

The Highland Council

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee 11th November 2015

Agenda Item	8.
Report No	ECAS 96/15

Progress and Future Development Review of the Broad General Education in S1 – S3

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This report sets out the current implementation status and future development priorities of the Broad General Education in secondary schools, and supports a presentation to this meeting of the Committee.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Delivery of the Broad General Education (BGE) is one of the key entitlements of the Curriculum for Excellence. The BGE covers the period from age 3 to the end of S3 (3-15). Each area of the curriculum in the BGE is broken down into experiences and outcomes (often called 'the Es and Os'). The curriculum areas are: expressive arts, health and well-being, languages, mathematics, religious and moral education, sciences, social studies and technologies. The Es and Os describe the expectations for learning and progression within each curriculum area. Schools are provided with a significant degree of flexibility to develop the Broad General Education to match the needs of their Associated School Group.
- 1.2 The focus of this report is on implementation progress made so far in the secondary schools. The information contained within the report was gathered from discussions with Headteachers, pupils and staff. Any future review should include the views of parents.
- 1.3 Schools have delivered major curricular development in the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence. However, the timeline for implementation has been challenging. It has required schools to put in place significant levels of curricular development without always having the capacity to reflect thoroughly on its success, before moving on to the next stage of development. This resulted in secondary schools implementing the BGE, but then moving on to implement the new national qualifications very quickly. Inevitably, the demands of the new qualifications have meant less focus in schools on the BGE over the last 2/3 years.
- 1.4 Accordingly, the delivery of the BGE is still very much work in progress. Schools are now beginning to turn their attention back to the BGE, as most of the development work around the new qualifications is coming to an end.

2. Summary of findings on BGE implementation in Secondary Schools

- 2.1 Curriculum Rationale and Structure:
 - Most schools have now formulated their curriculum rationale.
 - Schools have made full use of the flexibility available to them in developing their S1-S3 curriculum.
 - A significant number of schools have introduced personalisation into S3 by

offering pupils an element of choice to their curricular options.

- A significant number of schools have introduced skills courses to their S1-S3 curriculum.
- A significant number of schools have raised the priority of health and wellbeing as part of their curriculum delivery.

2.2 Learning and Teaching:

- All schools continue to make learning and teaching a high priority in their school improvement plans.
- All schools continue to develop participative active learning in their lessons.
- An increasing number of schools are beginning to use assessment data more effectively to inform future learning.
- Differentiation remains an area identified by schools for further development.
- Most schools are increasing the use of ICT in the delivery of learning.
- A significant number of schools have developed formal learning conversations between staff and pupils.

2.3 Assessment:

- An increasing number of schools are using the Assessment for Excellence data to inform pupils on how they can improve their learning.
- Schools are growing in confidence in using the approach of using Significant Aspects of Learning to make judgements of pupil progress.

2.4 Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting:

- At the moment, there is no suitable module within SEEMiS to allow schools to track pupil progress.
- Most schools have tracking and monitoring as a key priority within their school improvement plan.
- A variety of approaches are being developed by schools. The authority should ensure that good practice is shared between schools.
- The Quality Improvement Team has provided schools with good guidance in this area. Further work remains to be done.
- A significant number of schools are developing new methods of reporting pupil progress.

2.5 Literacy and Numeracy:

- While most schools have raised the profile of literacy and numeracy, in a significant number, this is still delivered by the English and Maths Departments.

2.6 Developing the Young Work Force:

- Schools are beginning to develop employability courses in S1-S3.
- Some schools are putting in place links with key businesses in their area.
- A growing number of schools are raising the profile of future work options for pupils at an earlier stage.

2.7 Interdisciplinary Learning

- Schools have explored a variety of ways of delivering interdisciplinary learning. This is not as easily delivered in secondary schools as it is in primary.
- Some schools have provided interdisciplinary learning by taking pupils out of their normal timetable to deliver project work - e.g. all subjects contributing to explore aspect of a special project (such as the World Cup)..
- Some schools have provided interdisciplinary learning by forming partnerships between subjects to deliver part of their curriculum – e.g. Music, PE and Home

Economics around the delivery of the Christmas dance.

- This is an area which requires further development by the authority and schools.

2.8 Transitions:

- Most schools provide a high standard of pastoral care to pupils in the transition phase from primary to secondary.
- Most pupils with significant support needs experience a positive transition.
- An increasing number of schools are developing curricular links in a variety of subject areas. The development of the curriculum frameworks provide a good starting point for schools.
- Most ASGs share assessment evidence and are working together to ensure the quality of assessment evidence is robust.
- An increasing number of schools are beginning to use the Assessment for Excellence data from primary schools.

3. Development Priorities

3.1 The following priorities were raised by schools as possible improvement priorities over the coming years:

- Further work on tracking and monitoring.
- Continued development of the use of ICT in the delivery of learning.
- Further work on interdisciplinary learning.
- Further work on the curricular transition work between primary and secondary.
- Further work on Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy.

3.2 It is important to stress that schools have used the flexibility that Curriculum for Excellence provides them to set out local priorities for the development of the BGE in their Associated School Group. Therefore, all schools will not have identical priorities.

4. Implications

4.1 There are no legal, rural, equalities, risk, climate change/carbon clever implications.

4.2 BGE requires to be delivered within mainstream budgets, including Gaelic provision. Future budget pressures may impact on the resources available to deliver BGE fully.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to note and comment on the progress made by schools and direction of travel for future development.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

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