Supporting Learners with the Key Stage 3 Curriculum:

# A Guide for Parents and Carers

Parents and carers make a valuable contribution to supporting their children in any phase of their education. You know your child and know how best to help them. You also need to look after your own wellbeing so that you can support your children.

Be reassured that everyone, including our children's schools, is adapting to how to implement the curriculum remotely. The focus on the learner remains at the core of everyone's efforts.
Your child's school can explain the staff and class structures that affect your child's learning. If you have specific concerns, contact nominated staff for advice.

Supporting Learning

Important Aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum:

## Personal Development

Includes mental health and wellbeing

### Schools can provide:

regular communications with children's teachers, including time to discuss worries and thoughts;

opportunities for children to interact with class mates about learning and for social connections;

a focus on helping children to feel good about their work and themselves;

resources to support children facing the impact of Covid-19;

opportunities for children to have a say in matters that affect their learning; or

links to trusted websites that can offer additional support.

### Parents can:

agree on a routine, such as wake up, bed and meal times, ensuring regular intervals for physical activity and relaxation such as listening to music;

provide a balanced diet that will help maintain health and wellbeing – the NHS Eatwell Guide offers practical advice;

create a space, if possible, where children can continue their learning taking account of their and the rest of the family's needs;

encourage children to communicate regularly with their teachers and class mates;

be curious about what is on their children's minds;

use shared activities, such as a walk, to listen to any worries and acknowledge those feelings no matter how small they may seem; or

visit Family Support NI for practical support.

## Connecting Learning

Includes planned, meaningful and purposeful learning

### Schools can provide:

an outline or timetable of what children are expected to learn;

a manageable number of key tasks or activities;

learning tasks and activities that allow children to look at real and relevant issues;

a balance of activities for children to work on a computer or device on their own and with others in their class;

opportunities to work on tasks away from the computer; or

opportunities for children to talk, read and share their views, choose topics to research, think about what they have learned and how they feel about their progress

### Parents can:

help their children to create a schedule to co-ordinate the learning plan provided and ensure a balanced workload;

encourage their children to make choices about how to engage in the learning provided;

talk about and be interested in what their children are learning – you don't have to be experts; or

make sure there is balance between offline and online, desk and practical work.

## Developing Skills and Capabilities

Includes developing independent learning

### Schools can provide:

various curriculum activities that develop skills such as Literacy, Numeracy and Using ICT as well as critical and creative thinking, analysis, problem solving, self motivation, team work and managing information and their own time;

resources, instruction, strategies and prompts to support children's progress; or

opportunities for children to choose learning activities and work at their own pace to meet longer term deadlines.

### Parents can:

encourage positive and safe online activity. For instructions on how to download the Department of Education's Safer Schools App visit inEQE

use the skills that are the focus of their children's learning, such as solving problems or making decisions, and talk about the importance of these in everyday life;

ask their children to talk about one or two things they have learned;

encourage their children to think about dos and don'ts for skills they are developing such as making decisions;

ask their children about the activities they enjoyed and why they enjoyed them; or

talk about possible solutions to any difficulties encountered.

## Assessment and Feedback

Includes encouraging meaningful feedback to support improvement and progress

### Schools can provide:

regular, consistent feedback to help children to make progress;

opportunities for children to show and present their best work both on their own and with peers;

clear guidelines about what high quality work looks like to help children with tasks, activities or work that is set;

feedback focused on key learning objectives set;

online polls and quizzes to assess children's understanding;

opportunities for children to reflect on how they have learned;

opportunities for children to reflect and tell their teachers about what they have learned; or

teacher comments that help children understand what they have done well and what they need to improve.

### Parents can:

if possible, create a daily 10–15 minute routine to talk about what their children have learned rather than what activity they did;

focus encouragement and praise on their children's efforts rather than what they have produced;

discuss what their children have done well and together set small simple goals for future learning; or

remind their children that we learn from our mistakes.