

Building the habits of...

Responsible Citizens



Curriculum for Excellence: the educational balancing trick

Scottish schools are more fortunate than many others in having, in CfE, a curriculum that pays balanced attention both to the higher purposes of educating young people for their future lives, and to the more obvious classroom business of curriculum areas with knowledge and specific skills to be inculcated and acquired.

But keeping the balance is always challenging. The ever-present pressure of the day-to-day, plus eventual qualifications, can squeeze out attention to the longer-term, higher-order learning and dispositions.

Yet the two sides can work synergistically instead of competitively, in concert rather than in conflict

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CfE says that Responsible Citizens are:

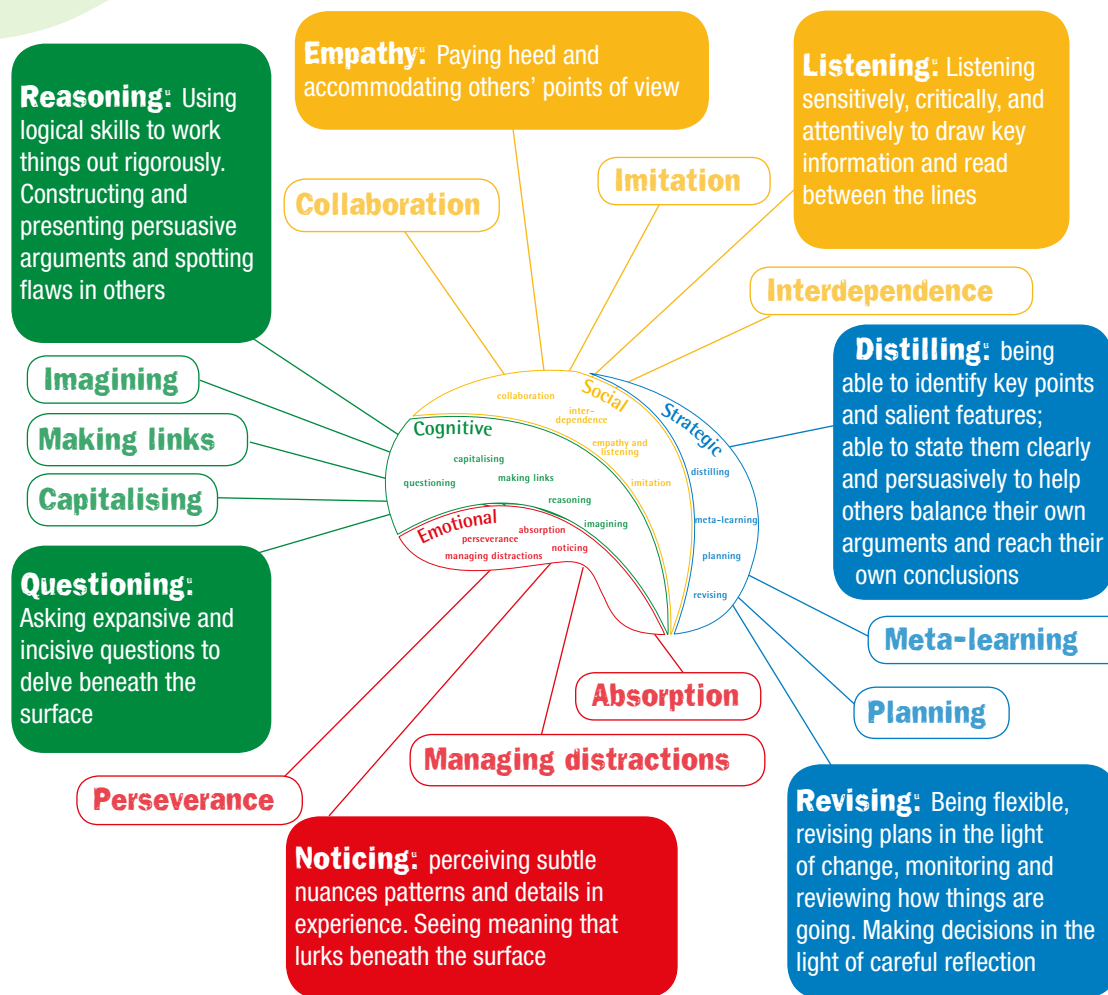
- respectful of others
- committed to participating responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life

and that they can:

- develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it
- understand different beliefs and cultures
- make informed choices and decisions
- evaluate environmental, scientific, and technological issues
- develop informed, ethical values



Uniting the models of CfE and Building Learning Power All powerful learners cultivate a set of key learning characteristics. Responsible Citizens, as described by the CfE, would deploy a subset of these characteristics, the most important of which are highlighted in the diagram below.



Responsible Citizens

This resource sketches an approach that schools and teachers could use to deliver the CfE promise of helping young people to become Responsible Citizens.

We see 'Responsible Citizens' as effective critical thinkers; able to form and re-form opinions beliefs and values about the world, and communicate those empathetically with others.

There is a lot of learning for a young person to get through in their school career — a powerful learner can expect to learn more, faster, and more thoroughly. Which, by the way, should help hugely with the 'outcomes' side of the curriculum balance.

The BLP approach



There are two main parts to the approach:

A a model of a learner and learning, in terms of a set of characteristics that work together to make a person a highly capable learner; we use 'learning power' to describe the effect. (Several of these characteristics appear in this card.)

B a view of the kind of pedagogy that will nurture and strengthen the learning characteristics in young people.

These are bound together by the fundamental idea that 'learning is learnable', and by explicit, detailed discussion of how learning works, supported by a rich repertoire of words and action.

Learning behaviours to build powerful Responsible Citizens