

Draft Curriculum Framework and Guidelines



NCCA
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curraicim agus Measúnachta

For Children in Detention and Care (CiDC)

A DRAFT CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES

**For Children in Detention
and Care (CiDC)**

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NCCA wishes to acknowledge and thank the learners from the detention and care settings for the use of their artwork in the design and layout of this document.

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Background



Introduction

In December 2005, the Government approved a number of major Youth Justice reforms following a review carried out by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The rationale for these reforms was to streamline and restructure the delivery of the State's services in the area of youth justice, which previously were dealt with by a number of departments and agencies. Among the principle measures agreed by Government were:

- The setting up of a new Youth Justice Service in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- The transfer of responsibility for the detention of young offenders under 18 years in four of the detention schools from the Department of Education and Science to the new Youth Justice Service. Responsibility for the fifth school transfers to the Health Service Executive
- Amendments to the Criminal Justice Bill (2004) to introduce necessary changes to the Children Act (2001), including changes in the way education is provided for in detention schools with a move away from the primary model to delivery by the relevant VEC: the rationale for this being that this better reflects the needs and age cohort of the children in question
- The development by the Department of Education and Science of an overarching strategy on educational services that aims to ensure a continuum of education and training opportunities for children in the high support, special care and detention school sectors.

In this context, the NCCA was requested by the Department of Education and Science to generate a framework for and guidelines on curriculum and assessment provision in schools attached to children detention schools, high support units and special care units.

In general terms, the curriculum framework takes account of the background and experiences of the learners involved. This is characterised in many cases by a combination of the following elements:

- Frequent periods of absenteeism during their schooling
- Poor experience of the transition from primary to post-primary schooling
- Marginalisation and disengagement leading to underachievement in mainstream school settings
- Significant difficulties in the areas of basic literacy and numeracy
- The presence of behavioural and emotional problems.

The curriculum framework is designed to accommodate the flexibility and autonomy needed by each school setting to tailor and develop educational programmes according to the needs of each learner. The framework has been developed in collaboration with those working in the settings involved. The schools and units have generated considerable expertise, based on experience, of what is needed and what works for the learners in question. The development of the framework has also been undertaken with cognisance of similar reviews and developments in cognate sectors and in similar contexts internationally.

It is acknowledged that education provision is only one part of a cluster of supports needed to ensure the development of a comprehensive response to all concerns related to the continuum of education and care of the young people in these settings. Adopting a 'one child one plan' partnership approach can improve outcomes for the young people involved. To achieve this, all relevant partners must work well together to provide a sustained coordinated interagency service with a shared set of values, commitments and objectives.

Education provision in the settings

The settings not only provide education but play a large part in the rehabilitation process. The educational background of many of the learners is often characterised by a failure to benefit from conventional mainstream schooling. In this context, the teachers and care staff work closely together to create a positive environment in which the young person can fulfil their potential socially, emotionally, academically, creatively/artistically, culturally and in other ways.

By their nature education programmes in detention/care settings are dynamic, inclusive and flexible. The curriculum is adjusted and modified by the schools in light of the assessed needs of the young people who present at any given time. The schools have generated an understanding, based on experience, of what works best for the learners in these settings. Typically this consists of several of the following elements

- Comprehensive educational assessment
- Generation of individual care and education plans
- Intensive literacy and numeracy programmes
- Aspects of the primary curriculum
- Some Junior Certificate subjects
- A number of programmes leading to FETAC Component Certificates
- Some Leaving Certificate subjects.

Young people in detention/care are generally of an age consistent with that of compulsory education. This period of compulsory education is especially critical for these young people, many of whom have basic literacy/numeracy needs, emotional or psychological difficulties and lack the family support

network and social support structures discernible in the lives of many of their peers in mainstream education.

The management of challenging behaviour is a daily concern of all staff working in these settings. Many of the behaviours exhibited by the children are extreme in nature. All staff may have to respond to and manage aggressive, disruptive or violent misbehaviour. During the course of the school day, teaching staff may have to respond to emergency situations where normal sanctions for misbehaviour do not apply. In these circumstances teachers who have received the appropriate training as part of an overall behaviour intervention strategy can be authorised by their board of management to use physical restraint.

Rationale for the framework

The general aim of education programmes within the detention and care settings is to develop the learner's knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes and to establish educational progression routes that offer quality alternatives to current life paths that may lead to uncertain or in some cases difficult futures. In this regard, the creative, supportive and even transformative impact that education can have on the learner is important. In this context education in a detention/care setting needs to be truly learner-centred.

Developing a curriculum that serves to address the complexities and diversity of individual learners is a challenging process. Helping young people in these settings to develop a wide range of knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes that will facilitate their successful integration into a rapidly advancing knowledge society is a challenging task. Other factors to be taken into account include changes in the way knowledge is constructed, the ever-increasing extent to which aspects of globalisation affect people's daily lives and the emergence of a more multicultural society.

The purpose of this curriculum framework is to encompass and facilitate the curricular experiences available to all learners across the range of settings. The framework is designed to assist schools and other settings in the area of curriculum development and programme planning. The framework can act as a reference point for educational programmes that develop a wide range of skills, knowledge, understandings and attitudes in line with the needs of the learners and the resources available.

The Framework



This section outlines the elements and features of the curriculum framework.

Vision

The curriculum framework is designed to support the development of high quality educational programmes that value and celebrate the learner's individuality in an inclusive and caring environment. The framework underpins the holistic benefits of programmes based around individual learning needs. It supports programmes that empower the learner with the educational, personal and inter-personal skills needed to participate in and contribute to society on leaving a detention or care setting. The framework also facilitates the establishment of progression routes for learners to other education and training opportunities, and prepares them for lifelong learning.

Aims

The aims of primary and post-primary curricula combined with the views of teachers and learners consulted in the detention/care settings on the role and purpose of a curriculum framework inform the proposed set of aims.

The Primary School Curriculum (1999) incorporates child-centred principles and a commitment to preparation for lifelong learning that concurs with the vision proposed for the curriculum framework for the detention/care settings. The three overall aims of primary education identified in the curriculum are

- To enable the child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as a unique individual
- To enable the child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society
- To prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning.

The aims and intended outcomes of junior cycle and the new draft senior cycle aims are consistent with the vision of the framework in that they emphasise an education that is learner-centred and that makes a pivotal contribution to how learners develop in terms of the knowledge they acquire, the understanding they achieve, the skills they master and the values they develop. Senior cycle education aims to

- Engage learners in using their talents and intelligence well to think, reflect, reason, deliberate, create and gain practical know-how
- Develop in learners the qualities that will enable them to be open-minded, critically discerning, hold values, generate ideals, have a sense of justice and exercise moral and political freedom
- Contribute to the personal well-being of the learner and to their quality of life now and in the future, in particular their capacity to establish and sustain caring relationships with family, friends and other people
- Promote active citizenship and encourage the participation of learners in the social, community, national and international dimensions of their lives
- Assist learners to become economically self-sufficient as adults and to contribute to the material well-being of society
- Facilitate learners in accessing learning pathways, in making sound learning choices, in managing their learning and above all, in enjoying and developing a love of learning
- Inspire, motivate and enable learners to pursue excellence in learning and to achieve to the highest possible standard
- Give learners the confidence, competence and resilience to live in a rapidly changing, technologically advanced, and globalised world

The education programmes offered in detention or care settings have a significant normalising influence on the daily routine of the learner. The building of relationships is central to this normalisation. Normal life is about the individual, his/her relationships and purposeful activity. Education programmes try to draw out those characteristics, talents, abilities and attributes that make the learner a unique person. Creating an inclusive and caring environment, providing the opportunity for all learners to experience success, and helping to build learner/learner, teacher/learner, and learner/care worker relationships are important aims for education in this normalising process.

The curriculum framework for the detention and care settings subscribes to all the above aims but, in addition, some aims of particular relevance to the settings are outlined below. These are

- To create an education environment that is inclusive and caring of all learners
- To raise the self esteem and confidence of the young person as a learner
- To target the individual learning needs of all learners
- To offer educational and vocational guidance to support the learner in preparing for their transition to mainstream care/home and their progression to other education and training opportunities
- To facilitate continuity of the learning experience by developing effective transition practices between the detention and care settings and mainstream education and training settings.

The Vision and Aims in a wider context

The vision and aims of the curriculum framework for children detention schools, high support units and special care units share common ground

with the mission statement of the Department of Education and Science (DES) which outlines in its Strategy Statement 2005-2007 the importance of providing high-quality education that will...

- Enable individuals to achieve their full potential and to participate fully as members of society
- Contribute to Ireland's social, cultural and economic development.

Through its high level goals, the DES also prioritises the promotion of equity and inclusion, quality outcomes, lifelong learning and planning for education that is relevant to personal, social, cultural and economic needs.

In developing the National Children's Strategy (2000), proposals submitted during the consultation process by parents and others who care for and work with children are similar to the aims of the curriculum framework.

The needs of the child must be catered for in a holistic sense. The emotional, physical, educational, societal and cultural needs should be looked at in the context of the family and the community. The creation and building of a sense of belonging, of being a valued member of the community, should be incorporated into all services.¹

The 'whole child perspective' upon which the National Children's Strategy is based is central to the work of teachers, care staff, managers and other professionals in these settings. In sharing this perspective, the framework values and supports the development of a partnership approach to learning. This sharing of knowledge and understanding within the multidisciplinary team particularly in the areas of literacy, numeracy and the social and emotional aspects of learning is a prerequisite of quality practice in education and care.

¹ The 'National Children's Strategy: Report of the public consultation' (2000)

The *Learning-Support Guidelines*¹ published by the Department of Education and Science set the role of the learning-support teacher firmly in the context of a whole-school approach. The principal aim of learning support is to optimise the teaching and learning process so that all students regardless of ability and age are enabled to achieve satisfactory levels of literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school.

Some of the subsidiary aims of learning-support services for pupils with low achievement and/or learning difficulties have a particular resonance with the proposed aims for education in the detention and care settings. These are...

- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in these pupils
- To enable these pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners

- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support and resources for these pupils in English or Mathematics
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support for these pupils
- To establish early intervention programmes and other programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties in learning.

The provisions of The EPSEN Act (2004), the guidelines² compiled by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) for teachers and students with general learning disabilities together with the provisions of The Children Act (2001), also represent a supportive background to the vision and aims of the curriculum framework.

¹ 'Learning Support Guidelines' (Department of Education and Science, 2000)

² Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities' (NCCA, 2007)



Guiding Principles

The curriculum framework includes guiding principles that support continuity, progression and participation. These principles will serve to guide schools and other settings in curriculum planning and development activity.

The guiding principles are informed by the thinking and recommendations included in

- Standards and Criteria for Children Detention Schools (2002)
- The Management of behaviour: key lessons from the inspection of High Support Units, Social Services Inspectorate (2006)
- The National Standards for Residential Care
- The Report of the Task Force on Student Behaviour (2006).

The guiding principles relate to the areas of

- Flexibility
- Personalised learning
- Continuity and progression
- Diversity
- Equality
- Collaboration and partnership

Flexibility

The curriculum should be adaptable to the particular needs of the individual learner and the context of the setting. Facilitating choice for the learner and offering the teacher the autonomy to tailor the curriculum to best meet the learner's needs are important in this regard. In response to social and technological change, and to increase the range of flexible options, effective use of new technologies as tools for learning should be encouraged.

Personalised learning

A curriculum that is personalised, holistic and experiential is best placed to meet the diverse learning needs of the learners. Through the use of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the Individual Care Plan (ICP), the learning experience should be personalised to the learner's needs, interests and ways of learning. Recognising and accommodating the different starting points, learning rates and previous experiences of learners are central to meeting these needs. The learner-centred approach should address the assessed needs of the learner in the areas of basic literacy and numeracy and place an emphasis on the social and personal development of the learner.

Continuity and progression

The curriculum for children detention schools, high support units and special care units should support a **continuum** of learning across age and developmental ranges. It should facilitate continuity of the learning experience for learners who move between these settings, helping the learner to develop their appetite and capacity for learning.

In this regard, the curriculum must support and align itself with a system that facilitates the tracking of student learning, effects a smooth transfer of vital information on the learner, and helps to manage effective transitions and progression to other learning opportunities for those learners who move between the various settings and beyond in their lives. In this context, encouraging coherence and consistency between the development of the IEP and the range of curriculum options, teaching and learning resources, and supports available to the learner are crucial aspects of any education programme in these settings.

The curriculum should also support learning progress. Progressing learning involves working with a sequence of successively more complex ways of thinking about a concept/idea in a learning

area. The education programme should structure this progression by supporting the learner in the process of developing better understandings and new ways of thinking. The interdisciplinary nature of knowledge necessitates the fostering of connections between different learning areas. To maximise a potential learning progression for the learner, the curriculum should emphasise not only the learning of individual topics but also the connections between them. Assessment strategies and materials should be developed to support such a curriculum.

In addition to managing the learning progress of the learners, the curriculum in detention and care settings should offer the learner routes of **progression** from the education programme offered by the setting to further education and training. The curriculum in the detention and care settings subscribes to the broad aims of primary and post-primary education and so should offer comparable qualification progression routes. This avoids potential reintegration difficulties for the learner as regards progression to other education and training opportunities.

Learners who achieve awards or qualifications should have some associated possibilities for progression to other awards or qualifications at a similar or higher level on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). This applies to learners in their current setting, those transferring to other detention/care settings and those returning to mainstream education or training. To enable such progression routes to operate smoothly and to support the learner, it is necessary to have a system in place to organise, identify, and transfer where necessary the information needed to effect and smooth progression.

Diversity

Every learner is unique and brings with them a wealth of values, talents, attitudes, abilities, aspirations and needs. Identifying, developing, and

adopting good practice in teaching and learning strategies will help settings to respond to the diverse needs of learners and to be inclusive in that context.

The curriculum should equip learners to live in a multicultural society, and the education programme for the detention and care settings should incorporate a range of supports needed to cater for international learners.

Equality

For the individual learner engagement with and success in education is directly related to future opportunities and life chances. In this context, the curriculum should promote equality of access to education, equality of participation and equality of outcome in education for all learners. This can be achieved by sustaining the focus on learner-centred education and the provision of flexible educational programmes that subscribe to the vision, aims, principles and defining features of the framework. Programmes of study generated with reference to this framework should be inclusive of learners with special educational needs, those learners of diverse cultural backgrounds, those with disabilities, and should enable those learners whose first language is not English to have full access to the curriculum and be supported in their learning.

Collaboration and partnership

Education in the settings is the shared responsibility of teachers, learners, parents, care staff and management personnel. Successful use of the curriculum framework to plan for and develop curricula that meet the needs of individual settings will require a collaborative approach to planning by all concerned. In this regard, a climate of listening, trust and mutual respect between all involved should be fostered. This should contribute to a sense of common purpose focused on ensuring that the learner experiences a sense of belonging and attachment. It should also foster a sense of teamwork

for all those involved in the provision of education in the setting. Planning the provision of effective support structures for education is the individual and collective responsibility of the VEC's, DES, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) the Education Welfare Board (EWB), and the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS).

The importance of collaborative dialogue focused on identifying and responding to the emerging educational needs of the learner in these settings between the relevant support agencies, education providers and Government departments cannot be over-emphasised. Necessary collaborative working arrangements between the EWB, its team of education welfare officers, the VEC's, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the Office of the Minister for Children (OMC) and the DES are important in this regard.

Defining Features

A number of defining features have been identified as central to any curriculum or educational programme that would be derived from this framework. In other words, the defining features are those elements that are considered to be essential to the education programme if it is to truly meet the needs of the learners involved. At least some of the defining features should be present in any education programme developed using the framework though not all features will be needed or present in every programme. The inclusion of defining features will contribute to achieving coherence among educational programmes based on the framework.

For purposes of clarity, the defining features have been grouped under the following headings mainly relating to

- Teaching and learning
- Culture and climate
- Implementation

Defining features: Teaching and learning

Personalised learning

Personalised learning involves providing a high quality educational experience that is responsive to the different ways learners achieve to the best of their ability, whatever their talent or background. Personalised learning is not new to these settings; schools and other settings have and will continue to establish their own approaches to personalised learning. They have tailored curriculum and teaching methods to meet the needs of learners for many years. Current approaches to personalised learning include

- **Individual Education Plan:** An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written document prepared for a named learner which specifies the learning goals that are to be achieved by the learner over a set period of time and the teaching strategies, resources and supports necessary to achieve those goals.
- **The Individual Care Plan:** An Individual Care Plan (ICP) is an agreed written plan designed to meet the individual needs of each child. It is drawn up in consultation with the child, their family and those involved with their care. The ICP identifies and outlines the current and future care of the child. It establishes short, medium and long term goals for the child and identifies the services required to attain these.

ICP's include an assessment of each young person's physical, social, psychological, emotional, educational, health and behavioural requirements and identify how the placement will support and promote the welfare of each young person. Through-care and after-care plans are part of the ICP, and are put in place in the early stage of a young person's placement. The Plan is reviewed and revised as required to reflect the young persons changing needs and circumstances.

The IEP and the ICP are included in a case record prepared for each learner and may be used in court to inform the judge of the young person's progress if requested.

Continuum of Learning

The educational experience of learners in a detention or care setting should reflect what is available to their peers in mainstream schools. The curriculum experienced should allow both for the age and stage of development of the learner. Education programmes offered should ensure continuity and progression in student's learning by offering a continuum of provision based on the needs of the learner.

Guidance Provision

Guidance provision is an important feature of education programmes in the schools and other

settings. Personal, educational and vocational guidance is of particular importance where a flexible curriculum with a range of options is being applied in a personalised way to meet the needs of learners. It is important that in this scenario learners understand the choices they are being given and are taking and the opportunities these open up for further education, training and the world of work. Personal guidance and counselling also feed into the IEPs and ICPs referred to earlier.

Learning management

Support of learners in managing their learning progress should also be a feature of education programmes in detention and care settings. Through learning management strategies, such as tutoring and mentoring, learners can be supported in becoming more independent and autonomous in their learning both in the setting and beyond it in their lives.



Special Educational Needs

Education programmes should serve to address the special educational needs a learner may have. The identification of a learner's special educational needs at an early stage is vital so that the supports needed to progress their learning and to enjoy the learning experience are made available. The co-ordination and monitoring of the learners IEP and ICP so that the priority needs of the child and the resources/supports necessary to meet those needs are provided for is also an essential feature of education programmes in detention and care settings.

Literacy and numeracy

Competence in literacy and numeracy is necessary for all learners to enable them to meet the challenges of living and working. These skills are fundamental to improving the self-esteem, confidence, and general proficiency and competence of learners. They are crucial in enabling learners to access other learning opportunities and life chances. The fact that many learners in detention and care settings present with difficulties in literacy and numeracy provides further cause for a focus on these skills being a defining feature of educational programmes in these settings.

Approaches to assessment

Assessment of learning progress and achievement is an intrinsic part of any educational programme. A range of assessment approaches should be used, reflecting the personalised nature of the programmes themselves. The range of assessment types includes

- **Formative assessment:** formative assessment informs both teachers and learners about learner understanding and learning progress at a point when timely adjustments can be made. The learner plays a key part in formative assessment. Examples of formative assessment practices include regular feedback, teacher praise/

recognition of achievement, teacher adopting questioning strategies, teacher using Assessment for Learning (AFL) techniques, self and peer assessment, and learners keeping an ongoing record of their work.

- **Summative assessment:** Summative assessments are given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and can do. Summative assessments are therefore not solely associated with state examinations. Summative assessment approaches are often used as part of in-house certification (based on a portfolio of work), end of unit and end of term tests, FETAC subject-related awards at various achievement levels, JCSP certification as well as in the state examinations.
- **Standardised testing:** A standardised test is an instrument of assessment that contains standardised procedures for its administration and scoring and for the interpretation of its results. Standardised tests are useful instruments in detention and care settings for testing a learner's reading and mathematical achievement. They can contribute to the teacher's monitoring and assist in identifying the needs of individual learners. However, it should be noted that no such specific tests normed for Irish learners in the relevant age categories are currently available.
- **Diagnostic testing:** Diagnostic testing is used for the early identification of learning difficulties and the detailed learning needs involved. The diagnostic features of the IEP are used in detention and care settings to enable the class teacher to plan for how the learning difficulties can be addressed during the teaching and learning process.

Defining features: Culture and climate

Recognition of prior learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the process of granting recognition for previously completed qualifications, work experience and life experience. Recognising prior learning is consistent with facilitating a continuum of learning in the educational programmes of detention schools and other settings. This continuum ranges from serving those who need support in developing their confidence to those young people who are confident as learners and who are actively seeking a means of recognition. The provision of an ongoing record of learning for all learners that can be linked to their personal development and the planning of future learning pathways could underpin the concept of a continuum of learning and the recognition of prior learning.

Mutually respectful relationships

The centrality of the teacher/learner relationship is of crucial importance to the learning process. The individual attention possible within small learning groups in these settings can facilitate a strong teacher-learner relationship built on trust and respect. A flexible curriculum that builds in opportunities for the development of these mutually respectful relationships has a strong motivating influence on the learner.

The voice of the learner should be sought and valued, particularly in the context of aspects of learning that relate to their lives and previous experience. Educational programmes should seek the learner's suggestions on ways to make the learning personalised and involve the learner in discussions of learning needs and learning progress.

Approaches to teaching and learning

The use of a wide range of teaching and learning approaches in the 'follow up' and 'follow through'

of a learner's IEP should be central to educational programmes. Variety in curricular content, teaching approaches, ways of learning, and learning rates should also feature in the programmes. Learning approaches involving activity-based learning, self-directed learning, practical problem-solving, thematic approaches to topics and open-ended tasks should be included.

Learning environment

It is important to allow students of all abilities to experience success, to have fun and to be active in their learning. A suitable context for experiencing the fun, challenge and success of learning is the use both of outdoor and indoor learning environments that are motivating and inviting to learners.

Positive learning experiences

Educational programmes that provide opportunities for incorporating learning activities that boost the learners self-esteem, promote healthy living and enhance student learning will be best placed to prepare learners for a life of autonomous well-being. Including visits by drama groups, speakers, musicians, workshops and creative activities in educational programmes are some ways in which this can be achieved.

Thematic approaches to learning

Educational programmes in detention and care settings should feature flexible multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and thematic approaches to teaching and learning. These approaches can often facilitate the involvement of teachers, parents, non teaching staff and other professionals.

Qualifications

The importance of the pursuit of qualifications and credentials that carry meaning in 'mainstream' education and in society should not be underestimated. Educational programmes, where appropriate and feasible, should serve to link the

learner's needs and aspirations with the qualifications needed to provide meaningful progression to further and higher education and training, and the world of work. Learners should be encouraged to gain a foothold on and progress their learning with reference to the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Defining features: Implementation

Tracking System

The use of a system that tracks the learner's educational progress should be a defining feature of educational programmes in detention and care settings and should be easily accessed by all settings the learner attends. A tracking system of this nature is important for the learner to facilitate a seamless progression in the learning from their previous mainstream school, through their possible series of multiple detention/care placements and to support their reintegration to mainstream education, training or employment.

Fit-for-purpose approaches to short-term placements

The use of a range of strategies suitable for learners on shorter periods of detention or placement should be an important feature of the educational programmes in these settings. The curriculum should encourage the use of a range of assessment techniques to target the specific learning needs of this category of learner, particularly in the areas of literacy, numeracy, personal and inter-personal skills, health education and vocational guidance.

ICT and assistive technology

The use of ICT as a tool for learning should be a feature of educational programmes, especially in the contexts of distance learning and virtual learning environments. The skill gaps of learners should be identified and addressed. An ICT plan for the

school or setting could facilitate an awareness of the beneficial aspects of ICT/Assistive Technology in teaching and learning, and a better understanding of how and why ICT should be integrated into daily learning.

In-service Support and Professional Development

The ongoing in-career professional development of those teaching in detention and care settings is essential, especially where in-service events facilitate communication between the various settings and allows for the sharing of good practice. Learners in detention and care settings provide unique challenges in their education. Principals and teachers in these settings should be supported through the continuous provision of professional development specific to the detention and care settings that complements other in-service courses provided for teachers by the Department of Education and Science, FETAC, etc.

Areas of Learning

Having identified the aims, guiding principles and defining features of the framework, the question of the areas of learning that the framework encompasses arises. The framework maps the areas of learning that are encompassed in the educational programmes of the detention and care settings.

These areas of learning are currently catered for in the detention and care settings by

- Primary curriculum (the full range of learning areas)
- FETAC modules (specification of specific learning objectives is seen as useful)
- JCSP (the learning profiles allow learners to build personal targets)
- Junior Certificate (the areas of experience)
- Leaving Certificate (usually specific subjects)

- **Circle 2**

Information from the planning stage acts as a baseline for the development of the most suitable educational programme for the learner, the intention being to enhance the learner's knowledge and understanding of themselves and to enable the learner to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to participate fully in society on leaving a detention or care setting.

- **Circle 3**

Represents the emphasis placed on the essential skills throughout the curriculum. Skills of literacy and numeracy, personal and interpersonal skills, and healthy living skills are vital for many of the learners in these settings. These enabling skills help the student to progress their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

- **Circle 4**

Represents the main learning areas of the curriculum. The achievement of the learner in each learning area is informed by the negotiation process, the knowledge, skills, understanding and

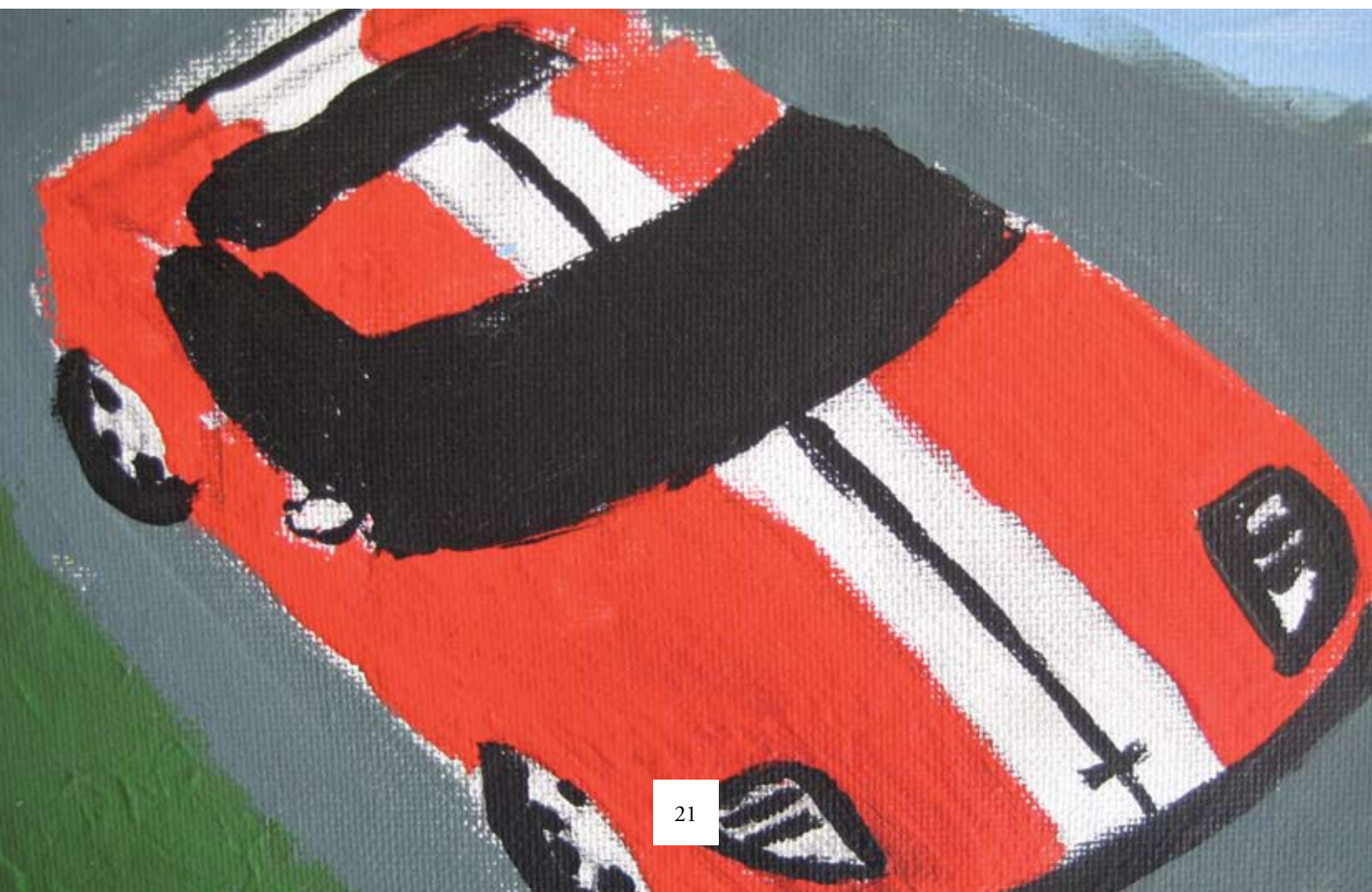
attitudes needed by the learner and is underpinned by the development of enabling skills.

- **Circle 5**

Represents the possible recognition and certification routes available to the learner in these settings. Also represented here are assessment practices related to ICT/EAL, in-house certification and assessment practices related to the Primary School Curriculum. Negotiating, planning and developing the most appropriate progression route for the learner is a key aspect in the development of each learner's IEP and together with the learner's care plan and exit strategy will support the learner in their transition to further education, training and employment.

- **Circle 6**

Outlines the guiding principles that permeate all aspects of the curriculum framework. These principles guide each teacher and school in the area of whole-school planning, curriculum development and programme development.



- Draft Curriculum Framework and Guidelines for Children in Detention and Care (CiDC) •

Draft Guidelines for the Implementation of the Framework

for Children in Detention
and Care (CiDC)



INTRODUCTION

The guidelines are designed to show how the framework can be used to support the planning and review of education programmes for learners in Children Detention Schools, High Support Units and Special Care Units. As with the framework itself, the guidelines are intended for use by all teachers,

and should also be accessible to care staff, managers, other professionals and stakeholders directly involved with the student's education during the time they spend in these settings and following their transition to mainstream schools, or other educational/training settings.

The four sections in the guidelines are:

Section 1: Foundational Areas of the Curriculum – Re-engagement

This section scopes some key features emphasised in the framework and which are also considered by the settings themselves to be foundational to a student's level of success in other areas of the curriculum, in re-engaging with learning and in lifelong learning.

Section 2: Using the Framework in a System of Review

This section outlines a process that the schools may find helpful when aligning the elements and features of the framework to their curriculum planning and review processes.

Section 3: Personalised Education Programme Scenarios

This section illustrates a number of education programme scenarios for a learner in a specific context. The purpose being to provide examples of personalised education programmes developed by an experienced team of practitioners in the field and underpinned by the principles and features of the framework. The concluding section of each scenario illustrates its current degree of alignment to the framework.

Section 4: Maximising Education Programmes in the Context of the Framework

This section outlines some realistic and achievable changes that principals and teachers in these settings feel could and should be made to curriculum to ensure greater alignment to the framework. Included are descriptions of possible new courses, subject areas to increase the breadth of provision and necessary resources to expand on existing programmes or to address perceived gaps in education provision.



Section 1: Foundational areas of the curriculum– re-engagement

Key elements of the framework emphasise what are generally recognised by the settings involved to be foundational areas of the curriculum vital in fostering re-engagement and lifelong learning. These areas include literacy and numeracy, life skills, and educational and vocational guidance.

It is widely acknowledged by practitioners in these settings that a learner's success and progress in these areas contributes to improvements in their self-esteem, social skills, work related skills and general well-being. This in turn provides the learner with the confidence to have a go, take risks, make mistakes and try again in other learning areas of the curriculum.

The attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding gained through involvement in these areas support the learner's reengagement in education and help the learner to map alternative life choice pathways in preparation for a return to mainstream school, home life and other education/training or work settings. The level of quality support necessary (staffing and resources) to offer learners such potentially life enhancing opportunities is recognised by the settings as a cornerstone of their education programme. The foundational areas of the curriculum are outlined below.

Literacy and Numeracy

Effective literacy and numeracy skills are requirements for success in key areas of learner's lives. They are important for learning across all curriculum areas and essential for life after school. Key areas where literacy and numeracy skills are used include the following:

- The practicalities of everyday life.
- Participation in community life
- Participation in leisure activities
- The world of work (paid and unpaid)
- For learning, in school and for participation in other education and training opportunities

The above areas are to a large extent context based. Education practitioners in these settings are aware that many of their learners can present with limited skills in the areas of literacy and numeracy and have a reduced capacity to function effectively in many life contexts.

This framework fosters a mindset for enhancing the learning experience by relating the skills and concepts of literacy and numeracy to a learner's life experience and personal interests. The framework also underpins the development of a school policy that facilitates a cross curricular approach to literacy and numeracy. This enables the learner to see the relevance and intrinsic merit of these skills and concepts in everyday life. Aspects of basic literacy and numeracy that resonate with the settings are outlined below alongside the cross curricular skills associated with these areas.

Aspects of Basic Literacy	Associated Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Listening • Communicating 	Developing concepts of language and print Developing reading skills and strategies Reading for pleasure and information Developing interest, attitudes, interpreting and thinking creatively Responding to text
Aspects of Basic Numeracy	Associated Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns in number • Processing number • Calculation • Problem solving • Measurement • Shape and space • Data handling 	Applying and problem solving Integrating and communication Reasoning Implementing Understanding and recalling

Life Skills

This framework emphasises ‘Life skills’ as individual areas of study on the curriculum and in the cross curricular sense with which they are embedded by many of these settings. It is generally felt, that in order to help increase the life chances of learners, attention should be focused on those components of life skills which connect an individual learner’s strengths and interests with his/her targeted needs.

Life skills are those that cross the boundaries of subjects and the school day. They are essential for all facets of a person’s life and include the following:

Communication skills

These skills range from awareness of people and the environment, making eye contact and using gesture, signs and symbols to listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Personal and social skills

These skills range from basic personal hygiene and self-help skills, feeding and dressing, awareness of

own feelings and body, and social interaction with others, both individually and collectively, to conflict resolution and understanding and dealing with moral issues.

Aesthetic and creative skills

The broadening of experience and the raising of levels of awareness to expression through the visual arts, music and drama and expressing ideas and thoughts in a creative manner are included in the development of aesthetic and creative skills.

Physical skills

These skills range from basic mobility and positioning and physical activation through an understanding of spatial awareness, and fine and gross motor skills to specific skills required for a purpose, for example writing, sports or leisure skills.

Outlined below are a set of life skill components and a description of some typical aspects of those components that can be generally associated with the needs of learners in these settings.

Life Skill Component	Typical Aspects	
Social skills	Communication skills Anger management	Conflict resolution Relationships
Decision making skills	Solving problems	Moral decision making
Workplace skills	Attitudes Job seeking skills Workplace culture	Following instructions IT skills
Money management	Budgeting Using a bank	Purchasing a car Road Safety
Transportation	Cost Using public transport	Conflict resolution Relationships
Health	Physical fitness Nutrition Drug/alcohol/awareness	Stress management Avoiding destructive behaviors
Family responsibilities	Parenting	Family
Basic understanding of the law	Rights and responsibilities	

Guidance

Personalised and flexible education programmes are features of curriculum in these settings. In this context, educational and vocational guidance is a necessary and integral part of provision and is a feature of this curriculum framework.

Guidance teachers, with the close cooperation of other members of the education and care team, can enable learners to develop a realistic concept of themselves and the world they live in and a deeper understanding and appreciation of self and self management. Parallels with the work of the guidance teacher can be found in other areas of the curriculum and in the work of the care team. The development and review of IEP's and ICP's and the area of the curriculum focusing on life skills can provide opportunities for collaboration, support and teamwork between all members of staff in the pursuit of the learner's best interests.

Guidance activities that offer support and have particular relevance to the range of circumstances that surround learners in these settings include the following

- Personal and social development
- Career information management to acquire, store and disseminate useful careers and courses information
- Vocational preparation: job search skills, work experience
- Consultation with parents, teaching staff, care staff and community
- Evaluation of the school's guidance needs and services

Managing challenging behaviour

The Report of the Task Force on Student Behaviour in Second Level Schools¹ makes reference to what it terms 'off-site provision'. Children detention schools,

high support units and special care units can be seen as constituting part of this provision. The Task Force reported that many of the off-site schools are doing exceptional work in their efforts to prevent and to manage disruption. Many of the good practices, structures and systems reported on by the Task Force as influencing positive behaviour resonate with the strengths and challenges of working on a daily basis in a detention or care setting. These include the importance of

- school ethos and culture
- personnel who are centrally involved in the school community
- a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of personalised education programmes
- a quality continuous professional development service for staff
- fostering positive relationships between students and staff
- structured extra- curricular activities
- the student voice in programme determination and evaluation of progress
- a parental involvement dimension.

General context

Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties can severely affect the learning process and make school life difficult for the learner, for other learners in the class, and for all those attempting to care for and educate him/her. Challenging behaviour should always be dealt with in the context of the learner's overall educational, social and personal development. The use of agreed strategies by education practitioners and by the learner's carers is critical when managing challenging behaviour. It is important for everyone involved to remember that it is the behaviour, and not the learner, that presents the challenge. The focus should be on enriching the learner's life and enabling him/her to benefit from education.

¹ School Matters- The report of the task force on student behaviour in second level schools

Some learners with social, emotional or behavioural problems will employ withdrawal and avoidance tactics and will often refuse to co-operate with others. This is easy to see in the learner who is active and can physically demonstrate withdrawal and avoidance; but a very quiet learner may also display such behaviour by refusing to respond or by closing off stimuli. Discovering the reason for the behaviour will often lead education practitioners and carers towards a method of dealing with it.

Finding out 'why'?

There may be medical reasons for the challenging behaviour, and medical help should be sought if this is suspected. Such causes include chemical and/or neurological imbalance, illness or pain, sensory difficulties, depression or emotional difficulties. Environmental factors may also be responsible, or may contribute to the difficulty. These include the physical environment and the people in it. Physical influences like noise level, heating, lighting, amount of space around the learner and physical positioning should be examined. The influence of other learners and staff may also be a cause or a contributing factor.

Communication difficulties can be an enormous factor in challenging behaviour, especially with learners who have significant communication difficulties and whose ability to communicate effectively is often very limited. Challenging behaviour may be caused by

- an inability to understand what is happening
- an inability to express needs and desires
- lack of choices
- lack of control.

Challenging behaviour may be the learner's only effective means of expressing a particular need or desire. Attention-seeking behaviour can often escalate into challenging behaviour. Inactivity and boredom should always be ruled out, but

very often attention-seeking behaviour is linked to communication difficulties. It may also be a learned behaviour, with a long history. It should be remembered that negative attention can be every bit as motivating for the learner as positive attention.

Planning intervention

In planning intervention, gathering information from all possible sources is essential. Therefore, it is acknowledged that this is an area for great collaboration between teachers and care staff and between the other services and agencies that work in partnership with these settings. There may be multiple causes for challenging behaviour and therefore observations and information should be as broad ranging as possible. All information that enables the teacher to understand the learner's perspective is extremely valuable.

The use of an ABC chart can be very helpful in gathering specific information about a behaviour that is being targeted for intervention. This records the Antecedents (what happened before or leading up to the incident), the Behaviour and the Consequences (planned and unplanned) of each incident of the targeted challenging behaviour. The records are examined for a pattern of behaviour over time. This pattern may highlight the cause of the behaviour, the conditions that perpetuate it and the purpose of the behaviour for the learner. It may also be important to note when the behaviour is not occurring. In analysing the information, the teacher may wish to seek the advice of others closely involved with the learner. It may also be very helpful to get an objective opinion from a trusted colleague or group of colleagues.

Intervening

Whatever the challenging behaviour, an agreed strategy that is consistently carried out in all relevant contexts is essential. Successful strategic and consistent intervention can include:

- training for all involved on safety and good practice in relation to dealing with challenging behaviour
- prepared information about the targeted challenging behaviour and the learner involved
- a strategic intervention plan agreed by all and written out in detail
- a plan where everyone is clear on what is involved and what their role will be
- discreet signals agreed by adults for alerting each other when action is needed and for communicating during incidents
- careful recording of incidents, intervention and consequences
- evaluation and review of plan.

Continuous professional development in the area of crisis intervention and the management of challenging behaviour is vital for all staff involved in the care and education of young people in these settings. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) is one model of intervention where training is currently provided to education and care staff. However, the benefits to all staff of providing training in other models of crisis intervention/management of challenging behaviour are being explored.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

When a young person is admitted to a detention or care setting a comprehensive assessment is carried out by a team, consisting of psychologists, care staff, and education staff. An Individual Care Plan (ICP) and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) are established. An exit strategy² is also considered at this time and the ICP, IEP and the exit strategy remain the focus of subsequent case conferences that take place between the education and care partners during the child's time spent in care/detention. These case conferences can also include the child and his/her parents.

The IEP is the vehicle through which the curriculum is worked in these settings. The IEP operates as a flexible instrument offering targeted support for the learner. The young person is placed at the centre of the learning. Progression routes are established and reviewed based on relevance and continuity of the learning experience. The preparation of the IEP alongside the ICP represents the necessary collaborative approach taken in the delivery of a quality care and education service for the young people in these settings. This commonality of approach is seen as an enabling feature to be harnessed in the development and implementation of the framework.

One of the challenges associated with an IEP is its portability between the detention or care settings. A learner's IEP needs to be easily accessible to all the settings to allow the transfer of vital information to take place when required. Similarly, a system to coordinate the transfer of information on the learner from their previous mainstream school needs to be established. The existence of and requirements for generating an IEP have implications for

² Care planning processes are informed by the throughcare model which looks ahead towards the child's future needs and the achievement of a positive exit strategy for the young person leaving a detention or care setting.

- record keeping
- tracking student progress
- The IEP is one of the key foundational areas of the curriculum. Key factors that have implications for its effectiveness in this key position are its need to
 - be transferable across all settings
 - be developed in close collaboration with the ICP
 - reflect a continuity of learning experience
 - facilitate progression for the learner across all settings
 - have a significance for all stakeholders involved in the care and education of the learner (including parents)
 - facilitate the needs of the learner who may be subject to the recent moves towards shorter sentencing/placement.
 - be recognised by the judicial system when decisions are being made that may have implications for the continuity and progression of the young persons education.

- Draft Curriculum Framework and Guidelines for Children in Detention and Care (CiDC) •



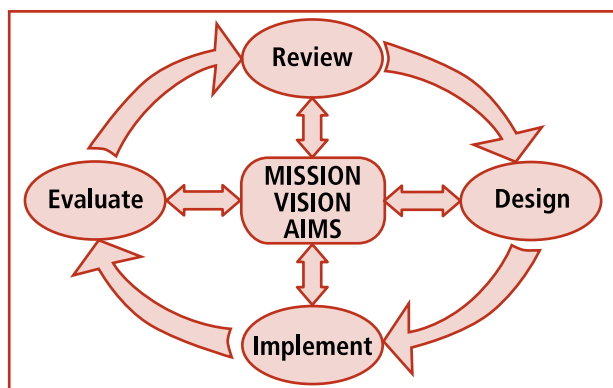
Section 2: Using the framework in a system of curriculum review

Improvements in curriculum provision are ongoing and unique for each of the school settings in this sector. It is essential that each school design their curriculum planning process around their own particular size, individual learner needs, teacher needs, organisational structure, and resources. This framework can be used as a guide by schools to assist them in the area of curriculum development and programme planning. The process described in this section is intended to help schools align curriculum planning and review processes with the elements and features of the framework that have most relevance to their school setting.

Curriculum Planning

The seven guiding principles outlined in the framework support continuity, progression and participation and should underpin a schools curriculum planning and development activity. This activity can be supported by the school development planning process. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the School Development Planning Initiative (SDPI) Coordination Team have jointly prepared a set of curriculum review instruments¹ to assist schools in this process. These instruments are designed to be used alongside other guidelines and resource materials also produced by the SDPI. The planning process is represented diagrammatically in fig.1 below.

Fig. 1. The School Development Planning Process



Curriculum Review

The starting point for most schools will be the need to carry out a review of existing curriculum provision. This review is necessary to ensure that the school is taking best advantage of the opportunities available and to enable it to build on its strengths. Using the framework as the basis for reviewing and analysing a curriculum's strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats presented by internal/ external contexts using a SCOT Analysis review tool (Appendix B1) provides the school with an

¹ School Development Planning – Curriculum Review at Junior Cycle, NCCA/SDPI

opportunity to compile a comprehensive account of how current curriculum provision aligns with the framework. Use of the 'Diagnostic Window' as a review instrument for collating evidence of what is or is not yet working well in relation to the areas highlighted from the SCOT Analysis, can be useful for suggesting areas where improvements can be made. These processes can help the school to

- Identify needs that must be addressed
- Identify factors that must be taken into account in planning for the development of the school
- Prioritise areas for development

It is important that schools be realistic about their capacity to sustain any chosen development work. All stakeholders in the process need to be mindful to choose priorities that are manageable. Scheduling a small number of key priorities in sequence over a fixed developmental period allows those involved to experience the success of achieving set targets and provides an impetus for further curriculum development work.

Using the Curriculum Framework

The first step in using the framework is to make sure that all interested parties are familiar with its content. Then, with the framework setting the measure for the initial review, an analysis using review instruments similar to those described above is necessary to determine what needs to be done. Once the school identifies the overarching tasks that need to be completed, a plan for structuring a curriculum review committee or steering committee to co-ordinate the process and a time-line for completing specific tasks by assigned Task Groups should be designed. The review activities and pre-prepared worksheets developed by the SDPI can be suitably adapted by schools in this regard.

The main features of the curriculum framework are summarised in the block diagram below (fig.2). The learning areas and curriculum components of relative

priority for schools in these settings are outlined on the ‘curriculum wheel’².

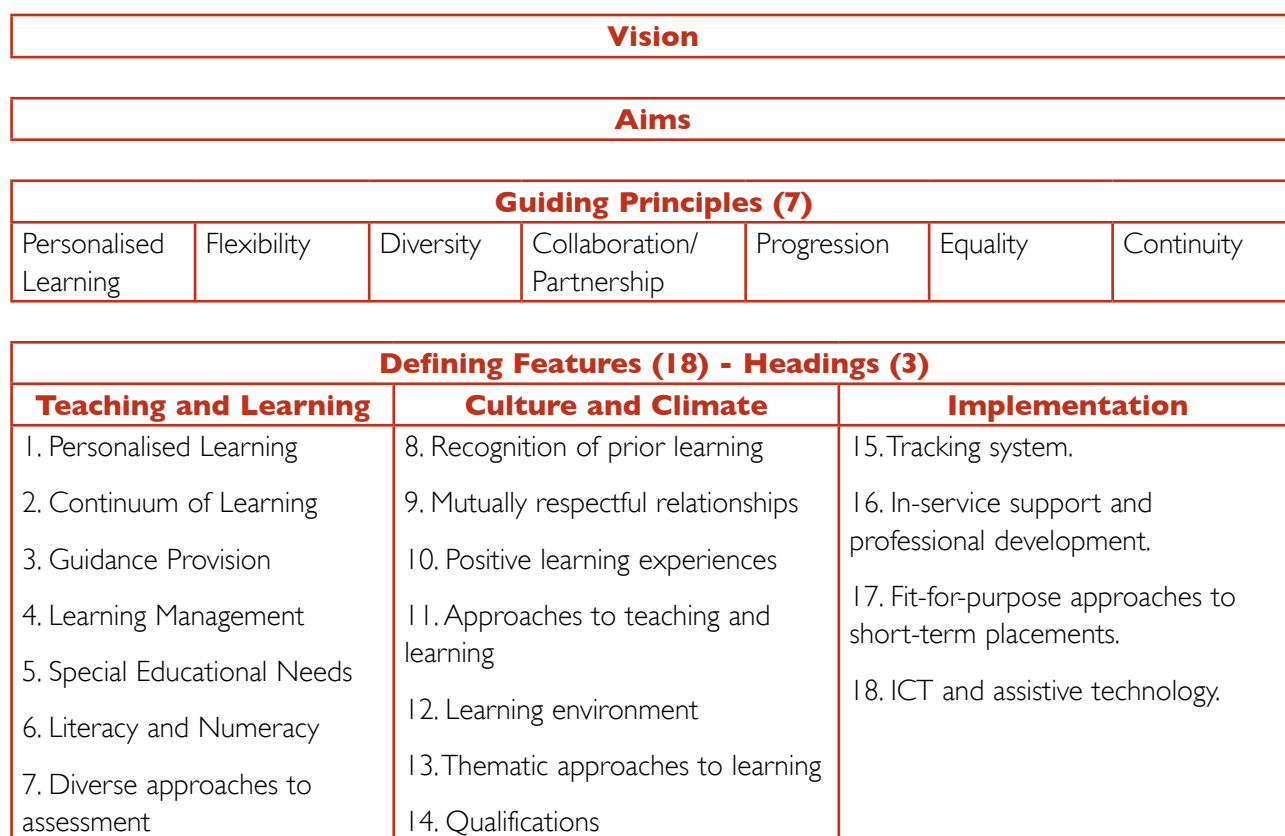
For the purposes of examining how the framework may be merged to a system of review, this section maps the defining features of the framework against those elements of the curriculum wheel that can be associated with a schools education programme. Suggested approaches that may prove useful for schools when reviewing programme content, teaching and learning, and assessment provision are also included. The suggested approaches are

not intended to be an exhaustive list, but to help schools reflect on their existing practices and plan for improvement. They should be considered in conjunction with the range of supports and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Science (DES) for primary and post-primary schools³. These resource materials are available to schools in print form and on the web to support the process of planning (www.sdpi.ie & www.sdps.ie).

² Guidelines and resources for post-primary schools – Approaches to Review; SDPI

³ Developing a School Plan: Guidelines for Primary School (1999), Department of Education and Science, Dublin: Stationery Office.

Fig. 2. Block diagram of the framework



‘Curriculum Wheel’ Focus Area	Areas of alignment with a Schools Education Programme	Most Relevant Defining Features of the Curriculum Framework
<p>Inner Circle I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP/Care Plan • Interests • Prior Learning • Future Aspirations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline Assessment • Development of the IEP • Curriculum Planning • Programme Planning • Classroom Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuum of Learning • Personalised Learning • Recognition of prior learning • Special Educational Needs • Literacy and Numeracy • Guidance Provision • Mutually respectful relationships • Tracking system

Suggested Approaches for Curriculum Review

This stage of the review process should focus on the schools establishment of a solid baseline for each learner. The review should also examine the schools policies and procedures for using baseline data to personalise the learning experience at the level of IEP development, curriculum planning, programme planning and classroom planning levels.

Individual reflection by staff on the following broad areas of concern should underpin this initial stage of the review.

In your opinion:

- I. Is the initial interview with the learner and subsequent baseline activity carried out in an atmosphere that places the learner at ease, creating a safe space to share his/her previous learning experiences and future aspirations?
- II. By completing a baseline assessment, a learners level of competence is ascertained in:
 - Literacy
 - Numeracy
 - Spoken language skills
 - Social skills
- III. By completing a baseline assessment, a learners level of competence and interest is ascertained in
 - Using ICT
 - Artistic activities
 - Physical Activities
 - Practical/scientific activities
 - Mathematics/spatial awareness

IV. By completing a baseline assessment, the following aspects relating to each learner are recorded

- General attitude to school/behavioral issues
- Any special educational needs
- Future aspirations – Educational and Vocational

V. By completing a baseline assessment:

- Progress reports relating to learners previous IEP's and Care Plans are examined and where necessary referenced to support continuity of the learning experience.

VI. When completing a baseline assessment:

- The school can be confident that it has policies and procedures in place to effectively use the data at the development and review stages of a learners IEP, to inform curriculum development, programme planning and classroom planning.

Approach

- Whole staff can engage in individual reflection on the areas of concern (above) and provide their perspectives on whether their baseline assessment procedure establishes such data on the learner. Staff can also reflect on the procedures the school has for following through with this information when developing a learners IEP. Using a 'Diagnostic Window' review tool (Appendix B2) schools can provide focused feedback on each of these areas.
- The perceived strengths and challenges of these reflections can be discussed in the context of the relevant defining features of the framework.
- Feedback can be collated to produce a list of suggested areas for improvement.
- Building on existing good practice, targets can be identified and priorities clarified. Activities for the future can then be agreed.

‘Curriculum Wheel’ Focus Area	Areas of alignment with a Schools Education Programme	Most Relevant Defining Features of the Curriculum Framework
<p>Inner Circle 2 & Circle 3 The Enhancement of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Skills • Attitudes • Understanding <p>As they relate to the foundational areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Numeracy • Personal and Interpersonal skills • Working life • Healthy Living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring/Reviewing the IEP • Curriculum Planning • Programme Planning/ Evaluation • Classroom Planning • Teaching and Learning • Assessment Provision • Behavioral Strategies • Key Skills emphasis • Learning Support • In-service/Professional Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuum of Learning • Personalised Learning • Recognition of prior learning • Literacy and Numeracy • Guidance Provision • Mutually respectful relationships • Thematic approaches to learning • Learning Environment • Learning Management • Fit-for-purpose approaches to short-term placements • ICT and assistive technology

Suggested Approaches for Curriculum Review

This stage of the review should focus on the curriculum interventions the school has in place to foster a learners re-engagement with education and lifelong learning. The various approaches to learning that the school takes to enhance a learner's knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding of the foundational areas of the curriculum are an important area for reflection and discussion as is the importance of the schools culture and climate in this regard.

Individual reflection by staff on the section of the framework relating to the 'Foundational areas of the curriculum – re-engagement' should take place. The defining features that relate to culture and climate should also underpin this stage of the review process.

Approach

1. Whole staff can engage in individual reflection on the areas of focus (above). Schools may find it useful to adapt *SDPI Guidelines and Resources for Post-Primary Schools – Unit 10 - Activity 4* when reviewing issues that surround a school's culture and climate.
2. Using a 'Diagnostic Window' review tool can provide focused feedback on what is/what is not yet working well in relation to specific focus areas.
3. An adapted version of the review instrument '*Imagine your School*' is included in Appendix 2. This instrument can enable members of the school community to think about and prioritise any future development of the curriculums foundational areas from their own perspective and from the perspective of other members of the school community.
4. Feedback can be collated to produce a list of suggested areas for improving the learning experience.
5. Building on existing good practice, targets can be identified and priorities clarified. Activities for the future can then be agreed.

‘Curriculum Wheel’ Focus Area	Areas of alignment with a Schools Education Programme	Most Relevant Defining Features of the Curriculum Framework
<p>Inner Circle 2 & Circle 4 The Enhancement of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Skills • Attitudes • Understanding <p>As they relate to</p> <p>The Learning Areas of the Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • English • Languages • The Arts • Society and Environment • Moral and Religious Education • Guidance • Science • Design and Technology • Health and Physical Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring/Reviewing the IEP • Curriculum Planning • Programme Planning/Evaluation • Classroom Planning • Teaching and Learning • Assessment Provision • Key Skills emphasis • Learning Support • In-service/Professional Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalised Learning • Recognition of prior learning • Literacy and Numeracy • Guidance Provision • Mutually respectful relationships • Thematic approaches to learning • Learning Environment • Positive learning experiences • Learning Management • Fit-for-purpose approaches to short-term placements • ICT and assistive technology • In-service support and professional development • Diverse approaches to assessment

Suggested Approaches for Curriculum Review

This stage of the review should focus on

- the learning areas of the curriculum
- the schools expectations for all learners
- the commitment to issues of continuity and progression relating to that content
- approaches to personalising teaching and learning
- professional development needs.

Staff should reflect on the set of identified guiding principles. They should also include in this reflection the menu of identified defining features. Together these provide common direction for schools. Particular attention should be drawn to the features outlined above. These could be considered most relevant when reviewing the learning areas of any curriculum or programme of study that would be derived from the framework.

Approach

Individual reflection by staff on any or all of the following questions can focus this stage of the review process. Schools may find the SDPI review instruments described earlier and those review instruments related to subject review in the *SDPI Guidelines and Resources for Post-Primary Schools – Unit 9 - Activity 2 & 3* helpful for prioritising strengths and needs and for the identification of areas for further development at classroom level or curriculum policy level.

- Is the approach the school takes to the organisation of the curriculum (either around learning areas or central themes or a combination of both) best placed to meet the identified needs of the learners?
- Does the school consider the learning areas of the curriculum as valuable in themselves and valuable for the pathways they open to other learning?
- What knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding does the school expect learners will come to know and do in each of the learning areas?
- Does the school structure the learning experience to make use of the natural connections that exist between learning areas. In making those connections, does the school link learning areas to the essential knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding that learners will need for learning, working and participating in school, their communities and society?
- Does the curriculum provide learners with teacher feedback and guidance encouraging the learner to develop strategies for self-monitoring and self-evaluation of their learning?
- Does the school have a policy of supporting and encouraging staff professional development?
- Feedback can be collated on any or all of these focus questions to produce a list of suggested areas for improving the learning experience.
- Building on existing good practice, targets can be identified and priorities clarified. Activities for the future can then be agreed.

‘Curriculum Wheel’ Focus Area	Areas of alignment with a Schools Education Programme	Most Relevant Defining Features of the Curriculum Framework
<p>Inner Circle 5 Possible Recognition and Certification Routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Curriculum • JCSP • Junior Certificate • FETAC • Leaving Certificate • ICT/EAL • In-house Certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring/Reviewing the IEP • Programme Planning/ Evaluation • Assessment Provision • In-service/Professional • Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse approaches to assessment • Mutually respectful relationships • Tracking system • Fit-for-purpose approaches to short-term placements • ICT and assistive technology • Guidance Provision • Learning Management • Qualifications

Suggested Approaches for Curriculum Review

This stage of the review should focus on the schools alignment of its range of assessment approaches and methods of recognising achievement with the curricular content, the defining features of the framework and the identified needs of the learner. The schools use of assessment to guide teaching and to inform decisions about student learning and the monitoring and tracking of student progress should also be the focus of attention at this stage in the review process.

Staff should familiarise themselves with and reflect on the frameworks descriptions of the above set of relevant defining features.

Individual reflection by staff on the adapted SDPI Review Worksheet together with the accompanying explanatory note located in Appendix B4 & B4.1 of this document entitled ‘*Characteristics of Effective Assessment*’ should underpin this stage of the review.

Approach

6. Following reflection on the frameworks relevant defining features, whole staff can engage in individual reflection on the degree of alignment the schools assessment provision has with some of the characteristics of effective assessment as outlined on the worksheet.
7. First as individuals and then in small groups, staff can choose 2 or 3 of the characteristics that represent the schools strengths. They then choose 2 or 3 of the characteristics that represent areas in need of further development.
8. Feedback can be collated to produce a list of suggested areas for further development.
9. 1 or 2 of the areas in need of further development can be assigned to small groups for discussion. The Diagnostic Window review instrument can then be applied to each of these areas to suggest areas for improvement (building on the schools earlier identified strengths).
10. Feedback on the suggested areas for improvement can be collated from each group
11. Targets can be identified and priorities clarified. Activities for the future can then be agreed.

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Section 3: Personalised Education Programme Scenarios

This section of the guidelines includes examples of a personalised education programme for a typical learner in each of these settings. The education programmes were developed in collaboration with a working group of principals and teachers from the settings involved. This group familiarised themselves with the contents of the framework and then proceeded to generate a set of education programme scenarios that aligned to the guiding principles and defining features of the framework. A graphically representation of the perceived strength of alignment between the features of the education programmes illustrated and that of the framework is presented in the conclusion at the end of each programme.

The programmes described are felt by the group to be examples of ‘what works’ for a typical learner in each of the settings. The background information at the beginning of the examples is provided to help the reader understand the particular learner and setting.



The education programme scenarios illustrated are as follows:	
Jason	15 year old boy sentenced by the Children's Court to a one year period of detention in a Children Detention School
Brendan	14 year old boy remanded for assessment by the Children's Court for a period of 28 days to a Children's Detention School
Trevor	14 year old boy who is in the care of the Health Service Executive (HSE), and is resident in a Special Care Unit
Cathy	13 year old girl who is in the care of the Health Service Executive (HSE), is subject to a full care order and is resident in a High Support Unit

The background of the page is a vibrant, textured abstract painting. It features a blue river winding through the upper left, a cluster of dark green trees in the center, and a house with a red roof and yellow walls in the middle. The lower portion of the painting is dominated by swirling blue and white tones, suggesting a sky or water. The overall style is expressive and painterly.

Sample Education Programme No.1

**EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR A
Learner sentenced by
the Children's Court
to a one year period
of detention in
a Children Detention School**

Target Learner

The target learner, Jason, is 15 years old, and has been sentenced to a Boys Children Detention School for one year. He has a history of school failure and has many unsuccessful prior placements with various HSE services. He has been out of education for the last two years. He presents with emotional difficulties with perhaps an underlying as yet undiagnosed psychiatric disorder. His emotional profile includes anger control issues, ADHD, conduct disorder and attachment problems. He has an average reading age of 9 years, a spelling age of 7 years and a mathematical age of 8.5 years.

General Context

Culture and Climate

The Education Centre is a school on the same campus as the Boy's Children Detention School. The school is a separate entity from the residential units and is seen by the students as a separate centre and place of learning. Doors to the Education Centre are locked while classes are being held, and teachers are expected to lock their classroom doors when teaching, unless in a one to one situation.

The Detention School subscribes wholeheartedly to a team approach in an effort to create a warm, accepting and healing environment where the individual needs of the student are met. The teachers see themselves as part of a multi-disciplinary team providing an educational service that is tailored to the individual needs of each student. The Education Centre not only provides the young people with education but also plays a large part in the rehabilitation process. The first task of the teaching staff is to create a learning environment that is safe and capable of providing the students with the opportunity to experience success in school. A successful teacher in the Education Centre displays many of the characteristics shared by a successful teacher in any educational setting.

These include the importance for all teachers to

- adhere to the philosophical principle that all students are educable
- focus on learning outcomes i.e. the teaching input and on the learning output
- praise and be positive even with the most negative, destructive and abusive student
- depersonalise the behaviour – see the behaviour as a symptom of a wider problem rather than an attack on one's personality or ability
- make the disaffected feel wanted
- accept and welcome the student unconditionally
- not only have a sense of humour but also display good humour.

Constraints

Jason will be in a mixed ability class with two other students. This could change on a daily basis. There is never a set group or fixed class as conflicting personalities in the group can present a safety issue. Safety concerns must be always balanced with the educational needs. It is crucial that any programme offered can be flexible enough to meet all his needs, yet help him reach his potential. Adaptations to class plans will often have to be made as he may miss school due to court appearances, appointments, visits etc. The new legislation with shorter sentencing has placed further pressure on the educational programmes. Naturally the length of sentencing dictates the designated programme.

Since the legislation on the 1st March, the financing of the school is shared responsibility between the VEC, the Department of Education and Science and the Irish Youth Justice Service.

Educational Experience

Introduction

On arrival Jason is welcomed into the school and an experienced teacher will carry out a short

induction programme. This is aimed at welcoming him into the school, introducing the subject areas and expected behaviour. It is acknowledged that a secure placement in a detention centre can be very traumatic and difficult for him. Every effort is made to encourage Jason to feel safe, supported and an active participant in his learning programme. The educational programme now begins.

Baseline Assessment

Each teacher begins by carrying out a baseline assessment on Jason across a range of subject areas. It gives a snapshot of where he is at that moment. It assesses skills specific to the subject area. From this baseline, short and long term targets are identified for that subject, and the class teacher plans a specific learning programme. This subject specific programme is designed to best meet his needs, based on the goals established in the baseline. Jason is involved in this decision and is advised of the appropriate programme. To make the programme meaningful and effective, every effort is made to ensure that Jason appreciates and values the designed programme. This is achieved by personalising the education programme to meet his needs, interests and future aspirations.

Within one week of arrival in the Detention School, Jason is assessed to determine his literacy and numeracy levels. Tests used can include Marino Reading Age, Schonnel Spelling Age and Vernon Graded Maths test. The results of these tests and the baselines are placed in his individual file, which is accessible to all teachers. The baseline is used to compile an overall Individual Education Plan (IEP) for Jason after six weeks. The six weeks allows the teacher to observe him, determine appropriate teaching strategies and suggested long term learning programmes.

Individual Education Plan

An IEP is a personalised learning programme for

Jason and is only devised for students who have been sentenced to the school. It is developed six to eight weeks after Jason's sentencing, enabling teachers and staff time to gain an insight into his ability, aptitude, learning strengths and learning strategies.

Jason is assigned a key teacher. The process begins with the key teacher researching Jason's previous education experiences and accreditations. This teacher reads educational reports that have been forwarded onto the school from previous schools or placements. Jason also provides details on his previous educational achievements. The key teacher continues to develop the personalised programme by working in collaboration with Jason's key care worker. This is reflective of the multi-disciplinary approach adapted by the school. The key teacher and care worker meet with Jason in the residential unit and with input from other care staff, identify Jason's strengths, needs, interests and abilities. To endorse the principle of personalised learning, and active participation in the learning process, Jason will also be involved in discussions on his strengths, weaknesses and priority learning needs. He will also make known what he is interested in learning and what skills he would like to develop. The key teacher may read up on his care file to get a greater understanding of Jason's background histories.

In keeping with the holistic education programme, teachers meet both formally and informally to discuss the results of the standardised tests, baseline assessments and teacher observations. Inputs from Jason and his key care worker also feed into these discussions. The group of teachers will continue with identifying strengths, weaknesses, priority learning areas, strategies most effective in achieving these, and finally appropriate long term learning programmes.

For Jason, the most appropriate programme decided upon is the Junior Certificate at foundational level. The justification for this decision includes the following factors

- he has been sentenced for one year
- he will be in the Children Detention School for the month of the exams
- Assessments show that Jason has an appropriate level of literacy/numeracy skills to complete the Junior Certificate examination at foundation level.

This decision is based on teacher observation, the results of assessments and sometimes Jason's own personal requests. All of this information forms the

IEP, which is reviewed after six months.

Jason's IEP will be further discussed at his Case Conference which is held 6 weeks after Jason's arrival in the Children Detention School. As part of the holistic rehabilitation process, the school report and IEP is brought to the multi-disciplinary team at the Case Conference where it is used to discuss Jason's progress and continued plan. This multi-disciplinary team includes a teacher, care staff, management, social workers, parents and other relevant parties.

PERSON INVOLVED IN IEP	ROLE
Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To partake in assessment • To communicate history of education • To contribute to IEP – identifying his own strengths, weaknesses and priority learning areas • To identify preferred learning areas
Key teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish history of education, previous education reports, diagnosed learning difficulty • To interview the student • To collaborate with care staff re: strengths, weaknesses and learning areas.
Class Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out baseline assessment in their subject area. • To discuss the student's strengths, weaknesses, priority learning areas and appropriate programmes
Key Care Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the student's strengths, weaknesses and priority learning areas. • To pass on valuable information about the student's family circumstances or important information
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To administer the standardised literacy and numeracy tests
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss the student's strengths, weaknesses and priority learning areas with the group of teachers. • To evaluate teaching strategies, work and behaviour of the student.

Core Curriculum

A safe and structured learning environment enables Jason to have access to levels of educational opportunities that are as close as possible to the learning experiences and outcomes of his peers in mainstream education settings. The appropriate education plan is devised, regardless of gender, age, race or background. There is no gender discrimination in subject areas. Attaining the breadth of curriculum that the Education Centre would like to provide for Jason is often challenging. The limiting factors acting against such provision for Jason include

- the lack of availability of suitably qualified teaching staff across a range of specialised subject areas
- the lack of incentives to attract suitably qualified teaching staff to work in this challenging learning environment
- the fact that applications for the security clearance of new staff, other professionals or guests visiting the Education Centre can take up to two months to process.

It is the initiative, creativity and experience of teaching staff working in the Children Detention School that facilitates the delivery of as relevant and comprehensive an education programme as possible.

Jason has the opportunity to study the following subjects:

- English
- Art
- Computers
- Geography
- Business Studies
- Technology
- Maths
- Woodwork

- CSPE
- PE
- Home Economics

The curriculum followed by the teacher will be based on the Junior Certificate syllabus, adapted accordingly to meet his needs. He will be involved in choosing the following aspects of the course.

- The optional project in Home Economics
- Themes for Art
- Woodwork projects
- Technology projects

This encouragement of student directed learning is seen as important for Jason to help increase his motivation and self-esteem. As Jason will have only one academic year to complete his Junior Certificate, compared to the three years his peers have in mainstream schools, each teacher will prioritise areas of the curriculum to be taught.

The core curriculum delivered for Jason takes account of his

- priority learning areas
- personal strengths and aspirations
- target areas for further development as established in his IEP through collaboration with teachers and care staff.

Teaching and Learning

Behaviour Management

With the new legislation, detention is viewed as a last resort. Jason has been committed to a Boy's Detention School because all other interventions have failed. He has failed to benefit suitably from community-based interventions or secure placements. The Detention School is invariably the last resort, so by the time Jason arrives in the school his behaviour is extreme. It is imperative that students with emotional and behavioural difficulties can gain therapeutic benefits of emotional recovery

and development by raising their self-esteem through educational achievement and attainment. It is essential that carers and teachers concentrate on the behaviour rather than the learner. The focus should be on promoting positive behaviour in an attempt to reduce and eliminate challenging behaviour. Confidence in work dispels the student's need of gaining compensation through obtrusive and difficult behaviour.

In an attempt to manage behaviour, the following strategies are encouraged:

- Jason is encouraged to express his individuality.
- Opportunities for meaningful participation are provided.
- Relationship skills are promoted.
- Appropriate tasks and projects are assigned which are gauged at Jason's level.
- Emphasis is placed on prevention and early intervention of any challenging behaviour.
- Emphasis is placed on problem solving techniques.
- Jason is encouraged to communicate with the care staff, teachers and other learners that he comes in contact with.
- Appropriate, consistent management techniques are utilised by all staff.

Classroom Management

To encourage positive behaviour in the class, there are basic rules and guidelines that Jason will follow in class.

Classroom Rules:

Jason must

- show respect for others and property
- use appropriate language

- not engage in physical contact with other learners (fighting)
- work to the best of his ability
- remain at his workstation during class.

In practical classes there are some further rules:

Jason

- is responsible for his own work.
- is responsible for cleaning up after himself.
- is only allowed to use tools or materials with permission from the teacher
- must not interfere with other student's work.
- must wear protective clothing whenever instructed by the teacher.

To strive towards the creation of a holistic environment and to achieve a positive learning experience for Jason, the relationships between the care staff and the teachers is viewed as extremely important. Both disciplines have a unique role yet need a collaborative approach to modifying behaviour and maximise learning. To ensure this collaboration on a daily basis, handovers by the care staff and the teachers are an essential part of every working day. Handovers are based on the premise that all information about Jason is valuable. They are a key element of the multidisciplinary approach used in this Children Detention School. The opportunities that handovers provide for Jason are outlined below.

- Teachers can find out about Jason's life outside of school.
- Care staff can become involved in Jason's school life.
- Teachers and care staff can share good practice.
- Teachers and care staff can learn from each other as to what strategies work best with Jason.

Progression of Learning

A cross-curricular approach similar to that described for the preparation of the IEP is used in targeting Jason's priority learning areas. Each teacher will focus in on these identified areas and adopt suitable teaching strategies from the range of suggested.

These strategies can include

- One to one tuition
- Questioning
- Recapping
- Praise
- Peer teaching
- Group work

Jason will benefit from seeing a consistent approach to teaching and the regular encouragement by the teachers of his positive behaviour in class.

Progression of Jason's learning is measured in the following three ways.

Progression within the subject area:

A monthly progress sheet in each subject monitors Jason's achievements. Each class teacher then prepares a monthly report, which refers to overall work, behaviour, social skills and appropriate teaching strategies.

Progression within the school:

Teachers discuss the priority learning areas set out for Jason and contributing factors that help achieve these. If achieved, new targets are set for the coming month.

Progression within the education system:

The curriculum allows a natural progression through the Junior Certificate syllabus. The syllabus will be adapted to meet the needs of Jason.

Reward System

Generally speaking, learners such as Jason have negative experiences of schooling. They are often functioning at below average abilities and seldom achieve success. They often feel isolated and have low self-esteem. To combat this, Jason is given opportunities to achieve success and build his self-confidence. These may include small attainable tasks or repeated tasks that encourage independence. To promote success in school and maximise learning, a reward system is in place. However, the points and rewards systems are not allowed to dominate school life or to obstruct the flexible addressing of individual needs.

Jason is awarded marks in class under four headings

- Work
- Verbals
- Physicals
- Responsibility

He must strive for his points throughout the class. If he completes work assigned and behaves appropriately in class he will earn full points. The marks can be used as a reward for positive behaviour and work. Both care staff and teachers endeavour to keep Jason in school.

As a reward at the end of the week, Jason's marks are added up and ranked accordingly. He is allowed to choose his own class for the last class, with a chance of mixing with peers not normally in his group. This is referred to as "Activities". The top three students receive a Certificate of Achievement for the week.

Once a year there is an Open Day where Jason can invite his parents, and care staff to view his work. There is also a ceremony for presentation of certificates and prizes for work completed in school throughout the year. All staff members, including Board of Management members, members of the IYJS, and VEC are invited to come and view the work.

Fostering Literacy and Numeracy across the Curriculum

There is a cross-curricular approach to teaching literacy and numeracy in the school. Each teacher has a responsibility to Jason to help him reach his potential. Teaching strategies similar to those which have been identified and recorded in the IEP are utilized in order to reinforce and develop literacy and numeracy skills across all subject areas.

Literacy

- Teachers in all classes and subjects adhere to a common approach to enhancing literacy skills.
- In each class, teachers endeavour to begin sentences with capital letters and end with a full stop.
- When using proper nouns Jason is encouraged to always start with a capital letter followed by lower case letters.
- Jason is encouraged to develop a range of reading skills and abilities and is assisted with the use of more difficult words where appropriate.
- Jason is encouraged to attempt spellings independently
- Teachers will regularly check that Jason understands what he has read.
- Teachers write the date on their boards in standard and numerical annotation and encourage Jason to do likewise on all assignments (e.g. 1st January 2005 and 01/01/05).

Numeracy

- Teachers understand that Jason may have varied levels of need, ability and educational experience.
- Teachers are flexible in their approach to teaching numeracy in their individual subject areas but follow agreed school guidelines regarding specific numerical aspects.
- Both imperial and metric systems of measurement are accommodated.

- Jason is expected to do his own calculations, mentally or manually, but calculators are available where appropriate.
- Teachers avail of any opportunity to use and explain mathematical language and concepts.
- Teachers use practical situations and activities to reinforce numerical concepts.

SPHE

A campus wide approach is taken to Social, Personal and Health Education. In this context, Jason attends a Young Offenders Group with trained care staff. In the Education Centre a cross-curricular approach is taken to SPHE across many subject areas. A multidisciplinary team consisting of teaching staff, care staff and health professionals have developed a Substance Abuse/Drug Awareness programme which Jason attends twice weekly in the Education Centre.

Recognition of learning

Jason's learning is recognised in the following ways:

- Class points that reflect work rate and improved classroom behaviour.
- Weekly marks which contribute towards Activities.
- Student of the week – awarded to the top three learners.
- The Junior Certificate results obtained by Jason.

Assessment of/for learning

The teachers observations of Jason working more independently, being less and less teacher dependent is used as a good indicator of learning having taken place. The teacher will note these improvements and use these opportunities to feedback the information to Jason, to praise him and where appropriate to offer him a reward. The teacher will revisit the learning by recapping on previous work, assigning tasks that draw on this work and providing Jason with opportunities to plan future tasks.

If necessary, Jason may re-sit the standardised tests for literacy and numeracy. This gives both the teacher and Jason an insight into progress made on these skills. Jason's Junior Certificate results are seen as a strong indicator of the learning that has taken place.

Learning Support

Learning support is offered by each teacher by means of one to one tuition and by focusing on the Jason's specific learning needs. For personal and spiritual guidance the chaplain is in communication with Jason on a day-to-day basis. She has a strong influence and role in the life of the Education Centre.

Support Services

There is an inbuilt support network for staff working in the Education Centre. As there is a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching Jason, there is a common sharing of information that in turn offers a lot of support to the teacher. The climate and ethos of the Education Centre is open and supportive, allowing room for the discussion of difficult scenarios and situations that arise daily within the school

In-service/Professional development

Teachers in the Education Centre attend the curriculum days provided by the Dept. of Education. School Development Planning (SDPI) days give the Education Centre opportunities to update skills, learn about new resources and how to develop school policies. Teachers are encouraged to undertake the Graduate Diploma in Special Education in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra. Teachers can upgrade their skills using the Profexcel courses run during the summer months. These courses focus on learning difficulties or on the management of challenging behaviour. These courses also help to update teacher's knowledge of appropriate teaching strategies.

Evaluation

The Education Centre evaluates Jason's learning and the progress he makes on his learning journey in the following ways.

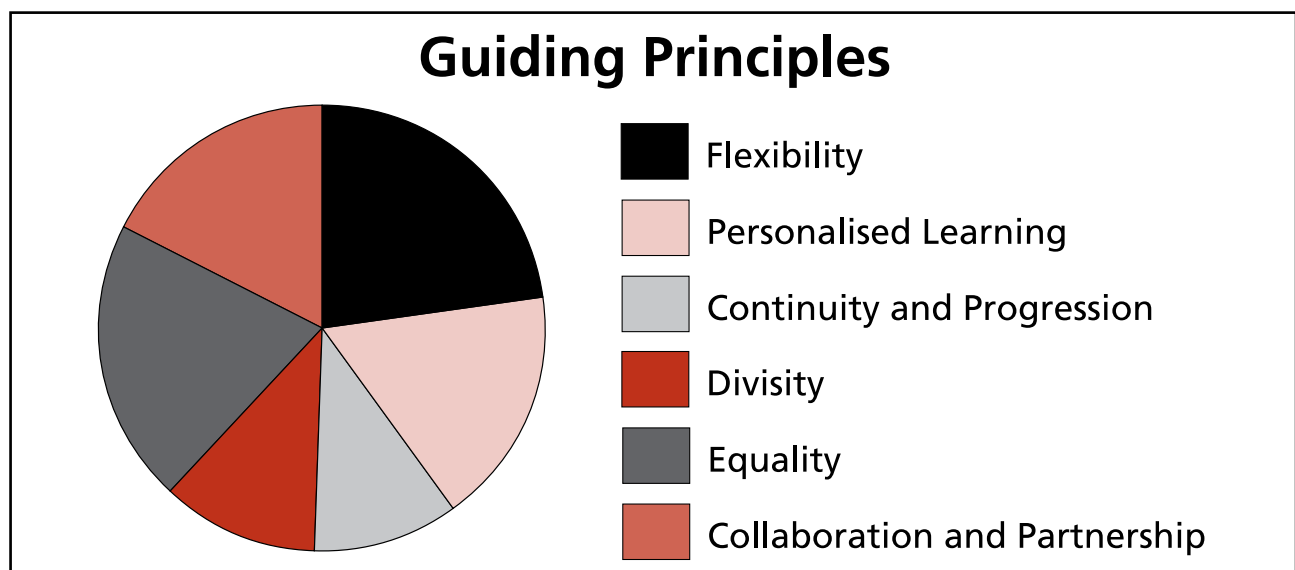
- Jason will have a monthly progress sheet for every subject studied. This sheet records details of work completed in each class, difficulties encountered and any relevant notes. The purpose of this progress sheet is to measure Jason's progress and provide all teachers with relevant information of his ability and progress. An overall report at the end of each month completes the progress sheet. This report reflects work completed by Jason, constructive teaching strategies, his progression and whether priority learning targets are being met.
- The report is used for case conferences, case reviews and for future planning of educational programmes. Case conferences and reviews are organised for sentenced students every six to eight weeks. The multi-disciplinary team including care staff, management, teachers, his parents, social workers and any relevant agencies discuss and plan life for Jason while in our care.
- The reviewing of Jason's IEP also allows the teachers to measure Jason's progress. If he has achieved the priority learning areas previously highlighted, new targets will be set. If they have not been met, the teaching strategies will be evaluated and alternative ones employed. Through the handovers between the care staff and the teachers, strategies and resources are often evaluated and discussed.
- An evaluation of the educational programmes ensures that the given programme is appropriate for the Jason. This usually entails differentiation between students or groups. When Jason leaves the centre, a concluding release report evaluates work completed and accreditations obtained. It is available to be passed onto new placements.

Conclusion

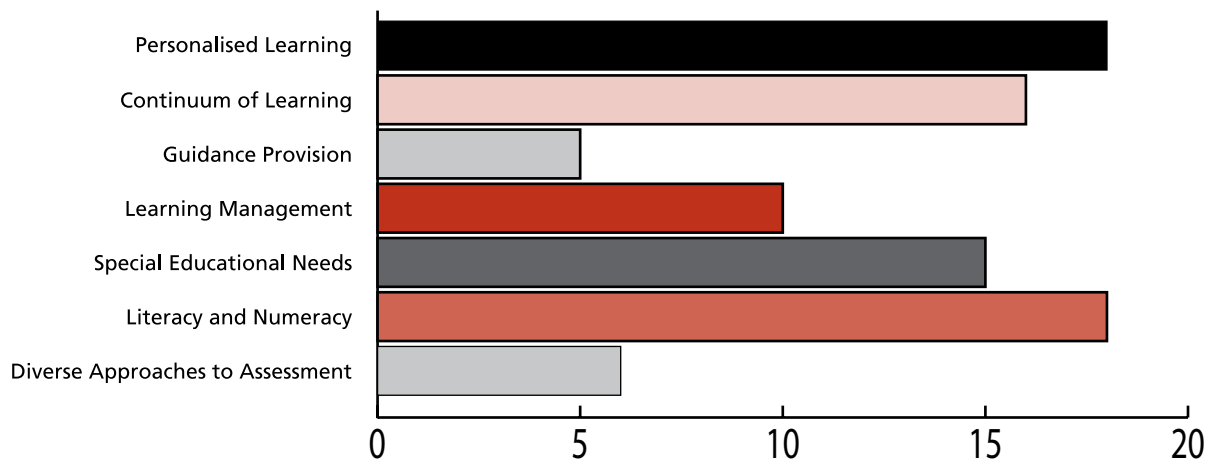
Areas of Alignment with the Features of the Framework

The framework is meant to be used flexibly. In that regard, no two education programmes that are aligned to the framework are likely to be the same. Depending on the learner for whom it is designed, each programme will emphasise different elements. The elements of this education programme are graphically represented below. These graphs correspond with the groupings used for the guiding principles and the defining features of the framework.

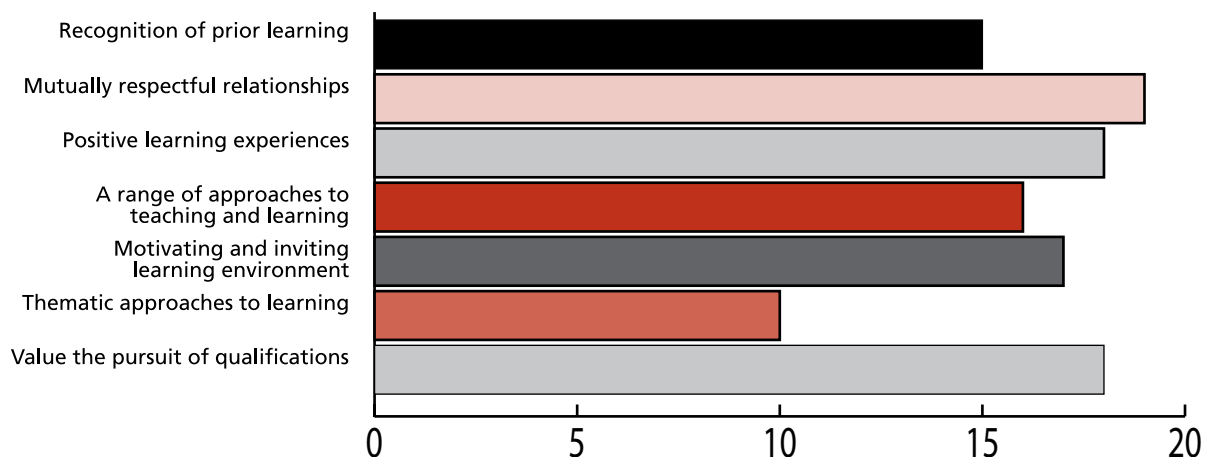
This process is useful when examining each programme for the purposes of curriculum development and review and to monitor the programmes alignment to the different elements of the framework. This type of monitoring gives insights into some aspects of the programme that could be developed. It is also useful in terms of comparing the different elements that are part of education programmes for a range of learners in these settings.



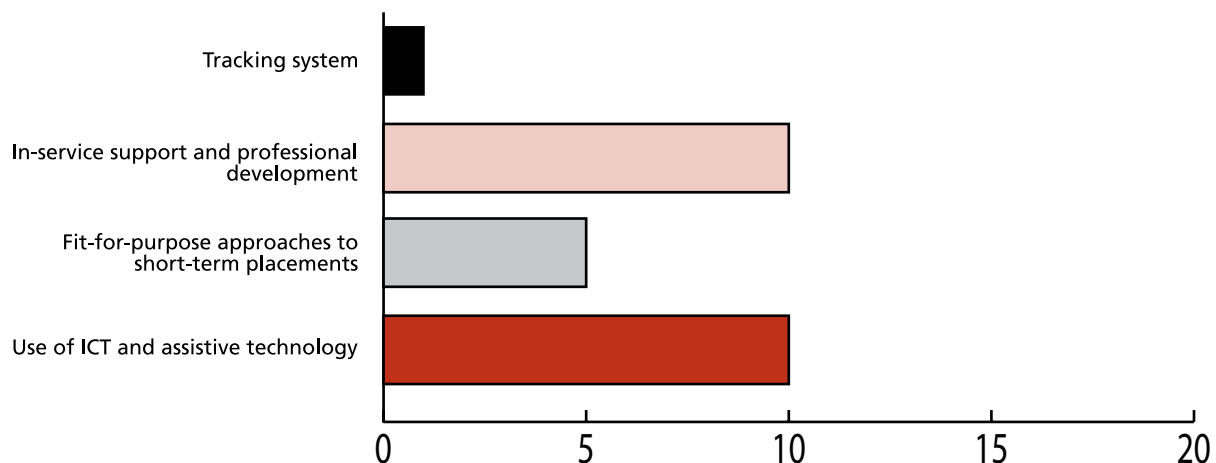
Defining Features - Teaching and Learning



Defining Features - Culture and Climate

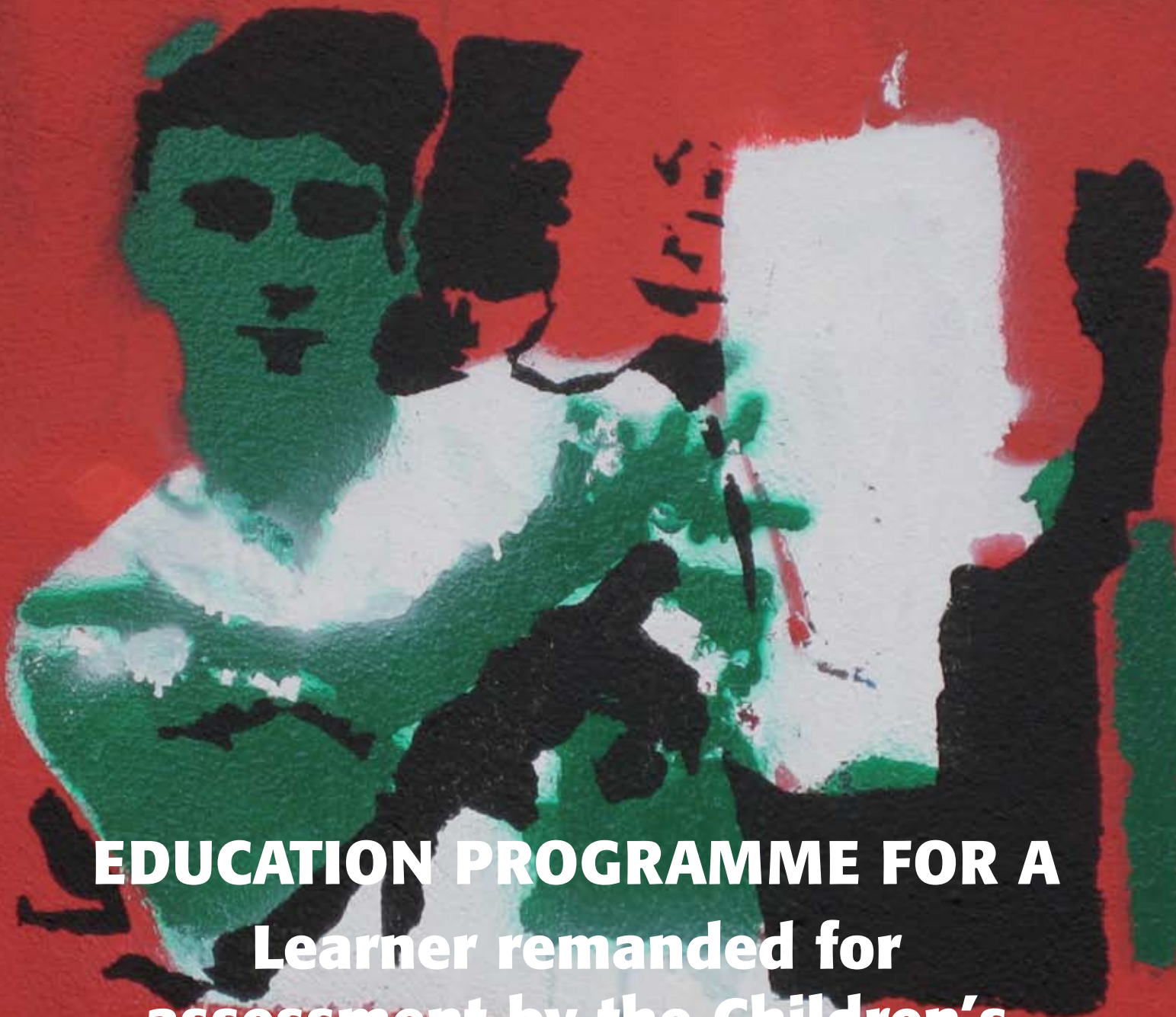


Defining Features - Implementation



- Draft Curriculum Framework and Guidelines for Children in Detention and Care (CiDC) •

Sample Education Programme No.2



**EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR A
Learner remanded for
assessment by the Children's
Court for a period of 28 days
to a Children Detention School**

Target Learner

The target learner, Brendan, is 14 years old and has been remanded by the courts to a Children Detention School for a period of 28 days to allow an assessment to be carried out by a multidisciplinary team. The assessment process involves

- a psychological assessment
- a family assessment by Brendan's social worker
- an educational assessment
- a care assessment

Brendan's educational background can be characterised by the following:

- A failure to benefit from conventional mainstream schooling
- A history of truancy, suspension and expulsion
- Poor self-esteem and little confidence in their own ability

Brendan's educational history and learning capacity show that he is reflective of the findings of recent research¹ which shows that approximately 20% of young people in detention can be expected to have full scale IQ scores in the intellectual disability range and 68% have a diagnosis of an externalising psychological disorder, which may include, conduct disorder, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or oppositional defiant disorder.

General Context

This Children Detention School houses a National Assessment and Remand Unit. Young people are remanded in custody by the Children's Court and then forwarded to the assessment unit. During his time spent here Brendan will attend school at the Education Centre and undertake a comprehensive set of care, educational, medical and psychological

assessments. For young people on assessment a counselling service is available from the psychological team in the Detention School. This team also administer psychological assessments. Reports are prepared for each discipline and presented at case conference, from which recommendations will be formulated for presentation to Court as to the suitability of future placements for Brendan.

The local Vocational Education Committee (VEC) has responsibility for the delivery of education in the Education Centre which is situated on the Children Detention School site. The Education Centre also provides an education programme to the following groups:

- Remand (for an indefinite duration)
- Committal (ranging from 2 months to 2 years)

Assessments carried out during Brendan's remand period have a crucial bearing on his future placements. Teaching staff, care staff and other professionals view their role in this process as crucial. They are aware of the responsibility their work has for contributing accurate assessment information to the Courts. This information can help inform decisions made around a suitable placement for Brendan to best fit his needs. Therefore, it is imperative that the multi-disciplinary team work collaboratively in order to ensure the best outcomes. The collaborative relationship that exists between the teaching staff, care staff and other professionals who work within the children detention school is extremely important.

One important aspect of the partnership that exists between teachers and care staff are the 'handovers' that occur on a daily basis every morning prior to school and following school in the evening. At morning handovers, care staff update teaching staff on Brendan's behaviour, emotional state, progress with homework, and on other issues that might affect Brendan's readiness to learn. Likewise, following school that evening, teachers update

¹ Jennifer Hayes: D Psych Sc (2006). Psychiatric Disorder, Emotional Intelligence and Cognitive Ability in Young People Detained by the Irish State for Criminal Behaviour.

care staff on similar issues relevant to Brendan’s behaviour/emotional state and on any homework given for the following day.

The principal and the teaching staff also meet every evening for a short period to discuss any issues that may have surfaced for learners and teachers during the school day. This short meeting enables teaching strategies for the following day to be modified without delay, if necessary.

Education Centre Staff

Administrative Principal (1)	Art & Crafts teacher (1)	Woodwork teacher (1)
General Subject teachers (3)	Technical Graphics teacher (1)	Home Economics teacher (1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy * • Numeracy* • Science • ICT • Life Skills (SPHE & RSE) • Geography • CSPE 		

* There is a cross curricular approach to guidance, religion, literacy and numeracy

Educational Experience

Induction

When Brendan is admitted to the Education Centre an induction process is carried out. The induction process takes approximately one day to complete and is carried out immediately following Brendan’s admittance. The objective of this process is to determine baseline data which is used as the basis for the development of an appropriate Individual Education Plan. Brendan’s IEP is developed for the 19 day period that he will spend in the Education

Centre. Because of the relatively short time period involved, Brendan’s IEP targets specific areas of concern that emerge from the induction process.

The induction process consists of three components:

- The young person’s self report
- The communication of school information
- Baseline assessments

Self Report

This takes the form of an initial informal interview.

The Principal or a teacher engage in a conversation with Brendan on his interests, prior learning, any special educational needs, and his future aspirations.

The information recorded on the self report typically includes

Name	Hobbies/Interests/ Aspirations
Brief School History	Notable Sporting and Educational Achievements
Literacy/Numeracy Needs	Prior Knowledge/ Experience of ICT
Prior Knowledge and Experience of Practical Subjects	Prior Knowledge and Experience of other Subject Areas
Any other relevant observations	

Communication of School Information

Any questions, fears or concerns that Brendan may have at this stage are addressed by the Education Centre in a spirit of inclusion. The information communicated to Brendan during the initial interview includes the following.

- School Rules Explained
- School Points System Explained
- School Contract Signed
- Allocation to Class Group
- Initial Testing Explained
- Assessment Process Explained

Baseline Assessments

Initial Literacy/Numeracy Assessment:

Initial Assessment	Administered by
Literacy/Numeracy – WIAT III (Wechsler Individual Achievement Test)	Educational Psychologist
Literacy/ Youthreach Literacy Assessment Tool	Teaching staff
Numeracy/Highland Maths Test	Teaching staff

Initial Practical Assessment:

This diagnostic test identifies any learning difficulties that Brendan may have. Teaching staff will address these in the classroom by giving effect to Brendan's IEP. This test is developed in-house with the collaboration of all teaching staff and includes the following test components.

- Hand –Eye Co-ordination
- Measurement
- Shape and Space
- Colour
- Weights and Measures
- Practical Assessment for Computers
- Texture and Materials
- Cutting and Folding Exercise

Learner Profile

The information obtained from the above induction process is analysed by a member of the teaching

staff. A Learner Profile is drawn up for Brendan using the following criteria.

- General information
- Hobbies/Interests/ Aspirations
- Past notable education/sporting achievements
- Individual strengths
- Areas for development

*Appendix A1 includes a sample 'Learner Profile' for Brendan

Individual Education Plan

The information from Brendan's Learner Profile is presented in written format and discussed with all teaching staff at a morning handover meeting, which occurs on a daily basis. It is as a result of these meetings with staff that suitable teaching and learning strategies are discussed and agreed for Brendan. This facilitates the development of an Individual Learning Plan for Brendan. The IEP is kept on file and remains in the Education Centre. At the daily handover meetings with teaching staff, ongoing monitoring and evaluation takes place of all learners IEP's. At 2 ½ weeks following Brendan's admittance to the Children Detention School a report is prepared by the Education Centre and is presented to the multidisciplinary team at Brendan's Pre- Case Conference. Following this meeting a formal Case Conference takes place. The representatives who may attend at each of these meeting are outlined below.

Pre-Case Conference	Case Conference
A Teacher	Social Worker
Educational Psychologist	Parents
Clinical Psychologist	Gardai
Social Worker	Probation Officer
Key Care Worker	Education Welfare Officer
Unit Manager	Independent Chairperson

Core Curriculum

Following the initial assessment, Brendan attends class in the Education Centre. Here he will be provided with

- ongoing assessment of a diagnostic nature that builds on the baseline assessment

- an Education Programme that focuses on personalising the learning.

The core curriculum provided by the Education Centre emphasises a number of key areas.

Key Curriculum Areas	Components	Administered by
Literacy	Standardised assessment tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aston Index • Neale Analysis • Wiat II • WISC IV 	Teaching staff Teaching staff Ed. Psychologist Ed. Psychologist
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norman France • Vernon Graded Maths Test 	Teaching staff Teaching staff
Practical Subjects	28 day practical assessment	Developed and administered by in-house teaching staff
Life Skills	Components of SPHE and RSE. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug awareness • Health and Hygiene • Relationships and Sexuality Education 	Teaching staff Teaching staff Teaching staff
Summer Programme	Involves learners in co-curricular activities and a more relaxed academic curriculum than at other times during the year.	Collaboration between teaching and care staff

Sample in-school and class contact time for a typical learner such as Brendan who is admitted to a Children Detention School on remand for assessment:

Sample time allocation over 19 school days			
	Minutes	% School Time	% Class Time
Induction	200	5.3	7.3
Literacy	325	8.6	11.8
Numeracy	300	7.9	11.0
Computers	130	3.4	4.7
Life Skills	230	6.1	8.3
Art & Crafts	215	5.7	7.8
Home Economics	370	9.8	13.4
Technical Graphics	320	8.4	11.6
Woodwork	365	9.6	13.2
Reading Time	300	7.9	10.9
Psychologist 1	320	8.5	
Psychologist 2	130	3.4	
Psychologist 3	120	3.2	
Social Worker (interview)	120	3.2	
Court	200	5.3	
Confined to unit (compassionate)	70	1.9	
Confined to unit	60	1.6	
Total	3800	100%	100%

Teaching and Learning

The focus of the teaching and learning in the Education Unit corresponds very well with the vision for education in these settings as outlined in the *Curriculum Framework for Children Detention Schools, High Support Units and Special Care Units*. Differentiation of the learning experience to meet the diverse needs of learners on short-term placements informs the daily work of the teachers in the learning environment.

Personalising the Learning

Flexibility in teaching and learning approaches helps to create the space needed to provoke inquiry by Brendan and to reflect on his learning. Brendan is supported as he builds on his prior knowledge and experiences and is encouraged and assessed in

his ability to discover answers to key questions and concepts in a range of learning areas. Teachers help Brendan to develop the skills required to manage his own learning and to personalise his own learning journey.

Teachers are aware of the importance of developing all learner's personal/interpersonal skills as well as literacy/numeracy skills in all subject areas. The teaching qualities of empathy, compassion, creativity and flexibility are requirements in this learning environment.

The approach adopted in the classroom, while being firm and structured, is predominantly positive, supportive and encouraging which is supported by high levels of individual attention. Teaching staff formally assess Brendan in each subject area as part of the assessment process. Teaching staff ensure

day to day classroom activities and learning tasks provided for Brendan are appropriate to his age and level of learning capacity.

Behavioural Strategies

The Education Centre incorporates the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) model of care into our teaching and all staff who are involved with the education and care of young people in the Detention School receive training with regard to its safe use.

In order to ensure consistency of approach in dealing with challenging behaviour there is collaboration between all disciplines working with Brendan. This is necessary in order to identify the triggers for the challenging behaviour on a case by case basis.

The most effective methodology that teachers develop when attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. To this end, the Education Centre has developed strategies to promote positive behaviour. This is based on the assumption that all behaviour (negative and positive) is learned and, therefore, that acceptable behaviour can be learned. It is also predicated on the belief that behaviour is contextual, so young people can be taught to behave in a certain way in the school context. Acceptable behaviour is then reinforced in a school and classroom climate which is supportive of positive behaviour. Teachers model positive behaviour, by treating children and adults with respect and building up a positive relationship with the young people.

Discipline for Learning Programme

Within the Education Centre a discipline for learning programme is in operation. This programme includes the following.

- **School Contract**

During the induction process Brendan is required to sign a behavioural school contract, which outlines the school rules and the schools

expectations during the remand period.

- **Points System**

Brendan is awarded points for each class; these are recorded on a notice board in the school which is visible to all learners. When Brendan reaches a predetermined number of points he will receive a reward from the school.

- **Certification**

When Brendan displays significant improvement in any curricular area or any school activity he may be awarded an in-house certificate. On these occasions both teaching and care staff celebrate his progress.

- **Interview**

Should Brendan require time out of a classroom, an interview takes place with a member of the teaching and care staff in order to determine the cause of the difficulty in class. The teacher in collaboration with the care staff assess whether it would be appropriate to attempt to deal with the issue within the Education Unit. Every effort is made to resolve any issues within the Education Unit area of the Detention School. However the safety of other learners and staff is taken into account in these instances.

Key Skills Emphasis

The Education Centre emphasises the integration of key skills across all aspects of the education programme. In this light, Brendan will be actively encouraged to develop his skills in literacy, numeracy and be supported in his development of other life skills by teachers in all the learning areas. Teaching staff and care staff are aware of the central role that these skills have in establishing a solid base for experiencing learning in each of the learning areas and also for life in general. In this regard, the Detention School places great emphasis on assessing, developing, monitoring and evaluating Brendan's skills. This is achieved through the collaboration and partnership of education staff, care staff and

other professionals who each play an important role in the follow up and follow through of Brendan's induction programme, baseline assessments, and classroom assessments and through the preparation of Brendan's IEP.

Learning Support

The Education Centre has recently developed a cross-curricular literacy and numeracy policy in order to ensure that a common approach is used in the delivery of the programme. Functional literacy skills are promoted. This is further enhanced by the reading time which takes place across the curriculum at a specified time on a daily basis.

A whole school approach is also in place for numeracy which sets out the schools' approach to the teaching of agreed numeracy skills in order to provide cross curricular consistency.

Life Skills

The Education Centre recognises that a cross curricular and cross agency approach is necessary in the delivery of any life skills programme. Within the Education Centre the curriculum on offer emphasise Life skills as an individual area of study. The Life Skills Programme currently on offer is an amalgam of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) syllabi. The Life Skills Programme provides opportunities for Brendan to learn personal and social skills which foster integrity, self confidence and self-esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings of others. For young people such as Brendan, on remand for assessment, they are provided with two class periods per week for this programme. This programme consists of three modules.

- Drugs
- Health and Hygiene
- Sex Education

The beauty of the life skills programme is its personalisation to the learners needs. Education staff will base the approach taken to the delivery of this programme on a number of factors. These include;

- Brendan's ICP
- Brendan's IEP
- The feedback given by care staff at Brendan's handover periods.

Guidance

The Education Centre has recently prioritised the need to develop a programme in relation to educational and vocational guidance for the young people remanded for assessment. The context for this prioritisation is the recent increase in age profile of young person attending the Detention School. Teaching staff feel that this change in age profile now merits an increase in emphasis on vocational preparation and training and in the provision of career information that reflects the individual interests and needs of the learner.

They are aware that guidance is a crucial element of provision in these settings and therefore are currently involved with sourcing guidance expertise externally. As an interim measure, the Education Centre is currently offering a 20 minute class period of one-to one guidance once a week to assess and address the needs of learners such as Brendan.

In-Service/Professional development

Teaching staff are encouraged to participate in any in-service or professional development that is seen as relevant to the needs of both staff and learners. In this context, teachers attend

- JCSP subject specific in-service courses
- FETAC subject specific in-service courses
- School Development Planning in-service days

Teaching staff place great value on the personal advice of other teaching colleagues who work in

these settings and see the need for opportunities that involve the sharing of ideas/advice and resources in this sector to be explored through a dedicated in-service provision.

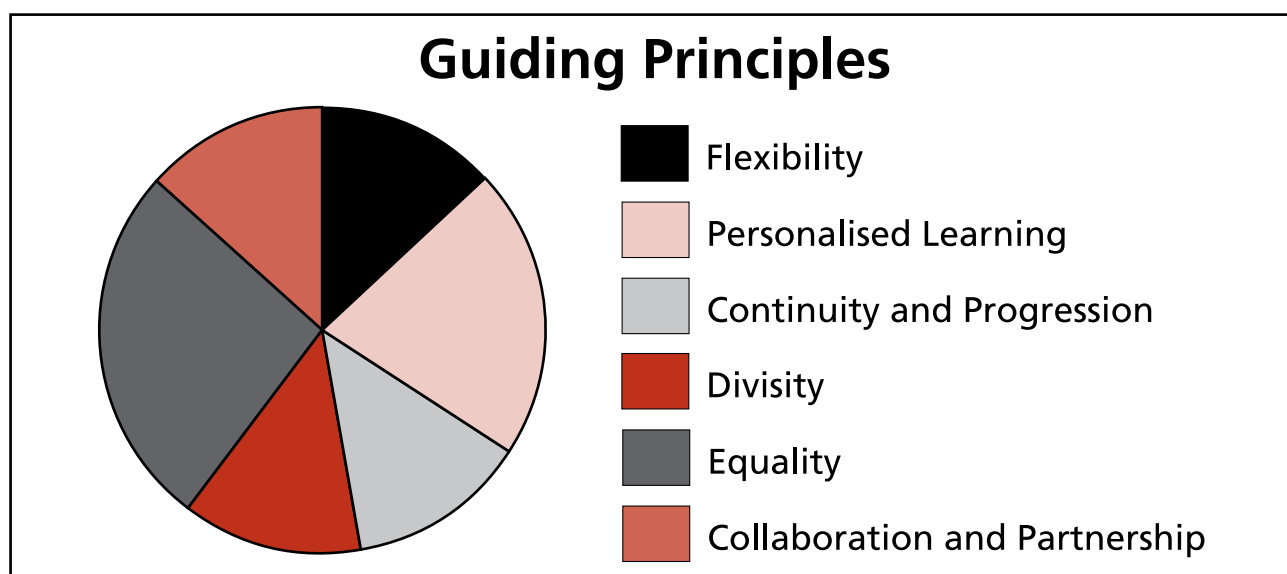
Conclusion

Areas of Alignment with the Features of the Framework

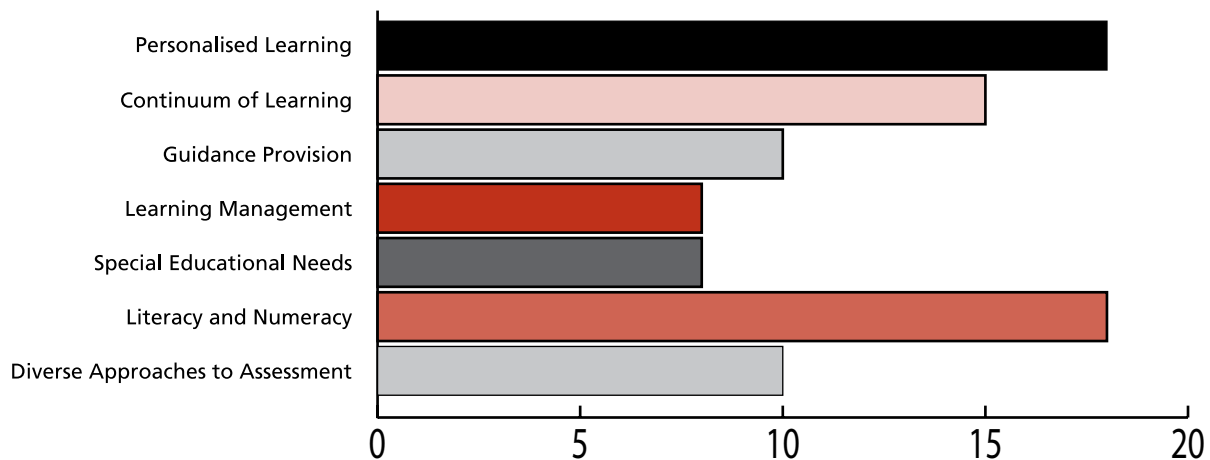
The framework is meant to be used flexibly. In that regard, no two education programmes that are aligned to the framework are likely to be the same. Depending on the learner for whom it is designed, each programme will emphasise different elements. The elements of this education

programme are graphically represented below. These graphs correspond with the groupings used for the guiding principles and the defining features of the framework.

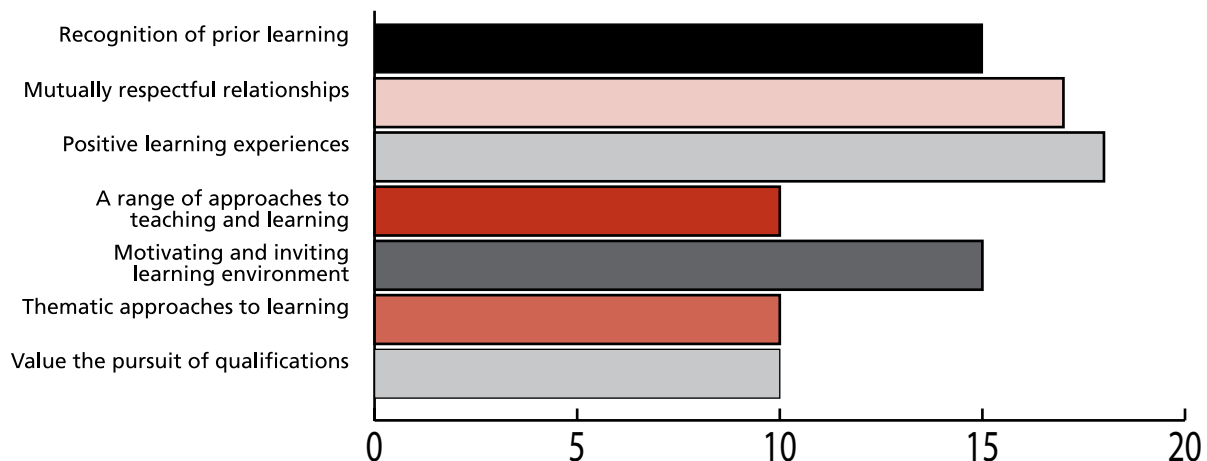
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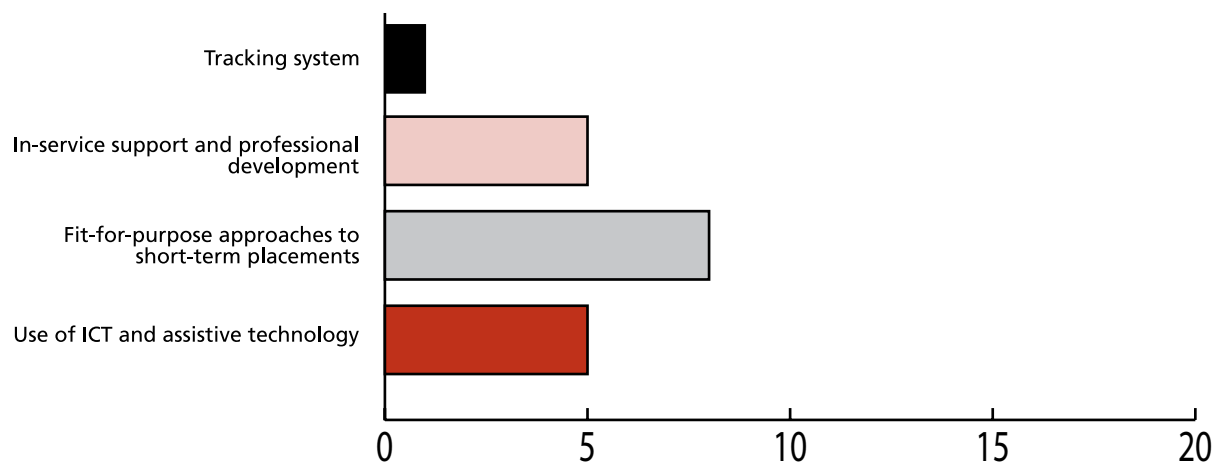
Defining Features - Teaching and Learning

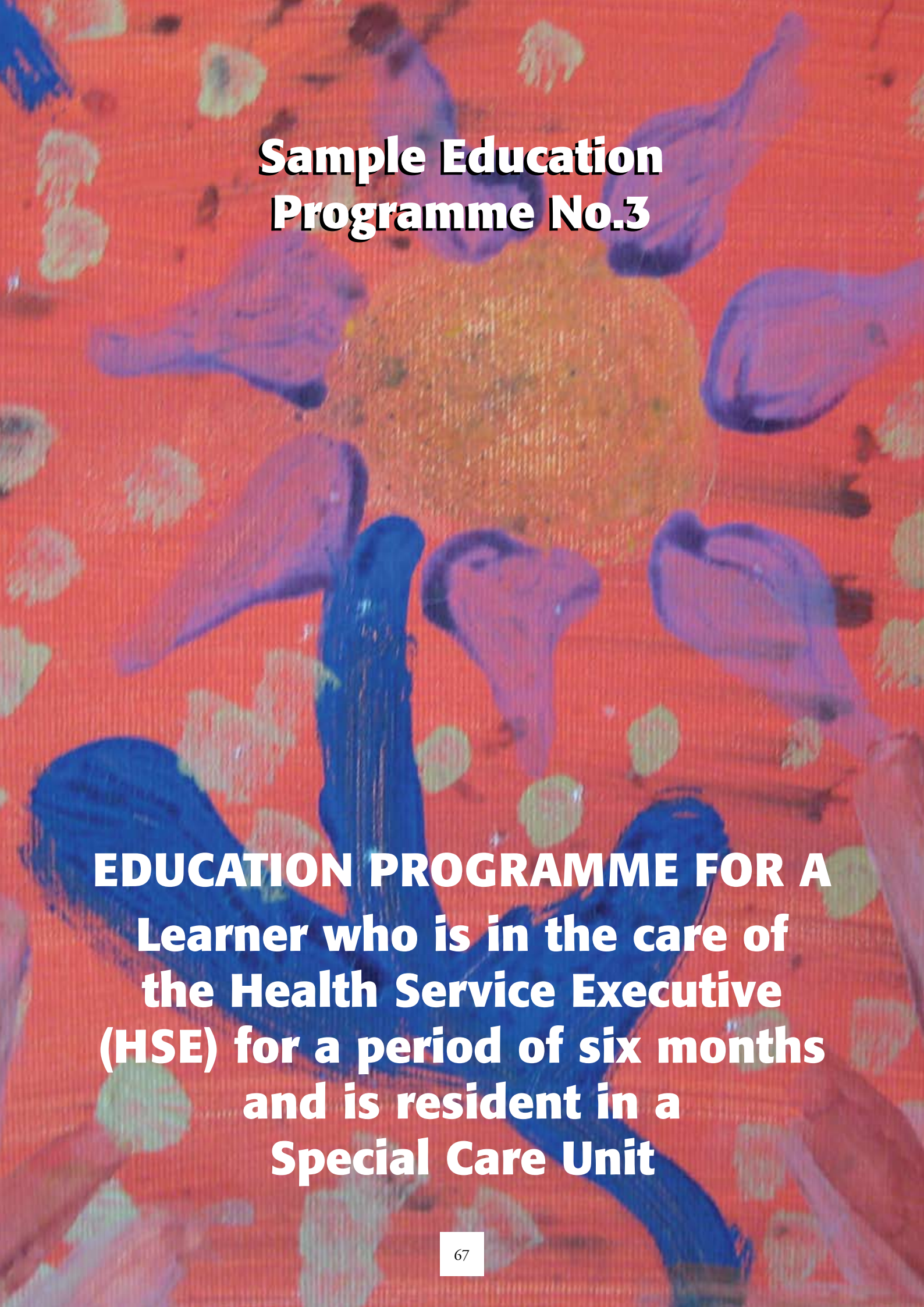


Defining Features - Culture and Climate



Defining Features - Implementation





Sample Education Programme No.3

**EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR A
Learner who is in the care of
the Health Service Executive
(HSE) for a period of six months
and is resident in a
Special Care Unit**

The Target Learner

Trevor is 14 years old and is representative of many of the young people attending school in Special Care. Typically these young people present at a Special Care Unit having had experienced

- a negative relationship with formal education resulting in very poor self-esteem
- serious histories of truancy
- disrupted schooling resulting in numerous placement moves
- school exclusion
- a lack of opportunity to develop basic educational skills.

Trevor, like many other young people in Special Care, admits to not being able to cope with large numbers in mainstream school settings and has experienced difficulty in the transition from Primary to Post-Primary School. Many of the young people placed in Special Care Units see this as a significant causal factor behind their decision not to attend mainstream school.

Trevor's educational history shows that he has attended mainstream primary school. He did not have or require support until sixth class. He was provided with the support of a resource teacher for his final year of primary school. Trevor completed first year in a post-primary school. His attendance was good for the first month of second year but after that he began refusing to attend. Trevor remained out of school for two months before moving to another post-primary school. Here he again refused to attend. Trevor's Education Welfare Officer together with his Social Worker and with the support of his parents collectively decided to register him for a placement in a local Youthreach centre. Trevor's attendance at the Youthreach centre remained poor.

For a year and a half, Trevor had little or no

attendance at a mainstream school or at a Youthreach centre. During that time he began running away from home and became involved in substance abuse. For his own safety and welfare Trevor was referred through the Health Board for a placement in a Special Care Unit.

Context

The Children Act 2001 provides for the establishment of Special Care Units where young people are detained for their own care and protection. The Children Act attempts to mark the distinction between those who have committed a crime and those who require secure care on welfare grounds.

The Education Centre is under the patronage of the Health Service Executive and funded by the Department of Education and Science. Emphasis is placed on custody in terms of care, safe keeping and supervision, rather than punishment and containment. The overall aim of the Special Care Unit is to provide focused care and therapy to young people so that their behaviour is stabilised and they are enabled to return to non-secure care within a short period of time. Young People who are resident in the Special Care Unit will usually attend school for three to six months depending on their exit plan. Some young people may attend for longer depending on decisions made by the care team.

The Education Centre attached to this Special Care Unit provides an opportunity for young people in care to engage in individual education programmes. Young people can attend from various HSE mainstream care units, other Special Care Units, High Support Units, Open units or Independent Living units. The Education Centre also caters for a number of young people who are not in care but are connected with the HSE in the region through the Social Work Department, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Education and Welfare Service. Young people attend

the Education Centre during regular school hours but may also attend at irregular times depending on the additional educational and co-curricular activities that are offered.

The specialised school environment provides the opportunity for learners to engage in an environment where they believe they can achieve. Difficulties can and do arise when learners refuse to engage with the Educational Programme.

Education Programme

Pre-planning

The Education Centre is informed of Trevor's impending arrival at the Special Care Unit. Care Review Reports and all available documents regarding Trevor's previous educational experience are made available to the Centre. The teaching staff are informed immediately of Trevor's arrival and time is allotted at the beginning or the end of the school day during morning and evening handovers to discuss his previous education and care reports and plan for his first days in the Education Centre.

Induction

The principal, vice principal or a member of the teaching team will meet with Trevor in the Special Care Unit before they start school. This is viewed as an important first step in creating a positive relationship with Trevor and an atmosphere of trust as he begins his next educational placement.

Trevor is offered the opportunity to visit and look around the school the evening before he begins class to enable him to become familiar with his new surroundings, feel at ease with the environment and begin a personal journey of belonging where he will hopefully view the Education Centre as "his school".

During the initial meeting the daily routine of school is explained and a basic profile of Trevor is gathered. His likes and dislikes, personal interests, favourite football team, favourite music, TV

programmes he has an interest in, books he may have read and magazines he likes to buy. This information though it may be seen as basic forms the building blocks of the personalised education programme that Trevor will follow while attending the Education Centre.

Baseline assessment

During the first week after arrival in the Special Care Unit Trevor is introduced to the various subject areas and the teachers begin to build on his initial profile. Trevor is allocated to a class group based on his priority learning needs and on his ability to mix with other learners. Each class group is evaluated on a daily basis and changes are made to provide the most suitable and nurturing learning environment for Trevor.

Many of the young people who come into Special Care have been assessed a number of times and can become agitated or distressed at the onset of MORE assessments. Therefore during this first five to six day period teachers strive to build a relationship with Trevor. School based and formal assessments are then gradually introduced as Trevor becomes more familiar, at ease and relaxed within the school environment.

Within the first two weeks of Trevor's placement, assessments are carried out to aid the teaching staff in developing an Individual Educational Plan.

Tests and assessments used include

- W.R.A.T 4 assessments
- Vernon Graded Maths test
- Nefer Nelson group reading tests
- individual assessments developed by teachers specific to their own subject area.

Information on Trevor is also provided by the HSE care unit; this information can come from psychological reports, previous school reports, and

medical reports. For the purposes of developing Trevor's IEP, the teaching staff focus on and discuss the following information.

- Previous school attendance.
- Behaviour in previous educational settings.
- Integration and ability to engage with other young people.
- Academic ability.
- Educational Interventions attempted in other settings.
- Other educational and social achievements.

All of this information helps to build a profile for Trevor which is used to inform decisions made by the education team around the development of Trevor's IEP.

Individual Education Plan

An IEP is developed for Trevor over a four to six week period. Trevor develops his plan with a Key Teacher from school and a Key Worker from the care team. When possible the group will meet once a month to review and develop the IEP. The Key Teacher reports on the progress, concerns and issues raised by the teaching team and changes to the plan are made based on this process. Any changes to the IEP are a result of collaboration/partnership between Trevor, his Key Teacher and his Key Worker.

As a result of Trevor's initial and baseline assessments his IEP specifically targets a number of priority areas. These include

- continuity with mainstream school curriculum
- attitude to learning
- social skills
- development of self-esteem
- pursuit of learning in an area of personal interest.

Trevor's priority learning areas are not approached

in isolation. The teaching intention in following through on the priority learning areas is to help Trevor prepare for his transition to home, mainstream school and the community.

As far as practically possible, the education programme undertaken by Trevor in the Education Centre will be determined by the programme he was following in his most recent school placement. All decisions surrounding Trevor's IEP are made in collaboration with the Social Care Team.

A Normalising Learning Experience

Culture and Climate for Learning

In the spirit of normalising the learning experience for Trevor, teachers create a climate of adventure in learning but also realise that something as simple as getting on a bus with six to ten other young people can be a major achievement for one individual, while having the opportunity to go into a shop and pay for lunch, sandwiches & rolls for a group of people can be a huge step forward for another young person. Teachers view these 'out of the classroom' tasks as valuable learning opportunities for Trevor and build on that learning through the planning of individual learning area tasks in mathematics, social skills and personal development courses when back in the classroom.

In a culture of ongoing planning, development and reassessment, the Education Centre strives to ground Trevor's IEP in the skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding necessary for lifelong learning.

Core Curriculum

The core curriculum followed by Trevor in his education programme includes:

- Woodwork
- Home Economics
- CSPE
- Physical Education

- Science
- English
- Maths
- Art
- Business Studies
- History/Geography

Co-curricular Activities

As part of Trevor's education programme he has the opportunity to take part in an Outdoor Activity Programme. Over the first three weeks of his placement, Trevor is involved in planning a number of learning experiences that will be external and away from the Special Care Unit and the Education Centre. These include

- hill walking
- rock climbing
- kayaking
- surfing.

In collaboration with the PE teacher and two other learners, Trevor plans for these activities. A budget is drawn up provisionally by the group for the purchase of outdoor equipment required for hill walking and rock climbing trips. Trevor visits outdoor equipment shops, makes phone calls and sends email in an attempt to secure the equipment within the budget. In conjunction with the Mathematics/Business Studies teachers an exact cost for the equipment is submitted to the schools board of management for approval. Once approved Trevor is involved in the purchase of the equipment from the suppliers.

These additional activities are monitored using assessments designed by the teachers involved in the Outdoor Education Programme.

The benefits of this co-curricular programme for Trevor are noticed by an increase in his

- ability to engage with and overcome a physical challenge
- self-esteem
- confidence and ability to interact with peers and the wider community.

Teachers attend training courses to ensure that the Outdoor Activity Programme is properly designed, managed and assessed for each young person.

Life Skills

Cross curricular learning take place in a range of Trevor's junior cycle subjects. In planning and developing cross curricular projects, teachers include links to life skills, social and personal development and literacy and numeracy. The Outdoor Activities Programme and other 'out of school' programmes used to help learners such as Trevor pursue areas of expressed interest, form the basis of the cross curricular projects undertaken in the Education Unit.

In collaboration with the Special Care Unit the Education Centre is involved in the process of maintaining 'social inclusion' for Trevor while he is in care. Through a series of carefully planned events he is given opportunities to explore what his peers in mainstream school would regard as normal social and recreational experiences. These include the following.

- **Joining a library close to the school:**
The books withdrawn are used as part of the morning reading sessions that take place during the first class of school for twenty five minutes each day.
- **Shopping for groceries:**
The groceries purchased are used in the Home Economics class where Trevor gains an understanding of the purchase of cooking materials, food, household products and the expense of day to day living. Links are explored

and connections made between literacy, numeracy, business, home economics and SPHE.

- **Indoor Wall Climbing:**

As part of the Physical Education programme Trevor attends a number of sessions at a venue away from the school to develop appropriate climbing skills and progress to Rock Climbing outdoors over a period of time.

Pursuit of Learning in an Area of Personal Interest

Following a “settling in” period of three to four weeks and with no issues regarding mobility and access out of the school, Trevor avails of a programme that aims to empower him with the skills to pursue an area of learning in which he expressed a personal interest. Through a high quality educational module Trevor has access to a horticultural project where he can engage with a wider cross section of the community. Trevor is given the opportunity to develop many new skills and hopefully an interest in the environment, sustainability and the natural process involved with the production and care of trees, fruit and vegetables. This Horticultural/Environmental Programme is offered to learners who express an interest in the environment. The programme takes place over a six month period from April to mid November and follows the aims of the primary and post-primary curriculum by

‘enabling the young person to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others while contributing to the good of society’.

The Horticultural/Environmental Programme helps Trevor to develop a keen interest in the outdoors and involves him in the building of a medieval ‘cobb’ house with the teachers and other learners from the Education Unit.

The learning experiences gained in the horticultural

environment are reflected upon and developed further in the classroom. Trevor begins a FETAC module in Horticulture and as part of this module undertakes a project in collaboration with the care team in the Special Care Unit. Trevor, together with other learners on the programme, design and plant a garden area within the grounds of the unit with the guidance and support of the teachers and the care team.

Recognition of Achievement

All of Trevor’s achievements are recognised by the teachers in the Education Unit and the care staff from the Special Care Unit. His achievements are not only recognised by the ‘certificates of achievement’ awarded by accrediting bodies but also by his success in overcoming personal challenges. Trevor has been successful in meeting many of the priority learning targets identified in his IEP. Each of these milestones is celebrated. Some of the ways in which his achievements are recognisable include the following.

- Engaged with the community
- Developed friendships with others both inside/ outside of the Special Care Unit and Education Centre
- Successfully pursued an area of personal interest
- Enjoyment from diverse outdoor learning activities
- Developed his self-esteem and confidence to ‘take a risk’
- FETAC certification in a Horticultural Module
- Continuity/progression in Junior Cycle subjects (in line with his peers at mainstream school)

Evaluation

- Throughout the six month period that Trevor attended the Education Centre, five IEP’s were developed for him. Each monthly plan listed the

positive outcomes of the previous months plan and highlighted areas of concern around Trevor’s behaviour and his engagement with the priority learning areas. Each plan identified one specific task for Trevor that linked with his planned ‘out of school’ learning experiences.

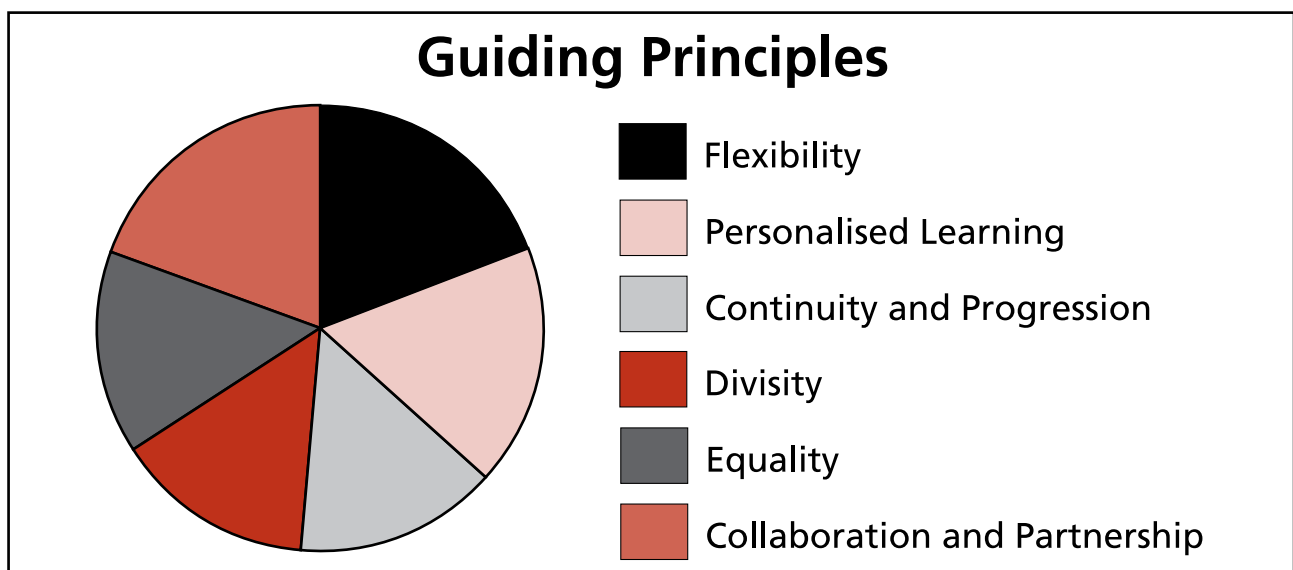
- Trevor’s progress and assessment of his behaviour is monitored on a class by class basis. The principal or teacher responsible for calls to classrooms will visit each class in progress a minimum of four times during each class period or every ten minutes.
- All teaching staff review Trevor’s progress at a weekly meeting. His educational progress in each class subject, his behaviour and social interaction are all monitored. The Education Centre is developing a model of behaviour management based on functional behaviour assessment to aid the school in providing a positive behaviour support system.
- As a result of Trevor’s positive engagement and interest in the collaborative Horticultural Project the possibility arose for him to attend another Horticultural Project closer to his home on leaving Special Care. Links and contacts were made to enable Trevor to attend.

Conclusion

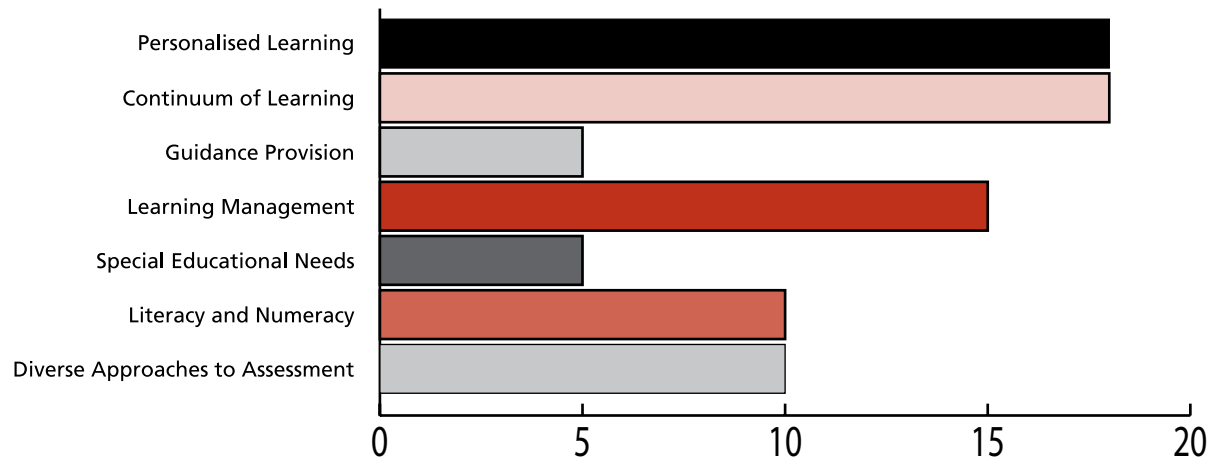
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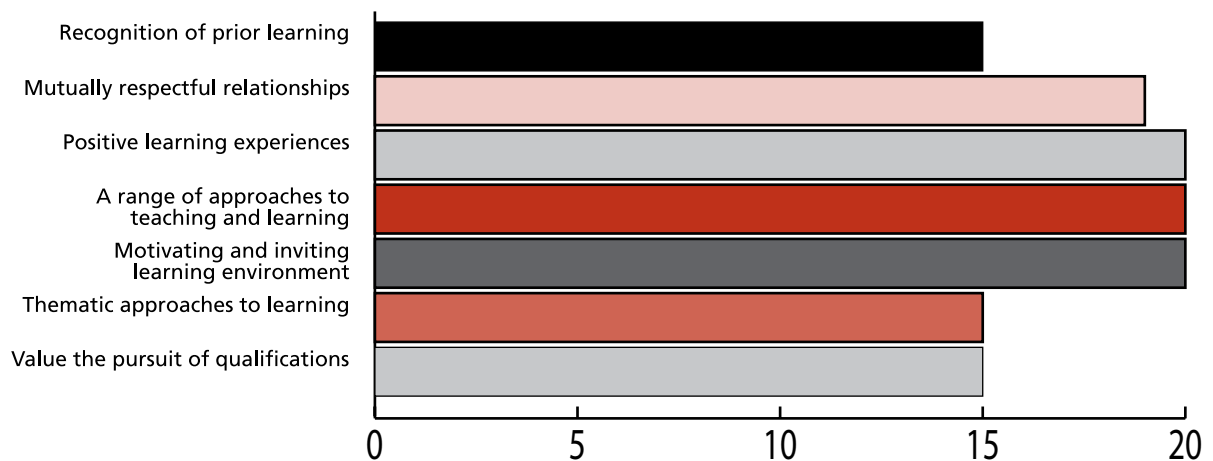
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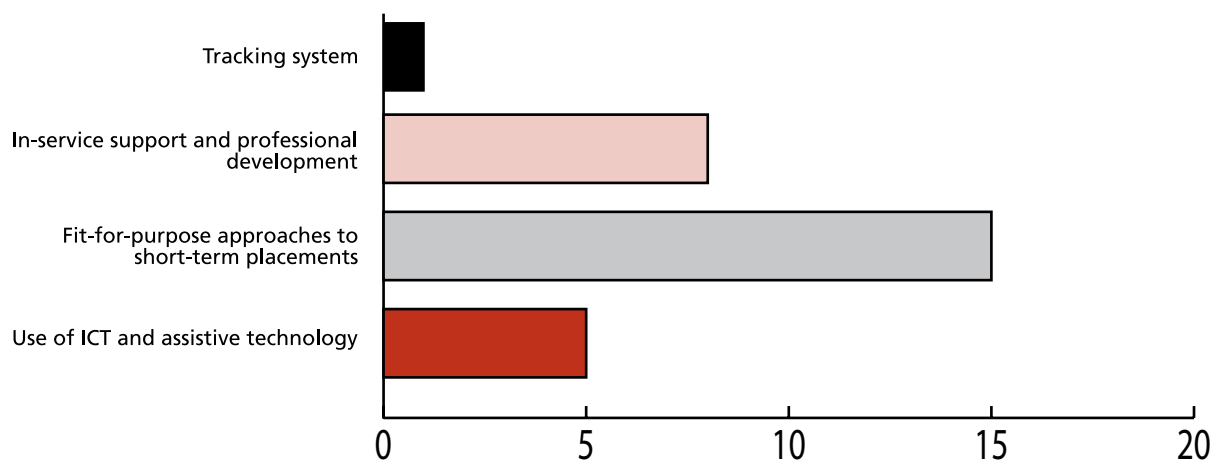
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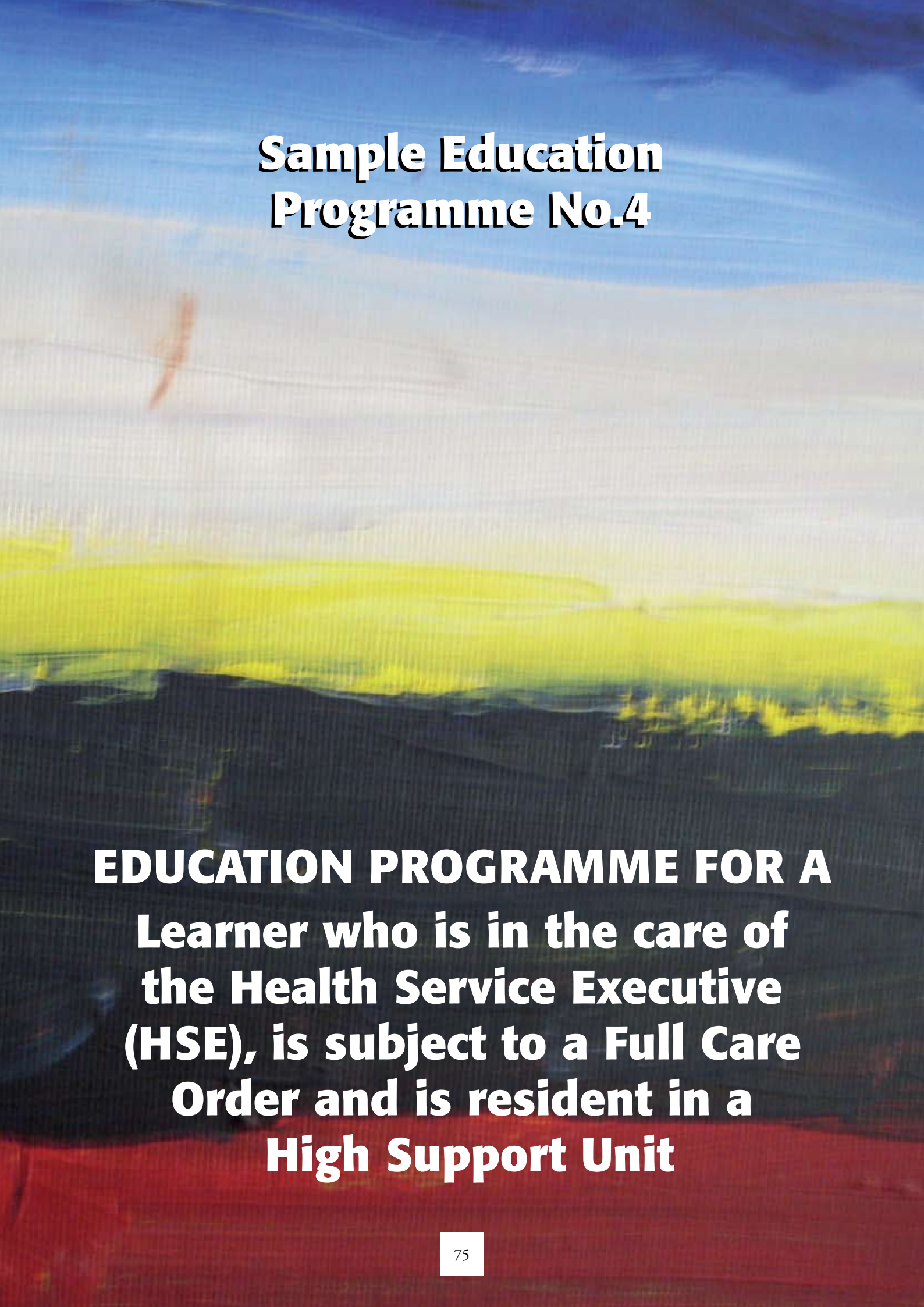


Defining Features - Culture and Climate



Defining Features - Implementation





Sample Education Programme No.4

**EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR A
Learner who is in the care of
the Health Service Executive
(HSE), is subject to a Full Care
Order and is resident in a
High Support Unit**

Target Learner

Cathy is a 13-year-old girl who has a full care order and is resident in a High Support Unit. Cathy, like many others in high support care has struggled at mainstream school from many perspectives such as lack of attendance, participation, behaviour in school, suspension, expulsion, multiple school placements, disjointed educational progress and lack of home environment support. She completed her primary education, though her attendance and meaningful participation had become sporadic. In September, she started her secondary education in her local Vocational School where she attended for six weeks prior to her admittance to the High Support Unit.

She has a great love of and interest in horses, children and cookery. She enjoys art and history. She dislikes maths because she feels she is no good at them and is reluctant to study new topics for fear of failure.

She has a reading age (Neale Analysis) of 6 years and 2 months and an IQ (WISC 111) score of 67 that places her in the 1st percentile, the mild general learning disability area of ability. It is evident from her free writing that her writing, spelling and use of capital letters and punctuation are erratic and limited. She regularly mixes up tenses, singulars and plurals and omits or adds letters especially for word endings. Her oral and written vocabulary is restricted which helps to compound her lack of confidence.

General Context

Culture and Climate

The Education Centre is a school that adjoins a High Support Unit. It is part of a three-stranded service that provides for the needs of children who are taken into residential state care. The three strands are - Care, Psychological Care, Psychological Therapy and Education. The service provides for

additional support to children, via higher staff ratios and higher levels of therapeutic input.

Under the Child Care Act (1991), the Health Service Executive (HSE) can use a number of procedures when dealing with children who are at risk or who are in need of care. The students who attend the Education Centre are in the care of the HSE on foot of a care order granted by the District Court. Application for enrolment in the Education Centre is made by the child's social worker. The child is usually in residence in the adjoining High Support Unit. The overriding backdrop being that the child will return to mainstream community care or home.

The Education Centre attached to this High Support Unit is located in a purpose built Mastercabin in the enclosed back yard of a period residence owned by the HSE. It consists of two good sized, bright classrooms. One of the classrooms is laid out in a traditional manner with individual desks and chairs. The other classroom operates as a general-purpose room with one half being used to offer Art classes while the other half, which has a kitchen area, is used to offer Home Economics classes. There are two separate small rooms in the Education Centre which function as a storage room and a small office. There is a large tarmaced area which is used as a tennis and basketball court. A gym which is owned by the HSE is also on the site. The High Support Unit is dedicated at present for girls.

The Education Centre has a pupil-teacher ratio of 5:1. During a typical class period, the teacher can be expected to manage the teaching and learning associated with up to five personalised education programmes. A number of co-operation hours operate within the Education Centre. These hours are sanctioned each year by the Department of Education and Science and are administered by the local VEC. This affords the opportunity to offer a

small number of specialised subjects such as Art, Woodwork, Music, and French.

The characteristics required on a daily basis by teachers in the Education Centre can include the ability to

- empathise with people and situations
- have good rapport with students
- share in the success of students
- be flexible
- have a sense of humour
- have professional competence in a wide range of subject related areas
- be a good communicator
- provide structure and routine
- manage conflict/behaviour difficulties
- be a multi-team player

Constraints

Cathy will attend class in the Education Centre with four other girls of mixed ability and mixed age ranges. Students usually range in age from nine to seventeen years. All children can leave the Care system on their eighteenth birthday. Classes will all take place in one or other of the two classrooms in the Centre. There is at present no provision of classroom assistants for Cathy and the other students in the group. Unlike enrolments in mainstream school which under normal circumstances take place at the beginning of the school year, enrolments in the Education Centre can occur at any time during the school year. Because of the movement of students both in and out of the Education Centre, there may be frequent changes to Cathy's class group. Having already established the VEC co-operation hours earlier in the year, the breadth of subject areas and subject choice available to Cathy may be limited.

The Education Centre, through its Board of Management, is funded by the Department of Education and Science (DES). The HSE provide for the electricity and heating requirements. The DES Capitation grant to the Education Centre is based on a total enrolment of five students. Capitation per head is paid at the Special Education rate. The Education Centre avails of some other grants associated with e.g. Ancillaries, Minor works, Book Rental, School Planning, PE, Science, Computers and Standardised Testing but because of the small number of students enrolled, these are minimal.

The management of challenging and aggressive behaviours place daily constraints on the teaching and learning that occurs in the Education Centre. The ranges of challenging behaviours displayed by students such as Cathy include:

- Incomplete homework
- Bad language and shouting
- Disrespect for people and property
- Non-compliance with instructions
- Bullying
- Negatively interfering with the work of others
- Threatening behaviours (verbal and physical)
- Aggressive behaviours (throwing books/chairs/equipment)
- Behaviour consistent with drug abuse

Challenging behaviours such as these have negative implications when one is attempting to access, attract and retain full and part-time teaching staff to this sector. In this regard, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) relevant to this sector of the education community is a necessary requirement for all staff who work in these settings.

Educational Experience

Pre-planning

Once Cathy has been accepted onto a place in a High Support Residential Unit, the Education Centre immediately begins the process of planning for her arrival. The Education Centre's enrolment procedures require that all information and reports from Cathy's previous schools be submitted to the Principal. If Cathy has had any previous Educational Psychological Assessments, her Social Worker is requested to access and submit any reports on the assessments to the Principal. The Principal may contact the child's previous school to access information on any SENO recommendations or provisions that Cathy may have had previous access to e.g. Special Needs Assistant (SNA) or resource hours.

Baseline Assessment

On Cathy's first day in the Education Centre, the Principal and a classroom teacher meet her for an informal interview. This gives Cathy the opportunity to talk about subjects, her likes and dislikes, interests, hopes for the future and her aspirations regarding success in school. Information from this interview helps the education staff to draw up an Individual Education Plan. In this way, Cathy sees the IEP as a learning contract that is negotiated with her for the length of time she will spend in the Education Centre.

During Cathy's first week in the Education Centre she attends a number of one-to one sessions with the class teacher. During these sessions Cathy is assessed in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. An in-house literacy and numeracy test is administered by the class teacher. This test focuses on basic mathematical concepts, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, time, fractions, money, and shape recognition. Some standardised testing is also carried out during these sessions. Some of the tests

used include Neale Analysis, Jackson Phonics, GAP test, Marino and Aston Index.

Individual Education Plan

An IEP is drawn up for each student in the Education Centre. For Cathy, It outlines the education programme, subject areas and course materials that she will follow together with the teaching strategies/methodologies that will be employed. It outlines and is influenced by the results of her baseline assessments. Cathy's IEP will help her to progress her learning from its current level while at the same time being mindful of her specific learning needs.

In preparing an IEP for Cathy the following key areas are prioritised:

- The results of the baseline assessments are used to prioritise her learning needs.
- Cathy is likely to return to a mainstream educational setting when her placement in the High Support setting ends. Maintaining continuity in Cathy's learning is therefore a concern of the education staff. It is also important that Cathy recognises and understands that she is working on a similar education programme to that of her friends in other mainstream schools. In this context, the Junior Certificate is chosen as the education programme most suitable to her needs.
- She has expressed frustration at her reading ability and wishes to improve it. In drawing up a reading programme it is important that it is interest and age appropriate. For these reasons, the Ginn Reading Scheme is chosen. Throughout the course of the programme constant positive affirmation will be given to build Cathy's self-confidence.
- Cathy's social sight vocabulary will be expanded.
- She needs to further develop her reading

comprehension skills. To do this, focus will be placed on WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, and HOW questions.

- An active learning/hands on approach will be taken to the presentation of curriculum materials. This approach will incorporate the use of field trips, poster making and other activities that involve ‘making and doing’.
- It is necessary that careful pre-planning of each lesson take place so that the learning required is broken down into a series of building blocks to ensure that Cathy understands what is expected from each of the steps and does not become frustrated with her progress.
- Cathy can use a calculator but her understanding of basic maths especially multiplication and division needs attention. She needs to focus on social maths, times and timetables, percentages for sales and discounts, bills, budgeting and wages.
- The teacher will need to repeat/revise/assess the lesson content to reinforce key concepts.
- The following life skills will be prioritised in Cathy’s education programme – computer competency, sex and health education, basic cookery, child care skills and first aid.
- Cathy’s social and interpersonal skills need to be developed further and will be subtly integrated throughout the education programme. These include appropriate social interactions with peers and people in authority, and speaking/ listening skills.

Core Curriculum

In organising Cathy’s education timetable, every effort is made to facilitate her subject choices. Great care is taken to ensure that the learning experienced by Cathy provides her with a challenge. The teacher is best placed to plan for and judge the most appropriate age and ability level for Cathy so that

she performs to the best of her ability, celebrates her successes, enhances her self-esteem and does not become frustrated with her lack of progress.

Cathy will follow a limited Junior Certificate programme at foundation and ordinary level. The core academic subjects that she will focus on are:

Junior Certificate Subject	Level
English	Foundation
Maths	Foundation
CSPE	
History	Ordinary
Home Economics	Ordinary
Art	Ordinary

Cathy will also complete modules of learning in the areas of:

- SPHE
- Computer and Internet skills
- First aid
- PE
- Child care
- Literacy

Co-curricular Activities

Co-curricular subjects and activities give Cathy an opportunity to experience new areas of interest and to learn and practice new skills. These activities do not have any terminal examination and so they lack any of the pressures normally associated with academic subjects. This gives Cathy the freedom to immerse herself in the activities. The learning intention for Cathy is to enjoy the experiences, to have fun, to increase her self-esteem and to improve her ability to communicate with peers and adults. Trips away from the High Support Unit are part of this provision and are undertaken to compliment the education programme that Cathy is following. The logistics associated with these trips are planned

in close collaboration with care staff in the High Support Unit. Depending on Cathy's interests and the availability of local events and exhibitions, such trips include:

- Local library
- Art gallery
- Pottery makers
- Dáil
- Museums
- Restaurants/cafes
- Court
- Local caves

Similarly, guests are invited to come and speak to students in the Education Centre on topics that relate to aspects of the education programmes and areas of personal interest to students. Cathy will plan for and interact with guest speakers. Those speakers who give up their time to involve themselves in the Education Centre include:

- Doctor
- District nurse
- Dietician
- ISPCA representative
- Public representatives
- Garda
- Fire officer
- Charity representative

Teaching and Learning

Behaviour Management

Education staff work as part of the multi-disciplinary team which is committed to the 'Rights, Respect and Responsibility' of and for both students in the High Support Unit. Cathy's Individual Care Plan (ICP) and Individual Education Plan (IEP) both take

cognisance of the management of any challenging/aggressive behaviour that she may display during her time in the High Support Unit. The members of the multi-disciplinary team who meet regularly to plan and assess a behaviour management strategy for Cathy and who discuss her progress in this and other areas include:

- Unit Managers
- Team leaders
- Key Careworkers
- Psychologists
- Psychiatrist
- Occupational therapist
- Speech therapist
- Social workers
- Educational Welfare Officers
- Principal/Teachers
- School Inspectors
- Parents/Guardians

Classroom Management

Cathy, like other students of her age, needs routine and boundaries and has an inherent need for a safe and secure environment. The following behaviour management strategies are regularly used as part of a classroom management approach with Cathy to promote positive appropriate behaviours.

The teacher...

- has a set of classroom rules that are clear and simple and negotiated with the class group. The rules are displayed in the classroom and always begin with a positive statement i.e. what the student will do rather than what they must not do.
- actively seeks out and acknowledges instances of positive behaviour in class and offers praise and

reward for such behaviour.

- gives short, clear, specific and positive instructions during class.
- demonstrate fairness to all students.
- avoids making threats or promises that cannot be kept.
- will contact parents/care workers to report and acknowledge positive achievements.

Teaching Methodologies

Targeting Priority Learning Areas

Cathy is particularly concerned about her reading ability and a programme is designed to strengthen her literacy skills. She is working systemically on Ginn Level 4 Reading scheme. This includes the use of all ancillary materials and work books which accompany this reading scheme. i.e.

- Sentence building
- Grammar and Punctuation
- Comprehension
- Poems
- Social sight words

The development of Cathy's language skills are identified as a target in her IEP. Cathy's vocabulary is strengthened by using the language experience approach. This includes...

- dictionary work
- listening to the news
- discussing current affairs and topical issues.

Communication skills with regard to listener/speaker relationships are also a focus of work with Cathy and form part of her social skills programme.

Her mathematical work is based on the four functions. Cathy has struggled in the past with division and multiplication which is limiting her ability to grasp fractions. Her classwork is focused

initially on money and bills. Cathy is using addition and subtraction to solve simple problems. This will be followed by the introduction of simple tasks and mathematical problems associated with

- time
- sets
- statistics.

History is one of Cathy's favourite subjects. The teacher uses topics such as 'The Age of Exploration' to introduce hands on practical activities where each learner must interact with their peers in order to complete History related tasks. Project work is used to involve all learners. The projects are planned to integrate with other subject areas and all learners will use ICT skills in the process. E.g. Cathy produces a series of step by step wall charts on the 'Age of Exploration' in collaboration with her peers. As the work progresses, the wall charts are displayed in the Education Centre to act as a visual reminder to Cathy and the other learners of their learning progress. This gives Cathy a sense of belonging in the school and helps to boost her self-esteem. The wall charts also act as a focal point for class discussion and revision. End-of-week quizzes and treasure hunts are regularly used as a method of reinforcing Cathy's weekly learning in class and as a reward for good behaviour and participation in class.

Continuity/Progression

The principal and teaching staff strive to maintain continuity in learning for Cathy and to plan a progression route for her to another education or training centre. The principal, in consultation with Cathy's teachers, advise the placing social worker on the range of options available to Cathy to best meet her needs. It is the social worker together with Cathy's parents who have the responsibility to enrol her in the onward school/training place. The principal assists this process by advising on and identifying an appropriate education/training

place, initiating contact with the proposed new school principal or manager of the identified setting and advocating on behalf of Cathy to secure her placement there.

Assessment

The class teacher will monitor Cathy's learning progression by assessing her

- attendance and participation in the Education Centre on a daily basis
- oral and written class work and home work
- fluency and confidence at reading
- expanded vocabulary
- level of behaviour
- expanded areas of personal interest
- knowledge and understanding through weekly and end of term examinations
- results achieved through in-house and State examinations.

Professional Development

Teachers are encouraged to...

- attend in-service training relevant to their subject areas and the management of challenging behaviour
- keep abreast of developments in ICT, new teaching aides and curriculum innovations
- Share good practice and resources with each other.

Evaluation

Cathy's participation, level of confidence and behaviour in class is monitored by the teacher on a daily basis. Weekly reports on each learner's progress are presented to the Principal. These reports are reviewed in the context of how each learner is progressing with regard to their IEP targets. It is within this framework that decisions are then made

around classroom management and teaching and learning approaches to help maintain a positive learning experience for Cathy.

The school places great value on the recognition of achievement, whether that is personal or academic achievement. Each learner is seen as an individual with his/her own strengths, abilities and interests. It is through this holistic approach that Cathy is encouraged by the Education Centre to build on her strengths and target the priority learning areas outlined in her IEP. The Education Centre always acknowledges occasions when Cathy succeeds in meeting her agreed targets by celebrating with all learners.

Unpredictable Circumstances

Cathy's social skills were seen to be improving and she appeared to be settling well and participating well in the Education Centre. Unfortunately having returned after the Christmas period, Cathy became very unsettled and ran away from the High Support Unit on numerous occasions. Each time she returned to the Education Centre it was obvious that she was presenting with very unsociable behaviours including verbal abuse, uncooperative behaviours, inappropriate name calling and was disrespectful to all members of the Education Centre staff.

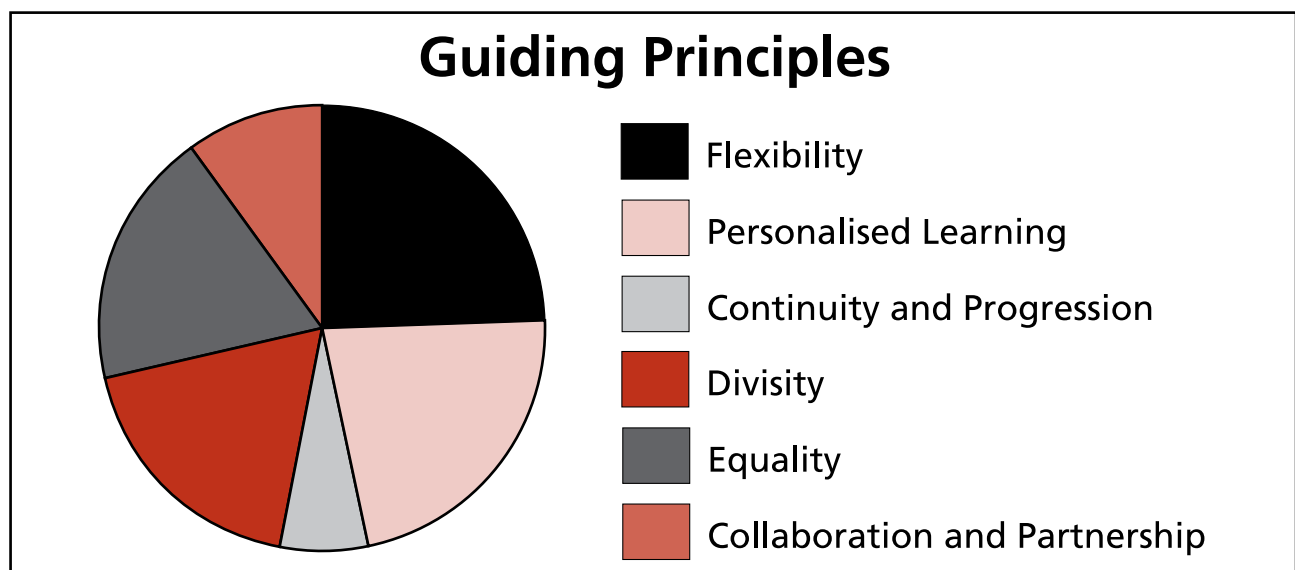
Cathy continued to abscond and absent herself from the Education Centre for over a twenty day period. This is the maximum period allowed and the Education Welfare Officer was notified. The nature of these unpredictable circumstances means that decisions are made to protect the safety and welfare of the young person. On this occasion a decision was made to place Cathy in the more secure environment of a Special Care Unit outside of the county.

Conclusion

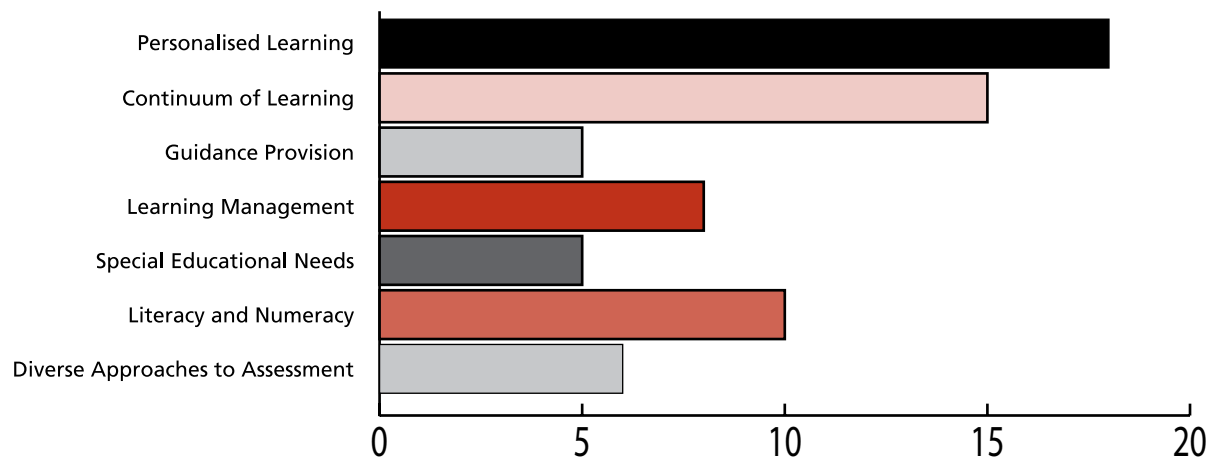
Areas of Alignment with the Features of the Framework

The framework is meant to be used flexibly. In that regard, no two education programmes that are aligned to the framework are likely to be the same. Depending on the learner for whom it is designed, each programme will emphasise different elements. The elements of this education programme are graphically represented below. These graphs correspond with the groupings used for the guiding principles and the defining features of the framework.

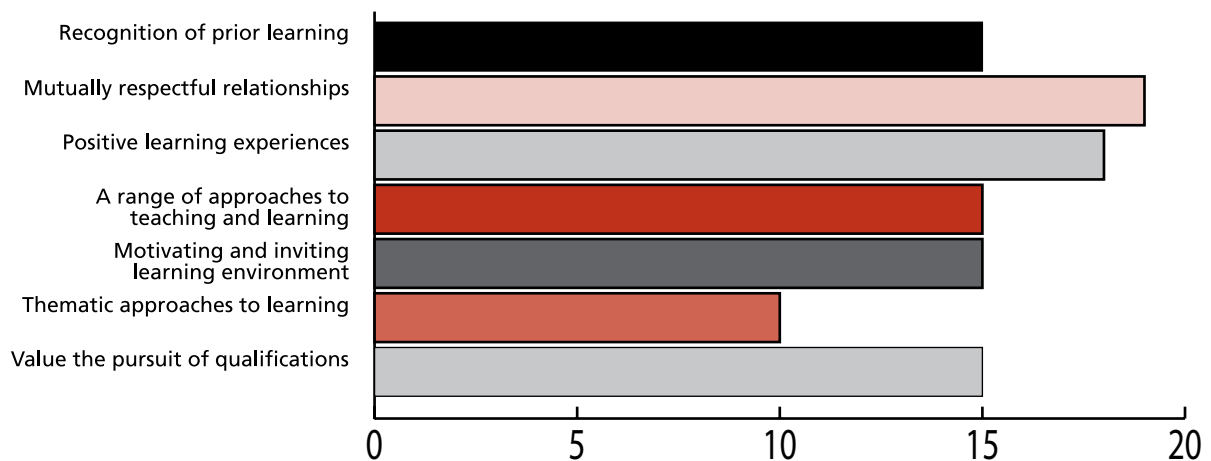
This process is useful when examining each programme for the purposes of curriculum development and review and to monitor the programmes alignment to the different elements of the framework. This type of monitoring gives insights into some aspects of the programme that could be developed. It is also useful in terms of comparing the different elements that are part of education programmes for a range of learners in these settings.



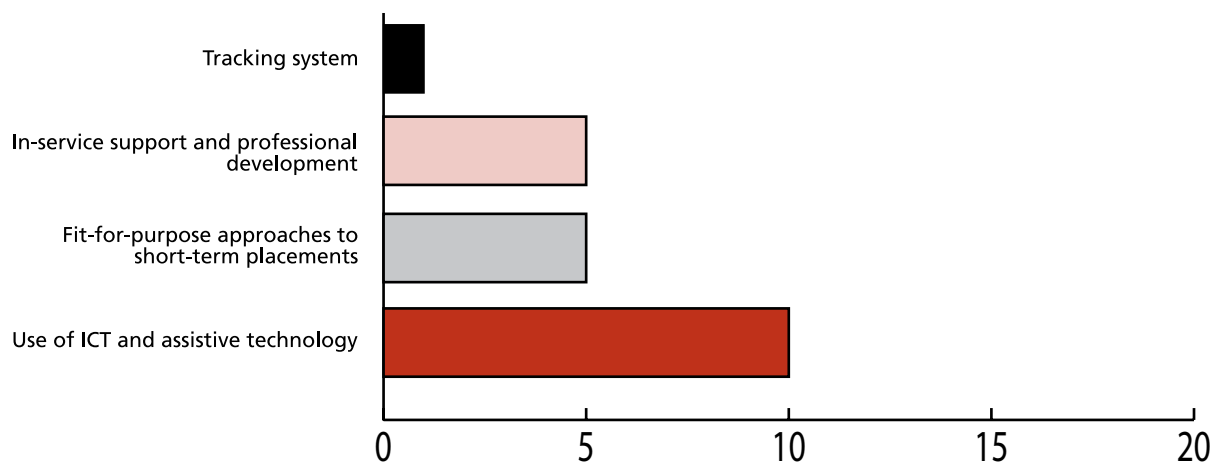
Defining Features - Teaching and Learning



Defining Features - Culture and Climate

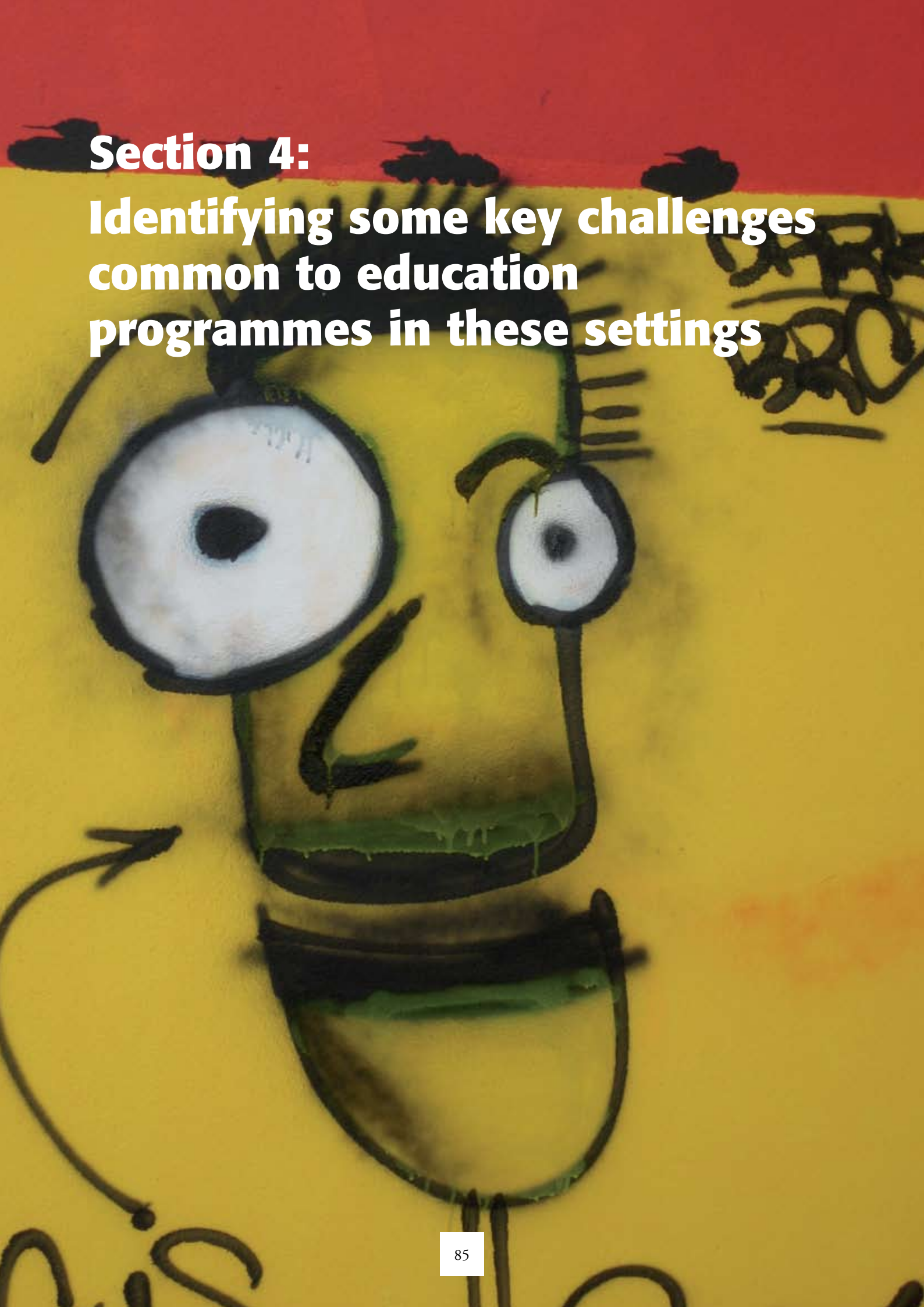


Defining Features - Implementation



Section 4:

Identifying some key challenges common to education programmes in these settings



Target learners

The learners for whom personalised education programmes are developed are young people who are disaffected with and have in the past been excluded from mainstream education. Many of the learners have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Assessments of learners in these settings show that many have special educational needs with the majority having very poor literacy and numeracy skills. The management of challenging and often violent behaviours exhibited by learners with anger control issues are a constant challenge for the teachers.

Flexible education programmes

The challenge for the education professionals who work in these settings is to develop flexible education programmes that are appropriate to a learner's age, stage of development and level of ability. Many of the learners involved have below average reading, spelling and mathematical ages, yet like many of their peers in mainstream schools, have ambitions towards studying for state examinations. Considering the recent moves towards more short-term sentencing and placements in the detention and care settings, the challenge faced by the education team in many instances is to plan and develop a personalised education programme for learners that provides continuity in learning, offers the opportunity for certification, and that addresses their assessed needs.

Holistic approach

A recent survey of learners in these settings, undertaken during the development of the framework, found that a large majority of learners had aspirations towards successful careers. In this context, helping the young people involved to understand and manage their own learning is a crucial part of any education programme. Providing educational and vocational guidance can help to

develop the young person's sense of value, explain the education and training opportunities that are available to them and encourage them to participate in society.

Compared with their peers in mainstream schools, the majority of learners in these settings have to date experienced such a high level of failure and have had to cope with so many personal/family issues that they are now struggling to find their way in life. Many have lifestyles and family relationships which are so highly complex that they are in need of an education and care structure that addresses their needs in a holistic fashion. In this regard, one of the challenges is to develop flexible education programmes that give the various stakeholder agencies and services a common dialogue. This can provide the opportunity to build partnerships and draw on the range of resources that best meet the needs of learners at any moment.

In-service training

The provision of a dedicated in-service programme for teachers and education managers tailored to the social, emotional, educational and behavioural needs of target learners in these settings can be identified as one key challenge common to all education programmes. Prioritising In-service training that focuses on the integration of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum as well as training on the management of challenging behaviour and crisis intervention is vital for working in these settings. Supporting all teachers and education managers by providing CPD on curriculum and assessment issues and on the development of the school plan and school policies is another key challenge.

Standardised templates

All of the education programmes describe context specific templates used to carry out baseline assessments, diagnostic assessments, standardised tests and to develop IEP's for learners. The challenge for the sector is to design standardised templates that

can be used across the range of settings to reduce the amount of duplication that currently occurs and to share good practice.

Communication/transfer of information

There are a number of challenges identified across the sector that relate to the development of a system to manage communication processes and the transfer and storage of information on the learner which are common to all these settings. The following aspects of such a system are key to the development of personalised education programmes and to addressing continuity and progression issues/challenges.

There is a need for a system that...

- facilitates the sharing of expertise and good practice between the schools and teachers in the sector
- manages the prompt follow up of requests for security clearance on new, substitute, part-time teachers or visiting speakers to the schools
- enables effective communication of educational information on a learner to take place between these settings and their previous mainstream school
- tracks a learner's educational progress in such a way as to be easily accessible by all the settings involved.

Resources

An examination of the education programmes shows that there is a need to broaden the curriculum available to learners in these settings. The common challenge faced by teachers and education managers is to provide a broad yet balanced set of learning experiences that help learners address their needs in a holistic fashion. Considering the needs of learners in these settings and the fact that these schools and units constitute what is essentially a very small

segment of the education system, an increase in classroom resources and full time teaching posts would help meet many of those challenges. Having access to part-time teachers, learning support teachers and resource teachers would help overcome the additional challenge of addressing the literacy and numeracy difficulties of the majority of learners in these settings.

- Draft Curriculum Framework and Guidelines for Children in Detention and Care (CiDC) •

An abstract painting featuring a rich palette of colors including red, orange, yellow, blue, green, and black. The composition is layered, with a dark, textured foreground at the bottom, a bright green and white middle section, and a vibrant red and orange upper section. The brushstrokes are visible and expressive, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is a dynamic and colorful composition.

Appendix I

Gaining Insights

In order to establish the current realities for 'teaching and learning' in these settings two questionnaires were developed to survey teachers and learners responses to these issues. The data gathered contributed to discussions with the stakeholders and provided a baseline for the development of an enabling curriculum framework.

What do the learners in these settings want?

The NCCA consulted with the learners in these settings to ensure their voice was heard in connection with decisions that might affect them. What we found out from learners in these settings was that the majority favour

- creative learning activities where they are actively involved in the learning process
- learning experiences that are enjoyable and fun
- a learning environment where their achievements are recognised
- teachers and schools that adopt a system of regular praise and reward
- small group and 1-1 support that address learners literacy and numeracy difficulties
- a small learner/teacher ratio to support personalisation of the learning process
- teachers who demonstrate genuine concern for the learner's education and well-being.

Listening to the voice and hearing the perspectives of young people in all areas of public policy making is important. However, the responses have a particular resonance when one considers that the young people surveyed in this instance may constitute some of the less heard voices on matters relating to public policy.

What do the education settings want?

Principals and teachers in the detention and care settings were surveyed on aspects of current curriculum and assessment provision. They were given many opportunities through a questionnaire survey to express their views on teaching, learning and assessment matters that relate to a curriculum framework for these settings. The emerging themes that had implications for a curriculum framework are summarised in the following pages.

Factors involved in providing education in these settings

Teaching staff feel that their first responsibility is to create an encouraging learning environment capable of providing the learners with the opportunity to experience real success in school. They generally feel that teaching and care staff work together to create a personalised learning environment in which the learner can fulfill their potential academically. Teachers are concerned that the full potential of the learning experience is not being explored enough. They say they would like to use the learning experience to

- give learners insights and understandings into new ways of thinking, feeling, doing and interacting with the world
- integrate the learning experience with the realities of living that face the learner on leaving these settings
- help the learner to manage their own learning so that they develop a sense of self as a learner and are prepared to continue learning into the future.

It is acknowledged that working with learners with challenging behaviour is a difficult task. Empathy towards learners is only one of the requirements deemed necessary to help create a positive learning environment in these settings. Motivation is seen as

a key theme of the education programme. The areas where motivation is seen as having a direct impact on the education of the learner, centres on the motivation of

- the management team to work collaboratively in the promotion of a shared understanding of the role and benefits of education
- the teachers to display day-to-day goodwill and flexibility in meeting the needs of the learners
- the teachers, care staff and other agencies to engage in positive working relationships with each other
- the teachers to pursue professional development opportunities
- school principals, programme co-ordinators and classroom teachers to regularly engage in a process of reflection and review of subjects and programme options
- the teacher to sustain the learner's motivation for learning by nurturing a sense of confidence and self belief.

Nature of the educational programmes in these settings

Teachers feel there is a need for more practical-type subjects and diverse activity programmes which, they believe have embedded educational, social and holistic benefits for the learner. The tendency for more recent moves towards shorter periods of detention and placement are seen as flagging the need for shorter interesting modules of education for this category of learner. Teachers feel that there is a need for 'life skills' to be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

Needs of the learner in these settings

It is the view of teachers that if real progress is to be made in relation to the learners' self esteem, aspirations and future life chances then the academic

focus of the curriculum needs to be balanced by attention to the learner's social, emotional, moral decision making and healthy living needs. Teachers are aware that many of the learners lack the confidence to take charge of their own learning and have low levels of self esteem.

One-to-one teaching, individualised programmes of learning and individual assignments are seen to be the most effective teaching and learning strategies used on a daily basis. The small learner-teacher ratio evident in these settings is felt to be a major contributory factor to the positive outcomes of these teaching strategies and a necessity for learners who may present with specific learning, emotional and psychological difficulties. Teachers are quick to emphasise the importance of building in elements of 'fun' and 'enjoyment' into the learning experience.

Assessment and qualifications in these settings

The importance of building in opportunities to experience success and acknowledging the achievements of all learners is paramount for teachers in these settings. The education programmes available to learners provide continuity in their learning. The programmes offered help the learner to re-engage with education, to improve their basic and effective learning skills and offer the learner the opportunity to gain qualifications that can improve their chances of participating in further education and training opportunities. In this context, gaining a foothold on the National Framework of Qualifications is seen as an important feature of the learning intention in these settings.

Implementation support

Teachers are concerned at the lack of a guidance counseling provision for learners. They see a need for a system of relevant in-service and continuous professional development for teachers in these settings. Teachers are aware of the benefits of a system that would enable the sharing of good

practice teaching and learning approaches across all the settings.

A structured tracking system that records student's educational progress and facilitates the transfer of that information across all the settings is seen by many teachers as an urgent requirement. It is felt that a system to examine the progression routes of learners on leaving detention/care could help inform future educational provision in these settings.

The nature of a curriculum framework

It is proposed that a curriculum framework for children detention schools, high support units and special care units will

- reflect a continuum of learning (across all ages)
- make curriculum planning/development easier across all abilities
- reflect the diversity of children in detention/care in terms of culture and background
- inform practice across a range of settings and so aid the sharing and connectedness of ideas
- aid inclusiveness
- encourage reflective practice as a tool to improve the quality of curriculum provision across all settings.

What is the scope of a curriculum framework for these settings?

The emerging consensus on the scope of a framework emphasise the importance of.

- placing the learner's needs at the centre (social, emotional, academic, developmental)
- achieving continuity in the educational experiences of the learner across the various centres and units
- facilitating a learners progression in their learning

and through a range of qualifications across all settings

- having clear guiding principles which are subscribed to by the cluster of services available for the care and education of the learner
- adopting the IEP as the main vehicle through which the curriculum is worked to best meet the assessed needs of the learner
- including 'What' learners and teachers will learn/teach and 'how' this is best achieved through teaching/learning approaches, methods and relationships
- facilitating the organisation of a system to evaluate the provision of educational programmes in the settings.
- investigating the contribution that the increased use of ICT's can make to the implementation of educational programmes, particularly in the provision of online curricula, of online support for teaching and learning, and of online assessment.
- enabling the learner to progress through aspects of the curriculum that reflect their assessed needs and learning capacities
- ensuring the curriculum framework is user friendly from a teacher's perspective
- enabling flexibility for schools to tailor the curriculum to suit the individual needs of the learner
- incorporating straightforward opportunities for achievements to be recognised by the settings and to place the learner on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Appendix II



APPENDIX A1

Learner Profile (Brendan)

Strengths:

- Co-operative, Cheerful and Friendly demeanour
- Verbal Comprehension (Social Knowledge)
- Numerical Operations 8.08
- Mathematical Reasoning 6.04
- Addition and Subtraction Basic Facts
- Multiplication and Division Basic Facts
- Word Reading 9.04
- Can Read words from Dolch List
- Colour Recognition Primary Colours

Needs:

Development of appropriate social skills when dealing with adults (possibly can be over familiar)

- Maths:** Addition—multi digits
Subtraction—regrouping using decimals
Simple Fractions

Would benefit from:

- Intervention in receptive areas such as comprehension of directions and linguistic concepts
- Development of social literacy and numeracy skills:
- Measurement in mm and cm
- Weighing in l and ml
- Development of IT Skills
- Development of colour mixing techniques and graphic representation

Other Relevant Observations:

- Lives at Home with Mum, 2nd oldest of 5 Children
- Is currently on 6th school placement

Standardised Language Assessment: indication of

- moderate to severe receptive language impairment
- Mild to moderate expressive language impairment

Diagnosis of ADHD in 2002: initially prescribed Ritalin, changed to Concerta, but now refuses to take any medication

In other school placements:

- Has partaken in SPHE programme
- Keen interest in boxing and Soccer
- Currently working on FETAC modules in a placement prior to assessment
- Ambition to obtain Safe Pass and work with Uncle (Paving and cobble locking)
- Has received trophies for swimming

APPENDIX B1

SCOT Analysis of the Curriculum

1. Please identify in our school current curriculum provision the **STRENGTHS** on which we can build and the **CHALLENGES** or weaknesses that we must overcome.
2. Please identify the **OPPORTUNITIES** for and the **THREATS** to our curriculum's future development that arise both from those strengths and challenges and from any external factors that affect us.

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

APPENDIX B2

Diagnostic Window

(adapted from SDPI publications)

In relation to _____

What is already working well?	Evidence
Staff Learners	
What is not yet working well?	Evidence
Staff Learners	

APPENDIX B3

Imagine Your School (adapted from SDPI publications)

In relation to the 'Foundational Areas of the Curriculum', think of priorities and possibilities from the point of view of different members of the school community.

School Community Member	Priority What would this person identify as most important?	Progress What change would this person make for progress?
Short-term learner		
Long-term learner		
Teacher		
Parent		
Local Employer		
Support Staff Member		
Care Staff Member		
Principal		
Director		
The Future?		
Your choice: What change would most benefit the school?	How would that change affect the community?	

APPENDIX B4

Review Worksheet

Some Characteristics of Effective Assessment

In relation to us as a school,

A. Choose 2 or 3 of these characteristics that represent our strengths

B. Choose 2 or 3 of these characteristics that represent areas in need of further development

Effective assessment:

- benefits learners
- involves learners
- supports teaching and learning goals
- is planned and communicated
- is suited to the purpose
- is valid and fair
- Add additional context related characteristics

APPENDIX B4.1

Review Worksheet

Some Characteristics of Effective Assessment: Explanatory Notes

- **benefits learners** – It clarifies for them what they know and can do and what they still need to learn. When learners see that they are making progress, their motivation is sustained and their confidence increases.
- **involves learners** – They discuss, clarify, and reflect on their goals, strategies, and progress with their teachers, their parents/care staff, and one another. This develops learners' capacity for self-and peer-assessment, which leads in turn to increased self-management.
- **supports teaching and learning goals** – Learners understand the desired outcomes and the criteria for success. Important outcomes are emphasised and the teacher gives feedback that helps the learners to reach them.
- **is planned and communicated** – Outcomes and teaching strategies and assessment criteria are carefully matched. Learners know in advance how and why they are to be assessed. The teachers class planning is flexible so that they can make changes in response to new information, opportunities and insights.
- **is suited to the purpose** – Evidence is obtained through a range of formal and informal assessment approaches. These approaches are chosen to suit the nature of the learning being assessed, the characteristics and experiences of the learners, and the purpose for which the information is to be used.
- **is valid and fair** – Teachers obtain and interpret information from a range of sources and then base decisions on this evidence, using their professional judgment. Validity is increased when evidence comes from more than one assessment.

- Draft Curriculum Framework and Guidelines for Children in Detention and Care (CiDC) •

