Learning at PL
2017-2018
Guide for Staff
We are committed to focussing on Learning as the key to improving achievement and attainment for all our young people. What we do in the classroom and how we do it is what makes a difference. (Slater et al. 2009 http://www.bris.ac.uk/cmpo/publications/papers/2009/wp212.pdf)

Curriculum for Excellence has given us the opportunity not only to refresh the content of our curriculum, but to look again at how we engage with the young people in our classrooms and how best to deliver and develop learning and teaching in our school.

There are, and always have been, examples of excellent teaching to be found at Preston Lodge. There is, and always has been, excellent learning being experienced by students and staff. What we are trying to do is to ensure that the BEST teaching is experienced in ALL classrooms and that ALL learners and teachers are equipped with the learning knowledge, skills and attributes to excel in school and beyond. We feel that one of the ways that we will achieve this is to ensure that there is a focus on quality Learning.
Curriculum for Excellence

“The curriculum reflects what we value as a nation and what we seek for our young people.”

Building the Curriculum 3 (2008) states that every child and young person is entitled to expect their education to provide them with:

- a curriculum which is coherent from 3 to 18
- a senior phase of education after S3 which provides opportunities to obtain qualifications as well as to continue to develop the four capacities

It is important to remember that CfE was not just brought in to allow us to update the content of our lessons and carry out an auditing exercise comparing what we did then and what we’ll do now. It aims to provide learners with the qualifications needed for their chosen career path and the skills and attributes needed for lifelong learning, work and life. The four capacities should not just be a box to tick on a planning sheet or something to recite at an interview. We should be consciously building these capacities into everything we do.

Ask a teacher what attributes and capabilities they want their learners to have and they may say;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>enthusiasm and motivation for learning</th>
<th>solve problems</th>
<th>self-respect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self-reliance</td>
<td>link and apply different kinds of learning in new situations</td>
<td>communicate in different ways and in different settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learn independently and as part of a group</td>
<td>create and develop</td>
<td>use technology for learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>make informed choices and decisions</td>
<td>develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it</td>
<td>ambition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understand different beliefs and cultures</td>
<td>apply critical thinking in new contexts</td>
<td>commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF ACTIVITY</td>
<td>secure values and belief</td>
<td>TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND LEAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>develop informed, ethical views of complex issues</td>
<td>be self-aware</td>
<td>relate to others and manage themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use literacy, communication and numeracy skills</td>
<td>THINK CRITICALLY AND INDEPENDENTLY</td>
<td>OPENNESS TO NEW THINKING AND IDEAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>pursue a healthy and active lifestyle</td>
<td>DETERMINATION TO REACH HIGH STANDARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT</td>
<td>RESPECT FOR OTHERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assess risk and take informed decisions</td>
<td>evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues</td>
<td>develop and communicate their own beliefs and view of the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live as independently as they can</td>
<td>make reasoned evaluations</td>
<td>an enterprising attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work in partnership and in teams</td>
<td>an enterprise</td>
<td>resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing</td>
<td>an enterprising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make reasoned evaluations</td>
<td>an enterprising</td>
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<tr>
<td>an enterprising</td>
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The statements above have been taken from the table below, but shown in a different format. Learning is at the core of CfE and bringing the Four Capacities to the fore in terms of course
development and lesson planning and delivery may help to ensure that we deliver the full entitlement for our students that CfE was designed to provide.

What do employers want?

According to employers, they want their employees to have the following skills, capabilities and attributes:

- ability to learn and adapt
- business and enterprise skills
- communication and interpersonal skills
- leadership
- negotiation skills
- numeracy
- organisational skills
- problem solving skills
- raised awareness of industry
- resilience
- team working
- technical and specialist skills
- using your initiative and being self-motivated
- working under pressure and to deadlines

(taken from Skills Development Scotland’s My World of Work Marketplace site https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/marketplace/opportunities)
Are we truly preparing our young people for the world of work by helping them to develop these skills? Are we overt enough in our teaching, development, and opportunity for demonstration of these skills? Do learners even know that these skills are important?

If CfE is supposed to provide learners with skills and attributes needed for lifelong learning, work and life then we need to deliver on employers’ key outcomes as well.

The **National Improvement Framework** ([http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491758.pdf](http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491758.pdf)) has helped us to further refine our focus in delivering Curriculum for Excellence. In particular, we are now making sure that our priorities 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; and
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people;

To do that we are developing our approaches to the six key drivers of improvement.

![Key drivers of improvement](image)

(taken from National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education – Achieving Excellence and Equity 2016)

We are also using **How Good is Our School 4** to ensure that we are challenging ourselves to improve in key areas of school life.  
Making Thinking Visible

In session 2015-16 we started to explore how we could engage teachers and learners in Making Thinking Visible.

“All classroom and school communicates to young people a story of what learning actually is -- what it feels like, what it looks like, and how it works to develop lasting understanding. With mandates and pressures looming large, though, many classrooms take on a culture of work compliance, ticking off the boxes. Shifting the culture of schools from one of “just getting through the work” to one of rich, powerful thinking is not an easy endeavour. How do we take something that is invisible -- thinking -- and give it visibility in our classrooms? And once made visible, just how does it influence both what gets learned and how learning happens for our young people?”

Mark Church

We wanted our classrooms to be thinking classrooms and began to explore the cultural forces that shape our classroom.

**CULTURAL FORCES THAT SHAPE OUR CLASSROOM**

*The 8 cultural forces teachers focus on that support a rich learning experience*

- **Language**
  Using language of thinking that provides students with the vocabulary for describing and reflecting on thinking.

- **Modeling**
  Modeling of who we are as thinkers and learners so that the process of our thinking is discussed, shared, and made visible.

- **Environment**
  Making thinking visible by displaying the process of thinking and development of ideas. Arranging the space to facilitate thoughtful interactions.

- **Time**
  Allocating time for thinking by providing time for exploring topics more in depth as well as time to formulate thoughtful responses.

- **Expectations**
  Setting an agenda of understanding and conveying clear expectations. Focusing on the value for thinking and learning as outcomes as opposed to mere completion of “work.”

- **Interactions**
  Showing a respect for and valuing of one another’s contributions of ideas and thinking in a spirit of ongoing collaborative inquiry.

- **Routines**
  Scaffolding students’ thinking in the moment as well as providing tools and patterns of thinking that can be used independently.

- **Opportunities**
  Providing purposeful activities that require students to engage in thinking and the development of understanding as part of their ongoing experience of the classroom.

Taken from [http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/reuther-middle-school/pages/6370/cultures-of-thinking](http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/reuther-middle-school/pages/6370/cultures-of-thinking)
Our Teacher Learning Communities aimed to share with teachers the **Thinking Moves** needed to generate **UNDERSTANDING** and some of the **Thinking Routines** that staff can use to help to scaffold thinking in their classroom.

### Defining Thinking Routines

**Tools** used over and over again in the classroom, that support specific thinking moves such as,
- Making connections
- Describing what’s there
- Building explanations
- Considering different viewpoints and perspectives
- Capturing the heart and forming conclusions
- Reasoning with evidence

**Structures**, through which students collectively as well as individually initiate, explore, discuss, document, and manage their thinking. These structures are:
- Explicit: They have names to identify them
- Instrumental: They are goal directed and purposeful
- A few steps: Easy to learn, and easy to remember
- Individual as well as group practices
- Useful across a variety of contexts
- Help to reveal students’ thinking and make more visible

**Patterns of behaviour** adopted to help one use the mind to form thoughts, reason, or reflect. We see these patterns emerging as the routines:
- Are used over and over.
- Become engrained in us both teachers and students.
- Flexibility emerges.
For example, **Think, Puzzle, Explore** is a routine for introducing and exploring ideas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THINK-PUZZLE-EXPLORE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider the subject or topic just presented:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do you <em>think</em> you know about this topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What questions or <em>puzzles</em> do you have about this topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How might you <em>explore</em> the puzzles we have around this topic?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This year, we are focusing on how we can use our **Learning Cycle** to support the development and recognition of Thinking in our classrooms.
Planning for Purpose

We have invested considerable time and resources into the provision of Collaborative Development time for departments and will continue to promote and encourage collaboration when developing, evaluating and adapting programmes of learning.

The implementation of CfE has created a large amount of development work that will be ongoing for several years, made more concentrated as we develop and deliver the new National Qualifications. As well as allowing us to update the content of our courses, it should also give us the opportunity to review how and why we are delivering that content. By doing this collaboratively, it draws on a range of experience and ideas and should help to produce a better learning experience for our young people.

Planning for Purpose is intended to be a supportive process that guides teachers through the development of a piece or programme of learning. It is beneficial when looking at a whole course, individual unit or outcome, and supports the development of appropriate assessment activities tailored to the learning. It identifies and develops the learning purpose, evidence of learning, success criteria and possible learning activities in that order. By leaving the activities until last it can help encourage a more creative approach and ensure that the activities being included are there because they are going to contribute to the learning of that outcome, rather than because they are familiar and have always been used in the past.

Once the learning outcomes to be developed have been identified from the relevant Experiences & Outcomes or the relevant SQA Course Specification documents (including Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Wellbeing), the first stage involves fleshing out the purpose of the learning. This includes not only the Knowledge and Understanding, but skills, attributes and capabilities. These can be subject specific as well as transferable. They can also include the Thinking Moves that will lead learners to be able to understand the learning. Considering these at the beginning of the process gives all involved a clear idea of the learning destination.

Next, the evidence that can be used to demonstrate this learning is identified. This evidence can come in many forms including “write, make, say, do” evidence as well as more traditional assessment methods.

The criteria that will be used to evaluate this learning are then created. Mandatory knowledge, understanding or skills can be taken from the relevant outcomes. Where appropriate, they can be differentiated and shared as success criteria with learners. Although these success criteria are developed in advance by teachers, there’s nothing to stop teachers from developing different and/or additional success criteria in collaboration with their learners, especially in S1-S3.

The activities that will deliver and develop the learning are then identified, ensuring that they allow learners to meet the criteria and fulfil the purpose(s) identified. This is aimed at ensuring that the activities experienced by learners in the classroom have a learning focus and avoids what can be “busy work”.

Planning for Purpose
A form (see below) is available to record the outcomes of the process and to provide a record for future reference. The key aim however is to get teams of teachers collaborating on the development of learning experiences and ensure shared goals and standards.

![Planning for Purpose @ PL](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course:</th>
<th>Topic/Theme:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Outcomes</strong> (What are we learning? These may be Es&amp;Os from your Curricular Area, as well as Literacy, Numeracy or Health &amp; Wellbeing where relevant or it may be NQ key area information from SQA Course Unit Support Notes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the **purpose** of the learning, identified from the outcomes above?
Start with the big picture. Why are we learning this?
What Knowledge & Understanding, Skills, Attributes & Capabilities are we trying to develop?
Which benchmarks are you covering?
What type of thinking is required for, and developed by, this learning?
- 

What **evidence** is likely to demonstrate learning (i.e. assessments and pieces of work)
What could they make, write, say or do to show that they have met the learning purpose outlined above?
Will this be formative or summative?
- 

- Reason with evidence
- Make connections
- Uncovering complexity
- Capture the heart and form conclusions
- Build explanations
- Describe what’s there
- Wondering
- Consider different viewpoints
What criteria will be used to evaluate the learning? What are the success criteria for this learning? Which criteria will be used when judging each piece of evidence listed above? These may be more specific versions of the benchmarks, skills, or capacities identified in the learning purpose section above. These could be in the form of “I can..” statements. (i.e. can explain, in detail, 2 human and 2 physical causes of climate change.)

What activities can be devised? For each activity, identify the type(s) of thinking required where relevant. What order will you do things in? What activities will you do to develop the learning but also to generate evidence of learning? This can be the beginnings of the order of lessons/cycles that can then be developed into fleshed-out and resourced lessons/cycles using the Learning Cycle.

- Reason with evidence
- Make connections
- Uncovering complexity
- Capture the heart and form conclusions
- Build explanations
- Describe what’s there
- Wondering
- Consider different viewpoints

Adapted from Myra Young’s Assessment & Moderation Circles Presentation, Haddington, January 2011 (http://myrayoung.co.uk/).
The Accelerated Learning Cycle

Using our adapted Accelerated Learning Cycle to plan learning ensures that there is a focus on the learning process as well as the learning content.

Research has shown that by incorporating these stages into the learning process, they can have a significant impact on students’ attainment.
An effect size of 0.5 is equivalent to a one grade band improvement (Petty, 2008).

Each cycle can span more than one period and may last for several periods. Some of the stages may be repeated within a cycle if appropriate.
Learning Intentions are described in terms of WHAT, HOW and WHY. What is the content of the lesson? What will they know or understand or be able to do at the end of it? How will the learn it? What processes will they undertake? And why are they learning it? What are the benefits of learning it? How does it fit into the big picture? It is not however necessary nor is it always desirable to share the learning intentions at the beginning of all lessons. Learners may be doing and experiment for example during which they will discover the answer themselves. In this case, the learning intentions may be exemplified in the demonstrate stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of the cycle</th>
<th>The teacher…..</th>
<th>The students…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connect the Learning</td>
<td>Connects new learning to prior learning and existing knowledge. Makes connections with the world outside of the class-room. Stimulates thinking about new learning to come. Gauges what students already know.</td>
<td>Engage with learning the moment they walk through the door by making connections with what they already know either individually, in pairs or in groups. Raise and asks questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Initiates discussion of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, attributes) by talking about what is going to be learnt (content), how it is going to be learnt (process) and why (benefits).</td>
<td>Ask questions, seek clarification, agree success criteria and make choices about what and how they learn. There is a dialogue about the level of thinking involved in the lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share New Information</td>
<td>Considers the best way to share new information so that it provides for maximum inclusion and impact.</td>
<td>Are actively listening, asking good questions and/or presenting and/or sharing information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Outlines activity and checks for understanding. Hands over the learning to the students and facilitates by: • Probing understanding • Asking good questions • Being a resource for students • Providing differentiated resources and choice Listens/observes and judges when it is appropriate to review learning (content and process) with the class or individuals.</td>
<td>Work individually, in pairs or small groups. Are active in their learning, thinking about the information they have been given, researching further information, making decisions, discussing ideas and arguing points of view. They are also practicing learner skills (communication, thinking, collaboration) and developing learner attributes (5Rs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate New Understanding</td>
<td>When planning, the teacher should consider: • How students will demonstrate progress towards learning outcomes. • How students can apply new understanding in new contexts or different situations.</td>
<td>Present what they have learned to the class, the teacher or to each other. • Students demonstrate progress towards the learning outcomes. • Students are able to apply their new understanding to new contexts or different situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and Reflect</td>
<td>Makes time for students to:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· consolidate understanding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· pose questions to unpack what has been learnt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· pose questions to encourage reflection on how learning took place (process).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· preview next learning steps.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review and consolidate understanding and reflect on how learning took place by:
· Considering learning outcomes and success criteria.
· Listening and responding to feedback from others.
· Planning next learning steps.
· Giving feedback to the teacher on the learning experience.

From Cramlington Learning Village’s Teaching and Learning Model [http://www.cramlingtonlv.co.uk/AboutCLV/TeachingLearningModel.php](http://www.cramlingtonlv.co.uk/AboutCLV/TeachingLearningModel.php)

The information above illustrates what we aspire to. All our developments should therefore support this.
Supporting Learners to Access Learning

When redesigning our curriculum to take into account the implementation of CfE we decided that time would be taken from traditional subject areas and used for other cross-curricular and learning skills focussed initiatives.

S1 learners have a double period a week of Learning Skills and PL Challenge. They alternate between 2 blocks of Learning Skills and 2 blocks of PL Challenge throughout the year. PL Challenge is a rich tasks activity based on the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme that aims to develop students learning in four key areas; physical learning, learning a new skill, service to the community and out of school learning. Learners choose to take part in 2 challenges throughout the year hosted by various CAs. Learning Skills aims to develop key learner qualities that we feel will allow learners to access learning across the school, including Mindsets, the 5Rs, good communication, team work, motivation, and our Learning Cycle.

S2 and S3 learners have one period a week of our tailor made Learning Programmes; S2 Skills for Thinking and S3 Skills for Studying. These programmes are delivered by small teams of teachers and aim to develop metacognition and learner self-awareness as well as equipping them with tools for learning, thinking and studying. There is a strong focus on self-reflection, self-evaluation and personal target setting. We are also using this time to introduce and develop learners’ individual learning Portfolios and in S3, they have dedicated time and support to pull this together to create their S3 Profile.

We are trying to develop a common Language for Learning for all teachers and learners that will allow learners to get to know themselves as learners and be able to articulate where they are, where they need and would like to go next with their learning and how they will get there. This should allow teachers to have more meaningful conversations with learners. Learners need to be able to develop and demonstrate these skills across their mainstream subjects and for teachers to help learners to further develop and acknowledge these transferable skills.