Supporting Successful Transitions: Recovery and Equity

Skilled use of Zone of Proximal Development pedagogy supports wellbeing and attainment

Falkirk Council
Children's Services

This approach is based on strong child-centred effective learning pedagogy. This visual is provided as a reminder and with specific consideration as part of moving on successfully in school transitions from August 2020 following education establishment closures due to coronavirus. Vygotsky (1896-1934) provided the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) framework and emphasised the role of social interaction in learning. Returning to school will enable learners to reconnect with adults, peers and experiences key to their learning and wellbeing.

An integrated approach to meeting the wellbeing <u>and</u> learning needs of children and young people is needed to optimally support them in their development & achievement across the curriculum, including learners with attainment gaps arising from poverty or other factors.

The pillars of nurture are:

| CARE	&	CHALLENGE
attunement warmth connection empathy		structure well-judged expectations independence new achievements

Wellbeing needs ← → Learning needs

Maximising the protective factors a child has in their life can be contributed to by education establishments. For most children, attending establishments with strong relationship-based practices and nurturing approaches will effectively meet the majority of children's wellbeing needs. It is critical that children have their achievements and skills recognised. Having the opportunity to practise achieved skills to further develop them and feel confident is key. Developmental progression of children's health and wellbeing should be guided by the curriculum for excellence and universal approaches to support health and wellbeing with individual and personal recognition and responsiveness.

Children may need higher than usual levels of reassurance, both through verbal & non-verbal communications from adults around them. Re-establishing and maintaining routines & predictability is protective for wellbeing. Trusted & attuned guidance and encouragement from adults assists children to persevere and succeed when faced with challenges. Approaches underpinned by fostering secure attachments and independence for children will contribute to children being able to make good judgements about when they can achieve things on their own (self-regulation) and when they need assistance from others (co-regulation/ co-operation). Children are highly attuned to the emotions and behaviours of adults so if adults are anxious or act in ways that are highly different and unpredictable for the children/young people, this is likely to elevate rather than reduce any wellbeing needs in them. The availability of wellbeing supports for practitioners is particularly critical at this time.

child/ young person's current achievement & skills, what they can learn on their own, their independent skills & strengths in their current wellbeing

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

What I can achieve with help

beyond reach at present

Learning and wellbeing are not separate entities but inextricably linked.
All children need differentiated responses to their learning & wellbeing needs.
Using the ZPD framework is a means to be attuned to learners and ensure an effective balance of support and progression in their holistic development.

We need to use ongoing effective assessment approaches to understand the child/young person's achievements across the curriculum. Finding their strengths and using these in assisting their learning in other areas. Understanding what new knowledge and skills children have acquired during school closures should be of priority. Using data from children's engagement in home learning activities, positive and negative, should inform learning planning and a basis for pedagogical changes and fostering ongoing family learning.

Children have expectations of school and balancing the two pillars of nurture is critical. Judgements about the balance of care and challenge for individual children is the basis on which their wellbeing and learning needs are met. Research suggests returning to numeracy and mathematics may need more support than literacy. For many establishments and learners the attainment gap in numeracy and mathematics exceeds that of literacy and there is more widespread negative attitudes among adults of their own mathematic skills that may have influenced learners during school closures. International research indicates that following previous school closures (for natural disasters/strikes), engagement and attainment achieved was initially higher than prior to the school closures. Sustaining this was problematic so specific consideration should be given to this in planning. Giving children a knowledgeable and a positive experience of the process of learning (eg. growth mindset, metacognitive understanding, self and formative assessment) will ensure mastery in their achievements and provide strong preparation if further blended or home learning is required. Creative solutions to any social distancing requirements should be sourced to re-establish and maximise co-operative learning experiences.
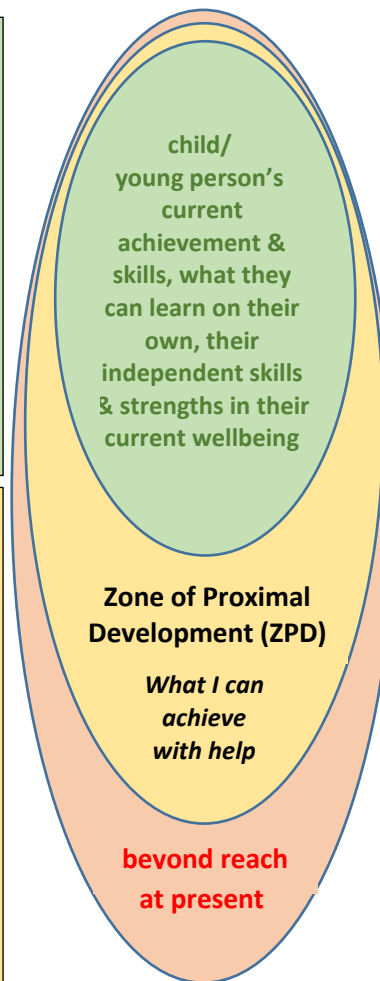
There is uncertainty about the number of children/ young people who may experience elevated levels of wellbeing concerns as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and/or returning to school in August 2020. We cannot make assumptions about an individual's resilience in response to vulnerabilities in their lives. All children will need a reasonable period of time to adjust and adapt to returning to school. Adults should provide ongoing monitoring of changes, both positive and negative in the child/ young person's wellbeing and learning. Re-establishing or refocusing on the evidence informed approaches considered to be effective in closing attainment gaps, using establishment and learner factors to guide decisions, and PEF plans remains critical. Effectively addressing any persistent concerns about a child's wellbeing and learning will be based on strong assessment. Where required, education establishments and teams around children should continue to use the Getting It Right for Every Child and Child's Plan processes to assist them. Universal approaches to assist wellbeing can be used in a targeted way for individuals and small groups where enhanced support is required.

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