

2019 NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUMMARY DOCUMENT

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY

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2019 National Improvement Framework (NIF) and Improvement Plan - Summary Document

The NIF sets out the vision and priorities for Scottish education that have been agreed across the system, and the national improvement activity that needs to be undertaken to help deliver those key priorities. This complements the ongoing implementation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), Getting It Right for Every Child, and Developing the Young Workforce, which are the three supporting pillars of the Scottish education system.

Our vision for education in Scotland

- 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.

We want to develop with our partners an empowered and collaborative system, where everyone's contribution is heard and valued, and improving children and young people's outcomes is at the heart of everything we do.

Key priorities of the National Improvement Framework

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

What we are achieving

We have been listening carefully to all those involved in the Scottish education system to ensure that we are working in partnership with them when developing the improvement activity set out in this year's NIF and Improvement Plan.

Delivering improvement

The latest Achievement of a CfE Level data shows that between 70%-80% of children across P1, P4 and P7 are achieving the expected level in numeracy, reading, writing and listening and talking.

The number of Higher passes fell slightly in 2016/17 (-1.5%), but to a lesser extent than the S5 and S6 school roll (-2.4%), and there were over 50,000 skills-based qualifications, awards and certificates achieved in 2017-18.

The proportion of young people in the most deprived areas getting qualifications at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6 is increasing faster than those in the least deprived areas,

and an increasing proportion of school leavers in the most deprived areas were in a positive follow up destination in March 2018.

An empowered and collaborative system

During 2019 local authorities and learning communities will work together to further develop a culture of empowerment and collaboration in their area.

We are bringing together representatives from all parts of the education system in Scotland to take a partnership approach to empowerment. Together we are developing new guidance and resources to support the empowerment of learning communities across Scotland. We are providing around £5 million directly to the six new Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) in this school year, to help strengthen educational support to schools.

Aspiring headteachers will be supported to develop their leadership potential by the local authority and through national development programmes such as Into Headship. There will be new opportunities for middle leaders to develop leadership skills through new Education Scotland leadership programmes.

Excellence and equity

The interim evaluation of the £750m Attainment Scotland Fund showed that 78% of headteachers had already seen an improvement in attainment and wellbeing as a result of the funding, and nearly all headteachers (97%) expected to see further improvements in the coming five years. The interim evaluation also suggests that the equity agenda has become embedded in schools' practice and ethos.

The themes of excellence and equity are also intrinsic to the report of the 15-24 Learner Journey Review which was published in May 2018. The report contains 17 recommendations to support this, building on and reinforcing the aims of Curriculum for Excellence and Developing the Young Workforce.

Health and wellbeing

As part of our commitments on improving children's and young people's mental health set out in the mental health strategy 2017-2027 we have undertaken a review of personal and social education. Work to deliver against a suite of recommendations will commence in 2019.

We will recruit an additional 250 school nurses by 2022 and will also introduce counsellors in all secondary schools across Scotland. We will provide training and support for those working in schools and education authorities to understand and respond effectively to children and young people's needs for support with their mental health and wellbeing.

We will implement a range of recommendations to support LGBTI inclusive education across Scotland, including recommendations to improve practice and guidance for education staff and to increase awareness of LGBTI issues.

We plan to introduce a brand new Health and Wellbeing Census, covering children from late primary through to secondary schools, starting in the 2019/20 academic year.

Early learning and childcare (ELC)

To help achieve greater equity in child outcomes, we will ensure that the children who need it the most benefit from an enhanced ELC offer. This will involve an earlier offer for eligible 2 year old children and, from August 2018, access to support from an additional graduate-level practitioner for children attending nurseries serving the most disadvantaged areas.

Funded ELC will expand from 600 to 1140 hours to all children from August 2020.

We have also developed a national standard for funded ELC providers, at the centre of which is a clear set of quality criteria that all settings delivering the funded hours will be required to meet from August 2020.

Measuring the Gap

At the moment, the evidence is demonstrating that the improvement activities being undertaken under each of the NIF drivers of improvement are helping to deliver a narrowing of the attainment gap across the key measures which have been assessed since the 2018 NIF and Improvement Plan was published. Of the 11 key measures to assess progress, 9 are showing a narrowing of the gap; albeit due to a mixed underlying picture and to varying extents. For the other 2 key measures, one will not have any new data to compare until 2019, and the other cannot be compared directly as there has been a change in the data that has been collected.

The Six Drivers of Improvement

School Leadership – Improvement Priorities for 2019

We will support and encourage the empowerment of school leaders and school communities and create a culture of collaborative and system leadership.

The Headteachers' Charter, new national guidance on empowering schools and a new self-evaluation framework for local authorities will be available to support partners throughout the system to work together to ensure meaningful empowerment and collaboration.

Education Scotland will enhance the leadership support package, creating more opportunities and resources for leaders across the education sector to develop leadership skills and lead improvement at system level. More headteachers will have the opportunity to participate in Excellence in Headship, and more school leaders will have the opportunity to develop values-based leadership by participating in Columba 1400 Headteacher Leadership Academies.

The Independent Panel on Career Pathways is due to report to the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers by the end of 2018 and its recommendations will be taken forward in 2019.

Education Scotland will also work closely with the RICs to support a range of tailored leadership and professional learning activities designed to meet the needs identified by school leaders in each RIC area.

Teacher Professionalism – Improvement Priorities for 2019

Education Scotland will work with partners to develop a range of resources to support teachers and professional learning providers in using the new national model of professional learning, which identifies the key principles and features of effective learning that will build capacity and promote collaborative practices.

Education Scotland will expand the Framework for Educational Leadership to include professional learning activities for teachers and work with subject associations to enhance teachers' access to subject specific professional learning.

Education Scotland will work in partnership with the General Teaching Council for Scotland to develop clear guidance on the endorsement and accreditation of professional learning.

The final cohort of GTCS registrants will engage in the Professional Update process. GTCS will undertake its 5-year longitudinal evaluation of the impact of Professional Update.

In its new regional capacity, Education Scotland will support professional learning priorities at regional as well as at national level.

Parental Engagement – Improvement Priorities for 2019

Improvement priorities will be taken forward across 13 key goals as identified in the joint Scottish Government / COSLA [“Learning Together” National Action plan](#). This will include steps to strengthen guidance, develop training and support materials and to improve the links between home and school.

Assessment of Children’s Progress – Improvement Priorities for 2019

Improving literacy and numeracy, particularly amongst those learners vulnerable to poorer outcomes, remains the key priority. We will take steps to improve information sharing in the early years and make it more systemic to improve support and protection for our most vulnerable children. Improvement activities in the school years will continue to focus on the quality and consistency of data collections for attainment and health and wellbeing, as well as on ensuring that support for learning, teaching and assessment is provided to school leaders and practitioners through the RICs.

Data literacy amongst teaching professionals will also continue to remain a key focus over the coming year and the use of the Insight Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool and the BGE Benchmarking Tool will provide the means for supporting this activity.

The evidence from the user review of the first year of the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) demonstrates that the information generated by the assessments and reports is being used to plan effective next steps in learning. This, in turn, will give teachers more confidence in assessing children's progress, with a more consistent understanding of the standards expected of CfE levels in literacy and numeracy.

However, concerns have also been raised about certain aspects of the assessments, in particular about P1 assessments. As a result, the Deputy First Minister

announced on 25 October 2018 that there will be an independent review of the approach to P1 assessments within the context of the NIF. The review will be asked to provide conclusions and recommendations by the end of May 2019.

The Scottish Government is increasing its focus on better preventing, and mitigating, childhood adversity. This involves building on existing interventions – such as the expansion of Health Visitor numbers, roll-out of Family Nurse Partnership and expansion of high-quality early learning and childcare and nurturing approaches in schools - and we will continue to develop further actions that better address ACEs in Scotland going forward.

Education Scotland is working with NHS Scotland staff schools to make the links between nurture, Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma informed practice, to develop effective practice and support positive mental wellbeing in schools.

School Improvement – Improvement Priorities for 2019

We will be increasing the focus of our improvement activity in early learning and childcare (ELC). We are finalising a national standard that all ELC providers will be required to meet in order to deliver the funded ELC hours from August 2020.

We will also continue to focus on supporting leaders and practitioners, through the RICs, to further develop their skills to deliver professional learning for others, to drive innovation and improvement in learning and teaching, to use data to raise attainment and close the poverty-related gap, and to continue to improve the capacity of staff to self-evaluate for improvement.

This will have an impact on both the early learning and childcare settings, and schools by ensuring the uptake of entitlement to Scottish Government funded early learning and childcare provision, increasing the emphasis on careers for children and young people in the broad general education, and ensuring that increasing numbers of vocational pathways are made available for young people in the senior phase.

Performance Information – Improvement Priorities for 2019

We will continue to support use of the Insight senior phase benchmarking tool at local level and the new BGE Improvement Tool for use by RICs, local authorities and schools to support school improvement focused dialogue. We will also work with the Scottish Council of Deans of Education to ensure the new self-evaluation framework for initial teacher education (ITE) programmes is used by our ITE providers.

Conclusion

We will continue to create a culture of empowerment and collaboration to enable the teaching profession to work together and to use their skills, judgement and creativity in the way they think best to develop the high quality teaching practice, and effective pedagogy, that are crucial to securing better outcomes for children and young people. This is supported by the specific measures under each of the drivers to deliver improvements in Scottish education.



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ISBN: 978-1-78781-457-8 (web only)

This document is available from our website at www.gov.scot

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland
21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS510286 (12/18)

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