

curriculum for excellence:
health and wellbeing
across learning:
responsibilities of all
principles and practice

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Health and wellbeing across learning: responsibilities of all

Principles and practice

Learning through health and wellbeing promotes confidence, independent thinking and positive attitudes and dispositions. Because of this, it is the responsibility of every teacher to contribute to learning and development in this area.

Building the Curriculum 1

What are the main purposes of learning in health and wellbeing?

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Learning through health and wellbeing enables children and young people to:

- make informed decisions in order to improve their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- experience challenge and enjoyment
- experience positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves
- apply their mental, emotional, social and physical skills to pursue a healthy lifestyle
- make a successful move to the next stage of education or work
- establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life, and which will help to promote the health and wellbeing of the next generation of Scottish children.

What are practitioners' roles and responsibilities for health and wellbeing?

Children and young people should feel happy, safe, respected and included in the school environment and all staff should be proactive in promoting positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and the wider school community. Robust policies and practice which ensure the safety and wellbeing of children should already be in place.

Good health and wellbeing is central to effective learning and preparation for successful independent living. This aspiration for every child and young person can only be met through a concerted approach; schools and their partners working together closely to plan their programmes for health and wellbeing explicitly, taking account of local circumstances and individual needs. The diagram on page 4 illustrates this shared vision and common goal.

How is the 'health and wellbeing across learning' framework structured?

The framework begins by describing features of the environment for learning which will support and nurture the health and wellbeing of children and young people, including a positive ethos and relationships, and participation in activities which promote a healthy lifestyle. These statements are intended to help to inform planning and practice within establishments or clusters and also by individual practitioners.

In the version which summarises those aspects which are the responsibility of all practitioners, the framework continues with experiences and outcomes which include those in mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing, aspects of planning for choices and changes, and relationships.

Many of the experiences and outcomes span two or more levels; some are written to span from early to fourth because they are applicable throughout life. All of these should be revisited regularly in ways which take account of the stage of development and understanding of each child and young person and are relevant and realistic for them.

Health and wellbeing across learning: the responsibility of all practitioners

Everyone within each learning community, whatever their contact with children and young people may be, shares the responsibility for creating a positive ethos and climate of respect and trust – one in which everyone can make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of each individual within the school and the wider community. There are many ways in which establishments can assist young people. These include peer support, buddies, breakfast or lunch clubs, safe areas, mentors, pupil support staff, and extended support teams.

The responsibilities of all include each practitioner's role in establishing open, positive, supportive relationships across the school community, where children and young people will feel that they are listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives; in promoting a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure; in modelling behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and encouraging it in others; through using learning and teaching methodologies which promote effective learning; and by being sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person. Practical responsibilities include understanding of anti-discriminatory, anti-bullying and child protection policies by all staff and knowledge of the steps to be taken in any given situation, including appropriate referral.

Partnership working

Children's and young people's learning in health and wellbeing benefits strongly from close involvement with children and young people and their parents or carers and partnership between teachers and colleagues such as home link staff, health professionals, educational psychologists and sports coaches. Partners can make complementary contributions through their specialist expertise and knowledge. Effective partnership working:

- engages the active support of parents and carers
- reinforces work across transitions and planning across sectors
- maximises the contributions of the wider community
- draws upon specialist expertise
- ensures, through careful planning and briefing, that all contributions come together in ways which achieve coherence and progression.

Personal support for children and young people

The health and wellbeing of every child and young person is greatly enhanced through the individual support and pastoral care which they receive through having an identified member of staff who knows and understands them and can support them in facing changes and challenges and in making choices. Members of staff are often best placed to identify even minor changes of mood in a child or young person which could reflect an important emotional, social or mental health issue with which that child or young person needs help or support. It is important that children and young people feel that they can share their anxieties with an appropriate individual who has the skills, rapport, responsibility and the time to listen and to help, or can identify appropriate sources of support.

What factors need to be taken into account in planning for health and wellbeing?

Children's capacities to learn are shaped by their background and home circumstances as well as by their individual development. Exposure to different social and environmental influences contributes to the way that attitudes, values and behaviours are formed. These in turn affect their ability to make and take decisions.

Progression and development in many aspects of health and wellbeing will depend upon the stage of growth, development and maturity of the individual, upon social issues and upon the community context. Teachers and other practitioners in planning together will take account of these factors, ensuring that experiences are relevant and realistic for the child or young person in his or her circumstances. Particularly within experiences and outcomes which span more than one level, careful planning will be required to ensure appropriate pace and coverage, and teachers and other practitioners will need to decide when and how the experiences and outcomes are introduced. The planning arrangements within which local authorities,

schools and teachers work must ensure that these decisions are taken in the best interests of each child and young person and take account of his or her social and personal circumstances as necessary.

What are features of effective learning and teaching in health and wellbeing?

Effective learning and teaching in health and wellbeing:

- engages children and young people and takes account of their views and experiences, particularly where decisions are to be made that may impact on life choices
- takes account of research and successful practice in supporting the learning and development of children and young people, particularly in sensitive areas such as substance misuse
- uses a variety of approaches including active, cooperative and peer learning and effective use of technology
- encourages and capitalises on the potential to experience learning and new challenges in the outdoor environment
- encourages children and young people to act as positive role models for others within the educational community
- leads to a lasting commitment in children and young people to follow a healthy lifestyle by participation in experiences which are varied, relevant, realistic and enjoyable
- helps to foster health in families and communities through work with a range of professions, parents and carers, and children and young people, and enables them to understand the responsibilities of citizenship
- harnesses the experience and expertise of different professions to make specialist contributions, including developing enterprise and employability skills.

How can I make connections within and beyond health and wellbeing?

Whatever their contributions to the curriculum as a whole, all practitioners can make connections between the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes and their learning and teaching in other areas of the curriculum.

Within health and wellbeing, physical education can build learners' physical competences, improve aspects of fitness, and develop personal and interpersonal skills and attributes in preparation for leading a fulfilling, active and healthy lifestyle. The Scottish Government expects schools to continue to work towards the provision of at least two hours of good quality physical education for every child, every week.

The diagram below illustrates the shared vision and common goal

