

Creativity is one of our most essential skills – Scotland's Creative Learning Plan

## Creativity in Leadership and Learning

Reframing Creativity: Considering school culture and the conditions to support creative leadership

How can we *all* use our creativity to improve young people's futures?

#creativechange

A partnership event for leaders, practitioners and learners at all levels and in all contexts from Scotland's Creative Learning Plan Partners and the National Creative Learning Network



# Aims of the session

- To explore what we mean by ‘creative leadership’ in education.
- To reflect on recent inspection findings to identify cultural features which facilitate creative leadership and lead to improved outcomes for children and young people.
- To consider the place of creative leadership in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic as a period of significant change.
- To offer reflective questions to support school staff/practitioners to consider their approaches to creative leadership.

*“Learning leadership demonstrates creativity and often courage: Innovating, designing, bringing others on board and redesigning all call on the exercise of creativity, and often courage. Deep shifts in mindset and practice and the capacity to keep the long-term vision in view are needed when the aim is transformation, even if the starting point may be incremental. The leadership focus is on deep changes to practice, structures and cultures.”*

**OECD (2013), *Leadership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning*, OECD Publishing, Paris**



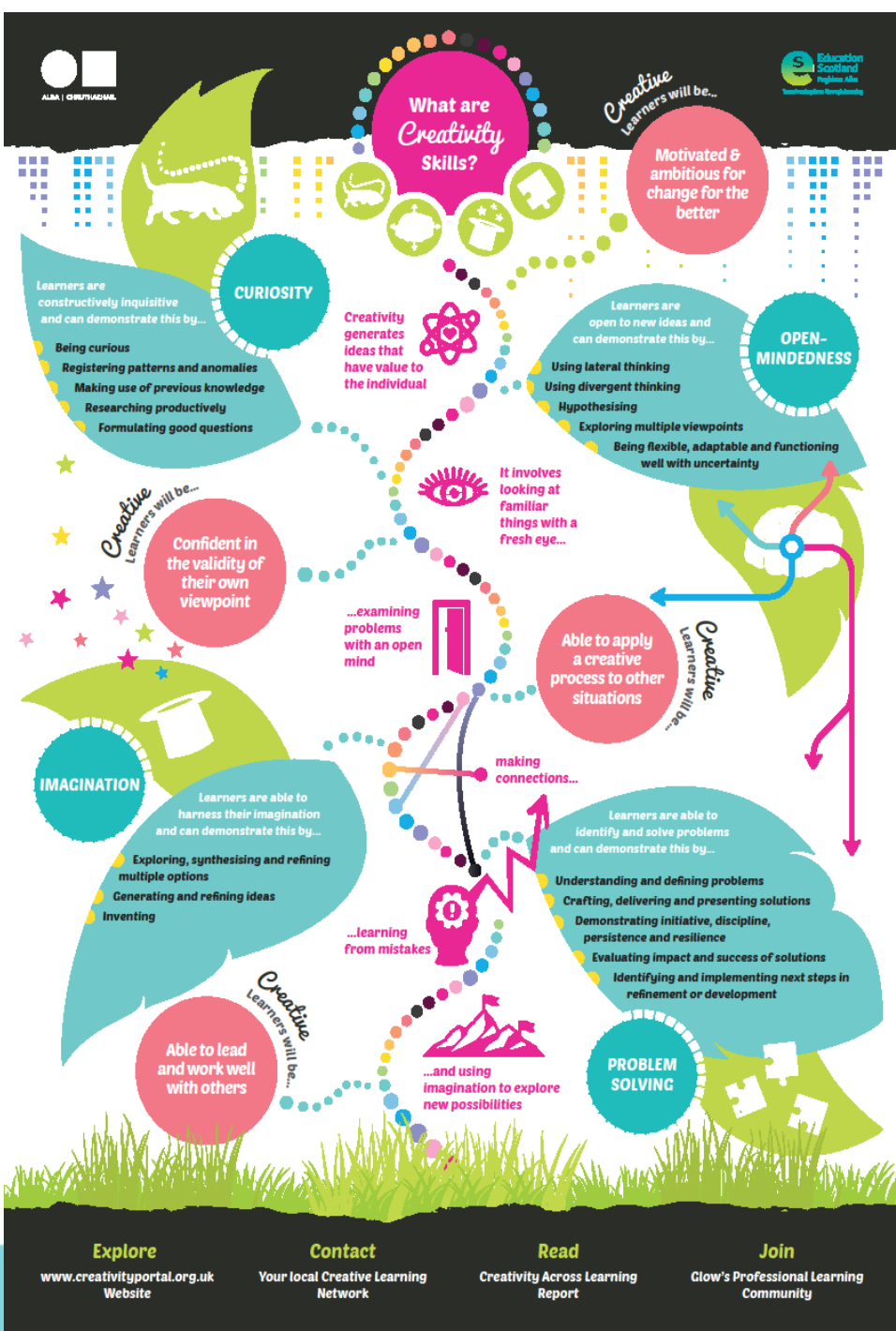
# What is creative leadership?

“Creative leadership is an **imaginative and thought through response to opportunities and to challenging issues** that inhibit learning at all levels. It's about **seeing, thinking and doing things differently** in order to improve the life chances of all students. Creative leaders also provide **the conditions, environment and opportunities for others to be creative.**”

Creative leadership is not just about problem solving...it also **involves 'problem finding' or identification; actively scanning the environment for challenges which, if not addressed now, could derail improvement efforts or prevent schools from engaging in more radical change as they strive to prepare their students for the future. Often these might be seen as opportunities.**”

Stoll, L & Temperley, J (2009), **Creative Leadership: A Challenge of our Times** in *School Leadership & Management* 29(1), pp. 65-78





# Education Scotland Infographics

[Creativity infographics](#) | [Learning resources](#) | [National Improvement Hub](#)  
([education.gov.scot](http://education.gov.scot))

## Creativity Skills

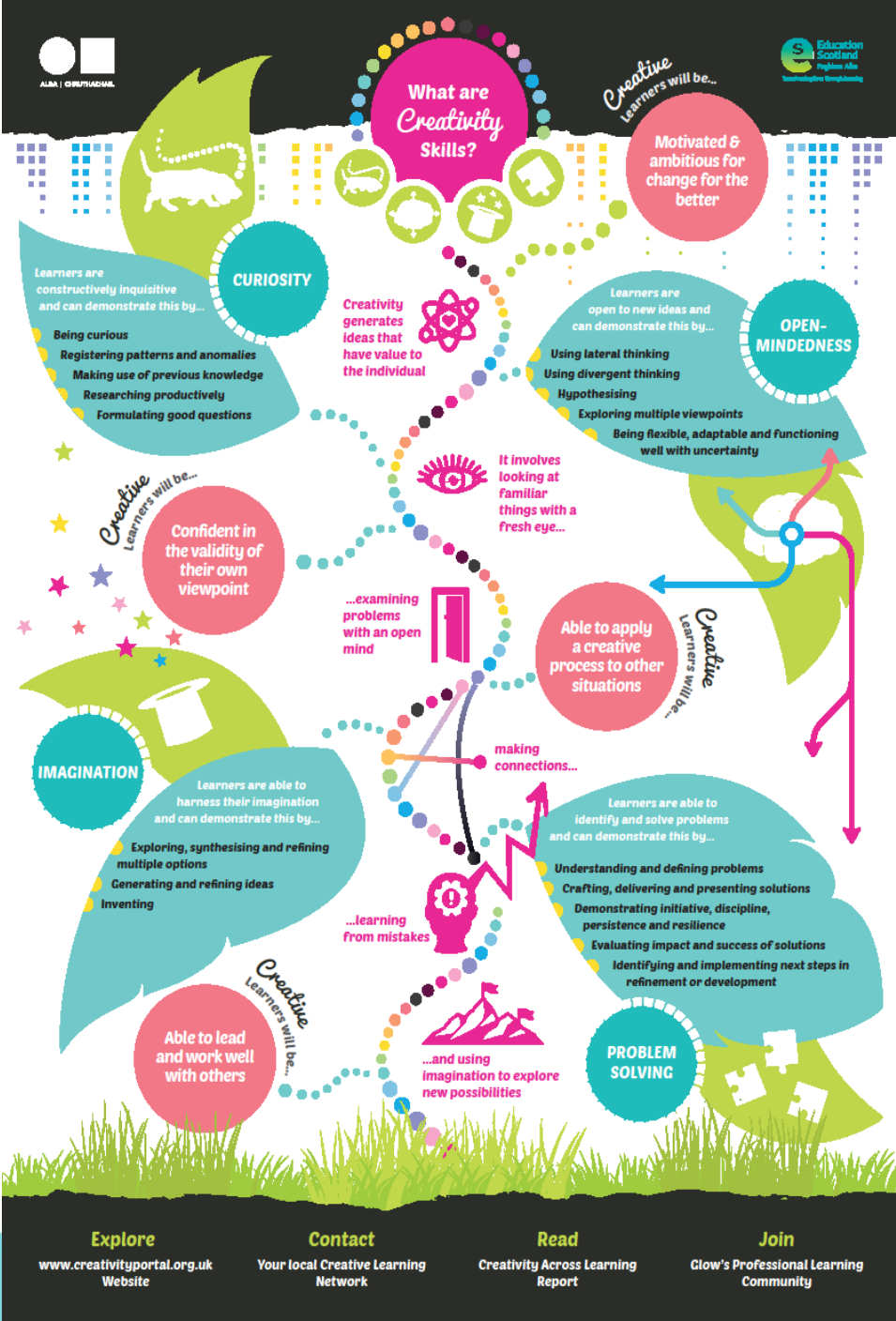
### Curiosity

- Registering patterns and anomalies
- Making use of previous knowledge
- Formulating good questions

### Open-mindedness

- Using lateral and divergent thinking
- Hypothesising
- Exploring multiple viewpoints
- Being flexible, adaptable and functioning well with uncertainty

For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators



# Education Scotland Infographics

[Creativity infographics](#) | [Learning resources](#) | [National Improvement Hub](#)  
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## Creativity Skills

### Imagination

- Exploring, synthesising and refining multiple options
- Generating and refining ideas
- Inventing

### Problem Solving

- Understanding and defining problems
- Crafting, delivering and presenting solutions
- Demonstrating initiative, discipline, persistence and resilience
- Evaluating impact and success of solutions
- Identifying and implementing next steps in refinement or development

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# Self-evaluation to support the creative leader

The virtuous cycle of improvement

Inwards, outwards and forwards





# What does HGIOS?4 say about creativity in Q.I. 1.3?

## Q.I. 1.3: Leadership of change

### Level 5 illustration: Implementing improvement and change

- Practitioner enquiry and creative approaches are integral to the thinking and practice of staff, pupils and partners.

### Features of highly effective practice:

- Senior leaders create conditions to support creativity, innovation and enquiry.
- Opportunities for learners and staff to regularly engage in critical and creative thinking are embedded.

### Challenge questions:

- How effective are we in nurturing creativity and innovation?

# The journey to success for a creative leader...



# Potential challenges to overcome in creative leadership

*“Changing the shared ways of thinking and acting that give shape, direction, and momentum to organizations is one of the great challenges faced by leaders.”*

Slocum, D. (2015). **The 7 Tyrannies that Creative Leaders Must Overcome**. [online] Berlin School of Creative Leadership. Available at: [The 7 Tyrannies that Creative Leaders Must Overcome | Berlin School of Creative Leadership \(berlin-school.com\)](https://www.berlin-school.com/the-7-tyrannies-that-creative-leaders-must-overcome/) [Accessed 19 March 2021]

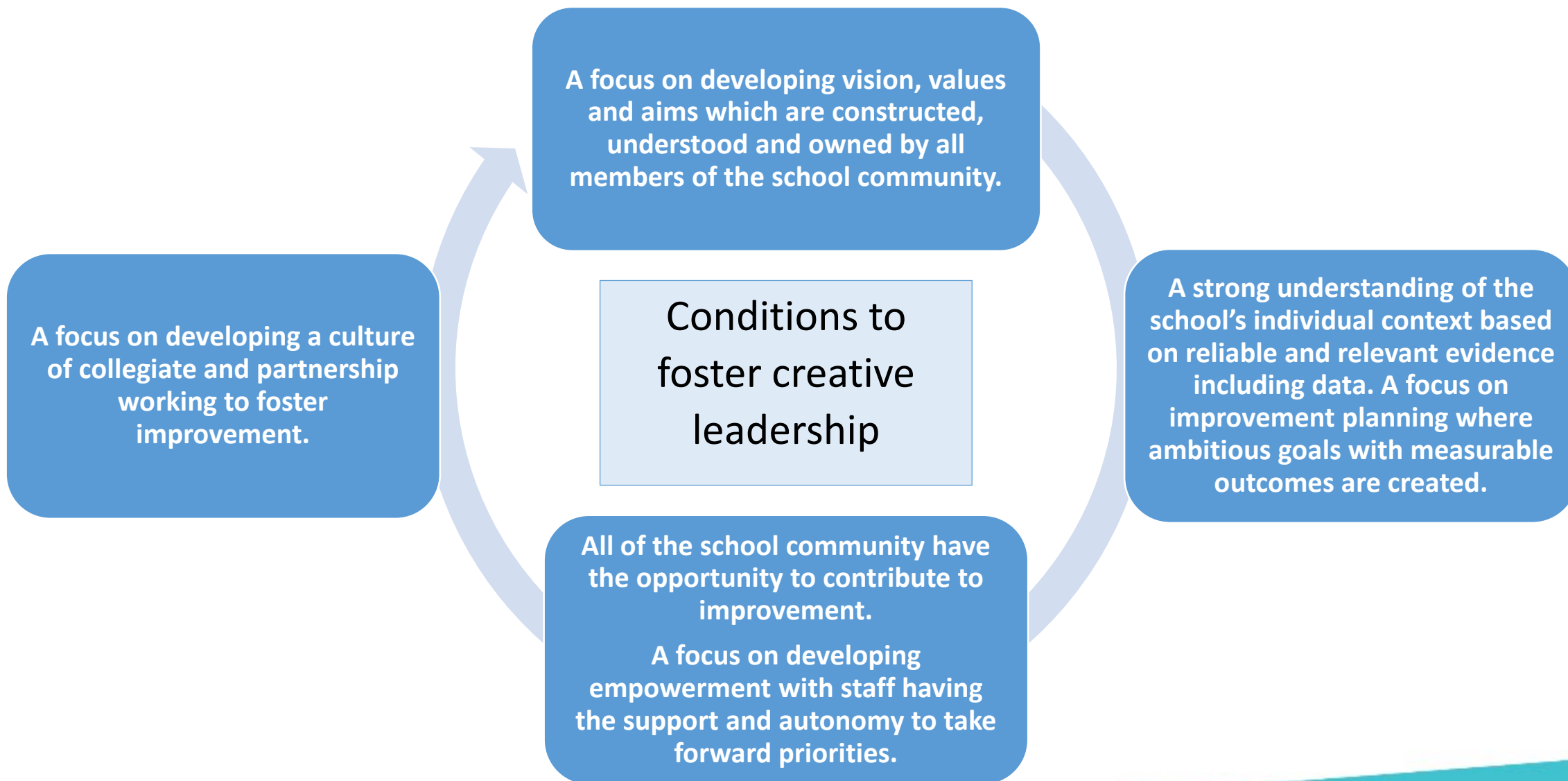
# Potential challenges to overcome in creative leadership

- The balance of bureaucracy
  - The outcomes are not established or measured effectively.
- Good enough?
  - Complacency leads to a reluctance to strive for better.
- Looking backwards, not forwards
  - It does not match with the shared aims and/or beliefs of the establishment.
- Better, not just different
  - It does not lead to school improvement.
- False freedoms
  - Depending on how it is led, some may feel it is “being done” to them or may not feel ready for change. The approaches are not embedded in a consistent or agreed manner.

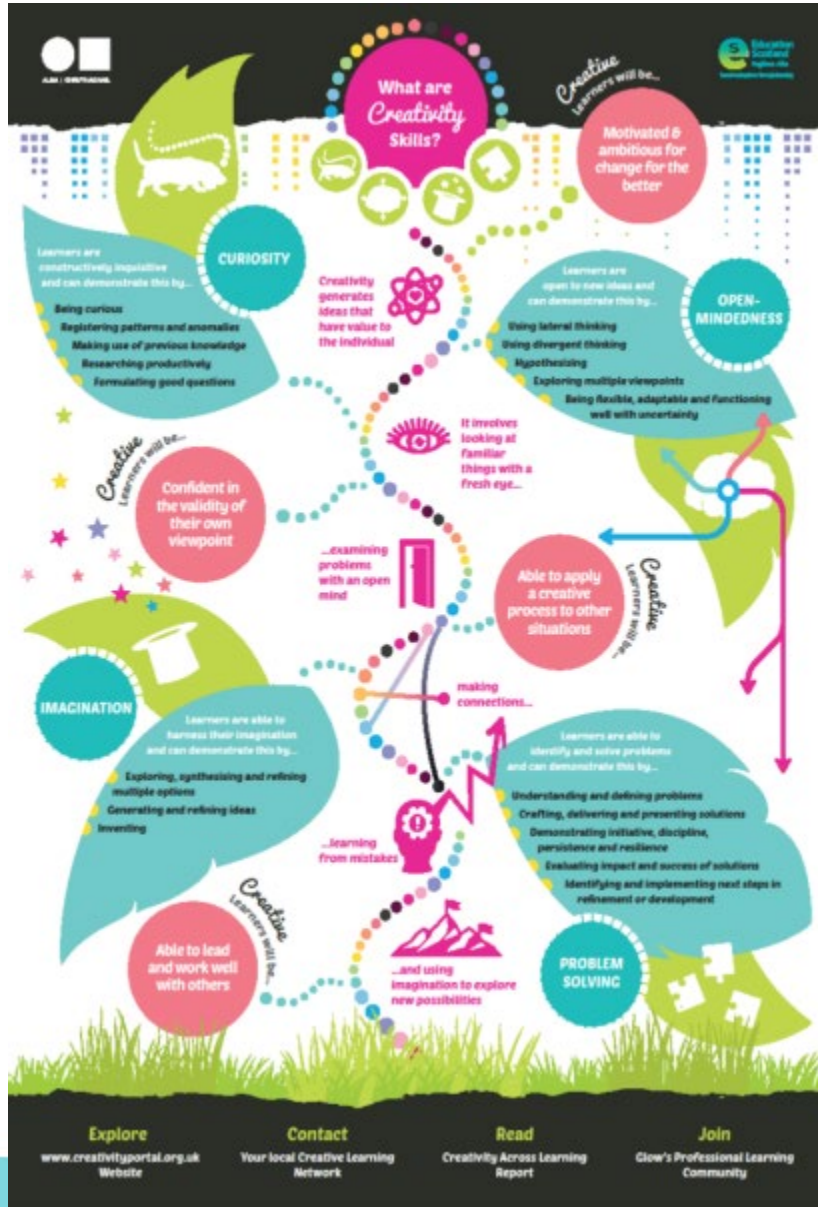
# Looking at the evidence...what did we do?

- We reviewed inspection evidence from 2018-2020, focusing on schools who achieved a grading of very good or excellent for QI 1.3: Leadership of Change.
- These included:
  - 16 Early learning and childcare centres
  - 28 Primary schools
  - 8 Secondary schools
  - 5 Special schools
  - 2 Independent schools
- We looked for common features of schools in their approaches to leadership of change. The following conditions featured in all or almost all of these schools.
- We identified four conditions relating to school culture which prepare a school community for the implementation of change.





# Connections between conditions and creativity?



A focus on developing vision, values and aims which are constructed, understood and owned by all members of the school community.

A focus on developing a culture of collegiate and partnership working to foster improvement.

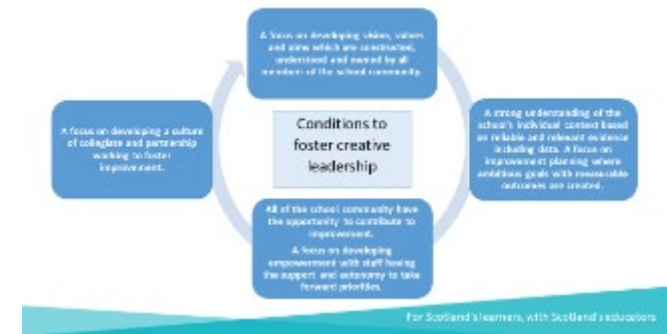
Conditions to foster creative leadership

A strong understanding of the school's individual context based on reliable and relevant evidence including data. A focus on improvement planning where ambitious goals with measurable outcomes are created.

All of the school community have the opportunity to contribute to improvement.  
A focus on developing empowerment with staff having the support and autonomy to take forward priorities.

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# A focus on developing vision, values and aims which are constructed, understood and owned by all members of the school community.



- All practitioners have a *clear understanding of, and commitment to* the values of the setting.

## Mid Calder Primary School – Nursery

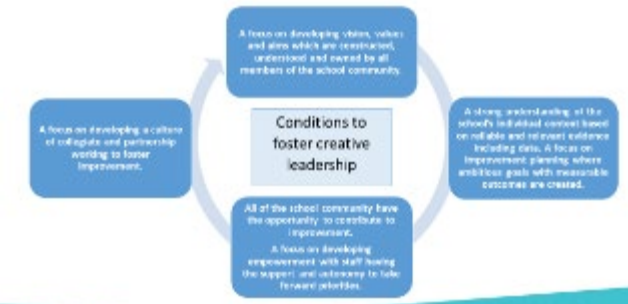
- The school and nursery have recently reviewed and refreshed their vision, values and aims to *reflect their context and place in the community...Practitioners* and children *demonstrate the values in their daily interactions.*

## Springfield Primary School – Nursery

- The school is adept at *connecting their values, wellbeing indicators and children's rights.* This is a major strength of the school. In particular, the children's knowledge and understanding of these three areas is very strong, as is their ability to make connections to all other areas of school life and learning. **Lanark Primary School**
- *Changes are guided by, and responsive to, the school's vision, values and aims.* Implementing these improvements has had *the effect of reinforcing the school's unique identity,* and also supporting its claim to place young people's needs at the heart of its business. **Graeme High School**
- The headteacher has consulted very effectively with young people and their families, partners and the wider community to develop the school's vision, values and aims. *The aspirational vision and aims is focussed on meeting the changing complex needs of young people.* **Ashton Secondary School**



# A focus on developing vision, values and aims which are constructed, understood and owned by all members of the school community.



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**Primary School INNERWICK**

Education Scotland Fòghlam Alba

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRONG CORE VALUES AND A SHARED VISION HAS LED TO A SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOCUSED ON CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

**1** Transition into a school partnership... **BUILDING**

**SHARED VISION**  
Supporting children to grow in a VIBRANT & INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

**CORE VALUES**

**VALUES**

- RESPECT
- CAN-DO ATTITUDE
- ENQUIRING MIND
- COOPERATION
- Resilience

HEADTEACHER (new) PARENTS TEACHERS CHILDREN

**2** EMBEDDING CORE VALUES IN THE LIFE AND ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

DAILY USE in classrooms

VALUE CERTIFICATES issued in weekly assemblies

Children talk about the impact on their LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Classes present 'VALUES' ASSEMBLIES

**3** Core Values are linked to THE WELLBEING INDICATORS

HELPS IN RESTORATIVE SITUATIONS

Supports positive relationships with peers and adults

LEADS TO A WARM AND FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

SHARED LANGUAGE for staff and children TO DISCUSS WELLBEING

**4** Taking the vision and values BEYOND THE SCHOOL

SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP (JOINT INITIATIVES)

FOR CHILDREN: ACTIVITIES TO COME TOGETHER

FOR TEACHERS: JOINT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

FOR PARENTS: USING CORE VALUES AT HOME

Highly effective practice identified through inspection

» Visit hub page «      » Read full report «

A pathway to ensure the whole 'nursery' community has ownership of our vision, aims and values

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Highly effective practice identified through inspection

Parents Children

**Vision & Values**

Respectfully Safely Fairly

Self-evaluation & using improvement methodologies

Needs of community

How Cornton Nursery achieves success

Collaboration and community action

What difference does it make to children?

Equity for children is achieved through strong community partnerships

Knowledge

Let's make things even better

we know we can make a difference

Want to know more? <http://bit.ly/ScotlandsNIH>

Visuals by [www.listenthinkdraw.co.uk](http://www.listenthinkdraw.co.uk)

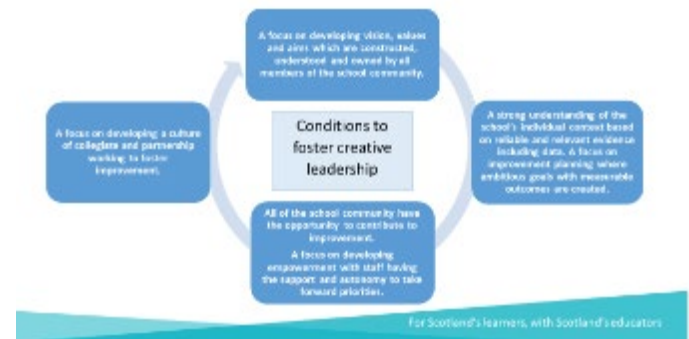
# A strong understanding of the school's individual context based on reliable and relevant evidence including data. A focus on improvement planning where ambitious goals with measurable outcomes are created.



- The headteacher and extended leadership team have ***developed rigorous approaches to planning for continuous improvement*** ensuring that time is protected for professional dialogue. **East Plein Primary School**
- The headteacher is ***highly skilled at presenting and interrogating formative and summative data***. She works closely with senior leaders and teachers to build up a clear plan for improvement. **Strathdevon Primary School**
- The headteacher and staff have ***used a wide range of information, including the use of locality data***, to ensure the overall vision is both aspirational and relevant to the school and community. **St Mary's Primary School**
- All staff have a clear understanding of the social and cultural context of the school and can refer to this data easily to inform their classroom planning. Key to planning for continuous improvement is the school's ***robust faculty review process***. **North Berwick High School**
- The headteacher provides very strong, highly effective and supportive leadership. Together with her senior leaders, she has led and managed change sensitively and successfully. ***Their use of analysis of evidence and data, consultation with stakeholders*** and clear communication are key features of the school's change process. **Aberdeen Grammar**



A strong understanding of the school's individual context based on reliable and relevant evidence including data. A focus on improvement planning where ambitious goals with measurable outcomes are created.



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Are our processes  
**HAVING AN IMPACT ON OUR CHILDREN & their families?**

**Riccarton**  
Early Childhood Centre

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO USING DATA TO SUPPORT LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?  
"WE DON'T STOP ... we continually strive TO DO BETTER AT RICCARTON"

**1 GATHERING**  
STREAMLINED assessment processes  
EFFECTIVELY USE INFORMATION from day-to-day LEARNING to secure children's PROGRESS

**2 COLLATING**  
Team Moderation FOR SOUND JUDGEMENTS ABOUT LEARNING

**3 USING**  
TO PLAN LEARNING and identify target groups for support or challenge.

**4 TRACKING**  
Tracking children's achievements ENSURES NO ONE IS MISSING OUT  
Children access evidence of their achievements  
USING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

A CLOSER LOOK AT CHILDREN'S LEARNING across playroom areas EXTENDS CHILDREN'S LEARNING

Children are making excellent progress IN LEARNING → THROUGH EFFECTIVE use of data.

SUPPORT WITH TABLETS → QR CODES TO RECORD achievement → Read & Reflect LEARNING

www.education.gov.scot

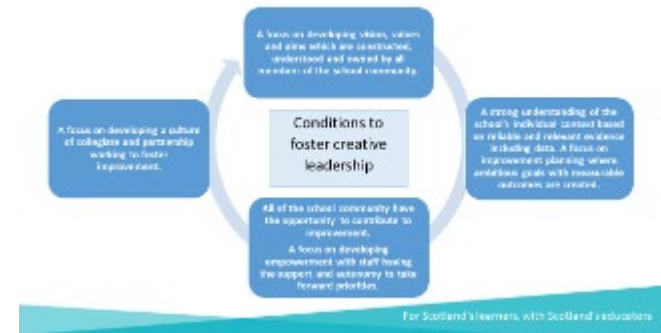
» Read full report «

Highly effective practice identified through inspection

East Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Sheirneil Air an Ear

# All of the school community have the opportunity to contribute to improvement.

## A focus on developing empowerment with staff having the support and autonomy to take forward priorities.



- Children are **fully included in planning** what they would like to see in their setting. The 'super committee' of older children represent their peers by putting forward ideas. **Peek a Boo Nursery**
- The leadership team is developing a **culture of trust and autonomy** to encourage teachers to **adopt new approaches, take measured risks and develop creativity and innovation** across the system. This approach to **empowerment** is growing effectively. **Balderneck Primary**
- The headteacher encourages her staff to be **creative, innovative and to use practitioner enquiry** to influence change processes. **Wellshot Primary school**
- The senior leadership team have also **created and fostered an enabling culture** for staff who wish to develop further their own practice. Under this leadership, staff are empowered to lead at all levels in the development of new approaches and initiatives. **Coal Primary School**
- The school is rightly proud of its **sector-leading programme of career-long professional learning (CLPL)**. Senior and middle leaders use Professional Review and Development to agree CLPL needs, linked to improvement planning. **St. Ninian's High School**

All of the school community have the opportunity to contribute to improvement.

A focus on developing empowerment with staff having the support and autonomy to take forward priorities.



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# North Berwick High School

CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT with PROFESSIONAL READING and a PROGRAMME of ACTION RESEARCH has empowered all teachers to develop their practice. It is leading to well-informed and INNOVATIVE APPROACHES to LEARNING, TEACHING and ASSESSMENT.

2 **Positive Impact** on PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

1 **Leadership** of PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

3 **Innovation** in LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT (LTA)

» Visit hub page «

» Read full report «

Highly effective practice identified through inspection



# A focus on developing a culture of collegiate and partnership working to foster improvement.



- Staff are very **outward looking and regularly use research** to support improvements. Examples include small tests of change, research with university partners and practitioner enquiry...Staff share their learning with colleagues within school and across schools in the local authority. Staff are **benefiting from developing partnerships across the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative (TRIC)**, including shared professional learning. **Inchtore Primary School**
- She [the headteacher] works collaboratively with the Parent Council and the wider parent forum. She **encourages and supports parents and partners to be involved in the life of the school and in decision-making**. **Kirkbean Primary**
- Children who access nurture support **presented to school staff, and senior leaders from the local authority**...A group of children recently spoke at an international conference on leadership. **Southwood Primary**
- All teachers take responsibility for developing aspects of their department's work or whole school priorities. This includes a few teachers who have successfully led whole school developments. They are now **supporting the development of colleagues in the school, in associated primary schools and across the local authority** in wellbeing and learning, teaching and moderation approaches. Partners contribute very well to the ethos and aims of the school. **Most partners express a strong commitment to ensuring positive outcomes for young people**. **Belmont Academy**

# A focus on developing a culture of collegiate and partnership working to foster improvement.



Watch video 'Glenlivet Primary School - Success is for all of us' on YouTube at:  
<https://youtu.be/qDedcSw15Ug>



## Creative leadership in the here and now...

Real change often takes place in deep crises, and this moment holds the possibility that we won't return to the status quo when things return to "normal". While this crisis has deeply disruptive implications, including for education, it does not have predetermined outcomes. It will be the nature of our collective and systemic responses to these disruptions that will determine how we are affected by them.

OECD (2020), *The Impact of Covid-19 on Education – Insights from Education at a Glance*, OECD Publishing, Paris

The dedication of professionals involved in supporting recovery has been a central feature of system leadership. We've seen real strength in leadership in a crisis, demonstrating a real resilience and showing adaptive leadership responses that reflect a context as it evolves.

Education Scotland (2020), *What Scotland Learned*, Education Scotland Publication, Scotland

# Creative leadership in the here and now...



## What Scotland Learned: BUILDING BACK BETTER

### RELATIONSHIPS

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION, CONNECTEDNESS, COMPASSION

People built strong collaborative relationships to be a source of "100 heads to the pump" leading to fast decisions. To work, learn and achieve better 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



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



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

Leadership is not just about a promoted position or title, it's about the professionalisation of all our educational staff. Support senior leaders' wellbeing is needed.

### HEALTH and WELLBEING

FUNDAMENTAL TO LEARNING.



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



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

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



### 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.

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

### 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 made up of individuals and groups that can support each other.

The pandemic brought about a collective urgency to work TOGETHER AT PACE.

### 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 BUILDS CONFIDENCE to support effective self-regulation.

FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM that supports change is clearly evidenced in actions taken in response to the pandemic. ADAPTIVE and innovative staff to collaborate and support one another - clear focus on children and families.

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## The IMPACT of the pandemic, AND IN PARTICULAR school building closures, ON CHILDREN FROM DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS

### EQUITY AUDIT

#### 1 HEALTH and WELLBEING

Disproportionate changes for all learners in terms of their daily life, routines and learning.



Most school staff and partners noted increased mental health concerns in young people. Emerging literature evidence of impact of closures on children.



#### MISSING FRIENDS

Children and young people missed the social aspect of school. Staff and parents cited significant issues with feelings of isolation.

#### 2 Education and learner EXPERIENCES

##### ACCESS TO LEARNING

considerable differences in teaching time and time spent home learning.



ECONOMIC AND FOOD POVERTY is an emerging issue.



LEARNER MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

\* Connection and peer interaction is missing  
\* Loss of face to face contact felt by almost all  
\* Digital communication supportive when comes daily allows



INTERSECTIONAL DISADVANTAGE NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED

For children with additional vulnerable characteristics - e.g. young carers, those with ASN or who speak English as an additional language



RURALITY

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY is a particular issue



DIGITAL ACCESS VARIED

\* Learner  
\* Connect with peers

#### 3 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

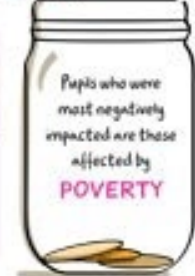


SCHOOL BUILDING CLOSURES had a negative effect on pupil progress and attainment.



CHILDREN in the EARLY YEARS of PRIMARY

in these starting secondary school were most likely to be negatively impacted



In a few cases, pupils reported they had found it easier to learn in a remote setting.



\* Particularly where they reported they had good digital skills and parental support





# Creative leadership in a time of significant change and challenge...

## ‘National overview of practice in remote learning’ documents



National overview  
of practice in remote learning  
Local authorities

1



National overview  
of practice in remote learning  
Schools

2



National overview  
of practice in remote learning  
Schools: a focus on meeting  
learning needs, including those  
with additional support needs

4

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/supporting-remote-learning/national-overviews/national-overview-of-practice-reports/>

## Reflective Questions

- In what ways have creative leadership in your context driven change and improvement?
- Are there any of the conditions which foster creative leadership which you feel require further development within your school?
- Are there any other conditions which you feel merit consideration to support creative leadership?
- How are the school's vision, values and aims considered in decision making and future improvement priorities?
- Do your systems for self-evaluation and school improvement planning support a focus on achieving measurable and sustained outcomes for young people?
- How are senior leaders embedding a culture of empowerment which offers support, through high quality professional learning and other approaches, as well as autonomy to foster leadership across the community?
- To what extent are staff given the opportunity to collaborate and work collegiately with others, both in and out with the school? What impact does this have and how do you measure the impact?
- How are partnerships fostered to allow creative approaches to be developed throughout the school?
- How has your school community shown creative leadership at all levels during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- What have you, as school leaders, learned about your school community during the pandemic?

Any feedback on the presentation would be appreciated: <https://forms.office.com/r/5PQgeBA4wV>