

## EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

The Scottish School System is based on a coherent 3-18 curriculum:-

Nursery	age 3 years – 5 years
Primary	age 5 years – 12 years
Secondary	age 12 years – 18 years (min school leaving age is 16)

### **Key features of the Scottish system:**

#### **Learner Entitlements:**

Learners are entitled to a range of features at the different stages of learning. The entitlements are:

- A coherent curriculum from ages 3 to 18
- A broad general education – learning across all areas from the ages of 3 to 15
- Support – all staff share responsibility for identifying the needs of children and young people, and for working in partnership to put support in place to meet those needs
- A senior phase – that prepares children and young people to study toward qualifications, but with a continuing emphasis on health and wellbeing, physical activity, opportunities for personal achievement, service to others and of practical experience of the world of work
- Skills for learning, life and work – support to develop skills used throughout life and in work
- A positive destination - local authorities and schools are responsible for planning and supporting young people to make successful transitions to young adulthood and the world of work

#### **Nursery:**

Between the ages of 3 and 5 children in Scotland are entitled to funded pre-school education. Though provision varies this usually means that during term time a child is offered five sessions of education a week, of about two and a half hours each.

#### **Primary School:**

Children in Scotland complete seven years at primary school (P1 to P7) with all curriculum areas generally being taught by their classroom teacher (some specialists e.g. in music, modern languages etc can also be used).

Children in Scotland must start primary school in the August term after their fifth birthday. This generally means that children start school when they are aged between four-and-a-half and five-and-a-half. Education Authorities can make arrangements for children to start in the August when they are four, if they will turn five by the end of the following February.

#### **Secondary School:**

Most children move to secondary school (typically a larger school taking pupils from several primary schools) between 11.5 years and 12.5 years. Pupils are taught by several teachers with specialist expertise in each curriculum subject or area. All subject teachers are responsible for teaching Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy across Learning within their subject material.

Children moving to Scotland from Year 7 in an English secondary school will generally be required to attend a Scottish primary school for up to one year (depending on the time of the move). Academic levels are similar and each case will be considered on its merits by the school and local authority.

A child transferring from a Scottish primary school at the age of 12 (P7) will miss the first year of secondary education on England/Wales. Although standards in English and Maths are similar, the child may not have experienced specialised teaching in the areas of Science or a Modern Foreign Language.

In all transfers into, and out of, the Scotland system the schools involved should work closely together and with parents, taking account of the needs of the child or young person, to ensure that any disruption to learning is minimised.

Children and young people are entitled to six years of secondary education (S1-S6): a broad general education (S1-S3) and a senior phase (S4-S6) during which the young person will build up a portfolio of qualifications. There are considerable consequences for the transfer of pupils between the systems between the ages of 14 and 16. If a change of school is unavoidable at that age further advice should be sought from the relevant local authority.

### **Assessment at 16:**

Years S3 and S4 in the Scottish system equate to Years 10 and 11 in England to prepare pupils for external examinations.

In Scotland the current Standard Grade examinations are broadly comparable with GCSEs. Both types of course place considerable emphasis on assessment of course work in addition to formal examinations. There are, however, likely to be considerable differences in syllabus content and teaching methods.

New National Qualifications are currently being developed in Scotland and will be available from 2013/14.

### **Advice and Information:**

Advice and information can be received from the appropriate Scottish Local Authority (there are 32 local authorities, each with responsibility for the schools in their area) or directly from the school. Additional information can also be found, and printed, on line:

- Curriculum for Excellence:  
[www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum)
- CfE Communications Toolkit:  
[www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/index.asp](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/index.asp)
- Parentzone:  
[www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone)

Scottish Government  
Supporting Learning  
2-C South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
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[enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

Education Scotland  
<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Agency  
[www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)

Scottish Council of Independent Schools  
<http://www.scis.org.uk>