

Report

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Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 November 2011
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Curriculum for Excellence - Progress Update
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to provide an update:-
- ◆ on the national position in relation to the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence; and
 - ◆ on the progress being made in South Lanarkshire in implementing Curriculum for Excellence.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-
- (1) that the progress towards implementation of Curriculum for Excellence in South Lanarkshire be noted; and
 - (2) that the actions taken to further support the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. Curriculum for Excellence is a programme of change that sets out the values, purposes and principles that underpin the new curriculum in schools for pupils aged 3 to 18 years. The aim is to put in place a curriculum that meets the challenges of the 21st century, will improve standards of learning and teaching and raise achievement for all learners.
- 3.2. There has been significant progress, both nationally and locally, over the last 3 years towards full implementation. Experiences and outcomes now shape learning and teaching in all schools; interdisciplinary learning is the norm in primary schools and is becoming more common in the secondary sector; there is an increasing focus on achievement as well as attainment; new assessment and certification arrangements are being developed and will be in use by 2013, with first certification in August 2014.
- 3.3. Formal implementation of Curriculum for Excellence began in August 2010 and will roll out to all stages of the secondary sector by 2015.

4. Progress to date

- 4.1. All establishments have a detailed plan outlining their approach to implementation. This establishment based plan reflects the latest implementation timeline produced by Education Resources and published in February 2011 that identifies particular areas where progress is required and sets target dates for progress with implementation.

- 4.2. Detailed improvement planning guidance to support areas of development has been made available to all establishments. Head Teachers have the opportunity to discuss this advice, and their establishment implementation plans, with the designated quality link officer.
- 4.3. In May 2011, following discussions with quality link officers, all head teachers provided Education Resources with an update on the actions that had been taken to implement Curriculum for Excellence in their establishment. The responses to this audit were generally positive, with almost all establishments indicating that they had made progress in addressing key aspects of the programme. This view is supported by recent inspections which comment positively on the progress made in establishments.
- 4.4. New National Qualifications are on track to be introduced to pupils in S4 from 2013. Currently, the Scottish Qualifications Authority is seeking feedback from teachers and other stakeholders on Unit Specifications for National 4 and National 5 Qualifications. The final versions of all National Qualification information will be published in April 2012 which will allow establishments 14 months to adapt current courses for pupils starting these qualifications in August 2013.
- 4.5. Last session a new provisional reporting format for primary schools was developed and used in all establishments. This report reflected the purposes of Curriculum for Excellence. It was well received by parents. A revised reporting format was also available for secondary schools which allowed schools to report on progress using the language of Curriculum for Excellence.
- 4.6. A major component of the new approach to assessment involves the introduction of a quality assurance system that uses moderation as the means of developing an understanding of national standards and ensuring that these are applied in all schools. Schools are now fully involved in a range of moderation activity within establishments, between establishments and also across learning communities. Initial support was provided in relation to the introduction of moderation which was designed to help all staff understand and share the standards required at particular levels. Education Resources developed resources for use in all establishments and led a full day in-service to support key personnel who then rolled out activities in their own establishments.

5. Future Developments

- 5.1. An important element of Curriculum for Excellence is the recognition of achievement as well as attainment. The Scottish Government issued guidance indicating that local authorities had to develop a profile to recognise achievement for primary 7 pupils by June 2012 and for S3 pupils by June 2013. Education Resources is currently developing guidelines for establishments that describe various possible structures and the likely content of a profile that will allow primary schools to recognise the full range of a pupil's achievements both within and beyond the classroom. This will be available for use in March 2012. The group is also considering the development of a profile for use in the secondary sector.
- 5.2. Work is currently being undertaken to develop further approaches to moderation in all establishments. The Government has allocated £232,000 in 2011/2012 to support the development of moderation networks and training for designated staff. Education Resources has allocated £140,000 to establishments and learning communities to facilitate moderation work. The remainder has been retained centrally to allow development officers to support moderation in learning

communities and to participate in the quality assurance of the moderation process that is taking place in establishments.

- 5.3. The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence has had a significant impact on the format used to report pupil progress to parents. The interim report was developed last session and was used successfully by primary schools and in the early years of secondary school. A working group has now further developed this reporting format and made it available through SEEMIS. This will allow staff to complete reports electronically and in the secondary sector to provide parents with information relating to target setting for each pupil. SEEMIS reporting also allows teachers to complete reports from home.
- 5.4. Currently, the major priority for those working in the secondary sector is developing an approach to the senior phase of schooling that builds on the work done to provide a broad general education from S1-S3. Wide ranging discussions have been taking place with head teachers and a representative group has now been established, comprising a head teacher from each area and several other staff from Education Resources. The remit of the group is to develop finalised guidance on the issues involved in developing a senior phase curriculum and timetable. The group is tasked to produce clear guidance for establishments by April 2012 to allow plans to be fully developed for full implementation in August 2013.
- 5.5. A key challenge of delivering Curriculum for Excellence is ensuring effective tracking and monitoring of experiences and outcomes for all children across stages and between sectors. Establishments are currently doing this manually, using resources available through Education Scotland (formerly Learning Teaching Scotland). Education Resources recognises the benefits of introducing an electronic tracking model and is working in collaboration with North Lanarkshire Council to introduce an on-line tool that allows staff to track and monitor the achievement of particular experiences and outcomes. This approach is currently being piloted in North Lanarkshire Council, using the SEEMIS platform, and it is anticipated that this will be fully endorsed by SEEMIS over the next 6 months. Training on the use of this resource will begin for key development officers within Education Resources by January 2012 and the roll out of training to establishments will begin in May 2012 for staged implementation from August 2012.
- 5.6. The Scottish Government has indicated that it intends to closely monitor the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence over the next few years. The Management Board asked all local authorities and other stakeholders to contribute to this monitoring activity by 29 October 2011 in order that a report on progress can be published in January 2012. In formulating a response to this request, Education Resources took account of the views of heads of establishment and quality link officers through the audit materials as well as considering the views of Heads of Education Area and the perspectives of a group of head teachers who were interviewed specifically about progress with implementation in their establishment.
- 5.7. It is currently too early to be definitive in terms of assessing the overall impact of Curriculum for Excellence. However, at a general level, heads of establishment report a clearer focus on outcomes, more purposeful activities being used to develop literacy and numeracy, more opportunities for young people to demonstrate that they are successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. The implementation of Curriculum for Excellence requires the provision of opportunities for staff to undertake training activities that support their development. Education Resources is ensuring that CPD needs are identified and that support is targeted in response to these needs.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. £232,000 has been provided by the Scottish Government to support assessment and moderation. This has been appropriately distributed between establishments, learning communities and the Quality Improvement Service which all have responsibilities to deliver effective moderation.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. It is important that target dates for the development and implementation of Course Specifications which have been set by SQA are met and overall progress on the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence will be monitored through the agreed South Lanarkshire timeline as part of Education Resources' approach to risk management.
- 8.2. Curriculum for Excellence addresses and takes cognisance of the Council's sustainability strategy with young people actively engaged in eco, community and environmental projects.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the South Lanarkshire Council, Curriculum for Excellence position statement and timeline referred to in paragraph 4.1 of this report. The assessment is that the proposals do not have any adverse impact on any part of the community covered by the equalities legislation or on community relations.
- 9.2. Consultation continues to take place with schools, parent/carers during various development stages as part of the on-going commitment to engage with stakeholders on the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.

Larry Forde
Executive Director (Education Resources)

2 November 2011

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Improvement Themes/Values

- Raise education attainment for all
- Improve the lives of vulnerable children, young people and adults
- Increase involvement in lifelong learning

Previous References

- Education Resources Committee – 31 August 2010

List of Background Papers

- Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 5 a framework for assessment
- Curriculum for Excellence – SLC Position Statement (August 2009)
- Curriculum for Excellence – Implementation Timeline (SLC February 2011)

- Progress Report to Scottish Government on the Delivery of Curriculum for Excellence (SLC October 2011)

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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