

WHAT EDINBURGH LEARNS

CURRICULUM GUIDANCE



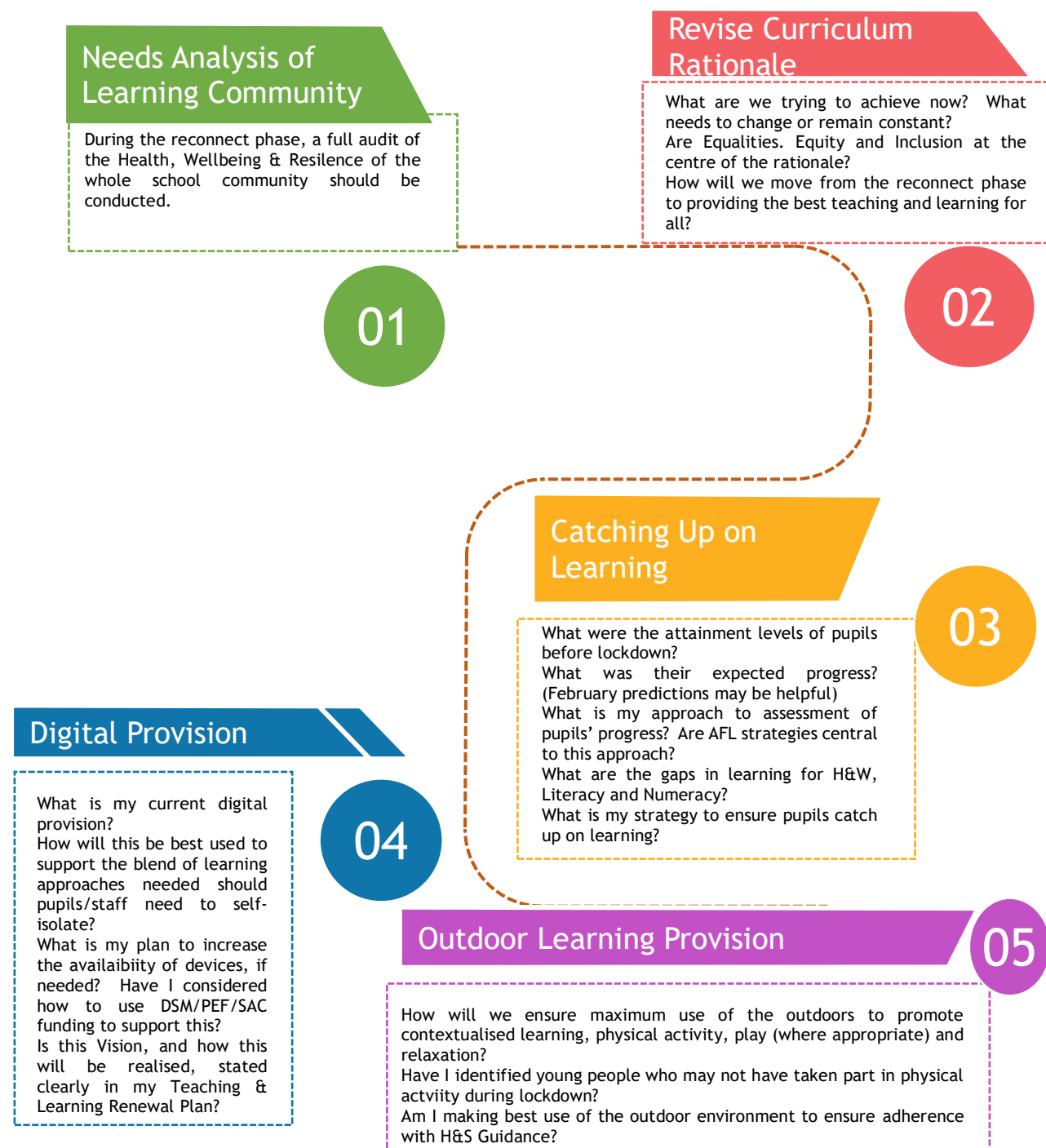
August, 2020

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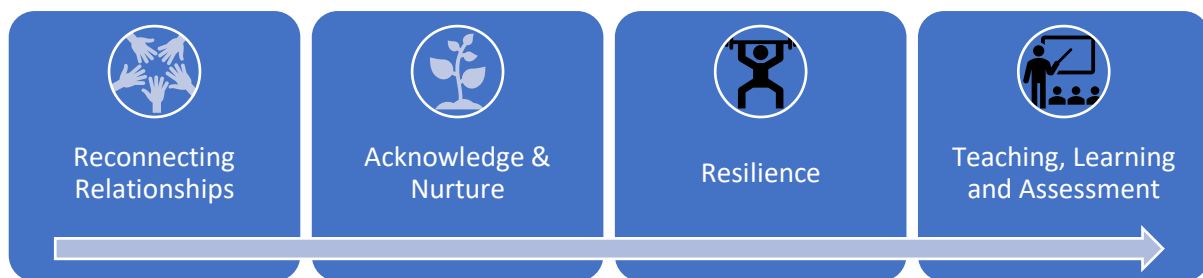
Introduction

The following guidance takes the National Guidance:- “Coronavirus: Curriculum for Excellence in the Recovery Phase” and clarifies the approaches which should be taken in planning the Curriculum in City of Edinburgh Schools. Detailed Local Authority Renewal Planning Guidance can be found at:

[Link to Teaching and Learning Renewal Planning in EdinburghLearns@Home Guidance Page](#)



Needs Analysis



Every school should ensure a full audit is done of the Health, Wellbeing and Resilience of the whole learning community. This analysis will then determine the blend of learning experiences and contexts for learning that are developed over the short, medium and long term. Active Schools support will be targeted to schools where the Needs Analysis shows that increased emphasis is needed on physical activity, to support learning. More guidance will follow.

Curriculum Rationale

“Coronavirus – Curriculum for Excellence in the Recovery Phase” is a practical tool to support a curriculum rationale for the BGE, and Senior Phase, in the Renewal phase, with an early focus on reconnecting relationships and supporting our young people to make sense of their recent experiences. You can access this tool through the following link:-

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-curriculum-for-excellence-in-the-recovery-phase/>

In partnership with learners and parents/carers, schools should draft a revised rationale for their curriculum. It should commit to nurturing principles and state how the learning community will move from reconnection to returning to delivering the Edinburgh Learns Goal – the best Teaching and Learning for all. This should include an overarching commitment to Equalities, Equity & Inclusion, the identification of gaps in learning and closing these gaps, including those which are poverty-related.

The Rationale should clarify the approach to delivering learning across all curriculum areas, including the importance of Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing. Guidance to support the review of your curriculum rationale can be found in the link below, within the Teaching and Learning section.

[Link to Teaching and Learning Renewal Planning in EdinburghLearns@Home Guidance Page](#)

Wellbeing and Resilience

Nurture, Adapt and Renew

We know the best way to support children through change and adversity is through nurturing, supportive relationships with skilled adults. When schools return on 10th August 2020, we will still be in a period of adaptation. It would be wrong to assume that children will pick up from where they left off. The nurture principles are a helpful starting point for meeting the needs of all children during this period of intense uncertainty and disruption.

Nurture is important for wellbeing

On welcoming our children back to school, it will help to demonstrate that we kept them in mind while we were not together. Connections and relationships are still in place and can be renewed and strengthened. We have a golden opportunity to build resilience by modelling mentally healthy

responses to the disruption and change, whilst not minimising the adversities faced by some adults and children alike.

The school offers a secure base

The change, uncertainty and impact of school closures, and the wider impact of Covid-19 on society, will affect children differently depending on the balance of other protective and risk factors in their lives. Now, more than ever we need to ensure that our schools and settings offer a secure emotional base for children in which their social and emotional development is well supported. We have an opportunity here to support the mental wellbeing of our children and, indeed, see it flourish.

To ensure our children/young people are in the best place to access learning, we must support their health and wellbeing. The four key facets of this support, included in our Renewal Planning, are to ensure all staff;

- **Reconnect relationships** - supporting the re-establishment of peer to peer and adult to children/young people relationships
- **Acknowledge experiences** – being curious, acknowledging feelings and reactions and creating time and space for dialogue
- **Create a nurturing environment** - the 6 nurture principles should be used to underpin the approach to school life and learning
- **Support our learners to build resilience** – the four contexts for learning should support children/young people to build resilience.

Advice, guidance and resources to support each aspect can be found here:-

<https://cityofedinburgheducation.sharepoint.com/sites/EdinburghLearns/EdinburghLearnsAtHome/SitePages/Guidance.aspx#health-and-wellbeing-resilience-renewal-planning>

Schools are not starting from zero and should continue to use the range of resources and supports they found to be effective before lockdown. The Wellbeing Indicators are our constant definition of wellbeing and reflective questions have been designed to support staff to identify health and wellbeing priorities within the current context.

Building on our strengths, with community partners, will be a vital part of renewing the holistic offer around health and wellbeing and this should be a priority for all schools, whilst observing the most up to date guidance around visitors to schools and infection control.

Teaching, Learning & Assessment

Learning is understood developmentally

We must accept and welcome our children where they are at. Not where they were when we last spent time with them, where would expect them to be for their age or where their peers are. The impact of school closures on children will be extremely individual and will have a variety of positive and negative effects. Knowing the child and offering them experiences which are appropriate for their developmental level is key here.

As children return to school, the initial focus will be on Health and Safety awareness measures and ensuring that pupils are re-engaging positively in their new environment, rebuilding relationships with peers and staff.

Primary children will focus on Literacy and Numeracy, alongside Health and Wellbeing, throughout the first term. Outdoor learning should be used whenever possible.

Secondary pupils will continue to study all curriculum areas in the BGE, with a focus on Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing as responsibilities of all. A focus on the significant aspects of learning and CfE benchmarks will ensure that learners develop the skills and knowledge to progress.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-curriculum-for-excellence-in-the-recovery-phase/>

A full timetable of SQA exams and coursework is planned at all levels in 2021. It will be important to collect and retain evidence throughout the session. SQA will provide further details on the approach for assessment of national qualifications and other awards before schools reopen.

Practical learning and activities are an important part of the curriculum so practitioners may need to adapt their approaches to enable learners to carry these out safely. SSERC has produced guidance for practical work in Sciences and Technologies; Education Scotland is preparing guidance in Physical Education and Home Economics; advice on singing, or playing wind/brass musical instruments is still being developed so should be avoided during initial return to schools, unless delivered virtually.

Children in Special Schools will focus on Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Communication and Numeracy. This will be built around the skills framework within each school. Secondary-aged pupils in Special Schools will continue to study across a wider range of subject areas. Outdoor learning opportunities will be a key feature of the school day where this can be achieved within school grounds.

Literacy and Numeracy

As part of planning, teachers should use their knowledge of young people through their assessment and tracking prior to lockdown, including attainment predictions gathered in February, to identify gaps in learning. They should plan school-based programmes with associated in-home learning activities to recover any ground lost.

Based on a nurturing approach, and mindful of the stress levels of our children, this analysis of learning gaps should not be carried out purely on the basis of a range of standardised tests. High-quality assessment opportunities should be planned, using a blend of formative and summative approaches, to provide a wide range of evidence of pupils' current levels of attainment.

Learning across all Curricular Areas

Linked themes across curricular areas can help learners experience activities across the BGE and access learning in a wider range of curriculum areas. Alongside Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing, schools will plan learning in as many curriculum areas as possible to provide meaningful, and motivating, learning contexts. The learning in curricular areas may be planned for individually or through IDL projects which have planned learning in two, or a maximum of three, curricular areas planned around relevant, enjoyable and challenging activities. Learning can be linked on a thematic basis e.g. Sustainability.

The learning in school will be extended and enhanced by activities and programmes in which children can participate when learning at home or in local communities. This builds on some of the excellent practice which emerged during lockdown and should include creative learning tasks, citizenship, life skills, physical and outdoor learning activities.

Outdoor Learning; Physical Activity and Play

We are fully committed to ensuring that physical health is prioritised to help all children and young people replenish their energy and motivation for learning. All curriculum rationales should clearly state how this will be taken forward over the short, medium and longer term.

Play and outdoor learning should be factored into both the contingency Blended Learning Plans and should also feature in the School Renewal Blended Learning Plan, with an emphasis on opportunities for learners to be physically active, to enjoy and learn about their natural environment, and to relax.

Each school's Needs Analysis should identify which young people had insufficient physical activity during the lockdown. In coming back to school, we should be able to plan opportunities for physical education and physical activity outdoors or safely indoors.

Creativity in Learning

Creativity is not just the Expressive Arts but is the development of a suite of skills for learning, life and work, including imagination, curiosity, problem solving and being open minded. Creative Learning and Teaching is defined as a process which generates ideas that have value to the individual. It involves looking at familiar things with a fresh eye, examining problems with an open mind, making connections, learning from mistakes and using imagination to explore new possibilities.

Creativity exists across all curriculum areas indoor, outdoors and through digital. It builds upon play based learning and supports effective IDL. The development of creativity means children can apply these skills in a range of contexts and develop cognition, resilience confidence and wellbeing. The ability to cope with ambiguity is a key aspect of the creative process and throughout the recent experiences of Covid-19, lockdown and most importantly the easing of lockdown has generated greater ambiguity in everyone's lives.

There has also been a recent increase in arts activities which support and develop creativity. Children should be given opportunities to develop their creativity and to do so across all areas of their learning. They should be supported to talk about their skills and helped to understand how these skills are applied in different and new settings.

The Arts and Creative Learning team is available to support teaching staff with a range of CLPL, materials and resources.

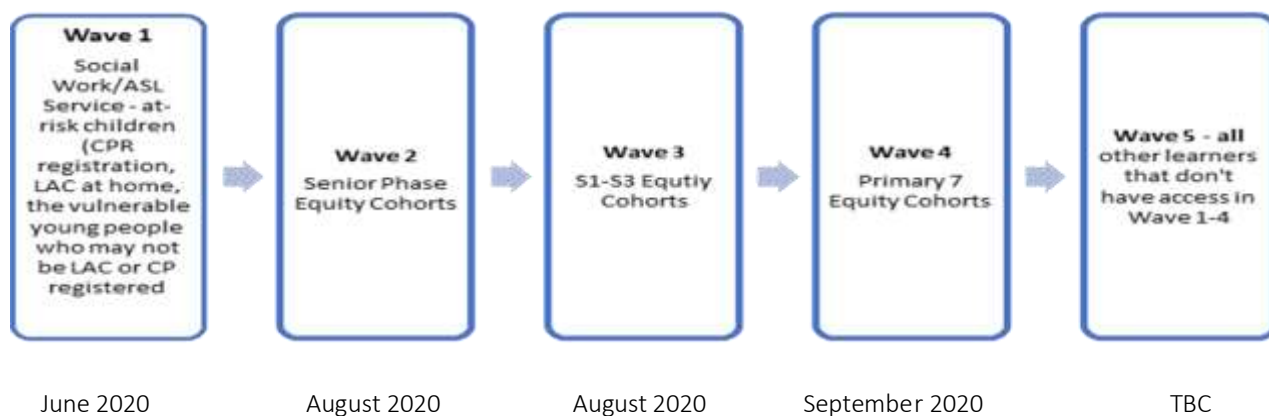
Digital Learning

During lockdown, practitioners, learners, parents & carers have been required to acquire new digital skills, at an accelerated pace. This will remain a main feature of high- quality teaching and learning as we move through the renewal phase, and beyond.

What is the timeline for availability of digital devices?

A Digital Access survey was sent to schools in April so that we could gather that information. We want all learners in S4-S6 to have a device as soon as possible. As budgets allow, we will allocate more devices to more learners. It is very important that we make sure no child is left behind in learning, so we are targeting the resources we have at those young people who don't have devices. As part of the Council's Adaptation and Renewal programme, a workstream to take forward Digital Learning has been started. This will set out the vision, the costs and the timescales for digital learning in the short, medium and long term. Having one-to-one devices for most learners is the aim, however the resource has still to be approved by the Council.

It is important to note that all schools should be making provision for digital learning through DSM and PEF, as appropriate. All schools will be required to detail their commitment to digital learning as part of School Renewal Planning. Digital learning can no longer be seen as an option.



Waves 3 & 4 subject to SG Funding

Wave 5 - subject to Council approval as per Life Chances workstream

Headteachers should now use this guidance to work with their staff, and school communities, to develop their approach to Curriculum for Excellence in the Renewal Phase. By doing so, the Curriculum offered will be in line with both National and Local Authority advice.