

Curriculum for Excellence and Community Learning and Development – Improving Life Chances

What is Curriculum for Excellence?

Curriculum for Excellence is transforming the way education is delivered for all 3-18 year olds – in nursery, primary, secondary, at college, workplace or communities, by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for young people aged 3-18. It takes a fresh approach to what, how and where young people learn. It aims to raise standards, improve knowledge and understanding and develop skills, closing the gap between the lowest and highest performers. Ultimately it aims to nurture young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens: the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. The transformation in education extends beyond schools and includes all those working with children and young people including colleges, universities, youth workers and the voluntary sector.

Delivering Curriculum for Excellence depends on all contributors to children and young people's learning, including parents and young people themselves; it is not solely the responsibility of schools.

Community Learning and Development and Curriculum for Excellence

Community Learning and Development (CLD) is a way of working with and supporting communities and links effectively with Curriculum for Excellence, in particular in relation to literacy, numeracy and health and well-being. It also links across other areas such as the creative arts. It offers a range of experiences and opportunities that are tailored to the individual needs of the learner, enabling people to develop the confidence to tackle challenges in their lives and move forward.

CLD embraces the principles of Curriculum for Excellence and focuses on developing the four capacities for everyone involved in learning, whatever their age and whenever their learning is taking place. It is central to the success of Curriculum for Excellence because of the unique ways in which it works with and supports communities and learners.

Learning for life

Learning takes place in a wide variety of settings. Learning for children, young people and adults can lead to qualifications and can also enhance skills and experiences without necessarily leading to formal qualifications. CLD practitioners have a key role in ensuring that all learning reflects the principles of Curriculum for Excellence and that there is recognition for the learners and their achievements.

CLD partners have, over many years, contributed to learning for young people, adults and communities. CLD practitioners contribute to learning within schools, particularly in relation to young people with more challenging behaviours. Schools have built increasingly strong relationships with community providers to extend and enhance learning experiences for young people. Family learning is a strong feature of work involving parents and children in many primary schools. Community groups and voluntary organisations help to deliver key outcomes for communities through their work with schools.

In the senior phase (which applies to young people of approximately 15-18 years) CLD providers and schools have an opportunity to work together to deliver programmes of learning for young people, wherever that learning takes place.

Community learning and development activities can play a critical role in:

- delivering skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- promoting and recognising achievement
- supporting young people into sustained and positive destinations
- contributing to curriculum areas including health and well-being, literacy and personal support
- supporting transitions
- providing opportunities for young people's engagement in decision making
- providing opportunities for young people to volunteer and make an effective contribution to their communities

www.LTScotland.org.uk/commstoolkit

Here are some examples of how CLD providers are helping to contribute to the aims of Curriculum for Excellence:

- Schools are increasingly building strong partnerships with CLD to extend and enhance opportunities for learning and achievement in and out of school as part of the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. The Zone Initiative in East Ayrshire is an excellent example of how CLD works with the local school to benefit the local community. To see a case study of the project, visit www.ltscotland.org.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/
- Curriculum for Excellence recognises the importance of parents as partners in their children's learning. CLD activities can make a significant difference to the health and well-being of parents. As parental confidence increases so too can their capacity to relate positively to their children, offering the ability to support them in their learning. The Welcome Point project in Shetland is managed by CLD and provides a range of learning opportunities for the island's migrant community including family learning. To see a case study of the project, visit www.ltscotland.org.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/
- Highly specialised youth work targeted at young people who are not engaging successfully with mainstream school. This specialised work relates specifically to Curriculum for Excellence. Projects like the X-plore project, which is managed by The Dundee City CLD Team, is making a real impact on the lives of the young people who take part. To see a case study of the project, visit www.ltscotland.org.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/

Delivery of Curriculum for Excellence through partnership working

Partnership working is at the heart of Curriculum for Excellence. Partners are expected to work together to plan and deliver a coherent experience for learners.

Schools, community learning and development, colleges and their partners should build a flexible system that offers personalisation and choice, providing clear and supported pathways for young people to make a successful transition and continue learning throughout the senior phase. Involving all partners at the planning stage strengthens the partnership and ensures the right opportunities and support are in place to meet the needs of a diverse range of learners.

All young people benefit from different approaches to learning and opportunities to access learning in a range of different contexts. CLD provides a range of opportunities which promote achievement, increase participation in community life and volunteering, increase awareness of diversity and inclusion, enhance employability, reduce exclusions from school, enhance learning, improve relationships and enhance the voice of young people in community planning and decision making.

Schools and other learning centres may have existing formal or informal partnership arrangements with CLD, however local authorities are responsible for co-ordinating CLD partnerships and work closely with third sector bodies, colleges, schools and others, for example the NHS.

A range of exciting practice is developing and the potential now exists to build further on the work already done, playing a key part in Curriculum for Excellence delivering major positive change and in Scotland becoming a dynamic learning society.

Web links

Learning and Teaching Scotland www.ltscotland.org.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment

Curriculum for Excellence Communications Toolkit (for practitioners) www.LTScotland.org.uk/commstoolkit

HM Inspectorate of Education www.hmie.gov.uk

CoSLA Joint Statement on CLD www.ltscotland.org.uk/resources/c/genericresource_tcm4649853.asp

Working and Learning Together www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/02/18793/32169

Delivering Change www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1046/0061097.pdf

CLD Standards Council for Scotland www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk

Scottish Government www.scotland.gov.uk/cfeinaction
Community Learning and Development Managers Scotland www.cldms.org.uk

Young Scot www.youngscot.org/channels/education/?ss=1599&s=42&sr=64

Scottish Qualifications Authority www.sqa.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence



Curriculum for Excellence is a major change to the education system in Scotland that aims to raise standards of learning and teaching for all 3-18-year-olds, wherever they learn. In this publication we sometimes use the term 'parents' for short – we mean all parents and carers. When we talk about 'learners' we mean all young people learning in school, college, community learning, training, special schools, extended support and secure settings.