy.

We also continue to review and update the Scottish Government's Supporting Disabled Children, Young People and their Families Information Website which provides families with information and advice on matters such as finance, housing, transitions, resources, support organisations, health and safety, online safety and education.

Further details are available on the Scottish Government's website

**Contact:** *Kirsty Merriman, Getting it right for every child*
*Kirsty.Merriman@gov.scot (07825 356 014)*

## DIGITAL LEARNING AND TEACHING PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy sets out a range of key activity, as well as expectations for schools and local authorities under four inter-related and essential objectives. Those are:

- Develop the skills and confidence of educators in the appropriate and effective use of digital technology to support learning and teaching
- Improve access to digital technology for all learners
- Ensure that digital technology is a central consideration in all areas of curriculum and assessment delivery
- Empower leaders of change to drive innovation and investment in digital technology for learning and teaching

The strategy sets out a number of national level activities under each objective. On-going implementation is managed by the Digital Learning and Teaching Programme at Education Scotland.

The full document can be found on the Scottish Government website at: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00505855.pdf

## DIGITAL INCLUSION

The Scottish Government is investing £25 million to support digital inclusion for disadvantaged children and young people across Scotland. Equitable funding allocations have been made to all councils. The first tranche of this work has seen almost 25,000 Chromebook devices delivered to 18 local authorities and schools in August. Councils are now in the process of ordering further equipment to meet local demand and we estimate that the funding will provide support for up to 70,000 individuals.

### National eLearning Offer

Education Scotland is a partner in the developing e-Learning National Offer. Education Scotland will strengthen its close working with e-Sgoil – a key partner in the national offer - who will widen access for learners to live, timetabled online classes and train additional teachers to contribute. The wider e-Learning National Offer will integrate and complement what is being provided by individual schools, centres, practitioners, local authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives. Education Scotland will work with those partners to support and coordinate across different subjects and different stages where there is clear evidence of a need to do so, for example, from the views of practitioners and networks. This will help to ensure that first and foremost practitioners themselves remain best placed to identify the learning, teaching and related materials for their learners, supported appropriately locally and nationally.

### Glow

Glow is Scotland's nationwide online environment for learning. Glow provides access to all learners and teachers in Scotland with free access to a range of digital tools and services that can enrich education across all areas of Curriculum for Excellence. Further details on Glow including details of the range of services available and how to gain access can be found here - https://connect.glowscotland.org.uk/.

One of the key issues during lockdown was the availability of platforms to support real time interactions between teachers and learners who are unable to be in school. As of August 2020 learners will be able to use their video when in Teams Meetings. Previously they were limited to using audio only. Video conferencing is also available via Google in Glow, if requested by the local authority.

**Contact:** *Russell Cockburn, Digital Learning and Teaching/Digital Inclusion, Workforce, Infrastructure and Reform Division, Learning Directorate*
*russell.cockburn@gov.scot (0131 244 4964)*

**Or:** *Patricia Dougan, Glow /Digital Learning and Teaching Programme/ National eLearning Offer*
patricia.dougan@educationscotland.gov.scot (*0131 244 4542)*

## GAELIC EDUCATION

The Deputy First Minister started the Faster Rate of Progress initiative in August 2018. The meeting is attended by representatives of 24 Public Authorities to discuss measures that will see a greater contribution to the development of Gaelic and with a clear aim of agreeing a number of measures which will allow improvements in support of the Gaelic.

- Recruitment and Retention of Teachers in GME;
- Digital Learning and Media;
- Economy and Labour Market;
- Community Engagement; and
- Participation, Usage and Learner Support.

These workstreams have worked collaboratively with others to identify areas of activity that could support Gaelic. There were a number of points identified and these are summarised as follows;

### Strengths

- Innovative thinking
- Collaborative planning and working
- Identification of opportunities
- Identification of challenges
- Identification and progressing of initiatives
- Reaching out to other relevant organisations and bodies

### Opportunities and Weaknesses

- Need to increase Gaelic workforce numbers
- Information sharing is essential
- Concerns regarding the levels of language skills
- Better use and focus of resource

These Public Bodies will meet again on 12 August 2020 to discuss the progress that has been made for Gaelic.

**Legislation –**

**The Gaelic Language Act Scotland (2005)** established Bòrd na Gàidhlig, with functions to promote the use of Gaelic in Scotland. Among other things Bòrd na Gàidhlig is responsible for preparing a National Gaelic Language Plan for 2018-2023 which lists a number of areas for development such as; Arts, Media and Heritage, Workplace, Community and Education, which was published on 30 March 2018. Bòrd na Gàidhlig receives funding directly from the Scottish Government and subsequently funds other Gaelic organisations and specific projects.

**The Schools Consultation Act 2010** was revised in 2014 to ensure that a procedure was in place for consultation when a Local Authority is closing or changing provision at a school within their area of operation. There is a provision in the Act that ensures Bòrd na Gàidhlig is a statutory consultee and therefore it is hoped that the view of Gaelic speakers is reflected any decision that could impact on Gaelic education.

**The Education (Scotland) Act 2016** contains Gaelic provisions. Gaelic provisions of The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 came into force on 2 February 2017.

**The main elements:**

- Give parents the right to ask their local authority to consider providing Gaelic Medium Education (GME)for their child;
- Place a duty on Local Authorities to promote and support GME; and
- Place a duty on Bòrd na Gàidhlig to produce Guidance on Gaelic Education.

The Bòrd published the Statutory Guidance which was also published on 2 February. The Guidance will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

The Statutory Guidance can be found at http://www.gaidhlig.scot/bord/education/statutory-guidance/.

To date Argyll and Bute Council, East Renfrewshire Council and North Ayrshire Council have been approached by parents under the Act and have come to different opinions. Argyll and Bute have provided Gaelic Provision at Bunessan Primary, East Renfrewshire have declined a parental request and North Ayrshire are in the process of developing provision in Kilwinning.

**National Plan for Gaelic 2018/23**

Bòrd na Gaidhlig have a duty upon them from the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 to produce a National Plan for Gaelic.

The Deputy First Minister launched the Plan on 28 March 2018.

The Scottish Government has set up a network for organisations involved in supporting Gaelic education. It is hoped that this will improve collaboration, opportunities for joint development and support available to teachers.

To help address pressures in teaching staff, the Scottish Government is working with partners to explore additional routes in to GME and GLE. We are also supporting additional language acquisition courses.

We have also met with Stakeholders around the expansion of subjects through the medium of Gaelic. The next stage of this process will be to meet with young people at all secondaries that offer Gaelic education to get their views.

**Contact:** *Stuart Pescodd, Gaelic and Scots*
*stuart.pescodd@gov.scot (0131 244 0389)*

## EDUCATION REFORM – AN EMPOWERED SCHOOL SYSTEM

On 26 June 2018, a landmark joint agreement with Scotland's local councils provided a clear and shared agenda for the empowerment of schools.

To take these reforms forward, a steering group chaired by the Chief Inspector of Education was established involving the key stakeholders responsible for delivering the joint agreement (the Scottish Government, COSLA, SOLACE, ADES, Education Scotland), with the addition of the GTCS, the Improvement Service, the Chief Social Work Adviser and a number of practising headteachers to ensure a broader children's services perspective.

Progress of the education reform programme was reviewed at the end of the 2018/19 school session and was outlined by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills in a statement to the Scottish Parliament on 25 June 2019. The progress document published as part of that statement can be found at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/empowering-schools-education-reform-progress-update/.

The work of the joint agreement steering group continues. Following publication in February this 2019 of the new Headteachers' Charter and associated school leaders guidance, a draft Self-evaluation Framework for Local Authorities and a draft strategy for evaluating the impact of the school empowerment reforms were published in July 2019. Seven additional sections of empowered system guidance were published as agreed drafts in September 2019 covering – learners; local authority/regional improvement collaboratives; Scottish Government and national organisations; Partners; Support Staff; Teachers and Practitioners; and Parents and Carers.

The draft guidance can be found at https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/an-empowered-system.

**Contact:** *Fearghal Kelly, Professional Learning and Leadership Team*
*fearghal.kelly@gov.scot (0131 244 9887)*

## WIDENING ACCESS

The ninth meeting of the Access Delivery Group scheduled to take place on 17 June was postponed with no future date yet agreed.

The Commissioner for Fair Access' published his third annual report on 5 June. The report covers three areas: progress; access to the professions and other forms of disadvantage. The report also warns that the COVID-19 pandemic, and the essential measures taken to combat it, could be a set back towards further progress. The main findings are:

- The interim target that 16 per cent of full-time first-degree Scottish domiciled entrants to higher education institutions in Scotland should come from SIMD20 areas by 2021 has effectively been met. But the rate of progress in the most recent year has been slower than the previous year.
- Establishing minimum entry requirements has been a significant achievement although it's too early to say how much difference this will make to participation rates amongst socially deprived communities.
- Excellent work continues to be done on outreach and bridging programmes by individual institutions and SFC supported regional groups and special projects.
- Progress on articulation continues to be slow despite the work of the National Articulation Forum.
- The impact of COVID-19 is likely to exacerbate the impact of inequalities that already exist between school pupils, potential higher education applicants and students in terms of access to material and financial resources.
- The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) should remain the core metric for assessing progress but free school meals and care experience should also be used. The full report can be found on the Scottish Government website (https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-access-higher-education-progress-challenges/).

**Contact:** *Karen Frew, HE Access Team*
*karen.frew@gov.scot (07816333298)*

## SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL

The Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) Outcome Agreements (OA) with colleges and universities underpin the expected impact and outcomes from the grant investment which those institutions receive from the Scottish Government (SG). They are key to having a clear line of sight between SG investment, SG priorities, SFC decisions and outcomes for learners and the economy. We look to the SFC to continue to develop and improve their use to set ambitious targets and create a robust basis for assessing the impact of Government's investment.

The SFC have been working closely with colleges and universities to understand the full impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the future of institutions and how and what they deliver, providing reassurance and guidance on the steps to take to complete the OA cycle for AY2020-21. The SFC are working to design a process for a comprehensive review of OAs which will impact from AY2021-22.

**Contact:** *Sharon Hamilton, SFC Sponsor Team*
*Sharon.Hamilton@gov.scot (0300 244 1334)*

## YOUTH JUSTICE AND CHILDREN'S HEARINGS

## ADVOCACY IN THE CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SYSTEM

Section 122 of the Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011

Children and young people attending Children's Hearings across Scotland are now able to access a service which will allow their voices to be heard, and have their views taken into consideration when decisions are made about their lives.

The advocacy service is for children and young people aged from 5 years up to the age 18 who are, or are about to be referred to the Children's Hearings System or who are already subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order, to support them to express their views and wishes.

A portfolio of advocacy provider organisations ensure quality advocacy provision across all of Scotland. Crucial partnership working with an Expert Reference Group of key partner organisations and stakeholders developed the provision. The Programme for Government to introduce the provision by Spring 2020 has been met in terms of the provision being in place for March 2020, however the impact of COVID-19 has resulted in a move to virtual Hearings, which has restricted the ability of advocacy workers to meet with, and support as many children and young people as we would have liked. Communications and engagement with stakeholders, practitioners and partner organisations is well developed and publicity materials at every stage of contact with children and young people is under way.

**Contact** *:* *Pam Semple, Youth Justice and Children's Hearings Unit*
*Pamela.semple@gov.scot (0131 244 0740)*

## AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY (SCOTLAND) ACT (2019)

Scottish Government officials continue to work with operational partners to develop guidance and processes for the use of police powers in the Act. This includes the development of a list of places of safety, guidance for use of the power to take a child under 12 to a place of safety, guidance and process for the investigative interview, and development of the role of child interview rights practitioner.

Part 2 of the Act (provisions relating to disclosure of convictions and other information) is due to be commenced at end-November 2020.

**Contact** *:* *Lucy Smith, Youth Justice and Children's Hearings Unit*
*lucy.smith3@gov.scot (0131 244 6437)*