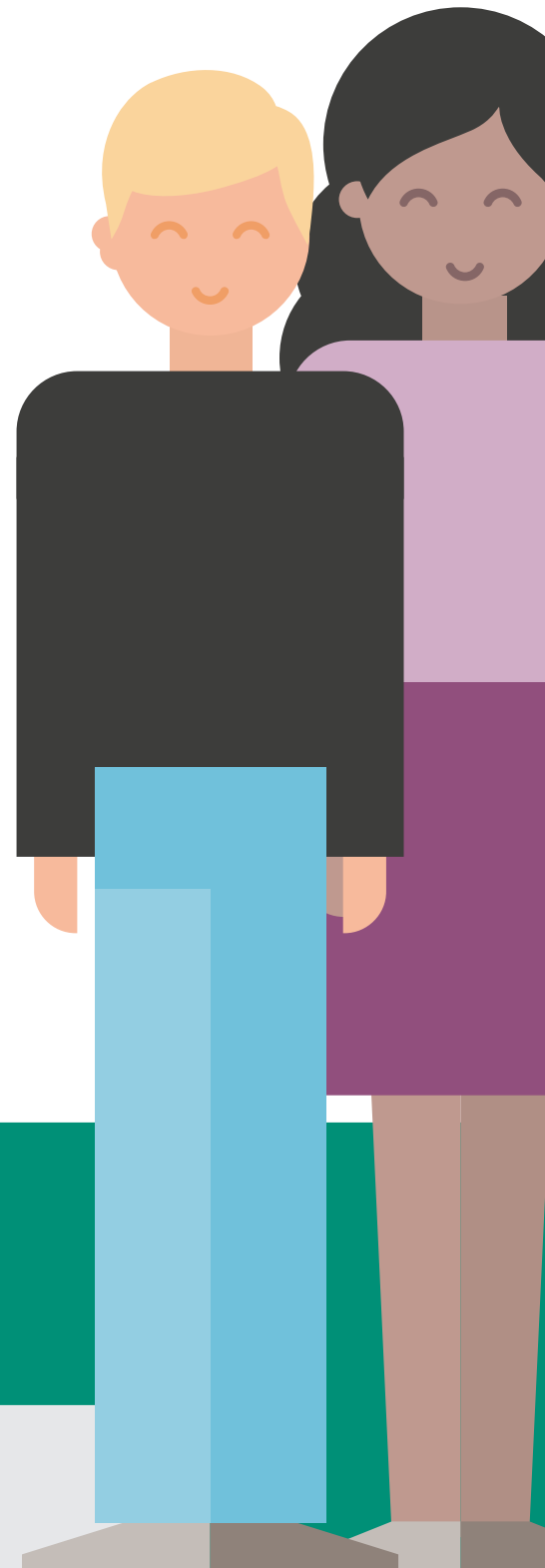


# Senior Phase

IN A NUTSHELL



**SCOTLAND'S CURRICULUM**  
FOR EXCELLENCE

## About the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

Children and young people, from age 3 to 18, learn in the broad general education from early years through to S3, and in the senior phase from S4 to S6. See more about CfE at: [npfs.org.uk/2019/06/cfe-in-a-nutshell-2](https://npfs.org.uk/2019/06/cfe-in-a-nutshell-2)

### During the three years of the senior phase young people:

- Study for qualifications and awards according to their abilities and interests
- Do activities alongside these which continue to develop them in line with the four capacities of CfE (see our Nutshell on CfE)
- Improve their skills for learning, life and work
- Are prepared for moving on and next steps after school

Because CfE is a complete programme of learning from age 3 to 18, before they start S4, young people will have already been thinking about what they might do after school and their possible subject and qualification/award choices from S4 onwards.

At the end of S3, young people, their parents and teachers discuss these choices. They look at how the young person prefers to learn, their interests and experiences, and what they are thinking about doing after they leave school.

You can do a lot to support your child at this time by helping them to think ahead and about what they'll need for the future world of work.



## Where young people can learn

Young people have all sorts of options about what and where they learn between S4 and S6. They can learn in different ways and in different places such as:



CfE is about giving each young person as much flexibility as possible. That's because staying in school/college after 16 gives them the best chance of secure and rewarding work.

*\*their own school and other schools – for example if their own school doesn't offer a certain course*

e-SGOIL digital hub provides a wider and more equal choice of subjects for pupils across all secondary schools in the Western Isles, and beyond. From bases in Lewis and North Uist, staff teach pupils across Scotland.

West Lothian secondary schools have a virtual campus. For some courses, some pupils are taught online, meeting the teacher and other pupils at key points.

## The options for learning

The flexibility means that young people have many different options.

This is very different from how things used to be. There are links at the end of this leaflet so you can find out more. Remember you can contact your child's school for more information too.

Some of the options which young people can choose from when they are in the senior phase are:

- Advanced Highers
- ASDAN qualifications
- City and Guilds qualifications
- Foundation apprenticeships
- Highers
- Higher National Certificates (HNC)
- Nationals 1 to 5
- Progression awards
- Scottish Baccalaureate
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)
- Skills Development Scotland Certificate of Work Readiness
- Skills for Work
- Wider achievement awards such as the John Muir Award and Duke of Edinburgh's Award (see our Nutshell on wider achievement)

There are many more.

Schools are keen to work with colleges, employers, parents and communities to make sure that what young people do is:

- Based on each young person's needs and wants
- Connected and rational
- Giving them a clear way forward
- Relevant to the world of work and adult life

Some young people do one-day a week at college and the rest in school. For example, S3–S6 pupils at Musselburgh Grammar are getting experience and qualifications at the local Construction and Technology Centre along with Edinburgh College.



## Qualifications and learning experiences



There's no set rule about how many awards and qualifications young people do. It varies depending on each young person and their school. The main thing is that young people get the chance to do awards and qualifications at the stage that's right for them. It takes account of the fact that young people learn in different ways and that, as well as qualifications, learning experiences (such as volunteering and work placements) are important for preparing young people for the future.

## Moving on from school

The three years of the senior phase of CfE prepare young people for life after school. Employers want young people who are flexible and adaptable, who can communicate with others, and who can think creatively and for themselves.

Schools offer young people different ways of moving on. For example, Foundation Apprenticeships give young people the chance to do an industry-related course, alongside other national qualifications which can support them into a Modern Apprenticeship or university. Some young people go to college after school, and then move directly into year two or three of university. Some take up Graduate Apprenticeships which allow them to combine work and higher education at college or university. And there are many other options.

### You can do a lot to support your child by:

- Keeping an open mind and remembering that the world of education and of work has changed a lot since you were at school
- Finding out, for yourself, about the possibilities which are open to young people now
- Encouraging your child to talk to you and others about their hopes and plans

This leaflet is part of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence series which also includes:

**Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence in a Nutshell**

[npfs.org.uk/2019/06/cfe-in-a-nutshell-2](http://npfs.org.uk/2019/06/cfe-in-a-nutshell-2)

**Wider achievement in a Nutshell**

[npfs.org.uk/2019/06/wider-achievement-in-a-nutshell](http://npfs.org.uk/2019/06/wider-achievement-in-a-nutshell)

**See other NPFS Nutshells at:**

[npfs.org.uk/downloads](http://npfs.org.uk/downloads)

**Curriculum for Excellence fact file**

[www2.gov.scot/resource/doc/920/0121215.pdf](http://www2.gov.scot/resource/doc/920/0121215.pdf)

**Parents as partners in their children's learning**

[education.gov.scot/parentzone/Documents/parents-as-partners-toolkit.pdf](http://education.gov.scot/parentzone/Documents/parents-as-partners-toolkit.pdf)

**SDS My World of Work**

[myworldofwork.co.uk/parents/topics](http://myworldofwork.co.uk/parents/topics)



the National Parent  
Forum of Scotland

[parentforumscotland.org](http://parentforumscotland.org)

[enquiries@parentforumscotland.org](mailto:enquiries@parentforumscotland.org)

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