



Delivering Statutory Curriculum and Assessment Requirements 2021–2022

CCEA Guidance for Schools

Contents

Introduction	2
The Northern Ireland Curriculum: Legislative Requirements	3
Delivering Curriculum Requirements	4
Key Curriculum Questions for the School Leaders	8
Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Northern Ireland Curriculum	9
Key Stage-Specific Guidance	11
Re-Engaging with Learning	11
Pre-School	13
Primary	13
<i>Foundation Stage</i>	13
<i>Key Stages 1 and 2</i>	14
Post-Primary	14
<i>Key Stage 3</i>	14
<i>Key Stage 4 and Post-16</i>	16
Special Educational Needs	17
Irish-Medium Education	18
Contingency Planning for Remote or Online Learning	18
Appendix: Useful Resources	19

Introduction

This guidance sets out considerations of how schools can address the statutory curriculum and assessment requirements in 2021/22 to enable learning recovery.

COVID-19 has already had a significant impact on teaching, learning, pupil experience and curriculum provision in Northern Ireland. With the restart of schools, the eventual extent of the impact will depend on the timing and severity of any further issues and compliance with health guidelines. There is likely to be a continued impact and this will continue to affect how schools adapt learning to address curriculum requirements.

School leaders and teachers have a range of concerns, including:

- sustaining and supporting pupils' (and teachers') mental health and wellbeing;
- the impact on provision of teaching, learning and curriculum delivery;
- educational inequalities; and
- uncertainties about assessment expectations.

Schools should consider this guidance in the context of departmental guidance (Education and Health) on the safe opening and functioning of schools. It also aims to complement a range of guidance documents being developed collaboratively by education partners through the Department of Education's Continuity of Learning and Education Restart Programmes (see the appendix for more details), which focus on providing practical advice and case studies to support curriculum delivery in schools.

We have provided links to useful materials throughout this document, along with a list of resources, with links where available, in the appendix.

Useful Links*

Department of Education Circulars

- ◆ [Circular 2021/18 Curriculum Planning for Primary Schools 2021/22](#)
- ◆ [Circular 2021/19 - Curriculum Planning for Post Primary Schools 2021/22](#)

* CCEA resources, Continuity of Learning/Education Restart guidance and resources, and other links

The Northern Ireland Curriculum: Legislative Requirements

The Northern Ireland Curriculum is subject to a range of legislative requirements for curriculum, assessment and reporting.

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 is primary legislation that specifies the statutory elements of the curriculum at each key stage. This includes:

- defining the **Areas of Learning** and subject strands, and requiring schools to teach the minimum content for these and the core syllabus for **Religious Education**;
- acquisition and development of the **Cross-Curricular Skills** of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT, and of the **Other Skills**; and
- **assessment** in each school year, including the Levels of Progression for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

The detail of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements, such as defining the minimum content for the Areas of Learning, sits in a range of subsidiary legislation.

Useful Links

Primary Legislation

- ◆ [The Education \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2006](#)

Curriculum

Statutory requirements vary from key stage to key stage, but they largely cover the following:

- ◆ minimum content for Areas of Learning ([The Education \(Curriculum Minimum Content\) Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2007](#));
- ◆ [Core Syllabus for Religious Education](#);
- ◆ Cross-Curricular Skills (Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT); and
- ◆ Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (Other Skills) – [The Education \(Other Skills\) Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2007](#) specifies which skills, but does not include the content within each skill.

Reporting

- ◆ Reporting is mainly the school's responsibility. Requirements are set out in [The Education \(Pupil Reporting\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2009](#).

Special Educational Needs

- ◆ [CCEA – Information for Principals on Exemptions from Statutory Curriculum and Assessment](#)

Delivering Curriculum Requirements

There is already considerable flexibility within the statutory curriculum in Northern Ireland. It specifies a minimum entitlement for all pupils. Schools then have considerable scope to tailor this entitlement and to provide other learning opportunities based on their own context and their pupils' needs.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum is driven by its central aim and objectives:

Aim

The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.

Objectives

The Northern Ireland Curriculum should provide learning opportunities for each young person to develop as:

1. an individual

to achieve personal fulfilment and individual wellbeing through living a successful life

2. a contributor to society

to be concerned for the wellbeing of others as well as themselves, in their own society and beyond it

3. a contributor to the economy and the environment

to appreciate how employment will impact on the economic choices they make and how they, in turn, impact individually and collectively on the environment.

Schools should use the curriculum's aim and objectives as the basis for considerations of how they can address the statutory curriculum and assessment requirements in 2021/22.

Useful Links

CCEA Curriculum Pages and Resources

- ◆ [Curriculum Aim and Objectives](#)
- ◆ [Big Pictures of the Curriculum](#)

- ◆ [Pre-School](#)
- ◆ [Foundation Stage](#)
- ◆ [Key Stages 1 and 2](#)
- ◆ [Key Stage 3](#)
- ◆ [Key Stage 4](#)
- ◆ [Post-16](#)
- ◆ [SEN and Inclusion](#)
- ◆ [Irish Medium](#)

Primary Curriculum and Assessment

- ◆ [The Northern Ireland Curriculum – Primary](#)
- ◆ [Guidance on Assessment in the Primary School](#)

Post-Primary Curriculum and Assessment

- ◆ [The Statutory Curriculum at Key Stage 3](#)
- ◆ [Guidance on Subject Assessment at Key Stage 3](#)
- ◆ [Guidance on Teaching, Learning and Assessment at Key Stage 4](#)

Considerations should include:

- pupil health and wellbeing;
- progression and transition;
- providing appropriate stretch and challenge and 'rich' learning;
- developing key concepts and skills; and
- maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum experience.

Key Features

Below are some of the curriculum's key features.

- There is a focus on broader, long-term outcomes (personal, educational and societal) for our young people.
- The curriculum minimum entitlement focuses on pupil experience and 'pupils should be enabled to ...' rather than on detailed content to be delivered.
- There is a focus on literacy and numeracy and development of the Whole Curriculum Skills and Capabilities that enable access to the curriculum.
- It encourages a pupil-centred approach, where the focus is on what is best for the individual pupil rather than one-size-fits-all.
- There is considerable flexibility for schools to adapt the curriculum to their context and their pupils' needs.
- There is no specified allocation of minimum time per subject or area.
- The curriculum is a key stage entitlement (i.e. over two or three years) and does not need to be covered in one year.
- It emphasises connectivity, coherence and progression, and encourages links between subjects.
- It also emphasises active learning and giving pupils the tools for learning.

When the current curriculum was introduced, four key cornerstones were identified as the focus for teacher professional development. These continue to be important in our current context.

Four Cornerstones of the Northern Ireland Curriculum	Recovery Relevance
Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Learning for Life and Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting pupils' mental health and wellbeing • Resilience and strategies to cope with change • Appreciating that we're all in this together – avoiding 'them and us' and blame culture • Careers advice and practical life skills
Assessment for Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality feedback to ensure progression • Self-evaluation
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent learning • Self-motivation • Strategies to manage own time and learning • Maintaining relationships
Connected Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing pupils with motivation to learn • Keeping learning relevant • Opportunities to connect learning (for example thematic approach and 'big tasks').

Useful Links

Parents and Carers

- ◆ [Supporting Learners with the Key Stage 3 Curriculum: A Guide for Parents and Carers](#)

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

- ◆ [Foundation Stage Personal Development and Mutual Understanding](#)
- ◆ [Key Stages 1 and 2 Personal Development and Mutual Understanding](#)

Learning for Life and Work

- ◆ [Key Stage 3 Learning for Life and Work](#)
- ◆ [Key Stage 4 Learning for Life and Work](#)

Assessment for Learning

- ◆ [Assessment for Learning – A Practical Guide](#)
- ◆ [Assessment for Learning for Key Stages 1 and 2](#)

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

- ◆ [Developing and Embedding Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#)

Connected Learning

- ◆ [Thematic Units](#)
- ◆ [STEM Thematic Units](#)
- ◆ [Visible Learning Effect Sizes When Schools Are Closed: What Matters and What Does Not](#) (available at opsoa.org)

Curriculum Planning

It's important to consider the immediate mental health and wellbeing needs of pupils and to ensure that they have opportunities to discuss and explore what they have experienced during the pandemic. Schools have adapted plans and schemes of work to ensure that any gaps in core learning are identified through normal forms of assessment in the classroom and that varied approaches are adopted to support the full range of pupils' needs in each Area of Learning. This phase will include recapping core content and introducing new concepts.

In all approaches, the Northern Ireland Curriculum has both the range and flexibility for schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that focuses on skills development, individual experiences, understanding and knowledge, along with opportunities to encourage positive attitudes towards the community.

Schools should try to ensure that the curriculum requirements are addressed in the longer term, with the aim that they can address any learning gaps over the period of a key stage (i.e. two or three years). It may not be possible to address all aspects of the curriculum in the same way, but in most cases, schools can apply public health adaptations to enable pupils to continue to have wide ranging experiences, including practical activities. Schools will already be aware of the benefits of providing opportunities for pupil interaction, outdoor experiences and continued safe access to resources.

It's key that there should be flexibility for schools and the system to respond to a rapidly changing situation and the needs of their particular context. The emphasis is on how schools can prioritise what's important for their pupils, while being realistic about what can be achieved.

Therefore, any considerations should start with two fundamental principles as a basis for curriculum planning:

- the needs of the pupils; and
- the underpinning principles of the curriculum (as summarised in the Big Pictures of the Curriculum at each key stage).

Key Curriculum Questions for the School Leaders

The following questions may be useful reflection points for curriculum provision in 2021/22.

How do we prioritise what's important for our pupils, while being realistic about what can be achieved?

For statutory statements and learning objectives:

1. Which of these statutory statements or learning objectives are a fundamental priority?

- supporting pupil wellbeing and delivering on the key curriculum aim and objectives (in terms of broader outcomes for young people);
- ensuring understanding of core concepts and developing core skills; or
- securing progression in learning and to the next phase of education or training.

For broader curriculum planning:

2. How can we ensure coherence and connectivity of the curriculum experience for pupils?

3. How can we retain as much breadth and balance as possible?

CCEA Resources

The findings of CCEA's Curriculum Monitoring Report may be a useful starting point for further reflection on the curriculum. For post-primary, CCEA's resources on Curriculum Planning and Design also provide guidance and exemplification to support school leaders in this process. The focus of the resources is mainly Key Stage 4 and post-16.

CCEA has developed a suite of resources that schools can use to support the embedding of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. Schools may use these as part of whole-school teacher professional learning, or to support individual teachers or departments in planning lessons to extend pupils' knowledge and skills. The materials include guidance, webinars, presentations, templates and practical examples for teachers.

Useful Links

- ◆ [Curriculum Monitoring Programme](#)
- ◆ [Curriculum Planning and Design](#)
- ◆ [Developing and Embedding Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#)
- ◆ [Think Pack – Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#)
- ◆ [Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#)

CCEA has also identified resources that schools can use to support a blended or remote approach to learning and that complement the Education Authority's Supporting Learning materials.

Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Northern Ireland Curriculum

Mental health and wellbeing are central to the aim and objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. The Department of Education has produced Circular 2020/06 – Curriculum Planning 2020/21, which stresses the importance of establishing a learning environment that prioritises good emotional health and wellbeing for pupils.

Schools should also include feedback from parents to ensure that teachers are aware of how pupils have reacted to the pandemic. The school routine can provide structure and security for children and young people, and teachers will have oversight of their emotional needs. It's important that children and young people have the opportunity to share their recent experiences to promote wellbeing and recovery.

During the time away from school, children have continued to learn, and the evidence indicates that any missed knowledge content is not likely to cause any long-term problems; however, they require supportive tools to facilitate learning. The flexibility of the curriculum will help teachers to adapt activities and content to support transition, healing and learning for pupils on their return to school.

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) and Learning for Life and Work (LLW)

PDMU at primary and Personal Development within LLW at post-primary explicitly address wellbeing.

PDMU provides the opportunity for teachers to focus on children's emotional development, health and safety, and relationships, giving children the opportunity to develop appropriate understanding and skills through activities that are tailored to their ability and current circumstances. For example, teachers should give children the opportunity to talk about what has happened, while recognising that some may not wish to do so, and create a calm atmosphere in school, which supports those children who are anxious or worried.

Useful Links

- ◆ [Education Authority – Supporting Learning](#)
- ◆ **Department of Education Circulars**
- ◆ [Circular 2021/18 Curriculum Planning for Primary Schools 2021/22](#)
- ◆ [Circular 2021/19 - Curriculum Planning for Post Primary Schools 2021/22](#)
- ◆ **CCEA Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources**
- ◆ [Wellbeing Hub](#)
- ◆ [Post-Primary Pupils: Supporting Your Health and Wellbeing](#)
- ◆ **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**
- ◆ [Foundation Stage Personal Development and Mutual Understanding](#)
- ◆ [Key Stages 1 and 2 Personal Development and Mutual Understanding](#)

At post-primary, the subject strand of Personal Development provides opportunities for each young person to become personally, emotionally, socially and physically effective and to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives.

At Key Stage 3, there are opportunities for pupils to consider factors that may influence physical and emotional/mental health throughout life through the three key concepts of Self-Awareness, Personal Health, and Relationships. Teachers may provide opportunities for pupils to discuss sourcing the facts about coronavirus from trusted sources of information, the potential for social media to cause worry or anxiety and the promotion of strategies to cope.

We have added new materials to the Active Citizenship suite of resources, including a resource that enables young people to explore the impact of the pandemic.

At Key Stage 4, the statutory requirements for Personal Development state that pupils should be enabled to:

- develop an understanding of how to maximise and sustain their own health and wellbeing; and
- reflect on, and respond to, their developing concept of self, including managing emotions and reactions to ongoing life experiences.

Other Areas of Learning

There are also opportunities to promote wellbeing across the curriculum, in line with current advice. For example, participating in Physical Education enables young people to take part in active, enjoyable and challenging learning experiences and to make a positive impact on their wellbeing.

Similarly, through The Arts, pupils have opportunities to recognise and express feelings and emotions, and to develop the curiosity, imagination, creativity, self-confidence and self-esteem to help them flourish.

There are clear connections between, for example, The World Around Us at primary and Learning for Life and Work or Environment and Society at post-primary and aspects of mental health and wellbeing, such as food, health and hygiene, sustainable development and the many opportunities to take learning outdoors.

Useful Links

Learning for Life and Work

◆ [Key Stage 3 Learning for Life and Work](#)

◆ [Key Stage 4 Learning for Life and Work](#)

◆ [CCEA – Active Citizenship](#)

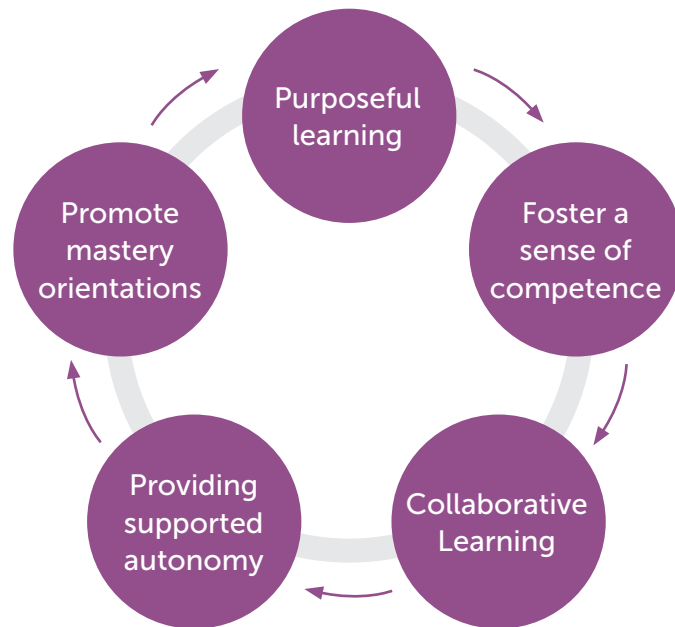
◆ [CCEA – RSE Hub](#)

Key Stage-Specific Guidance

Re-Engaging with Learning

At each Key Stage teachers will reflect, discuss and plan to develop pupils' engagement explicitly.

The Department of Education suggested that all schools frame their thinking for embedding recovery by using statutory curriculum guidance and five guiding principles:



i. Purposeful learning

To increase pupil engagement it is important to show why the learning matters and explicitly help pupils to understand how what they are learning in school relates to their lives and how it matters to them in school and beyond. Connecting with pupils' previous knowledge and experiences may help teachers to design a learning task that is personally meaningful and make connections between new information and previous knowledge.

ii. Foster a sense of competence

Research has found that effectively performing an activity can positively impact on subsequent engagement. When children feel competent, they have a sense of themselves as being capable to tackle the tasks and challenges they encounter. Pupils' sense of competence in learning can be enhanced by providing learning opportunities which are only slightly beyond their current level of proficiency and allowing them to demonstrate understanding throughout.

iii. Collaborative learning

Engagement may be strengthened due to experiencing a sense of connection to others. To make group work more productive, strategies can be implemented to ensure that pupils know how to communicate and behave in that setting. Teacher modelling is one effective method and fostering individual accountability by assigning different roles and evaluating both the pupil and the group performance also support collaborative learning.

iv. Providing supported autonomy

Pupils are given a sense of control rather than promoting compliance. Allowing pupils to have some choice and control can help instil ownership and responsibility for their own learning. This can be implemented by involving pupils in setting learning objectives; welcoming pupils' opinions into the flow of the activity; facilitating a self-directed learning process and giving pupils time to understand and absorb the task by themselves.

v. Promote mastery orientations

Pupils' perspective of learning activities also determines their level of engagement. When pupils pursue a task because they want to learn and understand (i.e. mastery orientations), rather than for example to obtain a good grade, please their parents, or outperform peers (i.e. performance orientations), their engagement is more likely to be full and thorough.

Circular 2021/19 - Curriculum Planning for Post Primary Schools 2021/22

Key Stage-Specific Guidance

Pre-School

The pre-school curriculum is a holistic, play-based curriculum that is set out in six Areas of Learning. It is delivered using exploratory and discovery teaching and learning approaches, which help to provide rich opportunities for young children. This early learning and development builds on the learning from home and/or other settings and takes place both indoors and outdoors. Settings are encouraged to offer further opportunities through outdoor play that provide active learning and increased engagement.

The Education Authority COVID FAQs section has additional guidance for the safe use of water, sand and dough. In addition, the EA – Supporting Learning site has several useful case studies to further support pre-school provision. You can find further guidance and support in the CCEA Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education and the Education Authority Pre-School Education Resources.

Primary

Foundation Stage

The holistic needs of the children are paramount in the Foundation Stage, and children need to feel safe and secure in the school environment.

Access to a play-based curriculum, both indoors and outdoors, is essential to the children's personal, social, emotional and cognitive development. Play can help children make sense of the things they find hard to understand, particularly in the current context.

Depending on their experiences, children may wish to role-play coronavirus situations, such as hospitals, and this can help them to understand what they have experienced and are experiencing in real life. This play can, in turn, prompt conversations with adults and help to alleviate any anxiety that the children cannot express verbally.

Remember that resources should be easily washed or wiped down, and schools should adhere to Public Health Agency and Department of Health guidelines.

Useful Links

- ◆ [CCEA – Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education](#)
- ◆ [Education Authority – Pre-School Education Resources](#)

- ◆ [CCEA – Learning Through Play in the Early Years](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – Learning Outdoors in the Early Years](#)

Ongoing observational assessments of each child are vital to identify learning and individual needs. You can find further guidance and support in Learning, Teaching and Assessment in the Foundation Stage. There is also a supporting online course on observational assessment.

Key Stages 1 and 2

Learning is a much broader concept than the acquisition of knowledge. It takes account of the cognitive, social and emotional needs of the child, so teachers should use active, playful approaches and take learning outdoors where possible.

Children may have had opportunities to develop new interests and hobbies during their time away from school, which teachers can build on and integrate into curriculum topics.

It's important that teachers give children time to feel secure again in school and that the teacher appropriately addresses any worries the children have about having missed learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. It's also important that teachers support the different needs of learners. PDMU lessons and a whole-school approach should emphasise the importance of the class and school community being kind and taking care of each other. This will help children feel supported and encourage them to learn effectively.

Children may also need time to settle back into group work. Teachers can support this way of working by using a range of ideas and strategies to develop the skill of Working with Others. Set 1 and Set 2 of the CCEA Thinking Cards show how to plan and integrate specific age-appropriate group working skills into any group activity.

Post-Primary

Key Stage 3

The following key issues are significant for Key Stage 3.

Transition of pupils from primary school to Year 8

Pupils will have transitioned from Year 7 in primary to Year 8 in post-primary, but without any of the usual preparation and support those transitioning pupils would receive. It is therefore imperative that teachers provide all Year 8 pupils with

Useful Links

- ◆ [CCEA – Learning, Teaching and Assessment in the Foundation Stage](#)
- ◆ [CCEA Training – Observational Assessment](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – Wellbeing Hub](#)

- ◆ [CCEA – Think Pack – Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities: Download Thinking Cards](#)

continuing support for any issues that would usually have been addressed through normal transition. This includes:

- a continuing focus on wellbeing;
- using games and activities to support pupils in building relationships; and
- supporting them as they progress in their first year of a new school.

Teachers should regularly review how well each pupil is settling into the school and their progress in learning.

Pupils should also have a forum to discuss their individual experiences of transition and to share feelings and any concerns. As with all Year 8 pupils, organisational skills and value placed on previous learning experiences will be key to enable pupils to settle down and to engage with new learning. Effective communication between parents and school is all-important for Year 8.

Building foundations at Key Stage 3 to facilitate progression to Key Stage 4

For Years 9 and 10, it's important to provide access to counselling and support for pupils who have had to contend with huge disruption to the familiar structure and support of the school day, along with isolation from friends for six months. Communication between pupils and parents will be essential to ensure that teachers understand pupils' individual issues so that they can tailor support to the children's individual needs.

Flexible approaches

The statutory curriculum for each subject strand at Key Stage 3 is structured according to the key elements. It's important to cover the key concepts of each Area of Learning. Teachers could establish connections, where relevant, using a thematic approach to address topics or issues like Personal Health, Cultural Understanding or Economic Awareness, based on independent learning and drawing on several subject contexts as applicable. For example, pupils could create their own public health campaign through the context of English, Art and Design, and Science.

Resumption of Practical Activities

The Department of Education has recommended resumption of practical activity across the curriculum for all post primary pupils in 2021/22. Schools will know the benefit and importance of providing opportunities for experiential learning, increasing

independence and skills. Through the delivery of practical work many students will gain confidence and be able to apply essential skills across all areas of learning. You'll find advice and support for Science and Technology, and Art and Design practical activities from [CLEAPSS](#), which will impact your choice of classroom activities. All schools in Northern Ireland have CLEAPSS membership through the Education Authority. The British Nutrition Foundation has also published [guidance for practical food activities](#) in both specialist and non-specialist food rooms.

Physical Education is a compulsory element of education at Key Stage 3. Research has shown the wide-ranging benefits of the PE curriculum on health and wellbeing. The Department has highlighted the critical importance of this learning area in supporting and embedding recovery of young people. Pupils should take part in a balanced programme of Athletics, Games, Gymnastics and Swimming. The Department of Education recommends that schools should provide pupils with at least two hours of curricular Physical Education each week.

Key Stage 4 and Post-16

Schools will have implemented health adaptations and appropriate social distancing measures in their own setting and in line with Department of Education guidance.

The main features of the statutory curriculum at Key Stage 4 (Communication, Using Mathematics, Using ICT, Other Skills, Learning for Life and Work, Physical Education and Religious Education) can make a vital contribution to developing independent study skills and to maintaining physical and mental health.

It's important that young people continue to experience the breadth and richness of the curriculum and that schools provide them with diverse opportunities for skills development, problem-solving and personal growth, in addition to formal programmes of study. Schools should, where possible, offer employability and extracurricular activities to pupils.

For example, physical activity is a key component of promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. You could consider the following questions for this example:

- In what other ways could we address and make provision for this?
- How could we maximise outdoor learning?
- Could we set any of these requirements as physical challenges to be carried out at home?

Useful Links

◆ [CCEA – Curriculum Planning and Design](#)

This could include, for example, personal fitness challenges or a school-wide group or class walking challenge using fitness trackers or pedometers to track progress.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Schools will be faced with a variety of issues to support learners with SEN. Many of these challenges will be related to managing learners' health and wellbeing.

Teachers working with children in mainstream, specialist units or special schools may find it useful to use these CCEA resources to support learners with SEN.

Resource	Skills and Areas of Learning	SEN
Quest for learning assessment framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Early cognitive development • Social interaction 	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
Q Skills assessment framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For assessing the Cross-Curricular Skills below Level 1 • Communication • Using Mathematics • Using ICT 	Severe, moderate and mild learning difficulties
SEN Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. 	Severe, moderate and mild learning difficulties and any learner who needs support in managing personally and socially

Special schools will already have made many modifications to their practice and physical arrangements to take account of our changed circumstances.

At a time when schools are reviewing and adapting their practice in many areas due to the expected implementation of the SEND Act (2016), it may also be useful to look at the work of other schools using our video series *A Window on Special*. You can find all these resources on the SEN and Inclusion section of our website.

Useful Links

- ◆ [CCEA – Quest for learning assessment framework](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – Q Skills assessment framework](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – SEN Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Framework](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – A Window on Special](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – SEN and Inclusion Learning Resources](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – Supporting the Curriculum and Assessment in 2021/22: SEN](#)
- ◆ [Education Authority – Special Education Resources](#)
- ◆ [Department of Education – Northern Ireland Re-opening School Guidance – Special Schools](#)

Irish-Medium Education

For most Irish-medium pupils, exposure to the Irish language may have been limited during their time away from school. A major focus in Irish-medium schools will be on re-immersing pupils in an Irish language environment.

Initially, there may be a need for increased focus on language-rich activities that maximise exposure to the Irish language. Schools may wish to prioritise oral activity to enhance learner confidence and provide opportunities for consolidation.

Irish-medium schools will have modified plans and schemes of work to ensure that they have identified any gaps in learning through normal forms of assessment. The following CCEA resources may be useful for Irish language and literature assessment:

- Na Céimeanna Forbartha san Fhoghlaim (Cumarsáid);
- Na Scileanna Réamhriachtanacha (Cumarsáid); and
- Na Leibhéil de Dhul Chun Cinn (Cumarsáid).

Contingency Planning for Remote or Online Learning

Schools will need to plan for how they will manage remote learning in the event of local or wider school closures.

The Department of Education's guidance on remote learning provides clear advice of the need for a planned well-balanced combination of both synchronous and asynchronous sessions.

Schools should not use remote learning to facilitate any other circumstance. It is extremely important that curriculum provision is face to face.

Useful Links

- ◆ [CCEA – Áiseanna Bunscoile/Primary Irish-Medium Resources](#)
- ◆ [Education Authority – Irish-Medium Education Resources](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – Na Céimeanna Forbartha san Fhoghlaim \(Cumarsáid\)](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – Na Scileanna Réamhriachtanacha \(Cumarsáid\)](#)
- ◆ [CCEA – Na Leibhéil de Dhul Chun Cinn \(Cumarsáid\)](#)

- ◆ [CCEA – Developing and Embedding Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities: Metacognition](#)

Appendix: Useful Resources

CCEA Resources – Description

We have created a Supporting the Curriculum and Assessment area on the CCEA website. It identifies information about the curriculum for teachers, parents and carers, as well as existing CCEA learning and teaching resources.

Exemplar Connected Learning Resources

We have developed exemplars that directly address issues around the pandemic with ideas about how you can take a connected approach to wellbeing in different Areas of Learning. They include activities that promote creativity and the development of pupils' independent working and problem-solving skills (Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities).

You can find the Key Stages 1 and 2 (We Could Be Heroes and Our World) and post-primary (Black Lives Matter and Active Citizenship) exemplars on our [Supporting the Curriculum and Assessment in 2021/22](#) page.

Parent guide for supporting learners at Key Stage 3

Guidance and frequently asked questions for centres, colleges and students

This features Phase 1 of the Curriculum Monitoring Report with accompanying resources, including a PowerPoint presentation, the Big Pictures, the Curriculum in a Nutshell video, and links to the Thinking Skills and Curriculum Planning and Design resources below.

Resources and Links

- ◆ [Supporting Learners with the Key Stage 3 Curriculum: A Guide for Parents and Carers](#)
- ◆ [Summer 2022 Awarding](#)
- ◆ [Curriculum Monitoring Programme](#)

CCEA Resources – Description

This guidance on what constitutes a broad and balanced curriculum covers issues such as:

- embedding skills and capabilities at Key Stage 4 and post-16;
- Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 transition;
- AS to A2 transition;
- enterprise/employability and work experience; and
- timetabling.

It also includes reflection templates and school case study exemplars.

The concept of wellbeing is central to the aim and objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. This area of the CCEA website provides links to our resources that support skills development, and preventative strategies where needed, in a range of relevant areas.

These resources support the development and understanding of the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities, with suggestions of how schools can deliver and embed them across the curriculum. These pages include lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations, videos, practical examples, webinars and templates.

Resource and Link

- ◆ [Curriculum Planning and Design](#)
- ◆ [Wellbeing Hub](#)
- ◆ [Developing and Embedding Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#)
- ◆ [Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#)
- ◆ [Think Pack – Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities](#)



Education Authority – Supporting Learning Resources

Workstream	Format/Resource Type	Resource Title	Intended Audience
All workstreams (including pre-school)	Supporting Learning web pages on the Education Authority website	Education Authority – Supporting Learning (web links and resources)	Parents and carers
Primary	Guidance document (Sway)	School Grounds – Taking the Learning Outdoors	Primary school principals and teachers
Post-Primary	Guidance resource (Sway)	Feedback and Assessment	Post-primary senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers
Primary and Post-Primary	TPL webinars and C2k Media Library Resource	Practitioner Showcase: sharing of effective practice in the use of e-learning tools to support remote learning	Primary and post-primary teachers
Irish Medium	TPL webinars	Using online learning forums and platforms to support Continuity of Learning in the Irish-medium context See also the full range of Irish-medium resources at: CCEA – Supporting the Curriculum and Assessment in 2021/22: Primary Irish-Medium Resources CCEA – Supporting the Curriculum and Assessment in 2021/22: Post-Primary Irish-Medium Resources	Irish-medium primary and post-primary principals and teachers
Irish Medium	Parent guide	Supporting Learners in Irish-Medium Education	Parents and carers
Special	TPL webinars	Developing a Healing School	Special school principals
Special	Guidance document (Word)	Curriculum Planning to Support Healing and Recovery	Special school principals, co-ordinators and teachers – all key stages (ages 3–19)
Special	Guidance document (Word)	Resources to support remote learning	Parents and carers Special school principals, co-ordinators and teachers

Workstream	Format/Resource Type	Resource Title	Intended Audience
Special	TPL webinars and C2k Media Library Resource	Practitioner Showcase: sharing of effective practice in the use of e-learning tools to support remote learning in the special school context	Special school principals, co-ordinators and teachers – all key stages (ages 3–19)
Special	TPL webinars	Be Kind to Yourself Webinar led by Action Mental Health, focusing on staff wellbeing	All staff in special schools: leaders, teachers and classroom assistants

Supporting Learning – Teacher Professional Learning

The Education Authority [Supporting Learning – Teacher Professional Learning](#) website aims to support teachers during the 2021/22 academic year and beyond. It promotes the reflective practice that is central to the Department of Education's [teacher professional learning strategy](#) (Learning Leaders).