

PE1535/A

School Leaders Scotland Letter of 8 December 2014

Public Petition PE1535

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above petition.

We fully support both the concept and the practice of sustainability and its inclusion in the curriculum experienced by every young person in Scottish schools.

'Learning for Sustainability – the report of the One Planet Schools working group was published in December 2012 and set an ambitious agenda to embed Learning for Sustainability in every school in an approach that encompasses learning and teaching, professional development, leadership, ethos, buildings and grounds.

The One Planet Schools Working Group agreed to define Learning for Sustainability as:

'A whole school approach that enables the school, and its wider community to build the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and confidence to develop practices and take decisions which are compatible with a sustainable and equitable society'

At a strategic and school specific level schools across the country have, through their implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, and within the context of Skills for Life, been building on already established good practice to address sustainability and other environmental issues. These are addressed across the curriculum, through multi disciplinary approaches to learning but also find specific focus within the Experiences and Outcomes outlined in:

Sciences- Planet Earth SCNO4a, SCN O4b.

Social Subjects - People Places and the Environment SOC09a, SOC09b, SOC11b, SOC12b.

Technologies - Technological Developments in Society TCH01c, TCH02a, TCH02b, TCH05a.

Schools and teachers have developed an expertise in interpreting the 'guidance' into a coherent curricular structure which delivers learning within the context of the wider community of the school and supported by the Experiences and Outcomes.

A major strength of Scottish Education has derived from trusting and empowering school leaders and teachers to best interpret guidelines in a manner consistent with the school context. While as stated previously we fully support and encourage the

teaching and promulgation of sustainability in schools and their communities, we do not feel that making it mandatory is necessary nor would it be productive.

Schools, however, will require a range of supports to further develop this approach and time to implement, innovate and embed practice.

Ken Cunningham CBE
General Secretary,
School Leaders Scotland