



Scotland's Equity Toolkit: supporting recovery and accelerating progress

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"Education is a universal human right, essential to bridging gaps in human wellbeing, equity and opportunity."

World Economic Forum

Background to the Scottish Attainment Challenge

[The Scottish Attainment Challenge](#) is about achieving equity in educational outcomes. 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 Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched by the First Minister in February 2015. It is underpinned by [The National Improvement Framework](#), [Curriculum for Excellence](#) and [Getting it Right for Every Child](#).

It focuses and accelerates targeted improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The Scottish Attainment Challenge also supports and complements the broader range of initiatives and programmes to ensure that all of Scotland's children and young people reach their full potential.

Scottish Attainment Challenge 2022/2023 – 2025/2026: The refreshed mission

In November 2021, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills [set out plans](#) for a refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge from April 2022. The mission of this refreshed Challenge is:

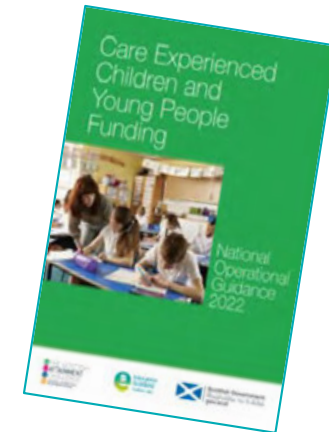
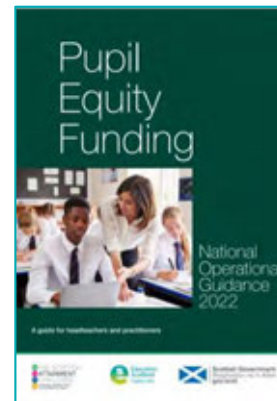
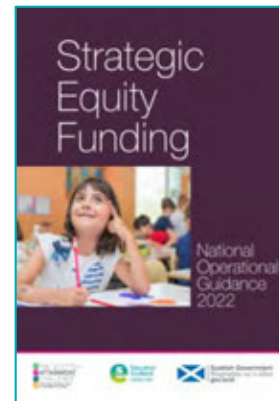
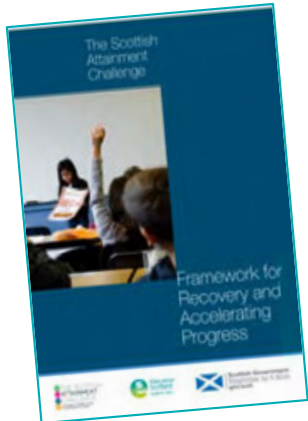
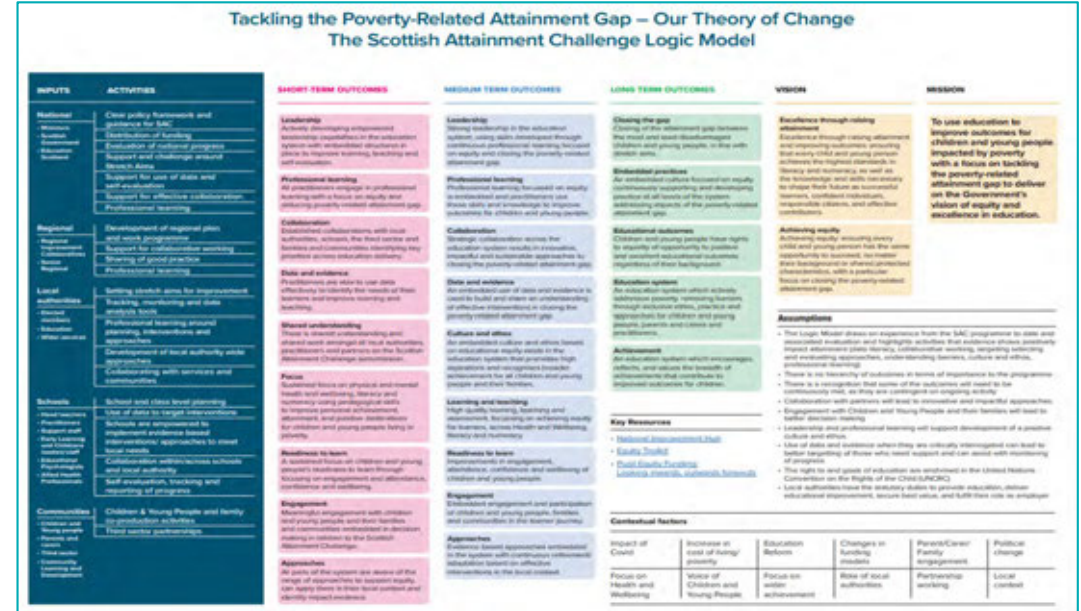
"To use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap "

From 2022-23 to 2025-26 the Scottish Attainment Challenge aims to support recovery from the pandemic and accelerate progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The next phase of the Scottish Attainment Challenge builds on the evidence set out in the Scottish Government and Education Scotland [5 year report](#) on progress towards closing the poverty related attainment gap, the [Equity Audit](#), the [Audit Scotland report](#) on educational outcomes, and the [OECD review](#). It will continue to provide support for children and young people impacted by poverty through funding to local authorities, Pupil Equity Funding, Care Experienced Children and Young People funding and a number of national programmes.

Scottish Attainment Challenge 2022/2023 – 2025/2026: The refreshed mission

A suite of materials and documentation are available to support and guide efforts to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap over this parliamentary term, including:

- [Tackling the Poverty-Related Attainment Gap – Our Theory of Change The Scottish Attainment Challenge Logic Model](#)
- [Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#)
- [Strategic Equity Funding \(SEF\) national operational guidance](#)
- [Pupil Equity Funding \(PEF\) national operational guidance](#)
- [Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding national operational guidance](#)
- [Equality Impact Assessment –The Scottish Attainment Challenge - 2022/2023 – 2025/2026](#)
- [Regional Improvement Collaboratives \(RICs\)](#)



Purpose of the toolkit

Supporting recovery

Reflecting on evidence about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on learners and their families heightened the moral imperative to support recovery.

- [Institute of Fiscal Studies \(IFS\) \(2020\)](#) and [Sutton Trust \(2020\)](#) found the time spent each day learning at home during COVID-19 school closures was significantly related to family income, with those from more affluent families reporting they were spending more time studying. This was supported by IFS data reporting similar patterns regarding engagement online and in secondary schools, the submission of completed work online.
- [UNESCO \(2020\)](#) advised disruptions to instructional/teaching time in the classroom can have a severe impact on a child's ability to learn. The longer marginalised children are out of school, the less likely they are to return. Children from the poorest households are already almost five times more likely to be out of primary school than those from the wealthiest.
- [Black \(2020\)](#) stated that “inequalities in literacy and numeracy among younger children are the foundation for the attainment gap in qualifications seen in older pupils” and “these inequalities in education are a product of wider socio-economic inequality: inequality that is already proving to be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis.”
- [Chapman \(2020\)](#), [Sahlberg \(2020 a, b and c\)](#) and [Netolicky \(2020\)](#) all make the case that the pandemic has placed a greater emphasis on equity.

Accelerating progress

Reflecting on the evidence from the recent review, evaluation and reports referenced previously, some key considerations can be drawn:

- Progress in tackling the poverty-related attainment gap was made before the pandemic. This provides solid foundations on which we can seek to accelerate both recovery and progress.
- The findings of the 2021 [Audit Scotland report](#) highlighted a need to make quicker progress even in relation to pre-pandemic gains, and to tackle variation in outcomes between and within local authority areas.
- There is a need for continued and accelerated progress to address the negative impact of COVID-19 on children's health and wellbeing and learning.
- Improving leadership, learning and teaching and the quality of support for families and communities and targeted support for those impacted by poverty remain the key levers to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Purpose of the toolkit

What is it?

Scotland's Equity Toolkit: supporting recovery and accelerating progress (DRAFT) is a live resource, which is being shaped by practitioners, for practitioners to support the refreshed mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. It is an accessible resource, which provides information on what practitioners can do and the conditions required for success and sustainability by ensuring equity throughout the learner journey. The toolkit provides information that can be used and adapted in a range of settings to ensure every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Who is it for?

The resource is being developed for practitioners involved in improving outcomes for children and young people most impacted by poverty, including but not limited to, school leaders and local authority staff, youth workers and third sector partners.

Why now?

There is a lot of information in the system already, which can feel overwhelming and at times difficult to navigate to the answers being searched for. The toolkit aims to simplify the search by streamlining content within relevant section headings. It has been designed to support practitioners in their practice and decision making by providing access to a range of evidence, research and practice, and importantly identify the conditions contributing to success in one place. The toolkit is underpinned by existing research and evidence, which is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure high quality information that is relevant and impactful. It includes key information which may be helpful to consider or guide implementation and sustainability in different settings.

Defining equity:

Equity is a policy concept and approach that means treating people fairly, but not necessarily treating people the same.

Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances are not obstacles to achievement and that all children and young people are well supported and have the same opportunities to succeed.

Within the context of the Scottish Attainment Challenge this relates to disadvantage arising from poverty.

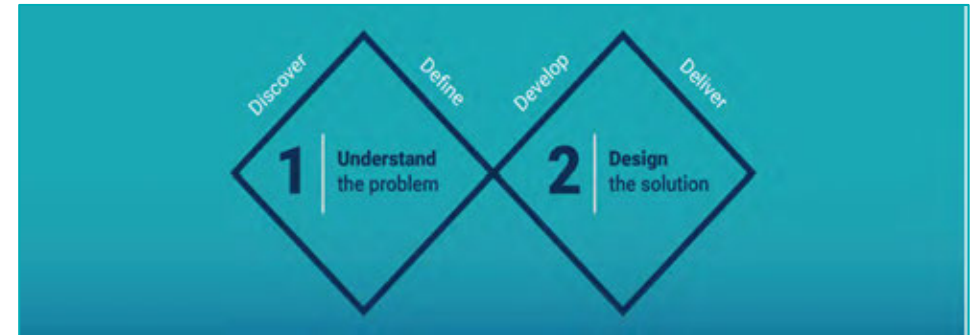
Purpose of the toolkit

Service design

To ensure Scotland's Equity Toolkit is representative of the needs of practitioners to support recovery and accelerate progress, the resource will undergo a process of service design. [Service design](#) follows an iterative process to ensure a well-thought out and considered approach to develop and deliver a differentiated and effective resource. Therefore, this resource has been developed as a prototype or DRAFT version, to test with the system and achieve feedback on its purpose, functionality, content, fidelity and intended impact.

The first step was to gain a clear understanding of the context, structure and aims of the refreshed mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge to make sense of data gathered and achieve actionable insights to establish system-wide needs of practitioners. This involved large-scale research and mapping of evidence and resources to synthesise themes and associated information. It is recognised Scotland's Equity Toolkit will not provide everything practitioners require to support learners affected by poverty, but provides a targeted focus on equity as a stepping stone to other avenues.

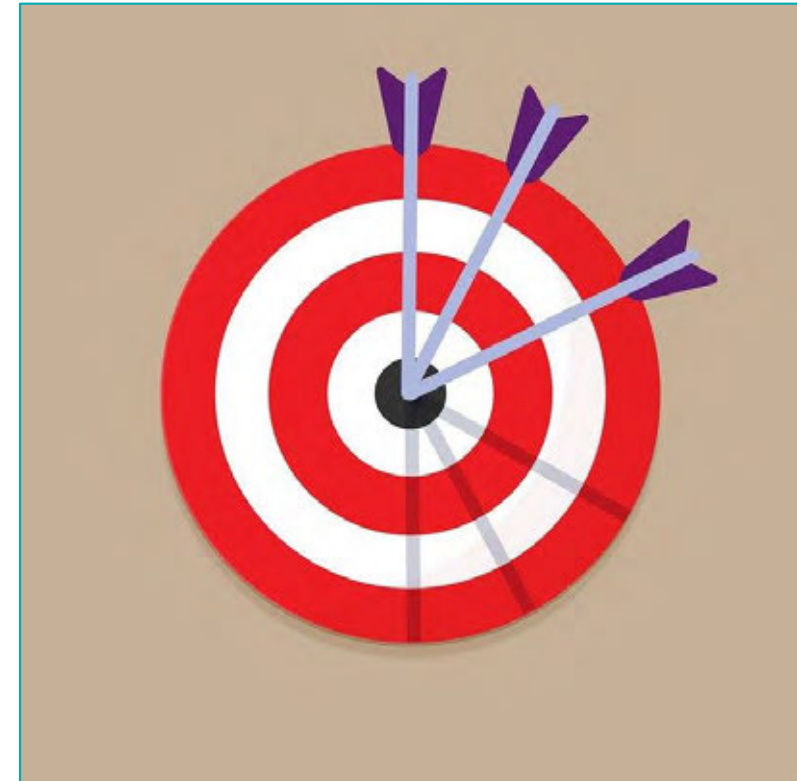
To achieve sustainability and authentic service design we sought the participation of stakeholders in developing Scotland's Equity Toolkit from a prototype to final product. As part of this process, stakeholders were invited to participate in a consultation, which closed on Monday 7th November 2022. The range of responses are being reviewed and converted into necessary improvements for a digital launch in 2023.



Aims of the toolkit

The information in the toolkit is based on data, evidence, research and practice about what has happened when particular approaches have been used in schools and other settings. The aims of the toolkit are:

- Increase awareness and understanding of approaches which support equity and support sustainability;
- Increase access to high quality information for practitioners to inform support for children, young people and families impacted by poverty through an equity lens;
- Increase the pace and consistency of progress by reducing variation in outcomes through guiding complex change and effective implementation of equitable approaches;
- Enhance continued support for recovery from COVID-19 on children and young people's health, wellbeing and their learning through equity-informed practice.





How to use the toolkit

The toolkit contains ten sections. Each section highlights and directs you to:

- What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?
- Conditions for success and sustainability
- Exemplars
- Reflective questions
- Useful resources
- Research and articles

Education Scotland has designed the toolkit as a learning resource which will be informed and updated as evidence, research and effective practice emerges. The toolkit endorses key principles and features of the [national model of professional learning](#). and may be used flexibly to support activities including:

- Professional reading and research
- Professional dialogue
- Professional enquiry
- Planning
- Self-evaluation

The toolkit can be navigated using the buttons located in the header bar of each page.



The individual buttons work as follows:



The 'home' button takes you back to the master contents page for the complete toolkit to allow you to access any section



The 'up arrow' button takes you to the section contents page to allow you to access all content within the section you are using



The 'back' button takes you back one page in the toolkit (this is not the same as the previous page you navigated from).



The 'forward' button takes you to the next page in the toolkit

Learning, teaching, curriculum and assessment

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- [Conditions for success and sustainability](#)
- [Exemplars](#)
- [Reflective questions](#)
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- [Research and articles](#)

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- [What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?](#)
- [Listening and talking](#)
- [Reading](#)
- [Writing](#)
- [Conditions for success and sustainability](#)
- [Exemplars](#)
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- [What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?](#)
- [Conditions for success and sustainability](#)
- [Exemplars](#)
- [Reflective questions](#)
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Health and Wellbeing

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Learning, teaching, curriculum and assessment

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Curriculum and Pathways

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- [Conditions for success and sustainability](#)
- [Exemplars](#)
- [Reflective questions](#)
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Assessment

- [What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?](#)
- [Conditions for success and sustainability](#)
- [Exemplars](#)
- [Reflective questions](#)
- [Useful resources](#)
- [Research and articles](#)

Section overview

There has been significant impact on learning for children and young people caused by disruption to education through the various stages of the pandemic.

In this section we aim to provide guidance and support relating to learning, teaching, curriculum and assessment. Consideration is given to what we can do to support recovery and accelerate progress, and the conditions for success and sustainability.

Exemplars of practice, reflective questions and links to research evidence and useful resources are also provided. Specific sub-sections within the learning, teaching, assessment and curriculum section include:

- Pedagogy
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Health and wellbeing
- Curriculum and Pathways
- Assessment



Pedagogy

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Pedagogy refers to the method and practices of the teacher and to how they deliver the content of the curriculum to the children and young people in their charge. Effective pedagogy considers knowledge of teaching styles and theory to ensure that learning is progressed through high-quality teaching and effective use of ongoing assessment.

The effects of high-quality learning and teaching are significant for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with protected characteristics.

There is a strong consensus from educational research that high performance in education systems is dependent on the quality of teaching.

The Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit highlights the following effective approaches to pedagogy which can be accessed directly at the links below.

- [Metacognition and self-regulation](#)
- [Collaborative learning approaches](#)
- [Feedback](#)
- [Mastery learning](#)
- [Social and emotional learning](#)
- [Peer tutoring](#)
- [One to one tuition](#)



Conditions for success and sustainability

The national research and development network was created by the National College for School Leadership.

In [this paper](#), research literature is used to advance nine strong claims about the characteristics of highly successful pedagogies:

- Effective pedagogies give serious consideration to pupil voice.
- Effective pedagogies depend on behaviour (what teachers do), knowledge and understanding (what teachers know) and beliefs (why teachers act as they do).
- Effective pedagogies involve clear thinking about longer term learning outcomes as well as short-term goals.
- Effective pedagogies build on pupils' prior learning and experience.
- Effective pedagogies involve scaffolding pupil learning.
- Effective pedagogies involve a range of techniques, including whole-class and structured group work, guided learning and individual activity.
- Effective pedagogies focus on developing higher order thinking and meta-cognition, and make good use of dialogue and questioning in order to do so.
- Effective pedagogies embed assessment for learning.
- Effective pedagogies are inclusive and take the diverse needs of a range of learners, as well as matters of student equity, into account.

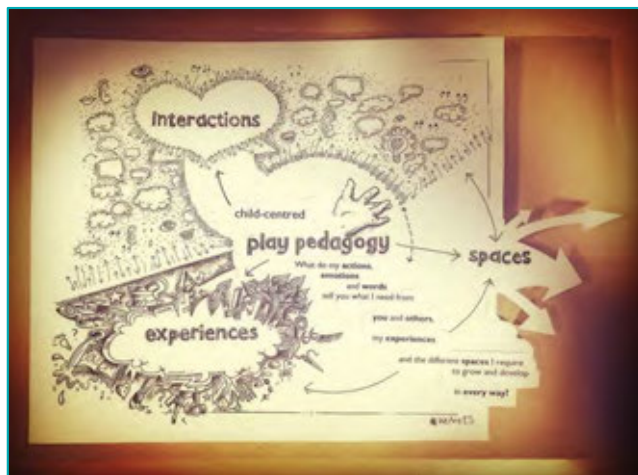


Exemplars

The Education Scotland publication “[What Scotland Learned, 100 stories of lockdown](#)” combines educational research with these inspiring stories. The publication is accompanied by a [YouTube video](#)

The [Early Level Pedagogy Toolkit](#) aims to support practitioners working with children in the Early Level to appropriately use play pedagogy to support learning and development.

A resource to support practitioners in professional dialogue and collaborative enquiry on learning through play. [Play2Learn in Bearsden Primary and St Matthew's Primary School, East Dunbartonshire Council | Research | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



Education Scotland
Foghlam Alba

What Scotland Learned: BUILDING BACK BETTER

RELATIONSHIPS
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION, CONNECTEDNESS, COMMISSION

People built strong collaborative relationships which led to a sense of 'all hands to the pump' leading to best decisions. To work, learn and achieve success in dealing with COVID-19.

*The OECD identified maintaining effective relationships as only second to supporting learning.

LEADERSHIP
CRISIS and CHANGE MANAGEMENT ARE ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Recent professional learning for those in formal leadership roles post-pandemic.

Collaboration with a range of partners to provide the most robust support for learners and their families.

Leadership is not just about a promoted position or title. We need to respect the professionalism of all our educational staff. Support senior leaders' wellbeing is needed.

HEALTH and WELLBEING
FUNDAMENTAL to LEARNING.

Schools are important in meeting children's non-academic needs.

*We need to create 'more equitable education systems' by identifying and supporting all 'vulnerable' learners for as long as that support is needed.

We need to promote wellbeing all of the time in our educational settings not just in a crisis.

LEARNING and TEACHING
EFFECTIVE and INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY and ASSESSMENT APPROACHES to support learners through recovery and beyond.

PROMOTE INDEPENDENT LEARNING SKILLS IN PUPILS to become self-directed learners.

COLLABORATION AT ALL LEVELS, with peers, parents and a range of partners will support practitioners to share effective practice and develop evidence based approaches.

REMAINING EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE - what will our learners need to help them flourish and achieve in a post-Covid world?

BUILD ON DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY to develop progressive skills in digital learning.

COMMUNITIES
BUILD BACK BETTER-SCHOOLS, partners and the wider community need to work in collaboration.

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED.

SCHOOLS HAVE HIGHLIGHTED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WIDER COMMUNITY's support of education. The pandemic brought about a COLLECTIVE URGENCY to 'write THREE TIMES AT HALF'.

SUCCESSES and ACHIEVEMENTS
RECOGNISE and CELEBRATE these to restore hope for the future.

Educators are more skilled in using digital technology, and authorities make digital technology accessible to all children and young people.

TEACHING SKILLS/CONFIDENCE to support effective self-regulation.

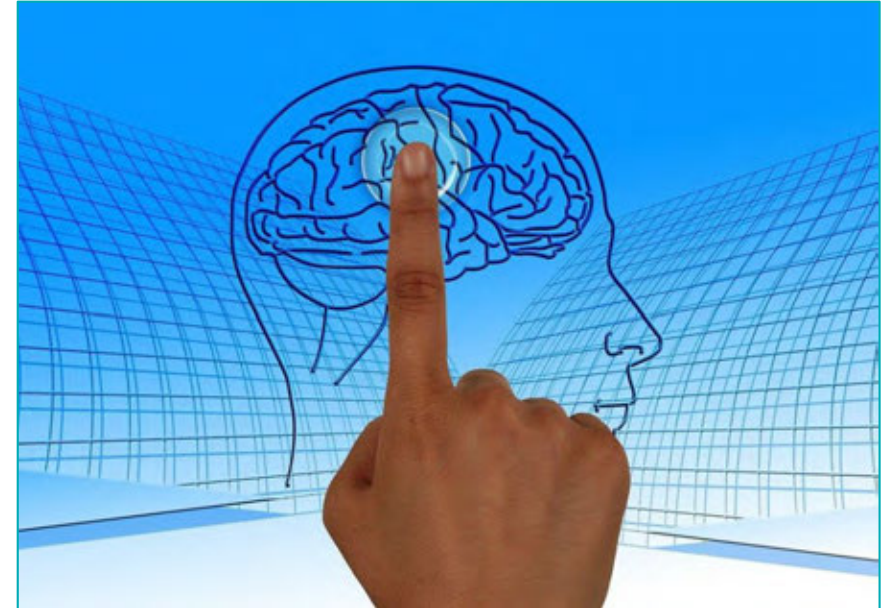
FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM that supports change in classing, individualised in response to the pandemic.

AGILITY AND INVENTIVENESS of staff to collaborate and support one another - especially on children and families.

Visit hub page and read full report

Reflective questions

- How effective are we at differentiating learning and teaching, and using strategies to address the socio-economic and wider challenges and barriers faced by children and young people?
- How effective is our moderation, monitoring, tracking and assessment in ensuring that our interventions and approaches are raising attainment and helping to close the poverty-related attainment gap?
- To what extent do we support children and young people to take responsibility for their own learning and progress?
- How well do we communicate the purpose of learning and give effective explanations for all learners?
- How well do we apply the principles of planning, observation, assessment, recording and reporting as an integral feature of learning and teaching?
- What range of sources do we use to identify evidence-based practice that may suit our school context?
- Are we confident that all learners, have access to the most effective learning and teaching approaches, whether working in school or remotely?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence \(scotlandscurriculum.scot\)](https://scotlandscurriculum.scot)
- [The Teaching Cycle - Dundee City Council Pedagogy Team](#)
- [Differentiation Strategies - Dundee City Council Pedagogy Team](#)
- [Education Scotland - Features of Highly Effective Digital Learning, Teaching and Assessment](#)
- [Education Endowment Foundation - Teaching and Learning Toolkit](#)
- [Education Scotland SLF2021 Pedagogy for Equity webinar](#)
- [Using quality assurance to improve learning and teaching in Kirkliston Primary School, Edinburgh | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [SCDE Attainment Challenge Project: Developing pedagogies that work for Pre-Service and Early Career Teachers to reduce the Attainment Gap in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and wellbeing | Research | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Action enquiry research focussing on closing the poverty-related attainment gap centred on raising attainment in numeracy and mental health | Research | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [What Scotland Learned: building back better \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Mastery learning | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)
- [Metacognition and self-regulation | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)
- [Exploring Effective Pedagogy \(pearson.com\)](#)
- [What makes great pedagogy and great professional development: final report \(ioe.ac.uk\)](#)
- [IFS Family time use and home learning during the COVID-19 lockdown](#)
- [Sutton Trust - School Shutdown COVID-19](#)
- [Attainment and disadvantage in Scotland's schools: what may the impact of lockdown be? | University of Glasgow](#)
- [UNESCO - Inclusion and education \(2020\)](#)

Literacy

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Education Scotland have developed a [National Literacy PLC - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#) within GLOW. This has links to numerous strategies and resources which can be used to intensify the support for those who need it most due to the disruption to their learning. There are also links to lots of professional learning materials which can support the development of teacher confidence in this area.

There are sections on the following:

- Key documents
- Professional learning and research
- Learning, teaching and assessment
- Blended and remote learning
- Support for National Qualifications
- Supporting additional needs
- Sharing practice

*A GLOW login is required to access the PLC

Listening and talking

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Listening and talking activities, or what the Education Endowment Foundation describes as [oral language](#), emphasise the importance of spoken language and verbal interaction in learning. Listening and talking underpin learning experiences across the four contexts and have a direct impact on learners' progress in reading and writing. Consequently, paying explicit attention to the teaching of talk in a variety of contexts supports learners' overall achievement and attainment.

Research indicates that developing children's listening and talking skills helps reduce the poverty-related attainment gap by improving learners' outcomes across the three curriculum areas of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Indeed, a pedagogical focus on oracy has been found to have a positive impact on relationships and engagement in learning, as well as in supporting self-regulation and metacognition. Conversely, a lack of well-developed communication skills can ultimately lead to worse outcomes in terms of employment opportunities and an individual's mental health and wellbeing.

Further information:

- [Oral interventions – YouTube \(Education Scotland\)](#)
- [Closing the Gap through Listening and Talking Full Webinar – YouTube \(Education Scotland\)](#)
- [Closing the Gap through Listening and Talking – Padlet \(Education Scotland\)](#)
- [Oral language interventions | EEF](#)
- [Oral Language Toolkit | HIGHLAND LITERACY](#)
- [Supporting oral language development - cloudfront.net \(EEF\)](#)

Reading

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

It is important to recognise that no one 'catch up' strategy should be relied upon. Alex Quigley, author of *Closing the Vocabulary Gap* and *Closing the Reading Gap*, shared his thoughts about [closing the reading gap](#) in the time of COVID-19. He suggests that we need to continue to support children's reading at home. Highlighting the inequity in children's access to texts at home with one in eight children in the UK not owning a single book. We need to take this into account when planning our recovery curriculum and for any further interruptions to learning that may occur. He also explains the importance of teachers understanding what makes reading complex in order for them to select 'goldilocks' texts (just right) for their learners. He outlines what he refers to as the 'arduous 8' which teachers should consider in selecting texts:

- background knowledge
- range and complexity of vocabulary (including word length)
- use of abstract imagery and metaphorical language
- sentence length and syntax
- narrative or whole text structures
- the generic elements of a text
- the scaffolds present or absent in a given text
- text length

Quigley also suggests the likelihood that more onscreen reading during lockdown may have led to more successful reading, and possibly better retention, especially of non-fiction, for more able readers. He explains that more able readers use reading strategies in a systematic way which less experienced readers struggle to do. He suggests the need to support the development of strategic reading by explicitly teaching, modelling and scaffolding the following strategies:

- evaluate task
- skim the text
- scan proper nouns
- activate prior knowledge
- re-read
- link nouns
- predict meanings
- build schema
- explore unfamiliar word parts
- evaluate meaning of punctuation
- clarify and question
- summarise text meaning

Writing

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Based on their survey "[More time on my hands](#)", Clark et al. (2020) offer the following observations:

In times of continued uncertainty, the essential role of writing as a tool for supporting mental wellbeing should therefore also be recognised and valued.

One particularly clear message from the children's comments was that having more time to write freely has contributed to their increased enjoyment of writing. Looking ahead, it seems that providing time for free writing once back in the classroom could help to sustain this positive outcome. While there may well be a need for a fast pace of learning, balancing this with time for writing that is not prescriptive or exams-focused could be enormously valuable to boost writing enjoyment overall.

Looking forward, we must ensure all children are able to use writing as a means of navigating difficult circumstances that might arise in the future.



Conditions for success and sustainability

Emeritus Professor Sue Ellis from the University of Strathclyde highlights the attention to different kinds of evidence in Strathclyde's '3 Domain Model.' This model evidences consideration of the following:

Consideration of all three domains is required if our learners most disadvantaged by poverty and wider inequalities are to progress in their learning.

[Three domains of literacy - Primary Education Network \(nottingham.ac.uk\)](http://nottingham.ac.uk)




Strathclyde 3 Domain Model: a tool to Different KINDS of evidence & pathways

Cognitive knowledge skills, phonological aware; phonic/alphabetic; Decoding cues & strategies, concepts abt print; comprehension skills.

Cultural /social capitals:
home practices, values & beliefs;
funds of knowledge; texts/resources
available; ideas/ experiences/
people/ activities/ home literacies



Personal/social identity:
aspirations; reader
Identity; friendships; view
of self as a reader& how
positioned by others;
entitlement

Exemplars

- [How can schools develop a literacy-rich curriculum in P1-3 to help to close the vocabulary gap? | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Support for emerging literacy approaches in Highland | The Highland Council](#)
- [Primary Literacy Coaching Programme in Renfrewshire | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Gathering of listening and talking evidence – Dundee City Council](#)
- [Closing the Literacy Gap in Dumfries and Galloway | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Supporting spoken language in the classroom - University of Bristol](#)
- [Primary One Literacy Assessment and Action Resource \(POLAAR\)](#)



Reflective questions

- What data do we have that tells us about learners' literacy and what gaps are we able to identify from this data?
- How will we address gaps which are identified? What does the research and our professional knowledge tell us?
- How will we ensure that we continue to gather reliable data about learners' literacy to ensure they are progressing throughout the year?
- How will we develop all [three domains of literacy](#) to ensure equity underpins our approach to literacy development?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Education Scotland Literacy and English Professional Learning Community - DigiLearnScot](#)
- [Closing the Reading Gap - Further Reading List - \(theconfidentteacher.com\)](#)
- [Forth Valley and West Lothian RIC – The Literacy Academy – DigiLearnScot](#)
- [Read with TRUST infographic \(Education Endowment Foundation\)](#)
- [Listening and Talking Evidence - Dundee City Council Pedagogy Team](#)
- [Whole class reading approaches \(theconfidentteacher.com\)](#)
- [Oral language interventions \(Education Endowment Foundation\)](#)
- [Mediating text difficulty \(theconfidentteacher.com\)](#)
- [Helping home reading - Read with TRUST \(Education Endowment Foundation\)](#)
- [Explicit teaching of phonics \(Education Endowment Foundation\)](#)
- [Reading comprehension strategies \(Education Endowment Foundation\)](#)
- [Primary One Literacy Assessment and Action Resource \(POLAAR\) | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Education Endowment Foundation - Preparing for Literacy Guidance Report](#)
- [Speak for Change - Oracy All-Party Parliamentary Group Report \(2021\)](#)
- [Oral Language Support key for COVID-19 recovery - University of Bristol](#)
- [National Literacy Trust - Reading practices under lockdown report](#)
- [National Literacy Trust - Writing during lockdown report](#)

Numeracy

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Education Scotland have developed a [Numeracy and Maths Professional Learning Community \(PLC\)](#)* within GLOW. This has links to numerous strategies and resources which can be used to intensify the support for those who need it most due to the disruption to their learning. There are also links to lots of professional learning materials which can support the development of teacher confidence in this area.

There are sections on the following:

- Key documents
- Professional learning and research
- Learning, teaching and assessment
- Blended and remote learning
- Support for National Qualifications
- Supporting additional needs
- Sharing practice
- Numeracy across learning
- Financial education

*A GLOW login is required to access the PLC



[What is working in numeracy and mathematics.](#)

Numeracy

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

There is emerging evidence of positive impact reported when:

- Pedagogy ensures children gain a depth of understanding rather than relying on procedures and algorithms.
- Manipulatives are used to support understanding.
- The concrete, pictorial, abstract model is promoted.
- Mathematical reasoning is developed through use of a variety of approaches, for example bar modelling or non-routine tasks.
- Discussion of strategies is encouraged through talking about number calculations.
- The biggest impacts observed are when a school or secondary department work together to review their teaching and learning, plan collaboratively, reflect and review changes.



Numeracy

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Five recommendations for approaches to raising attainment in numeracy, sourced from Education Endowment Foundation report on [Improving Mathematics in the Early Years and Key Stage 1](#).

- Develop practitioners' understanding of how children learn mathematics
- Dedicate time for children to learn mathematics and integrate mathematics throughout the day
- Use manipulatives and representations to develop understanding
- Ensure that teaching builds on what children already know
- Use high quality targeted support to help all children learn mathematics



1 Develop practitioners' understanding of how children learn mathematics

- Professional development should be used to raise the quality of practitioner knowledge of mathematics, of children's mathematical development and of effective mathematical pedagogy.
- Developmental progression shows us how children typically learn mathematical concepts and can inform teaching.
- Practitioners should be aware that developing a secure grasp of early mathematical ideas takes time, and specific skills may emerge in different orders.
- The development of self-regulation and metacognitive skills are linked to successful learning in early mathematics.

2 Dedicate time for children to learn mathematics and integrate mathematics throughout the day

- Dedicate time to focus on mathematics each day.
- Embed mathematics through different contexts, including textbooks, puzzles, songs, rhymes, puzzle play and games.
- Make the most of moments throughout the day to highlight and use mathematics, for example, in daily routines, play activities, and one-curriculum areas.
- Create chances to reinforce mathematical vocabulary.
- Create opportunities for extended discussion of mathematical ideas with children.

3 Use manipulatives and representations to develop understanding

- Manipulatives and representations can be powerful tools for supporting young children to engage with mathematical ideas.
- Ensure that children understand the links between the manipulatives and the mathematical ideas they represent.
- Ensure that there is a clear rationale for using a particular manipulative or representation to teach a specific mathematical concept.
- Encourage children to represent problems in their own way, for example with drawings and marks.
- Use manipulatives and representations to encourage discussion about mathematics.
- Encourage children to use their fingers – an important manipulative for children.

4 Ensure that teaching builds on what children already know

- It is important to assess what children do, and do not, know in order to extend learning for all children.
- A variety of methods should be used to assess children's mathematical understanding, and practitioners should check what children know in a variety of contexts.
- Carefully listen to children's responses and consider the right questions to ask to reveal understanding.
- Information collected should be used to inform next steps for learning. Developmental progressions can be useful in showing teachers around what a child should learn next.

5 Use high quality targeted support to help all children learn mathematics

- High quality targeted support can provide effective extra support for children.
- Small-group support is more likely to be effective when:
 - children with the greatest needs are supported by the most experienced staff
 - training, support and resources are provided for staff using targeted activities
 - sessions are brief and regular; and
 - explicit connections are made between targeted support and everyday activities or learning.
- Using an approach or programme that is evidence-based and has been independently evaluated is a good starting point.

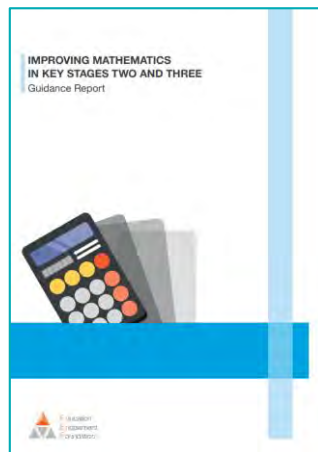
Report published 24th January 2020 eef.li/early-maths

Numeracy

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Eight recommendations for approaches to raising attainment in numeracy, sourced from Education Endowment Foundation report on [Improving Mathematics in Key Stages Two and Three](#).

- Use assessment to build on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding
- Use manipulatives and representations
- Teach pupils strategies for solving problems
- Enable pupils to develop a rich network of mathematical knowledge
- Develop pupils' independence and motivation
- Use tasks and resources to challenge and support pupils' mathematics
- Use structured interventions to provide additional support
- Support pupils to make a successful transition between primary and secondary school



Improving Mathematics in Key Stages Two and Three – Recommendations Summary

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<p>1 Use assessment to build on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment should be used not only to track pupils' learning but also to provide teachers with information about what pupils do and do not know • This should inform the planning of future lessons and the focus of targeted support • Effective feedback will be an important element of teachers' response to assessment • Feedback should be specific and clear, encourage and support further effort, and be given regularly • Teachers not only have to address misconceptions but also understand why pupils may persist with errors • Knowledge of common misconceptions can be invaluable in planning lessons to address errors before they arise 	<p>2 Use manipulatives and representations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manipulatives (physical objects used to teach maths) and representations (such as number lines and graphs) can help pupils engage with mathematical ideas • However, manipulatives and representations are just tools: how they are used is essential • They need to be used purposefully and appropriately to have an impact • There must be a clear rationale for using a particular manipulative or representation to teach a specific mathematical concept • Manipulatives should be temporary; they should act as a 'scaffold' that can be removed once independence is achieved 	<p>3 Teach pupils strategies for solving problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If pupils lack a well-rehearsed and readily available method to solve a problem they need to draw on problem solving strategies to make sense of the unfamiliar situation • Select problem solving tasks for which pupils do not have ready-made solutions • Teach them to use and compare different approaches • Show them how to interrelate and use their existing knowledge to solve problems • Use worked examples to enable them to analyse the use of different strategies • Require pupils to monitor, reflect on, and communicate their problem solving 	<p>4 Enable pupils to develop a rich network of mathematical knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasise the many connections between mathematical facts, procedures, and concepts • Ensure that pupils develop fluent recall of facts • Teach pupils to understand procedures • Teach pupils to consciously choose between mathematical strategies • Build on pupils' informal understanding of sharing and proportionality to introduce procedures • Teach pupils that fractions and decimals extend the number system beyond whole numbers • Teach pupils to recognise and use mathematical structure 	<p>5 Develop pupils' independence and motivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage pupils to take responsibility for, and play an active role in, their own learning • This requires pupils to develop metacognition – the ability to independently plan, monitor and evaluate their thinking and learning • Initially, teachers may have to model metacognition by describing their own thinking • Provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop metacognition by encouraging them to explain their thinking to themselves and others • Avoid doing too much too early • Positive attitudes are important, but there is scant evidence on the most effective ways to foster them • School leaders should ensure that all staff, including non-teaching staff, encourage enjoyment in maths for all children 	<p>6 Use tasks and resources to challenge and support pupils' mathematics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks and resources are just tools – they will not be effective if they are used inappropriately by the teacher • Use assessment of pupils' strengths and weaknesses to inform your choice of task • Use tasks to address pupil misconceptions • Provide examples and non-examples of concepts • Use stories and problems to help pupils understand mathematics • Use tasks to build conceptual knowledge in tandem with procedural knowledge • Technology is not a silver bullet – it has to be used judiciously and intentionally 	<p>7 Use structured interventions to provide additional support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection should be guided by pupil assessment • Interventions should start early, be evidence based and be carefully planned • Interventions should include explicit and systematic instruction • Even if the best-designed intervention will not work, a poor implementation is poor • Support pupils to understand how interventions are connected to whole-class instruction • Interventions should motivate pupils – not bore them or cause them to be disengaged • If interventions cause pupils to miss activities they enjoy or content they need to learn, teachers should ask if the interventions are really necessary • Avoid 'intervention fatigue'. Interventions should always need to be time-consuming or intensive to be effective 	<p>8 Support pupils to make a successful transition between primary and secondary school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a large dip in mathematical attainment and attitudes towards maths as children move from primary to secondary school • Primary and secondary schools should develop shared understandings of curriculum, teaching and learning • When pupils arrive in Year 7, rapidly attain a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses • Structured intervention support may be required for Year 7 pupils who are struggling to make progress • Carefully consider how pupils are allocated to maths classes • Setting is likely to lead to a widening of the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, because the former are more likely to be assigned to lower groups

Conditions for success and sustainability

Published in 2019, the Education Scotland Thematic Review titled “[Multiplying skills, adding value](#)” highlights the following areas as consistently working well:

Curriculum

- The commitment of staff to improve the curriculum in numeracy and mathematics, building on proven strengths and tackling key areas for improvement.
- Staff's investment in career-long professional learning in aspects of numeracy and mathematics.
- The clarity which settings and schools have achieved in shared understanding of the key features of national, local and establishment policies, for numeracy and mathematics, which seek to improve outcomes for all children and young people.

Learning and teaching

- Positive relationships among and between learners and staff, laying foundations for a positive tone to learning in numeracy and mathematics.
- Clear commitment to closing the gap in attainment in numeracy and mathematics, between children from the most and least disadvantaged areas.

- Most learners have positive views about learning in numeracy and mathematics. Most respond well to strategic approaches, for example the concrete/pictorial/abstract structure.
- Teaching is well organised and almost all staff offer clear explanations.



Conditions for success and sustainability

Assessment

- Senior leaders have a clear strategy for promoting assessment as an integral part of learning and teaching.
- A range of assessment data is used very effectively to identify learners' needs and plan learning across the school, specifically for targeted groups of learners.
- A range of well-considered and carefully planned approaches to moderation, including those using the National Benchmarks within and across schools, supports staff to make confident and accurate judgements. This increases the reliability of assessment data and leads to improved outcomes for learners.
- High-quality professional learning is building teachers' and practitioners' confidence and increases their skills in assessment of learners' progress.
- Skilled analysis and interpretation of high-quality assessment data supports robust tracking and monitoring of learners' progress. It ensures that next steps in learning for individuals and groups of learners are identified accurately.
- Children and young people are fully involved in the assessment of learning. High-quality feedback and learning conversations ensure that children and young people have sound knowledge of themselves as learners. Learners understand what is expected of them, their strengths and the areas where they need to improve.

Other areas worth considering in assessment

- English for Speakers of Other Languages(ESOL) - support the process of carrying out initial assessment of English language level with ESOL learners.
- Using formative assessment to support high quality feedback on learning.
- Using assessment strategies to support high quality learning and teaching.
- Approach assessment as part of their planning for learning and teaching.



Exemplars

- [South Lanarkshire: Hareleeshill Primary School - A Constructivist approach to improving numeracy](#)
- [Scottish Borders: Cluster approach using Model for Improvement methodology to closing the poverty related attainment gap in numeracy](#)
- [Glasgow City: Using a Lesson Study approach to improve learning and teaching in numeracy](#)



Reflective questions

- What data do we have that tells us about learners' numeracy and what gaps are we able to identify from this data?
- How will we address gaps which are identified? What does the research and our professional knowledge tell us?
- How will we ensure that we continue to gather reliable data about learners' numeracy to ensure they are progressing throughout the year?
- To what extent do our approaches support effective transitions and progression in numeracy for learners?
- Do we have a clear understanding of current thinking on high-quality learning and teaching in numeracy to support learners disadvantaged by poverty and wider inequalities?
- How will we develop our approaches to ensure equity underpins our approach to numeracy development?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Education Scotland National Improvement Hub - Resources to support learning, teaching and assessment within numeracy and mathematics](#)
- [Education Scotland National Improvement Hub – Numeracy Professional Learning resources](#)
- [DigiLearnScot - Secondary Numeracy and Mathematics – Wakelet](#)
- [DigiLearnScot - Primary Numeracy and Mathematics – Wakelet](#)
- [Mathematics | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)
- [GLOW - Numeracy and Mathematics Professional Learning Community \(GLOW login is required to access this link\)](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Multiplying skills, adding value - Numeracy and mathematics for Scotland's learners: a thematic inspection | HM Chief Inspector Report](#)
- [Education Scotland \(GLOW\) Numeracy and Mathematics Key Documents \(GLOW login is required to access this link\)](#)
- [Education Scotland: Numeracy Professional Learning resources](#)
- [Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour? | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)
- [Industrial actions in schools: strikes and student achievement - Baker - 2013 - Canadian Journal of Economics](#)

Health and wellbeing

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

The health and wellbeing curriculum enables learners to develop their own knowledge and skills through the co-dependency of mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. When delivering a robust and inclusive health and wellbeing curriculum for all young people, it is important to remember the age and stage of learners, the school context and the lifelong skills that learners will require to thrive in the future.

Learners in poverty are more likely to experience poor mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing, as are their families. The health and wellbeing curriculum shares important learning around improving learners' knowledge and skills to cope with some of the challenges and potential barriers they may experience.

The six organisers within the health and wellbeing curriculum are;

- **Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing**
- **Planning for choices and changes**
- Physical education, **physical activity and sport**,
- Food and health
- Substance misuse and
- **Relationships**, sexual health and parenthood.

*The aspects of the health and wellbeing framework which are the responsibility of all adults who are working together to support the learning and development of learners, are highlighted in bold.

Education Scotland have developed a share point within Glow [National Health and Wellbeing PLC - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com) that focuses on the health and wellbeing curriculum. There are links to teaching and learning, resources, accreditation and wider opportunities and, Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities for practitioners.

**A GLOW login is required to access the PLC



Health and wellbeing

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

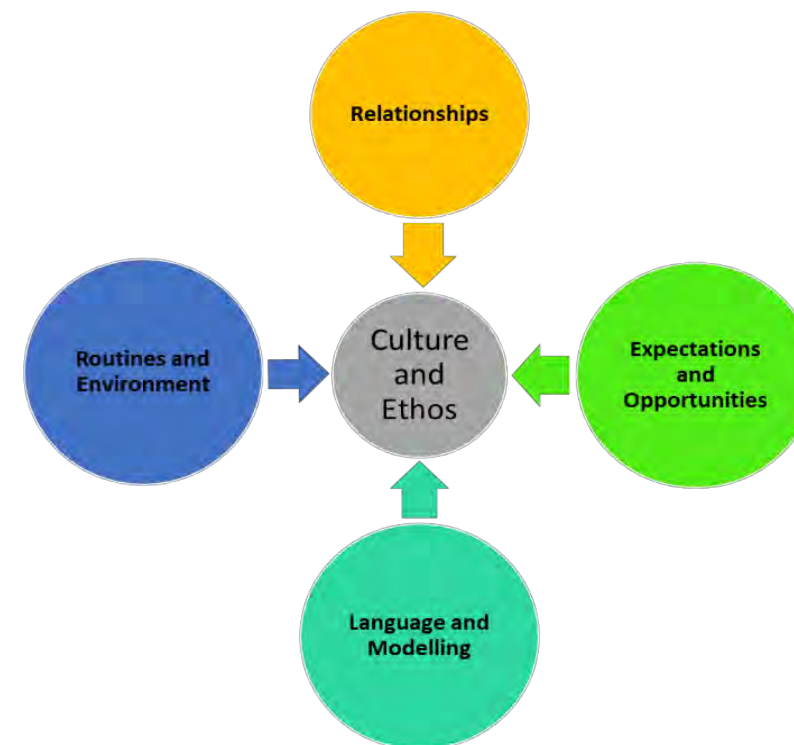
Build positive relationships across the learning community

A culture where children and young people feel included, respected, safe and secure and where their achievements and contributions are valued and celebrated is essential to the development of good relationships. In order to create this environment for effective learning and teaching, there should be a shared understanding of wellbeing underpinned by children's rights and a focus on positive relationships across the school community.

Scottish-based research indicates that schools with catchment areas experiencing higher levels of deprivation and exceeding expectations in attainment, demonstrate positive relationships throughout the school community. Children and young people are also meaningfully involved in decisions which affect them at all levels of the school: [Developing a positive whole-school ethos and culture – Relationships, Learning and Behaviour \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

Work closely with relevant partners

Learners should experience activities which enable them to develop the skills and attributes they will need to achieve and sustain positive destinations beyond school. Demands and employment patterns are changing, so it is particularly important for all young people to develop high levels of skill and an understanding of the world of work, training and lifelong learning to undertake and sustain opportunities. This is supported by recommendations in the [Skills Development Scotland's Careers by Design Review report](#).



[Our relationships](#) | [What Scotland Learned](#) | [Scotland Learns](#) | [National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](http://NationalImprovementHub.education.gov.scot)

Health and wellbeing

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Include effective learner participation in design of the health and wellbeing curriculum

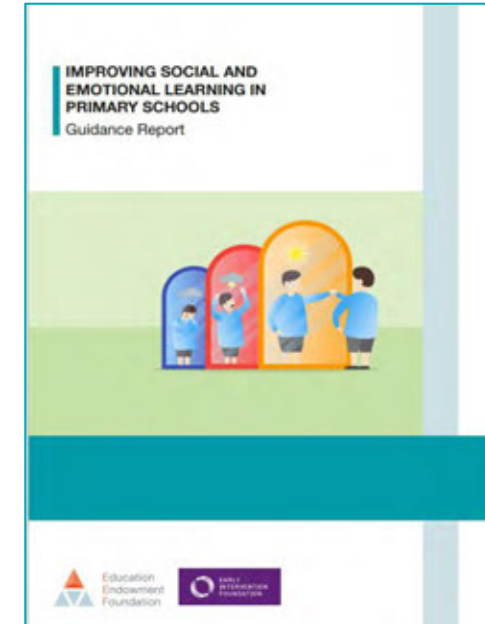
Effective learner participation means that a good education can become relevant, valuable, and supportive of achievement and attainment. Teachers and school leaders are distinctively positioned to facilitate meaningful and effective learner participation.

[Learner Participation in Educational Settings \(3-18\)](#).

As well as considering what can be done universally to add value for all learners, it is important to think about how targeted and small group interventions, across the health and wellbeing curriculum, contribute to improving outcomes for learners affected by poverty. Learners should be supported to understand and exercise their rights regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and background. They should be supported to contribute to a range of decision-making, both locally and through links to the wider community: [Life skills and enrichment | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#).

Encourage CLPL in relation to learners needs

Linking CLPL to the needs of learners and the school context will enable practitioners to deliver themes across the health and wellbeing curriculum that are relevant and relatable to learners: [Delivering equity and closing the poverty related attainment gap | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#).



[Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools PDF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

Health and wellbeing

Conditions for success and sustainability

Learning and Teaching

According to research by the [Sutton Trust](#), “the effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds: over a school year, these pupils gain 1.5 years’ worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers (Sutton Trust, 2011).” In other words, for learners affected by poverty, the difference between an effective teacher and an underperforming teacher is a whole year’s learning.

A range of partner agencies and stakeholders should be utilised to deliver a curricular focus on mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. Partnerships and multi-agency working make a significant contribution to supporting children’s and young people’s learning in PSE/health and wellbeing and meeting the range of their needs.

Professor Ken Muir’s report [Supporting documents - Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) stated there should be:

“A continuing focus on literacy and numeracy in primary schools but with greater recognition of the importance of health and wellbeing and the contribution made by all areas of the formal and informal curriculum and interdisciplinary learning” (Muir 2022:19).

Establishments should consider using a wide range of approaches to enhance the learning environment and develop positive relationships, including:

- a curricular focus on social and emotional wellbeing,
- restorative approaches,
- trauma informed,
- nurturing approaches,
- peer mentoring and,
- solution oriented approaches.

These approaches should be embedded within the establishments learning and teaching policy with appropriate support, as required, for all staff. [Health and wellbeing: Responsibility of all - Making the links...making it work | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#).

Health and wellbeing

Conditions for success and sustainability

Curriculum

Involving learners in reviewing, designing and delivering the health and wellbeing curriculum is essential to provide learners with the knowledge and skills required to thrive in challenging times.

A key message in the [Thematic inspection of PSE and HWB in Scotland's schools and early learning and childcare settings \(education.gov.scot\)](#) was the importance of increasing opportunities for children and young people to be involved in designing their PSE/HWB programme: [Young children have powerful voices | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Increased physical activity can have a positive impact on a learner's health, educational attainment and life chances. In 2011, the Scottish Government made a commitment to ensure that by 2014, every learner will benefit from at least two hours of Physical Education in primary school and two periods (100 minutes) in S1 to S4 per week.

The food and health curriculum should be based around low cost healthy eating and partnership working:

- [food_in_schools_connections.pdf \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [food_in_schools_contributions.pdf \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [A summary of Food Education resources | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub](#)

Assessment

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is a way for families to work in partnership with people who can support them, such as teachers, doctors and nurses. [GIRFEC wellbeing resources \(SHANARRI\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

It is important to adapt learning, teaching and assessment to meet the needs of all learners. Flexibility and differentiation are essential within assessment. It is an integral part of learning and teaching and needs to be planned for in advance. It requires staff to have knowledge of their learners, so they can support the collation of evidence to highlight the learners journey. [cfstatement.pdf \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

The Education Scotland resource [Main messages for Primary schools](#) highlights key information when evaluating progress in health and wellbeing for practitioners working with learners in primary school settings. It can also be used to support professional dialogue, professional development and increase confidence in practitioners when evaluating progress in health and wellbeing.

Health and wellbeing Exemplars

- [How learners flourish through family engagement - Braes High School | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [A whole school approach to wellbeing support | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Cost of the School Day – understanding and addressing financial barriers at school | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Nurture in North Ayrshire | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



Health and wellbeing Reflective questions

- To what extent do we focus on supporting the health and wellbeing of learners living in the most deprived communities and circumstances? Does this include a focus on equity for care experienced children and young people?
- How well do we listen to and involve learners in making decisions about shaping their health and wellbeing curriculum?
- Through the involvement of learners in planning, managing and participating in individual and group activities in school and in the community, do they demonstrate skills, attitudes and attributes which will be important for the world of work, such as judgement, resilience and independence?
- To what extent are our collaborative partnerships with specialists and partners improving outcomes of learners? How is this work building the capacity of our staff to improve outcomes and achieve equity?
- To what extent do our partnerships enhance family learning opportunities within the health and wellbeing curriculum, for learners affected by poverty?
- How confident are we that all of our staff and partners understand how to use data effectively to monitor the impact of health and wellbeing interventions and approaches?



Health and wellbeing Useful resources

- [The Compassionate and Connected Classroom curricular resource \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [National Action Enquiry Programme Reports 2018-19 | Research | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [Health and wellbeing: Principles and practice \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [Pedagogy for equity – relationships](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [National Health and Wellbeing PLC - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](https://www.sharepoint.com) (GLOW login is required to access this link)
- [Health and wellbeing: Responsibility of all - Making the links...making it work | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [Thematic inspection of PSE and HWB in Scotland's schools and early learning and childcare settings \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [Mental health and wellbeing: whole school approach: framework - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

Research and articles

- [The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment \(Public Health England\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Child and Adolescent Health and Wellbeing in Scotland - Evidence Review \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)
- [Rapid Evidence Review: Reducing the attainment gap – the role of health and wellbeing interventions in schools \(healthscotland.scot\)](https://www.healthscotland.scot)
- [Public Health Priorities for Scotland \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)
- [Closing the attainment gap in Scottish education | JRF](https://www.jrf.org.uk)



Curriculum and Pathways

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

It is essential that children and young people experience a coherent and progressive curriculum provision through the 3-18 continuum.

An effective curriculum is based on the experiences and outcomes, and design principles of progression; coherence; breadth; depth; personalisation and choice; challenge and enjoyment; and relevance.

Children and young people are entitled to access high-quality learning in all curriculum areas and through outdoor learning.

All staff take responsibility for developing literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and digital literacy across the curriculum.

Learners are given opportunities to demonstrate these skills at a high level in a variety of meaningful contexts underpinned by a curriculum rationale relevant to the school.

An effective curriculum provides flexible learning pathways which lead to raising attainment through meeting the needs and aspirations of all our learners. Learning pathways support children and young people to build on their prior learning and ensure appropriate progression for all learners.

In the Senior Phase it is important to consider the major disruptions to every sector of the economy which have had a significant impact on the labour market. Schools need to prepare their young people for this by providing learner pathways relevant to local context. Local and national labour market intelligence data is available through Skills Development Scotland to support this.



Conditions for success and sustainability

An effectively designed curriculum will develop the knowledge and skills of children and young people and reflect the four contexts of learning: curricular areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning, ethos and life of the school, and opportunities for personal achievement.

Children and young people have an entitlement to experience a curriculum which is coherent from 3-18, and provides opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Effective partnership working with connected settings and sectors across the learning stages of 3-18 can significantly enhance the coherence of the curriculum developed in the context of the wider learning community. With collaborative working and shared understanding of a common curriculum rationale, progression for learners becomes less disjointed. Curricular progression at key transition stages should be seen as equally important as that of pastoral transitions.

An effective curriculum provides flexible learning pathways which lead to raising attainment through meeting the needs and aspirations of all our learners. Learning pathways support children and young people to build on their prior learning and ensure appropriate progression for all learners.

A curriculum should evolve through regular review and refresh, in partnership with learners and the wider school community, to ensure that it remains relevant and coherent in supporting the delivery of better outcomes for learners.

Children and young people disadvantaged by poverty and wider inequalities may lack social and cultural capital. This could result in reduced awareness of how to access the full range of opportunities that exist beyond formal school education. To ensure equity, it is essential that schools effectively target and support those young people and their families to raise awareness and accessibility of modern curriculum and employment opportunities.



Exemplars

- [Education Scotland - Learning across the four contexts](#) - Multiple Schools exemplars
- [Education Scotland\) - Primary school curriculum: Middleton Park PS](#)
- [Education Scotland\) - Primary school curriculum: Queensferry PS](#)
- [National Numeracy and Mathematics Progression Framework \(NNMPF\) | Research | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
 - [Argyll and Bute Numeracy and Mathematics Progression Framework | Learning resources](#)
- [Social Studies Skills Progression Framework | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- Modern Languages Progression Frameworks: | National Improvement Hub (education.gov.scot)
 - [First to Second Level](#)
 - [Second to Third level](#)
 - [Third to Fourth Level](#)
- [Profiling employability skills and wider achievements - Kingussie High School | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Skills framework - Larbert High School | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [School Leaver Transitions – A targeted approach in West Dunbartonshire | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- The [Senior Phase Benchmarking tool](#) has been developed to help evaluate your approach to planning the Senior Phase curriculum and to consider any necessary improvements /actions. Revisiting or using this tool may also be a helpful process to go through in light of the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and learner pathways.

Reflective questions

- To what extent are we considering equity for those disadvantaged by poverty and wider inequalities across the four contexts of learning?
- Do we have a clear rationale for our curriculum that considers equity? Does the curriculum experienced by our learners reflect this rationale?
- How well do we support learners disadvantaged by poverty and wider inequalities to provide progression pathways and transitions at all stages through to sustained positive destinations?
- How well does our work with partners support our curriculum to develop knowledge and skills as well as provide opportunities and pathways which ensure positive outcomes for our young people? Are there additional partners who could support this?
- How well does our range of curricular pathways meet the needs of all learners? Can we adapt our curricular offer to create new pathways for learners?
- Has there been an increase in learners finding themselves with no positive destination? Is there an equity aspect to this? How can we address this?
- Do we have more learners returning to school for S5 and S6 due to limited school-leaver opportunities? How can we ensure this is a positive and worthwhile experience for them?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Resources to support the Refreshed Curriculum for Excellence Narrative | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Explore a range of learning pathways – third and fourth level | Health and wellbeing activities | Resources for practitioners | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Finding pathways for your child | Developing the Young Workforce | Learning in Scotland | Parent Zone \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [A summary of outdoor learning resources | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Young Persons guarantee](#)
- [DYW senior phase developments - Foundation Apprenticeships \(FAs\) | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Education Scotland: A summary of Developing the Young Workforce \(DYW\) resources](#)
- [Developing the Young Workforce: Embedding equality in resources for learning](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [The purpose of the curriculum | Curriculum for Excellence | Policy drivers | Policy for Scottish education | Scottish education system | Education Scotland](#)
- [COVID-19 Labour Market Insights | Skills Development Scotland](#)
- [YouthLink Scotland - Youth work and employability report \(2020\)](#)
- [Nuffield Foundation: Class-of-2020 Education leavers in the current crisis](#)
- [IPPR: What does COVID-19 mean for the labour market prospects of young people in Scotland?](#)
- [Learner Pathways: A key to successful curriculum design \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Assessment

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. It helps to provide a picture of a child's or young person's progress and achievements and to identify next steps in learning. Assessment approaches need to promote learner engagement and ensure appropriate support so that all learners can achieve aspirational goals and maximise their potential.

A variety of assessment approaches, which allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities in different contexts, are key to our understanding of the progress learners are making.

The adoption of a range of valid and reliable assessment approaches should be integral to planning of learning and teaching. Assessing progress across the broad spectrum of learning and applying learning in different contexts, will help practitioners to plan, track progress and summarise achievements of learners. This should support learners in their subsequent stages of learning and development.



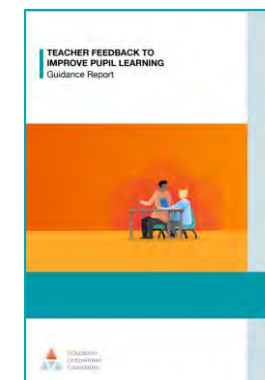
Assessment

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Providing effective feedback to learners is one of the most significant factors in ensuring equity for learners disadvantaged by poverty and wider inequalities. Children and young people facing disadvantage often lack the social capital and access to additional support external to the school environment to assist them with school work and study. Families may be unable to provide direct academic support which may impact the chances of learners meeting their full potential. The importance of teachers and practitioners as professionals delivering equity through high-quality feedback to learners cannot be overstated.

The Education Endowment Foundation report on [Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning](#) summarises six effective practices

- Lay the foundations for effective feedback
- Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward
- Plan for how pupils will receive and use feedback
- Carefully consider how to use purposeful, and time efficient, written feedback
- Carefully consider how to use purposeful verbal feedback
- Design a school feedback policy that prioritises and exemplifies the principles of effective feedback



TEACHER FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE PUPIL LEARNING
Summary of recommendations

1	2	3	4	5	6
Principles			Implementation		
<p>1 Lay the foundations for effective feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, feedback should be given in a timely manner, and should be given in a way that is meaningful to the learner. • High quality initial instruction and support are required to set learning intentions which feedback will aim towards and to assess learning goals which feedback will address. 	<p>2 Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not one clear answer for when feedback should be provided. Rather, teachers should judge whether more immediate or delayed feedback is required, considering the characteristics of the task, the individual pupil, and the collective understanding of the class. • Feedback should focus on moving learning forward, beyond the specific learning goal that pupils set for themselves. High quality feedback may focus on the task, subject, or self-regulation strategies. • Feedback that focuses on a learner's personal characteristics, or feedback that offers only general and vague remarks, is less likely to be effective. 	<p>3 Plan for how pupils will receive and use feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful thought should be given to how pupils receive feedback. Pupils' motivation, self-confidence, their trust in the teacher, and their capacity to receive information can impact feedback's effectiveness. Teachers should therefore implement strategies that encourage high learners to welcome feedback, and should monitor whether pupils are using it. • Teachers should also provide opportunities for pupils to use feedback. Only then will the feedback loop be closed so that pupil learning can progress. 	<p>4 Carefully consider how to use purposeful, and time-efficient, written feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written methods of feedback, including written comments, marks, and scores, can impact pupil attainment. However, the effects of written feedback can vary. • The method of delivery (and whether a teacher chooses to use written or verbal feedback) is likely to be less important than ensuring that the principles of effective teacher feedback (Recommendations 1-3) are followed. Written feedback may be effective if it follows high quality foundations, is timed appropriately, focuses on the task, subject, or other non-personal, and is then used by pupils. • Some forms of written feedback have also been associated with a significant opportunity cost due to their impact on teacher workload. This should be monitored by teachers and school leaders. 	<p>5 Carefully consider how to use purposeful verbal feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal methods of feedback can improve pupil attainment and may be more time-efficient when compared to some forms of written feedback. • However, as with written feedback, the effects of verbal feedback can vary and the method of delivery is likely to be less important than ensuring the principles of effective teacher feedback (Recommendations 1-3) are followed. 	<p>6 Design a school feedback policy that prioritises and exemplifies the principles of effective feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enacting these recommendations will require careful consideration and the implementation should be a staged process, not an event. This will include ongoing professional development. • Schools should design feedback policies which prioritise the principles of effective teacher feedback (Recommendations 1-3) and exemplify the principles of effective feedback.

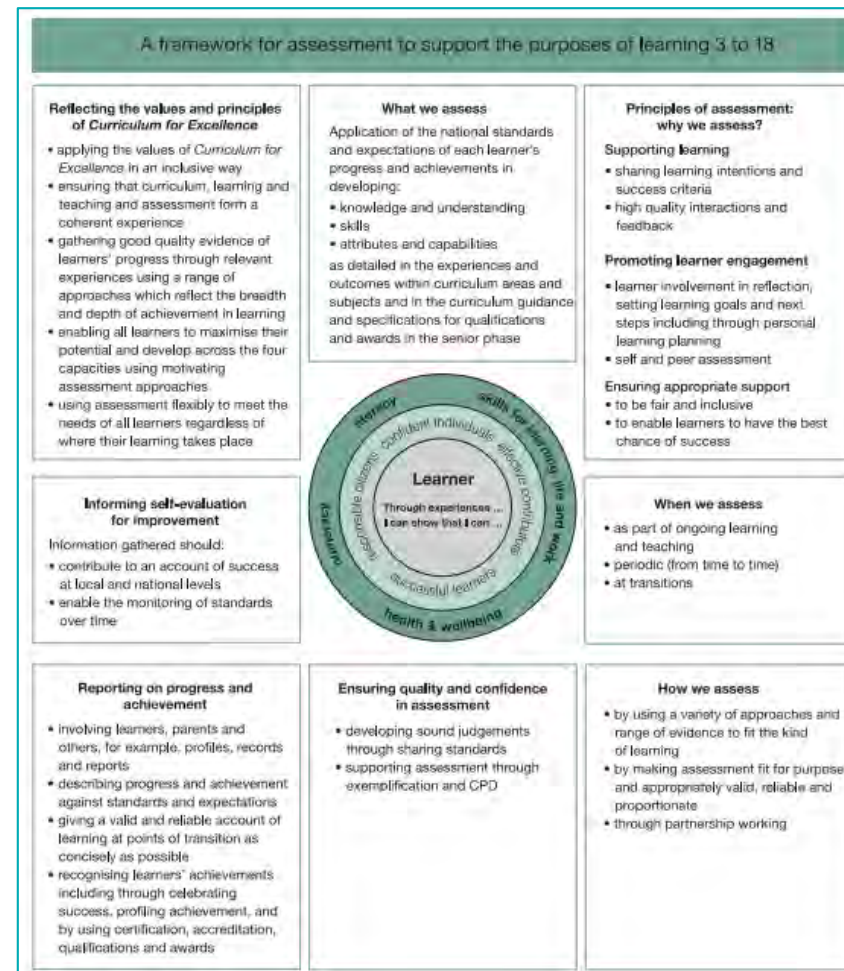
Conditions for success and sustainability

The adoption of a range of valid and reliable assessment approaches should be integral to planning of learning and teaching. Assessing progress across the broad spectrum of learning and applying learning in different contexts, will help practitioners to plan, track progress and summarise achievements of learners. This should support learners in their subsequent stages of learning and development.

Learners will progress in different ways and will be able to demonstrate their achievements in different ways. Assessment approaches should help learners to show progression and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways which are appropriate to learning. Practitioners should support approaches which allow learners to demonstrate:

- their breadth of learning across the curriculum
- the level of challenge to which they are able to respond
- the degree to which they can apply what they have learned in new and unfamiliar contexts across the curriculum

Learners will progress in different ways and will be able to demonstrate their achievements in different ways. In order to support this, assessment should be seen from the perspective of the learner.



Exemplars

- [Assessment within the BGE: Education Scotland thematic inspection - signposts to highly-effective practice](#)
- [Assessment in the broad general education 2020/21 | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub](#)
- [Assessment in the Senior Phase | Learning in Scotland | Parent Zone \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Dylan Wiliam: Assessment strategies | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Dylan Wiliam – Using assessment strategies to support feedback | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Dylan Wiliam: Formative assessment | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Dylan Wiliam - Self and peer assessment | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Education Scotland: Effective observation leading to effective assessment](#)
- [Assessment Approaches - Dundee City Council](#)
- [Gathering of listening and talking evidence – Dundee City Council](#)



Reflective questions

- How well do we make use of a range of valid, reliable and relevant assessment tools and approaches to support the improvement of children and young people's learning?
- How well do we record, analyse and use assessment information to identify development needs for individual learners and specific groups?
- How effectively do we involve learners and parents in planning and evaluating learning?
- How well do we enable all children and young people to engage in self- and peer-assessment to improve their learning?
- How well do we apply the principles of planning, observation, assessment, recording and reporting as an integral feature of learning and teaching?
- To what extent are we monitoring and tracking the interventions and approaches to know if they are raising attainment and helping to close the poverty-related attainment gap?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Effective use of data for equity | Scottish Attainment Challenge 2020-21: Equity in education | Resources for practitioners | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub](#)
- [Assessment: Some useful strategies – Dundee City Council](#)
- [Assessment Approaches - Dundee City Council](#)
- [Assessment and feedback | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Closing the Attainment Gap: 8 Insights to Help You Improve Your Strategy \(insidegovernment.co.uk\)](#)
- [ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: Centre for Educational Research and Innovation \(oecd.org\)](#)
- [Weaving-Education-Theory-and-Practice-in-Oceania: Rethinking Educational Assessment: Improving our \(usp.ac.fj\)](#)
- [Research Supporting the Ten Principles: Assessment Practices | Great Schools Partnership](#)

Leadership

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Section overview

Effective leadership at all levels is essential if schools and local authorities are to accelerate progress in ensuring equity and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The importance of social justice and social justice leadership is recognised in the GTCS suite of Professional Standards, which clearly set out an expectation of socially just practices for teachers at all levels. In the section entitled 'Being a teacher in Scotland', the professional values of **social justice**, trust and respect and integrity are highlighted as central to what it means to be a teacher in Scotland. Commitment to reflecting on the connections between values, actions and career-long professional learning is a critical part of developing teacher professionalism. School Leadership and Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism are two of the drivers for improvement set out in Scotland's National Improvement Framework. This section of the Equity Toolkit focuses on leadership to ensure equity.

Defining social justice

Social justice is the view that everyone matters and deserves the same opportunities. The aim of social justice is to create a fair and equal society where each individual's rights are recognised and protected, and where decisions made are fair and honest.



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Social justice leadership is not solely a function of headship.

In the table opposite we see 4 themes:

- Pedagogical leadership – practitioners using their knowledge and skills for the benefit of ALL learners, working collaboratively across the school to that end
- Middle leadership – the connection between playroom/classroom practice and strategic development;
- School leadership – the shaping of whole school culture, structures and relationships
- System leadership – constructive collaboration to influence across the system.

This leadership continuum highlights actions to promote and ensure equity at all levels of education.

Source: Christine Forde & Deirdre Torrance (2017) "Social justice and leadership development, Professional Development in Education", 43:1, 106-120, DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2015.2131733

Table 2. Social justice leadership across a leadership development continuum.

Pedagogical leadership	Middle leadership	School leadership	System leadership
Acting on collective values systems	Contributing to collective values systems	Building collective values systems and commitment	Shaping values
Inclusive pedagogies	Building shared understandings of inclusive practice	Ensuring inclusive practices meet the needs of all learners across the school	Reducing the equality gap across the system
Know and interrogate policy	Lead staff in reviewing policy to identify issues and actions	Critically review policy and identify areas for action across the school	Influence and shape national policy
Understand issues and challenges related equity and equality in the classroom	Plan and review teaching and learning provision in relation to equity and equality	Balance the rights and responsibilities of teachers and pupils in ensuring equity and equality	Build commitment to an equality agenda across stakeholders
Explore personal values and vision for equity and equality in education	Ensure a shared vision underpins the teaching and learning programmes	Build a common vision across the school community for equity and equality	Guardianship of the purposes of education addressing the needs of all learners across the system
Respect and value diversity in classroom communities	Act with integrity in dealing with diversity in leading teaching and learning	Managing ethical dilemmas through mediation to resolution	Build collaboration across the system to address issues relating to priorities and the needs of diverse learners
Justify teaching strategies on the basis of values related to the needs of all learners	Acknowledge the challenges of meeting the needs of diverse learning and work constructively to address these	Capacity to articulate and justify to the school community principled decisions	Champion sets of values related to equity and equality across the system

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Research identifies a number of elements that contribute positively to tackling the poverty-related attainment gap. Strong leadership; high quality teaching and learning; a targeted approach; a curriculum that is inclusive and addresses gaps; and effective use of data are among these. Staff at all levels can support recovery and accelerated progress by ensuring a focus on these.



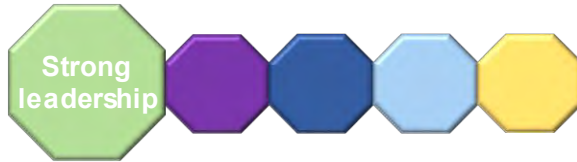
Research referred to is -

Tackling disadvantage: what works in tackling the achievement gap in schools?

Review of Education

Vol. 3, No. 2, June 2015, pp. 138-174 Demie & Maclean

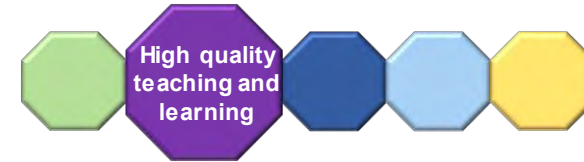
What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?



Strong leadership at all levels will drive forward improvement in the outcomes of children and young people. This requires an inclusive school culture that is aspirational for all learners, underpinned by a commitment to a shared vision of equity.

Useful links:

- [SLF online 2021 Leadership of inclusive practices to tackle educational inequity – YouTube](#)
- Podcast considering social justice leadership in practice. [Education Scotland: Signposting Equity Issue 11 \(office.com\)](#)
- [Ten Principles for Effective and Equitable Educational Recovery from COVID-19 – OECD](#)
- [Michael Fullan on Leading in a Culture of Change - Getting Smart](#)
- [Approaches to closing the equity gap | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



The provision of high quality teaching and learning is essential to raise attainment and tackle the poverty-related attainment gap. Additional targeted interventions can build on this but the provision of universal high quality universal teaching and learning will support sustainable progress.

Useful links

- [SLF Online 2021 Pedagogy for Equity – YouTube](#)
- [SLF online 2021 Tracking and monitoring to support learners disadvantaged by the impact of poverty – YouTube](#)
- [Metacognition and self-regulation | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)
- [Dialogue, reflection and feedback with practitioners about learning | Sharing what's working well | National overviews | Supporting remote learning | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Dylan Wiliam – Using assessment strategies to support feedback | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Dylan Wiliam: Formative assessment | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

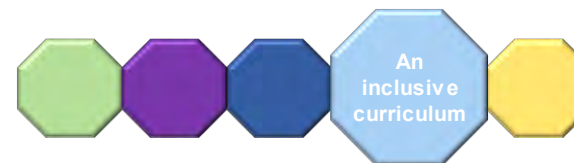
What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?



In addition to providing universal high quality teaching and learning, delivering a targeted approach allows learners impacted by poverty to accumulate advantage and achieve their full potential. A targeted approach provides additional support to individuals or groups of learners (and their families, if appropriate) to address specific gaps and/or barriers.

Useful links:

- [Evidenced Based Interventions - YouTube](#)
- [Learning Through Play: Increasing impact, Reducing inequality | The LEGO Foundation\(learningthroughplay.com\)](#)
- [Poverty-Alliance-Mentoring-and-Tutoring-ReviewFINALv2.pdf \(povertyalliance.org\)](#)
- [Equality and Equity Toolkit \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



A school's curriculum can be an effective tool in tackling the poverty-related attainment gap. Understanding the needs of learners impacted by poverty is vital to designing the best curriculum for them to address disadvantage arising from poverty. Education Scotland's Curriculum Design Toolkit is a suite of design tools to ensure learners and their needs are genuinely at the heart of their own curriculum.

Useful links:

- [Curriculum Design Toolkit | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Curriculum Co-Design | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Learning which reflects the principles of Curriculum for Excellence | Sharing what's working well | National overviews | Supporting remote learning | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Resources to support the Refreshed Curriculum for Excellence Narrative | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?



Effective use of data supports the identification of learners impacted by poverty, their gaps and the underlying barriers leading to those gaps. Effective use of data will also support robust monitoring and evaluation of progress and the impact of approaches and interventions.

Useful links:

- [Effective use of data for equity | Scottish Attainment Challenge 2020-21: Equity in education | Resources for practitioners | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub](#)
- [Data Use For Equity: Amanda Datnow and Vicki Park](#)
- [Small Data for Big Change: What does it mean for teachers? | Pasi Sahlberg](#)
- [Pasi Sahlberg - Big Data or small data: What's the key to unlocking learning opportunities? - YouTube](#)
- [Data and the Poverty Related Attainment Gap – YouTube](#)
- [Data Impact Toolkit \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

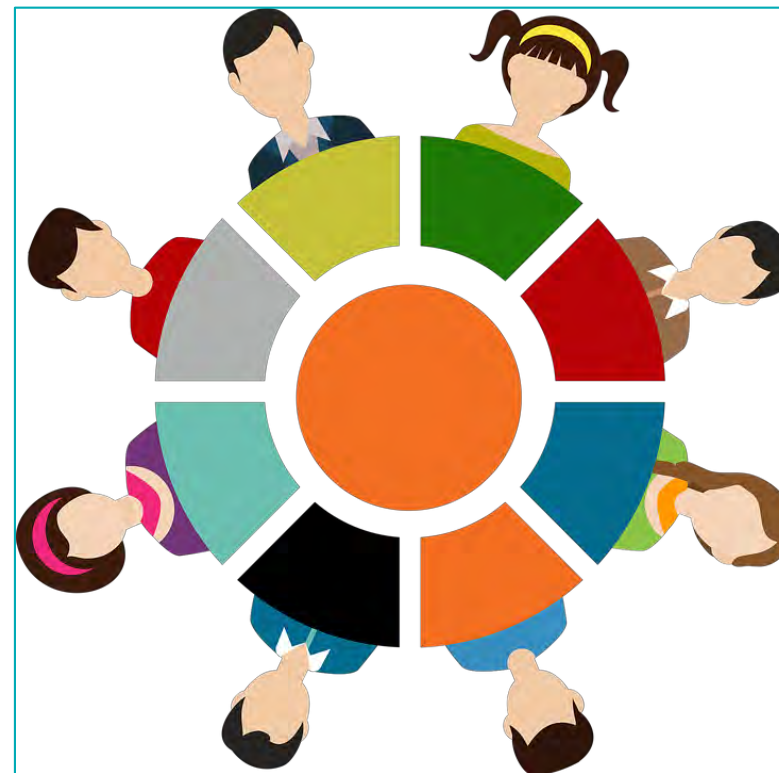


Conditions for success and sustainability

In your classroom/playroom/department/school/local authority, create a culture that will support and nurture equity:

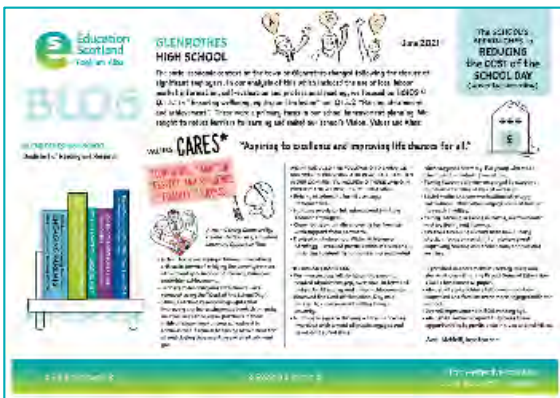
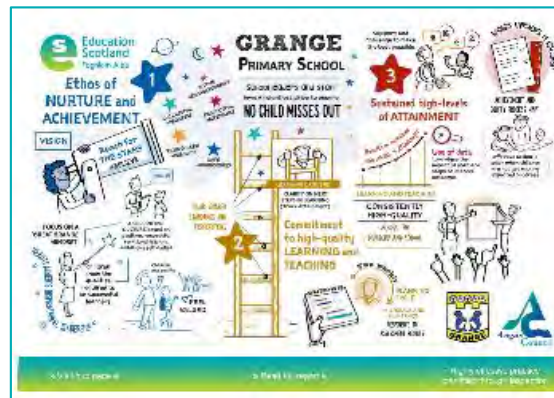
- Create the vision*
- Build a collective values system*
- Critically review policy* and ensure inclusive practices*
- Work collaboratively and value partners
- Ensure all staff understand the causes and impacts of poverty
- Ensure a relentless focus on ensuring equity and closing the poverty-related attainment gap

*From: Christine Forde & Deirdre Torrance (2017) "Social justice and leadership development, Professional Development in Education", 43:1, 106-120, DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2015.1131733



Exemplars

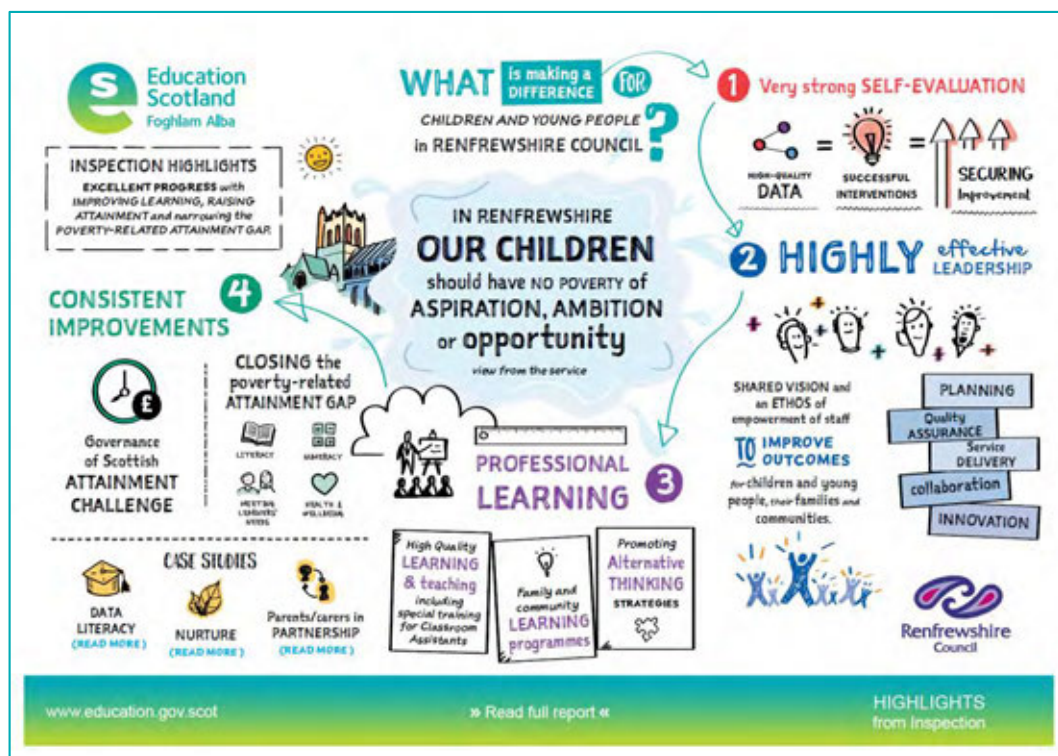
- [Grange Primary, ensuring no child misses out, before and into the recovery phase | What's going well? | Resources for practitioners | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Castlemilk High School – Opportunities for learning and achievement – November 2019 | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



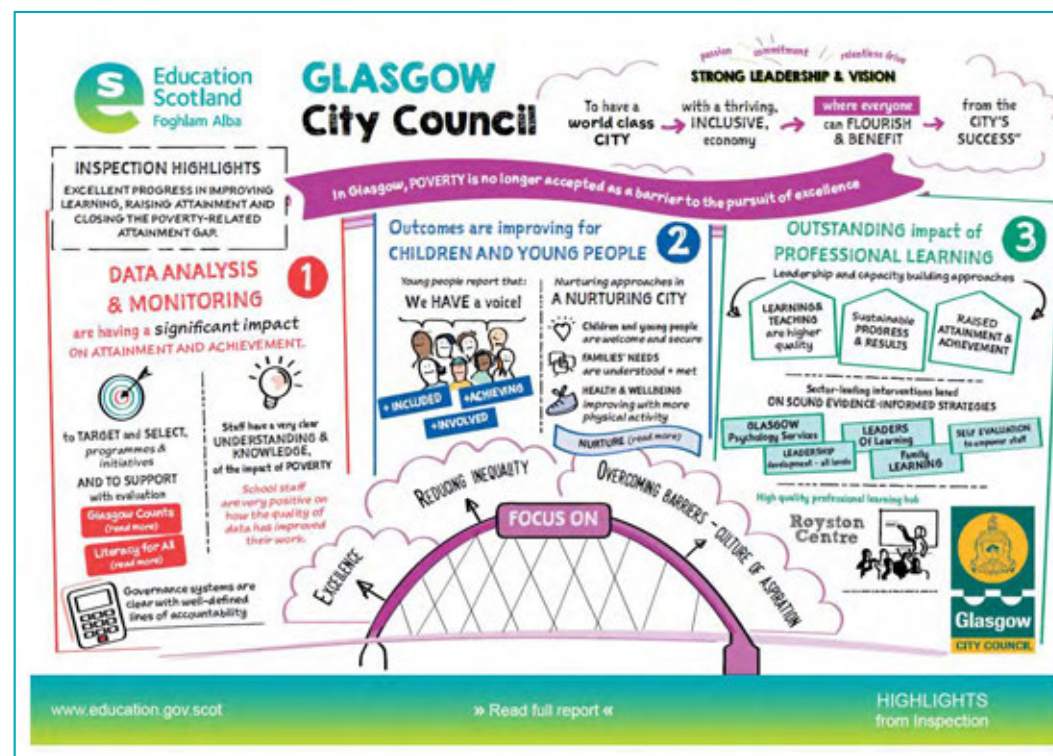
- [Glenrothes High School - Equity - June 2021 | What's going well? | Resources for practitioners | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Exemplars

- [Sketchnote - Renfrewshire Council – Closing the Attainment Gap - February 2019 | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



- [Sketchnote - Glasgow City Council – March 2019 | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



Reflective questions

- To what extent is there a shared vision and commitment to achieving equity for children and young people living in the most deprived communities and circumstances?
- How well do staff at all levels clearly focus on and commit to achieving equity?
- How focused are we on closing the poverty-related attainment gap in our school self-evaluation?
- Is there strong and effective leadership at all levels driving forward improvement in the outcomes for children and young people?
- Do all staff in our school know who the children and young people are whose learning may be impacted most during the recovery or a lockdown situation?
- How confident are we that all children and young people, regardless of their socio-economic circumstances, are accessing a wide range of learning experiences and pathways? Are they progressing to positive and sustained destinations?
- How effectively are we tracking and monitoring our progress?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Achieving Excellence and Equity: 2022 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)
- [UK Poverty 2022: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | JRF](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- Dan Nicolls. [Urgent Action Required | addressing disadvantage](#)
- Deirdre Torrance & Christine Forde (2017): [Social justice leadership in Scottish education — University of Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)
- Christine Forde & Deirdre Torrance (2017) Social justice and leadership development, Professional Development in Education, 43:1, 106-120, DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2015.1131733: [Social justice and leadership development \(tandfonline.com\)](#)
- Bob Lingard, Sam Sellar & Glenn C. Savage (2014) [Re-articulating social justice as equity in schooling policy: the effects of testing and data infrastructures](#), British Journal of Sociology of Education, 35:5, 710-730, DOI: 10.1080/01425692.2014.919846
- Paul Fleming, Senior Regional Adviser with Education Scotland, Podcast on social justice leadership in practice: [Education Scotland: Signposting Equity Issue 11 \(office.com\)](#)

Families and communities

[Section overview](#)

[What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?](#)

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[Useful resources](#)

[Research and articles](#)



Section overview

Children and young people spend more than 80% of their time outside school in families and communities ([Closing the poverty related attainment gap: Before and beyond the school gates, Barnardos, 2018](#)). Circumstances beyond school significantly impacts the capacity of children and young people to engage in education. The report [Closing the Attainment Gap in Scottish Education \(Sosu and Ellis, 2014\)](#), published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, evidenced closer partnerships between home and school supports reducing the attainment gap. By engaging effectively with a range of community partners and co-designing effective support and interventions, we can positively impact on outcomes for learners. Enabling stronger links with the wide range of important services for children, young people and their families that sit beyond the school gates is critical to support recovery and accelerate progress. This section provides information and links to strategies and approaches to support equity within families and communities by attending to the following:

Parental Engagement

Family Learning

Partnership and collaboration

Cost of the School Day

Use of community data

Community Learning and Development (CLD)

Community Engagement

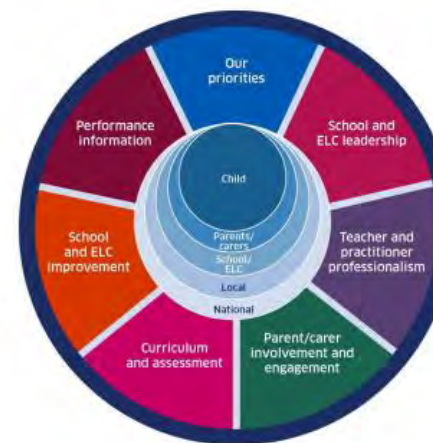
Participatory Budgeting (PB)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

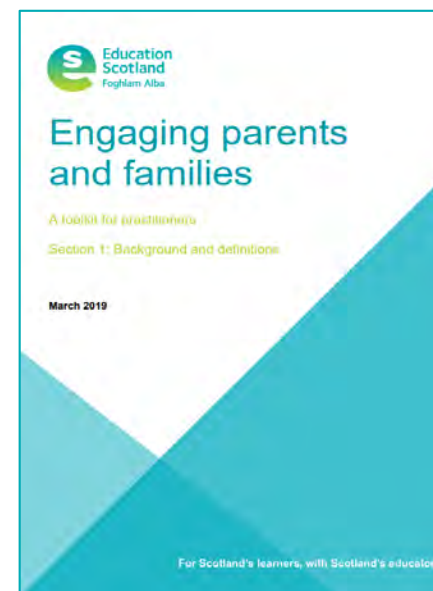
[Parental Engagement](#) should be planned for and embedded in a whole school or service strategy. The planning cycle will include a comprehensive needs analysis; the establishment of mutual priorities; ongoing monitoring and evaluation of interventions; and a community awareness process to help parents and teachers understand and commit to a strategic plan. The [National Education for Educational Research \(NER\) guide](#) asks establishments to consider:

- the best available research evidence on which strategies work best and how to implement them
- research into local needs and circumstances
- data from consultations with staff, parents and pupils.

The [Parental Engagement: how to make a difference report](#) published by the Oxford School of Improvement helpfully outlines considerations for equity through a series of steps, including ethos, communication, reach and what works.



[The National Improvement Framework: parent communication plan](#)



[Engaging parents and families - A toolkit for practitioners \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Parental Engagement

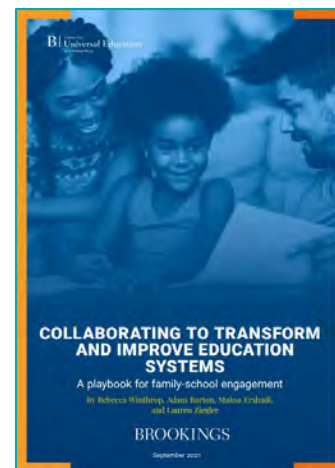
The [NFER guide](#) also provides key messages from research and practice on how to engage parents from disadvantaged groups. Some of the features include:

- Maximise choices and minimise barriers for parents by attending to logistical barriers, such as cost, time and transport.
- the leadership team are engaged with and committed to the strategy.
- there is sustainability, so developments remain when a specific piece of work concludes or staff member leaves.
- schools use a range of engagement strategies and let parents choose what they want to participate in. For example, workshops and courses to encourage parents to connect with their child's learning (virtual or in-person); family literacy classes; or involve parents in the classroom, such as listening to pupils reading.
- there is partnership and multi-agency arrangements with local services to reach the most vulnerable families.

“Schools with strong family engagement are 10 times more likely to improve student learning outcomes.”
(Brookings, September 2021).

Global research developed by the [Brookings Institute](#) highlights four goals to connect families with schools (figure 1). They developed a [Family Engagement Playbook](#), which is particularly helpful for shaping perspective on bringing an equity lens to understanding the multiple ways in which families, communities, schools, and education systems can interact. It presents an opportunity to shift broader approaches, and the overall vision, for long-term collaboration. This [playbook](#) shows that family-school engagement - namely the collaboration between the multiple actors, from parents and community members to teachers and school leaders - has an important role to play in improving and transforming education systems to achieve four main goals (Figure 1).

See pages [201-206](#) for Scotland's case study example on parental engagement.



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Parental Engagement

The [EEF](#) evidences a positive impact on “average of 4 months’ additional progress” for parental engagement through the following:

- early engagement with parents – engagement with parents in the early years is typically more effective, and can lay strong positive foundations for the future.
 - consider what method(s) of communication you will use and what information you will communicate to parents to encourage positive dialogue on learning.
 - consider what support you can give to parents to ensure home learning is of high quality.
 - supporting parents to assist their children’s learning or their self-regulation, as well as specific skills, such as reading may help to mitigate against some causes of educational disadvantage.
 - it is important to consider how parental engagement strategies will engage with all parents aligned to the context of the establishment. Parental engagement strategies can increase attainment gaps, if the parents that access parental engagement opportunities are primarily from affluent backgrounds.
- establishments should consider whether parents have the knowledge and skills to provide the support required for their child’s learning, particularly for young people in secondary schools. Interventions designed to engage parents in home learning have not generally been linked to increased attainment. It is important for practitioners to encourage parents to direct their child or young person to their teachers, rather than take on an instructional role themselves, if they do not have the capacity.
 - When introducing new approaches, schools should consider implementation. Information from the EEF’s [Putting Evidence to Work – A School’s Guide to Implementation](#) is a useful resource to assist in this area.



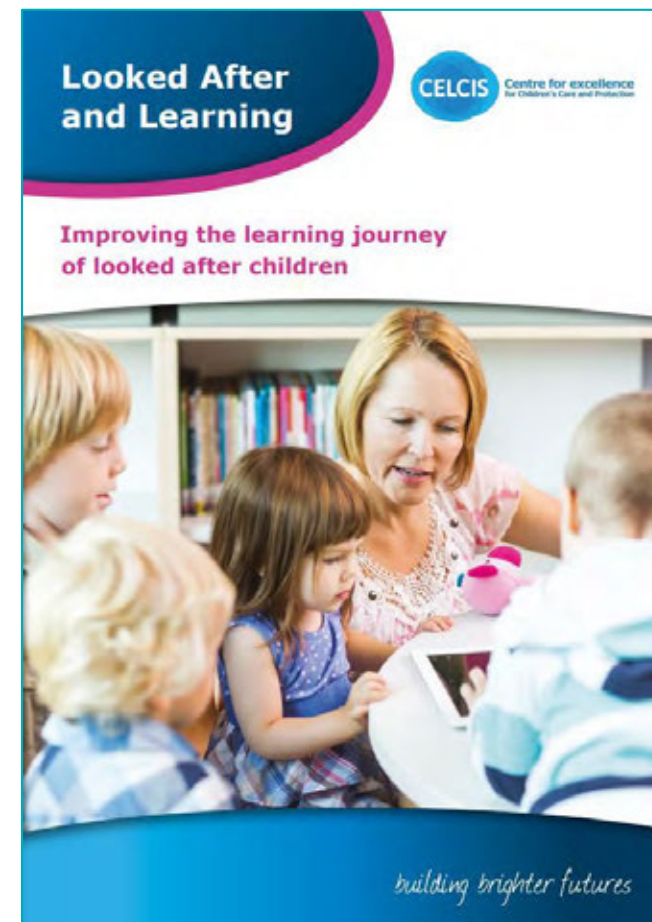
What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Parental Engagement

The 2015 CELCIS [Looked After and Learning](#) report provides seven key areas for improvement, including developing engagement between schools, parents and carers. The report provides evidence, case studies and benchmarks in support of equitable approaches for parental engagement.

“You want the best for your kids, I want better for ma [my] kids, better than I had for mase [myself]. I’m doon [down] here all the time. I think am a bit too pushy sometimes with the kids and am always doon here [at school].”
(Mother, Primary school)

“They [children] see you turn up and they take pride in that, it motivates them to do better, especially if they see that you learn as well.”
(Father, Primary school)



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Family Learning

The [Review of Family Learning supporting Excellence and Equity \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot) highlights “supporting, equipping and building capacity amongst Scotland’s parents to capitalise on children’s opportunities for learning is key in raising attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap.” A family learning approach can also help adults take up adult learning and training opportunities, gain employment or attain new skills. This in turn positively impacts on children’s individual attainment, their aspirations and personal learning journey. Learning outcomes and benefits resulting from family learning approaches can be categorised into five key areas:

- new skills;
- increased confidence and understanding;
- improved communication;
- changed behaviours;
- and changed relationships with community and family.



Community Learning and Development plays a vital role in providing engaging and impactful family learning opportunities. [Family learning](#) is an approach to engaging families in learning outcomes that have an impact on the whole family. Family Learning is supported by National Occupational Standards. In order to support a consistent understanding of family learning Education Scotland have published a number of documents, reports, case studies and resources. Family learning also facilitates increased parental participation and engagement, improved school attendance, reduces persistent absenteeism and can increase learner attainment. The wider outcomes of family learning are shown through skills development, employability, progression into further education opportunities, and interactions within the family, as well as improvements in parental confidence and parenting skills. Family learning should be part of an overall strategic approach to supporting families and communities as and when appropriate

Evidence gathered in the [Review of Family Learning](#) highlights that improving and increasing ways in which parents and families can be equal partners in their children’s learning at home, school and in communities is crucial to raising attainment for all and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Family learning as an approach is not a new concept but one which helps break cycles of poverty and disadvantage amongst communities whilst at the same time enhancing the intergenerational transfer of skills from the parent to the child and the child to the parent.

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Partnership and collaboration

Multi-agency partnership working is where practitioners from more than one agency work together to jointly share aims, information, tasks and responsibilities in order to intervene early to prevent problems arising which may impact on the child's ability to reach their full potential. Multi-agency working can be interpreted in many different ways as it can mean different things to different people. Multi-agency working is typically used interchangeably with collaboration, coalition, partnership and joint working which can either be informal or formal and can happen at all levels in an empowered system and can derive from a statutory obligation or from a group of colleagues who work in a similar field who want to achieve a common purpose. Therefore the landscape of multi-agency working can be complex, encompassing a wide range of different types of collaborative activity with a range of partners.

To help navigate recovery and accelerate progress, youth workers across Scotland have continued to engage with young people during the COVID-19 crisis. As we move into the recovery and renewal phases, youth work has an important part to play in supporting young people's learning and health and wellbeing.

This Wakelet includes a selection of links to advice, resources, feedback from young people and practice examples which youth workers and their partners in schools and other sectors may find useful: [Youth Work during the renewal phase](#)

The following resources also contain useful links and resources for recovery:

- [Impact of COVID-19 – communities](#) (GLOW login required)
- [A summary of Community Learning and Development \(CLD\) COVID-19 recovery resources | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Community Learning and Development \(CLD\) Wakelet - Wakelet](#)



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Partnership and collaboration

During school building closures effective partnership working was key to schools being able to correctly identify and support vulnerable families. The [Equity Audit](#) highlighted that many new community partnerships formed quickly, strengthening the links between school and home. The Equity Audit sketchnote illustrates the role of partnership, collaboration and multi-agency working as one of the key factors in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on learners, but also pointing as a measure to support recovery through bespoke support. In addition the [Closing the poverty-related attainment gap: A report on progress 2016-2020](#) identified effective collaboration and increased engagement with families and communities as particular areas of progress and can be viewed in the accompanying sketchnote.

Youth workers and school staff often work with the same children and young people but don't always fully understand each other's aims and approaches. Recovery from the Pandemic requires a whole system approach to support young people's health and wellbeing and attainment. [Lost in Translation](#) is a resource to support structured professional dialogue between youth work and school practitioners who are looking to build a greater shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and approaches.



[Equity Audit Sketchnote, March 2021](#)



[Progress towards closing the poverty-related attainment gap, March 2021](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Partnership and collaboration

Working in partnership with third sector organisations can be on a formal or informal basis. Working with the third sector can provide innovation and a skilled, competent and motivated workforce. Third sector organisations may work in specific geographic locations or in various locations across Scotland. They will vary in size and their levels of capacity, depending upon the parameters and scale of the collaboration or partnership. Establishing contact with the [Third Sector Interface](#) is helpful to explore local providers that are already operating within the geographical area and assess if providers can help meet the need of an establishment or local authority.

A multiagency planning cycle (diagram opposite) has been developed to illustrate seven key steps for establishments to consider when collaborating with partners to close the poverty-related attainment gap. The steps highlighted can be adapted to suit any context when considering collaborating with others. Using the multiagency planning cycle in isolation will not guarantee a successful partnership if a strong foundation is not established first. Before using this cycle consider the rationale for the collaboration. What is the need and purpose underpinning the collaboration?

If there is a need to work with new partners, seek out organisations that complement existing skills and objectives. Seek recommendations from others who have worked with them and listen to what has not worked well and why. [HGIOS?4 \(1.5 Management of resources to promote equity and 2.7 Partnerships\)](#) and the [school and community partnership toolkit](#) may also be useful resources.

Multi-agency planning cycle



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Partnership and collaboration

The [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) provide 7 good-practice principles designed to improve and guide the process of community engagement.



[National Standards for Community Engagement | SCDC - We believe communities matter](#)

[The Scottish Attainment Challenge and partnerships with the Third Sector](#)

resource provides information and guidance to identify shared agendas and create purposeful partnerships with appropriate third sector organisations to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. The third sector has experience in delivering projects which address each of the three priorities identified for the Scottish Attainment Challenge but is particularly well placed to support improvements to health and wellbeing and to improve employability skills and school leaver destinations.



[Youth Work & Schools Partnerships: PEF Funding](#)



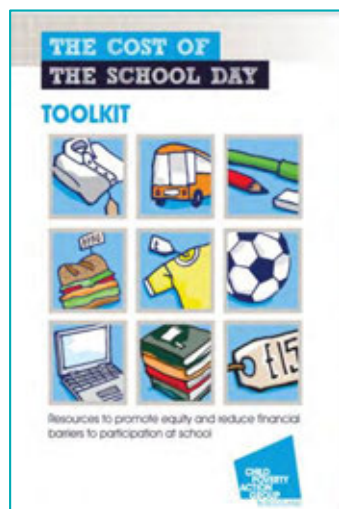
[Scottish Attainment Challenge and partnerships with the Third Sector](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

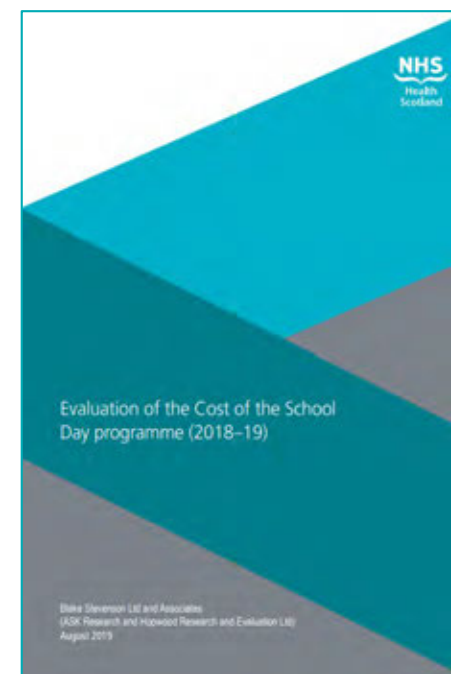
Cost of the school day

The [Cost of the School Day Toolkit](#) was updated and refreshed in 2021. The toolkit sets out the Cost of the School Day process in five steps and features editable action plans, updated information and resources to facilitate whole school conversations about barriers relating to costs associated with school and how to tackle them, and examples of practice.

The resource supports all members of the school community - children and young people, teachers and school staff, parents and carers – to be involved in making Cost of the School Day changes. Every school is unique, so the toolkit ensures that every school community can form a unique plan. [The Cost of Having Fun at school report](#) highlights key findings, ideas and suggestions from learners and families about how events can be made more inclusive, and details interesting practice from schools.



Find out what some of the schools around Scotland have been doing as part of the Cost of the School Day project [here](#).



[Evaluation of the Cost of the School Day programme \(2018-2019\)](#)
(healthscotland.scot)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Using community data

Education and children services are in a unique position where they can work collaboratively across sectors to reduce structural inequalities and collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders to [get it right for every child](#). This can be facilitated by having a deeper understanding of the mechanisms in which educational attainment can be negatively affected by poverty and subsequently support professionals to design bespoke interventions suitable to their own unique context and achieve excellence and equity of educational outcomes for children and young people.

It is important when considering data as part of contextual analysis to avoid setting a deficit discourse by fixating on the problems children and young people experience and not address the systemic issues that exacerbate the poverty-related attainment gap. [Integration of community data](#) can be helpful when understanding the context, you're operating in and when considering approaches to equity. For example, the Northern Alliance regional improvement collaborative are working closely with education practitioners to understand what data currently exists, how the datasets may link with one another, and how this may help inform issues associated with poverty and deprivation. The outcomes of the first phase of the work in the Northern Alliance can be read [here](#)

The use and analysis of community data will help to consider trends and approaches within local contexts, including all services that support children and families to understand how best they can work together at a local level to make a difference. Understanding the factors that present barriers to children, young people and their families will help to support families to access the help they need to flourish.



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Community Learning and Development (CLD)

"Community Learning and Development (CLD) is a field of professional 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 CLD Standards Council Scotland](#))

The CLD profession is governed by a set of [principles](#) which includes attending to equity to ensure their practice is equitable and inclusive. CLD has a pivotal role in supporting children and young people's well-being; helping children, young people, families and communities through recovery of COVID-19 and in accelerating progress to support closing the attainment gap.

The [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) have been updated to guide thinking about how to engage communities during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Standards cover some of the issues impacting on communities which might make it more difficult for people to take part in engagement activity. The Standards also points to useful resources and online tools that can help address these issues

A single point of access to guidance and support for COVID-19 recovery and equity within the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Sector - [A summary of Community Learning and Development \(CLD\) COVID-19 recovery resources | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[Outdoor learning](#) is a vital aspect within Scotland's Curriculum and is particularly important in the context of COVID-19, providing both a safe and challenging learning environment as well as a route to supporting learners' achievement, attainment and wellbeing. CLD and their partners, including the voluntary sector, help to plan and deliver a wide range of progressive, impactful, challenging and sustainable outdoor learning opportunities. The John Muir Trust's '[Closing the Gap](#)' and '[Education Recovery](#)' reports provide useful examples of ways to use the award to support equity, including in the context of recovery. Some other examples of projects which evidence impact for equity include:

- [Outdoor Learning Hubs - A Scottish Attainment Challenge Innovation Fund Project](#)
- [Outdoor Learning as a context and an approach for learning Middleton Park School Aberdeen City](#)
- [Curriculum Outdoors Attainment Challenge \(COACh\)](#)
- [Outdoor adventure learning EEF](#)

A summary of outdoor learning resources, including examples from CLD is available from Education Scotland's [National Improvement Hub](#). Specific advice on the potential role of outdoor education during COVID-19 is available from the [Scottish Advisory Panel on Outdoor Education](#).



See page 11 of the thematic inspection of [Successful approaches to learning outdoors](#) for case study from Beeslack High school, Midlothian.

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Employment and Skills

CLD plays a critical role in skills development – very often working with people who have been excluded from work and everyday life because of their low self-esteem, skills and confidence. For many people across Scotland, CLD can create a route into skills provision at all levels. This route embeds literacy and numeracy into all of its provision, so that learning and skills development becomes accessible for many people who are disengaged from learning.

Ensuring effective community provision for lifelong learning and skills development is critical to addressing economic recovery post COVID-19.

Mental health and wellbeing

The impact of COVID-19 have particularly highlighted the need for mental health support in our communities. CLD provides support for young people and adults who are vulnerable or marginalised through the delivery of targeted interventions to improve health and wellbeing. Through building this trusted relationship, learners are supported to build confidence, improve resilience and connect with personal development opportunities for learning and building new skills.

The Scottish Government's [Mental Health Transition and Recovery](#) Plan sets out key actions to promote good mental health and wellbeing, ensuring rapid and easily accessible support is provided to people in distress. CLD will play a crucial role in complementing these interventions, bringing its significant expertise and knowledge to support and target the wellbeing of those most disproportionately affected prior to, during and following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Digital Engagement

The Scottish Government has set out plans to develop a Digital Learning Strategy for Further Education, Higher Education and Community-based Learning. This work will align digital curriculum and platforms to deliver equity of access to learning across Scotland.

The Strategy will build on the work CLD providers have undertaken to support those most [disproportionately affected by COVID-19](#) have access to the digital means needed to engage with services.

Access to all 32 local authority CLD Plans can be found [here](#)



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is relevant to all parts of the public sector and is an area of increasing importance. The [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) requires community planning partners to secure the participation of community bodies in community planning. Account should be taken of the interests of people who experience inequalities of outcome, as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.

Implementing community empowerment is a national priority for the Scottish Government. It is an important part of public service reform, focusing attention on reducing disadvantage and inequality, and improving outcomes for communities. Community empowerment is central to a human rights-based approach to policy and decision-making. The human rights PANEL principles (Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination and Equality, Empowerment and Legality) means:

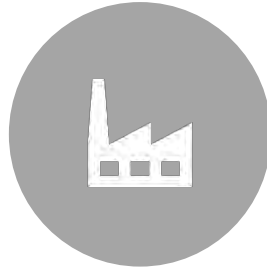
- people should be involved in decisions that affect their rights and be fully supported to take part in developing policy and practices which affect their lives;
- prioritising those people who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights.

- Community empowerment is a gradual process which involves continual learning and the constant building of a community's capacity to articulate and address their priorities. It also involves communities having greater influence and input to decision-making. Public bodies and communities are likely to be at different stages as they develop their understanding and gain confidence in working together. Public bodies need to invest in capacity-building appropriate to their local communities, particularly those facing disadvantage.
- In some communities, people may already be driving change and public bodies have a role in supporting and facilitating this. Other communities will need to be supported to participate more fully. Public bodies should be finding ways to empower communities, for example by sharing and shifting power in decision-making. It is important that children and young people also have a say in services that affect them.
- The [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) have been updated to guide thinking about how to engage communities during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Standards cover some of the issues impacting on communities which might make it more difficult for people to take part in engagement activity. The Standards also points to useful resources and online tools that can help address these issues.

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?



COMMUNITY
CAPACITY BUILDING



CO-PRODUCTION



ASSET-BASED
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT



COMMUNITY
EMPOWERMENT

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Participatory Budgeting

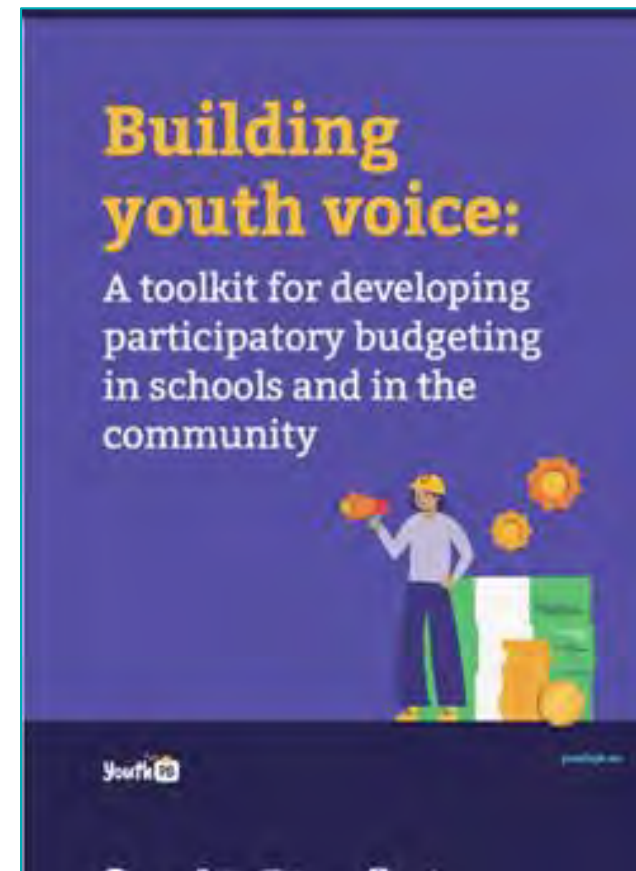
[Participatory budgeting \(PB\)](#) is a way for people to have a direct say in how local money is spent. PB is linked to [community empowerment](#) and aligns with wider policy implementation such as [Children's Rights legislation](#). Practitioners should consider use of well-established engagement tools such as the [Place Standard](#) and [PB processes](#). Practitioners would benefit from proactive engagement with marginalised groups and carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on any proposed plans. Practitioners can learn from existing consultation activity in the local authority and be wary of duplicating community engagement. Local intelligence and analysis of shared data should be used to inform setting priorities with partners and communities.

The [Pupil Equity Fund National operational guidance](#) advocates PB as a core tool to achieve the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and address poverty and inequality experienced by children, young people and their families.

[Building youth voice: a toolkit for developing participatory budgeting in schools and in the community](#) provides practical advice for involving the community and young people in participatory budgeting processes.

[PB Scotland - Participatory Budgeting in Scotland](#) acts as a hub for sharing and learning about the impactful work being done by PB initiatives in Scotland. It provides updates on events, policy and resources relevant to PB in Scotland, and profile good examples of PB in action.

Education Scotland developed a [wakelet](#), which links to national frameworks, practice guidance, and case studies, in support of PB, including within and alongside schools.



Conditions for success and sustainability

Strategy and planning

- Working and allocating funding strategically, with clear linkage between local children's service planning processes and individual school decisions, delivers the greatest impact.
- Transparency in decision making and developing a culture of openness and honesty builds trust. Bring parents into the decision-making process early, rather than at the end and asking for their reaction. Building trust in relationships makes it easier to work through issues or concerns. Engage in dialogue to know preferences and needs.
- Validating parents as co-equal members ensures parents and families have a voice throughout planning, delivering and evaluating as part of a service design process.
- In order to ensure sustainability, a parental engagement strategy should be subject to ongoing support, monitoring and development. This will include strategic planning which embeds parental engagement in whole-school development plans, sustained support, resourcing and training, community involvement at all levels of management, and a continuous system of evidence based development and review.

Data

- [Data-based decision making](#) – effective use of data for equity helps to identify needs, set goals and measure progress.
- Involve families in making decisions about data – it's their story behind the numbers.
- Use data to find out who is not engaged so you can reach out and involve them.

Approaches

- [Approaches](#) that remove barriers to participation and build strong relational foundations supports wellbeing for everyone involved.
- Being receptive and open-minded of insights and ideas parents' bring to the table encourages respectful dialogue.
- Being flexible with multidimensional communication increases reach and volume of response – use a variety of methods to engage in productive dialogue with parents such as: printouts, video calls, phone calls, email, social media, surveys, text messages, face to face meetings and newsletters.
- Empower parents – help them to share their knowledge to encourage participation and instil confidence in the process of engagement.
- Listen and understand what needs are required to be met in order for the child or young person to succeed – not only in school but at home as well.
- Use scripts or flowcharts as guides for sensitive conversations if required.
- Training in parental engagement should be provided in the context of initial teacher education or by an establishment as part of continuing professional development.
- Work with families to collaboratively problem solve educational challenges and bring in outside agencies where required to support complex challenges..

Conditions for success and sustainability

Leadership

- Prioritise parental and family engagement to build capacity and support learner achievement.
- Avoid making assumptions that everyone involved understands each other – ensure clarity and shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, items for discussion, language and terminology.
- Building relationships based on mutual respect and recognition of family needs and culture increases cultural proficiency. Leaders should set the ethos, tone and culture for parental engagement deliberately and consciously.
- Being empathic conveys understanding and helps to build relationships.
- To avoid making assumptions or decisions based on your own traditions, ensure you are in tune with your [unconscious bias](#).

Defining social justice

Social justice is the view that everyone matters and deserves the same opportunities. The aim of social justice is to create a fair and equal society where each individual's rights are recognised and protected, and where decisions made are fair and honest.



Exemplars

- [Castlemilk High School – Opportunities for learning and achievement – November 2019 | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Family learning at Aileymill Primary School](#)
- [The 1 in 5 - Raising Awareness of Child Poverty Project in Edinburgh](#)
- [The Cost of the School Day Programme, Child Poverty Action Group](#)
- [Doing Our Best: A Children's Parliament and Aberdeen City Council programme located in Bramble Brae, Manor Park, Riverbank and Tullos Primary Schools](#)
- [Cost of the School Day – understanding and addressing financial barriers at school](#)
- [Aspire Programme, Dundee](#) - a community engagement programme that used performing arts across the curriculum to increase children and young peoples' health and wellbeing, self-confidence, self-esteem, learning and skills development.



Reflective questions

- To what extent are establishments engaging with the parents of children and young people living in the most deprived communities and circumstances?
- To what extent are establishments engaging parents in the evaluation of interventions and approaches to achieving equity?
- To what extent are establishments supported and challenged to engage with their local communities to design, develop and evaluate their curriculum? To what extent does this focus on equity?
- To what extent do establishments ensure that care experienced children and young people benefit from approaches to parental engagement?
- How are the views of parents, families and the wider community heard?
- To what extent do they inform planning and how is this fed back to them?
- How well do we know and understand the wider community?
- Which partners are we working with, what is working well?
- Which partners are available in the wider community to support children, young people and families? What could this collaboration look like?



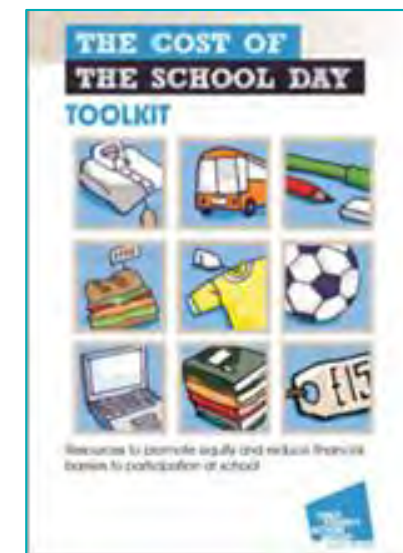
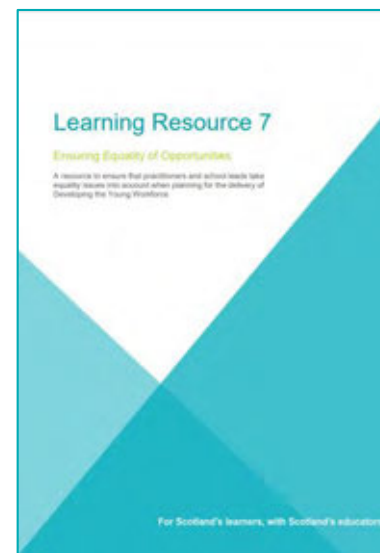
Useful resources

CLD, Poverty and Social Justice

A collection of links to online information and resources on the subject of poverty and social justice. Some focus on child poverty and the impact that can have on the children, young people and families we work with. Others give more general information alongside facts and figures.

- [Support for community learning and development \(CLD\)](#) - information and links to partner organisations who provide a range of resources and opportunities to support the mental Health and wellbeing of the education workforce, including support for recovery from COVID-19.
- [Parentzone Scotland](#) – provides information for parents and carers on education in Scotland.
- [Engaging parents and families](#) – a toolkit for practitioners.
- [Family Learning Framework Advice for Practitioners](#)
- [The Cost of the School Day Toolkit, updated 2021](#) - outlines the process, information, resources and practice to tackle barriers created by costs associated with school.
- [About Community Learning and Development \(CLD\)](#) – links to further information about CLD, including youth work, community-based adult learning, family learning and community development.
- [Community Learning and Development Planning 2021 – 2024](#) - link to all 32 local authority CLD plans, developed with learners and communities.
- [Parental engagement | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

- [SIMD \(Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation\)](#) - link to SIMD interactive tool
- [Career Education Standards 3-18: Learning Resource 7](#) – Ensuring Equality of Opportunities



Useful resources

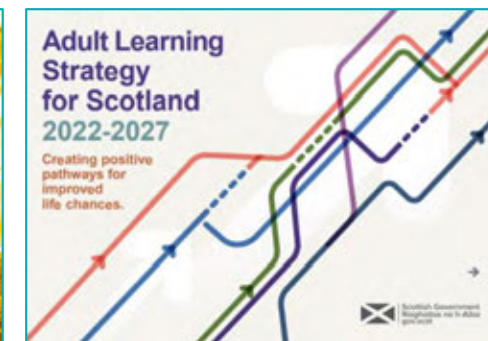
- Supporting parents to further engage in their children's development Continued Professional Learning (CPL) Modules - this [online CPL module](#) developed by the University of the West of Scotland, is now live from the Scottish Government website. Links to this course and the wider package of CPL modules is also provided via the Twitter page, the Care Inspectorate Hubs Directory of CPL, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) website, and the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Knowledge Hubs.
- Domestic abuse information for educators - emerging evidence suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in those experiencing domestic abuse being at increased risk. New resources created by staff from the Inclusion team and the IGBE team, in partnership with Scottish Women's Aid, have been published to help education staff understand the role they can play in tackling domestic abuse. The resources outline the nature of domestic abuse, the indicators and impact on children and young people, and [how to respond to potential cases of domestic abuse](#).
- [A Fairer Start Local: Learning from rapid discovery projects \(nesta.org.uk\)](#)
- [Lost-in-translation-final-final.pdf \(youthlinkscotland.org\)](#)



[COVID-19 | Education | YouthLink Scotland](#)

Useful resources

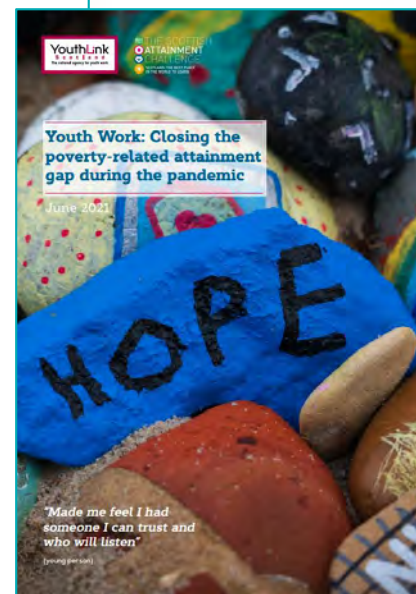
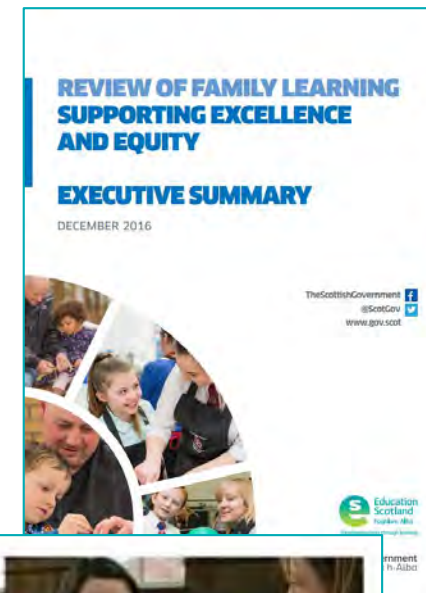
- [SWEIC Parental Engagement Event: sharing good practice](#)
Wakelet collection from the South West Regional Improvement Collaborative including links relating to the events.
 - [Engaging fathers in family learning \(session 1\)](#)
 - [Engaging fathers in family learning \(session 2\)](#)
- New resources created by staff from the Inclusion and IGBE teams from Education Scotland, in partnership with Scottish Women's Aid, have been published to help education staff understand the role they can play in tackling domestic abuse. The resources outline the nature of domestic abuse, the indicators and impact on children and young people, and how to respond to potential cases of [domestic](#) abuse.
- [Successful approaches to learning outdoors \(education.gov.scot\)](#) The report highlights six connected components of practice that create conditions for learners to experience high quality outdoor learning.
- [Best Start Bright Futures, Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026](#) Best Start, Bright Futures sets out the delivery plan of Scotland's national mission to tackle child poverty. It is a plan for all of Scotland, recognising the contribution all parts of society must make to deliver the change needed for children and families.
- [Adult-Learning-Strategy for Scotland 2022-2027](#). This strategy aims to create the conditions for connected adult learning opportunities that link Scotland's communities, local authorities, third sector organisations, colleges and universities around an offer of learning for adults, particularly those furthest from inclusion and experiencing disadvantage.



Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Barnardo's Scotland written evidence - attainment challenge - final.pdf \(barnardos.org.uk\)](#)
- [What is Family Learning? | Research | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#) - links to research underpinning family learning approach
- [Review of Family Learning supporting Excellence and Equity \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [CfE Briefing 10 - CLD \(education.gov.scot\)](#) - advice for practitioners and partners and can be used to inform learners and their families about developments in Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)
- [Approaches to engaging people with direct experience of poverty in the development of local child poverty policy](#)
- [Youth Work: Closing the poverty-related attainment gap during the pandemic](#) – explores how youth work responded to the needs of young people during the pandemic
- [Parental engagement – equity and equality | The University of Edinburgh](#)
- [Connect](#) - a membership organisation working with parents, families, parent groups, educators and others in Scottish education to make family engagement as good as it can be.
- BLOG: [Capturing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the family relationships of young fathers](#)



Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Digital by default: the new normal of family life under COVID-19 | Media@LSE](#)
- [REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICE IN PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Ainscow-paper-for-JPCC-February-2016.pdf \(cscjes-cronfa.co.uk\)](#) - collaboration as a strategy for promoting equity in education: possibilities and barriers Mel Ainscow University of Manchester, 2016
- ['You want the best for your kids': Improving Educational Outcomes for Children living in Poverty through Parental Engagement \(strath.ac.uk\) Sime & Sheridan \(2014\)](#)
- [The Square Peg and Round Hole Story of Early Learning and Childcare | Info for practitioners | Parenting across Scotland](#)
- [Parents: partners in education | Essays about parenting | Parenting across Scotland](#)
- [Place-based approaches to support children and young people: Children's Neighbourhood Scotland, 2018](#)
- [Putting our Heads together: A study of Headteacher collaboration as a strategy for school improvement - West and Ainscow \(2005\)](#)



Mental Health and wellbeing

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Section overview

Closing the disadvantage gap

A learner's wellbeing is influenced by everything around them and the different experiences they have at different times in their lives. We know that poverty negatively impacts health and wellbeing. The British Medical Association ([Health at a price - Reducing the impact of poverty, 2018](#)) identified a number of ways in which poverty impacts health outcomes.

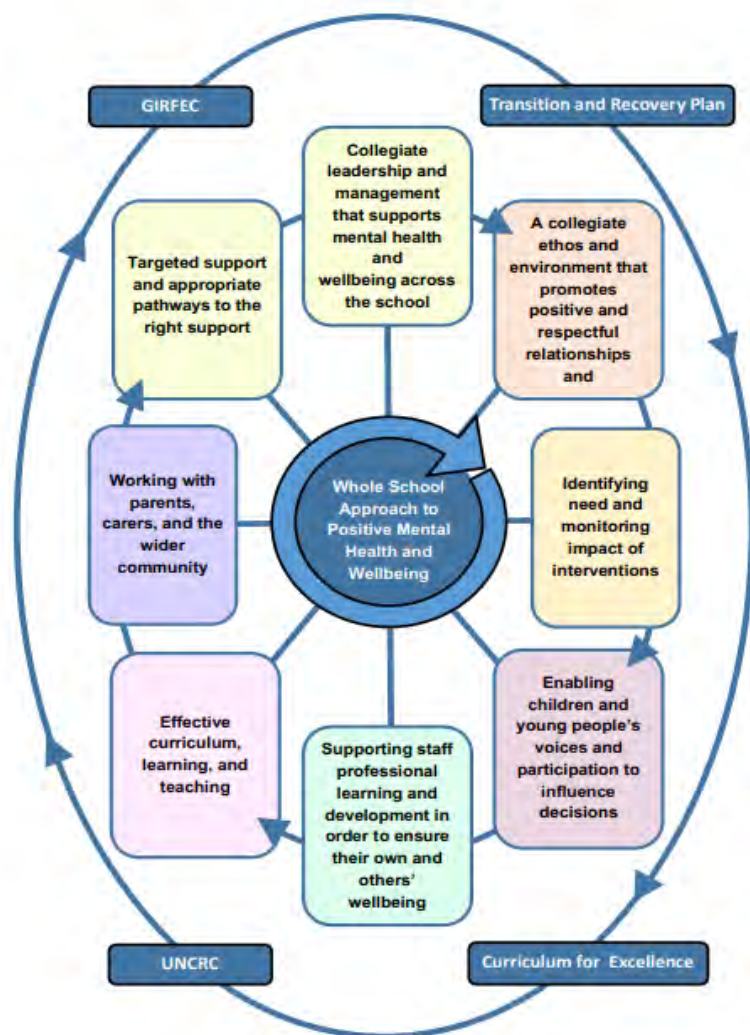
- Poverty can have a significant impact on child health, from the point before a child is even born.
- Children living in poverty are three times more likely to suffer from mental health problems.
- Children living in poverty are more likely to suffer from chronic diseases and diet-related problems.
- Poverty has long term implications on children's 'life chances' and health in adulthood.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation in its 'Poverty and trauma' (September 2020) report states that 'The relationship between poverty and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is complex and there is not a causal line between the two. However, there is a growing body of evidence showing an association between deprivation and ACEs'. The Scottish Health Survey 2019 found that adults in the most deprived areas were almost twice as likely than those in the least deprived areas to experience four or more ACEs.

Supporting children and young people's health and wellbeing and addressing disadvantage is a priority. This section of the equity toolkit focuses specifically on mental health and wellbeing and signposts resources and guidance to support schools and local authorities in this area.



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?



Take a whole school approach to supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing...

A whole school approach is preventative, universal and includes targeted interventions to ensure that all members of a school community can flourish and sustain a state of being mentally healthy. Taking a whole school approach can also achieve positive outcomes such as helping to reduce stigma and discrimination for those seeking help; support early intervention; promote positive mental health for all and improve the capacity of specialist services by providing support to those who need it at a universal and targeted level.

A whole school approach has eight principles that focus on:



More information on taking a whole school approach and on each of the eight principles can be found in the Whole School Approach Framework, links below.

- [Mental health and wellbeing: whole school approach: framework - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)
- [A whole school approach to wellbeing support | West Partnership | Williamwood HS](#)

Conditions for success and sustainability

The Cycle of Wellbeing

This Cycle of Wellbeing (National Improvement Hub) draws together a range of recently published resources to support staff wellbeing and the wellbeing of children and young people. It demonstrates the synergies of the resources and how they can be used strategically to forward plan supports for staff and learner mental wellbeing based on evidence gathered within a school community.

[The Cycle of Wellbeing | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/national-improvement-hub/learning-resources)

Trauma informed approaches

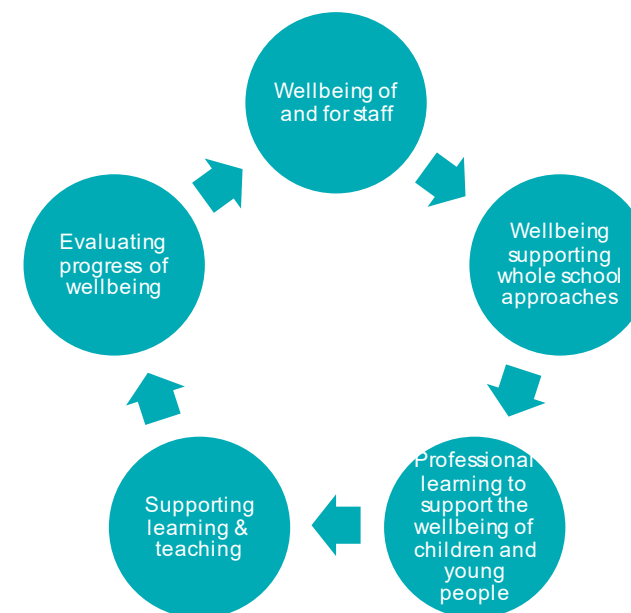
Being 'trauma informed' means being able to recognise when someone may be affected by trauma, adjusting how we work to take this into account and responding in a way that supports recovery, does no harm and recognises and supports people's resilience.

Being 'trauma informed' is underpinned by the 5 R's:

- **R**ealising how common the experience of trauma and adversity is
- **R**ecognising the different ways that trauma can affect people
- **R**esponding by taking account of the ways that people can be affected by trauma to support recovery
- Opportunities to **R**esist re-traumatisation and offer a greater sense of choice and control, empowerment, collaboration and safety with everyone that you have contact with
- Recognising the central importance of **R**elationships.

NHS Education for Scotland provides professional learning resources to support staff to develop the knowledge and skills required to ensure trauma informed approaches are embedded in practice. Education Scotland's National Improvement Hub is also a source of support.

- [NES Trauma Informed - What is meant by trauma? \(transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot\)](https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/)
- https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/media/amqk3nrx/nesd1334-national-trauma-training-programme-online-resources_0908.pdf
- [Nurture, Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma informed practice: Making the links between these approaches \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/national-improvement-hub/learning-resources/nurture-adverse-childhood-experiences-and-trauma-informed-practice-making-the-links-between-these-approaches)



Exemplars

- [Aberdeenshire CLD - mental health and wellbeing peer educators | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Due regard for learner wellbeing and safeguarding | Sharing what's working well | National overviews | Supporting remote learning | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Tracking and Monitoring Wellbeing in Girvan Academy – A Whole School Approach | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Wellbeing Profile: Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile \(GMWP\) | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [A whole school approach to wellbeing support | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Inchtute Primary School - Wellbeing | What's going well? | Resources for practitioners | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Schools Learning and Education, Stirling | Our health and wellbeing | What Scotland Learned | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub](#)
- [Our health and wellbeing | What Scotland Learned | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



Reflective questions

- To what extent do we focus on supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people living in the most deprived communities and circumstances?
- Do we have an effective plan for supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and, where appropriate, families?
- Are we intensifying support for those most disadvantaged by poverty?
- Do all staff understand their role and responsibilities in supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people?
- In what ways does our learning environment support positive mental health and wellbeing?



Useful resources

- [The Cycle of Wellbeing | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/learning-resources/national-improvement-hub/the-cycle-of-wellbeing)
- [The Compassionate and Connected Classroom: A health and wellbeing curricular resource for upper primary | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/learning-resources/national-improvement-hub/the-compassionate-and-connected-classroom)
- [Resilience alphabet - building inner strength and wellbeing for kids - primary | Health and wellbeing activities | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/scotland-learns/resilience-alphabet)
- [ACEs and trauma overview - Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) and Trauma - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/adverse-childhood-experiences)
- [ACEs research - Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) and Trauma - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/adverse-childhood-experiences-research)
- [NHS Trauma Informed - National Trauma Training Programme Online Resources Summary \(transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot\)](https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/nhs-trauma-informed)
- [Positive mental wellbeing - resources to support children and young people | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/learning-resources/national-improvement-hub/positive-mental-wellbeing)
- [NHS Trauma Informed - Home \(transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot\)](https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/nhs-trauma-informed-home)
- [CYPMH – Professional Learning Resource](https://www.cypmh.scot/)
- [Support for the education workforce during COVID-19 | National Improvement Hub](https://www.education.gov.scot/learning-resources/national-improvement-hub/support-for-the-education-workforce-during-covid-19)
- [Barnardo's Scotland | All About Relationships - YouTube](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/relationships)
- [Included, engaged and involved: part 1 - attendance in Scottish schools - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/learning-resources/national-improvement-hub/included-engaged-and-involved-part-1)
- [Included, engaged and involved part 2: preventing and managing school exclusions - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/learning-resources/national-improvement-hub/included-engaged-and-involved-part-2)
- [Developing a positive whole school ethos and culture: relationships, learning and behaviour - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/learning-resources/national-improvement-hub/developing-a-positive-whole-school-ethos)
- [Nurture & trauma informed approaches : resources to support learning & teaching - Wakelet](https://www.wakelet.com/nurture-trauma-informed-approaches)
- [Trauma Informed Teaching: 10 Things Every Educator Needs To Know \(weareteachers.com\)](https://www.weareteachers.com/trauma-informed-teaching)

Research and articles

- [Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children](#)
HBSC International Coordinating Centre Child & Adolescent Health Research Unit – a source of health data over time from research collaboration with the WHO conducted every four years in 50 countries and regions across Europe and North America.
- [Keeping children safe in education 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [SHINE – Schools Health and Wellbeing Improvement Research Network \(gla.ac.uk\)](#)
- [ACEs research - Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) and Trauma - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Community mental health and wellbeing supports and services: framework - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [International comparisons of health and wellbeing in adolescence and early adulthood Nuffield Trust/AYPH \(2019\)](#)
- [Mental Health Data Science Scotland \(mhdss.ac.uk\)](#)



Children's Rights

Section overview

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Conditions for success and sustainability

Exemplars

Reflective questions

Useful resources

Research and articles



Section overview

Children's Rights

- What do we need to consider?
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Rights based practice in the Early Years
- All about dignity in school
- What does UNCRC mean for families?
- Useful resources
- Children's Rights – what works/what can we do?
- How could you implement in your setting?
- Exemplars
- Reflective questions
- Research and articles



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress? Key considerations

There are widespread concerns about the impact of COVID-19 and the response to it on the rights of children and young people, including by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child who published 11 recommendations for governments (Scottish Government, 2020a). The Scottish Government have recognised the importance of these recommendations and set out its [response](#):

A review of learning from previous pandemics concluded that children can be physically and socially invisible in the context of public health containment measures. Therefore, it is essential to develop responses tailored to the distinct experiences of children and young people; ensuring they are included and their agency recognised (Inspiring Children's Futures, 2020)

Play is considered to be critical for children's physical and mental health, development, and wellbeing (Bergen, 2009; Lester & Russell, 2010), and key global organisations such as UNCRC have highlighted the importance of children's right to play. However, in times of crises, the value of children's play is often overlooked (UNCRC, 2013). Due to severe lockdown regulations around the world, typical play experiences have needed to adapt to school and playground closures, changes to peer interactions, and social distancing (Graber et al., 2020).



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress? UNCRC Thinglink resources



This interactive resource provides access to a wide range of information about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and how it can be embedded within establishments.

It contains examples of practice and implementation.

<https://www.thinglink.com/scene/1480112476593848323>

WHAT IS THE UNCRC?



Every child has the **right** to survival, protection and education. The United Nations Convention on the **Rights** of the Child (**UNCRC**) is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural **rights** of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress? Rights based practice in the Early Years

Relationships, CULTURE AND ETHOS

At Children's Parliament, we talk about rights-based relationships. These are based on kindness, empathy, trust, and belief in the human dignity of each and every one of us.

- How would you describe the relationships you have with children? Or the relationships you help foster between children?
- How do you support children to thrive?
- What are your expectations of adults in the setting when it comes to how they are with children and indeed with each other?
- How do the relationships in your setting support the rights of the child?

AGENCY

This is the idea that every person has a level of control and a positive sense of who they are. We want children in early years' settings to develop a strong sense of who they are and to feel they can have and express their preferences, likes, dislikes, opinions.

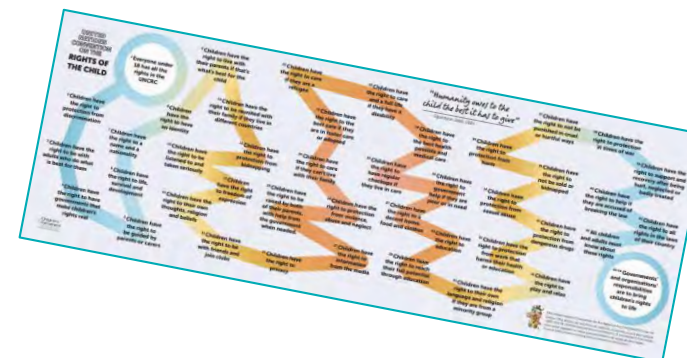
- How does your setting support children with things like having their say, being part of planning, leading activities, being recognised as an individual?

AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF RIGHTS

The concept of rights can be challenging for our youngest learners. It is important though that we help children to develop an understanding that their rights are central to everyday experiences and relationships. Children might begin to develop an understanding that they have the right to be safe, to play, to be loved.

- How do you help children understand their rights? You could think about how adults are in their interactions with children, or perhaps some of the activities or resources you use.
- Do you ever use the language of rights?

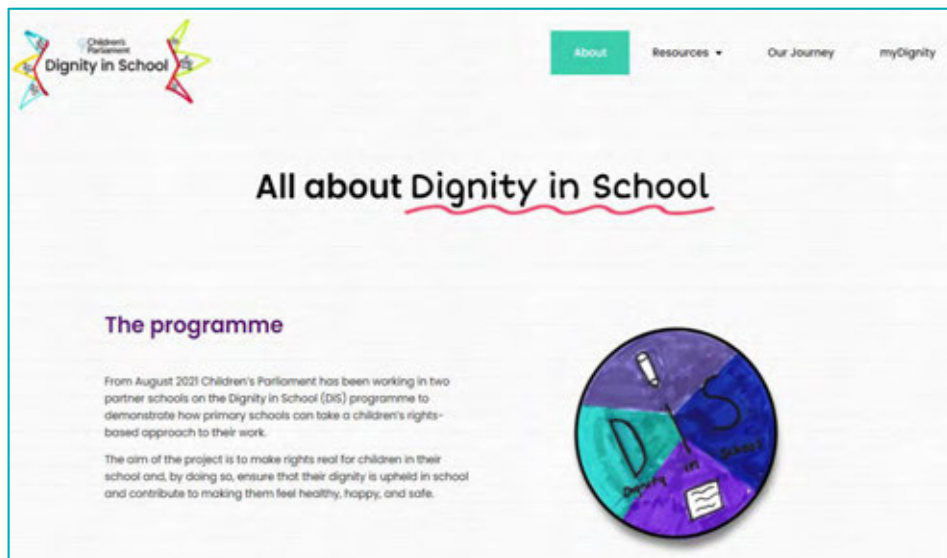
Click here to take you to the website:
[Rights-based practice in the Early Years - Children's Parliament \(childrensparliament.org.uk\)](https://childrensparliament.org.uk)



Wee Book of Promises

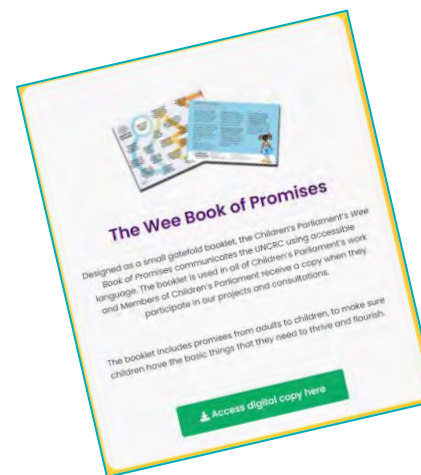


What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress? All about Dignity in School



Click here for more info:
[About - Dignity In School
\(childrensparliament.org.uk\)](https://childrensparliament.org.uk)

Every single person in Scotland has human rights – children have rights to make sure they grow up healthy, happy and safe. Human rights come from the government – they're laws, and nobody can take them away from you. You can think of rights like promises – promises adults have made to help keep children healthy, happy and safe. If a child ever feels scared or worried or unhappy, it's important they talk to someone they trust who will try and help them with their worry. No worry is too big or too small



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress? The UNCRC: what does it mean for families?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is crucial for families as well as children – it supports families to bring up children. Its preamble states:

“Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community.

Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding...”

Scotland intends to incorporate the UNCRC into domestic law as far as it is able to do so, and to this end passed the [United Nations Incorporation on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) in 2021. This Bill has not yet become law as it was referred to UK Supreme Court by the UK Government; in September 2021 the UK Supreme Court ruled that parts of the Bill were outside the competence of the Scottish Parliament powers. The Scottish Government now intends to return the Bill to the Scottish Parliament to amend it within competence.



[The UNCRC: What does it mean for families? | Info for practitioners | Parenting across Scotland](#)



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress? Children's rights?

Children's Parliament launched [Back to School](#), an online resource for schools to support a rights-based approach to recovery.

The resource has been designed to help school staff to understand children's experiences of lockdown and their wellbeing needs in the current context.

The practical activities will support conversations between children, and between children and adults in school, giving time and space to pause, reflect and then recover.

Are the views of all your children and young people heard and acted on?





What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress? Children's rights?

Learner Participation in Educational Settings (3-18)

Guidance and support materials to help schools and early years settings develop an understanding of learner participation and plan for implementation within their setting.

The 'Four Arenas of Participation' provides a framework to help us understand and develop when, where, and how learners can have a say in schools and ELC settings.



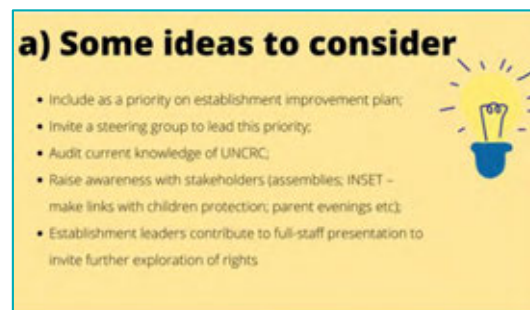
Conditions for success and sustainability

Children's rights – self evaluation

This [self-evaluation approach](#) could be used to provide professional learning to practitioners around the UNCRC and to help them reflect on how they are taking forward children's rights within their school context. It also links well to [How Good is Our School? \(fourth edition\)](#).



A professional learning resource to promote self-evaluation and improvement planning on recognising and realising children's rights is available on the [National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/)



Exemplars

Series of linked video clips of children and young people from Harlaw Academy, Caldercuilt Primary and Longniddry Primary schools noted discussing right's based approaches:

- Children and young people from Harlaw Academy, Caldercuilt Primary and Longniddry Primary discussing some of the ways they work to realise children's rights – how they implement it, and why rights are important. https://youtu.be/8by2Mlv_afU
- Children from Longniddry primary discussing how rights based approach can support equity. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwSkAd05cKs>
- Children from Longniddry primary discussing how they were involved in their vision, values and aims. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCjxYjdzvQs>
- Children from Longniddry primary speaking about their campaign. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O15nCcaHA0U>
- Teachers from Caldercuilt Primary and Longniddry Primary discussing how they make links with curriculum and rights. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWOKfXTSG8s>
- Riverbank rights – children discussing their charter and rights that are important to them. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwNAxLW50xg>
- St Euanan's PS demonstrates learner participation mainly in the arena of learning, teaching and assessment. <https://youtu.be/hxQOObrCbSw>
- Pre-birth to 3 - Children's rights are defined in many ways, including a wide spectrum of civil, cultural, economic, social and political rights. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Z1w1upuyps>
- Pre-birth to 3 - Aline-Wendy Dunlop, Emeritus Professor within Childhood and Primary Studies at the University of Strathclyde, talks about the rights of children. <https://youtu.be/FspjKbBFzoY>

Reflective questions

- How well do we understand the UNCRC and how the articles within it relate to the practice in our school?
- How well do we understand and demonstrate our role as duty bearers of children's rights?
- To what extent do we make links between the UNCRC and our culture, values and ethos; skills and activities; curricular programmes and targeted support?
- How are the views of children and young people currently heard and acted on? To what extent do children and young people truly and meaningfully inform planning?
- In the current context when poverty and financial difficulties are a concern for a rising number of families, how are we supporting children and young people to be aware of the intersection of poverty with other key themes of social justice such as gender and race equality and climate justice?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Children's Rights – Wakelet](#)
- [Children: Your human rights - The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland \(cypcs.org.uk\)](#)
- [Together launches its 2022 State of Children's Rights Report! | Together Scotland](#)
- [Improving Gender Balance - Self-Evaluation Framework \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Beyond the official language of learning](#): Teachers engaging with student voice research
- [Seen and heard, and then not heard](#)
- [‘Voice’ is not enough](#): conceptualising Article 12
- [Guide to Involving Children and Young People.pdf \(nwleics.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Being Heard: One Year On \(June 2020\)](#) – A study on young people's engagement in Scotland
- [YoungScot: Lockdown Lowdown report \(2020\)](#)
- [MCR Pathways lockdown survey](#): care experienced children and young people



Capturing the voice of our children and young people

[Section overview](#)

[Information on national groups](#)

[Information on regional groups](#)

[What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?](#)

[Exemplars](#)

[Reflective questions](#)

[What to consider next?](#)

[Key documents](#)

Section overview

- SAC refreshed mission
- National groups
- Examples of regional groups through a link to our interactive resource
- Key documents to consider
- Where to begin – 6 key steps
- Participation of children and young people
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- PEF example
- Social justice example
- Participatory budgeting examples
- Reflective questions
- What to consider next?
- Share your examples

To use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap

Information on national groups

[YouthLink Scotland](#)

YouthLink Scotland operates a Youth Work and Schools Partnerships Programme - a national capacity-building programme supported through ASF funding of two posts within YouthLink Scotland. It aims to strengthen collaboration between youth work and schools in closing the attainment gap and to provide capacity to measure and communicate impact.

[Young Scot](#)

In 2018, Young Scot launched the 'Attainment Challenge: National Strategic Partnership' alongside Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, Improvement Service, Local Authorities, and the National Entitlement Card Programme Office (NECPO) to help close the poverty-related attainment gap and to tackle food and rural poverty.

[Child Poverty Action Group \(CPAG\)](#)

The Cost of the School Day (COSD) programme was developed by the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland (CPAG). The aim of the programme is to mitigate the impacts of poverty on school children and contribute to equity in education, by reducing or removing financial barriers to full participation in school and poverty-related stigma that some children may experience. It achieves this by encouraging school level action, following research/engagement with parents, learners and staff within individual schools.

[Centre for excellence for Children's Care and Protection \(CELCIS\)](#)

CELCIS convene a network of colleagues from local authorities who are using the Virtual School Head Teacher (VSHT) model or similar. Currently, 16 local authorities in Scotland have chosen to allocate funding from the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund towards the establishment and development of a VSHT role, or a Care Experienced Team (CET).

[Hunter Foundation](#)

The Scottish Government announced £19.4 million of funding, partly funded through the ASF, to support MCR Pathways to roll out its Young Scottish Talent mentoring programme in local authorities who wish to participate. Columba 1400 are also being supported through this programme with additional funding of £7.5 million being provided by the Hunter Foundation.

Information on regional groups

When you access our interactive resource you will see examples of groups already in place in some of our local authorities

Click here to find out more: [Capturing the voice of children and young people](#)

REGIONAL GROUPS

We have 32 local authorities across Scotland, each of whom capture pupil voice in a variety of ways. Here are some examples.

- Aberdeen
- Renfrewshire
- Stirling
- Falkirk
- East Renfrewshire
- Clackmannanshire
- Inverclyde
- Glasgow
- Argyll&Bute
- West Dunbartonshire
- Orkney Islands

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Participation and engagement with children and young people should begin at the project design stage. They should be included in the planning and coordination of activity from the start.

Awareness of child rights and meaningful participation complement and strengthen child protection practices

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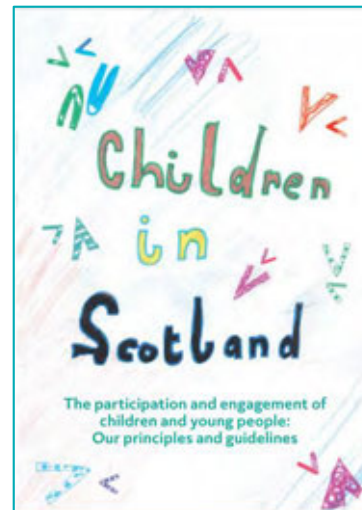
Six key stages

In all participation and engagement work, children and young people should be actively listened to, treated fairly and have their opinions respected and taken seriously.

Participation of children and young people is an important mechanism to ensure that, as an organisation, we are listening and communicating to our members the views and perspectives of children and young people on a wide variety of issues, coupled with the best available evidence of what works for supporting children and their families.

These principles and guidelines can be applied at all times, from start to finish of any work involving children and young people, and have been designed to cover the following six stages:

1. Planning and coordination
2. Inclusion
3. Child protection
4. Delivery
5. Communication
6. Feedback, evaluation and next steps

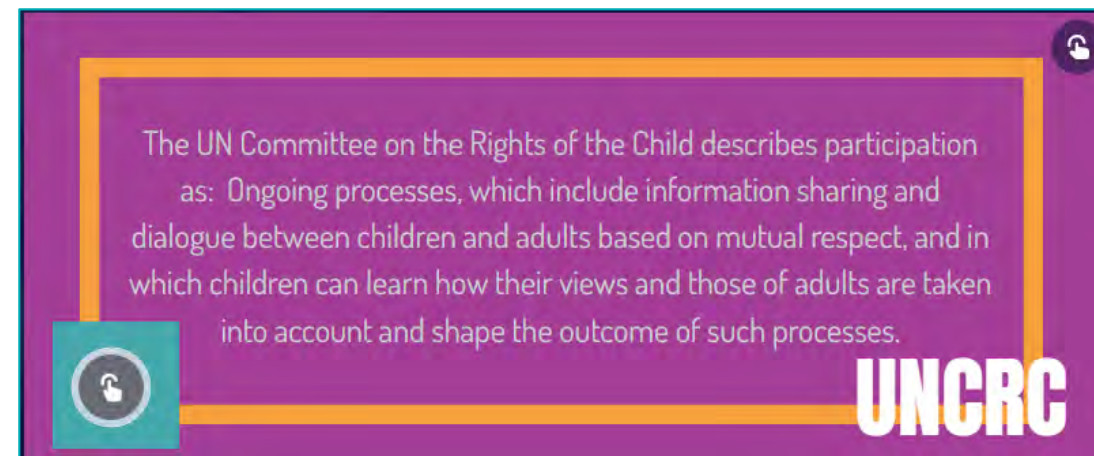
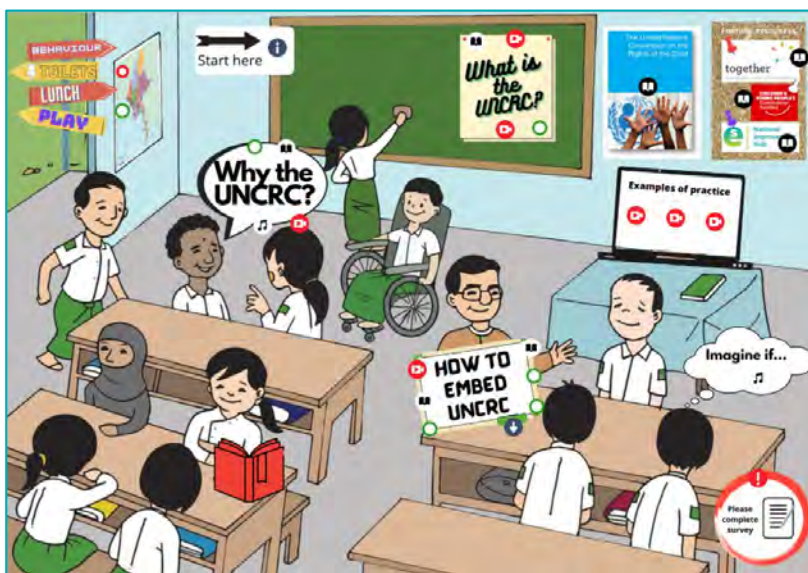


Thank you to Children in Scotland for giving permission to share this document

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child

Click on the image below to access the UNCRC Thinglink



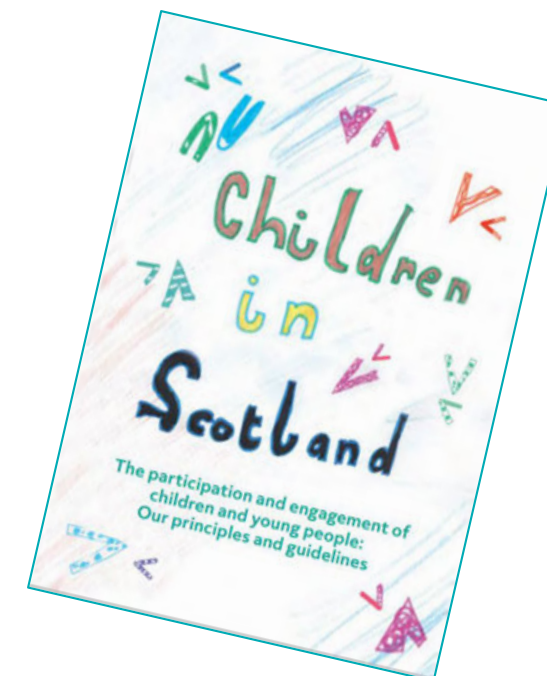
Click here to find out more: [Capturing the voice of children and young people](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Children in Scotland: Participation

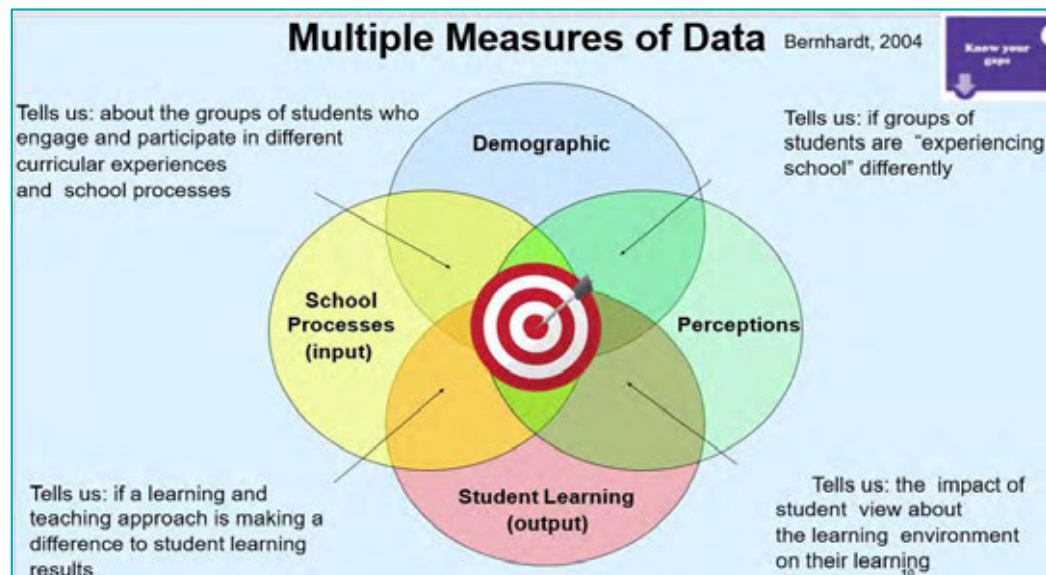
- Article 12 of the UNCRC states that children have the right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously in all decisions which will affect them.
- The term participation is broadly used to describe practice, policies and methodologies which enable children to be heard in decision-making.
- Participation of children and young people is an important mechanism to ensure that, as an organisation, we are listening and communicating to our network and the wider community the views and perspectives of children and young people on a wide variety of issues.
- Children and young people should be supported to participate in decision-making in all relevant contexts and at all levels of their lives.
- These include, but are not limited to: family, alternative care, education and school, health care, prevention strategies and national and international settings.

[CiS-Participation-2019.pdf \(childreninscotland.org.uk\)](#) link to newer version of document but we decided on highlighting the six original steps to ensure consistency of process.



Exemplars

West Lothian PEF intervention example



This school used the Bernhardt model to identify a gap in reading for a group of children

Thank you to West Lothian for giving permission to share this example

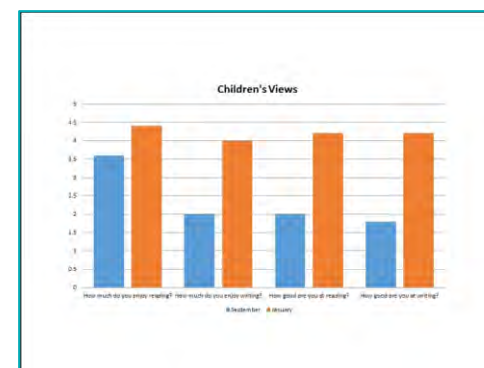
Perception
Looking Underneath the Data

We created a questionnaire to gather learners' perceptions about reading

5. When the teacher calls you out to read in a group, tell me how you feel
 Liked Responses: 10 Responses
 Liked: 10
 Didn't like it: 0
 Really really nervous and anxious because I have stage fright: 0

6. Can you rate how you feel about reading? 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest
 Liked Responses: 10 Responses
 3.23 Average Rating
 5 stars: 10
 4 stars: 0
 3 stars: 0
 2 stars: 0
 1 star: 0

7. Would you describe yourself as a reader?
 Liked Responses: 10 Responses
 Yes: 4
 No: 6



The school captured the voice of the children using Microsoft forms

Exemplars

Stirling Social Justice Ambassador programme

'Social Justice Ambassador Programme – PEF' was developed alongside CLD colleagues in Stirling. The purpose of the programme is to ensure children and young people are informed and have the space to explore what poverty means to them, their school and their community. They are trained as social researchers to look into this and their research is then used to inform the decision-making around PEF for their school.

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

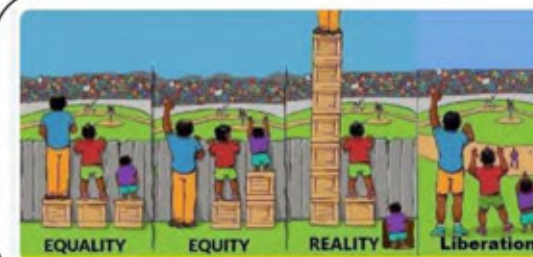
- How much money does our school get for PEF?
- What is in our school PEF plan?
- What do we think about this?

Samples of part of the programme

Thank you to Stirling for giving permission to share this example

Equity Vs Equality

Think about different people's experiences of education ...



Look at each picture

For each character think about:

- Can they see what is going on?
- Can they access the opportunity?
- Is their situation fair?

Attainment & equity

SCHOOL BUDGET & HEARING CHILDREN'S VIEWS ON HOW WE SPEND IT



Exemplars

Participatory Budgeting in HAMILTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Who we are

LOCAL MINISTER: JOANNE HOOD | MONEY MATTERS EXPERT: DAVID HARNNESS | S2, S3, S4, S5 & S6 PUPILS | HGS PARENT COUNCIL

Our Participatory Budgeting Journey

Ideas that went to the vote

Outdoor Shelter	Grab N Go	Benches
Outdoor Shelter for the playground to enhance outdoor learning and shelter during break and lunchtime.	Grab 'n' Go breakfast provided for free from the canteen each morning.	Outdoor Seating - more outdoor seating to be added to the playground.

Voting and Results

Over 600 votes were cast across the school community. Voters were able to vote for two out of the three options.

We had a variety of voting and marketing ideas: Posters, Letters, Tweets, Google Forms, QR codes, Ballot Boxes. We settled on Google Form for gathering votes as this was going to be the most efficient way for all stakeholders to give their vote. We emailed all staff, parents and put posters with QR code around the school. The voting process was shared on the Parent Council Facebook page and our Hamilton Grammar School website to gather as many votes as possible.

Example of participatory budgeting

Thank you to South Lanarkshire for giving permission to share this example

Grab 'n' Go 342 votes 55.9%	Outdoor Shelter 405 votes 66.2%	Benches 290 votes 47.4%
-----------------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------------------------

The Outdoor Shelter won the vote.

This has led to our PB member of staff receiving quotes from companies to erect a 12 x 4 shelter with sides. This will provide the opportunity for pupils to eat their lunch under shelter, whilst also allowing pupils to learn outdoors.

Rationale and Aims

Our stakeholders identified that a lack of shelter during the winter in particular meant they would not stay around school to eat their lunch. This resulted in FME pupils being less likely to take up their entitlement, resulting in a negative impact on household expenditure.

We aim to increase FME uptake by 5% to 55% of S1 and S2 pupils by May 2022. We will review our FME uptake over three checkpoints throughout the year.

What everyone is saying

"As a teacher in the school it was a pleasure to see such importance placed on pupil voice"

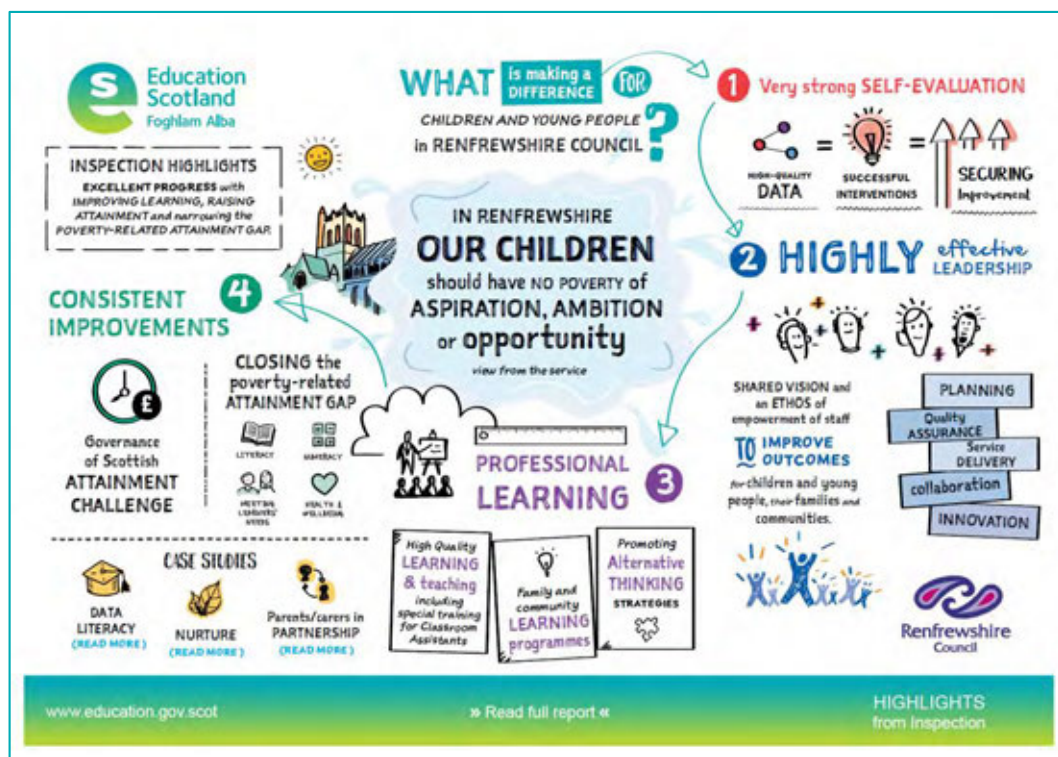
Our Depute responsible for PB: "It was lovely to see the pupils enthusiasm and creativity being showcased. I am really looking forward to seeing the benefits to all our pupils and especially those ideas which help to close the poverty related attainment gap".

Douglas in S3: **"It was really good to have an input and impact on what happens in the school"**.

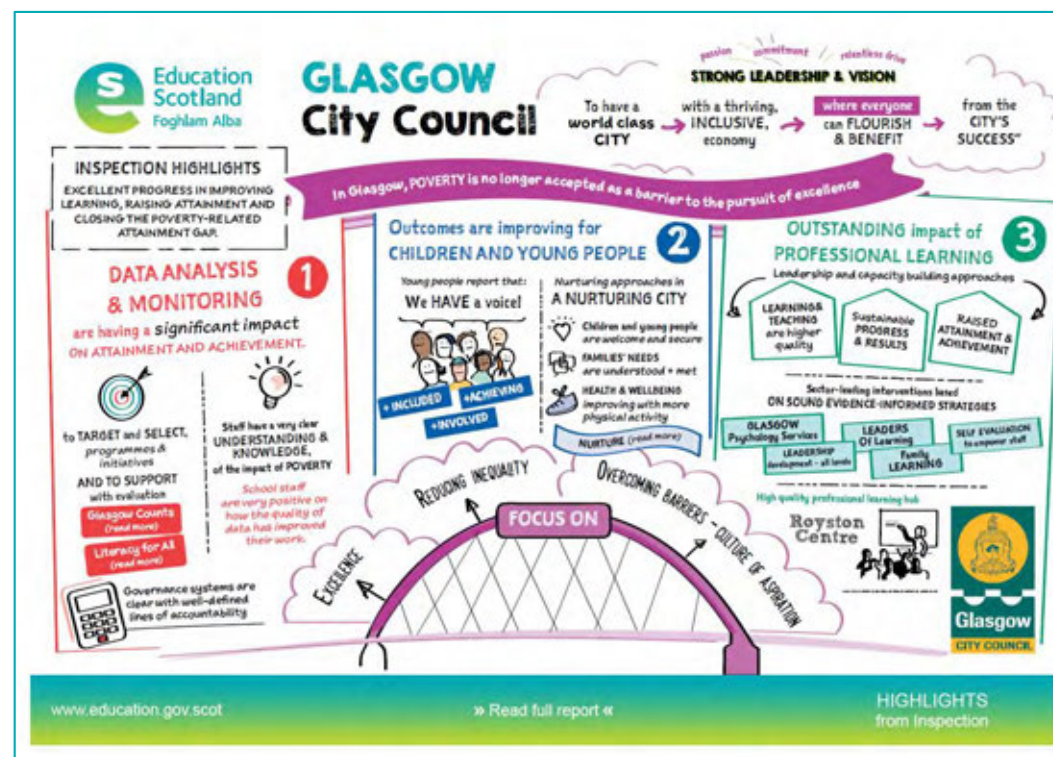
PEF Officer for COSD and PB: "I am so proud of our pupils who care about improving the learning experience of others in the school"

Exemplars

- [Sketchnote - Renfrewshire Council – Closing the Attainment Gap - February 2019 | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



- [Sketchnote - Glasgow City Council – March 2019 | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

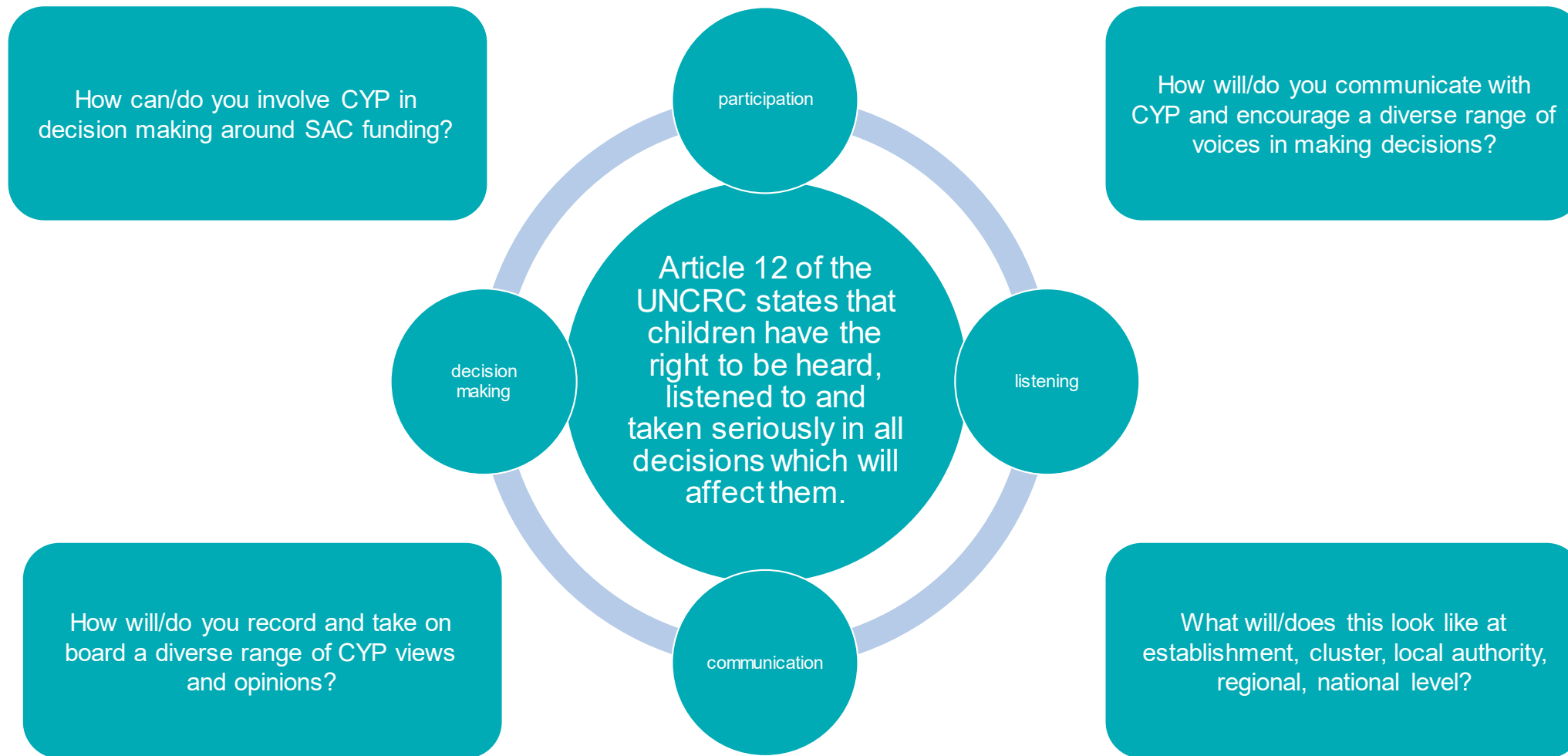


Reflective questions

- Do we track pupil participation and progress effectively and make use of this information to plan next steps in learning?
- Is our school plan based on robust self-evaluation including the views of all children and young people (including minority voices)?
- How effective are we at taking account of the views of all children and young people (including those who are marginalised) in decision making around change and improvement? Have you considered how unconscious bias may be impacting whose voices are heard?
- Are we making sure that the voices of children and young people affected by poverty, as well as those with other minority characteristics, are heard?
- Are children and young people involved in the discussions and decisions around equity and the impact of COVID-19 on their lives and experiences?
- How are we ensuring that children and young people have the necessary information in order to make informed choices and decisions around poverty and equity?



What to consider next?



Key Documents

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Principles-and-Guidelines-FINAL.pdf \(childreninscotland.org.uk\)](https://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/Principles-and-Guidelines-FINAL.pdf)
- [Learner Participation in Educational Settings \(3-18\)](#)
- [How good is OUR school? Part 1 \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/How-good-is-OUR-school-Part-1)
- [How good is OUR school? Part 2 \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/How-good-is-OUR-school-Part-2)
- [Scottish Attainment Challenge - Self-evaluation resource \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/Scottish-Attainment-Challenge-Self-evaluation-resource)
- [7 Golden Rules for use with children - The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland \(cypcs.org.uk\)](https://www.cypcs.org.uk/7-Golden-Rules-for-use-with-children)
- [7 Golden Rules for use with young people - The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland \(cypcs.org.uk\)](https://www.cypcs.org.uk/7-Golden-Rules-for-use-with-young-people)

Pupil Equity Funding

[Section overview](#)

[What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?](#)

[Conditions for success and sustainability](#)

[Exemplars](#)

[Reflective questions](#)

[Useful Resources](#)

[Research and articles](#)



Section overview

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is an additional resource allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty-related attainment gap. This section of the toolkit is to support schools to maximise the impact of PEF to accelerate progress in closing that gap. Funding allocations for each year from 2022/23 to 2025/26 have been confirmed to enable long term planning.

This section has a focus on:

- National guidance
- Planning for effective use of PEF
- Collaboration
- Evidence-based approaches
- Sharing exemplars and useful links



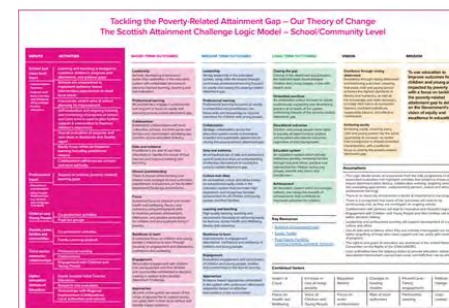
What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

National guidance

National guidance, including PEF National Operational Guidance, is intended to help schools plan how they will most effectively invest their Pupil Equity Funding allocation to accelerate progress in improving outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap.

The most recent national guidance can be accessed using the links below:

- [Pupil Equity Funding National Operational Guidance](#)
- [Pupil Equity Funding: school allocations 2022 to 2023](#)
- [Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards – sharing effective practice to maximise support for learners and practitioners](#)
- [Scottish Attainment Challenge: framework for recovery and accelerating progress](#)
- [Scottish Attainment Challenge - theory of change and logic model](#)



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Planning for effective use of PEF

Schools should consider each element when planning for PEF.



Collaborative:

Actively engage children, young people, families, communities, staff and partners in planning process.



Evidence informed:

Plans are based on data and a clear understanding of the context of communities they will be implemented. This data should include: local & national data and reference to research including SAC Theory of Change and Logic Model.



Setting ambitious and SMART aims:

Aims should be smart, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. They also need to be ambitious enough to achieve long term goals of closing poverty-related attainment gaps.



Measuring progress:

SMART measures and baseline data are needed to be able to show progress towards aims. Regular tracking and monitoring will support staff respond timeously to interventions which are not having the desired impact and make adaptations.



Evaluative:

All plans should have aims and measures which allow leaders to clearly state whether aims have been achieved.



Quality assurance processes embedded

to support the development and implementation of SAC plans. This can be both internal or external, involve peers or senior leaders.

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Planning for effective use of PEF



[Data and the Poverty Related Attainment Gap - YouTube](#)

This professional learning session explores:

- the poverty related attainment gap and why we need to close it;
- how we measure the poverty related attainment gap;
- the role of data in closing the poverty related attainment gap;
- the types of data that you might use;
- how and why data should be intersected;
- some practical classroom examples; and
- the importance of creating a positive data culture.



[Outcomes and Measures Webinar - YouTube](#)

This professional learning session explores:

- what is meant by the terms outcomes and measures;
- why outcomes and measures are important;
- how to create well-defined outcomes;
- how to identify appropriate measures; and
- how to engage with measures to ensure impact.



The PEF: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards publication shares examples of current practice from across Scotland to support staff involved in planning, implementation and monitoring of PEF.

[Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards – sharing effective practice to maximise support for learners and practitioners](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Collaboration with learner and families

The PEF: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards report shares examples of current practice from across Scotland to support schools to engage meaningfully with learners and their families.

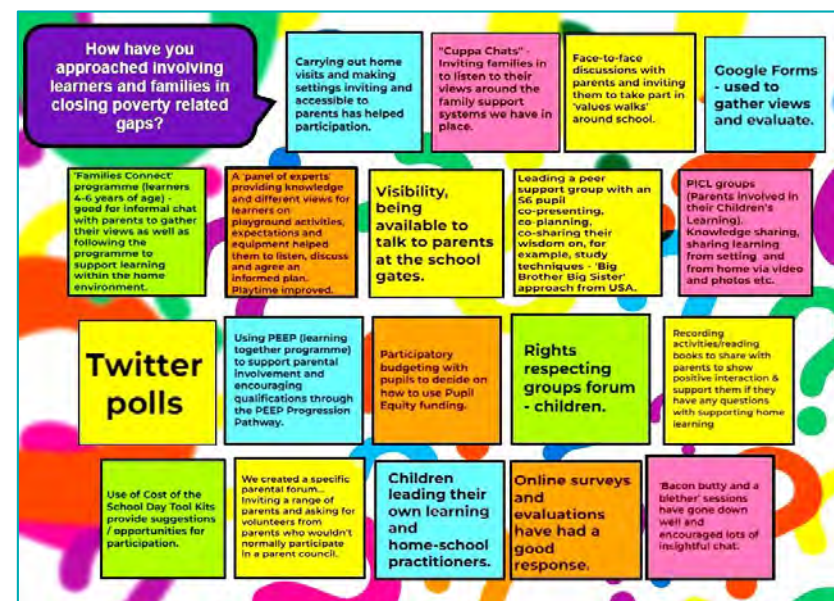
- [Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards – sharing effective practice to maximise support for learners and practitioners](#)



Other resources to support collaboration with learners and families include:

- [Participatory Budgeting in educational establishments | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub](#)
- [Scottish Attainment Challenge Capturing CYP Voice](#)
- [Learner Participation in Educational Settings \(3-18\) | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub](#)

Schools shared the following approaches to engaging with learners and families at an Education Scotland webinar.



[School suggestions on engaging learners and their families](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?



[Effective Multi Agency Practice: Considering Community Approaches - YouTube](#)

This professional learning session considers:

- the definition and benefits of multi-agency partnerships for schools, learners and the community;
- recent reports that highlight why multi-agency practice is critical in closing the poverty related attainment gap and accelerating educational recovery.

In the presentation we hear from practitioners leading on projects across Scotland who have developed innovative service models that evidence multi-agency practice to address the needs of local families.

Dundee City Council

Read about the effective partnership between Dundee City Council's Children and Families Service (secondary schools and Dundee City Council's Neighbourhood Services (Communities: CLD Youth Work) using this link

- [The role of youth work in closing the poverty-related attainment gap - Dundee City Council | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Helpful guidance can be found in these documents:

[YouthLink Scotland | Youth Work: A Guide for Schools](#)



[Scottish Attainment Challenge and partnerships with the Third Sector](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?



[Evidenced Based Interventions - YouTube](#)

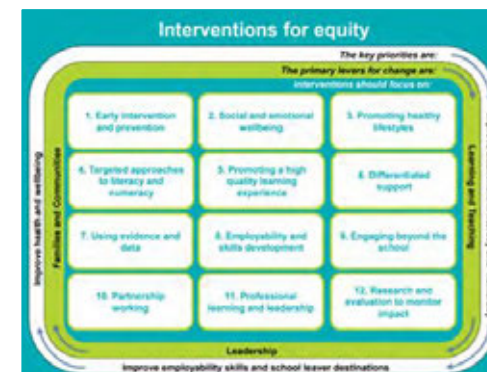
The session explores:

- the importance of contextual analysis in choosing approaches and interventions;
- existing evidence on 'what works to close poverty-related attainment gaps; and
- the role of effective implementation for interventions to be successful and have impact.

As the Toolkit does not provide definitive answers, it should not be used in isolation. Your professional judgement and expertise is also needed to move from the information in the Toolkit to an evidence-informed decision about what will work best in your school.

The 'Interventions for equity' resource on the National Improvement Hub and the Education Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning Toolkit provide examples of approaches that have been used in schools. The toolkits do not provide definitive answers and alongside the toolkits, schools should consider what will work in their setting. When identifying which approach(es) to take, decision-making should focus on robust evidence from self-evaluation and effective analysis of school data.

[Interventions for Equity: Self-evaluation National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



[Teaching and Learning Toolkit: EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](#)

Conditions for success and sustainability

Research identifies 6 broad principles which can be used to support schools and local authorities to consider their use of PEF to recalibrate equity and support educational recovery.

- Impact of COVID-19
- Prioritise re-engagement
- Identify those learners most affected by poverty & COVID-19
- Intensify support in the short-term for learners identified
- High quality universal and targeted provision is vital
- Long term strategic vision still required

The links below provide more information on these.

- [Recalibrating Equity and Social Justice \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- [Recalibrating Equity and Social Justice in Scottish Education](#)

<p>IMPACT OF COVID-19</p> <p>Children and young people learn less well when not in regular classes (Scottish Government, 2020a; Grattan Institute, 2020). Evidence from Australia shows that the achievement gap widens at triple the rate in remote schooling (Grattan Institute, 2020).</p>	<p>PRIORITISE RE-ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>Most children and young people will recover but those learners who are already facing disadvantage will need additional support to re-engage (Grattan Institute, 2020).</p>	<p>IDENTIFY THOSE LEARNERS MOST AFFECTED BY POVERTY & COVID-19</p> <p>Research highlights that learners most affected include: groups already not achieving their potential such as those learners affected by poverty, younger children (PS-3), those experiencing transitions, existing mental health and social difficulties and those with ASN (Grattan Institute, 2020; Scottish Government, 2021)</p>	<p>INTENSIFY SUPPORT IN THE SHORT-TERM FOR LEARNERS IDENTIFIED</p> <p>Intensified support is needed in the short-term for learners most affected by COVID-19 and school closures. Focus should be on targeted supports for core literacy and numeracy, language development, social learning, physical skills or concentration.</p>	<p>HIGH QUALITY UNIVERSAL AND TARGETED PROVISION IS VITAL</p> <p>Provision needs to be more than providing extra teaching. It needs to be of the highest quality and evidence based. Factors which support this include: appropriate training in effective interventions and networked learning systems.</p>	<p>LONG TERM STRATEGIC VISION STILL REQUIRED</p> <p>The impact of COVID-19 on children and young people affected by poverty and their learning, needs to be kept in perspective. The poverty related attainment gap has been a factor of our society before the current pandemic. These underpinning, deep rooted causes need to continue to be prioritised and tackled.</p>

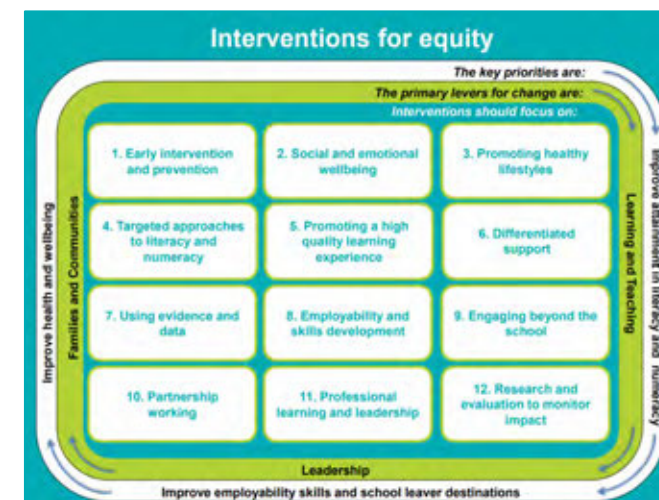
Exemplars

Exemplars can be found on the National Improvement Hub and in the 'Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards' report. The PEF: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards report is intended to support school leaders and local authority staff as they further develop and refine their approaches to PEF. Each section reflects on a different aspect of PEF practice and provides examples of approaches being employed across the country. It is hoped this sharing of current practice will help staff involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring of PEF to reflect and build on their current practice as we enter the next phase of the Scottish Attainment Challenge ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed in education.

- [Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards – sharing effective practice to maximise support for learners and practitioners](#)

The Interventions for Equity Framework is based on a range of interventions and approaches that are currently being use in schools across Scotland. These will provide a helpful stimulus for planning discussions based on your own robust self-evaluation.

- [Interventions for Equity | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



Reflective questions

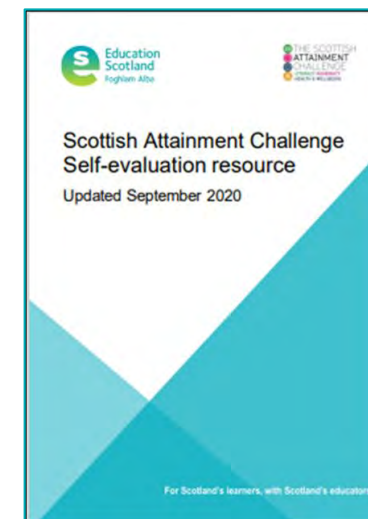
The Scottish Attainment Challenge self-evaluation resource has been designed to support schools to improve their approaches to ensuring equity and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. It includes a section on Pupil Equity Funding.

For schools

- To what extent is our rationale for PEF spending based on robust self-evaluation with relevant stakeholders?
- To what extent is our self-evaluation informed by effective analysis of data focused on the poverty-related attainment gap?
- To what extent is our use of PEF improving outcomes for children and young people and closing the poverty-related attainment gap?
- Are we making sure that we are hearing from children and young people affected by poverty?
- How are we ensuring that children and young people have the necessary information in order to make informed choices and decisions around poverty and equity?

For local authorities

- How confident are we that all head teachers have a clear rationale for spending PEF based on robust self-evaluation?
- What local PEF guidance is in place?
- What robust procedures are in place to monitor how PEF is being spent?
- To what extent is our schools' use of PEF leading to improved outcomes for children and young people and closing the poverty-related attainment gap?



[Scottish Attainment Challenge - Self-evaluation resource \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/attainment-challenge/self-evaluation-resource)

Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Pupil attainment: closing the gap - Scottish Attainment Challenge 2022/2023 – 2025/2026](#)
- [Scottish Attainment Challenge: framework for recovery and accelerating progress](#)
- [tackling-poverty-related-attainment-gap-theory-change-scottish-attainment-challenge-logic-model](#)
- [Pupil Equity Fund: national operational guidance 2022](#)
- [Pupil Equity Funding: school allocations 2022 to 2023](#)
- [Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards – sharing effective practice to maximise support for learners and practitioners](#)
- [Delivering equity and closing the poverty related attainment gap | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Events | News and events | Education Scotland](#)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Closing the poverty-related attainment gap: progress report 2016 to 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Recalibrating Equity and Social Justice in Scottish Education: Bouncing forward after COVID-19 lockdowns | Research | National Improvement Hub](#)
- [State of Child Poverty 2021 - Buttle UK](#)
- [Reducing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap - Evidence Review of Mentoring and Tutoring | The Robertson Trust](#)
- [Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) - An overview of the latest evidence on the six priority family types identified as being at higher risk of child poverty
- [Poverty in rural Scotland: evidence review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

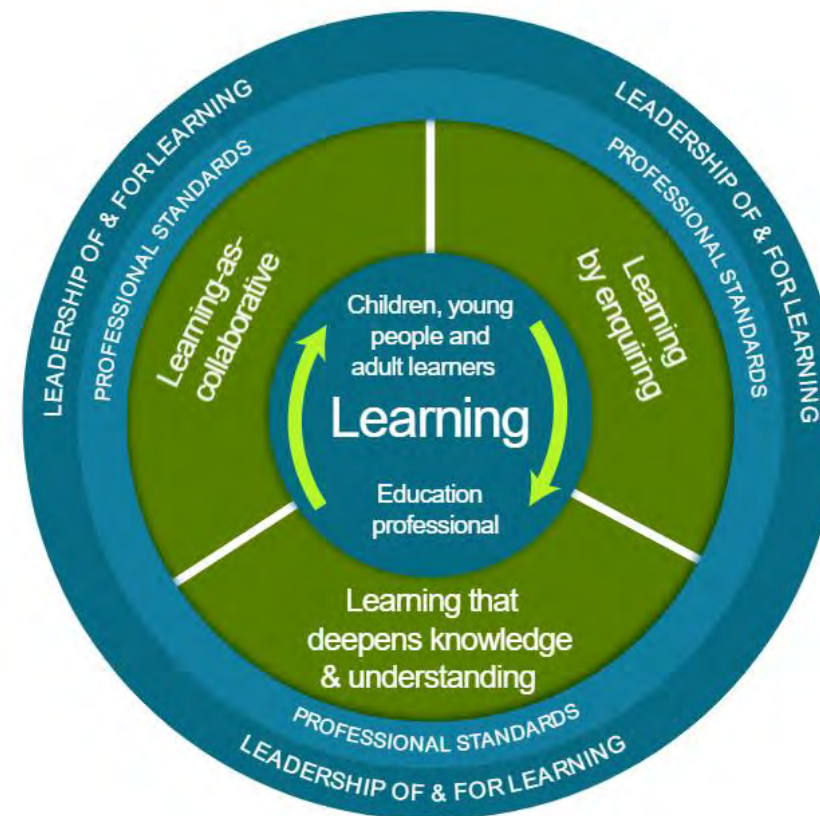
Section overview

The [interventions for equity](#) highlights promoting and participating in professional learning and developing practice has significant impact on improving outcomes for learners. Professional learning to improve equity requires attending to the beliefs of practitioners. In the context of adult learning and how practitioners grow and change, it is more than knowledge and skills that are required to be considered. It is necessary to address beliefs, attitudes, values, and assumptions. If the [unconscious bias](#) of practitioners, whether about specific learners in their establishments or their own efficacy, is not considered, it can be difficult to transform practice or sustain the implementation of new learning. This section provides dual purpose:

- considerations for practitioners when designing professional learning, and
- professional learning opportunities for practitioners to support their own career long professional learning.

This section also includes information and links to research and useful resources to support equity, including recent publications and upcoming events featured in the Spotighting Equity sways, archived content to support recovery and accelerate progress of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and reflective questions and useful resources.

The [national model of professional learning](#) (opposite) identifies the key principles and features of effective learning that will build capacity and promote collaborative practices.



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

[Practitioner-led professional learning](#) is important for teaching for equity to be rooted in the needs of learners, paying particular attention to the unique context of schools and other settings. Practitioners should also experience professional learning that meaningfully meets their needs (Skerrett, Warrington, & Williamson, 2018). Skerrett et al. (2018) identified six features to support professional development, which addresses equity within the design:

- practitioner-identified and driven;
- presented by a skilled facilitator who value the practitioners' expertise;
- context where the practitioner can be the leader of learning, and the learner;
- sustained over time with continued further learning;
- fosters meaningful collaborative relationships with others in the community;
- and includes support from those with the capital to facilitate change.

[Research by Anne Burns Thomas](#) included:

- establishing a network of practitioners engaged in a common goal and providing practical examples of what equity and [social justice education](#) looks like, feels like and sounds like supports capacity building to improve outcomes for learners.
- the importance of collaborating with others who share similar goals and the significance of practitioner-led professional learning should focus on the context of the establishment in response to challenges in the setting, at home and in the community. In turn this develops greater understanding of social and educational inequity and promotes collaboration across boundaries.

Professional learning for equity, when meaningfully designed and delivered provides opportunities to disrupt and dismantle societal barriers. Deeper learning creates opportunities for learners to interrogate issues, develop critical thinking skills, and build a sense of agency and belief. The research points to a developing framework for teaching for equity and deeper learning as one that includes, learning that engages children and young people in thinking about and exploring questions related to their immediate lived experiences.

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

There are four considerations when designing professional learning for equity that have the potential to positively disrupt practitioner and learner experiences:

- teacher professional learning for equity should be centred on content related to equity and social justice;
- teacher professional learning should model instructional practices that promote equity;
- create a culture of inquiry and ownership to promote a school ecosystem informed by equitable approaches;
- invite learner voices into the conversation to understand the impact of practitioners' professional learning

Data suggests that when practitioners are steeped in professional learning that explores issues of equity and pedagogy that models equitable practices, learners are more likely to experience those practices in the classroom.

Additionally there is greater coherence between professional learning experiences and classroom experiences if practitioners have opportunities to practice new pedagogical skills within the professional learning experience.

Coaching and peer mentoring is an effective way of ensuring the learning intentions from activities are implemented in practice.

Case studies are useful at helping practitioners reflect and align what they planned and designed the professional learning for, and how it was applied and implemented in classrooms and other settings to determine impact.

Invite learner voices to understand practitioners' professional learning. Learner voice is often left out, but can be key to understanding the impact of practitioner professional learning.

Spotlighting Equity

- Current Equity Insights
- National Publications
- National Improvement Hub
- Publications and Research
- Upcoming Professional Learning Events
- "You say, we listen" - Feedback
- Previous Issues

Click the link below to access the most recent and previous issues of Spotlighting Equity



[Spotlighting Equity October 2022](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Archive of webinars and events

There are a series of [recorded webinars and short videos](#) on the National Improvement Hub. The content provides support for practitioners and establishments to work with learners and families living in communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage to ensure equity and close the poverty related attainment gap. The webinars are based on a range of interventions and approaches being used in schools across Scotland. This section will be updated when new content is released.



[Data and the Poverty Related Attainment Gap - YouTube](#)



[Equity within Remote Learning - YouTube](#)



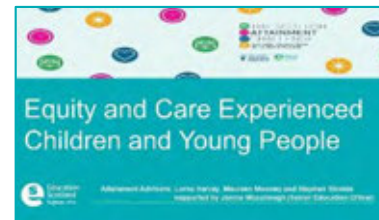
[Effective Multi Agency Practice: Considering Community Approaches - YouTube](#)



[Outcomes and Measures Webinar - YouTube](#)



[Evidenced Based Interventions - YouTube](#)



[Equity and Care Experienced Children and Young People - YouTube](#)



[SLF online 2021 Scottish Attainment Challenge - Maximising Progress - YouTube](#)

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

The short videos in the table opposite are intended to provide key messages, provoke thought and act as a starting point for further exploration, discussion or development.



Full details for all of the equity video shorts, alongside a selection of recorded webinars, can be found on the [National Improvement Hub](#).

Pedagogy for Equity		
This is a series designed for classroom practitioners. These videos provide an introduction to pedagogical approaches that can support in closing the poverty-related attainment gap.		
Relationships – the Foundation for All Pedagogical Practice		
Pedagogy – Uncovering values and beliefs	Metacognition	Feedback
Oral Interventions	Reading Comprehension	Writing
Leadership and Equity		
This is a series developed for school leaders. These videos focus on planning, implementation and evaluation through an equity lens.		
Planning	Implementation	Evaluation
Pupil Support Staff and Equity		
This is a series designed for support staff working with learners affected by the poverty related attainment gap.		
Pupil Support Staff and the Scottish Attainment Challenge	Relational Approaches	Approaches and Interventions

Reflective questions

- To what extent do you access professional learning and development opportunities to help you explore new ways to promote equity in your practice?
- In what ways does your establishment use professional learning to address equity to improve outcomes for learners? How impactful are these and how do you know? How could this be improved?
- To what extent do you critically engage with research, policy sources and developments in learning and teaching to promote equity?
- What are the personal and professional development needs of practitioners required to support learners most adversely affected by poverty? How has this changed as a result of COVID-19?
- How are you identifying which learners are experiencing the greatest barriers to learning (connectivity, inaccessible content, etc.)? What can you do to ensure those learners experience equity of opportunity?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Equality and Equity Toolkit \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/)
- [Spotlight on equity and outdoor learning experiences | Scottish Attainment Challenge 2020-21: Equity in education | Resources for practitioners | Scotland Learns | National Improvement Hub](#)
- [Improving Gender Balance Scotland \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/)



Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [Ten Steps to Equity in Education OECD Policy Brief 2008](#)
- [teachingforequityanddeeperlearning.pdf \(montclair.edu\)](#) – academic paper (Meg Riordan, Emily J. Klein & Catherine Gaynor (2019): Teaching for Equity and Deeper Learning: How Does Professional Learning Transfer to Teachers' Practice and Influence Students' Experiences?, Equity & Excellence in Education, DOI: 10.1080/10665684.2019.164780)
- [Recalibrating Equity and Social Justice in Scottish Education: Bouncing forward after COVID-19 lockdowns | Research | National Improvement Hub](#)

Implementation

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[What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?](#)

[Conditions for success and sustainability](#)

[Exemplars](#)

[Reflective questions](#)

[Useful resources](#)

[Research and articles](#)



Section overview

The Scottish Attainment Challenge has provided opportunity for practitioners to explore and test innovation to improve outcomes for learners. As a result there is evidence of interventions and services - where successfully implemented and embedded - have led to local improvements and reduced variation in outcomes ([Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards \(education.gov.scot\)](#)). A fundamental aspect of improvement is implementation, yet it is an area of practice that is largely overlooked.

The principle of equity, whilst systemically understood, rarely features as part of planning for implementation. To support recovery from COVID-19 it is important to understand how implementation is best considered when planning approaches, interventions and services. Therefore, to address recovery and advance equity, practitioners should engage in a consistent process of knowledge development, intervention selection, and use of implementation strategies. We must also critically assess the gaps between the intentions and the impact of our work.

“one of the most critical problems our schools face is not resistance to innovation, but the fragmentation, overload, and incoherence resulting from the uncritical and uncoordinated acceptance of too many different innovations”

(Fullan and Stiegelbauer)

[Equitable implementation](#) requires us to engage in [social justice inquiry](#) of our work and pursue fair, restorative, and equitable outcomes. Equitable implementation occurs when strong equity components, including explicit attention to the culture, history, values, and needs of a community are integrated into the principles and tools of implementation, and its associated science ([Allison Metz, Beadsie Woo & Audrey Loper, 2021](#)).

The purpose of this section is to equip practitioners with baseline knowledge and concepts of Implementation Science and practical steps, which support equity. The content is intended to create curiosity and stimulate professional dialogue and offers dual purpose:

- to provide opportunity to engage in further professional reading, research and enquiry.
- to provide practical considerations and steps for practitioners and establishments to implement and manage change effectively.

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

What is implementation?

Implementation is “a specified set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or program” (Fixen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). These activities occur over time, in stages that overlap and are revisited as required.

Why implementation?

Have you ever wondered why a new approach, practice or service never seemed to achieve the outcomes you or your team had hoped for? What was missing? Resources? Training? Support? Effective implementation is more than a contributing factor in setting interventions up for success. The quality of implementation plays a significant part in achieving outcomes. If an approach or intervention is implemented poorly or even moderately well, its goals are unlikely to be achieved, or the results will be less significant.

‘It is a truism that people cannot benefit from innovations they do not experience. That is, if innovations are not used as intended, they cannot produce the intended results’

Fixsen, Blase, and Van Dyke 2019

What is Implementation Science?

Implementation science is the study of how evidence-based programmes can be embedded to maximise successful outcomes ([Kelly and Perkins, 2012](#)).

Adopting new practice and approaches requires change. Implementation science recognises that people need to be ready for change and that creating the right conditions for an intervention is key to how it is delivered and sustained over time. Therefore, implementation science is fundamental to the design of successful interventions. To understand true effectiveness, both the intervention and its implementation need to be evaluated to fully understand outcomes and impacts ([Kelly and Perkins, 2012](#)). Although implementation science has been employed for some time in health and community settings, its application within education is still relatively new and there are many areas for further research ([Lyon et al., 2018](#)).

Is there a difference between Improvement Science and Implementation Science?

In a word yes. Implementation science and improvement science have similar endpoints, but different starting points and academic perspectives. They have similar goals of improving practice and services to improve outcomes. However, a fundamental difference between quality improvement and implementation science is that the former generates knowledge for local improvement, whereas the latter is aimed at producing more general scientific knowledge ([Frontiers | Bridging the Silos: A Comparative Analysis of Implementation Science and Improvement Science | Health Services \(frontiersin.org\)](#)).

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Overview of Implementation Science

[The National Implementation Research Network](#) developed five overarching frameworks referred to as Active Implementation Frameworks:

- [Framework 1: Usable Innovations](#)
- [Framework 2: Implementation Stages](#) ([exploration](#), [installation](#), [initial implementation](#) and [full implementation](#))
- [Framework 3: Implementation Drivers](#)
- [Framework 4: Implementation Teams](#)
- [Framework 5: Improvement Cycles](#) (PDSA)

A helpful one-page overview of the frameworks can be found [here](#). Each Active Implementation framework contains information and tools, which integrate and compensate each other. A series of modules designed for independent learning, cohorts or in-service training can be accessed [here](#). They include content, activities and assessments designed to promote the knowledge and practice of implementation science and scaling-up.

What is fidelity?

Implementation fidelity refers to the extent to which an intervention or programme is delivered as intended.

Active Implementation Formula

It is important to start with the end in mind. In the active implementation formula (below), positive outcomes for learners represent the 'why' in the equation. It is why we want to improve instructional practice and behaviours. The 'what' in the equation is an effective approach. We need to know what it is that is going to be implemented to create the infrastructure to support the approach and ensure once in place, is being used as intended, and producing outcomes (fidelity).



How will this be done? The implementation infrastructure is the 'how' and the next component of the equation. Competency, Organisation, and Leadership Drivers are in service to Fidelity to achieve improved outcomes. Supporting activities such as coaching, training or feedback should always be in service to the practice, or change, you want to see on the ground."

[SISEP Video Series: Active Implementation Formula - YouTube](#)



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Coaching

“[Coaching](#) is a necessary component for promoting practitioner’s confidence and ensuring competence. Coaching is defined as regular, embedded professional development designed to help practitioners and staff use the approach or innovation as intended (fidelity).” Ensure the use of multiple sources of data to provide feedback to practitioners and always include direct observation.

Leadership

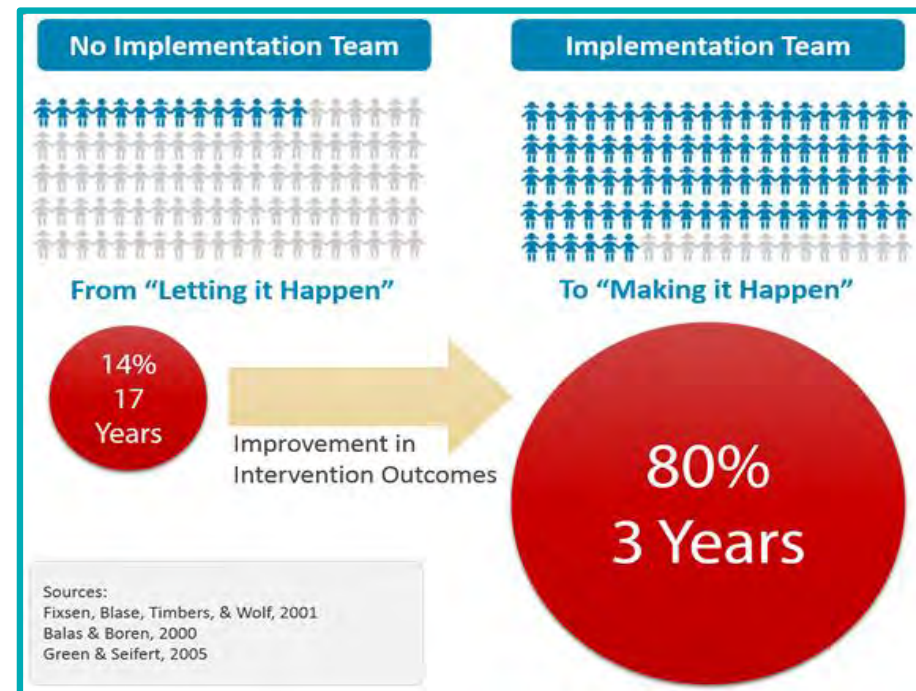
[Leadership](#) involves setting achievable goals, identifying and feeding back success, keeping abreast of implementation steps, roles and progress, accepting barriers/ problems as part of the process, provide opportunities and time to identify/ remove barriers and continue to gather evidence and data.

Training/Professional Learning

[Training/Professional Learning](#) should provide information relating to the theory and underlying values of the approach or programme.

Capacity building through implementation teams

Investing in developing and supporting competence and capacity within [implementation teams](#) can lead to sustained use and significantly improved outcomes in establishments and regional areas (see graphic opposite). Implementation teams can also contribute to increased success and efficiency, with the time required to achieve fidelity reduced from 7 to 3.6 years (Fixsen, Blase, Timbers, & Wolf, 2001).



[Voices from the field: implementation teams](#)

Conditions for success and sustainability

Collaborative decision making

Successful implementation is the product of many shared decisions. In all implementation efforts, opportunities exist for critical decision-making that can either increase or decrease the likelihood that implementation will result in equitable outcomes. Ten recommendations from the [Stanford Social Innovation Review](#) include:

- **Engage in deliberate and transparent decision-making.** Implementation decisions should be conscious, reflective, well thought through, and paced in a way that unintended consequences can be assessed. By taking the time to reflect, we can make course corrections for decisions that yield any unexpected results. Decision-making should also be transparently communicated with stakeholders at all levels of implementation.
- **Engage community members in interpreting and using data to support implementation.** The success and sustainability of implementation are related to the alignment with and deep understanding of the needs of a community as defined by the community members themselves.



Community-defined evidence

Equitable implementation starts with how the evidence we seek to implement is developed. Research evidence often demonstrates different levels of effectiveness for different groups of people when replicated or scaled widely, leading to inequitable outcomes. As interventions are developed, it is critical to consider diversity in all its forms—including geographical, racial and ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, and access—and to do this through the involvement of local communities. A recommendation for developing community-defined evidence is:

- **Co-design interventions with community members.** This ensures interventions are relevant, desired by communities, and feasible to implement. Community members' experiences and perspectives should be used to develop interventions that are aligned with community needs as they described them.

Make Adaptations

To reduce disparities in outcomes and advance equitable implementation, interventions and services must reach specific groups of people and demonstrate effectiveness in improving outcomes for them. Adaptations through the lens of equity should be made for both interventions and for implementation strategies to ensure the reach and relevance required for equitable implementation. Recommendations for making adaptations include:

- **Address issues of social justice.** Specific groups of people face significant stressors and barriers to that are rooted in systemic inequity.

Conditions for success and sustainability

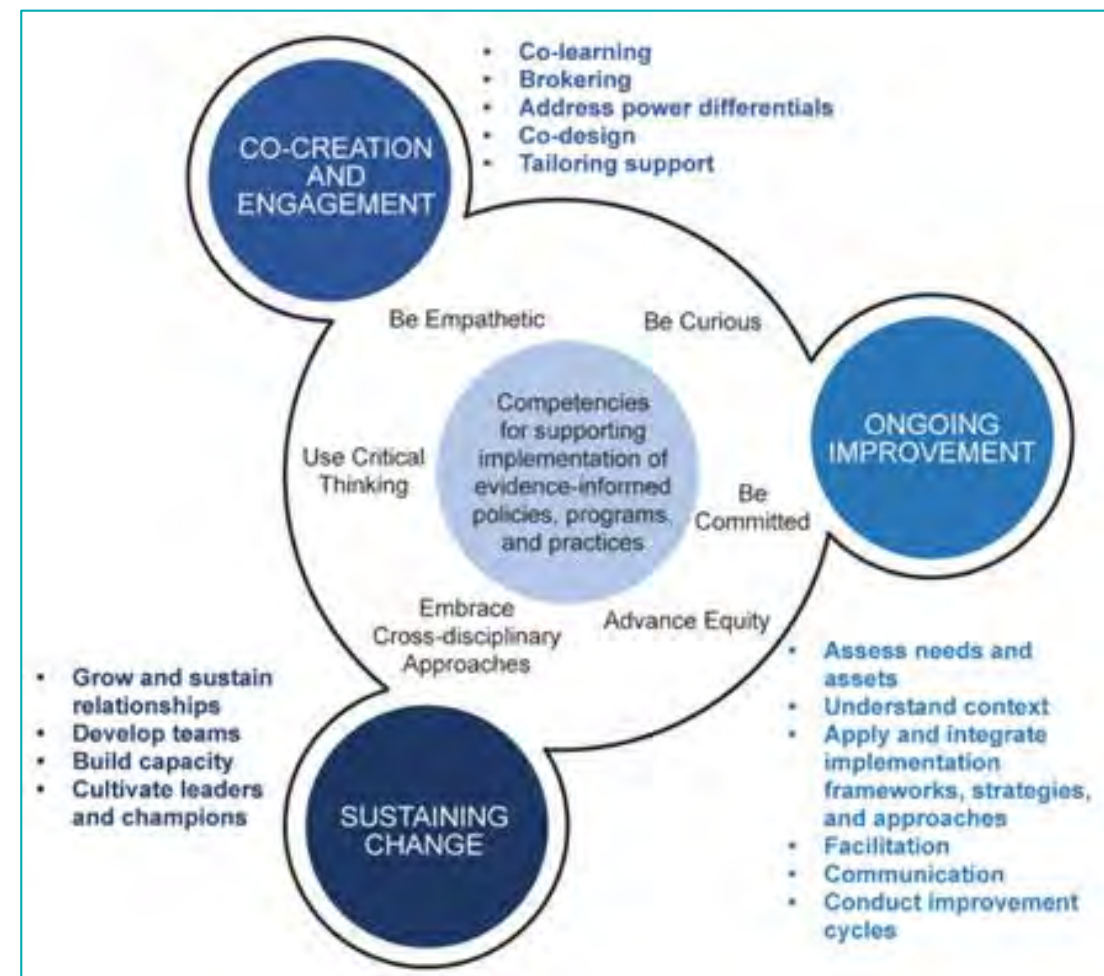
Readiness

Readiness is defined as a developmental point when a person, organisation, or system has the capacity and willingness to engage in a particular activity. Creating '[readiness for change](#)' is a key feature of the [Exploration Stage](#) (framework 2). Encouragement, incentives, or demands to “just do it” typically do not lead to the “action” hoped for by leaders or the management team. What is needed is relevant and detailed information so those who are being asked to change know what is expected, how the process will work, and are “ready” for change. In education “readiness for change” is something that needs to be developed, nurtured, and sustained.

Practice Tip: creating readiness is an ongoing activity and is embedded in each stage of Active Implementation. New leaders, practitioners, community members, new family and youth advocates are always leaving and entering. There is a need to provide them with information, actively request their input, and discuss their concerns as an ongoing task.

Data indicate that about 20% of people and organisations are ready for change at any given time (Prochaska, Prochaska, & Levesque, 2001).

Implementation Support Practitioner Core Competencies Virtual Series



Exemplars

- [Using implementation science to support the implementation of interventions in real world contexts](#)
- [Developing a data culture in Stirling \(case study\) Pupil Equity Funding: Looking inwards, outwards, forwards \(education.gov.scot\) \(pg 22\).](#)

“Implementation is not an event. It is a mission-oriented process involving multiple decisions, actions, and corrections designed to make full and effective use of effective innovations in education settings” ([National Implementation Research Network](#)).

Reflective questions

- What has been your experience of change?
- What have been the enablers or barriers for you and for others in that change?
- Is there an evidence base for the intervention or programme that you are planning to implement?
- To what extent are you able to implement this intervention or programme to ensure fidelity?
- What are the core components that might have an impact on the effectiveness of this programme or intervention?
- How might you address unconscious bias when planning implementation of interventions?
- How effective is your establishment's or class implementation of small group interventions to intensify support for those children and young people who need it most?
- How do you know? Is the intervention being delivered of high quality with clear outcomes and measures which everyone is aware of?



Useful resources

The resources linked below provide a range of practical strategies, ideas and links which you may find useful.

- [Putting Evidence to Work - A School's Guide to Implementation | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)
- [Integrating Improvement and Implementation Sciences to Enhance Educational Outcomes \(unc.edu\)](https://unc.edu)
- [EEF-Active-Ingredients-Summary.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)
- [Professional-Development-Summary_2021-12-07-103959_aibu.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)
- [EEF-Gathering-and-Interpreting-Data-Summary.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)
- [EEF-Implementation-Process-Diagram.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)
- [A School's Guide to Implementation online course | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)
- [Using implementation science to support the implementation of interventions in real world contexts | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://education.gov.scot)
- [ISP Practice Guide-v1-11.27.20.pdf \(unc.edu\)](https://unc.edu)
- [IS-Practice-Profile-single-page-printing-v10-November-2020.pdf \(d1j85byv4fcann.cloudfront.net\)](https://d1j85byv4fcann.cloudfront.net)

Research and articles

The following articles and research relating to this section are available.

- [EEF Implementation Guidance Report 2019.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)



Sustainability

Section overview

What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

Conditions for success and sustainability

Exemplars

Reflective questions

Useful resources

Research and articles

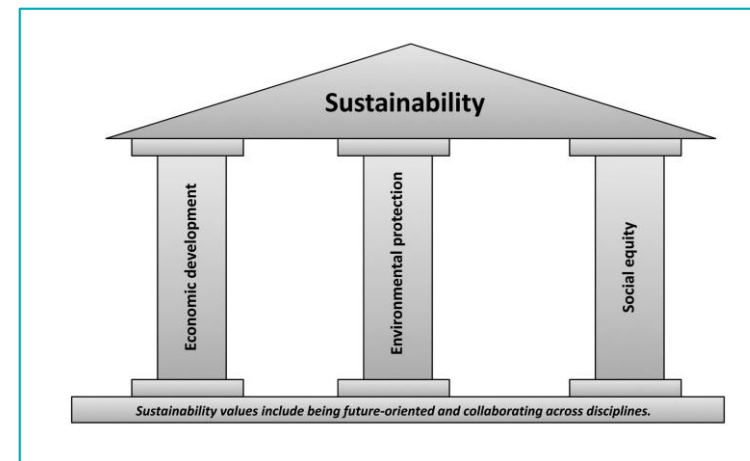


Section overview

Equity is an essential component of sustainability that has been viewed as one of three pillars of sustainability, alongside environment and economy. It is important to highlight the unique role of schools in the context of sustainability, equity and the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Not only are schools' the provider and beneficiary, but are also the funder or commissioner in this regard. Therefore, understanding and connecting with the paradoxes described in this section may provide some reassurance and helpful suggestions for these settings.

"Sometimes sustainability is about equipping other people not to need us anymore: building the capacity of people, communities and other services to sustain things for themselves. Sustainability is really about impact, not organisations. For all these reasons, Wren and Greyhound define sustainability as **the capacity of an organisation, service or system to make a lasting difference.**" For the purposes of the Equity Toolkit, this is the working definition throughout this section. This toolkit and [implementation guide](#) supports practitioners on their journey to managing sustainability challenges.

It is important to acknowledge the global significance of sustainability within the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must closely align with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and encourage economic growth.



What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

The [Lasting Difference Toolkit](#) was developed to support the third sector to navigate and provide the 'how to' of organisational sustainability. However, the principles in the toolkit are widely applicable and strongly relate to the refreshed mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the range of establishments and providers involved in its delivery. The toolkit was reviewed to take account of COVID-19, but the practice and principles were unchanged and are helpful to consider to support recovery and accelerate progress, particularly when planning for PEF.

The pandemic has brought into sharp focus the importance of collaboration to deliver against national need. The mission approach to the Scottish Attainment Challenge, encourages and supports collaboration, drawing together the necessary expertise, across disciplines, and enabling schools and other partners to unite on defining and addressing specific target areas. The concept of sustainability is about more than survival.

Sustainability should be an [active component](#) at every stage of the process of implementation and ensures continued quality implementation includes plans and activities for:

- Continuing to provide timely and effective training, coaching, and fidelity measurement processes making data-driven decisions for continuous improvement and problem-solving
- Ensuring that policies and procedures continue to support and facilitate full implementation.



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What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

The Change Paradox

The paradox of change is that it is only by changing that we can sustain things. When we think about sustainability we think it means surviving as we are. But the world is changing around us, so being sustainable means being prepared for change. We need to adapt and evolve in the face of changing needs, situations and the environment. Put simply, if we don't change and adapt we will get left behind. Therefore sustainability is not the same as sustained.



Understanding the challenges and key principles of sustainability and counter-acting practice.

PART ONE: BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES

WE CAN SUMMARISE THESE CHALLENGES INTO FIVE KEY PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY

- Sustainability does not mean 'sustained'**. Things change. Sustainability means not staying the same. Other factors like capacity, development and staff wellbeing are just as important. Experience tells us that money flows in great waves, not the other way around.
- It's about more than just the money**. Other factors like capacity, development and staff wellbeing are just as important. Experience tells us that money flows in great waves, not the other way around.
- Diversifying activity does not necessarily mean reducing risk**. Sustainability means being clear on what you do - and don't do - best. Sustainable organisations know when to say 'no'. Saying 'yes' to everything leads to reduced quality, safety and sustainability.
- Sustainability requires capacity**. Organisations, teams and individuals need time and space to think. Without spare capacity, there can be no innovation or development.
- Sustainability does not mean self-sustaining**. On their own, organisations are closed systems which will simply exhaust inputs from and exchange with their environment's funding, staff, loans, support etc.

The paradoxes, principles, and some of the practices that logically follow are summarised below. More examples of sustainable practices are given under each of the five categories in Part Two.

PARADOX / CHALLENGE	PRINCIPLES	PRACTICES
THE CHANGE PARADOX	Sustainability ≠ sustained	Adopt and evolve purposefully
THE YES/NO PARADOX	Sustainability > money	Know what to say 'no' to, when and how
THE OCTOPUS PARADOX	Diversifying activity ≠ reducing risk	Focus on three purposes
THE EFFICIENCY PARADOX	Sustainability requires capacity	Invest in capacity building
THE MYTH OF PERPETUAL MOTION	Sustainability ≠ self-sustaining	Prepare for funding to end
DEEP POCKETS, SHORT ARMS		Build capacity for sustainability

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What can we do to support recovery and accelerate progress?

- **Integrate** social equity into sustainability plans through an inclusive process. Leading practice communities invite input from a wide variety of community members and emphasise engaging stakeholders from disadvantaged communities.
- **Collaborate** with third sector organisations, CLD, further education providers and others to achieve common goals. Benefits include improved capacity, increased economies of scale and increased sharing knowledge in community development efforts.
- Set [equity goals](#) that specifically address the needs of children and young people most at risk of disadvantage. This strategy ensures that ramifications of specific choices can be thoughtfully considered ahead of developing interventions and services and their implementation.
- Use data and establish performance measures to track progress towards social equity objectives. Leading practice communities share progress to provide evidence as to whether social equity objectives are being achieved. This strategy ensures transparency and accountability.
- Advancing social equity requires innovation and leadership.

"Sometimes sustainability is about equipping other people not to need us anymore: building the capacity of people, communities and other services to sustain things for themselves."

Wren and Greyhound, The Lasting Difference Toolkit, version 5

Conditions for success and sustainability

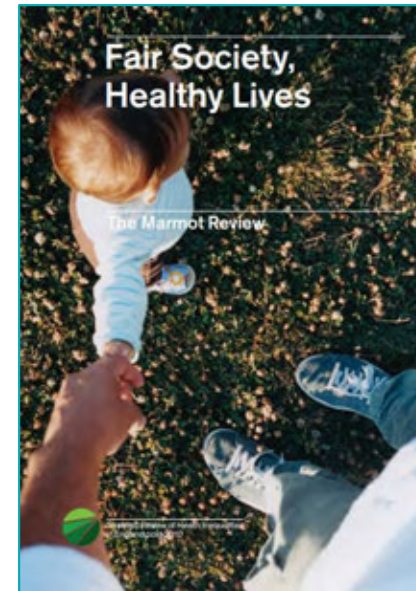
The provision of multi-year funding is helpful for sustainability.

Evidence on the most important factors influencing educational attainment suggests that it is families, rather than schools, that have the most influence. Closer links between schools, the family, and the local community are needed.'

[Marmot Review, 2010](#)

To work collectively on the refreshed Mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge practitioners should catalyse cross-sector and interdisciplinary working to maximise resources, expertise and additional funding as leverage to meet the scale of the challenges.

“Some of the greatest innovations of our time have come from the need to solve problems. The internet was initially designed to solve the problem of satellites communicating; GPS to determine the location of military equipment.” Mazzucato, M. (2018), Missions: Mission-Oriented Research & Innovation in the European Union. European Commission. Available online at https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/mazzucato_report_2018.pdf



Exemplars

St Ninian's Primary School, Inverclyde

St Ninian's were keen to maximise their PEF spend to create a sustainable support system for pupils. Find out more about their approach using the link below.

- [Pupil Equity funding used to empower support staff to close the poverty related attainment gap in Inverclyde | Practice exemplars | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



Reflective questions

- In ensuring sustainability, how well embedded are our school's approaches to building capacity and improving practice?
- To what extent are we considering and ensuring long-term sustainability as part of our planning to achieve equity?
- What procedures do we employ to ensure transparency and equity in the use of our financial resources?
- How effectively do we allocate resources to sustain improvement priorities?
- To what extent are local authority and regional approaches to building capacity and improving practice embedded to ensure sustainability?



