



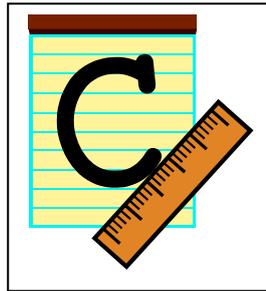
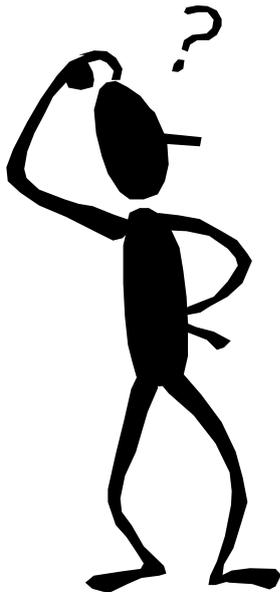
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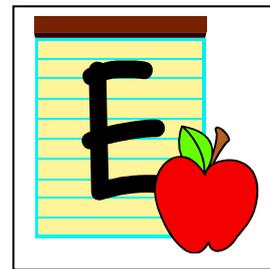
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***Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) – what  
is it and what does it mean for me?***

### ***1) What is Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)?***

If the overall term of Curriculum for Excellence seems strange, you may be more familiar with the “four capacities” that it aims to develop - *Confident Individuals, Successful Learners, Effective Contributors* and *Responsible Citizens*. These reflect the purpose of Curriculum for Excellence to provide pupils with learning/teaching that is more relevant to the changing world. In order to achieve this, the programme itself consists of a number of separate but related elements.

1. a new approach to teaching which is more interactive between the pupils and teacher, and less about teachers simply providing information;
2. a slimming down and updating of what is taught to focus on what is relevant to the world today and what youngsters need to know;
3. more cross-subject teaching i.e. using a project to combine different elements from different subjects. So, for example, in science the topic *Planet Earth* draws on all the conventional sciences - physics, chemistry and biology;
4. a new focus on literacy and numeracy by all teachers in all areas of the curriculum to help ensure that youngsters become competent in these skills;
5. a modernised qualification (examination) system in the upper secondary (S4 onwards) which takes account of both the new style of teaching and learning and the new content; (Youngsters will also be assessed on a portfolio of their work in literacy and numeracy and given an award that reflects level of attainment.)



6. a recognition that not all learning happens in the classroom and youngsters will be credited for other activities that they do whether these are playing sport/music or taking part in activities like the Scouts.

It is also anticipated that the new, interactive approach to teaching and the more relevant curriculum content will motivate pupils to learn and so help them raise their levels of attainment.

## **2) What does CfE mean in Primary Schools?**

### **What stays the same?**

- Many primary schools are already well established in delivering Curriculum for Excellence. The interactive teaching suits their normal approach as does using projects that draw on different subjects.
- With a single class teacher, it is quite natural for him/her to teach literacy and numeracy through all areas of learning.

### **What will be different?**

- The changes that you might notice are that the 5 - 14 levels of "A" to "D/E" are disappearing. Instead, the primary curriculum will cover two stages - 1 and 2 - with the first stage starting in nursery and going on to the end of P3 and the second stage covering P4 to P7.
- There will be no formal national tests, although teachers will continue to assess pupils' progress and report back to parents. Also, some local authorities are using standardised tests to see how children across the authority compare and are progressing.

The primary school will remain what it has always been for children - a good place to learn with the focus on the individual child.

## **3) What does CfE mean in Secondary Schools?**

In general, secondary schools are not so advanced in introducing Curriculum for Excellence. With different teachers for different subjects, the programme does not fall quite so naturally into their current approach. However, a number of schools are already making great strides and developing cross-curricular topics, involving different subject departments. Individual schools have a lot of flexibility on how they do this and schools will develop different programmes of learning that suit their pupils and their staff.

- Under Curriculum for Excellence, the secondary school will be organised differently. Although there is currently a little variation, with some schools presenting pupils early for SQA exams, most schools are organised into three, two-year blocks; S1/2 - a general course, S3/4 - Standard Grade/equivalent courses, S5/6 - the qualification years for Highers and Intermediate exams. In future the secondary school will be organised into two, three-year blocks; S1 to S3 - a general course and S4 - S6 the senior phase when qualifications will be taken.
- S1 to S3 will build on the work done in primary schools and will cover levels 3 and 4 of the Curriculum for Excellence. There will continue to be a strong focus on interactive teaching, literacy and numeracy, cross-curricular working and the child's learning outside the classroom.
- In S4 to S6 many of these same elements will continue, but as youngsters move forward to qualifications, they will be taught more subject-based material.
- The new qualifications - National 4 replacing General and Intermediate 1 and National 5 replacing Credit and Intermediate 2 - will be sat for the first time in 2014. Until then, students will continue to sit the existing qualifications.
- The National 4 & 5 qualifications will be taught in a common course covering both levels, but with different assessments for each the level.
- The National 4 course will be assessed internally and will be ungraded. The National 5 course will have an external assessment that will be graded.

- The new National 4 & 5 courses will be offered in specific subjects, not cross-curricular topics. Pupils will not get a qualification in Planet Earth!
- The National 4 & 5 courses will have the same value and will be just as rigorous as the existing qualifications so they will be equally regarded by employers, colleges and universities. There will be no advantage or disadvantage in sitting the old or new qualifications.
- The popular Skills for Work courses will continue to be offered from S3 onwards as they are at present

As we have said, secondary schools are already starting to introduce new approaches to teaching and some cross-curricular work, but the major changes will happen more gradually. These will follow the 08/09 session P6 children as they move through secondary because these are the youngsters who are due to be the first take the new qualifications in 2014. For more information go to the LTS Curriculum for Excellence website at

[www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/)

### Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF).

This shows the level of all qualifications, starting at level 1 for Access 1 and going up to level 12 for a Ph.D. It is easy to see at a glance what fits where so, for example, although they are all very different qualifications, SVQ level 2, the existing Standard Grade Credit and Intermediate 2 qualifications are all at SCQF level 5. \*The new CfE qualifications fit in at levels 4 and 5. For more information go to [www.scf.org.uk](http://www.scf.org.uk)

SCQF level	SQA National Units, Courses and Group Awards	New CfE Courses	Higher Education	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
12			Doctorates	
11			Masters	SVQ 5
10			Honours Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
9			Ordinary Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
8			Higher National Diploma Diploma in Higher Education	SVQ 4
7	Advanced Higher		Higher National Certificate Certificate in Higher Education	
6	Higher			SVQ 3
5	Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade	*National 5		SVQ 2
4	Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade	*National 4		SVQ 1
3	Access 3 Foundation Standard Grade			
2	Access 2			
1	Access 1			

\* These qualifications are differentiated by volume of outcomes and may be offered at either level

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**Scottish Parent Teacher Council**, the independent voice of parents, is a national organisation. It has been serving parents' groups in schools for 60 years. For further information, details of other leaflets and membership forms **write to:-** SPTC 53 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2HT **Tel:** 0131-226 4378/1917 **Email:** [sptc@sptc.info](mailto:sptc@sptc.info) **Website:** [www.sptc.info](http://www.sptc.info)