

Context of the Curriculum Rationale

Curriculum for Excellence in summary Broad general education Curriculum for Excellence is divided into two phases: the broad general education and the senior phase. The broad general education begins in early learning and childcare (at age 3) and continues to the end of S3 (the third year of secondary school). Its purpose is to develop the knowledge, skills, attributes and capabilities of the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence:

- Successful learners
- Confident individuals
- Responsible citizens
- Effective contributors

It is designed to provide the breadth and depth of education to develop flexible and adaptable young people with the knowledge and skills they will need to thrive now and in the future. It aims to support young people in achieving and attaining the best they possibly can. During the broad general education, children and young people should:

- achieve the highest possible levels of literacy, numeracy and cognitive skills
- develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- develop knowledge and understanding of society, the world and Scotland's place in it
- experience challenge and success so that they can develop well-informed views and the four capacities.

There are eight curriculum areas: expressive arts, health and wellbeing, languages (including English, and modern languages), mathematics, religious and moral studies, sciences, social studies and technologies. Each curriculum area is planned using experiences and outcomes and assessed in accordance to benchmarks. These describe the knowledge, skills, attributes and capabilities of the four capacities that young people are expected to develop.

Curriculum for Excellence includes four contexts for learning:

- Curriculum areas and subjects
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Ethos and life of the school
- Opportunities for personal achievement

Curriculum for Excellence Benchmarks set out clear statements about what learners need to know and be able to do to achieve a level in Literacy and English and Numeracy and Mathematics. Learning in the broad general education may often span a number of curriculum areas (for example, a literacy project planned around science and technologies might include outdoor learning experiences, research and the use of ICT). This is likely to be in the form of themed or project learning which provides children and young people opportunities to show how skills and knowledge can be applied in interesting contexts. The term often used for this is interdisciplinary learning.

The rationale for our curriculum is broadly based on the key drivers nationally of Curriculum for Excellence as well as the National Improvement Framework (NIF), which are:

- To raise attainment and achievement in Scottish Education and in our school
- To provide equity for the most vulnerable in Society and our school
- To ensure that all young people develop, the skills knowledge and attributes they will need to flourish now and in their life beyond school

Our rationale is more directly based on the St Machar Vision where we state our aspirations for the service we will provide young people in key areas related to the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence.

St Machar Academy – Our Vision and Aims

In this diverse and multicultural school community, we teach that we all have unique talents and great potential for doing well in the world. In this context, the development and delivery of Curriculum for Excellence is focussed on achieving the St Machar Vision as stated below. We will deliver:

- The highest levels of attainment and achievement for every individual young person
- Positive aspirational destinations for all our young people as they leave school

We will do this through:

Teaching and Learning

Our staff will deliver high quality learning experiences that take into consideration the needs of every individual by providing opportunities to engage with active and collaborative learning, whilst considering individual learning needs.

We use Assessment for Learning strategies combined with high quality feedback and robust tracking systems to monitor and evaluate pupil progress across the curriculum.

We create a learning culture of the highest aspirations and motivation; where all young people are encouraged to be fully engaged and motivated to take responsibility for their own learning and set themselves challenging but achievable targets.

Through a consistent approach to learning intentions and success criteria in every lesson, all pupils can make excellent progress from their prior levels of attainment and develop skills that lead to positive sustained destinations.

Wider Achievement

All staff will provide outstanding and varied personal achievement opportunities within and beyond the school day to develop skills for life learning and employability.

Learners are supported and challenged to grasp the wide range of opportunities offered in our school and wider community. Their successes are recorded, recognised and celebrated.

We develop high quality partnerships to enable our curriculum to offer the widest range of academic and vocational courses to ensure all young people are given the opportunity to maximise their potential.

Personal Support

All staff know each young person's learning needs and put in place coherent support which allows them to thrive, attain and achieve within our school.

Our staff and partners know our learners and creatively use differentiated approaches and support to meet the needs of all learners.

Our staff provide universal and targeted support to articulate individual progress and identify next steps leading to positive destinations.

Our young people experience an inclusive approach to learning in every learning area.

Partnership and Family Learning

We work together with families, community and partners to promote opportunities for learning and appropriate support and challenge for young people.

Our home school links are extremely important to us, we build positive relationships with parents and carers of our young people. We provide opportunities for our families to be involved in the life of the school and the achievements and progress of our young people.

We strive to maintain effective communication between the school, families and wider partnerships to support our young people and lead to improved outcomes for all.

Ethos & Life of the School

We celebrate our diversity, nurture personal growth, encourage responsibility leading to high standards and expectations and a strong sense of pride and school spirit.

Through positive and supportive relationships based on mutual trust and respect, we raise attainment and achievement for all our learners in an inclusive environment.

The voice of our young people is central to the on-going improvement and success of our school.

Professionalism & Professional Development

Our staff are committed to self-evaluation and career-long professional learning and development to stay at the forefront of cutting edge thinking and practice to the benefit of our pupils.

Our staff share good practice through classroom observation, improvement groups, listening to the pupil voice and professional dialogue both within our school and with colleagues in other establishments.

Our school continues to create leadership opportunities for all stakeholders to ensure high quality learning experiences and raise attainment.

What Makes St Machar Unique – What are the needs of our Community?

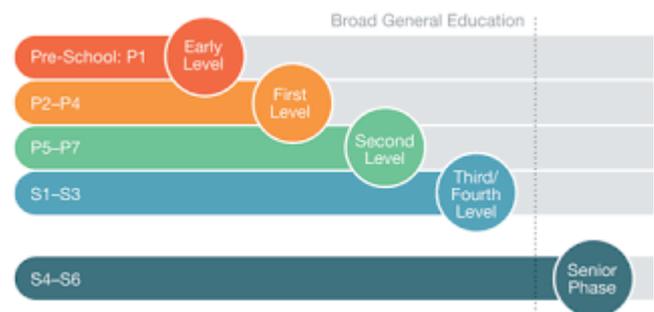
Unique Quality	Current provision	Next steps towards excellence and equity
SIMD Profile	Good support for some of our most vulnerable but not fully challenging our middle or upper range	Improve choice of course, pace challenge & rigour across our school. Targeted Literacy & Numeracy. Aim for parity amongst pathways & SIMD
A truly multicultural inclusive community accepting and supportive of all young people	Ethos and life of the school. The introduction of PSE accreditation for personal achievement & SfLLW within the S2 curriculum	Provision for accredited wider achievement in BGE & senior school
Staying on Rate	Progressive curriculum design for BGE, leading to flexible pathways on offer in S4	Selection of strongest subjects Increased opportunities for blended learning
Positive Sustained Destinations	Slight increase - Below national average	Increase partnerships, skills development, senior phase review
Geographical location	City Campus – Low uptake	Transition support, Online OU courses

School values are currently under review.

Broad General Education Curriculum Rationale

At St Machar Academy the broad general education phase has a clear purpose - to ensure a strong platform for later learning and for successful transition to the new qualifications at the appropriate level for each young person. As they continue to develop the four capacities, the curriculum should enable each young person to:

- As Experience learning across all eight curricular areas up until the end of S3.
- Achieve high levels of numeracy and literacy with opportunities to develop these across the curriculum.
- Apply learning in abstract contexts' - depth, challenge, and application - to ensure smooth progression between levels and across the BGE in terms of knowledge, skills and aptitudes.
- Develop skills for life, learning and work.
- Experience opportunities for personal development and achievement.
- Experience challenge and success.



They should be encouraged to adopt an active and healthy lifestyle equipped with the skills needed for planning their future lives and careers. All young people will be encouraged to aim for the highest possible levels of attainment and achievement. As a school we expect:

- third level outcomes overtaken by *most* young people by the end of S2
- majority* of young people at level 4 or equivalent by the end of S3

Application of the Principles of Curriculum Design to the St Machar Academy Broad General Education Model

Breadth

In S1 learning will take place across all the Experiences and Outcomes in the eight curriculum areas with most reaching level 3 by Christmas of S2. Pupils will study a broad general curriculum across all curricular areas until the end of S3. In S2 pupils will continue to learn across all curricular areas although a level of personalisation will take place at varying stages. This will ensure that all pupils develop a breadth of knowledge and experience at level 3 before progressing to level 4. As pupils progress through the broad general phase they will engage with a broadening range of experiences growing in confidence and competence in skills for learning, life and work in familiar and routine contexts. Learning within the broad general curriculum will be further enhanced by timetabled Numeracy & Literacy periods that explore opportunities for interdisciplinary learning. English, Maths, PE, RMPS, Literacy & Numeracy will be core subjects throughout S1-S3. We plan to increase wider achievement & IDL opportunities.

Depth

During the S1-S3 stage depth of learning will be provided through opportunities for pupils to engage with increasingly demanding concepts, develop progressively more complex cognitive abilities and build and learn new skills. The new structure provides pupils with the time to study chosen subjects in depth. Many pupils will achieve outcomes in these curriculum areas at the third level by the end of S1/2 and the fourth level by the end of S3. In some cases learning may stretch beyond third and fourth levels in S3. Depth will be enhanced through actively seeking interdisciplinary opportunities to connect learning between subject areas, across curricular areas, special focus learning events and whole school opportunities.

Personalisation and Choice

All pupils will experience a common curriculum in S1. Pupils will have opportunities for personalisation and choice across many aspects of their learning throughout S1 to S3. Choice will be made across four curricular areas in S2/3; Technologies, Expressive Arts, Social Subjects and Sciences. Through offering a degree of choice pupil motivation will be improved. This approach will provide a balance between traditional strengths and personal development courses. Departments have created bespoke Masterclasses for the S2 cohort and may also develop new courses to offer pupils as the structure develops. Pupils will make choices for the Senior Phase at the end of S3.

Teachers across the school will continue to work towards offering personalisation and choice in pupil's learning at classroom level.

Challenge and Enjoyment

At St Machar Academy we will continue to have the highest possible expectations of what our young people can achieve. Through offering a truly broad general education until the end of S3, with choice at the end of S1/2, this structure provides an opportunity to challenge pupils to cover most third level outcomes by the end of S1/2 and reach fourth level outcomes by the end of S3. As we embed our BGE curriculum and pupils progress through the experiences and outcomes they should develop increasingly complex higher order thinking skills including analysing, evaluating and creating. The design of our new curriculum provides a number of enjoyable ways in which pupils can engage with the experiences and outcomes. Strategies such as co-operative learning, active learning and the use of technology all provide pupils with stimulating and engaging lessons matched to all learners' styles and abilities. Interdisciplinary projects and themed days will further enhance challenge and enjoyment.

Progression

Young people should experience appropriate and challenging progression from primary into secondary and through the levels. We are in the process of building our curricular links with our partner primaries through our ASG partnerships and our own transition programmes. These contribute to a shared understanding of teaching methodologies across both sectors and along with moderation activities across the level 2/3 experiences and outcomes we ensure that we build upon prior learning as pupils enter S1. Given the focus on literacy and numeracy, most young people should achieve outcomes at the fourth level in these two areas. Most learners will progress to study at the fourth level in chosen areas at appropriate points during S1-S3. This model provides opportunities for pupils to progress across all 8 curricular areas. The introduction of choice within the broad general education phase should ensure that there are appropriate progression routes at the end of S3 as pupils move into the senior phase.

Coherence

Taken as a whole, learning activities should combine to form a coherent experience with clear links between different aspects of learning. Subject departments within curriculum areas will work closely together in order to ensure a coherent experience for pupils within the curriculum area and across the experiences and outcomes. As the structure of our school day changes we hope to expand emerging practice in the school such as the interdisciplinary timetabled classes for Literacy, Numeracy and Wider Achievement, this will ensure our broad general education is coherent allowing pupils to make connections across the learning.

Relevance

Pupils should understand the purpose of their learning and the activities they are engaged in. Courses should be planned so that pupils understand the relevance of their learning to their lives, present and future. This curriculum model aims to enhance relevance through offering choices in S2/3 that focus on personal development, are innovative, and will enhance skills for life, work and learning.

SFA

The SFA programme is offered to pupils S1 and S2 within the BGE. Pupils will undertake this as their wider achievement and time will also be taken from the Health and Well Being periods to support the programme. The programme is designed to mould better citizens and develop social and academic abilities through the vehicle of football.

- Football is used as a tool to motivate pupils to enhance social skills, communication and behaviour
- The programme is funded by the Scottish government, cash back for the community's fund
- The school works in partnership with the Scottish Football Association
- It is a two year programme
- Pupils get accreditation and work through dynamic youth awards.
- Pupils work through a classroom programme which has many IDL links