

Learning for Sustainability Hub



Learning for Sustainability ‘Connect’:

**Learning for Sustainability and a Rights-Based
Approach**

Welcome!

@LfSScotland

@gtcs

#LfSforALL

- **Please introduce yourself in the chat box**
- **Mute your audio**
- **Put any questions in the chat box**
- **We will be recording the main webinar but not group discussions.**

Aims of today's session:

- **Hear a context update:**
 - **Scotland's national vision** for Learning for Sustainability (LfS)
 - **Learning for Sustainability and a Rights-Based approach**
- **Hear from Kate Vickers, UNICEF, on approaches to rights-based learning**
- **Share your own ideas and experiences** on rights-based approaches to learning
- **Share your favourite rights-based learning resources.**

Session overview

- 16:00** **Welcome and ‘Setting the scene’** *Learning for Sustainability Scotland*
- 16:10** **‘Trusted Teaching: LfS, the Professional Standards, and the rights of the child’**
Suzanne Aldous, GTC Scotland
- 16:20** **‘Learning for Sustainability and a rights-based approach to learning’**
Kate Vickers, Professional Advisor, Rights Respecting Schools, UNICEF.
- 16:40** **Group conversation**
All participants
- 17:10** **Next steps**
- 17:15** **Close**

Learning for Sustainability Hub



‘Setting the scene’

Kirsten Leask

Learning for Sustainability Scotland

'Sustainability' – an international and national priority



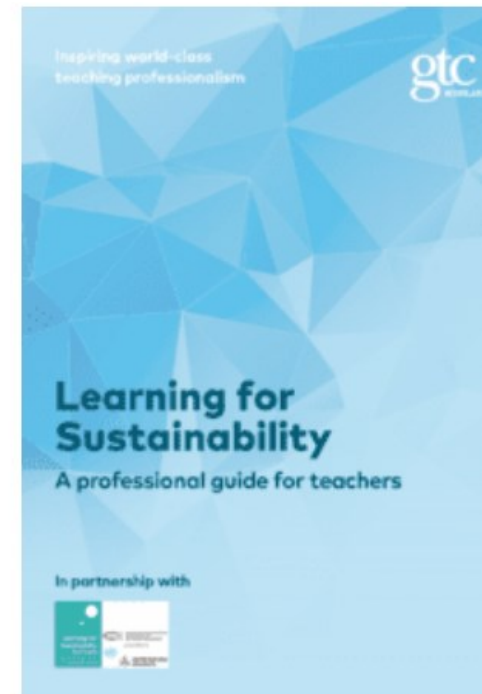
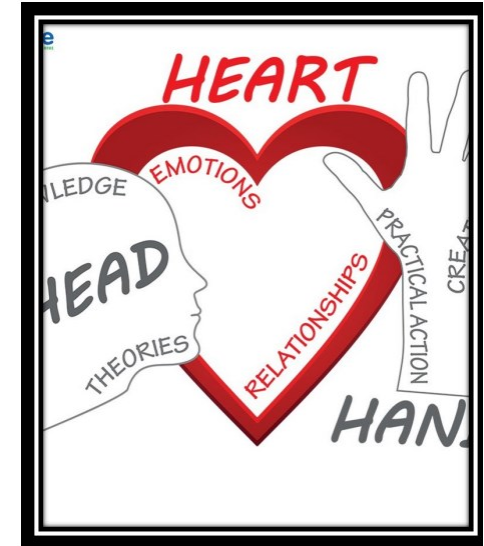
embedded in the curriculum international education ethos
equality and fairness values-based understanding interdependence improving attainment and achievement
outdoor learning resilience critical thinking health and wellbeing
sustainable energy and water use local to global eradicating poverty and inequity
responsible use of our planet's resources play children's rights skills for work
links between environment, society and economy creativity contact with nature
problem solving school linking
fair trade learning for sustainability respect
peace and conflict learning for a better world identity and heritage
social justice engaging with democracy human rights addressing discrimination and prejudice
sustainable buildings and grounds discussing controversial issues
sustainable development education learners as leaders protecting biodiversity
developing political literacy tackling climate change growing food global citizenship ethical issues
culture community partnerships systems thinking waste reduction and recycling
social and cultural diversity cooperative, collaborative and active learning

What is 'Learning for Sustainability'?

“... a **cross-curricular approach** which enables learners, educators, learning settings and their wider community **to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society**; and as an effective **whole-setting approach** which weaves together global citizenship, sustainable development and outdoor learning to create coherent, rewarding and **transformative learning experiences**.”



Scottish Government 2023



How is this being delivered in Scotland?

'Target 2030: a movement for people, planet and prosperity':
Scotland's national Learning for Sustainability action plan 2023



"To build an inspiring movement for change so every 3-18 place of education becomes a Sustainable Learning Setting by 2030."



Action Plan themes, with 25 actions:

- ❖ Leadership and Collaborative Partnership
- ❖ Learning, Teaching, Curriculum and Assessment
- ❖ Learning Environment and Resources
- ❖ **Learner Voice, Choice and Action**
- ❖ Meaning and Understanding

'this is not just for a few, it is for everyone'

Towards Sustainable Learning Settings

Culture

- Learner voice, ethos, relationships, **UNCRC**, weaving across other key strategies

Curriculum

- Learning, teaching, assessment, pedagogy

Campus

- Buildings, grounds, procurement, resource usage, digital spaces

Community

- Place, partnerships, families, communities of practice/culture/identity, local action – and thinking globally

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Learning for Sustainability, the Professional Standards, and the Rights of the Child

Suzanne Aldous
General Teaching Council for Scotland



The General Teaching
Council for Scotland

Learning for Sustainability and the Rights of the Child

A view from the Professional Standards





UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



Children's
COMMISSIONER



Survival



You have a right to life, good food, water, and to grow up healthy

Development



You have a right to an education and time to relax and play

Participation



You have a right to say how you feel, be listened to, and taken seriously

Protection



You have a right to be treated well and not be hurt by anyone



UNCRC incorporation into Scots Law



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024

The UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award

**WE ARE A UNICEF GOLD
RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL**



**Children's rights are learned, understood
and lived in this school.**



Climate Sustainability and the Rights of the Child



“having a deep connection to the natural world and understanding the significance of the choices we make – now and in the future.”

GTC Scotland Professional Standards, 2021.

The Professional values and Social Justice

- Embracing global educational and social values of sustainability, equality, equity, and justice and recognising children's rights.
- Respecting the rights of all learners as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and their entitlement to be included in decisions regarding their learning experiences and have all aspects of their wellbeing developed and supported.
- Demonstrating a commitment to engaging learners in real world issues to enhance learning experiences and outcomes, and to encourage learning our way to a better future



The GTC Scotland Professional Standards, 2021

Learning for Sustainability is the lens we look through to understand the world, shape our values and choose our actions.

developing political literacy
embedded in the curriculum
values-based
international education
ethos
understanding interdependence
protecting biodiversity
outdoor learning
resilience
addressing discrimination and prejudice
sustainable energy and water use
local to global
human rights
fair trade
eradicating poverty and inequity
children's rights
skills for work
links between environment, society and economy
creativity
contact with nature
learning for sustainability
peace and conflict
learning for a better world
critical thinking
respect
ethical issues
identity and heritage
waste reduction and recycling
social justice
sustainable buildings and grounds
school linking
discussing controversial issues
sustainable development education
learners as leaders
tackling climate change
growing food
community partnerships
systems thinking
global citizenship
social and cultural diversity
cooperative, collaborative and active learning
play
health and wellbeing
culture
engaging with democracy
equality and fairness
improving attainment and achievement
problem solving
responsible use of our planet's resources

Learning for Sustainability Hub



Learning for Sustainability and

Kate Vickers, Professional Advisor, Rights Respecting Schools, UNICEF

Learning for Sustainability and a rights-based approach

Learning for sustainability (LfS) 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: 'Whole school and community approach to learning for sustainability (LfS)'

embedded in the curriculum

international education

ethos

equality and fairness

values-based

understanding interdependence

improving attainment and achievement

outdoor learning

resilience

critical thinking

health and wellbeing

sustainable energy and water use

local to global

eradicating poverty and inequity

responsible use of our planet's resources

play

children's rights

skills for work

links between environment, society and economy

creativity

contact with nature

problem solving

fair trade

learning for sustainability

school linking

respect

peace and conflict

learning for a better world

identity and heritage

social justice

engaging with democracy

human rights

addressing discrimination and prejudice

sustainable buildings and grounds

discussing controversial issues

sustainable development education

learners as leaders

protecting biodiversity

developing political literacy

tackling climate change

growing food

culture

community partnerships

systems thinking

global citizenship

ethical issues

social and cultural diversity

cooperative, collaborative and active learning

waste reduction and recycling

Learning for Sustainability and the RRSA Outcomes

STRAND A: TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT RIGHTS

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is made known to children, young people and adults, who use this shared understanding to work for improved child wellbeing, school improvement, global justice and sustainable living.

OUTCOME	AT SILVER	AT GOLD
1. Children, young people and the wider school community know about and understand the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and can describe how it impacts on their lives and on the lives of children everywhere.	Many children and young people are familiar with a number of Articles of the CRC and can talk about the rights they enjoy. They know rights are universal and unconditional; the CRC applies to all children and young people everywhere, all the time. They demonstrate an awareness of where and why some children may not be able to access their rights. Adults and the wider school community know about and understand the CRC.	Most children and young people are familiar with a wide range of Articles of the CRC. They understand the concept of duty bearers and the concepts of rights being inherent, inalienable, indivisible, universal and unconditional. Most children and young people understand how local and global issues and sustainable development are linked to rights. Adults and the wider school community show a commitment to the CRC.

STRAND B: TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH RIGHTS – ETHOS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Actions and decisions affecting children are rooted in, reviewed and resolved through rights. Children, young people and adults collaborate to develop and maintain a school community based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation; this includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners and promotes wellbeing.

OUTCOME	AT SILVER	AT GOLD
2. In school children and young people enjoy the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Many children and young people are able to explain how school facilitates them to enjoy a range of their rights. They (and staff) describe how they and others act to create a rights respecting environment.	Most children and young people are able to explain how school, and duty bearers, facilitate them to enjoy a wide range of their rights. They understand the concepts of fairness and equity and are able to describe how the school promotes such principles and puts them into practice. Most children and young people know and trust that the school will act upon any concerns about their rights not being met.
3. Relationships are positive and founded on dignity and a mutual respect for rights.	Many children and young people speak with confidence about how positive relationships are encouraged. Rights are used to clarify moral dilemmas and consider rights respecting approaches.	Relationships are identified by most children, young people and adults as mutually respectful. There is evidence that respectful relationships are strengthening consistently over time. Many children and young people can talk about the concept of dignity. They can explain how dignity and rights explicitly inform life in school. School systems to address disagreements, conflict and prejudicial attitudes and actions are perceived as transparent, fair and effective by children and adults.

4. Children and young people are safe and protected and know what to do if they need support.	Many children and young people say they feel in a safe environment at school and can describe how their actions and those of others contribute to this. They can describe what they would do / who they would speak to if, for any reason, they did not feel safe.	Nearly all children and young people say they feel safe at school and can describe how becoming rights respecting contributes to this. The school can show that bullying, violent and discriminatory behaviour is rare (or steadily declining). Most children and young people have trust in the school systems that enable them to report any sense of not feeling safe both within and beyond school.
5. Children's social and emotional wellbeing is a priority. They learn to develop healthy lifestyles.	Many children describe how the school supports them with their physical and mental health, social and emotional needs.	Most children and young people describe how the school provides information and support for a range of physical, mental, social and emotional needs.
6. Children and young people are included and are valued as individuals.	Many children and young people can describe how they are included and valued at school and can describe how their actions and those of others contribute to this.	Nearly all children and young people interviewed describe how everyone is included and valued, and can describe how becoming rights respecting contributes to this. The school is actively working towards (or is sustaining) a strong culture of inclusion and is able to show how this is underpinned by non-discrimination.
7. Children and young people value education and are involved in making decisions about their learning.	Many children and young people speak positively of school and of their learning. They understand and can talk about the role they play in their learning. Many adults explain how rights respecting language shapes a positive learning environment.	Most children and young people speak of their commitment to the right of others to learn and can describe how they actively respect this right. Nearly all children and young people explain how they play an active role in their learning.

STRAND C: TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR RIGHTS – PARTICIPATION, EMPOWERMENT AND ACTION

Children are empowered to enjoy and exercise their rights and to promote the rights of others locally and globally. Duty bearers are accountable for ensuring that children experience their rights.

OUTCOME	AT SILVER	AT GOLD
8. Children and young people know that their views are taken seriously.	Many children, young people and adults describe how young people can express their opinions, have been involved in decisions about their life in school.	Most children and young people describe how their participation has a significant impact on school improvement.
9. Children and young people have taken action to claim their rights and promote the rights of others, locally and globally.	Many children and young people interviewed have been involved in a range of activities to promote children and young people's rights on a local and global scale.	Children and young people engage in action to campaign and/or advocate for the rights of children locally and globally. Most children and young people understand their role as global citizens.

Education Scotland: 'Whole school and community approach to learning for sustainability (LfS)'

██████████ Primary School is a Rights Respecting School taking part in Unicef's Rights Respecting Schools Award. In November 2020, we were awarded Bronze: Rights Committed status. We are now working towards Silver: Rights Aware.

All children in the school should be familiar with the UNCRC and be able to identify the key articles. Our pupils should know that rights are for all children and young people throughout the world (universal), are there at birth (inherent), cannot be taken away (inalienable), do not come with any conditions attached to them (unconditional) and are all equally important (indivisible). Whilst there is not an expectation that children and young people necessarily know the actual words that define these features of rights, it is important that they understand the meaning of them (within the context of their age and ability).

Every classroom should feature a children's rights display, including a LCFE friendly poster of the UNCRC, the book 'We Are All Born Free' and samples of pupil's work on rights.

Planning for children's rights should be evidenced in the termly Metaskills Grids and explicit links to individual articles should be made wherever possible.

All classes should be learning ABOUT rights, THROUGH rights and FOR rights throughout the school year.



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.

LfS activities should support our ethos and culture of participation and inclusion. There should be a strong focus on learner voice in decision-making and planning. Outdoor learning should be a regular, curriculum-led experience. Learners should engage in motivating and relevant interdisciplinary activities relating to topical LfS themes. LfS should be used to promote skills for learning, life and work including leadership and higher order thinking skills. Information about careers linked to the breadth of the LfS agenda should be embedded within learning and teaching.

Learners' LfS achievements should be recorded and recognised through the use of displays and PLP folders. We should aim to gather a wide range of evidence to demonstrate the impact of LfS on learners' successes and achievements.

Teaching and Learning

Planning for children's rights should be evidenced in the termly Metaskills Grids and explicit links to individual articles should be made wherever possible.

All classes should be learning ABOUT rights, THROUGH rights and FOR rights throughout the school year.

Strand A: Teaching and learning about rights

Guidance for teaching and learning about rights:

- Identify curriculum areas where you can have a strong focus on learning about the CRC. Some curriculum areas already have clear links, for example Health and Wellbeing and RME.
- As you progress, most curriculum areas should naturally provide rich opportunities for learning about the Convention, and there should be clear links with global citizenship and sustainable development.
- Topics or Interdisciplinary Learning lend themselves well to learning about rights. Include students in exploring how specific topics link to children's rights. Bringing a rights perspective to topics can enhance and enrich learning and also draw different curriculum areas together e.g. a topic on Water, the Victorians, Refugees or Climate Change.
- Use resources from the World's Largest Lesson to link rights to the global goals for sustainable development.

Strand B: Teaching and learning through rights - ethos and relationships

Teaching and learning through rights means developing a rights respecting ethos in your school and rights respecting classrooms. This involves not just learning about rights but putting rights into practice every day in your school.

Guidance for teaching and learning through rights:

- Consciously discuss and develop attributes (such as resilience) and strategies (for example, Growth Mindset) to support pupils in sustained and life-long learning.
- Help pupils to feel confident in using the language of rights to resolve disagreements and address complex situations. Explore made up 'scenarios', use role play, hot seating, using circle time or Philosophy for Children approaches, debates etc.
- Encourage children and young people's involvement with the evaluation of their own learning and in understanding their targets for improvement and how to achieve them.
- Develop meaningful involvement in areas such as topic planning (including opportunities for pupils to work with teachers in planning learning); self-determined or autonomous learning; structured feedback about lessons to staff.

Strand C: Teaching and Learning for Rights – participation, empowerment and action

Children, young people and adults in Rights Respecting Schools develop a strong sense of social justice and knowledge of local and global issues from a rights perspective and become ambassadors for rights, locally and globally.

Guidance for teaching and Learning for Rights:

- Identify how children and young people are supported and actively engaged in identifying and reviewing their progress targets and, where relevant, in any other review procedures.
- Use structured and systemic access to appropriate media, news and current affairs to provide a stimulus for child and young people led action.
- 'Signpost' children and young people to reliable information and support, both within school and externally. Consider exploring issues such as 'fake news'.
- Support children and young people to understand the difference between fundraising and campaigning and provide opportunities for pupils to move beyond fundraising to campaigning and taking active part in social justice initiatives.
- Focus on global themes, such as fair trade, social justice, climate change and sustainability, and identify how these impact upon children's rights.
- Explore with children and young people how you might raise awareness of particular issues, and help to bring about change.
- Develop children and young people's involvement with charity events, for example choosing charities to support, sharing information, organisation of fund-raising events.
- Start to make explicit connections between charity action and support for the realisation of other people's (especially children's) rights.
- Explore what being a rights respecting global citizen means and how making small changes to daily decision making can have a positive impact on the planet and other people e.g. how we use resources, what we choose to buy, how we use energy, recycle, reuse etc.



Sustainable Development Education should be taught through the UN Global Goals. All pupils in our school should know what the Global Goals are and why they are important. At the start of each year the Global Goals should be introduced through teaching materials found on the World's Largest Lesson website.

Every class teacher should choose one Global Goal to focus on each term and link this to the learning experiences in the Metaskills Grid. Links to other goals can be made. Coverage of the Global Goals across each level should be recorded by class teachers using the Global Goals tracking grid.

Links can be made between The Global Goals and Children's Rights with the support of Unicef's document 'Mapping the Global Goals for Sustainable Development and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.'

Mapping the Global Goals for Sustainable Development and the Convention on the Rights of the Child



Learning for Sustainability - First Level



Global Goals														
Goal 1: No Poverty					Goal 2: Zero Hunger					Goal 3: Good Health and Wellbeing				
P2					P2					P2				
P3					P3					P3				
P4					P4					P4				
Goal 4: Quality Education					Goal 5: Gender Equality					Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation				
P2					P2					P2				
P3					P3					P3				
P4					P4					P4				
Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy					Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth					Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure				
P2					P2					P2				
P3					P3					P3				
P4					P4					P4				
Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities					Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities					Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production				
P2					P2					P2				
P3					P3					P3				
P4					P4					P4				



Learning for Sustainability

Children's Rights Tracker - First Level

Children's Rights											
Article 1: Everyone under 18 has these rights.				Article 2: You have the right to protection against discrimination.				Article 3: All adults should always do what is best for you.			
P2				P2				P2			
P3				P3				P3			
P4				P4				P4			
Article 4: You have the right to have your rights made a reality by the government.				Article 5: You have the right to be given guidance by your parents and family				Article 6: You have the right to life and to grow up to be healthy.			
P2				P2				P2			
P3				P3				P3			
P4				P4				P4			
Article 7: You have the right to have a name and a nationality.				Article 8: You have the right to an identity.				Article 9: You have the right to live with your parents, unless it is bad for you.			
P2				P2				P2			
P3				P3				P3			
P4				P4				P4			

Useful Resources

UNICEF UK Guidance:

[Guide to Global Citizenship in Rights Respecting Schools](#)

[Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#)

[Engaging Political Decision Makers](#)

[Engaging Local Media](#)

[Exploring War & Conflict](#)

Relevant UNICEF UK Spotlight CPD Resources:

[Spotlight on Global Citizenship from a rights perspective](#)

[Spotlight on Embedding rights into your curriculum](#)

[Spotlight on developing your campaigning work with children and young people](#)

UNICEF UK RRSA Training Courses:

[Introduction to Global Citizenship](#)

[Strengthening Global Citizenship](#)

Other Useful Resources:

[Plan global learning into your curriculum using Reboot Education's calendar of awareness raising days and annual celebrations](#)

[Wosdec](#)

[Scotdec](#)

[Signposts for Global Citizenship](#)

[Oxfam Global Citizenship Guides](#)

[SDG Book Club](#)

Learning for Sustainability Hub



Group Conversations

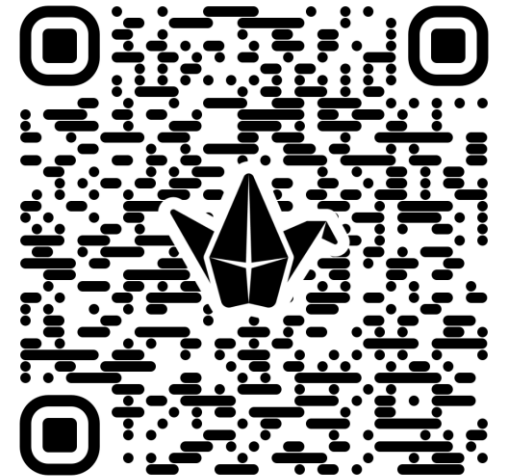
All

Group conversations

Thinking about a rights-based approach to learning...

1. **Share your own ideas and experiences** regarding ways in which you have woven a rights-based approach to learning across your practice.
2. What opportunities does this kind of approach offer to **supporting and enhancing a wider whole-setting approach to LfS?**

[Share your thoughts on the Padlet](#)



Learning for Sustainability Hub



Plenary

All

Be inspiring – and inspired!

Click on the hyperlink below to read about what others are doing...and share your own LfS practice.

[Join the Learning for Sustainability conversation - The General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://www.gtcs.org.uk)

#LfSforALL



Join the Call to Action

- [Learning for Sustainability | Resource Themes | Education Scotland](#)
- [GTC Scotland Learning for Sustainability Hub: resources, professional learning, self-evaluation tools and practice examples.](#)

([Making learning for sustainability part of my teaching](#))

- [Whole school and community approach to learning for sustainability \(LfS\) - Self-evaluation and improvement framework | Resources | National Improvement Hub](#)



Join other like-minded individuals...

Find out more at:

- [Learning for Sustainability Scotland Events](#)
- [Become a member of Learning for Sustainability Scotland](#)

#LfSforALL



Learning for Sustainability Hub



Next Connect session date for your diary:

Thursday 29th May 2025

The new Framework for Learning for Sustainability in Initial Teacher Education.

Learning for Sustainability Hub



Thank you and good-bye!

[Learning for sustainability \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://gtcs.org.uk)

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