

SCOTTISH EDUCATION COUNCIL

UPDATE FROM THE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT BOARD

1. The Curriculum and Assessment Board met for the second time on 8 March at Blackhall Primary School in Edinburgh. The agenda included a revisiting of the fundamental principles, entitlements and values of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), measures to drive improvements in literacy and numeracy, Senior Phase curriculum design and delivery, communications and engagement on National 4 and CAB's engagement with learners. A brief summary of each is provided below.
2. CfE's Fundamental Principles, Entitlements and Values: At the first CAB meeting there emerged a general consensus that an important early step for the Board was to revisit the fundamentals of CfE in order to determine where the Board's focus should be. After revisiting the educational outcomes that CfE was intended to achieve for children and young people and using available evidence to assess how effectively CfE has achieved those outcomes, the Board concluded that priorities for its attention should be:
 - reviewing the **narrative** on CfE, to ensure clarity of understanding across practitioners, learners, parents and wider partners, as also noted by the OECD in 2015 (and it was agreed a short-life sub group would be formed and tasked with progressing this work swiftly);
 - **learner progression** and learner pathways within and between CfE levels; and
 - **transitions** at all points in the system (ELC to primary, primary to secondary, BGE to Senior Phase, Senior Phase to positive destinations).
3. Literacy and Numeracy: CAB considered the broad range of activity and interventions already being taken to deliver improvements in literacy and numeracy and looked at a range of possible 'next steps'. It was agreed that the main focus had to be on capacity building within the system through measures to strengthen CLPL, initial teacher education and the support provided for probationer teachers. The importance of ensuring emphasis on the craft of learning, teaching and assessment in literacy and numeracy, based on a sound pedagogical framework was highlighted.
4. Senior Phase Curriculum: The CAB focused on the design and delivery of the senior phase curriculum, and agreed actions to ensure that schools and their partners are able to maximise the flexibility of the senior phase curriculum and meet the needs of all learners.
5. National 4 Communications and Engagement: At the first CAB meeting in December, it was agreed that there was a need to further enhance the evidence base around the perceived credibility issues with National 4, and to use this intelligence to undertake specific communications and engagement to improve its currency amongst learners, teachers, parents, employers and others. The second meeting agreed the plan for this work, to be taken forward in two stages: further evidence to be gathered from stakeholders by Scottish

Government, working with SQA and Education Scotland, from February to June; with enhanced comms and engagement from June onwards.

6. Learner Engagement: CAB agreed a set of guiding principles for ensuring it had meaningful engagement with learners and were updated on the work underway to establish a Scottish Learner Panel that will influence and contribute to the work of CAB. As part of the meeting, CAB received a presentation from pupils at Blackhall Primary School and two former pupils, now 5th year students at the Royal High School, participated in the meeting itself.

**Curriculum and Assessment Board Secretariat
March 2018**