

## Transcripts: Curriculum in a Nutshell

Here's a quick introduction to the Northern Ireland Curriculum and how it was designed taking account of the needs of learners, parents, teachers and employers in today's rapidly changing world.

As well as knowledge and understanding, the curriculum identifies skills, capabilities attitudes and values that young people will need for life and work. It's a framework that covers all 12 years of compulsory education from age 4 to 16.

In the Foundation Stage, learning builds on children's early experiences through well planned challenging play. As pupils progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 at primary school they gradually move towards more formal approaches to learning and in Key Stages 3 and 4 at post-primary they continue to broaden and deepen what they know, understand and can do.

Broadly speaking, the curriculum framework means that each year all pupils should have opportunities to develop skills across different areas of learning. Employers need a curriculum that helps young people become flexible. Adaptable, collaborative and resilient team players with the right skills. Crucially, they need to access, manage and analyse information from different sources and perspectives and apply their knowledge to solve problems and make informed decisions.

The curriculum sets out Areas of Learning for each key stage. Primary teachers typically teach through themes and make connections across these areas. At post-primary teachers are encouraged to work collaboratively to help pupils make important connections in the Areas of Learning. At Key Stage 4 only some areas are compulsory, for the other Areas of Learning pupils can choose courses that lead to qualifications.

Schools also need to consider the requirements of the Entitlement Framework when deciding on courses to offer. Across the key stages, through the Areas of Learning, skills and capabilities there's lots of room for flexibility. Young people want learning experiences that are engaging and authentic and that's why important issues for modern society are key elements or big ideas of the curriculum and provide real life contexts for learning.

The curriculum is designed to empower teachers as professionals to develop and shape relevant learning experiences that suit their pupils' interests and abilities, maximise motivation and provide equal opportunities for all. Parents want a curriculum that enables their children to become happy, confident, health conscious and well-adjusted individuals and responsible citizens, who, where possible will gain meaningful qualifications that lead to fulfilling careers. When put into action that's what the Northern Ireland Curriculum is all about. For more details or to view a Big Picture of the Curriculum you can go to the overview pages for each Key Stage and find other resources and support at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).