

CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

Discover the power of Learning for Sustainability



TEACHER HANDBOOK



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 Learning for Sustainability (LfS) is an entitlement for all learners within Curriculum for Excellence. LfS is embedded within the General Teaching Council of Scotland Professional Standards for practitioners and permeates How good is our school? [Fourth edition]. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are central to Scotland's national vision and are at the heart of the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework  Education Scotland 2018

What is the Connecting Classrooms programme?

Discover the power of Learning for Sustainability

Connecting Classrooms in Scotland is part of the international [Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning](#) programme, which supports schools and early years settings in Scotland and internationally to learn about and collaborate on the big issues that shape our world. The programme is co-funded by the British Council and the Department for International Development (DfID). Contributing towards increasing Learning for Sustainability (LFS) in Scotland's schools, the programme is intended to:

- improve teachers' pedagogical skills, especially their ability to incorporate transferable skills into their curriculum teaching
- give young people in both Scotland and overseas countries an opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to live and work in an increasingly globalised world
- raise awareness of global issues amongst young people by supporting collaboration with their international peers.

How it works

There are a host of learning opportunities and support on offer as part of the programme. Whether you are part of a cluster of schools or applying for individual opportunities, you can tailor your LFS journey to match your school's priorities thanks to the programme's range of flexible elements. As part of Connecting Classrooms, you can:

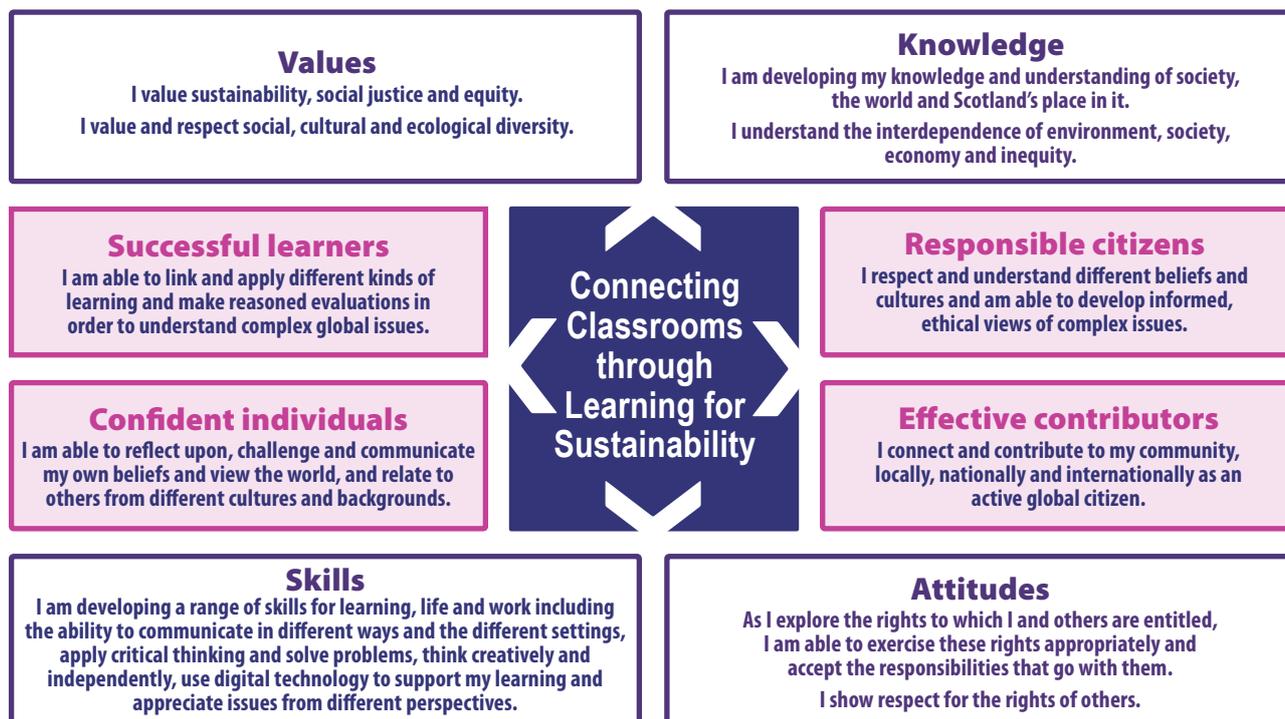
1. **partner with schools** – collaborate with schools in Scotland and other countries on activities focusing on LFS themes. Partnerships offer you the chance to share experiences and learn from one another
2. **develop a whole-school approach** – receive support in implementing an effective whole-school approach to LFS to create coherent, rewarding and transformative learning experiences
3. **explore teaching and learning approaches** – improve your knowledge and expertise at embedding LFS themes in your teaching, by completing CLPL courses; available online and face-to-face
4. **take action for the SDGs** – complete activities with partner schools based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and inspire young people to take meaningful action towards achieving the Goals in their local communities and beyond
5. **apply for funding** – as a cluster of schools or one-to-one school partnership, you can apply for funding to facilitate reciprocal visits, events and training as part of the Connecting Classrooms journey
6. **receive accreditation** – whatever stage of your Connecting Classrooms journey you've managed to reach, you will receive the relevant level of the International School Award to recognise and highlight your achievements.

Why take part?

Benefits for pupils

Connecting directly with Curriculum for Excellence, involvement will enable you to implement teaching and learning approaches which can:

- equip children and young people with values, knowledge, attitudes, capabilities and skills to enable them to contribute effectively in a globalised and interdependent world
- enhance motivation and readiness to learn
- have a positive impact on attainment in literacy and numeracy
- improve young people’s health and wellbeing.



Benefits for teachers

- understand the contribution LfS makes to key national priorities such as raising attainment and achievement, tackling inequity, addressing the SDGs and to Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce
- enhance teaching and learning approaches in collaboration with colleagues in Scotland and overseas
- compile evidence to support Professional Review and Development and Professional Updates for GTCS registration through meeting the GTCS Standards related to LfS.

Benefits for schools

- effectively plan for and implement LfS approaches in your school and wider community in ways that will significantly enhance the educational experience of all learners
- receive support in enabling the school to develop a coherent whole-school approach to LfS with a focus on Curriculum for Excellence and local and global partnerships.

Understanding Learning for Sustainability

1. What is Learning for Sustainability?

“ Learning for sustainability is an approach to life and learning which enables learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially just, sustainable and equitable society. An effective whole-school and community approach to LfS weaves together global citizenship, sustainable development education and outdoor learning to create coherent, rewarding and transformative learning experiences ” Education Scotland 2018

The word cloud below summarises some of the elements of Learning for Sustainability that you might recognise from your own practice. This serves to demonstrate the breadth of approaches to teaching and learning that can act as starting points for LfS, although it is by no means an exhaustive list. Connecting Classrooms provides you with the opportunity to deepen your understanding of LfS and further embed it through a whole-school and community approach.



2. Scotland's education policy context for LfS

A. Learning for Sustainability is a significant aspect of Scottish education and is embedded across many policy areas, as well as in the [GTCS Professional Standards](#)

B. Scotland's LfS National Implementation Group published their [Vision 2030+](#) report in 2016 to review the progress made to date in LfS practice in Scotland, as well as setting out a renewed vision for LfS – to 2030 and beyond – to further develop what has been recognised as one of the most progressive approaches to LfS in the world. Connecting Classrooms provides the support and opportunities for schools and practitioners to work effectively towards many of the aims set out in the report.

C. The programme also supports the associated National Outcomes outlined in the Scottish Government's [National Performance Framework](#) which are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

3. The local and global context

[The Sustainable Development Goals](#) are 17 goals agreed upon by all United Nation member states in 2015 with the aim of achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. They are a universal call for action by all countries to work in partnership to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people across the world live in peace and prosperity. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 is a global challenge, and one that will not be achieved without the united efforts of all of us.



The Connecting Classrooms programme supports you as an educator in working towards all of the Sustainable Development Goals, but Goal 4: Quality Education is of particular importance.

This Goal's key aim is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all".



Each Goal contains several targets to help meet the aims of the Goal, and Connecting Classrooms provides particular support towards the seventh target for this Goal, which is:

“ By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development ”

You can find out more about all of the targets for Goal 4 [here](#).

Partner with schools locally and globally

Benefits of working with others locally and globally

Local learning community

Clusters of schools working together can provide a firm foundation for collaborative growth, enabling peer support and learning from each other. A successful school cluster can:

- increase the quality of teaching and learning in the participating schools
- improve pupil engagement
- provide an opportunity for teachers to compare approaches and build confidence in their ability to increase the quality of teaching and learning, equipping children and young people with values, knowledge, attitudes, capabilities and skills to enable them to contribute effectively in an interdependent world
- achieve positive community impact.

Find out more about forming a cluster with other schools in Scotland by contacting connectingclassrooms@fsscotland.org

International partnerships

International school partnerships inspire students to fully engage with learning through joint learning activities focusing on global themes. They also offer teachers the chance to share experiences and learn new thinking, ideas and practices from colleagues in other countries, in line with the [International Engagement Strategy of Education Scotland](#). Connecting Classrooms can match you with an international partner school to help you build international connections, as well as offering guidance and training to get the most from partnerships. This might be through:

- **reciprocal visits** – with funding available to enable Scottish teachers from the cluster partnership to travel to the country of overseas partner school(s) and vice versa
- **virtual partnerships** – including interactive challenges, which schools can complete together, sharing thoughts and outcomes on social media
- **collaborative pupil projects** – themed around the Sustainable Development Goals.

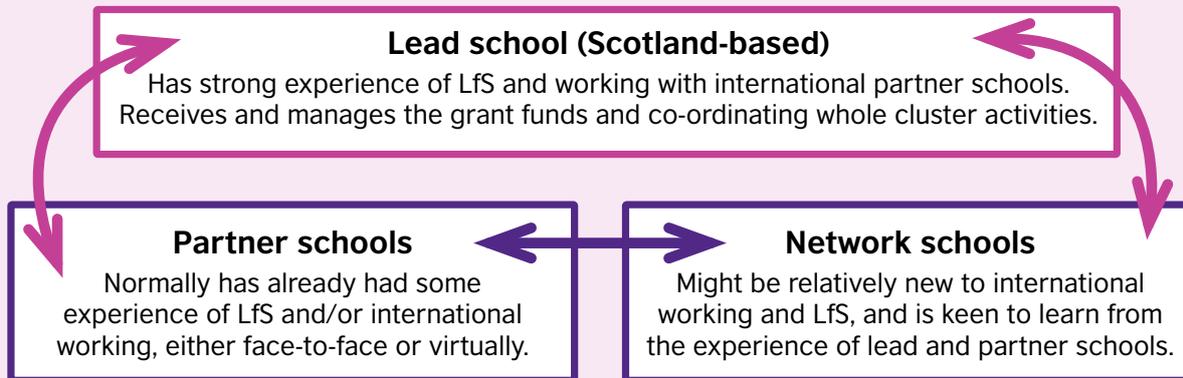
Find out more about setting up a partnership with a school overseas through the Find a Partner section of the [British Council Connecting Classrooms website](#)

Understanding roles and responsibilities

What is a cluster?

A cluster is a group of Scottish schools and schools from participating countries (see [British Council Connecting Classrooms website](#)) working together, and can include a mix of early years settings, primary and secondary schools, with no limit to the upper number of schools taking part. As a minimum, there must be two schools from a participating country, or countries, outside Scotland in the cluster. The cluster's collaboration can focus on a variety of Learning for Sustainability themes, one of which has to be common to the whole cluster.

A cluster could be constituted of schools with the following characteristics:



If you are interested in forming a cluster, or joining an already existing cluster, and you are unsure how to start, contact connectingclassrooms@lfsscotland.org or visit the [British Council Connecting Classrooms website](#)

Your role

As a teacher from a partner or network school, your role is to contribute to collaborative project planning and implementation of LfS within your cluster through:

- completing the school self-evaluation web and setting next steps for your school and cluster
- working together with cluster schools on joint activities e.g. CLPL, projects and celebration events
- leading on the development of LfS practice within your school
- contributing towards embedding a whole-school and community approach to LfS in your school.

Support available to you includes:

Cluster co-ordinator

Each cluster will be facilitated and co-ordinated by an identified, experienced, cluster co-ordinator from the lead school. They will be responsible for co-ordinating the development of the cluster action plan, supporting partner and network schools in the cluster, submitting grant applications and managing grant funding, and co-ordinating reciprocal international school visits.

Local advisor

Local advisors are based in your regional [Development Education Centre](#). Your local advisor will be working with the cluster co-ordinator to provide a range of advice on: making action plans and grant applications, working in international partnerships, training and recommending resources to help develop collaborative learning projects with pupils around the SDGs.

Towards a whole-school approach to LfS

Why use the self-evaluation tools?

Closely linked to Education Scotland's [Whole-school and community approach to LfS](#) and [HGios 4](#), the self-evaluation tools are designed to support your school's development towards an effective whole-school approach to LfS, with a focus on local and global partnerships.

Whole-school self-evaluation tool

This will enable you to identify your areas of strength as well as the next steps for your school. Your final results can be shared in order to inform the cluster self-evaluation.

Cluster self-evaluation

The cluster self-evaluation tool should be completed through a collaborative process that involves all the cluster schools. The aims of the process are to identify the needs of the cluster and inform future cluster actions, as well as provide a basis for grant funding applications.

How to use the tools

It is recommended that the whole-school self-evaluation web be carried out together with colleagues from your school at least annually so that progress can be monitored and celebrated, and all staff can contribute to the identification of next steps and subsequent work towards their achievement.

After completing self-evaluations, the programme offers a wide variety of opportunities to support the areas that your school or cluster has identified for further development.

Explore teaching and learning approaches

Through Connecting Classrooms you will have the opportunity to engage in fully-funded, high-quality career long professional learning (online, face to face, available individually or organised for your school or cluster) to equip you with the skills and practices to integrate Learning for Sustainability themes into your curriculum.

Find out more about the career long professional learning opportunities that are available to you in Scotland through the [Connecting Classrooms website](#)

You can read about LfS teaching and learning experiences from teachers across Scotland through the links below, which examine what great LfS looks like, and the impacts this can have.

- [Opening up Great Learning – Learning for Sustainability](#)
- [Conversations about Learning for Sustainability](#)
- [Global Learning Programme case studies](#)

Take action for the Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are a core theme that underpins the whole Connecting Classrooms programme. You will have access to a range of [free, downloadable classroom resources](#), relevant to all learning environments, curriculum areas and subjects and have the opportunity to explore how you might work towards achieving the SDGs with your learners. Both classroom resources and professional learning opportunities will be available to support you in addressing the SDGs locally and globally, through developing collaborative pupil projects, celebration events and local community activities.

Apply for funding

There are a host of learning opportunities and support on offer as part of the Connecting Classrooms programme. Whether you are part of a cluster or applying for individual opportunities, you can tailor your LfS journey to match your school's priorities. Funding is available for:

- reciprocal visits with international school partners
- collaborative pupil projects
- professional learning opportunities (face-to-face or online)
- virtual international school partnerships
- community engagement and celebration events
- cluster network CLPL activities and meetings.

You can apply either individually or as a cluster through the [British Council Connecting Classrooms website](#), after doing your self-evaluation.

Accreditation

You may wish to seek accreditation to recognise your achievements in LfS through the Connecting Classrooms programme. This could be through applying for the British Council [International School Award](#), which celebrates schools' international work, as well as providing further opportunities to enrich learning through international learning practices.

You will also have the opportunity to work towards achieving [GTCS Professional Recognition](#) in LfS, either by completing one of our accredited courses, or by collating evidence of your practice to support your independent application for professional recognition in LfS.

 **Useful resources****Teaching the SDGs**

[The World's Largest Lesson](#)

[Practical Action schools](#)

[Explore the Global Goals](#)

[SDG tracker](#)

[Eco-Schools Scotland](#)

Action projects

[Connecting Classrooms](#)

[Your Campaign for Change](#)

[Get Global](#)

Classroom activities

[Signposts for Global Citizenship](#)

[Stride Magazine](#)

[Oxfam Education](#)

[Christian Aid schools](#)

[Scotdec](#)

[Education Scotland](#)

Measuring Impact

[RISC – How do we know it's working?](#)

[Tools to measure attitudinal change in young people](#)

Resources to support Learning for Sustainability

[Stride online Global Citizenship magazine](#)

[Oxfam Guide for Teachers](#)

[Oxfam Guide for Schools](#)

[Education Scotland's](#)

['A summary of Learning for Sustainability Resources'](#)

['Opening up Great Learning'](#)

['Conversations about Learning for Sustainability'](#)

Professional learning

[General Teaching Council for Scotland](#)

[Making Connections through Learning for Sustainability](#)

[Learning for the Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[Professional Recognition in Learning for Sustainability through the General Teaching Council for Scotland](#)

 **Further information**

Contact Project Manager Kirsten Leask: connectingclassrooms@lfsscotland.org
or visit the [British Council Connecting Classrooms website](#)

