



Flexible Learning Pathways Case Study

Sanderson High School

South Lanarkshire Council

Context of the school

Sanderson High School (HS) is a non-denominational secondary school for young people with additional support needs serving East Kilbride and the surrounding area. It caters for pupils with additional support needs from S1 to S6. Currently, the school has a roll of 103 with 27.5 teaching staff and 30 support assistants. Sanderson HS provides its young people with a range of individualised education programmes which are designed to meet their needs and prepare them for life after they leave school.

Staff at Sanderson HS believe in challenging all pupils to achieve their full potential both in attainment and through developing their individual gifts and talents. They also aim to develop the qualities and values in young people which ensure they become active participants in their local communities. The school is committed to equity and equality of opportunity by overcoming barriers to learning.

Rationale and strategic planning

The rationale for the curriculum is based on the school's commitment to ensuring all young people experience their entitlement to a broad, personalised curriculum that meets their needs. At the core of the curriculum are the wellbeing of all young people and experiences that develop equality and respect for one another. Other important features are skills for life and work and the ability to make informed choices that lead to a positive future. Personalisation and choice are central to curriculum design at Sanderson HS and ensure individual needs are met and talents and interests are nurtured.

The headteacher has developed the curriculum in collaboration with staff and partners. She established a multi-agency working group and adopted improvement methodology to manage the process of change. A first step was defining the challenges and working with staff to develop a shared aspirational vision for the curriculum and an understanding of the need for change. For more detail see '[Curriculum change at Sanderson High School – the process](#)'. The process of curriculum development is continuous and responds to the needs of the young people.

S1 to S3

S1 to S3 is known as the 'Junior Phase'. It provides a full broad general education experience, underpinned by opportunities to develop confidence and skills for life and work through active learning. Young people experience learning across all eight curriculum areas. The Junior Phase also includes discrete lessons in 'Education for Work', unique to Sanderson HS (see below). Personalisation and choice is built into the Junior Phase through individual curriculum planning based on individual needs and strengths. Examples include: water play, sensory time, gaming, beauty and self-care, horse riding, yoga, in-house work experience, assertiveness intervention groups, motor-skills intervention groups and nurture.

Within the Junior Phase, there are [three pathways](#) appropriate to the different needs of young people with opportunities for flexibility within and across these pathways. Route 1 is for higher attaining young people, Route 2 offers more support and Route 3 is designed for young people with more complex learning needs. Classes who follow Route 1 and Route 2 are streamed according to literacy and numeracy levels to allow for those who need more support to be placed in a smaller class. Young people have additional support plans with personalised targets, set in consultation with all staff, in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They work towards these targets in all areas of school life, and progress is tracked and monitored by all teachers, regularly in the short-term and three times a year in the long-term.

Young people in S1 to S3 with more complex needs follow a life skills and sensory-led curriculum based on individual milestones from South Lanarkshire's Framework for Supporting Pupils with Severe and Profound Learning Needs, linked to the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes. They receive their entitlement to learn across all entitled curriculum areas through a combination of discrete subjects and learning in their base class.

For more detail, see [Sanderson High School curriculum plan](#)

Senior Phase

In S4 to S6, young people have opportunities for specialisation and choice and can undertake a range of qualifications and accredited achievements at a level appropriate to them. Included in this are college courses, training opportunities and work placements. Through these experiences, young people are supported to develop skills and independence. [Three different routes](#) continue in the Senior Phase with an appropriate range of opportunities to meet the different needs of young people.

The curriculum in the Senior Phase is underpinned by focused preparation for transition to a positive post-school destination through well-planned activities with partners. It includes work and college experiences in S4, S5 and S6 as well as a variety of additional awards that support post-school transitions. Personal achievement continues to be central to the curriculum in the Senior Phase. It is delivered through a discrete subject called Wider Achievement and accredited by Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) points from the following programmes.

- Moving On Transition in Action (SQA accredited)
- Sanderson Personal Achievement Award (SQA accredited - see below)
- Prince's Trust XL Award
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (attained through annual residential experiences from S2 to S6)

Across both the Junior Phase and the Senior Phase, there is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy which are delivered through learning in English and mathematics lessons and also

through discrete mixed stage classes, streamed according to prior learning, which have a focus on the development and application of literacy and numeracy skills through relevant, real life contexts.

Young people in both the Junior and Senior Phase also attend classes in Calderglen High School as appropriate, for example, to study subjects not available in Sanderson HS or courses at a different level. This is allowing specialisation to meet different needs, interests and strengths. Assessment evidence for national courses is often accredited across learning in both Calderglen HS and Sanderson HS.

For more detail, see [Sanderson High School curriculum plan](#).

Partnerships to develop and deliver the curriculum

The school has a strong focus on preparing young people for life and work. Staff have linked the entitlements in the Career Education Standard and career management skills to each curricular area. Partnership working provides a range of purposeful experiences. The S5/6 principal teacher (PT) responsible for developing links with employers and other partners is proactive in engaging partners and getting them to consider what they could offer young people at Sanderson High School. Sanderson HS is now a member of the Chamber of Commerce. The PT, together with the Education for Work teacher arranges for over 30 businesses each year to join Sanderson's Industry Day. They liaise with local businesses, football clubs, emergency services, the credit union and banks to prepare pupils for transition. The PT meets with colleges regularly, attends local and national DYW meetings and works closely with business partners to plan relevant work placements for young people. He ensures partners providing work placements are aware of young people's additional support plan targets and makes up 'job cards' to define clearly the intended outcomes for young people. He is currently helping design a tailored apprenticeship with a local furniture provider which will be suitable for learners requiring additional support. As a result of this focused partnership working, young people are very well prepared for transitions beyond school. The school has had 100% positive destinations for pupils for the past 3 years. Sanderson HS won the Scottish Education Award for Employability across Learning (Secondary) in 2017.

Education for Work

From S1 to S6, young people experience one period a week of 'Education for Work'. This is delivered in partnership with the Skills Development Scotland career advisor. The focus is on careers education. In the Senior Phase, young people can achieve SQA Steps to Work qualification. More information can be found here:

<http://www.sandersonhighschool.co.uk/curriculum/education-for-work/>

College partnership link programmes

The school works with three different colleges (New College Lanarkshire, Glasgow Kelvin College and South Lanarkshire College) to provide meaningful courses for young people. All programmes aim to prepare young people for a post-school college placement if they wish to go on to further education. Courses include non-modular college-devised programmes such as ICT, world studies, art, drama, life skills, horticulture and construction. Young people can also study SCQF level 1 or level 2 programmes in music and drama as part of the links between college and school curriculum aims. These links have been fostered due to the hard work of staff who arrange and attend college meetings and tirelessly search for suitable courses in every possible college in the vicinity.

Business partners

Partnerships with employers are supporting young people to get ready for work. For example, TFS Furnishing Service offers work experience across a range of roles and is currently working with the school to create a bespoke apprenticeship course. Sainsbury's works in partnership with the school to deliver a range of career education and skills development opportunities. Young people are placed on short or long term, supported or independent programmes as appropriate to their needs.

Interesting practice

Sanderson Personal Achievement Award

Sanderson HS created this award to accredit wider achievement in the Senior Phase and to allow pupils to gain accreditation from everyday transition activities across the curriculum. The Sanderson Personal Achievement Award is made up of 6 units.

- Home Management (HM)
- Numeracy (N)
- World of Work (WW)
- Leisure Time Activities (L)
- Health & Wellbeing (HW)
- Citizenship (C)

Each unit consists of 25 challenges. The teacher delivering the unit decides which challenges to deliver. To achieve a unit, pupils must complete at least 12 challenges within that unit. Young people must complete two units to achieve a Bronze award, a further two units to achieve Silver and all six units for a Gold award. It is anticipated that pupils will achieve Bronze in S4, Silver in S5 and Gold in S6 - two units per year.

Interdisciplinary learning (IDL)

IDL is strategically planned to ensure progressive experiences and opportunities for accreditation. It aims to support the development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work and promote self-confidence and self-esteem. In S1 to S3, accreditation is through the

Junior Award Scheme for Schools (JASS) programme. In S4 to S6, young people can achieve a range of awards such as SQA Personal Achievement and Personal Development awards, Princes Trust Achieve, the Duke of Edinburgh's award and the Sanderson Personal Achievement award. There are three blocks of IDL per session. Learning is interest-based although each block has an overarching curriculum focus. Young people are involved in the planning. Contexts for learning include citizenship, outdoor learning through Forest Schools, and, in S4 to S6, independent living and financial awareness. Young people with complex needs experience IDL in their base class. Learning is individualised and aligned to their additional support plan targets.

Impact and outcomes for young people

The school's strong focus on skills for learning, life and work is resulting in young people with relevant skills for life beyond school. Skills are planned for, assessed, tracked and monitored through the school's skills tracking system based on Blooms Taxonomy. It includes learning from experiences such as residential trips, college and work experience. Increased accreditation is ensuring young people develop a portfolio of qualifications and awards from the range of opportunities in the curriculum such as IDL, Education for Work and the personalisation and choice activities. Young people have a good awareness of their skills. Every young person for the past three years has gone on to a positive destination.

Additional Support Plan (ASP) targets ensure that learning is planned around individual needs. More young people are achieving their targets as a result of the flexible personalised curriculum on offer. Data shows a positive reduction in the number of young people achieving no targets and a positive increase in those achieving all three targets.

The whole school approach to developing literacy and numeracy has resulted in improved motivation and engagement (as measured by the Leuven Scale). Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy has also improved. Data from 2016/17 indicates a significant increase in the percentage of young people achieving CfE first and second level in literacy by the end of S3. In the latest year, 50% of young people achieved the first level in numeracy by the end of S3, compared to 0% the previous year.

Attainment in National Qualifications has improved as a result of the different pathways on offer. Young people's needs are being met more effectively in each learning pathway and aspirations for attainment are higher. Staff are now delivering National 3, 4 and 5 courses for the first time in many curriculum areas.

Planned interventions are having a positive impact on the young people involved. All pupils involved in the nurture group had 100% increases in five or more areas of the Boxall test after attending a six-week block of the nurture group. Intervention groups led by senior leaders have resulted in fewer anger and anxiety driven incidents and equipped young people with strategies to cope better when feeling angry or anxious. Self-care, social skills and time telling intervention groups also demonstrate positive impact.

Attendance has shown a positive increase in the number of pupils with over 95% attendance and the number with 100% staying the same as it was the previous year.

Sanderson HS staff have been tracking young people's health and wellbeing (HWB) under the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. The school has made much progress in developing three of the four capacities in its young people. HWB tracking across the four capacities shows there is a need to develop more opportunities for responsible citizenship as this has the lowest number of instances.

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