



CF SCHOOL
Creating Foundations

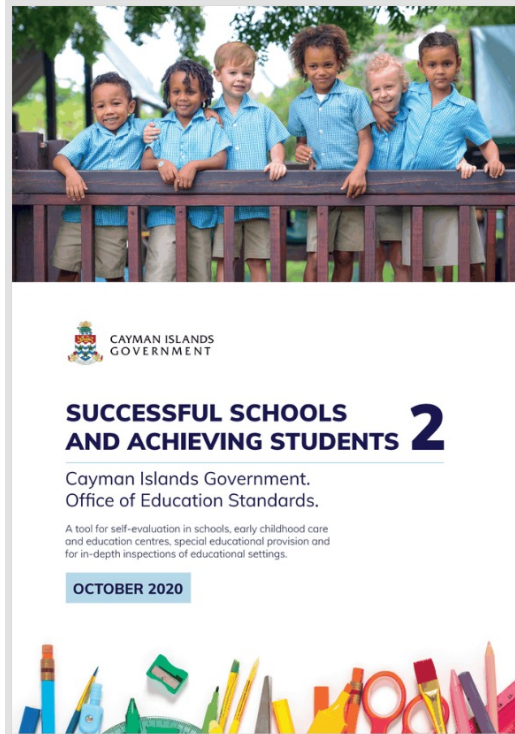


The seven facets of
excellent
curriculum design

What are they and where are they from?



1. Challenge
2. Enjoyment
3. Progression
4. Relevance
5. Coherence
6. Personalisation
7. Choice



Quality of the curriculum illustrated below would be evaluated as excellent.

- The curriculum has breadth and balance across and within each of its various elements. There is a clear rationale based on shared values. Its programmes, courses, syllabi and activities promote challenge, enjoyment, progression, relevance, coherence, personalisation and choice in learning for all students.

- Tasks should not be too easy. Personal development and learning is maximised when students:
 - 1) Feel Psychologically safe
 - 2) Are in the ‘struggle zone’
- The Curriculum is the progression model. As students move through the curriculum they should encounter increasing difficulties, that are though, crucially, not beyond their reach.
- The amount of substantive and disciplinary knowledge students are building (and require) should increase steadily as students move through the curriculum. Knowledge acquisition should beget further knowledge acquisition.
- The curriculum should offer sufficient breadth and depth to challenge students’ thinking but provide balance in order that it doesn’t go beyond their grasp.

Challenge



- When planning the curriculum, students' interests are taken into account.
- Topics and lessons are delivered in a way that maximises the engagement of all learners in our context.
- Enjoyment is though not used as a proxy for learning, but instead as an indicator or engagement, and is used alongside hard data to establish the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Enjoyment



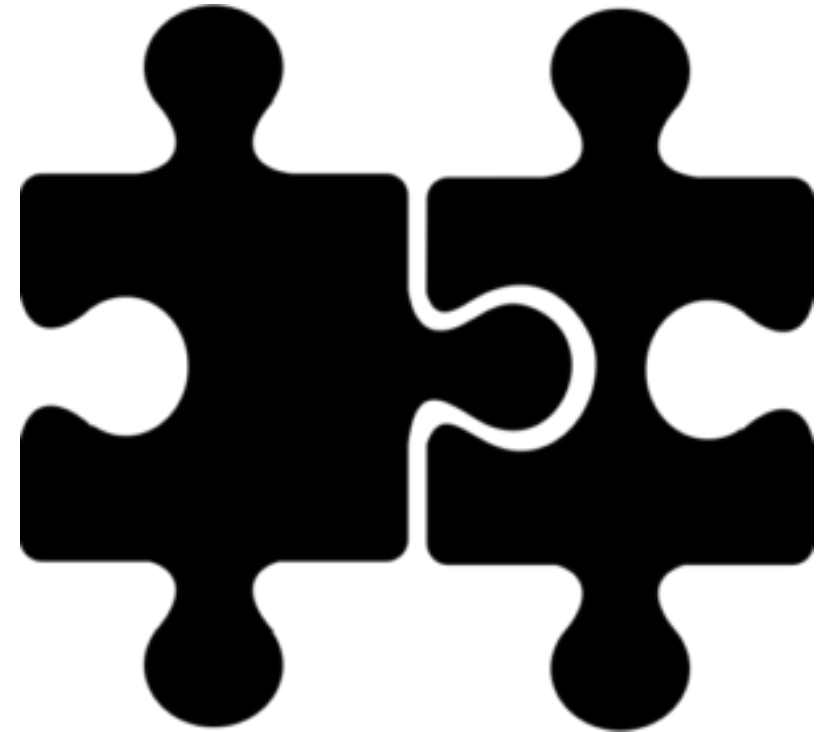
- The Curriculum is the progression model. As students move through the curriculum they should encounter increasing difficulties, that are though, crucially, not beyond their reach.
- The amount of substantive and disciplinary knowledge students are building (and require) should increase steadily as students move through the curriculum. Knowledge acquisition should beget further knowledge acquisition.
- Student’s progression in relation to their own starting points is encouraged through curriculum design, and is measurable thanks to the incorporation of systematic assessment and more informal measures of students’ progress over time.

Progression



Relevance

- The curriculum should be relevant to:
 - 1) Students' own lives and experiences
 - 2) The modern world
 - 3) Their own futures
- Curriculum design should take into account these indicators of relevance, and subjects should seek, wherever possible, to provide context for what is being studied.
- Cognitive science research suggests that students are more likely to retain knowledge that they are able to put into context, since they already have, or are provided with, foundational knowledge onto which this new knowledge can be 'attached'.



Coherence

- The curriculum must be well-thought through and consideration must be made for how all its components interact.
- ‘Curriculum coherence’ is vital and is associated with high-performing systems. This is not just a trivial, common-language use of the term ‘coherence’.
- A system is regarded as ‘coherent’ when the national curriculum content, resources, teaching content, pedagogy, and assessment and incentives all are aligned and reinforce one another.
- The curriculum is ‘coherent’ when the ‘factors’ above, having been aligned, then act to reinforce one another.

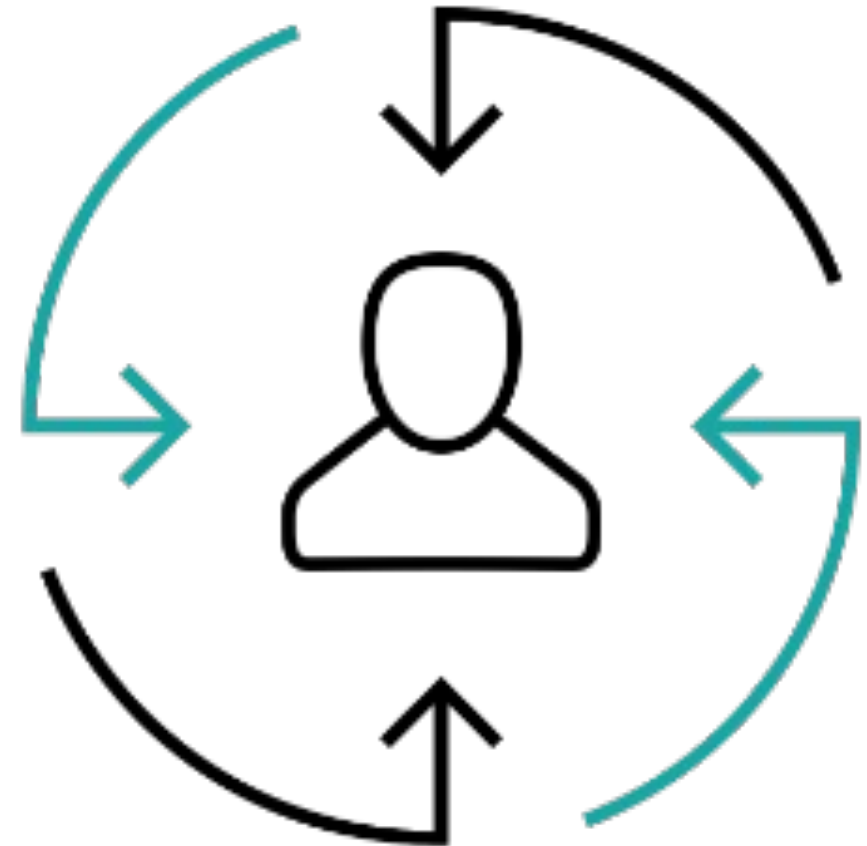
Schmidt, W. and Prawat, R. (2006)

Curriculum control and national control of education: issue or non-issue? **Journal of Curriculum Studies** vol 38 no 6



Personalisation

- The curriculum needs to be personalised, and this applies to both the school, and the individual learner.
- The curriculum, from a whole school point of view, must be personalised to the context of the school, and the needs of its students.
- The curriculum, from the point of view of the school's staffing, can be personalised according to teachers' individual talents and areas of expertise.
- Personalising the curriculum for individual learners is also more possible here at CF than in other places, due to our small size, which helps us to be dynamic in adapting the curriculum to the needs of groups of students, or individual learners.



Choice

- There must be instances ‘baked into’ the curriculum for individual to enable students to personalise their learning.
- This can be in the form of student voice influencing curriculum decisions on a macro level, or individual learners having the choice to curate their own curriculum, through the KS4 options process.
- Choice is not available to students in the same way it would be in other forms of education, such as the Montessori model, but opportunities for students to choose their own path can, and should, occur at points throughout schemes of work and within learning tasks on a micro level.

