

Learning to Achieve



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01 Foreword

This is Falkirk Council Children's Services' key policy: Learning to Achieve. It aims to respond and align with the changing educational landscape. It has been created by senior leaders and staff across our service with the extensive involvement of children and young people.

Learning to Achieve is designed to offer direction on how we deliver Curriculum for Excellence across Falkirk Council educational establishments. It provides the scaffolding which allows us to build on our longstanding commitment to achievement in its widest sense and continues to stand the test of time.

This Learning to Achieve policy captures and communicates the entitlements of children and young people across Falkirk Council educational establishments. Its purpose is to set out how we ensure all children and young people have the best learning experiences which enables their success and progress.

Learning to Achieve will continue to be used to:

- prompt regular reflection by all educators.
- support a collaborative ethos enabling the focused sharing of ideas and approaches.
- enable innovation to improve pedagogy.
- develop frameworks for planning for a wide range of purposes.
- drive quality assurance practices at all levels in education services.
- help to inform school and cluster improvement planning.





02 Vision



02 Vision

Within Falkirk Council, we want all learners across all our educational establishments to have enjoyable, challenging experiences allowing them to reach their full potential. Our aspirations are to enable all children and young people to be pro-active and independent within their own learning experience. We must support learners to develop resilience and the creativity and flexibility necessary to function in our rapidly changing society. Children and young people will develop the skills and attributes which allow them to make a positive contribution to society and achieve positive sustained destinations. We must inspire our children and young people to become enthusiastic lifelong learners.

We are committed to ensuring that inclusion and equality leads to improved outcomes for all our learners. It is our vision that all learners are included, engaged, and involved in the life of their setting. All young people within our learning provisions should be treated fairly, with respect and have their rights upheld and promoted at all times – this will help to enable all young people to reach their true potential.



28
Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.



29
Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.



31
Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities.

Article 29 of the UNCRC is at the heart of education policy in Falkirk Children's Services. Our ultimate aim is that every "child or young person's education should help their mind, body and talents be the best they can. It should also build their respect for other people and the world around them." (UNICEF, 1989, Sourced from Children & Young People's Commissioner Scotland).

We aim to ensure that all our learners have access to:

- a range of creative learning experiences which support deep, sustained learning and appropriately meet their needs.
- a variety of active learning approaches, appropriate to their developmental stage, to support them in their development of creative and critical thinking.
- regular conversations relating to how they want to learn.
- appropriate supports to ensure they can overcome any barriers to learning which helps them feel included and engaged in their own school or setting.
- regular opportunities to reflect on their own learning and achievements, setting learning goals and next steps.

We recognise that learning experiences take place in and beyond educational establishments. All adults who contribute to the educational experience of our learners are key players in making this vision a reality. Our aim is to raise the bar ensuring that all of our learners have the best possible outcomes.

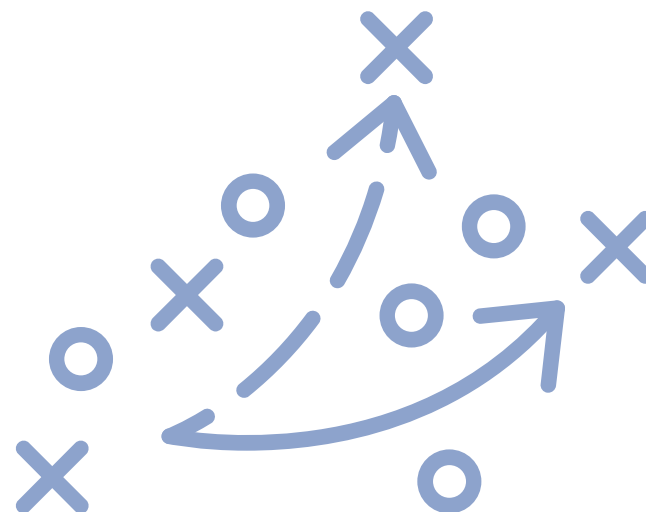


03 Strategic Map



03 Strategic Map

Learning to Achieve integrates with key national and local policies. To support practitioners, these have been hyperlinked in this document and will be updated regularly.



[Click to view the strategic map.](#)







04 Children and Young People's Entitlements



04 Children and Young People's Entitlements

“Curriculum for Excellence allows for both professional autonomy and responsibility when planning and delivering the curriculum... The framework provides flexibility to organise, schedule and deliver the experiences and outcomes in ways that meet the needs of all learners...”

[page 14, Building the Curriculum 3](#)

“We provide both responsive and intentional learning for children in our day-to-day practice...Responsive and intentional planning approaches start with our observations and interpretations of the baby or young child’s actions, emotions and words. This tells us what the child needs for us to provide in their learning environment. A child-centred approach to planning learning will help the child connect each new discovery to what they already know.

[page 63, Realising the Ambition](#)

At the heart of everything we do are our children and young people. Their views are vital in developing their experiences. A rights-based approach to education is therefore the framework for working with children and young people. We need to ensure we embed rights into every aspects of decision-making, policy and practice.

In addition to the entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence, our education provision will reflect local needs and circumstances. Working across all sectors, children and young people have identified the following entitlements for all learners across Falkirk which are detailed on the next page.

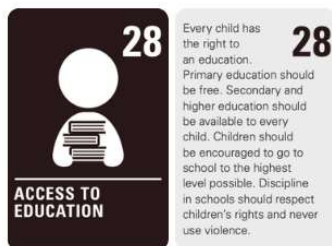




04 Children and Young People's Entitlements

At different stages of their education, our children and young people will:

1. Learn about their local environment and history.
2. Take part in a range of school outings including overnight trips.
3. Be involved in arts, sports and other out of school events.
4. Participate in creative, business and fund-raising activities
5. Take part in projects about our world and how to look after it.



6. Engage in community and local activities.
7. Regularly take part in outdoor learning activities.
8. Use age-appropriate digital technology.
9. Be included in decision making.
10. Take part in work-based learning linked to real life throughout their education.

11. Develop teamwork, social, leadership and other life skills.
12. Have experiences which are educational, social and linked to work.
13. Have input from relevant partners and people within the local community.
14. Have influence and involvement in deciding their next steps and how they learn best.
15. Learn about and communicate with young people around the world to develop an understanding of other cultures.



16. Have opportunities to take suitable breaks throughout the day.
17. Use spaces and support which help them to feel safe, calm and happy
18. Be involved regularly in learning that is fun, well planned and varied.
19. Have their beliefs, opinions and belongings respected.
20. Learn in healthy spaces which are clean and well equipped.





05 What will our children and young people learn?



05 What will our children and young people learn?

What do we mean by high quality curriculum?

Every member of Falkirk Children's Services, is responsible for developing and providing a dynamic, differentiated and inclusive curriculum in line with Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence [scotlandscurriculum.scot](https://www.scotlandscurriculum.scot) (Scottish Government, 2019). Each educational establishment will tailor the curriculum to enable their children and young people to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence and reach their full potential.

In line with national guidance and international research, we take full advantage of opportunities to link learning across the curriculum contexts and through the experiences and outcomes. We know the structure of the organisers and sub-organisers of each subject area, and we can plan purposeful discrete and interdisciplinary learning by connecting these in relevant and engaging ways.

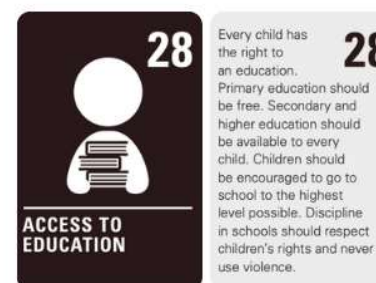
In all Falkirk education establishments, the experiences and outcomes across the curriculum should be planned in a progressive, relevant and coherent way. The curriculum rationale and long-term planning of every establishment should ensure a balance of learning and experience across all curricular areas.

"The curriculum is: "the totality of all that is planned for children and young people throughout their education". A key purpose of the curriculum is: "to help children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors".

[page 22, Building the Curriculum 3](#)

"The early childhood curriculum is holistic. It values children, recognising them as full of potential from birth. Our role in developing a flexible, enabling and creative child-centred curriculum is to be responsive to the uniqueness of each child, their family and the context of the community in which they live."

[page 23, Realising the Ambition](#)





What does this look like for children and young people?

'More choice would make me more interested. Listening and then acting on what you say is important.'

Children and young people will:

- Engage in a range of creative learning experiences across the curriculum which support deep, sustained learning and appropriately meet their needs.
- Contribute to their learning through open, positive, supportive relationships where they feel that they are listened to.
- Experience a range of learning experiences which help build motivation, resilience and confidence.
- Undertake learning which they find challenging through support and encouragement from all involved.
- Make connections between different areas of learning.
- Revisit concepts or skills from different perspectives to deepen understanding and make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful.
- Experience increasing specialisation and greater depth as they move through from the broad general education to the senior phase.
- Contribute regularly to the life and work of the school and to exercise their responsibilities as members of a community.





How do we make this happen?

Children and young people should:

- Understand the purpose of learning and its relevance to them.
- Be fully involved in designing and developing their own learning.
- Develop clear understanding of where they are on their individual learners' journey.
- Have agency in their learning with opportunities for personalisation and choice.
- Contribute effectively to their learning through learner conversations and quality interactions.

Parents and carers should:

- Be familiar with what and how their child is learning and how it evolves to meet the needs of all children and young people.
- Share, celebrate and reflect on successes of children and young people.
- Develop effective partnerships to review areas of the curriculum.
- Become increasingly familiar with progression across all curricular areas.

Staff should:

- Use knowledge of their local community to build a relevant curriculum which meets the needs of their children, young people and families.
- Review and refine the curriculum offer on a regular basis, making effective use of relevant information to meet the needs of learners.
- Take account of the knowledge, skills and attributes that children and young people need to develop in our rapidly changing world.
- Understand and use pedagogies that meet the development needs of children and young people.
- Ensure children and young people see the relevance of their learning and can link this to their own experiences and the world of work.





06 How will our children and young people learn?



06 How will our children and young people learn?

What do we mean by high quality pedagogy?

In line with the General Teaching Council for Scotland Standard for Full Registration, Scottish Social Services Council and Curriculum for Excellence, learning and teaching will be delivered by highly skilled educators with increasing levels of professional autonomy and accountability. This includes engaging in professional research and enquiry about their pedagogy.

The highest quality learning and teaching supports us in achieving our vision for learners in Falkirk Council. An understanding of pedagogy is essential to delivering effective learning and teaching. Educators should consider how they adapt their pedagogy to their curriculum and the needs of their learners. In a culture of on-going self-evaluation and professional accountability, educators should be pro-active in their own professional development of their pedagogy in line with personal, establishment and authority priorities.

"As a registered teacher you are required to demonstrate a depth of knowledge and understanding of:

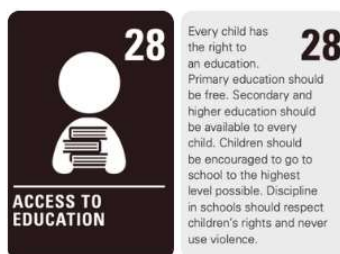
- pedagogical and learning theories, and draw on these appropriately to inform:
- curriculum design and content where appropriate taking account of Gaelic medium;
- classroom organisation, learning environment and structures;
- planning, learning and teaching and assessment;
- interdisciplinary learning;
- outdoor learning, including direct experience of nature and other learning within and beyond school boundaries;
- additional support needs;"

[GTCS Standard for Full Registration 2021](#)

"Managers and Lead Practitioners have knowledge and understanding of:

- Concepts of curriculum.
- Factors that drive the learning of children and young people.
- The settings in which children and young people learn.
- Concepts of wellbeing, communication and creativity, inquiry and curiosity, as determinants of effective learning on the part of children and young people.
- Circumstances and events conducive to effective learning.
- The developmental process in the delivery of specific concepts.
- The role of rest in ensuring that children and young people have the necessary energy and motivation to participate in play and creative engagement.
- How play opportunities can be maximised to enhance the learning process."

[Standards for Childhood Practice \(2015\)](#)





What does this look like for children and young people?

Children and young people will:

- Participate in relevant, developmentally appropriate experiences across the curriculum.
- Experience a range of innovative and engaging learning experiences which support them to lead their own learning.
- Engage with investigative and enquiry-based experiences which support the development of creative and critical thinking.

'It should be about learning different stuff – we would prefer to learn skills rather than subjects – ones which help us in the real world.'





How do we make this happen?

Children and young people should:

- Have an active role in designing and implementing learning experiences.
- Be given opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and attributes to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Feel empowered to make choices about what, how, why and where they are learning.

Parents and carers should:

- Be involved in their child or young person's learning.
- Develop a greater understand how their child or young person is learning.
- Be supported to contribute actively to their child or young person's learning.

Staff should:

- Ensure environments are conducive to effective learning and offer support and challenge for all children and young people.
- Systematically reflect upon and evaluate their own practice.
- Access relevant professional development to help adapt their pedagogy to the needs of their learners and their own establishment.
- Make purposeful use of professional collaboration in schools, centres and beyond to improve their practice.
- Work in partnership with all stakeholders including children and young people to develop their pedagogy.





07 How do we support children and young people to succeed?



07 How do we support children and young people to succeed?

What do we mean by Inclusion and Equality?

Equality and Inclusion is about fairness, acceptance, rights, partnerships and the development of a sense of belonging. It should support children and young people to achieve their full potential within their educational setting.

Equality is about removing barriers, protecting people from discrimination, supporting and reflecting different beliefs and cultures and enabling all voices to be heard.

Inclusion is about creating opportunities for children and young people to experience, engage with and participate in education that is appropriate to their needs and abilities.

In Falkirk Council we are committed to ensuring that inclusion and equality leads to improved outcomes for all our learners. It is our vision that all learners are included, engaged, and involved in the life of their setting. All young people within our learning provision should be treated fairly, with respect and have their rights upheld and promoted at all times – this will enable all young people to reach their true potential.

“All learners are entitled to personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities provided...’.

[page 5 Building the Curriculum 3](#)





What does this look like for children and young people?

'The relationship with teachers is very important and the ways of working with us.'

Children and young people will:

- Feel included and engaged through a clear focus on relationship-based practice.
- Be aware of Children's Rights with dignity being respected.
- Feel well supported to overcome barriers to learning and where appropriate know how to access relevant supports.
- Participate fully in, and influence decisions about their learning, levels of support and planning for their future.
- Engage with appropriate learning environments which maximise motivation and engagement with learning.
- Value diversity, challenge discrimination and use encouraging and inclusive language.
- See themselves reflected without bias, judgement or stereotypes. They feel they belong and can be themselves.
- Feel safe and empowered to talk about any issues they may have.
- Have equal opportunities to attain and achieve to the best of their ability.
- Make the progress that they are capable of.





How do we make this happen?

Children and young people should:

- Promote a positive and inclusive environment.
- Make use of supports available if they or someone else needs support.
- Reflect on and discuss how their learning environment meets their needs and those of others.

Parents and carers should:

- Support settings to promote a positive and inclusive environment.
- Feel empowered and enabled to better support the needs of their child.
- Support their child to respect the dignity of other members of the school community.
- Know how to appropriately challenge others about their behaviours and attitudes which impact on children and young people's wellbeing.

Staff should:

- Promote a positive and inclusive environment.
- Ensure the lens of inclusion is used when planning experiences for children and young people.
- Develop purposeful connections with others to best meet the needs of children and young people.
- Ensure the culture and ethos within the classroom and/ or setting promotes and reflects an inclusive mindset.
- Develop further children and young people's understanding and awareness of diversity and equality.
- Allow children and young people time to talk about inclusion and equality related issues when they arise.
- Develop a greater understanding of equality and inclusion practices and how these apply to their setting.
- Engage in regular professional learning to ensure their practice is in line with all current legislation and guidance.



08 How do we celebrate and recognise the achievements of children and young people?



08 How do we celebrate and recognise the achievements of children and young people?

“Achievement is defined in Building the Curriculum 5 as relating to progress in all aspects of each child’s or young person’s planned learning. Achievement covers learning within curriculum areas and interdisciplinary learning, including recognition through qualifications, but it is much wider than that. It includes achievement in other areas within the life of the school and outside the school – sometimes referred to as wider achievement.”

[page 8 Building the Curriculum 5](#)

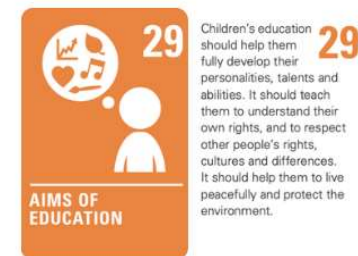
What do we mean by Assessment?

Assessment is integral to planning, learning and teaching to ensure that learners experiences are relevant and meet their needs. It should provide reliable evidence to report on the progress of children and young people and to plan next steps. Therefore, assessment has a crucial role in enabling all learners to maximise their potential and develop the four capacities.

Good quality evidence of learners' progress captures the breadth and depth of achievement and learning. Effective use of tools to support progression will ensure we have shared expectations for standards to be achieved. This should be used to plan how we build assessment into learning and teaching, and is enhanced by a range of assessment types and approaches.

The richness of wider achievement as part of assessment evidence will ensure learners are successful, confident, exercise responsibility and contribute to the life of the school, the wider community and as global citizens.

Children and young people should be fully involved in the assessment process and should understand what is expected of them. This will support them to identify areas of strength as well as next steps in learning.





What does this look like for children and young people?

Children and young people will:

- Explain their thinking to show their understanding of concepts.
- Engage regularly in self and peer assessment.
- Apply the most appropriate skills and knowledge to real life and unfamiliar contexts.
- Recognise achievements, successes and progress made which support them to make relevant choices about their learning.

'We should be able to reflect upon our learning and be responsible in making our own choices.'





How do we make this happen?

Children and young people should:

- Be at the heart of planning learning, teaching, and assessment.
- Be given time to time discuss and explain their thinking.
- Be involved in the reporting process that gives clear information on progress and next steps.

Parents and carers should:

- Be provided with opportunities to be involved in the assessment process.
- Be involved in the reporting process that gives clear information on progress and next steps.
- Have access to information that allows them to form a clear understanding of how their child is progressing, and the information they need to help them play a key role in their child's education.
- Be provided with opportunities to give their views on their child's progress, including through their responses to written reports.

Staff should:

- Explicitly plan for the knowledge, understanding and skills you expect children and young people to achieve.
- Ensure assessment takes place as part of ongoing learning, periodically and includes times of transition.
- Share the purpose and application of learning.
- Support children and young people to discuss and explain their thinking.
- Provide high quality interactions and feedback that informs next steps in learning
- Use a range of assessment evidence including National Benchmarks to describe progress and achievement against standards and expectations
- Ensure tracking and monitoring informs teaching and improves outcomes for learners
- Engage in professional dialogue with colleagues to moderate and plan collegiately at all stages of the learning, teaching, and assessment cycle



09 Conclusion



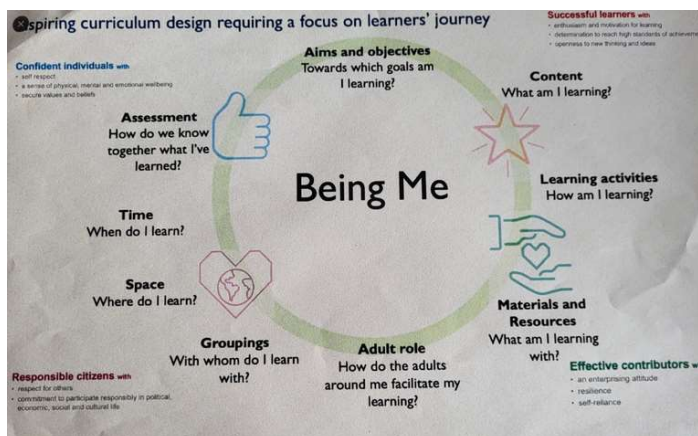
09 Conclusion

SCOTLAND'S CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE
Putting learners at the heart of education

Scotland's Approach
What Matters?
How We Do It

Scotland's curriculum places learners at the heart of education. At its centre are four fundamental capacities. These capacities reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning. They:

- recognise the need for all children and young people to know themselves as individuals and to develop their relationships with others, in families and in communities
- recognise the knowledge, skills and attributes that children and young people need to acquire to thrive in our interconnected, digital and rapidly changing world
- enable children and young people to be democratic citizens and active shapers of that world



Learning to Achieve continues to be the core policy for our service and should be embedded in our daily practice across all establishments. The revised policy will provide both clarity and support around expectations of all who contribute to children and young people's learning.

It specifically supports practitioners to develop a clear understanding of expectations linked to:

- What we expect our children and young people to learn including their learning entitlements?
- How we engage them in their learning experiences?
- How we support all children and young people to succeed?
- How we celebrate and recognise the successes of our learners?

Using this document as our core guidance should help ensure that we are 'Getting it right for Falkirk's Children and Young People'.

