

# DELIVERING EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY IN SCOTTISH EDUCATION

A DELIVERY PLAN FOR SCOTLAND



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# **DELIVERING EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY IN SCOTTISH EDUCATION**

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## FOREWORD BY THE DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER AND CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS



It is a great privilege to be appointed the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. As the First Minister has made clear, education is the defining mission of this Government. There can be no greater responsibility than working to improve the life chances of our children.

There are many strengths in Scottish education, reflecting the hard work and commitment of teachers, parents and young people across Scotland. This was confirmed by the recent OECD review, *Improving Schools in Scotland: An OECD Perspective*. Scotland has been bold, innovative and collaborative in its approach.

However, there is further important work to do, to deliver both excellence and equity. I am committed to raising attainment and making demonstrable progress in closing

the gap in attainment between our least and most disadvantaged young people over the lifetime of this Parliament.

This Delivery Plan outlines the steps the Scottish Government will take to achieve these improvements, building on the work contained in the National Improvement Framework which was published in January, and addresses the recommendations of the OECD review. It requires action from us all, across all the drivers of improvement outlined in the Framework. This action will be coupled with reforms to deliver a transformational expansion in early learning and childcare, fairer funding for our schools and empowered teachers who have the space and time to deliver. I am committed to ensuring unnecessary and unintended workload is removed from the classroom, so teachers have the freedom to teach.

This plan will provide clarity and focus to all of our work on improving Scottish education and take strong and decisive action where it is needed.

The recent Education Summit highlighted the need to work together, beyond the school gates and across Scotland as a whole, to deliver this national endeavour. I will continue to engage widely on this plan over the summer and early autumn. These conversations will also inform a review of school governance, to be announced alongside the Programme for Government in September.

We will build on Scotland's strengths, so powerfully highlighted by the OECD, and make further progress. We will be guided by what the evidence is telling us, drawing on the advice of a newly-established International Council of Education Advisors. I will work hard to build consensus and partnership, but I intend to move forward with clarity, with purpose and with pace. Our children deserve nothing less.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Swinney', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

**John Swinney**  
Deputy First Minister and  
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

June 2016

## Introduction

Scotland has a good education system.

We have great nurseries, schools, colleges and universities across the length and breadth of the country.

Visit a school or educational establishment in Scotland today and you will see the energy, enthusiasm and confidence of our young people and the strong commitment and professionalism of teachers and staff.

**“Learners are enthusiastic and motivated, teachers are engaged and professional, and system leaders are highly committed.”**

Improving Schools in Scotland: An OECD Perspective, 2015

This delivery plan builds on an impressive track record of improvements and reforms which have been driven forward across education and children’s services in recent years, including:

- Our investment in high-quality **Early Learning and Childcare**, including the recent expansion to 600 hours of funded provision and extending the entitlement to those 2 year olds who stand to benefit the most.
- National implementation of the **Getting it Right for Every Child** approach to improving outcomes for children and young people.
- A more coherent, flexible and child-focused curriculum which gives teachers more professional autonomy over how they teach and sets higher standards for achievement than ever before, through the development and implementation of **Curriculum for Excellence**.
- New schools and improvements to existing schools through **Scotland’s Schools for the Future** programme.
- A new **National Youth Work Strategy** for Scotland through which a wide range of partners in the public and third sector are contributing to improving outcomes for young people.
- Improving the breadth of opportunities available to children and young people to experience high-quality, work-related learning and develop their skills for work throughout, and beyond, their education, through implementation of **Developing the Young Workforce** – our youth employment strategy.
- Ensuring we have a highly professional, skilled workforce, who can exploit fully the potential of the curriculum, including through the implementation of **Teaching Scotland’s Future** and, more recently, the **Early Learning and Childcare and Out of School Care Workforce Review**.
- A targeted approach to closing the attainment gap, through the **Scottish Attainment Challenge**.

But we also face significant challenges.

A child's circumstances – where they live, their family's circumstances – still have a disproportionate impact on their chances of success. For example, despite some progress over the last decade, a pupil from the 20 per cent least deprived areas of Scotland is almost twice as likely as one from the 20 per cent most deprived areas to leave school with a qualification at SCQF 6 or better (Higher equivalent or above).

As the OECD review highlighted, current assessment arrangements do not provide sufficiently robust information across the system to support policy and improvement. We must move from a *culture* of judgement to a *system* of judgement. And while teachers have worked very hard to introduce Curriculum for Excellence successfully, it has brought with it unnecessary – and unintended – workload demands and pressures. If we are to focus on improving outcomes for our children, it is vital these issues are dealt with. This will require strong and decisive action by Education Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, local authorities and schools.

The National Improvement Framework, published in January, sets out how we will provide the information we need to drive improvement in the system. Crucially, it sets out a clear **vision** for Scottish Education:

- **Excellence through raising attainment:** ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and
- **Achieving equity:** ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

This Government was elected to deliver a range of reforms to help us transform education in Scotland to ensure it delivers excellence and equity for all. This plan sets out our programme for delivery.

Its focus is on action around three core aims – to close the attainment gap, to ensure we have a curriculum that delivers, and to empower our teachers, schools and communities to deliver. We will make progress on these priorities by addressing the 6 drivers of the National Improvement Framework, which are so critical to delivery.

## A Relentless Focus on Closing the Attainment Gap

### Our ambition

We are committed to making demonstrable progress in closing the attainment gap during the lifetime of this Parliament and to substantially eliminate it in the next decade. This will involve the full efforts of all those involved in education – from early learning, through school and in our colleges, universities and beyond. However, our efforts must also extend beyond the classroom and across our communities and wider public services if we are to succeed in our ambition.

In February 2015 the First Minister announced the Scottish Attainment Challenge, with associated investment of £100 million over 4 years to provide targeted support to schools and local authorities with the highest concentrations of primary school pupils living in multiple deprivation to close the attainment gap. Reflecting on the first year of the Challenge, we have learned that:

- Schools in all parts of Scotland now have a renewed focus on closing the gap, helping children to overcome the effects of poverty on their progress and attainment. The teaching profession in Scotland has united behind the Challenge.
- Improving leadership, learning and teaching and engagement with families and communities will be essential to close the gap.
- A range of strategies in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing developed or extended through the Challenge are improving children's progress.
- We need to intervene early – there is a vocabulary gap of up to 18 months on entry to P1 between the most and least disadvantaged children.
- We need more data on children's progress in primary school and early secondary to 'know the gap in order to close the gap' and pinpoint where more intensive improvement is required.

A range of actions, including expanding the reach, scope and investment of the Scottish Attainment Challenge is required if we are to make the progress in closing the attainment gap we want to see. These actions, alongside our work across the Further Education and Higher Education sectors, including implementation of the Developing the Young Workforce strategy and progressing the recommendations from the Commission on Widening Access, will support our ambition to ensure fair access for school-leavers to all post-school opportunities.

### What we will do to deliver

- We will almost double the hours of early learning and childcare to 1,140 per year by **2020**. We will ensure that nurseries in the most disadvantaged areas in Scotland benefit from an additional teacher or degree qualified early learning and childcare professional from **August 2018**.
- We will deliver the new Universal Pathway for Health Visitors including the new Child Health Reviews to support early intervention and prevention in those crucial early years. This work is already underway. With **immediate effect**, and within the parameters of legislation, we will examine arrangements for information sharing to ensure that appropriate data on children's progress is shared between professionals working with children from the early years onwards.
- We will work with schools to focus the curriculum to meet children's needs fully and close the gap in early years settings and primary schools. For example, we will share and develop ways in which the vocabulary gap can be closed through a literacy-rich curriculum in P1-3 from **August 2016**. We will expect all schools to have clear strategies in place across the curriculum in **school session 2016-17** to reduce the gap in their context.

- We will use new data that will become available through the National Improvement Framework from **October 2016** to identify the attainment gap in P1, P4, P7 and S3 and at school and local authority level – and agree targets to reduce this. We will focus our collective efforts where they are needed most. School inspection and self-evaluation will focus more directly on closing the gap from **September 2016**.
- We will extend the funding available through the Scottish Attainment Challenge to £750 million over the **next 5 years**. Funding for the areas with the greatest intensity of children living in poverty – our Challenge Authorities and Schools – will be doubled to £50 million per year and will include secondary schools. Renfrewshire and East Ayrshire will join the Challenge Authorities programme from **August 2016**.
- From **financial year 2017-18** the additional £100 million per annum that will be raised each year from our Council Tax reforms will be allocated directly to schools. The allocation will be based on the numbers of children in primary school and S1-3 in secondary school who meet the eligibility criteria for free school meals. We will launch a new framework of fully evidenced and proven educational interventions and strategies to improve attainment in **December 2016**. This Framework will inform the decisions schools make to spend the additional funds and monitor the impact on improving individual children's progress. This new funding will reach around 95 per cent of schools in Scotland.
- We will extend the reach and impact of the Attainment Advisors, through regional alignment to promote collaboration and joint delivery across local authorities from **October 2016**. Using the data available from the Framework, the Attainment Advisor team will work directly with schools where they can make the biggest difference to accelerate efforts to close the gap. Educational leadership of the programme will be extended through a new Chief Advisor role.
- We will work with identified communities within the Challenge authorities to develop and implement a programme of family learning by **December 2017**. They will be developed in partnership with parents' organisations to ensure that parents are fully involved in their children's learning.
- We will accelerate efforts to share what is working to close the gap through the new National Improvement Hub and through a new network of empowered leaders from **August 2016**. We will develop a space on the hub to showcase what is working across Scotland updated regularly by the Attainment Advisors.
- We will continue to extend the use of research to underpin the interventions and strategies used in classrooms to close the gap as part of our developing research strategy. This will include the creation of a national forum for academics and practitioners to come together to ensure that cutting-edge evidence is being implemented in practice. This will be informed by the International Council of Education Advisors. Our approach to research will also include working with all 32 local authorities to develop local action research based projects on closing the gap led by educational psychologists from **August 2016**.
- We will develop a range of national programmes and further extend the reach and impact of the Scottish Attainment Challenge from **August 2016**. This will focus on areas such as staffing supply and capacity, professional learning and community learning and development.
- The Read Write Count programme already operates nationally for P1-3 across Scotland. We will extend the Read Write Count programme into P4-7 in areas of high deprivation from **April 2017**. This will link to the First Minister's Reading Challenge and will include a strong focus on outreach and family learning programmes.

- We are of course aware that there are wider issues which can affect children's attainment and equality of outcomes. We are intent on delivering equity for all children and we will consider the impact of issues such as looked after status, additional support needs and English as an additional language. We will continue to address wider issues such as gender to ensure that we are creating the conditions for all children and young people in Scotland to flourish and thrive.
- In recognition of the huge effect that advances in digital technology are having on our economy and society, we will work with partners to ensure that the curriculum and infrastructure are in place and our teachers equipped to deliver the digital literacy and skills that our young people and economy need, now and in the future. Our Digital Learning and teaching Strategy will be published in **September 2016**.
- We have accepted the Commission on Widening Access's proposed national and institutional targets to ensure that by 2030, students from the 20 per cent most deprived areas make up 20 per cent of Higher Education entrants.
- We will appoint an independent Commissioner for Fair Access to act as a powerful voice for our most disadvantaged learners by **September 2016**. The Commissioner's role will be to drive and scrutinise progress, provide strategic leadership and challenge all parts of the system to do more and to push harder.

## A Curriculum which Delivers for Children and Teachers

### Our ambition

The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) – Scotland’s approach to learning and teaching – has been a very positive development in our schools. Scotland’s children and young people are now much more confident, resilient and motivated to learn. The OECD has applauded the boldness of our approach, and called on us to maintain the breadth of learning in CfE.

The ultimate goal of education is that each and every child develops a broad range of skills and attributes and gains the qualifications to have choices and be successful in life. If we are to achieve this goal, our teachers need to be clear about what is expected of them, and have the time and space to do their job. This requires us to take action on a number of fronts.

We need to make the whole CfE framework much clearer and simpler. Too many documents and too much ‘guidance’ have accumulated as CfE has been implemented. We need clear, simple statements that give teachers confidence about what CfE does, and does not, expect of them.

Within that, we need to be clearer and more specific about how children’s progress is assessed. This is crucial to making sure children are making the right progress in their learning – not least so they are ready to meet the demands of qualifications in the ‘senior phase’ of school.

We need to de-clutter the curriculum. We need to make sure there is enough time in the week to allow teachers to teach the things that matter most at each stage of a child’s learning.

Finally, we need to strip away anything that creates unnecessary workload for teachers and learners. The ‘Tackling Bureaucracy’ report of 2013 was agreed and well-evidenced, but has still to be fully implemented by all partners. Our new national qualifications have been introduced successfully, but the practical demands they place on teachers and young people have created problems, which must be addressed.

It is imperative that all partners involved take the action needed to free teachers and staff to do what they do best – provide high-quality, interesting and engaging learning, to raise attainment, close the gap, and give all our young people the best chance of success in life. The Government will act to ensure this is the case. This action will be taken whilst preserving the great strength of a broad general education.

### What we will do to deliver

- The Deputy First Minister has instructed Education Scotland to prepare and publish a clear and concise statement of the basic framework within which teachers teach. This statement will be published in time for the new school session in **August 2016**. This will set out very clearly the role of the various elements of CfE, and the use teachers should make of them – highlighting the significant flexibility CfE offers to teachers.
- This statement will make clear, for example, that the ‘Experiences and Outcomes’ of CfE should not be used for assessment – that is the exclusive role of the ‘Significant Aspects of Learning’. Rather, teachers should use the Experiences and Outcomes as a guide, to help them plan holistically for a broad range of learning experiences over the course of the year.

- Crucially, this statement will make clear that teachers do not need to cover each and every Experience and Outcome individually, or in a ‘tick-box’ way. It will also make clear that primary teachers do not need to cover every curriculum area every week – another factor that can lead to the curriculum feeling ‘cluttered’.
- The statement will also set out a very clear priority for primary schools – to ensure above all else every child achieves the best possible progress in the key areas of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and to maintain our commitment to PE.
- Also by **August 2016**, Education Scotland will provide clear, practical advice on assessing achievement in literacy and numeracy – making clear the expected benchmarks for literacy and numeracy, for each level of CfE.
- By the **end of 2016**, Education Scotland will provide similar advice on the achievement of curriculum levels in every curriculum area across the Broad General Education. This will allow teachers to make sure their learners are on track, with a firmer, clearer understanding of their next steps. It will also ensure that learners are developing the range of skills required to progress smoothly through the broad general education, and on into the senior phase.
- Alongside this work, we will significantly streamline the current range of guidance and related material on CfE, based on feedback from teachers. By **January 2017**, a new, much simpler set of key resources will be available on the new National Improvement Hub.
- From **September 2016**, the SQA will also consult stakeholders on how best to streamline its course documentation for the national qualifications.
- Based on ideas contributed by teacher associations and other partners in education, we will formulate a more intense new programme of reducing workload in schools. This programme will be directly overseen by the Deputy First Minister. Prior to agreement and implementation, the programme will be tested with a new panel of class teachers to ensure it has the potential to be effective. This will seek to ensure, for example, that local processes for planning, monitoring and tracking are as streamlined and efficient as possible. It will also give examples of how workload can be reduced by using digital approaches.
- At the request of the Deputy First Minister, HM Inspectors will carry out a focused review of the demands placed on schools by each local authority in relation to CfE. This review will report with recommendations by **mid-September 2016**.
- We will ensure that the SQA, Education Scotland, schools and local authorities deliver the commitments made in the first report of the Assessment and National Qualifications Group. We will also ensure that the SQA delivers the actions to simplify and streamline qualifications set out in the 51 ‘subject reports’ published in May 2016. The Deputy First Minister will meet the Chief Examiner for Scotland on a monthly basis to ensure that the SQA continues to take all actions it can to reduce workload.
- We will also reconvene the Assessment and National Qualifications Group, chaired by the Deputy First Minister, to further explore what more could be done to reduce workload associated with the new qualifications, as quickly as possible.
- We will also work with the Assessment and National Qualifications Group to consult on the design of assessment within the qualifications system -involving teachers, parents, young people, employers, national partners and other stakeholders.

- We will take action to help young people develop the skills and knowledge they will need in the workplace in particular in the areas of STEM, digital skills and languages. Through the Developing the Young Workforce programme we will provide more opportunities for young people to experience high-quality work-related learning, and to gain vocational qualifications. We will increase the percentage of school leavers attaining vocational qualifications at SCQF level 5 and above by the **end of academic year 2020-21** and take a tailored approach to young people who most need support, increasing positive destinations from school for looked after children by 4 percentage points per annum, resulting in parity by **2021**.
- Building on Curriculum for Excellence and Developing the Young Workforce, we will review the learning journey for all 16-24 year olds to ensure that education provision for young people is as effective and efficient as possible and provides more stepping stones for those needing most support. The review will consider the current offer across school, college, university and training from a learner perspective. The aim is to further improve the post 16 system to ensure that learners are supported to make well-informed choices, have equal opportunities to access the right options for them, and can move through the system and towards employment easily, with no unnecessary duplication of learning. The review will begin in **September 2016**.

## Empowering our Teachers, Headteachers, Practitioners, Parents Communities and Children and Young People

### Our ambition

We are committed to a publicly owned and run, comprehensive education system in Scotland – a mutual system, not a market system – which supports every child to achieve. High-performing education systems across the world are characterised by high levels of professional autonomy and collaboration. It is important therefore that decisions for individual children are made as close to those children as possible and we must see more decisions about the life of schools driven by the schools themselves.

We know that the quality of teaching and school leadership are the most important in-school factors in a child's outcomes which is why we will do everything we can to support our headteachers and teachers and to empower them. Our focus will be to provide them with the responsibilities and resources to make the best decisions for our children and young people. At the same time we will ensure that the overall funding for education is transparent and protected.

We also know that when parents are fully involved in their child's learning, and in the life and work of their local school, that we see better outcomes for children, parents and schools. That is why we will work to ensure that parents are supported to play an active role in their child's learning, and that parents and communities play a bigger role in the day-to-day lives of their schools. Parents and teachers in particular will become key decision makers. Research by the Children and Young People's Commissioner has also shown that the level of participation of children and young people within schools can have a significant impact on attainment, so empowerment matters for them too.

### What we will do to deliver

- We will publish the results of the Financial Review of the Early Learning and Childcare sector in **September 2016**. This review will explore expenditure on funded childcare and thereby enable us to better predict the cost implications of different delivery models as we move towards the forthcoming expansion.
- We will introduce a new training and induction programme for childminders. This will be developed with the Care Inspectorate, and will support the development of skills and training for all childminders working in the Early Learning and Childcare sector by **September 2017**.
- We will launch a Governance Review alongside the Programme for Government in **September 2016**. This review will examine the system changes required to deliver our commitments to empower schools, decentralise management and the support through the encouragement of school clusters and creation of new educational regions. The reforms are designed to ensure that parents, colleges, universities and local employers can better support efforts to raise attainment and ensure that young people progress into positive destinations. Our clear objective is to devolve decision making and funding to schools and communities. This process will run in parallel with the review of the impact of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 by the National Parent Forum of Scotland.
- We know that parental engagement is crucial to attainment and achievement but further evidence is required about what works and why. The information gathered from the National Improvement Framework, the National Parent Forum of Scotland's (NPFS) review of the 2006 Act and through the Governance Review will be used to develop a National Improvement Plan on Parental and Family Engagement. This will be developed in partnership with the National Parent Engagement Steering Group and other key stakeholder groups.

- We will begin developing proposals for a fair and transparent national funding formula immediately and will listen to the views of teachers, parents, system leaders, local authorities and communities through the Governance Review. Building on the responses to this review we will consult on proposals for a funding formula in **March 2017**. This will build on the approach being adopted for the Scottish Attainment Challenge, where £100 million will go direct to headteachers from **April 2017**.
- We are committed to simplifying and clarifying the system for teachers, parents and learners and will ensure strong national standards and a clear evaluation framework which supports and empowers schools. Where progress can be made without legislative change we will do so. We will implement any proposals arising from the Governance and Parental Involvement reviews at the earliest opportunity. In particular we will support the development and expansion of school clusters and increased regional working **throughout 2017-18**.
- We will support the continuing growth of Gaelic Medium Education in schools by implementing new rights for parents and by providing more resources for teachers and learners, by **February 2017**.
- Currently, legal responsibilities for delivering education and raising standards in our schools sit largely with education authorities, not with the schools and teachers that teach our children and young people every day. We will address this imbalance by extending to individual schools responsibilities that currently sit with local authorities. We will introduce a new Education Bill in the second year of this Parliament. Building on the responses to the Governance and Parental Involvement reviews, a consultation on a Bill will be held **early in 2017**.
- We will work with teachers, headteachers, parents, and communities throughout to ensure that every support is provided to them to build capacity and ensure that these changes support a reduction in bureaucracy and workload.

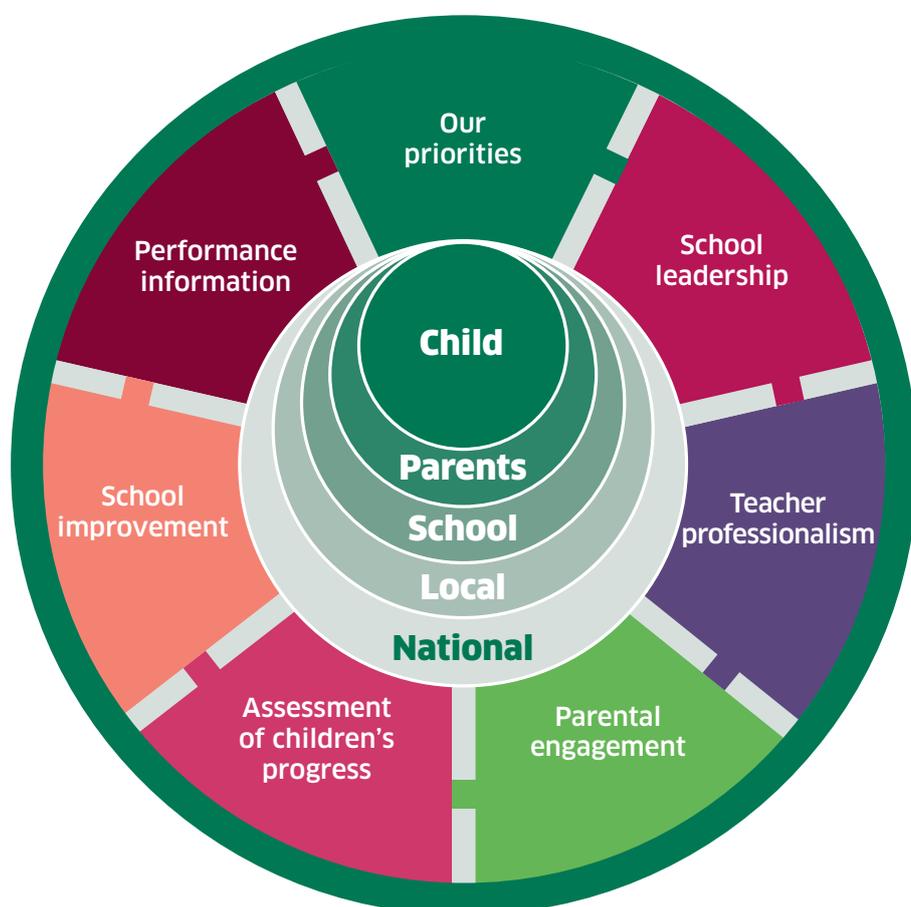
## A CLEAR FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT

The next section of the delivery plan provides key actions we will take to continue implementation of the National Improvement Framework. The Framework provides focus and clarity on the main areas for improvement in Scottish education, and sets out the evidence and data we need to support that improvement. It is part of a revolution in transparency on the performance of schools and local authorities. The current priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework are:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

The action we will take is summarised under each of the six key drivers for improvement set out within the Framework:

- School leadership
- Teacher professionalism
- Parental engagement
- Assessment of children's progress
- School improvement
- Performance information



## School Leadership



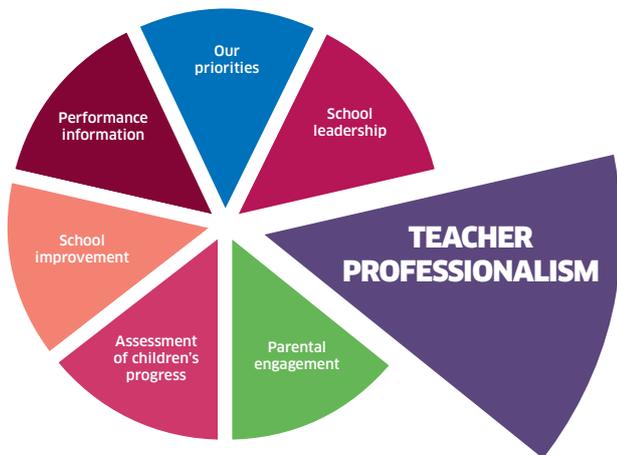
Leadership is recognised as one of the most important aspects of the success of any school. Leaders at all levels who are empowered, and who empower others to take ownership of their own learning, have a strong track record of ensuring the highest quality of learning and teaching. This in turn helps to ensure that all children achieve the best possible outcomes.

Highly effective leadership is key in ensuring the highest possible standards and expectations are shared across schools to achieve excellence and equity for all. We want to empower the leaders at all levels in our schools. We believe good leaders are best placed to improve outcomes for our children and can drive further improvement by collaborating across boundaries.

### What we will do to deliver

- We will continue to support the Scottish College for Educational Leadership in their vital role in supporting leadership development for all education practitioners across Scotland, with an ambitious new package of support in place by **March 2017** for aspiring, new and experienced headteachers. This will include professional learning opportunities to strengthen and expand school leadership skills, an international exchange programme for school leaders, and the development of a network of local champions to support headteachers to draw on local expertise and work in partnership with the wider community.
- As part of the Governance Review in **September 2016**, we will consider leadership throughout the system, building on existing shared headship models and supporting the development of school clusters and regional models. This will support a strengthened middle and the importance of collaborative leadership.
- We will support up to 160 aspiring headteachers each year to go through the 'Into Headship' programme, with an investment of £1.5 million over the **next 3 years** (up to 2018-19).
- 'We will make holding the Standard for Headship mandatory for all new Headteachers by **August 2019** and will consult by the **end of 2016** on the legislation that will achieve this.
- We will continue to support teachers' professional learning through further investment of close to £1 million in Masters level learning during **2016-17**. We will also carry out a research project to be completed by **December 2017** to evaluate the impact of this substantial investment.

## Teacher Professionalism



The quality of teaching is a key factor in improving children's learning and the outcomes that they achieve. In Scotland we have a highly professional, graduate teaching workforce with high professional standards, which are set by the General Teaching Council for Scotland. We want to continue to improve the professionalism of our teachers and the quality and impact of their professional learning.

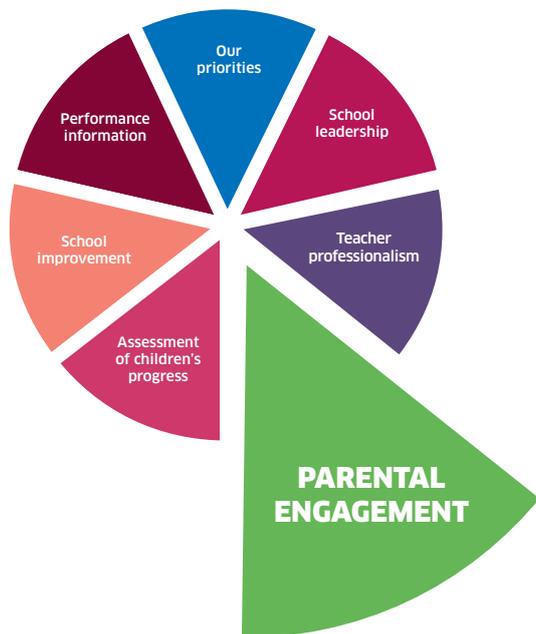
There is a strong link between teachers' professional skills and competences and the quality of children's learning experiences. Ensuring the highest professional standards for all teachers in Scotland will help to ensure the highest standards and expectations for all children. We want all new teachers to develop as enquiring professionals who are experts in teaching literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, including early childhood development where appropriate. This is critical to ensure the strongest possible progression in learning for all children.

### What we will do to deliver

- We remain committed to ensuring that we have the right number of teachers, with the right skills, in the right places to educate our young people. All local authorities in Scotland have been allocated an appropriate share of £88 million funding provided to meet the agreement to maintain teacher numbers and support probationer teachers.
- We will work with Initial Teacher Education providers and other key partners to address issues of staffing supply and capacity at a national level in order to support the Scottish Attainment Challenge. We will introduce new and innovative routes into teaching and promote the teaching profession by:
  - Addressing the ongoing issue of teacher recruitment in the North East through the Transition Training Fund, in partnership with the University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. Through investment of £400,000 in **2016-17** we will provide guaranteed employment for up to 20 individuals from the oil and gas sector while they train as teachers in STEM subjects.
  - Developing Scottish Masters programme for Initial Teacher Education in **2016-17** covering primary and secondary allowing a clear focus on transition between primary and secondary.
  - Extending support for Masters in Early Years to provide leadership in this sector.
  - Providing development funding to the University of the Highlands and Islands to build on its model of delivering of Initial Teacher Education through local colleges.
  - Expanding existing distance learning provision models of Initial Teacher Education.

- Developing a new route which is focused on getting high-quality graduates into priority areas and subjects. This will be in place by **2017-18**. This will build on the model developed in partnership with the University of Aberdeen to attract career changers to the profession.
- Maintaining our strong focus on Gaelic teacher supply with promotional campaigns, innovative courses and new routes into Gaelic teaching.
- We need to encourage more people into early learning and childcare and teaching, particularly those groups under-represented in teaching (men and minority ethnic communities) as well as in particular subjects (STEM) and geographical areas. We will extend our recruitment campaign, building on the positive work of the current campaign, to address these issues to be in place by **end 2016**.
- We will work with Education Scotland and the General Teaching Council for Scotland to undertake a review of Initial Teacher Education programmes to report by **April 2017**, to ensure that they provide appropriate detail on content for literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, data literacy and equality across both primary and secondary sectors.
- We will work with the General Teaching Council for Scotland to provide more support to teachers on equality issues through Career Long Professional Learning to be in place by **August 2017**.
- We will work with Education Scotland and the General Teaching Council for Scotland to explore options to bring further flexibility into registration for teachers who have qualified outside Scotland by **March 2017**, while ensuring that our high level of teacher professional standards are maintained.
- We will support the Scottish Catholic Education Service to widen access to the Catholic Teacher Certificate for teaching students studying at the Universities of Edinburgh and Strathclyde, this will be in place for the **2016-17** academic year.

## Parental Engagement



Parents and families are the most important and influential people in children and young people's lives, and are central to achieving our aims of raising attainment for all and closing the attainment gap. We want to ensure that parents and families are equal partners in their child's education and learning at home, at school, and in their community.

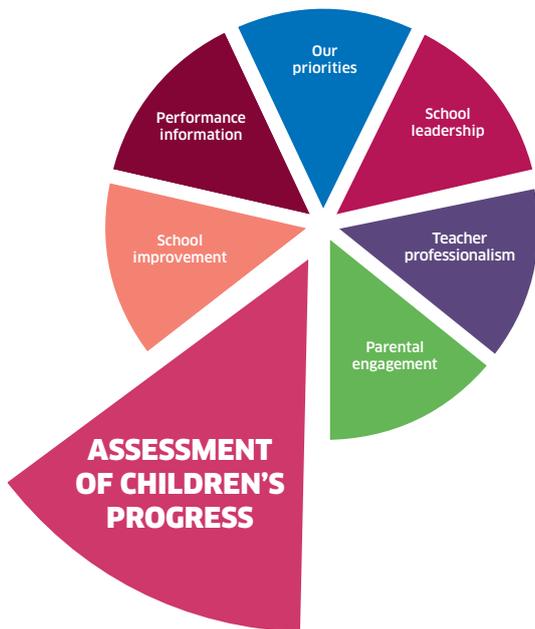
We will support all schools to further improve parental engagement and develop family learning programmes that support children's progress and achievement. This also means empowering parents and enabling them to be active participants and effective contributors to the life of the school and to school improvement.

### What we will do to deliver

- We will publish an in-depth review looking at the available evidence on family learning programmes. The review, which will involve key partners, will look at what works and why and will publish its conclusions in **December 2016**. This will be supported by a 'What works' study of the international evidence which will draw out world leading practice.
- We will lead a revolution in transparency on school performance through further improvements to ParentZone - the national online resource for parents by **August 2018**. We will publish additional clear information on each school on a range of key measures, such as attendance rates, children's progress and grades from school inspection.
- As highlighted earlier, we will provide support for learning communities in the Scottish Attainment Challenge to develop progressive family learning programmes by the end of **2017**. We will provide support for all learning communities to roll out this approach by the **end of 2018**.
- Parents want to be informed about their children's progress and achievements, what they need to learn next and how they, as parents, can best support them. We will develop guidance on reporting to parents by **January 2017** in order to support better reporting.
- We will work with the National Parent Forum of Scotland and other parent organisations to develop a comprehensive parent communication plan for the National Improvement Framework by **September 2016**.

- We will continue to deliver our national campaigns and gifting programmes to parents and families across Scotland – Bookbug, PlayTalkRead and Read, Write, Count – providing a universal offer supporting parents to help kick start their children’s learning from an early age. As mentioned earlier, we will extend the Read, Write, Count Programme into P4-7 in areas of high deprivation from **April 2017**. In addition, the first round of Read, Write, Count gift bags will be gifted to families of P2 and P3 children in **November 2016**.
- We will work with local authorities to understand the nature of parental demand for early learning and childcare in their areas, so that provision of additional free hours can be sufficiently flexible to respond to need. This will also include the development of opportunities for further integration with additional hours and out-of-school care by **June 2017**.
- We will promote the opportunities afforded by the development of extended early learning and childcare to provide family and employability support for parents by **June 2017**.

## Assessment of Children's Progress

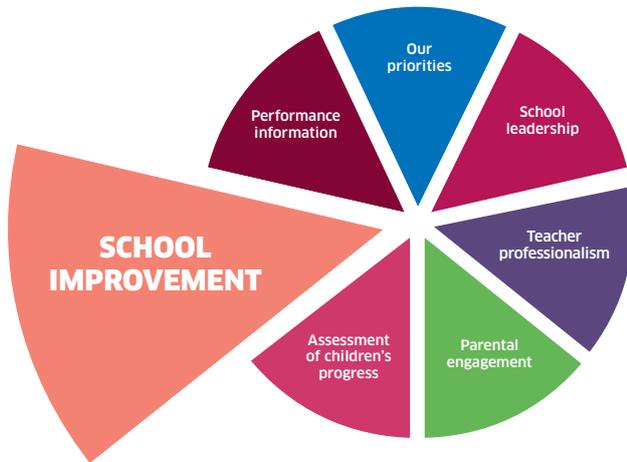


We need more robust and consistent evidence on what children learn and achieve throughout their education to help us raise attainment and close the gap. Building on the range of data available on the senior phase, we need a greater range of consistent assessment of children's progress through the broad general education. Collecting data on children's progress will help practitioners, early learning and childcare settings and schools to evaluate how well children are achieving and which practices and interventions are having an impact.

### What we will do to deliver

- We will continue to gather a wide range of data that will tell us how well our children and young people are doing, for example SQA exam data, employability and leaver destination data and health and wellbeing data.
- From **August 2016**, we will collect teacher professional judgement data on an annual basis on whether individual children have achieved the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy by the end of P1, P4, P7 and S3.
- From **October 2016** we will provide further support for local and national quality assurance and moderation of teacher judgement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.
- From **December 2016 until May 2017** we will carry out implementation testing of new standardised assessment materials in schools across Scotland. The results will inform teacher judgement of children's achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels.
- From **August 2017** the new standardised assessments will be used by all schools.
- In **December 2016** we will publish plans for gathering information about the health and wellbeing of children and young people, including the data gathered at early years stages.
- In **December 2016** we will publish appropriate performance indicators on employability skills and positive school leaver destinations for inclusion in the National Improvement Framework.
- In **August 2018**, we will make available national standardised assessments for children in Gaelic Medium Education.

## School Improvement

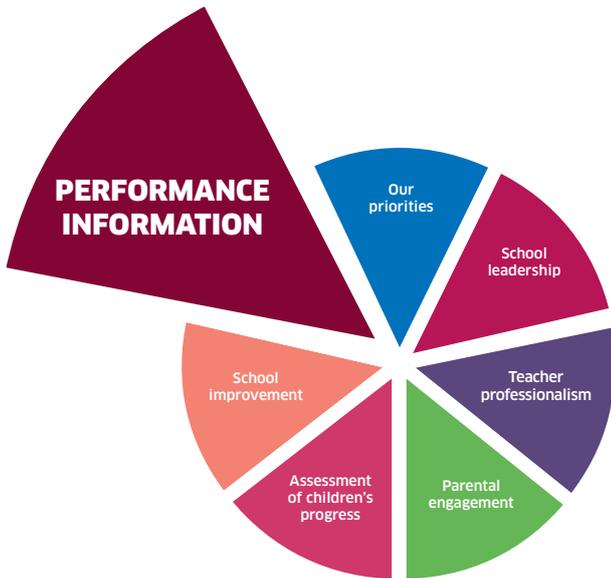


School improvement focuses on the quality of education, including learning, teaching and assessment, as well as the quality of the partnerships that are in place to support children and young people with their broader needs. We have a good education system in Scotland, with schools achieving good outcomes for children. We want to continue to improve this so that more children experience very good and excellent education services, delivered by self-improving, empowered schools and key partners such as community learning and development professionals.

### What we will do to deliver

- From **September 2016** school inspections and other Education Scotland evaluative activity will be more focused on the priorities within the National Improvement Framework. We will gather evidence on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, progress in raising attainment and achievement, and the leadership of change through school inspection.
- By **June 2017** we will develop a new Standards and Evaluation Framework, which will set out clear expectations for schools and the focus and frequency of school inspection.
- By the **end of 2016**, we will provide advice and support to ensure that schools, parents, communities are effectively involved in improvement planning on the basis of the evidence generated by the National Improvement Framework and school self-evaluation.
- By **January 2017**, we will issue advice to support more consistent and robust annual reporting on school improvement.
- In **September 2017**, we will gather information from 2016-17 school inspections and other evaluative activity on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, progress in raising attainment and achievement, and the quality of partnerships.
- By the **end of 2017**, we will support the publication of school-level reporting for parents and communities against their own action plans.

## Performance Information



We will pull together all the information and data we need to support improvement. Evidence suggests, and the feedback from the National Improvement Framework tells us, that we must ensure we build a sound understanding of the range of factors that contribute to a successful education system. This is supported by international evidence which confirms that there is no specific measure that will provide a picture of performance. We want to use a balanced range of measures to evaluate Scottish education and take action to improve further.

We will publish performance information on a school-by-school basis, to improve public confidence, transparency and ensure that information is available across Scottish education, for parents and community planning, for schools and local authorities, and at a national level to inform strategic resourcing and planning.

### What we will do to deliver

- We will establish a new International Council of Education Advisors during **summer 2016**, with the first meeting of the Council taking place in September. In **August 2016** we will establish a panel of teachers to discuss key developments in Scottish education and to monitor workload demands.
- In **December 2016**, we will publish an annual National Improvement Framework report, with progress against the four priorities and evidence against all of the 6 drivers of improvement.
- On an ongoing basis from now, and by **December 2016**, we will conduct a thorough analysis of all the evidence generated by the National Improvement Framework in consultation with stakeholders and with scrutiny from the new International Council of Education Advisors.
- By **December 2016**, we will publish an improvement plan and any revisions to the National Improvement Framework in consultation with key stakeholders.
- By **December 2016** we will publish a research strategy that makes clear any gaps in our evidence base and how these gaps will be filled.

- By **February 2017**, we will share evidence of what is working in helping us achieve the four priorities and where further research or evaluation is needed.
- In **March 2017**, to support current legislation we will publish Statutory Guidance to support local authorities in carrying out their duties to plan and report on the National Improvement Framework, including advice on how they use performance information for this purpose.
- By **March 2017**, we will publish information for parents on a school-by-school basis, including for the first time information on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy at stages P1, P4, P7 and S3.
- In **May 2017**, we will publish the literacy results from the 2016 Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy. Given the implementation of the National Improvement Framework and the data that it will provide, this will be the final set of results from the SSLN.
- Before **July 2017**, we will host an International Conference on improvement and the use of performance information, to learn from other countries and international experts on using knowledge and high quality data for improvement.
- By **summer 2017**, we will publish a draft information 'dashboard' covering the Broad General Education - making detailed performance information available to teachers and local authorities.
- By **December 2017**, we will consider further evidence from early years, Developing the Young Workforce and on health and wellbeing to use in the Improvement Framework.

## What next

We are committed to supporting and empowering our teachers, headteachers, parents, and communities to deliver an education system that gives all young people the chance to reach their potential and achieve their ambitions.

This Delivery Plan outlines the steps this Government will take to achieve our priorities for education. The reforms that we plan are substantial and our ambition is clear. We will deliver change on the basis of evidence and through engagement with teachers, parents, local government, trade unions and young people. The recent Education Summit brought together key partners and political leaders to share ideas for change and we invited teaching unions to identify specific, tangible ways to reduce unnecessary teacher workload.

We will build on this approach welcoming positive proposals for change. We have committed to establish a new panel of class teachers to work with us to reduce workload in our schools as well as an International Council of Education Advisors and to developing and publishing a research strategy. We will continue to invite everyone to work with us in this national endeavour, to raise attainment and close the equity gap for all our children and young people.



**The Scottish  
Government**  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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