

Learning to Achieve



A Strategy for Raising Achievement



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Foreword

This is Falkirk Council Education Services' second revision of our key policy **Learning to Achieve**. The revision is a result of our determination to be a reflective, responsive service. It is our practice to regularly review our strategic focus to ensure that our policies and actions align with key national and local priorities.

Curriculum for Excellence has given us a vibrant new context within which to conduct this revision. **Learning to Achieve** has been designed to offer direction on how we will deliver Curriculum for Excellence across Falkirk Council educational establishments. It provides the scaffolding for subsequent thinking and action, building on our longstanding commitment to achievement in its widest sense.

Headteachers, teachers, early years practitioners, support staff, parents/carers, pupils and other partners have had the opportunity to contribute to this revision. Responses to this consultation process indicated that views on the form, content and applications of this document were varied and often opposing. However, a number of consistent messages emerged from the consultation. The over-whelming request was for clear, concise content presented in an attractive, accessible format which effectively exploits current technology.

Consequently, we have produced information in a variety of formats:

- **Core document for each educational establishment**
- **A web link on Falkirk Council website**
- **A poster for each teaching area**
- **A leaflet for parents**
- **An electronic format for learners**
- **Interactive materials available through GLOW**

The purpose of this document is to set out how we go about delivering education across Falkirk Council educational establishments. This in turn enables us to evaluate our practice and measure value added through the impact we have on learners and the contexts for learning. We are publicly accountable for the service we provide and we have a collective responsibility to evaluate our performance effectively. This document has been designed to facilitate this at all levels. **Learning to Achieve** will be used to:

- **Prompt regular reflection by teachers and support staff**
- **Support a collaborative ethos enabling the focused sharing of ideas and approaches**
- **Enable innovation to improve pedagogy**
- **Develop frameworks for planning for a wide range of purposes**
- **Drive quality assurance practices at all levels in education services**
- **Inform school and cluster improvement planning**

We anticipate that this policy will be "alive" in the sense that it will inspire an evolving array of applications for its contents. It will constantly influence our practice and policies across all parts of our service. The Early Years and Primary Improvement Partnership and Secondary Schools Improvement Partnership will be instrumental in driving forward the implementation of **Learning to Achieve**.



Julia Swan
Director of Education

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Our Vision

Within Falkirk Council the overarching guide for our work is the Integrated Children's Services plan **For Falkirk's Bairns**. In turn, we want all learners in our educational settings to have enjoyable, challenging experiences allowing them to work to their full potential. For economic and social reasons we must enable all young people to be pro-active and independent within their own learning experience. The service must support young people to develop resilience of character and the creativity and flexibility necessary to function in our rapidly changing society. Learners will then develop the skills and attributes which will allow them to make a positive contribution to society and achieve positive sustained destinations. We must inspire young people to become enthusiastic lifelong learners.

We aim to ensure that all our learners have access to:

- **Positive learning environments**
- **Opportunities to fully develop the four capacities**
- **Opportunities for play, sport, creativity and cultural activities**
- **Opportunities to contribute to decision making**
- **Opportunities to develop skills for life and skills for work**
- **Support that will enable them to make positive transitions at all stages of their learning**

We recognise that learning experiences will take place in and beyond school. All adults who contribute to the educational experience of our learners are key players in making this vision a reality. **Our ultimate aim is to raise the bar ensuring that all of our learners have better educational outcomes.**

Learning to Achieve



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Our Vision

Learning to Achieve has been informed and influenced by a number of national and local documents:



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Principles of Curriculum Design

The curriculum is: *“the totality of all that is planned for children and young people throughout their education”*. A key purpose of the curriculum is: *“to help children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors”*. Page 22, **Building the Curriculum 3**

The principles of Curriculum Design are:

Challenge and Enjoyment

Breadth

Progression

Depth

Personalisation and Choice

Coherence

Relevance

It is the responsibility of all practitioners to ensure that these principles are built into the design of learning experiences. The practitioner will decide which combination of principles is relevant for each lesson or series of lessons. This choice will be influenced by the learning context, the required outcomes and the needs of learners. Therefore it is essential that the principles are applied systematically to ensure balance across the totality of learners' experiences.

The principles will apply to:

- The whole school curriculum
- Cluster plans
- Subject courses / syllabuses
- Early Years and Primary forward plans
- Interdisciplinary and thematic project plans
- Individual lessons

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Learning and teaching

In line with the General Teaching Council for Scotland **Standard for Full Registration** and Curriculum for Excellence, learning and teaching will be delivered by highly skilled practitioners with increased levels of professional autonomy and accountability. The highest quality learning and teaching will be essential to achieving our vision for learners in Falkirk Council.

In a culture of on-going self-evaluation and professional accountability, practitioners will be encouraged to be pro-active in their own professional development in line with personal, establishment and authority priorities. A range of forums exist through which we will collectively support all staff to continually improve their practice by ensuring that arrangements for professional development are regularly reviewed and aligned with identified needs.

Learners will be taught by teachers who:

- **Systematically reflect upon and evaluate their practice**
- **Feel confident and supported in adopting innovative practice**
- **Adapt their methodology to meet the needs of learners**
- **Consistently use Assessment for Learning strategies to inform their practice**
- **Ensure relevant development of literacy, numeracy, health and well-being across the curriculum**
- **Use active learning approaches to support learners in their development of creative and critical thinking strategies**
- **Gather a range of evidence of learner progress in order to record and report upon this**
- **Make purposeful use of professional collaboration in school and beyond**
- **Regularly share information with parents, carers and relevant others in a range of ways**
- **Use local and national policies and guidance to inform their practice**
- **Access professional development related to the needs of the learner, the teacher and their establishment**



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Curriculum Outcomes



The experiences and outcomes are the vehicles for the delivery of learning within and across the eight curriculum areas; **Expressive Arts, Health and Well-being, Languages and Literacy, Mathematics and Numeracy, Religious and Moral Education, Sciences, Social Studies, Technologies**. These sit within four contexts for learning; ethos, curriculum areas and subjects, opportunities for personal achievement and interdisciplinary learning.

Opportunities to learn across disciplines will allow learners to develop and demonstrate the ability to apply a range of skills and abilities in flexible and creative ways within new and different contexts.

Each educational establishment will be responsible for developing a dynamic, differentiated curriculum within and across the eight curriculum areas and subjects. Through a progressive, coherent curriculum 3-18, practitioners will ensure that learners can effectively:

- Read, write and demonstrate communication skills
- Communicate in one or more languages other than English
- Apply literacy skills in everyday life
- Manage themselves in a range of social situations
- Demonstrate and use a range of mathematical skills in a variety of contexts
- Apply numeracy skills in everyday life
- Demonstrate the ability to make healthy lifestyle choices

- Participate in physical education and physical activity and understand the benefits
- Make use of existing and evolving technologies
- Apply the design process to create and evaluate an end product
- Apply scientific knowledge and skills and demonstrate understanding of their impact on our environment
- Demonstrate understanding of their place in society in past and present contexts
- Demonstrate an understanding of the interaction between the natural world and humankind
- Demonstrate understanding of the impact of political, environmental, ethical and economic issues locally, nationally and internationally
- Demonstrate understanding of a variety of religious and moral issues and their impact on societies
- Demonstrate the ability to apply expressive arts skills creatively or within a context

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Learning Entitlements 3 - 18

“Curriculum for Excellence allows for both professional autonomy and responsibility when planning and delivering the curriculum... The framework provides flexibility to organise, schedule and deliver the experiences and outcomes in ways that meet the needs of all learners...”. Page 14, **Building the Curriculum 3**

In addition to the Entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence our education provision will reflect local needs and circumstances. Therefore at different stages of their education our learners will have opportunities to:

- **Link aspects of their learning to the local environment and its heritage**
- **Participate in a residential experience where possible**
- **Participate in arts, sports and cultural events**
- **Participate in enterprising activities**
- **Participate in environmental projects**
- **Participate in a community project**
- **Participate in outdoor learning experiences**
- **Access appropriate technology**
- **Be consulted on and contribute to the decision-making process in school**
- **Experience work-based learning**
- **Develop collaborative, social, leadership and other life skills**
- **Access academic and vocational learning experiences**
- **Access learning experiences designed and/or delivered by relevant partners**
- **Reflect upon and be pro-active in planning and making choices about their own learning**
- **Engage with learners in other countries and demonstrate knowledge of their culture**

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Personal Support

"All learners are entitled to personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities provided..."
Page 5 **Building the Curriculum 3**

In order to support all learners to work to their full potential and to develop the attributes, dispositions and skills embedded in the four capacities we will work in partnership with parents and carers as well as other services to address long or short term barriers to learning. We will deliver our service in a way that creates capacity to provide additional support and early intervention. We will promote a culture of inclusion and mutual respect across education services.

The power of educational establishments in securing engagement with partners is key. In turn parents, carers and other partners will have an essential role to play in ensuring our aims are achieved. Support for this role can be found in the leaflet **Information and Guidance for Parents and Carers**.

In our educational establishments all staff will contribute to the creation of a positive, stimulating and supportive learning environment by:

- **Identifying concerns in respect of learners' physical and mental health**
- **Equipping learners to respect and care for themselves and others**
- **Equipping learners to be pro-active in seeking information and help**
- **Supporting learners with personal and educational issues**
- **Developing positive relationships, using restorative practices and pro-active anti-bullying strategies**

- **Using support systems to ensure development of appropriate social and behavioural skills**
- **Communicating with and including parents and carers in the support process**
- **Engaging with services provided by partners where necessary e.g. Health professionals.**
- **Adopting a systematic approach to reviewing and planning appropriate progression of learning**
- **Providing a mechanism which allows recognition of wider achievement**
- **Using targeted tracking systems; enabling purposeful reporting on achievement and attainment**
- **Ensuring that there are successful transition arrangements which promote continuity of learning and personal well-being**
- **Supporting learners making choices at all stages in their learning including transition to positive, sustained and successful destinations.**

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Achievement

"The purpose of the curriculum is to enable the child or young person to develop the four capacities." Page 22, **Building the Curriculum 3**

Our educational establishments will recognise the learner's effort and achievement within the four capacities through:

Successful Learners
Confident Individuals
Responsible Citizens
Effective Contributors

- **Formative assessment**
- **National Qualifications**
- **Certification such as Duke of Edinburgh, ASDAN, John Muir Award...**
- **Personal achievements in areas such as sport, the arts, community service...**
- **Personal learning targets**
- **Personal achievement in social, behavioural and motivational development**
- **Participation in a range of performances or events**

Falkirk Council's ongoing commitment to enabling learners to achieve in a wide range of contexts aligns well with this national purpose. If our learners are to develop the skills and attributes of the four capacities, they will require a curriculum which enables them to plan for and demonstrate achievement in personal, academic, sporting and cultural endeavours. We will now develop appropriate ways of recognising and reporting on the full range of young people's achievements.

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Conclusion



Learning to Achieve provides a clear vision for the strategic implementation of Curriculum for Excellence in all of our educational establishments.

It specifically supports:

- **Learning and Teaching**
- **Curriculum Design Principles**
- **Learning Outcomes**
- **Learner Entitlements**
- **Personal Support**
- **Achievement**

Learning to Achieve is the core policy for our education service and will be embedded in our daily practice. The policy will enable all who contribute to the delivery of the curriculum to conduct targeted self-evaluation using a learning improvement cycle. It is intended that this policy will be formally revised three years from publication as part of Falkirk Council Education Services' self-evaluation process.

Curriculum for Excellence has given Scottish education a new vision. The aim of the consultation and review process, culminating in this policy document, has been to enable our practitioners and service providers to create new strategies and move in new directions to meet the challenges and take full advantage of the opportunities provided by Curriculum for Excellence. This requires a significant shift in thinking which needs to be embraced by all.

