Scotland’s Curriculum Review: an holistic approach

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The World is Changing Fast

Society
- Inequality increasing
- Demography
- Life expectancy
- Single households
- Civic participation
- Family

Employment
- Skill demand changing
- Portability
- Employability
- Digital competence
- Fluid job market
- Lifelong learning

Globalisation
- Interdependence
- Competition
- Offshoring
- Reshoring
- Migration
- Scarcity
- Climate

Resources
- Scarcity
- Efficiency
- Accountability

Technological developments
Nature/pace/lag/digital divide

Education
- New and growing expectations
- Instrumental pressure? Education is for work?
- Education for democratic participation / citizenship?
- Uncertainty and lifelong learning
- New conceptions of knowledge?
- Creativity, teamworking, problem-solving?
- Deprivation and educational achievement?
- Better learning or different learning?
- Anywhere, anytime learning? Hand-held connectivity?
- Social networking
- Internationalisation – PISA/PIRLS/TIMMS
INITIAL CAUTIONS

• Heath Robinson Effect

• Sabre-tooth Effect

• Vasa Effect

• Ducks-in-a row Effect
VASA EFFECT
DUCKS IN A ROW
SO WE NEED TO

• Be clear about purposes – what really matters
• Avoid unnecessary complexity
• Recognise obsolescence
• Beware overload
• Create alignment
• Purposes matter as a unifier, guide, winnower, and test of success
• Be clear about the principles of design
• Agility and flexibility – strategic approach to change/time and impatience
• Avoid false dichotomies – equity and excellence/breadth and depth
• Relevance locally, nationally and forward focused
• Beware romantic conservatism
• Identify and manage risk sensibly
• Ducks in a row – what/how/assess/scaffold/evaluate
• Beware perverse incentives and effects
• Capacity matters – ends and means
Scottish Curriculum Reform
Origins and Background

• No statutory curriculum but high degree of consistency
• Tradition, guidance, examinations, inspection, culture, size etc
• Secondary entitlement guidelines from 1980s - modes
• 5-14 Curriculum – entitlement, areas, outcomes, levels
• Scottish Parliament 1999 – legislative competence
• Great Debate 2002
• Curriculum for Excellence 2004 –
• Engagement and development
• Revised national exams introduced 2013
Smaller classes at crucial stages
Review of school curriculum to suit 21st century needs and to reduce substantially the current overload
Improve literacy and numeracy levels
Increase pupil choice - a well-balanced core around which pupils will have expanded access to choices such as vocational training
Simplified assessment - reduce the amount of time spent by pupils and teachers on tests and exams
Improved information for parents

Curriculum For Excellence
Features of the Scottish curriculum

Definition:

‘all that we plan for children and young people though their education’ including

the ethos and life of the school as a community
opportunities for wider achievement
interdisciplinary learning, as well as
subject-based learning

Scope:

for all children and young people aged 3 to 18
Broad, twenty-first century education for all
Based on four capacities
Outcomes-based general education between 3 and 15
Flexible Senior Phase building from new curriculum
Deep learning and higher standards, particularly in STEM subjects
Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the curriculum
Engaging, imaginative and purposeful pedagogy
Assess what we profess – teacher assessment and wider achievement

AND

A new paradigm of governance and change
A revitalised and better connected teaching profession
Constructive accountability
One aligned agenda
Purposes of the curriculum: four ‘capacities’

To enable all young people to become:

**successful learners**
- with
  - 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

**confident individuals**
- with
  - self respect
  - a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
  - secure values and beliefs
  - ambition
- and able to
  - 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

**responsible citizens**
- with
  - 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

**effective contributors**
- with
  - an enterprising attitude
  - resilience
  - self-reliance
- and able to
  - communicate in different ways and in different settings
  - work in partnership and in teams
  - take the initiative and lead
  - apply critical thinking in new contexts
  - create and develop
  - solve problems
Curriculum Areas

- Expressive arts
- Languages
- Religious and moral education
- Social studies
- Health and wellbeing
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- Technologies
The title 'experiences and outcomes' recognises the importance of the quality and nature of the learning experience in developing attributes and capabilities and in achieving active engagement, motivation and depth of learning. An outcome represents what is to be achieved. Taken as a whole, the experiences and outcomes embody the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities.

They apply to the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people, including the ethos and life of the school and interdisciplinary studies as well as learning within curriculum areas and subjects. This means that they apply beyond timetabled classes and into, for example, enterprise and health activities and special events.
The Curriculum for Excellence Learner Journey: Children and Young People aged 3–18

THE FOUR CAPACITIES: SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS - CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS - RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS - EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION

As learners move through the year groups, they will progress at their own pace through the Curriculum Levels

Learning at the First Curriculum Level
Learning at the Second Curriculum Level
Learning at the Third Curriculum Level
Learning at the Fourth Curriculum Level

Experiences and Outcomes in all Curricular Levels and areas

Personalisation and choice
The Responsibility of All: Health & Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy
Eight curricular areas: Expressive Arts, Languages, Health & Wellbeing, Mathematics, Religious & Moral Education, Science, Social Studies, Technologies

Senior Phase

Study towards qualifications and awards

National 1 to National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher, Skills for Work, Progression Awards and wider achievement awards such as John Muir, Duke of Edinburgh, Youth Achievement
Learning may take place in school, college or both
Learners can leave from S4 onwards with qualifications and awards

Subject choices for qualifications
Issues:

Specificity  Open-endedness
Experiences  Outcomes
Autonomy  Risk
Choice  Entitlement
Ambition  Capacity
Teaching subjects  Teaching children
External assessment  Teacher assessment
Work back  Work forward
Assessment

Assessment for school and national reporting

Assessment for learning and individual reporting
Promoters

Drivers

Motivated teachers supported by guidance and resources

Leadership Accountability Inspection

Assessment, reporting and qualifications

Support from parents, young people, employers, universities, colleges
Teachers and change

- 85% resistant to change what works for them
- 10% willing to change to be more efficient
- 5% willing to try new innovations

Cuban and Tyack in Hattie ‘Visible Learning’ 2009
Scottish Teacher Education Reform

New degrees – practicum reconceptualised

Career-long professional learning – ITE/Induction

New Standards Framework from GTCS

More relevant, collegiate and challenging professional development

Professional review and update

Masters level profession – Scottish Masters Framework

Scottish College of Educational Leadership (SCEL)

Strong partnership approach - University engagement

(Donaldson, Teaching Scotland’s Future 2010)
Lessons from Scottish Education Reform?

- Ownership, responsibility and engagement
- Agility and flexibility
- Maintain purposes as driver
- Curriculum led
- Aspiration and capacity
- Alignment – curriculum, assessment, capacity and accountability
- Culture change and phasing
The curriculum should be:

• **authentic**: rooted in agreed values and culture and aligned with a clear set of stated purposes;
• **evidence-based**: drawing on the best of existing local practice and from elsewhere and on sound research;
• **responsive**: relevant to the needs of today (individual, local and national) but also equipping all young people with the knowledge, skills and dispositions for future challenges as lifelong learners
• **inclusive**: easily understood by all, encompassing an entitlement to high quality education for every child and young person and taking account of their views in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and those of parents and wider society;
• **ambitious**: embodying high expectations and setting no artificial limits on achievement and challenge for each individual child and young person;
• **empowering**: developing competencies which will allow young people to engage confidently with the challenges of their future lives;
• **unified**: enabling continuity and flow with components which combine and build progressively;
• **engaging**: encouraging enjoyment from learning and satisfaction in mastering challenging subject matter;
• **based on subsidiarity**: commanding the confidence of all, while encouraging appropriate ownership and decision-making by those closest to the learning and teaching process;
• **manageable**: recognising the implications for and supported by appropriate assessment and accountability arrangements
Thank You

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