

This briefing provides advice for practitioners and partners and can also be used to inform learners and their parents and families about developments in Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

CfE Briefing ¹⁰

The role of Community Learning and Development (CLD) and partnership working

Scottish education is going through a period of transformation that will affect all learners. Approaches to the curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment, awards and qualifications are all changing. Education Scotland is supporting change by evaluating evolving practice and sharing it nationally to inform discussion and promote innovation. This briefing explores the important contribution that CLD is making to CfE outcomes for learners through partnership working in educational establishments and communities.

1. What is Community Learning and Development (CLD) and partnership working?

CLD provides opportunities for **all learners** and is important for **all practitioners and partners**. It is the overarching description given to the wide range of programmes and activities, often delivered in partnership with educational establishments, that are aimed at improving life opportunities for learners, families and adults, and which help to build and strengthen communities. Partnership working describes the way these and other services work together to secure improvements for learners, families and communities.

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CLD includes both local authority services and voluntary sector provision, and is delivered by practitioners such as youth workers, children and family workers, adult learning specialists, and others who work to strengthen and build the capacity of our local communities. CLD activities are supported by large numbers of volunteers including, often, young people. Other partner services, including the police and health, often share approaches and work effectively in partnership to meet the needs of children, young people, adults, families and their communities.

CLD makes a positive contribution to the delivery of many Scottish Government policies. These are highlighted in the CLD strategic guidance for community planning partnerships (CPPs)¹. Improving the life chances of young people in Scotland is a major priority for all of us. The CLD strategic guidance has an increased focus on early intervention and prevention, family learning, and post-16 provision. CLD supports learning which begins at birth and continues throughout people's lives. As such it promotes the implementation of the Scottish Government's education and lifelong learning strategy.

2. How does CLD and partnership working contribute to CfE?

CLD programmes and activities take place in community and educational settings and bring important contexts and experiences to learning. These play a particularly valuable role in promoting and enhancing learners' achievement and in making it relevant

to lifelong learning. Through this, CLD contributes directly to the purposes of CfE, and supports learning that is important in developing skills for learning, life and work. By working together in partnership, services, agencies and educational establishments increase significantly the life chances for learners who may need different interventions to achieve their potential. Often, these learners find the reason for learning becomes much clearer to them through the contexts and relevance that comes from CLD. Everyone who provides learning needs to be clear about how they can contribute through planning together by using all of the CfE advice including, at the Senior Phase, advice on National Qualifications and Awards. This partnership working will help to maximise impact on learners' progress and overall achievement.

How well does CLD contribute to the curriculum?

CLD makes a particularly important contribution to **health and wellbeing** by helping to address health inequalities in our communities, working with families and contributing to health improvement. Partners often work with children and young people to support them to address sexual health, emotional wellbeing and drugs and alcohol issues, thereby enabling them to make more positive choices in their lives. Work with families may also include the development of positive relationships, behaviour management and help in reducing conflict, and other areas such as improving the ability to make healthy food choices for the benefit of the whole family.

CLD provides access to a wide range of **award programmes** as well as National Qualifications which enable young people to experience success. The achievements can now readily be recorded in learners' profiles at P7 and S3². Partners use these programmes to develop important areas of learning and to build confidence through celebrating achievement. This might be through youth awards which promote and recognise young people's achievements in the widest sense. Many youth awards actively involve young people in the assessment of their own learning and in recognising their achievements through dialogue and record-keeping in portfolios and journals. Self- and peer-assessment, personal learning planning and portfolios can be effective in profiling achievements within CfE and are key to assessment processes. Some youth awards have external accreditation through the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Others have their own internal processes for validation and accreditation. Awards relate both to the BGE and the Senior Phase, and some partnerships also use awards to support P7-S1 transitions. There are also SQA awards designed to support the principles of CfE and these are available for young people

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¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/2208/downloads#res394611>

² Refer to CfE Briefing 3 'Profiling and the S3 Profile'

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and for adults. For more information on awards and Scotland you can access 'Amazing Things – guide to Awards in Scotland'³.

What is the impact of our programme of youth awards on young people's achievement?

In several areas, CLD partners are part of teams which support early years' **transitions**, working with families, early years' practitioners and primary school staff, as children commence nursery or move from pre-school into primary education. CLD practitioners often support primary to secondary transitions and post-school transitions. This includes a strong contribution to *Opportunities for All*⁴, supporting the implementation of employability strategies, working closely with other services and often playing a lead role in Activity Agreements. Staff engaged in CLD bring with them a broad range of skills and opportunities which can engage with learners and families in ways that grow the important attributes and capabilities which define the four capacities of CFE⁵. Partners can help learners to develop skills such as teamwork, leadership and problem solving, and promote their achievements. This can have a positive impact on learning across the curriculum and in other areas such as self-confidence, esteem and resilience, thereby enhancing learners' employability and contributions to society more broadly. Overall, recent signs of positive impact on destinations coming from improved transitions have been very encouraging.

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How effectively are we working with parents and families?

CLD can play an important role in supporting parents' understanding of Curriculum for Excellence, its aims and how young people will benefit. This can help parents understand what they can do to contribute. Often in partnership with educational establishments, CLD also works with parents through family learning programmes to help them become more involved in supporting their child's learning and to develop higher aspirations for their families.

Engagement in this way can often result in a reduction in social isolation. It does this by helping parents to access learning opportunities for themselves and their families, promoting parental involvement, enhancing the home learning environment and helping to reduce the attainment gap. Some local programmes help to develop **literacy and numeracy skills**, as well as other important **skills for learning, life and work**. These programmes take many guises, often linked to local opportunities, and are often key

in helping young people develop skills for employability. For example, in some areas, literacy and numeracy are promoted directly through initiatives such as radio projects and financial capability courses. In all cases, it is effective planning involving all partners that ensures individual needs are met. CLD offers opportunities for learners and their families to become **active in their communities** through volunteering and becoming involved in decision-making through youth forums, for example. As a result, they can make an effective contribution to their communities and become more responsible as citizens.

Outdoor learning is an important context for **building confidence** and developing teamworking and problem solving skills. Programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and John Muir Award provide valuable opportunities for learning in residential and outdoor contexts. Learning through sports, arts and cultural activities provides opportunities for learners to engage in experiences that they can build on throughout their lives. CLD can help

3 <http://www.youthscotland.org.uk/projects/volunteer-action-plan/amazing-things.htm>

4 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/11/7618>

5 The four capacities are: successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

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to give learners access to a range of such opportunities, and others including sports coaching and leadership awards and a broad range of music, theatre and arts activities. Through these, learners build their own confidence and self-esteem, increase their creativity, and develop a range of skills leading to enhanced career pathways.

CLD strategic guidance has a strong focus on early intervention and prevention, and on post-16 provision. With this in mind, CLD is contributing increasingly through working in partnership with schools and others to improve the wellbeing and life chances of young people by taking a *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC) approach. This approach is as applicable to young people as it is to children and provides a holistic framework to support, promote and safeguard their wellbeing. CLD programmes taking a GIRFEC approach in partnership with others often provide the critical support necessary for young people to achieve and sustain positive destinations. Working in partnership with schools and other services, including health and the police, CLD can support young people by ensuring that they receive the right help at the right time and that their individual needs are met. CLD can also help young people who need to re-engage with their learning, often through offering targeted support in partnership with others.

3. How might CLD and partnership working further promote CfE?

In taking forward CLD and partnership working, educational establishments, education authorities, CLD services and all partners might find it helpful to consider the following reflective questions alongside those embedded throughout this briefing. In particular, it will be useful to consider these questions together as partners and also with learners, their families and through community planning arrangements as appropriate.

- Is everyone involved clear about the intended outcomes for learners of partnership working?
- How effective are arrangements for joint planning across all services, partners and volunteers who have a role in improving learners' lives?
- Do all partners have a clear understanding of their role in delivering the entitlements of CfE, and plan together to maximise impact?
- Do all partners have a clear contribution to make to the profiling process and children's and young people's profiles, including through e-portfolios?
- To what extent does CLD and partnership working enhance the range of pathways through the Senior Phase and on to positive destinations?
- How well do CLD practitioners and other partners share effective practice with each other?

- How well are self-evaluation approaches and outcomes shared to ensure maximum benefit from partnership working?

You can find out more by visiting the following:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/>

<http://www.youthlinkscotland.org/>

<http://www.youthscotland.org.uk/>

<http://www.syp.org.uk>

<http://www.youngscot.org/>

<http://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/>

<http://www.cldms.org.uk/>

<http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/Home>

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/CCC_FirstPage.jsp

<http://home.scotland.gov.uk/home>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/10/4789/downloads#res403769>

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