

Report on Learning for Sustainability (LfS) Network

1. 'Learning for Sustainability' is a cross-curricular approach which enables learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society.
2. The LfS initiative was adopted by the Scottish Government upon its acceptance of the recommendations set out in the Vision 2030+ report¹ which recommended that:
 - i. All learners should have an entitlement to Learning for Sustainability;
 - ii. In line with the GTCS Professional Standards, every practitioner, school and education leader should demonstrate Learning for Sustainability in their practice;
 - iii. Every school should have a 'whole-school' approach to Learning for Sustainability that is robust, demonstrable, evaluated and supported by leadership at all levels;
 - iv. All school buildings, grounds and policies should support Learning for Sustainability;
 - v. A strategic national approach to support for Learning for Sustainability should be established.
3. A *Learning for Sustainability (LfS) Network* was launched on the 19th June 2019 in Edinburgh by the Deputy First Minister, with the EIS in attendance. The Deputy First Minister stressed the government's commitment to *Learning for Sustainability* and announced the publication of the *Learning for Sustainability Action Plan*², which sets out how the Scottish Government will implement the recommendations of the 'Vision 2030+' report over the next 3-5 years.
4. It is a comprehensive plan which includes amending the CfE to directly include Learning for Sustainability: to facilitate and encourage Learning for Sustainability to be regularly experienced by pupils throughout their schooling, to amend ITE and GTCS Professional Standards for Teachers, use educational stakeholders to promote 'Learning for Sustainability' and to adapt school estates to facilitate 'Learning for Sustainability'. According to the Action Plan: "*An effective whole school and community approach to LfS weaves together global citizenship, sustainable development education and outdoor learning to create a coherent, rewarding and transformative learning experiences for pupils.*"
5. The Government has not announced funding to deliver the LfS programme, however.

¹ <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/res1-vision-2030.pdf>

² <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/LearningforSustainability-Vision2030ActionPlan.pdf>

6. 'Learning for Sustainability' has effectively become part of the CfE in schools under the 'global citizenship' element of CfE. The Government has pledged to disseminate a consistent narrative that shows how "*LfS contributes to the four capacities and four contexts of learning of Curriculum for Excellence; and supports understanding, engagement with and the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.*"

The GTCS has already embedded LfS into teachers' professional standards³. and the Education Scotland website⁴ hosts a LfS national improvement hub with strategic information and resources.

7. The Network was informed that the CfE narrative is being refreshed at the moment by the Curriculum & Assessment Board (that Assistant Secretary Bradley is a member of) and that this refresh will lead to 'Learning for Sustainability' becoming a bigger feature of the CfE.
8. The Government sees the LfS Network's role as being to promote the 'Learning for Sustainability' agenda in schools. The EIS has been invited to the LfS Network and Assistant Secretary Belsey attended the first meeting. As a part of the Network, the Government is asking individual stakeholders to promote LfS within schools. The EIS is therefore being asked to endorse and build support for LfS amongst teachers. The Government believes that much of this work is already being done but may not always be being called LfS.
9. The first Network had around 70 persons attending from a range of backgrounds. The EIS has been invited to remain involved with the Network.
10. Learning for Sustainability is an established element of the curriculum, which sits well with developing EIS policy in relation building a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society. Concerns about potential additional workload might suggest that it is best to be part of the Network to ensure an EIS perspective and to stay informed.

Recommendation

That the Education Committee consider this report and decide on the question of continued EIS membership of the LfS Network.

³ <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/learning-for-sustainability.aspx>

⁴ <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/A%20summary%20of%20learning%20for%20sustainability%20resources>