

By email  
Director of Education

2 May 2014

## **Curriculum for Excellence: National Implementation Plan 2014-15**

I am writing as Chair of the Curriculum for Excellence Implementation Group, to thank you for your contribution to another very important year in the process of realising fully the benefits of Curriculum for Excellence for Scottish learners. I also wish to share with you the national Implementation Plan for next year, 2014-15, and the progress report for activities on the 2013-14 Implementation Plan which is now nearing its final months. We have responded to feedback from practitioners by producing the forward plan a few months earlier this year to help assist you in your own planning processes for the year ahead.

### **Implementation Plan 2014-15**

The aim of publishing the 2014-15 Implementation Plan is to help you in planning local activity to take forward the next steps in your areas, establishments or services. The implementation plan sets out the objectives we need to achieve, the activities at local level that will be required to achieve these objectives and the national support that will be available.

The plan is designed to ensure that further support is provided in the areas which feedback suggests will be of most benefit. Activities include producing more guidance on planning for learning and assessment, programmes of engagement, national events, partnership work, CLD opportunities and much more. By providing support and guidance in all of these areas and more, the emphasis will be on ensuring that processes are effective but are also manageable and do not take valuable time away from learning and teaching. Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing will continue to be key priorities. The plan also sets out the further support being provided for the next phase of the introduction of new Highers which will be taken for the first time in 2015.

### **Progress Report**

The progress report provides a summary of progress made on the activities outlined previously in the Implementation Plan 2013-14 up to the end of January. It focuses on national activity and shows the significant amount of work that has been undertaken nationally this year and the extent of the progress that has been made.

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## **This year to date**

This year's exam diet is now underway. I know the Implementation Group are extremely conscious that a huge amount of work has gone into preparing learners for the new National Qualifications. This represents a very significant milestone, as we see the first awards of new National Qualifications being made to the first cohort of young people who have experienced CfE throughout their secondary schooling. There have certainly been many challenges for all concerned in the journey towards reaching this milestone. Challenges are not unexpected in such a major transformational change programme, but we are positive that as confidence grows in practitioners and learners it will become even clearer that CfE is absolutely the correct approach for education in Scotland and has the potential to provide huge benefits for our learners.

The extra funding and resources that were announced by the Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages earlier this year should have helped schools engage further with parents at a local level. Effective parental involvement is of vital importance throughout a young person's education. From national to local level, we are all still in a process of making sure that all parents understand why we are changing education in Scotland and the nature of the benefits that we expect these changes will bring. Whilst doing so, we need also to ensure we are listening to any concerns that learners or parents may have, responding to them in ways which build confidence and understanding.

Work continues across the project delivery partners to ensure our other stakeholders are also fully aware of the changes CfE is bringing. With significant work having already been undertaken with Universities and Colleges, employers are also now being targeted to help build their understanding of what CfE and the new qualifications will mean for them and their businesses.

I also wanted to let you know that Curriculum for Excellence Management Board has recently announced it is establishing a short-life working group to reflect on the first year of the new qualifications. The group will consider implementation experiences and provide feedback to schools and everyone involved in education to spread best practice for the second year of National Qualifications and the first year of the new Highers. The group will be chaired by Kenneth Muir, Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council for Scotland, and will be made up of representatives of several of the organisations on the Management Board including teaching unions, Directors of Education, parental representatives and national education agencies. It is also expected to take advice and input from others and will ensure that the all-important views of pupils are considered. Key recommendations made by this group will be added to the national implementation plan where appropriate.

In conclusion I hope you will agree that, whilst it has been a very challenging year in many respects, we have made substantial progress this year through a collective national effort across our education system. For my part, as I have visited education settings and services throughout the year, I have often found the innovation, enthusiasm and professionalism being demonstrated by practitioners across sectors and across the country to be truly inspirational. It is this professionalism and

commitment that will ensure learners increasingly experience the full benefits Curriculum for Excellence will provide in the years to come.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Maxwell". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Bill" and "Maxwell" being capitalized and prominent.

Bill Maxwell  
Chair of the Curriculum for Excellence Implementation Group