

Launch of the Vision 2030+ Report

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12 September 2017

I'm delighted to be here this evening to introduce and to hear Ms Halinen's lecture about the recent educational reforms in Finland.

I am also here on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to launch the Vision 2030+ report.

Before introducing Ms Halinen I would like to take the opportunity to mark the publication of the Vision 2030+ report, and to set out how Scottish Government will work with a range of partners to support its implementation in the coming months and years.

As many of you will be aware, Curriculum for Excellence aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work.

As part of this, Scottish Government supports every learner's entitlement to Learning for Sustainability, and sustainable development themes are prominent in the 'experiences and outcomes' across a range of curriculum areas.

For me, Learning for Sustainability is about learning for a better world – equipping our young people with the skills, values and attributes they need for life and work in a sustainable and fair Scotland and a sustainable and fair world.

It involves schools weaving together sustainable development education, global citizenship, international education, outdoor learning and children's rights into a coherent whole school approach that covers curriculum, culture, community and campus (including school buildings and grounds).

It inspires and motivates learners and has a key role to play in raising attainment and promoting equity within our education system. This is strengthened further by the opportunities it provides for parental engagement and in energising practitioners by connecting them to the moral purpose of teaching.

To help support this all teachers and school leaders are now required to demonstrate learning for sustainability in their practice as it is an integral part of the General Teaching Council of Scotland Professional Standards. It is also explicitly mentioned in *How Good Is Our School 4* and will therefore be part of school improvement planning and Education Scotland's inspection activities.

I was very interested to learn of Professor Higgins view that the unique aspect of LfS in Scotland is its requirement for teachers and children to engage with the natural world. This is evidence-based, internationally unique and highly regarded around the world. This also stems from work here, including guidance we published 'Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning'.

And this is why I am delighted to mark the formal launch of the Vision 2030+ Report.

The report, which should be considered within the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, contains a range of very important recommendations.

As well as the recommendation that every learner receives their entitlement to learning for sustainability, the report notes the importance of:

- a strategic national approach to supporting LfS, and
- ensuring that the school estate in Scotland is world-leading in terms of energy efficiency

The Scottish Government remains committed to ensuring that the school estate meets the highest standards of energy efficiency and sustainability, and that our children and young people have access to buildings and grounds which provide opportunities for daily contact with nature.

I would like to thank those who worked on the report, and in particular Professor Pete Higgins, Chair in Outdoor and Environmental Education at Moray House School of Education at the University of Edinburgh. The department has an international reputation

and is one of few in the world with both a practical and teaching orientation as well as substantial research interests in the field of 'learning outdoors'.

It is now essential that we maintain the momentum and ensure that Learning for Sustainability is fully embedded across our approach to curriculum and our three overarching strategic priorities for education: the National Improvement Framework, Scottish Attainment Challenge and Developing the Young Workforce. Learning for Sustainability has a crucial role in supporting and enhancing these priorities.

In addition, I want the new Regional Improvement Collaboratives to consider the role of LfS as part of their focus on curriculum improvement.

I'm delighted to know that Peter will be meeting with my officials in the next few weeks in order to discuss the next steps in further detail, and to ensure that we maintain the momentum on LfS.

Professor Higgins' role in developing the Vision 2030+ Report highlights the importance of drawing on the insight and expertise offered by education experts not just from Scotland from right across the globe.

This is why I am delighted that Peter has arranged for Ms Halinen to speak to us this evening. I'm sure that all of you look forward to hearing her reflections the Finnish curriculum reforms, and how learning sustainable ways of living is one of the main goals of education in Finland.