



## SCQF School Ambassador Blog Currie Community High School, Edinburgh



**By John Schmidt, Acting Depute Head Teacher**

Currie Community High School is a fully comprehensive, non-denominational high school situated in the South West of Edinburgh. We offer a variety of courses covering a wide range of subjects from the Broad General Education (BGE) in S1-3 through to Level 7 (Advanced Highers) through the Senior Phase. In addition, we offer a large range of wider opportunities within and beyond the school day. Currie was designated as a Community High School in 1997 and the school's extensive facilities are shared with the local community.

The school joined the SCQF School Ambassador programme in April 2019, this is our journey so far...

Our aim is to provide opportunities for all learners to achieve qualifications, not just traditional courses. After our training from the SCQF, we hit the ground running and appointed staff Ambassadors across each department in the school. We have a three-year improvement plan and are starting to work with our S3 learners on the importance of understanding the qualifications on offer at various SCQF levels. This requires a change of mindset as it is no longer a given that learners will follow the National 4/5>Higher>Advanced Higher route. We have introduced additional qualifications at SCQF levels 5 and 6; for example, the National Progression Awards (NPA) in Cyber Security and PC Passport at levels 5 and 6; the Skills for Work Laboratory Science at level 5; and we have a number of pupils undertaking Foundation Apprenticeships at SCQF level 6 in partnership with Edinburgh College.

At the heart of our Creativity & Employability Strategy (HGIOS 4 and formerly Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)), we are using the SCQF to inform our learner pathways and these are becoming available on our school website for both the BGE and Senior Phase. This is one of the main drivers in shaping Currie's 3-18 learning journey, providing focus on developing skills, industry-recognised qualifications, embedding the Work Placement and Career Education Standards, and STEM, whilst being a strategy for raising attainment and embedding the 15-24 Learner Journey. Currie is developing a flexible curriculum and opportunities for individual learner pathways, to gain the skills and experiences that can influence our learners' positive destination.

The Senior Phase aims to offer our learners the opportunity to extend and deepen their learning as they begin to build a portfolio of qualifications. These qualifications will recognise the individual learning, while enabling them to continue to develop skills and offering pathways to support positive destinations – whether that is Further Education, Higher Education or employment.

In planning our Senior Phase, we also take account of our local context. Attainment levels at Currie are consistently well above national and city averages at every stage and the stay-on rate post-16 is very high, with many of our learners going on to study in Further and Higher Education. It is important that we are able to support these aspirations.

The range of courses on offer to our learners in the Senior Phase has been extended and many of these are on the SCQF: Sports Leaders awards at levels 4 and 5; participation in the JET Academy leads to the Employability Award at level 4; completion of the Prince's Trust Achieve leads to a level 4 award in Personal Development; Creative Industries awards at level 6 and Business with Information Technology awards at levels 5 and 6.

We have also started working with parents on the relevance and importance of the SCQF via Parent Council meetings and materials such as the parent leaflet, Framework diagram postcard and Old v New leaflets provided by the SCQF Partnership. At all parents' evenings these resources have and continue to be invaluable, in consolidating knowledge and understanding of learner opportunities, now and in the future, amongst our parent body.

Our next steps as an Ambassador School are:

- to continue to enhance parents and information evenings on SCQF qualifications and levels; including work with a range of ambassadors
- to raise awareness with all learners, starting in S3 as part of WOW (World of Work) Week, each year, as they start their process through their courses and course choice
- as part of improvement planning, departments continue to explore the opportunity for alternative courses for learners, leading to progression into the next stage of their learning, life or work
- to develop a communications strategy to engage all stakeholders with the progression and opportunity within the SCQF, including the school website and noticeboards.

For more information on Currie CHS visit our website (<https://curriehighschool.co.uk/>) and twitter accounts ([@curriechs\\_dyw](#) & [@curriechs](#)).