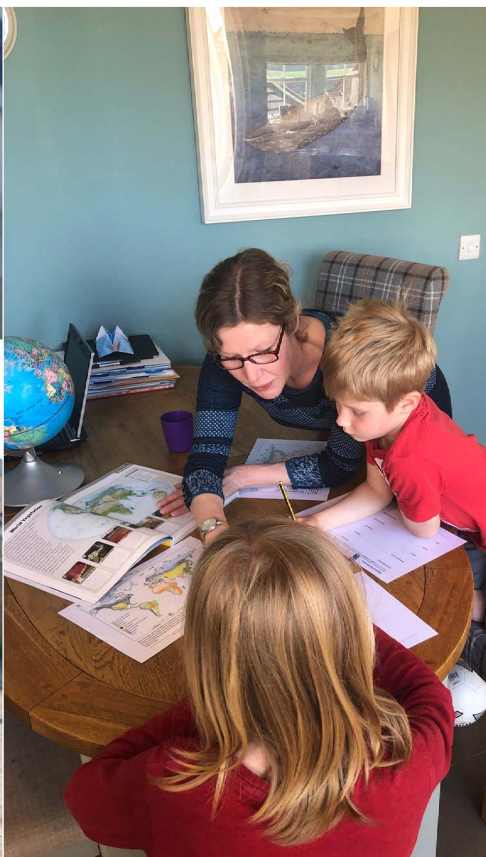


Scotland Learns

Practitioner Newsletter

14 May 2020



Issue 1

Hints and tips for supporting children and young people with autism

Links to new learning activities on [#ScotlandLearns](#)

Support for practitioners to develop online learning opportunities

Sharing practice about the refreshed narrative for Curriculum for Excellence

Much positive work has already been undertaken by teachers and education professionals across Scotland to support continuity in learning while most schools remain closed. Many schools quickly established a planned approach to providing ongoing lessons, tasks and activities for learners. Teachers and practitioners are best placed to know the context within which children and young people are now learning.

Each week, we will publish suggestions for learning at home activities for literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics, health and wellbeing and a context for learning that will focus on other areas of the curriculum. These are intended to complement the work you are already carrying out in school, establishments and local authorities and should be linked to class learning where appropriate. The weekly updates will have a clear focus on supporting you, as educators, in creating ideas and learning activities that are challenging, not heavily reliant on resources, and that develop children's and young people's independence in learning. We will also be sharing hints and tips as well as helpful links and ideas from sharing practice from across Scotland.

Learning activities

New learning activities have been uploaded on the [#ScotlandLearns](#) this week to help practitioners plan for children's learning at home. These resources are divided into Curriculum for Excellence levels and will be added to weekly.

In the coming weeks we will be sharing more learning activities to support young people in the senior phase.

Literacy and English



Our ideas for literacy and English this week will help children to use their skills to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings and plan their days.

- An activity for younger children at early level to help children develop their communication and language skills, creativity and enjoyment through story-telling and games.
- Children at first level are encouraged to engage in conversation with others whilst at home to develop their skills in having two-way conversations.
- For children at second level they can develop their listening and talking skills through observing and identify techniques used by others to get their messages across. They can then recreate their own weather forecast, tourist or school information leaflet.
- This week's literacy tasks for young people at third and fourth level are designed to help them write a letter or create a journal where people in the future will be able to gain an understanding of their personal experience.

[See the full range of literacy and English activities for this week.](#)

Numeracy and mathematics



This week's numeracy and mathematics activities focus on ideas to support you to design a play-based activity which you can use or adapt for learners. It is important to think about the range of learners in your class and their individual circumstances when planning play-based activities.

- Younger children at early level can set up their own pretend shop, learn to recognise, compare and explore 2D shapes and 3D objects and sort and match items into groups.
- Children at first level use money to work out how much items cost and how much change they should receive. Use mathematical language to name and classify 2D shapes and 3D objects and explore weights using the context of cooking at home.
- Children at second level carry out money calculations to inform affordability, understand the relationship between 3D objects and their nets using the context of baking at home.
- Young people at third and fourth level solve problems related to a family's ages, investigate real-life problems involving the surface area of simple 3D shapes and decide which type of average is most appropriate to use.

[See the full range of numeracy and mathematics activities for this week.](#)

Learning activities



Health and wellbeing



Looking after our health and wellbeing as best we can is really important for us all in these uncertain times. Children need to relax, get some exercise, enjoy the fresh air out outdoors and keep a positive focus.

We have ideas and activities appropriate for children and young people at different ages that you might like to highlight to families. We have activities for older children and young people focused on staying safe online.

- Early level activities to support children explore foods and build awareness of a healthy diet. Exploring how to move, manage and control the body and share space.
- Children at first level can do small things to improve fitness and have some fun. They can set challenges or measure their heartrate when doing different activities. Investigate the range of foods available and discuss how they contribute to a healthy diet.
- Children at second level can learn about food groups and advice on healthy and balanced diets. Increase physical activity and improve personal fitness. Over the course of a week they can try to build up from a walk to a jog.
- Young people at third and fourth level can learn about safe and hygienic practices, particularly in the kitchen. The Resilience Alphabet includes ideas and activities to help you child build inner strength and wellbeing.

[See the full range of health and wellbeing activities for this week.](#)

Interdisciplinary learning activities



Each week, we will suggest activities that cover different curriculum areas for children and young people learning at home. These learning activities encourage children to apply their learning and skills in real-life situations. This week's theme is about the environment, fire safety and customer surveys.

- Younger children at early level can investigate the properties and purposes of everyday objects through play. They are encouraged to look closely at their local environment while out walking to help develop an awareness of the world around them.
- Children at first level can create a family quiz to help develop children's skills in finding, organising and presenting information in a way that engages the audience. Identify ways to help children understand the importance of drinking more water.
- Children at second level can design a fire safety plan using a range of skills to produce an important end product. Develop their skills in an additional language in a real-life context.
- Young people at third and fourth level can use a poem about friendship to stimulate their learning and creativity or can explore and think of ways to manage the impact of human action on the environment.

[See the full range of interdisciplinary learning activities for this week.](#)

Hints and tips

Additional Support Needs (ASN)

Children with autism can find the change of routine from attending school to learning at home a challenging transition. You can use some of the following approaches and strategies to support children with autism to engage better with learning activities.

- Provide a clear routine for children. Use appropriate labelling and visual aids to support children's understanding.
- Personalise your planning of tasks and activities to take account of the needs of individual children. Use reasonable adjustments to ensure that learning is sufficiently challenging.
- Try to be flexible with your routines and incorporate the views of children and parents as much as possible. This can support parents to take ownership of tasks and activities, and help children to overcome any anxieties they may have about learning at home.
- Encourage parents to include children in developing and designing their learning space at home. This will enable them to share ideas and feel included.
- Use a balance of tasks and activities. Include ways for children to incorporate their interests into learning activities.
- Ensure that there are frequent opportunities for children to engage in practical learning activities (cooking, gardening), construction tasks (model building, den building) and the use of digital technology (research, education games).
- Provide ways for children to converse and interact with others where possible. This could include structured and supervised use of social media.
- Build in regular opportunities for children to play, relax and exercise. Movement breaks can be particularly beneficial in supporting children. A movement break (sometimes called a sensory break) is a planned activity which can help support children to retain focus or avoid becoming over-stimulated. The same activity can be effective for both.

Useful advice on movement breaks can be found on the [National Autistic Society website](#).

Creating a sensory story in seven steps

Sensory stories can be a great way to support a learner who is coping with change. The unexpected transitions which all learners have and will continue to experience, may bring heightened levels of anxiety, stress and distress for some learners. Sensory stories are an engaging way for learners to relax and learn about change and new experiences through their senses, using familiar repetition which helps build their confidence.

A sensory story is quite short with each sentence accompanied by a sensory stimulus. When choosing a stimulus it is important to make it a good touch experience such as feeling a cuddly toy or feeling the air from a hairdryer on the sole of your foot. The key to creating a sensory story is using imagination and all five senses. Familiar sensory stories for young children may be Incy Wincey spider, or the Gingerbread Man. Alternatives for older learners could include the 'clap for carers' or a rainbow story.

Here are seven steps to creating your own story.

1. Choose a favourite book, story or theme that both the learner and parent will enjoy. Ensure it is personalised to the learner's skills, knowledge and interests. Consider how any relevant individual learning priorities may be incorporated into the story telling.
2. Create about 10 simple sentences that tell the whole story in summary.
3. Pick a key word in each of the sentences. These keywords need to be the best that can tell the story. They will usually include the who/what/where words and verbs.
4. Find props to bring the story to life and that engage a range of senses. It helps if the props represent the chosen keywords. For example, props can be an under the stairs cupboard for a dark cave, or crushed cereal for sand.
5. Try to use props which make sounds, such as pan lids for thunder sounds. Encourage learners to make sounds and gestures to join in as you tell the story.
6. Use your imagination. Rain can be your fingers patting on the table or a water spray made from a plastic milk bottle. The more stimuli you give learners to help them understand the better.
7. Repeat your story several times. Repetition is very important when using sensory stories to help children and young people to learn.

Hints and tips



Check more information on [Pamis website](#)



Assessment

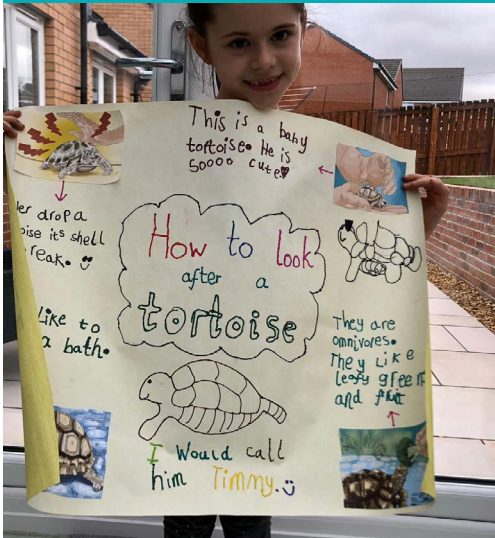


What is working well for practitioners and families?

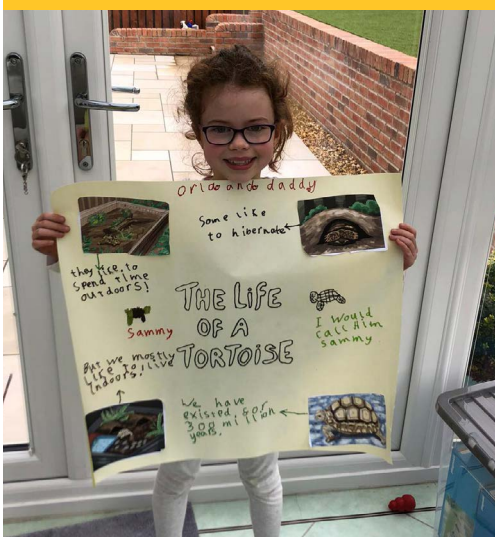
Across Scotland, and the rest of the world, practitioners are adapting their learning, teaching and assessment approaches to best meet the needs of children, young people and their families during this period of school closures. Colleagues from across Education Scotland have been gathering information about what is working well, drawn from the emerging practice over the first six weeks of remote learning.

We aim to regularly review the main points of guidance as we learn more about what is working well and share practice examples from schools and local authorities across Scotland. The main points are:

- Make sure that you have regular contact with your learners to find out about their learning in the context of current challenges and opportunities.
- Use assessment approaches that will allow your learners to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum, taking account of their individual needs and circumstances.
- Encourage parents and carers to support and capture learning in ways that work for them.
- Strengthen the ability of your children and young people to plan and assess their own learning.
- Establish how you will record the progress being made by learners in term 4 and use this to inform next steps in learning for session 2020/21.



See [guidance paper](#), with links to practice



Links



Support for Practitioners

All practitioners who are planning for online learning and learning at home can find support and resources on the [National Improvement Hub](#).

Key resources to support the delivery of online learning at home include:

[Learning and teaching online: Practitioner Guidance](#) - Advice, guidance and considerations for all practitioners who are engaging in the delivery of teaching and learning online.

[Upcoming Webinars](#): Live webinars for practitioners to support delivering online and remotely.

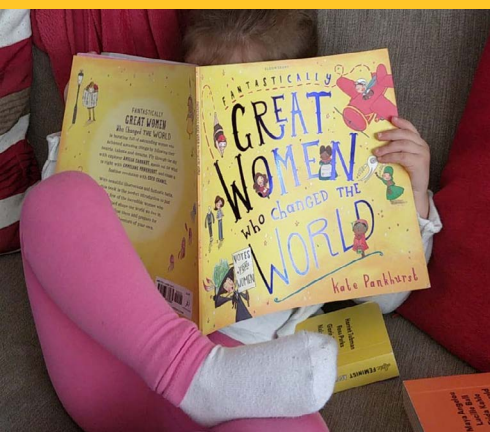
Children's Parliament Resources and Survey

The [Children's Parliament website](#) contains information and resources to support children and young people with the changes they are facing in their lives. This includes the Corona Times Journal, a fortnightly magazine and monthly children's How are you doing? survey.

Wellbeing: [Resilience Alphabet](#)

- Education Scotland in collaboration with Martha Simpson and Philip Wong and Aberdeen City Council Education Team have created a Resilience Alphabet to support learner wellbeing.
- Aimed at 7 – 12 year olds, the resource has 26 letters with an image, a definition and activities to THINK about, SAY and Do. The Resilience Alphabet includes ideas and activities to help build inner strength and wellbeing. You may wish to use these activities during Mental Health Awareness Week, which starts on the 18 May.
- The resource can be used on-line, an accessible voice over Sway version is also available, or it can be printed off and used as part of an activity or discussion.

Links



What's New This Week

Professional Learning Community Numeracy and Mathematics

A reviewed, refreshed and strengthened Numeracy and Mathematics Professional Learning Community has been launched on Glow this week with new content, support, [online learning modules and resources](#) to support practitioners in our current context.

National Numeracy Day

This is an annual celebration is for anyone who wishes to build their confidence with everyday numbers.

The focus of this year's campaign is on the following three themes:

1. Helping children to learn (at home)
2. Improving self-confidence and skills (in adults)
3. Weathering the storm, financially

This year's event was held on Wednesday 13 May as a virtual festival with a [series of videos](#) and designed for learners of all ages. You can find further resources at [numeracy day website](#).



National Numeracy Day
Wednesday 13 May

Sharing Practice

Subscribe to this Newsletter: Why not get this newsletter emailed directly to you each week? Simply [sign up to receive](#). Please pass it on to anyone you think might be interested.

Learning across the four contexts at Laxdale Primary School



Opportunities for personal achievement

- Helping Shen/Grandpa in the croft by looking after a new born lamb.
- Creating a garden plot as part of HIS Accredited Youth Award

Interdisciplinary Learning

- Learning from Grandparents about how transport has changed over the generations.
- Learning how to plant potatoes with help from big brother!

Ethos and life of the school as a community

- Saying thanks to the local NHS and key workers.
- 5k Run for Heroes fundraiser

Curriculum areas and subjects

- Harry, along with his dad, chose 10 tools from the garage to help him learn the "Stories of 10".
- Science experiment to create 'fireworks in a glass' - oil is less dense than water.

The Curriculum the totality of all that is planned for children and young people throughout their education

Refreshed Curriculum for Excellence Narrative

As part of the refreshed narrative on Scotland's curriculum, schools and establishments are taking different approaches to sharing learning across the four contexts. There are PowerPoint examples with materials which you might want to adapt for sharing learning in your own setting.

[See examples](#) from West Lothian Inclusion Service and Laxdale Primary School, Lewis, Western Isles.