

## Context and Supporting Information 2021-22

### Content:

1. National Plans and Priorities
2. Local Authority Strategic Plans and Partnerships
3. The National Creative Learning Network
4. Creative Learning Networks
5. Useful links

### 1. National Plans and Priorities

**[The 2021 National Improvement Framework \(NIF\) and Improvement Plan](#) sets out the vision and priorities for Scottish education that have been agreed across the system, and the national improvement activity that needs to be undertaken to help deliver those key priorities. This complements the ongoing implementation of [Scotland's Curriculum](#), [Getting It Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#), and [Developing the Young Workforce \(DYW\)](#), which are the three supporting pillars of the Scottish education system.**

In March 2020, three months after the Scottish Government had set out the priority improvement activities in the 2020 NIF and Improvement Plan, school buildings closed as a result of COVID-19.

The review of the NIF in Autumn 2020 produced a clear consensus that broad stability in the priorities and drivers of improvement was desirable. Equally, it was considered important to ensure that the NIF reflects changing priorities due to COVID-19. A number of issues were raised during the review, including the need to focus on recovery, provide certainty in a world where very little feels secure, and support those who need it most with an increased focus on the health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff. It was agreed that more emphasis should be placed on the needs of children and young people with additional support needs. The impact of COVID-19 and school closure on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing is a key focus of recovery across the system.

*“Since the onset of COVID-19, the Scottish Government has placed protecting the interests of children and young people at the heart of our response. Schools remaining safe, open and welcoming – with a focus on health, wellbeing and intensified support for reducing inequity and enabling the highest quality of learning and teaching – has been a critical component of that priority.”*

### **[2021 National Improvement Framework and Implementation Plan](#)**

**[GIRFEC](#)** places the rights and wellbeing of children and young people at the heart of the services that support them, including early years and childcare providers and schools, to ensure that everyone works together to improve outcomes for a child or young person. It is based on [values and principles](#) which support children's and parents' rights.

The purpose of [Scotland's Curriculum](#) is to provide young people with the skills, knowledge and experiences to prepare them for their life beyond school and the best possible opportunity to fulfil their potential. As part of their learner journey, all children and young people in Scotland are entitled to experience a coherent curriculum from 3 to 18, in order that they have opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to adapt, think critically and flourish in today's world. The term 'curriculum' is understood to mean everything that is planned for children and young people throughout their education, not just what happens in the classroom.

*“Maximising opportunities that develop the four capacities for learners, making clear links to future skills, for example meta-skills”*

*“Embedding [Creativity](#) and [Learning for Sustainability](#) in curriculum design”*

**(From the Refreshed Narrative on Scotland's Curriculum - How We Do It)**

[Developing the Young Workforce \(DYW\)](#) is the Scottish Government's Youth Employment strategy to better prepare young people for the world of work. The employer-led Developing the Young Workforce Regional Groups set up across Scotland are connecting employers with education. They are currently working hard to respond to the changing circumstances regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, which will undoubtedly drive a change in the way DYW is delivered across Scotland. Regional Groups continue to be on hand to support employers, educators and young people. DYW supports the delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee, you can find more information on [My World of Work](#) or connect with your [Regional DYW Group](#) to discuss how you can get involved.

The [Scottish Attainment Challenge \(SAC\)](#) is about achieving equity in education. This can be achieved by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The SAC is underpinned by The National Improvement Framework, Scotland's Curriculum and Getting it Right for Every Child.

The [Scottish Attainment Challenge Equity Audit](#) deepens understanding of the impact COVID-19 and school closures had on children and young people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Two [sketchnotes](#) have been produced to share some of the key findings of the Equity Audit. Although most school buildings were closed, some families, particularly those who had been identified as vulnerable, were referred to local childcare hubs where children could access learning, physical activities and arts and crafts and families could access respite support.

*“The Hub's focus on childcare, with creative solutions to engage the children and young people, is linked to higher-than-expected levels of engagement, and the paper suggests an opportunity to consider the design of the curriculum to incorporate new or different learning opportunities.” (Chapman et al, 2020 c)*

Taken as a whole, the initiatives outlined above prepare our learners for life and work in a future that is unpredictable and rapidly changing. The current educational landscape, particularly in the context of the global pandemic, continues to place a strong emphasis on the development of skills for the future - or meta-skills - which include creativity.

*'...the question to ask now is not why creativity is important for the lives of students in the 21st century, but rather, how creativity can be embedded in every young person's education, everywhere, in a fast-changing world.'*

**Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning and National Programmes, V&A in Creativity Matters No.1, LEGO Foundation.**

*'The kinds of skill that are now easiest to automate are also those that are easiest to teach. We can solve this dilemma by teaching ways of thinking, including thinking creatively and outside the box.'*

*'We need to do more to support educators worldwide in recognising, promoting and rewarding creative thinking, as well as thinking creatively about their own work too.'*

*'Creative thinking can provide a key source of engagement for young people at school, as it can help them to discover, define and develop their talents.'*

**Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills, and Special Advisor on Education Policy to the Secretary-General at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**

*'[Meta-skills are] timeless, higher order skills that support the development of additional skills and promote success in whatever context the future brings'*

**[Skills 4.0 – a skills model to drive Scotland's future \(Skills Development Scotland\)](#)**

*'We recognise, in particular, the importance of creativity and innovation for economic growth and the strong synergies that exist between STEM and creativity.'*

**[Raising Aspirations in Science Education \(RAiSE\) pilot Final evaluation report May 2019](#)**

*'The ability to develop key skills of initiative, ability to work with others, problem-solve and keep up with digital advances is being stripped out, and yet when young people are squeezed out of education this is just what employers are looking for.'*

**Ollie Bray, Director, Connective Play, LEGO Foundation, in an interview in The Guardian, Tuesday 18 September 2018**

## **Scotland's Curriculum**

As a higher order skill for learning, life and work, creativity is integral to all curriculum areas and themes. Creativity is central to the achievement of the four capacities: successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens. In addition, a creative learning environment has known benefits in supporting each of the principles of curriculum design: challenge and enjoyment; breadth; progression; depth; personalisation and choice; coherence; and relevance to learning experiences.

*'Creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation is increasingly embedded across learning.'*

### **How Good Is Our School? QI 3.3 Increasing Creativity and Employability**

*'Planning strongly reflects children's ideas and interests and shows how practitioners very effectively respond to and promote their creativity, inquiry and curiosity.'*

### **How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare? QI 1.2 Leadership of Learning**

*'We work well with partners to ensure creative and innovative approaches to curriculum development are encouraged and support positive outcomes for learners.'*

### **How Good Is Our School? QI 2.2 Curriculum**

Creative Learning Networks (CLNs) should reflect the ethos of Scotland's Curriculum when developing new initiatives. An overarching focus is on the quality of pupils' learning experiences with an emphasis on what and how they 'learn' rather than what they 'do'. Education professionals are expected to involve learners in the planning of relevant, engaging and appropriately challenging learning experiences. Learners are also supported to develop understanding and ownership of their own learning journeys and to be able to articulate this to others. Active learning which takes place in relevant and meaningful contexts can motivate learners and offer the opportunity to solve problems collaboratively. Learners should be supported to make connections across learning and transfer their skills into new and unfamiliar situations.

**How Good is Our School? 4<sup>th</sup> edition** is a nationally and internationally recognised framework for self-evaluation and continuous improvement. Creativity features throughout the document and the quality indicator on creativity and employability skills includes the following level 5 illustration of creativity skills:

*'Creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation is increasingly embedded across learning. Children and young people benefit from learning and teaching through partnerships with education, employers, creative industries and cultural sectors. Learners are confident and ambitious with high levels of self-esteem. They are motivated to explore and challenge*

*assumptions. Children and young people take ownership of their own learning and thinking. They are imaginative, open-minded, confident risk-takers, and appreciate issues from different perspectives. They can ask questions, make connections across disciplines, envisage what might be possible and not possible, explore ideas, identify problems and seek and justify solutions’.*

[Scotland’s Creative Learning Plan](#) was first published in 2013, setting out a shared vision for the importance of creativity in education and as a result we have seen growth in a shared language and common understanding of creativity and creativity skills.

In light of the current landscape and the impact of COVID-19, a rapid rethinking of Scotland’s education, skills employability and careers provision has been required. As part of this, Scotland’s Creative Learning Plan now has a fresh look, underpinned by the key principles of being aspirational, values-based, and inclusive.

The new vision is **to ensure the Scottish education system enables everyone to recognise, develop and apply their creativity to ensure they thrive in an increasingly complex and fast-changing world**, with 3-year outcomes focused on:

- Learners’ mental health and wellbeing
- Creativity skills
- Learner participation
- Curriculum design
- Quality cultural experiences

The Mission is **to embed creativity at the centre of Scottish education and adopt a collaborative culture where all learners are empowered, creative and confident.**

The values-based goals are:

**Collaborate** We will engage and participate through collaborative, sustainable and impactful networks and relationships, so that conditions are right for creativity to flourish across all places of learning.

**Empower** We will co-create the conditions and environments in which all learners lead their learning and apply their creativity.

**Embed** We will ensure creativity is embedded, prioritised and actively informs curriculum rationale and that all learners’ creativity is explicit throughout their learning journey.

A Steering Group consisting of representatives from ADES, Creative Scotland, Education Scotland, Glasgow Colleges Regional Board, GTCS, National Parent Forum for Scotland (NFPS), Scottish Council of Deans of Education, SDS, SQA, and local authority creative

learning leads, has been established to take a strategic lead on the implementation of the plan. The purpose of this group is:

*'To promote creativity as essential to improvement across every aspect of education, and to collate, contextualise and disseminate examples of effective practice and research evidence of the impact of creativity on outcomes for learners. The group offers support to facilitate creative change, support the delivery of creative learning and build collaboration between sectors and cultures.'*

...and its overall aim is:

*'For our actions to result in improved outcomes for children, young people and their families through engagement with creativity.'*

### **Creative Learning Steering Group - Terms of Reference (May 2021)**

CLNs are a key delivery mechanism of the Creative Learning Plan (CLP), their work being fundamental to its implementation across Scotland. Short-term working groups, consisting of CLN coordinators and partners are established to deliver against specific tasks, such as events or research, as and when required.

The work of the National Creative Learning Network (NCLN) and local authority CLNs is therefore closely aligned with the Refreshed Creative Learning Plan which comprises five 3-year outcomes:

- Creativity embedded in curriculum design
- Learners' mental health and wellbeing is improved
- Learners confidently applying creativity skills in all contexts
- Learners directly influencing their own creative learning
- Quality cultural experiences accessible to all learners

The Creative Learning Plan and the National Creative Learning Network initiative are collectively underpinned by a National level Strategic Partnership<sup>1</sup> between Creative Scotland and Education Scotland.

---

<sup>1</sup> Education Scotland (ES) and Creative Scotland (CS) have a Strategic Partnership Agreement which recognises a shared commitment to developing creativity within a learning context. Since 2010, the two organisations have contributed to a joint fund which has been used to support local authorities to build capacity for creativity across learning, and to support the formation of a National Creative Learning Network. Since 2016, the fund has supported the implementation of the CLP.

## [A Culture Strategy for Scotland](#)

Scottish Government's A Culture Strategy for Scotland (Feb 2020) places culture as a central consideration across all policy areas including education and entrusts both Education Scotland and Creative Scotland with working together in helping to improve cultural experiences for learners.

## [The UNCRC](#)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, or UNCRC, is the basis of all of UNICEF's work. It is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history. The UNCRC comes into Scots Law around the end of 2021. The following articles are particularly relevant to the work of the Creative Learning Networks:

### [- Article 13](#)

Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

### [- Article 29](#)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents, and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment

### [- Article 31](#)

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

## **2. Local Authority Strategic Plans and Partnerships**

CLN initiatives should be developed within the context of the specific local authority area's strategic plans and partnerships.

### **Community planning**

Community Planning is a process which helps public agencies to work together and with the community to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives. It was introduced by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

The Community Empowerment Act lists all the public authorities which take part in community planning and places new duties on them. These authorities form a Community Planning Partnership (CPP) for each local authority area.

---

The CPP must prepare and publish a local outcomes improvement plan (LOIP) which sets out the local outcomes which the CPP will prioritise for improvement.

Tackling inequalities will be a specific focus. They must also produce 'locality plans' at a more local level for areas experiencing disadvantages. All partners must take account of these plans in carrying out their functions and must contribute appropriate resources to improve the priority outcomes.

Participation with communities lies at the heart of community planning. CPPs must support community bodies to participate in all parts of the process, in the development, design and delivery of plans and in review, revision and reporting of progress.' ([Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act: summary - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Community-Planning/Community-Planning-Act-2016))

### **Community Planning Partnerships**

Community Planning is a process which helps public agencies to work together with the community to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives. The aims of Community Planning in Scotland are:

- making sure people and communities are genuinely engaged in the decisions made on public services which affect them; allied to
- a commitment from organisations to work together, not apart, in providing better public services.

There are two further key principles in addition to the two main aims outlined above:

- Community Planning as the key over-arching partnership framework helping to co-ordinate other initiatives and partnerships and where necessary acting to rationalise and simplify a cluttered landscape.
- the ability of Community Planning to improve the connection between national priorities and those at regional, local and neighbourhood levels.

### **Community Learning and Development**

Community learning and development (CLD) is a field of practice that enables people to identify their own individual and collective goals, to engage in learning and take action to bring about change for themselves and their communities

The focus on CLD activity in Scotland is:

- 1) Improved life chances for people of all ages, including young people in particular, through learning, personal development and active citizenship.
- 2) Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential, and inclusive communities

CLD practitioners work in many different settings in the public and third sectors. CLD is widely understood to include:

- community development
- youth work, family learning and other early intervention work with children, young people and families



- community-based adult learning, including adult literacies and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the community
- volunteer development; and
- learning support and guidance in the community.

### **The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013** place a legal requirement on local authorities to:

- ensure communities across Scotland – particularly those which are disadvantaged – have access to the CLD support they need.
- Publish plans every 3 years containing information about the provision of community learning and development
- strengthen coordination between the full range of CLD providers in all sectors
- reinforce the role of communities and learners in the assessment, planning and evaluation processes, enabling them to shape CLD provision; and
- articulate the important role and contribution of CLD and make it more visible

Creativity plays an important role in encouraging successful CLD outcomes. Creativity also has a key role in enabling communities to express their views and their identity, influence decision makers, develop services and shape their future.

Creative approaches are often the most successful way of engaging with young people, adult learners and community groups. Community learning and development approaches use these to support areas such as literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing to assist people of all ages to achieve their potential. Partnership working can also play an important part in the delivery of opportunities for all learners including young people in the community, particularly supporting communities to use creative solution-focused approaches to issue

### **3. The National Creative Learning Network**

The NCLN is a strong community of practice with a leadership role in championing and advocating creativity across learning both nationally and in local authorities across Scotland. The NCLN is delivering on the purpose of the CLN Fund, which is:

To support CLNs to implement Scotland's refreshed Creative Learning Plan championing creativity, the arts and culture in schools and communities within the overarching context of Scotland's Curriculum and for the long-term benefits to learners.

Aims:

- To develop a shared language and understanding of creativity and its role across every aspect of learning, teaching and continuous improvement.
- To raise awareness of creativity and its practical application as a higher order thinking skill and as a cross-cutting theme across Scotland's Curriculum.

- To raise levels and standards of creativity in learning, teaching, and assessment in both formal and community learning contexts.
- To provide leadership on national priorities in creativity in learning for local and national partners.
- To sustain strategic partnerships between the education, community, and cultural sectors locally and nationally.
- To better connect the arts and cultural sectors with education and community learning settings to inspire, empower and support learners to develop 'in' and 'through' the arts and creativity across the curriculum.
- To stimulate creativity in our leaders, practitioners, and learners.

The NCLN consists of the group of coordinators leading CLN funded activities for each local authority. This professional learning community provides a leadership role in championing and advocating creativity across learning both nationally and in Scottish local authorities. It shares a sense of purpose and direction which is ambitious and challenging, encouraging local authority colleagues and partners to engage in creative learning initiatives.

#### 4. [Creative Learning Networks](#)

Local authority CLNs are a key delivery mechanism of Scotland's Creative Learning Plan, helping to ensure that key messages are embedded in their work with educators, practitioners, partners and learners. They provide high quality learning experiences, practical support and conversations on creative leadership, creative teaching, creative learning, creative change and the conditions in which they can flourish. CLNs should be informing, challenging, and innovating - visibly implementing the refreshed Creative Learning Plan vision, mission and values-based goals.

Working in partnership with Education Services, CLNs are required to support learning communities to embed creativity in leadership, curriculum design, improvement planning and learning and teaching as set out in HGIOS 4. They must demonstrate that they are taking proactive steps to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and remove barriers for protected characteristic groups.

CLNs are having significant impact, building capacity by championing and advocating creativity across learning and helping to unlock learners' creativity.

CLNs work at all levels and across sectors. They might, for example:

- work effectively with senior leadership teams to influence policy
- have strong links with Education Services and a strategic involvement in planning
- work closely with learning establishment leaders, practitioners and partners to deliver CLP outcomes through CLPL and Creative Conversations.

The following summary is drawn from a national progress report on the impact of the CLN Fund, 2019:

The work of CLNs continues to contribute to the growth in the number of schools that are including creativity as a school improvement priority and to the development of creativity across a range of curriculum areas. There is increasing evidence that learners and practitioners are connecting creativity skills with a range of contexts including STEM, employability, arts and music.

Partnership working at both strategic and operational levels continues to be a key feature of the work of CLNs. The focus on partnerships being used effectively to deliver highly engaging creative learning by CLNs has increased, with 81% identifying this as a strong priority, up from 73% in 2017/18. Engagement in CLN activities by a range of education and creative professionals continues to contribute to a shared understanding of creativity and creativity skills and their role in the development of skills for learning, life and work. The strong priority placed on the recognition, articulation and value of creativity skills by leaders, practitioners and learners continues to rise with the greatest increase in priority, from 27% in 2017/18 to 44% in 2018/19. However, the biggest change has been the increase in CLNs identifying learners and practitioners engaging in dialogue about the development of creativity skills as a strong focus of their work. This has risen from 33% in 2017/18 to 63% in 2018/19.

## 5. Other useful links

### [Creativity Across Learning 3-18 Curriculum Impact Report](#)

Education Scotland report containing useful definitions of creativity, creative learning, creative teaching and creativity skills.

### [World Economic Forum: The Future of Jobs report](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic-induced lockdowns and related global recession of 2020 have created a highly uncertain outlook for the labour market and accelerated the arrival of the future of work. The *Future of Jobs Report 2020* aims to shed light on: 1) the pandemic-related disruptions thus far in 2020, contextualized within a longer history of economic cycles, and 2) the expected outlook for technology adoption, jobs and skills in the next five years.

### [Building a Common Language for Skills at Work – A Global Taxonomy](#)

The combination of the ongoing COVID-19-related global recession and increased automation in the future of work has led to a large-scale disruption of the jobs and skills landscape. This report by the WEF contains a proposed framework for a global skills taxonomy as a first step in shifting toward a skills-based labour market.



## Global Top 5 skills of 2025

1. Analytical thinking and innovation
2. Active learning and learning strategies
3. Complex problem-solving
4. Critical thinking and analysis
5. Creativity, originality and initiative

### **Skills Development Scotland – Skills 4.0 report**

Skills 4.0: a skills model to drive Scotland's future Considers potential exponential changes to work relating to the likelihood that digital technology will permeate all places and forms of work.

### **Creating Creators**

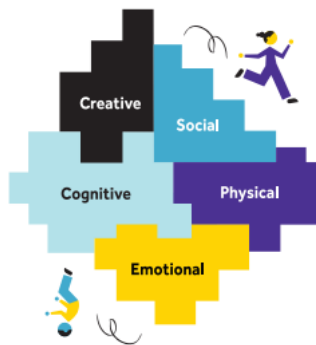
This report is the first in a series of the LEGO Foundation publications on the importance of creativity in education systems. The Creativity Matters series aims to highlight not just why creativity matters, but how education systems can best adapt and reimagine learning to equip today's and tomorrow's learners with creative skills, mindsets, and confidence.

### **Learning Through Play: Increasing impact, Reducing inequality (2021)**

Many children around the world do not reach their full potential, despite continuous attention and efforts to improve early childhood interventions and policy. When children learn through play in stimulating environments with quality facilitation, there is a greater opportunity to support them, taking account of their individual backgrounds and needs. The studies in this white paper demonstrate benefits in terms of learning outcomes across social, emotional, cognitive and physical learning. While most studies assess a range of such skills often associated with "school-readiness," two studies in high-income settings depart from this formula to look at creativity and stress-response physiology.

### **Closing the Skills Gap – Position Paper**

Our education systems are struggling to equip children with the breadth of skills they need to navigate our increasingly uncertain and complex world. The pandemic and other destabilising global events have created an unparalleled opportunity to re-evaluate what and how we are teaching our students, so that all learners develop the skills they need to thrive. This paper from The Lego Foundation recommends bold and creative reforms to curricula, teaching and assessment.



### [National Improvement Hub](#)

The National Improvement Hub is the key gateway to educational improvement resources and support. It provides easy access to dynamic digital resources to help you improve your practice quickly and easily, increasing the quality of learners' experiences and their outcomes. It contains dedicated **creativity resources** (see below), including infographics, films and animations to inspire creative thinking, teaching and learning, and tools to support planning for and evaluating creativity.

### **Creativity resources on the National Improvement Hub**

- [Creativity in Leadership and Learning – NCLN event March 2021 – Legacy and Resources page:](#)
- [What are creativity skills?](#)
- [Creativity Infographics](#)
- [Planning for and Evaluating Creativity](#)
- [Transforming Learning Approach](#)

### [Creativity Toolbox films](#)

13 films for creative improvement and planning

### [Creativity Toybox Films](#)

27 films to warm up creativity skills and get brains firing, including:

### [Creativity Across Learning Animations](#)

10 x two-minute films on the 'How to' of creativity

### [Art of Learning Films](#)

A toolkit of resources that draw on the experience of a large teacher development programme in which artists and teachers worked together to co-deliver classroom activities using a creative learning pedagogy.

### [\*\*Creativity Portal\*\*](#)

The one stop shop for educators, learners and parents on creativity across learning.

### [\*\*Community Learning and Development\*\*](#)

Education Scotland's site on community learning and development

### [\*\*Developing the Young Workforce - Resources\*\*](#)

National Improvement Hub suite of useful guides including the Career Education Standard, Work Placement Standard and School/Employer Partnerships. The page also includes DYW materials aimed at supporting professional learning and development.

### [\*\*Career Education Standard 3-18 Learning Resource 5 – Introduction to Creativity Skills\*\*](#)

This resource is effectively a short CLPL course for practitioners on creativity and creativity skills

### [\*\*Why are creativity skills important to employers? \(infographic\)\*\*](#)

### [\*\*The National Parent Forum of Scotland Nutshell Guide on Creativity, Enterprise and Employability\*\*](#)

This guide has been produced by the NPFS in partnership with Skills Development Scotland with input from a range of other partners, including NCLN representatives and Young Enterprise Scotland. It recognises the significant and increasing link between future employability and well-developed creativity skills in young people.

### [\*\*Scotland's Curriculum: Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching\*\*](#)

### [\*\*Scotland's Curriculum: Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, life and work\*\*](#)