
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date: 05 November 2013
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No: EDUCOM/89/13/WB
Contact Officer:	Wilma Bain (Head of Education)	Contact No: 01475 712891
Subject:	Update on Proposed Revised Senior Phase Model for Inverclyde Secondary Schools	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee members with information about the proposed revised Senior Phase model for Inverclyde's secondary schools as part of our delivery of Curriculum for Excellence. The revised Senior Phase model has been the focus of an authority working group chaired by the Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development and consisting of all secondary Head Teachers and senior Education Officers. Details of the revised Senior Phase model are outlined in Appendix 1.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Curriculum for Excellence aims to transform the Scottish education system to achieve better outcomes for all children and young people aged 3 to 18, and prepare them for life in the 21st century.
- 2.2 A revised model for Inverclyde's Senior Phase is being proposed which will build in more time for depth in learning and will include time for dialogue and reflection about learning. This proposed model involves reducing the number of subjects S4 pupils currently study from 8 to 6 (from August 2015). This is a model adopted by other Councils and a model which the authority working group believes will adhere to the entitlements, purpose and principles of Curriculum for Excellence, and importantly support our young people to develop as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
- 2.3 The content of this report is supported by a presentation to members of the Education and Communities Committee by two of Inverclyde's secondary Head Teachers who serve on the authority's working group tasked with reviewing our current interim Senior Phase model.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to approve the proposed revised Senior Phase model as part of the progress being made with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence in Inverclyde.

Albert Henderson, Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18.

The curriculum includes the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated.

The purpose of Curriculum for Excellence is encapsulated in the 4 capacities – to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance

The cost of staffing the Senior Phase model will be within the current staffing budget allocation.

6.2 Legal

There are no legal implications

6.3 Personnel

There are no personnel implications

6.4 Equalities

Curriculum for Excellence aims to improve outcomes for **all** children and young people aged 3-18.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 This report outlines the current progress that is being made with the development of the Senior Phase as part of Inverclyde's implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None

CURRICULUM PLANNING IN THE SENIOR PHASE

PROPOSED REVISED MODEL FOR INVERCLYDE

Background

Curriculum for Excellence was published in November 2004 following the National Debate on Education in Scotland. It set out for the first time, values, purposes and principles for the curriculum 3-18 for all children and young people.

Curriculum for Excellence aims to transform the Scottish education system to achieve better outcomes for all children and young people aged 3 to 18, and prepare them for life in the 21st century through the development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

The purpose of the curriculum is to make sure that learners acquire the 4 capacities of *Curriculum for Excellence* to be:

- Successful learners
- Confident individuals
- Effective contributors
- Responsible citizens

The learning environments, the focus on experiential learning and opportunities to develop employability and core skills contribute to meeting these aspirations.

Curriculum for Excellence has 2 closely connected phases of education. Firstly, there is the Broad General Education which spans from age 3 to the end of S3, after which learners move on to the second phase, known as the Senior Phase, from S4-S6. All curricular courses in the Broad General Education are planned around the Experiences and Outcomes in Curriculum for Excellence and will provide a coherent pathway into the Senior Phase (S4-S6) where at an appropriate point the learning will be measured within the qualifications framework.

The Broad General Education and the Senior Phase are 2 of 6 entitlements for children and young people which are a central design feature of Curriculum for Excellence:

Every child and young person is entitled to:

- *a curriculum which is coherent from 3 to 18*
- *a Broad General Education (up to the end of S3)*
- *a Senior Phase where he or she can continue to develop the four capacities and also obtain qualifications*
- *develop skills for learning, life and work, with a continuous focus on literacy and numeracy, and health and wellbeing*
- *personal support and challenge to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which CfE can provide*
- *support in moving into a positive and sustained destination (post 16)*

Appendix 1

The above entitlements reinforce the fact that Curriculum for Excellence is firmly focused on the needs of the child and young person and puts learners at the heart of the 3-18 curriculum.

Senior Phase

“The Senior Phase of the curriculum relates to the period S4 to S6 in schools or the equivalent in terms of college or other means of study. It is the stage of learning at which the relationship between the curriculum and qualifications becomes of key significance. At this stage of the curriculum we expect that most young people will engage with the qualifications framework and that more formal assessment and certification will take place.”

[Building the Curriculum 3]

The Senior Phase builds firmly on the Experiences and Outcomes a young person will have experienced and achieved through the Broad General Education. Young people should continue to progress their learning through the Curriculum for Excellence principles of curriculum design namely Challenge and Enjoyment, Breadth, Progression, Depth, Personalisation and Choice, Coherence, and Relevance.

In the Senior Phase young people will be able to study a range of subjects at levels appropriate to their needs and abilities. The Senior Phase allows a 3 year plan for pupils where if they cannot study a subject one year they may be able to pick it up the next year.

Current Senior Phase Model in Inverclyde

The current Senior Phase model, where young people study 8 subjects in S4 which will lead to National Qualifications, is an interim model put in place to allow secondary Head Teachers to undertake full consultation with staff, parents/carers and pupils on an alternative model that promotes depth in learning and includes a greater focus on securing the development of skills and knowledge. The current model allows pupils to progress to S5 where up to 5 subjects at Higher Grade will be studied.

A working group, chaired by the Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development, and consisting of all secondary Head Teachers and senior Education Officers has been working on a revised senior phase model over the last year. The work of this group included reviewing the current interim model and looking at the Senior Phase models which are being adopted in other local authorities.

Proposed Revised Senior Phase Model

The proposed revised Senior Phase model for Inverclyde involves the majority of pupils studying 6 subjects at National 4 or National 5 levels in S4 and continuing their learning in 5 subjects in S5 and S6.

Curriculum for Excellence allows a more flexible approach in which programmes of learning can be tailored to meet the needs of individual learners in terms of appropriate breadth, depth and pace of learning allowing young people to aim for the most appropriate levels of qualifications. For some pupils in S4, this may include learning towards National 1, 2 and 3 qualifications.

Appendix 1

This revised model is being proposed after much consideration of other models currently in place across Scotland's education authorities, and following consultation with staff, pupils and parents from each of our secondary schools. Our District Inspector from Education Scotland has also been involved in our discussions.

The authority working group firmly believes that the model of 6 subjects (English and Maths plus 4 other subjects) in S4 should ensure a smooth transition to 5 Higher Grade courses in S5. For those young people not progressing to Higher Grade courses in S5, there will be other appropriate progression routes (or learning pathways) which allow for further qualifications through the senior phase.

The authority working group also recognises that we need to build in time for dialogue and reflection about learning in order to develop our young people as resilient and independent learners for the future. By choosing 6 subjects in S4 there will be more time for each subject (than there is currently is with the 8 subject model) allowing depth in learning which incorporates this dialogue and reflection.

It is important to highlight that while this proposed revised Senior Phase model involves the majority of pupils choosing 6 subjects at National 4 or National 5 levels, there is also the likelihood that the core subjects of PE and RE will also be accredited giving pupils the opportunity to achieve up to 8 National Qualifications by the end of S4.

Other Councils, such as Fife, South Lanarkshire, Aberdeenshire, Dundee, Highland and West Dunbartonshire, have opted for a Senior Phase model of 6 subjects in S4, and some Councils are adopting a model where S4 pupils choose 5 subjects in S4.

The authority working group is confident that our proposed curriculum model for the Senior Phase will adhere to the entitlements, purpose and principles of Curriculum for Excellence, and importantly support our young people to develop as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

The proposed date for implementation of the above Senior Phase model for Inverclyde secondary schools is August 2015.