

# **Our Curriculum Rationale at Buchlyvie Primary School**

## **Foreword**

Buchlyvie is a small village with in Stirlingshire. Most families live close to school and walk or cycle to school, a few children come by car as their home is situated outside the village. Buchlyvie Primary is part of a small campus that is attached to the health centre and community care service.

At Buchlyvie Primary School we appreciate and enjoy our rural countryside setting and the privileges provided by the outdoor space and scenery. The Trossachs National Park and Loch Lomond are on our doorstep providing excellent opportunities for learning. Additionally, the school is very close to Stirling, Glasgow, and Edinburgh so we try to take advantage of the facilities each city has to offer to deliver aspects of the curriculum through school trips. Buchlyvie is a small village with a big community who like to get involved with our school. Parents support the school well, 78% of parents participate in our Parent Council.

In June 2022 we shared a survey with our Parent Forum on the curriculum. We followed this up with a small focus group asking parents what the curriculum should look like for our children in the future. The response to the survey was 41% of our parents participated which represented 13 children from 32 children at the school. A small group of 5 parents attended the focus group.

The Principal Teacher surveyed the children across all classes from P1 to P7. Almost all learners shared that they are happy at school, the older class shared that they would like more opportunities to learn through play and inquiry based activities.

Teachers shared their expertise discussing the responses to the surveys, and contributed to the development of a new curriculum plan.

## **Survey Findings**

Most of our parents are in employment. In our survey, 55% of our families' work in Stirlingshire and 34% do not. Post Covid, 11% of parents who have employment outside Stirlingshire work from home. A significant number of parents are self-employed working within the central belt of Scotland. A few parents run their own businesses. A few have management jobs within large companies. Many parents work within education. A few parents work within arts, entertainment and recreation. Health, hospitality and arts are key enterprises within the village. Reflecting our rural location, one family has farmed in Buchlyvie for several generations.

Parents live in Buchlyvie because it allows a village lifestyle in a very safe environment for their children. Parents choose a small rural school for their children's education because they believe that their children will benefit from small classes in a family environment, everyone knowing each other well and supporting their children to achieve their best. Some families have attended Buchlyvie Primary School for several generations and choose to continue to raise their children in Buchlyvie.

*I grew up here and I want to bring my children up here. Hopefully it will be a safe environment for them and the opportunities I give them will allow them to experience a vast range of skills/activities prior to them moving on in life.*

*We live here because of the community spirit and access to outdoor pursuits as well as the slower pace of life and safety it has to offer.*

Parents are knowledgeable about the 4 capacities and feel strongly that being a successful learner is the key to building confidence and resilience. Developing resilience and life skills are identified as important by almost all parents. Money and Finance are considered important life skills which should be included in the curriculum.

Teaching Health and Wellbeing to ensure physical, social, emotional and mental health for children is agreed as essential by all parents in the survey.

Parents who responded to our survey, shared that Literacy and Numeracy should be at the heart of their child's education. Parents shared that repetition and practice are important to support progress in literacy and numeracy. Since our last survey, digital skills and safety online are now cited as an important part of the curriculum. There is increased understanding of STEM subjects and acknowledgement that these are taught well in school. All 8 curricular areas were understood as important to their child's learning. Parents have a mixed opinion on skills v knowledge and what the balance should be in the curriculum.

Parents agree that post Covid, they would like to see their children demonstrating their skills as effective contributors and responsible citizens within the Buchlyvie community. Suggestions included gardening around the village; helping out at the church soup club; hosting coffee mornings; reading to the elderly. Supporting the elderly in our village resonated across our parent forum. Parents would like to see people who live in the community sharing their skills and knowledge with school: musicians, artists, potters, gardeners, chefs, bakers, nurses and vets. Parents would like to see more connections with the local newspaper, Buchlyvie Bulletin, to share information within the community about school life and children's achievements.

Parents would like more interdisciplinary topics and that this should be strategically organised by teachers to ensure breadth across the curriculum.

Consultation on our Curriculum has been positive, we have planned our curriculum to meet the needs of our families in Buchlyvie. A new curriculum plan sets out our curriculum from P1- P7. (Appendix 1)

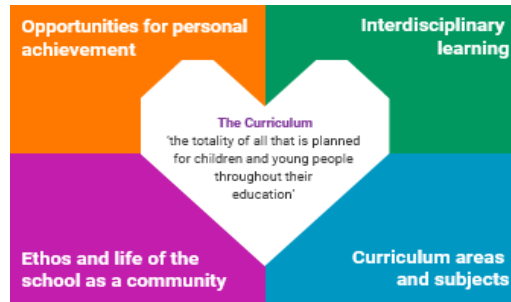
By **Curriculum** we mean, what learners are learning about in school across each level: early, first and second. By **Curriculum Rationale** we mean, that everyone involved with the school can answer the questions 'What is it we want for learners?' and 'What are we going to do to achieve it?'

## Our Curriculum Rationale



### What is it we want for our learners?

Our school values are shared by the community to show kindness, honesty, confidence, courage and respect. Curriculum for Excellence is at the heart of Buchlyvie Primary School.



### Our Aims

- teach children the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to thrive in our interconnected, digital and rapidly changing world;
- nurture children to become part of an inclusive school through promoting positive relationships within a democratic community where everyone's rights are respected;
- foster children's confidence and resilience to encourage risk taking, learning from mistakes and enjoy challenges;
- support children to know themselves to become successful unique individuals; and
- enable children to be responsible citizens and effective contributors.

### Our Objectives

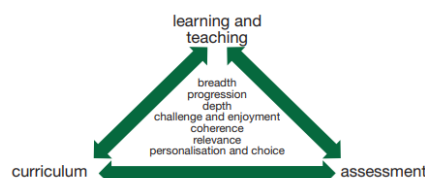
To meet our aims, our curriculum is delivered across the four contexts for learning.

- Personal achievements
- Ethos and Life of the School
- Curriculum areas
- Interdisciplinary learning

### What are we going to do to achieve it?

Progression frameworks in Languages and Mathematics alongside yearly overviews across all curricular areas ensure there is *Breadth; Progression; Depth; Challenge and Enjoyment; Coherence; Relevance; Personalisation and Choice*.

The teaching staff work together to set out clear targets for learners. Teachers plan and assess the learning and teaching in meaningful contexts to meet the needs of our learners. To ensure progress is made across early, first and second levels, we use the *experiences, outcomes* and benchmarks from Curriculum for Excellence. Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are shared in every lesson and children know what they are learning about and what the teacher is looking for as success.



## Teaching and Learning

Our teaching and learning ensures the development of each individuals' knowledge, skills and attributes.

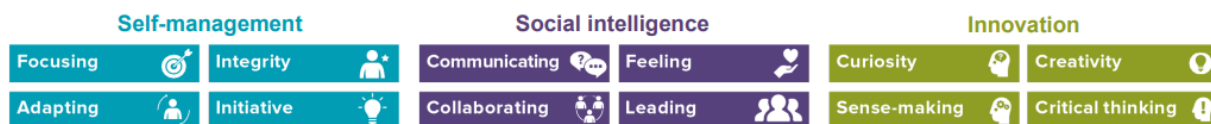
Why is learning knowledge Important?

- We know that learning factual knowledge is key to developing our memory. Facts and accompanying information allow us to think more powerfully and engage critically to solve problems or share opinions. Curriculum for excellence develops knowledge across 8 subjects:

***Well-being and health; Languages; Expressive arts; Mathematics; Sciences; Technologies; Social Studies and Moral and Religious Education.***

Why are skills important?

- The key message is that knowledge on its own is not enough. *Skills for Life Learning and Work* are fundamental to children's adaptability when experiencing challenges in the future.
- The meta skills from Skills Development Scotland are shared with learners to create adaptive learners and promote success in whatever context the future brings.
- The skills have been classified under three headings:
  - **Self-management:** Manage the now
  - **Social intelligence:** Connect with the world
  - **Innovation:** Create our own change



Why are developing attributes important?

- The 4 capacities reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning.
- Learners who have developed as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors will be able to contribute socially, culturally, politically, sustainably and economically to improve their lives in the future.



How do our learners learn and how is the teacher facilitating their learning?

Teacher knowledge of the learner and their stage of development is the starting point. Determining what children already know about a subject is also crucial before planning teaching and learning. Next the teacher scaffolds, chunks down manageable sections of learning, to ensure success. The teacher facilitates the learning depending on the experience of the learner, e.g. if a learner is learning something for the first time, their learning will be more teacher led. As learners become more confident and experienced in a subject area, the teacher will promote inquiry, investigation and collaboration to ensure breadth and depth of learning. Learners will continually be learning new knowledge and skills on their learning journey so teachers will weave together a variety of teaching methods and the curriculum to make learning fun and challenging.

Specialist teachers, parent and partners support our curriculum delivery. Music and PE specialists teach lessons. Parents share their skills with classes. A parent teaches bouldering across all stages. Active Stirling encourage fitness and interests in sport. The local community contribute to our curriculum; including Jessica Langford who supports Sustainability learning. The local farm encourages learning about the local economy.

### With what do our children learn?

At Buchlyvie Primary hands on, active learning is embedded in our learning and teaching. We are developing a play based learning approach across all stages; starting in early years and transitioning to inquiry learning from P1 to P7. Concrete materials, visual supports are key foundations of learning before working on abstract ideas. An additional classroom allows more space to encourage collaborative learning and group work. Curiosity and Creativity are a focus as a whole school and we continue to encourage children to develop their skills. A snug provides a safe space for quiet and calm.

Outdoor Learning is developing within our curriculum to benefit the mental, social, emotional and physical health of our children. We know that green space and gardening have health benefits and we want our children to have these opportunities. To support healthy attitudes, the children take part in the daily mile. We have developed our Outdoor Learning to include a variety of experiences in the school grounds and local surrounding area. We also encourage daily excursions linked to our curriculum and a residential visit in P7.

### How do we use assessment in learning to ensure success?

Assessment is a central part of everyday learning and teaching for learners. Teachers use assessment to track progress, plan next steps, and involve children in their learning. Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are shared in every lesson and children know what they are learning about and how success can be achieved. Assessments are based on the Learning Intentions and Success Criteria.

The teacher's role is knowing what the learner has achieved through observations, questioning, classroom tasks, dialogue. Teacher feedback will always be supportive to move the learner forward.

In the classroom, learners are encouraged to support each other, first of all helping each other understand what they need to do to be successful and achieve their targets. The teacher helps clarify what the learning is and learners have a role in communicating this to each other as well. Peer Assessment supports learning across the curriculum.

Teachers model key skills of reflection and self-assessment so that learners can be owners of their learning. Teachers teach metacognition so that learners are equipped with important strategies they need to use to be successful.

Children in P1, P4, P7 complete the National Standardised Assessments for Scotland. These are online standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy as part of everyday learning and teaching. The assessments help to identify children's progress, providing diagnostic information to support teachers' professional judgement.

Occasionally, diagnostic assessments will be set for learners to ensure we '*get it right for every child*' (GIRFEC). Assessment information can be used by teachers to make decisions about the next steps in learning.

### Working with Parents to deliver the Curriculum

An active Parent Council supports the school in its work.

Each Term, targets across the 4 contexts of learning is shared with parents to communicate the next steps in learning and how they can support their children at home. We aim to build good partnerships with parents and encourage parents to share their knowledge and skills to support our termly targets.

