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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2013 edition of *Leaders: SLS Annual Review and Conference Guide*. With contributions from SLS and prominent figures in Scottish education it provides an invaluable insight into key issues and developments affecting Head Teachers, Depute Head Teachers, Principal Teachers and Business Managers. It also serves as the programme for the SLS Annual National Education Conference which will be held at Cameron House, Loch Lomond, from Thursday 14 to Saturday 16 November 2013 and as a vehicle to acknowledge the continued support of the association's business partners who make such an invaluable contribution to the annual conference.

Leaders is part of the association's communication strategy. Members will now be familiar with the regular e-Bulletins and our re-vamped website through which it is the aim to keep everyone informed of the association's activities and its influential role in the evolution of Scottish education.

I hope that you enjoy our 2013 edition and welcome your comments and observations.

Alan C Jones, Events Manager.

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The Presidential Year

Back in September, I spent a (very enjoyable) weekend down in Northumberland with two friends from schooldays, neither of whom works in education. They were both aware that I was approaching the end of my Presidential Year and asked how it had been. "My most rewarding professional experience," was my reply.... and I suspect recent Presidents would have offered a similar comment.

I could of course have offered "hectic", "frustrating", "humbling", "stimulating" or "infuriating". You meet many people, some on a regular basis. You discover the inner workings of Scottish education and realise that our views and aspirations are taken very seriously and inform the decision-making process out of the public eye. You discover sectional interests which are not, sadly, in the interest of children. You discover, humbly, how much work Past Presidential Teams have done in building positive relationships with other organisations. You hear new ideas and ways of working which you want to take back to your own school. You share all this at Council and Executive and do well to heed the collective wisdom of colleagues at those meetings. There is much talking shop but also much hilarity and friendship. It was a tremendous time to be President and I am very grateful for the chance to represent you.

This is a time of challenge and change in Scottish education: we are in the first year of SQA

senior phase qualifications, there are changes in GTC Scotland's standards, and we are moving forward on the recommendations of the McCormac and Donaldson reports to name but two. There are infuriatingly glib mission statements about delivering more with less. There are uncertainties in workforce planning and school budgets. There is a loss of central support in many authorities for our members who are Business Managers, Principal Teachers and Faculty leaders and part of Senior Management Teams. And yet...and yet. You will, like me, have wonderful members of staff who go the extra mile every day of the week and pupils who make you smile and make you proud. You will, like me, have parents who know how hard teachers work in their child's school and appreciate the staff. You will, like me, grit your teeth at the unfairness of much reporting in the media, and at the negative spin put on the results of honest endeavour. That national propensity for seeing a glass half empty has been evident in the responses to the progress of Curriculum for Excellence.

I have remarked in the past that CfE is a complex seven year development programme and that questions from teachers about the programme are actually the sign of a mature reflective profession. For all the rhetoric about the importance of the Broad General Education 3-15, we will do well to

anticipate a very real and very sharp scrutiny of pupil

performance in the first year of the new National Qualifications – and in fact to anticipate some very sharp parental questioning about the different approaches we are taking in the arrangements for the senior phase. That is not unreasonable – all publicly funded bodies should expect to be held accountable for what they do. I think there is an obligation on all leaders in schools to explain the complexities of CfE and avoid metaphorically patting stakeholders on the head and telling them all will be well. At the same time, I do not think it is unreasonable to ask for a period of time to elapse before rushing to judgement on the success or failure of the programme. Are we judging purely on qualifications achieved? And who is best placed to judge? I'd like to see how the current cohort of S4 perform this year and then see how well they make the transition into the new Higher and Advanced Higher courses – and see if they have indeed become "successful learners", "confident individuals", "effective contributors" – and oh the irony and resonance of "responsible citizens" given the opportunity to vote in the independence referendum in 2014!

We are not alone in implementing educational change. Few countries are complacent about their education systems and it is clear that politicians have got their teeth into the apparent link between education and economic success. I say "apparent" because a simplistic adoption of one country's structure fails to take into account differences in culture and attitude. We know from the 2007 OECD report that in Scotland who you are is more important than the school you attend. We have too many disengaged pupils and we need to close the gap in performance to reduce the number of subsequently disengaged adults. The CfE programme should help, by delivering a more relevant curriculum for many pupils – and I'd endorse the recent

comments of Sir Ian Wood that schools need to do much more in delivering vocational programmes. But how? To illustrate the dilemma: the well-meaning Scottish Government request for all pupils to have two hours of quality PE fails to see the consequent impact on other parts of the school day; there are also voices arguing for more time for languages; voices arguing for science. What do you then drop out of the curriculum? The next two years, the final two years of the CfE programme, will challenge us to rethink our structures for S5/6 pupils. Not all pupils want to sit 5 Highers in one sitting. The change to GTCS standards could, if we can get past initial staff suspicion, energise and inspire the next generation of teachers to accept the concept of continuing professional development and in time, assist them to join us in leadership. They will, like us, discover both the pleasure and challenge. Irene Dalton's words from an article for SHA in 2000 still apply: "Our leadership is tested daily..... We are not afraid to expose what we believe in because it might make us unpopular; therefore our beliefs in justice, equal value and integrity will make a difference immediately in the schools and, with faith and over time, in the wider community."



RONNIE SUMMERS,
HEAD TEACHER,
MUSSELBURGH
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
(PRESIDENT: 2012-2013)

General Secretary's Reflections

Last year for my reflections I wrote about 'interesting times'. Just when you think they can't get any more interesting, they do. By this time next year the political landscape will have changed forever. Scotland will never be the same again whatever the outcome of the Referendum. Interesting times indeed! One of the challenges around that very subject is, of course, the young people in our schools who for the first time in history have the right to vote. That has brought its own challenges to senior leaders. There is a need to ensure they are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities in that regard. There is the need for good education regarding 'political literacy' and Education Scotland in consultation with ourselves and others has produced good advice around this. The article later in this publication from the Electoral Commission is further evidence of the import of all this. Then there is the need to ensure fair play and that as we know is when it can get tricky. I hope our advice on that front has proved and will continue to prove helpful. The referendum has also indirectly sparked renewed interest around governance and how education is delivered generally. The heat generated south of the border hasn't helped in that regard although it has concentrated the mind wonderfully. While there is always room for healthy debate, it has all been somewhat of a distraction when schools continue to bring to fruition years of development of the curriculum and the new qualifications. I continue to be confident that our heads and teaching staff will ensure the progress of our young people in their new suite of qualifications. However, I came across the other day the HAS Headlines for November 1993, 20 years ago. It was mainly the report

of the first HAS Conference I attended as a member. If membership had been open to PTs, I'd have joined nearly twenty years earlier again! I've never regretted that decision for one second. HAS and SLS has brought an enormous amount of support, challenge and friendship over these many years in between. What struck me most however was some of the comment from the conference of that year: "Why schools matter":

- "Quality comes from: strong leadership; a clear focus on teaching; an orderly, safe climate; high teacher expectations; emphasis on the evaluation of pupil achievement."
- "There was no single model of a good head teacher."
- "Tenure for life was unlikely to last forever."
- "Effective head teachers can be very different in style and their approach, but leadership that is focused on teaching and learning is the key! Schools do matter. We can make the difference."

Does any of that sound familiar? Without giving the game away, it will be interesting to see if one of the speakers then would say something similar today. I'll let you work out which of our guests might be in the frame! It does remind us there are some timeless truths about educating young people which don't change, however we dress up the rhetoric surrounding the professional debate. Of course, we learn new things, but as we do we mustn't forget the old, well tried and trusted ways. The best systems in the world supported by the best central thinking will collapse without the commitment of the teachers themselves and their leaders, all of whom have been and often still are, teachers at heart. And that old adage of Henry Stimson's still holds: the only way to make a man (or woman) trustworthy is to

trust him (or her)! Get the right people doing the right things with the right attitude in the right context and you'll get the young people right. And then we'll get the society that will serve all our best interest in the future. Schools really do still matter.

But schools cannot do everything on their own. The challenge we find ourselves facing today is how to ensure schools and increasingly the wider community can make the difference for those who, though having improved relatively over the decades, have not in relation to their more privileged peers. The Conference speakers in 2013 will bring a range of experiences which taken together should show the green shoots of potential growth in this regard as we get everyone working as one for that common cause. Finally I would want again to record my thanks on your behalf for the commitment of Council and Executive in progressing your interests. The Presidential Team in particular give a huge amount of personal time and I think the continued very high status of SLS at home and abroad is in no small measure due to that commitment. At this Conference we recognise the eleven very successful years Alastair has put in to this association. On a very personal basis I would want to echo that and thank him for all his support, friendship and understanding to myself and our members. We wish him a long and healthy retirement from SLS. In Neil Shaw we have a very worthy successor and I look forward very much to working with him and developing our already long association together working on behalf our membership. To the other members of our Events team – Alan, Lyn, Margaret and Mhairi – on your behalf, our grateful thanks. They will be the ones with fraught looks until the last

member departs on Saturday. If you have had an enjoyable, informative, challenging, inspiring Conference then, and only then, will they relax.

KEN CUNNINGHAM
GENERAL SECRETARY



President Elect

The vision for Paisley Grammar is of a learning community and as Head Teacher my focus has always been developing positive relationships across the school and ensuring all in that community understand that these positive relationships support and are supported by good practice in learning and teaching. My task as a school leader is to ensure that the pupils in my care have the best possible educational experience and my work in the school is to challenge, support and enable staff to do the best possible job. As school leaders we should never lose sight of our responsibilities towards children.

When an authority review team arrived in my school a session ago, one of the slides on my presentation was of a 'snakes and ladders' game. Leading and managing a Scottish secondary school can sometimes feel like being on that board. As school leaders we climb many ladders through change, innovation and improvement but every so often we come across a 'snake' and it can take a great deal of hard work to overcome that adversity, that challenge. Just when you feel you are getting there, someone throws a new challenge your way. SLS can provide all of us with support in the handling of difficult situations; it delivers useful professional development and information and can be a platform to share good practice.

I have been Head Teacher at Paisley Grammar for seven years. I took over when budgets began to get tight, when staffing was further reduced, when new management structures were implemented and when the corporate approach began to pull us into its web. I have managed the school through the implementation of CfE and all of the changes and challenges that has presented. I have made improvements, appointed new staff and developed existing staff. I have dealt with a myriad of events, experiences and incidents, some of which you could not make up if you tried. Our job as senior managers is diverse and varied, difficult and rewarding, at times a pleasure and at other times punishing. The responsibility and accountability demanded of us all can cause many a sleepless night. I have worked for three different authorities – Glasgow, East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire – and each has equipped me with experience and the skills to help me do what I do now. I have also worked with a range of Head Teachers, many of whom have imparted words of wisdom. With some others it was just words! The job of a senior leader is a demanding one and whilst our job is often lonely and can be isolating, it is important that networks and associations like SLS enable us all to share, support and to learn from each other. I became involved in the

SLS Council when John Watson, who had been on the Council, retired as Head Teacher of Gryffe High School and was keen to find a replacement to represent Renfrewshire. Like a good heidie, he asked for volunteers and then when he realised there were no takers he selected a volunteer and on that occasion it was me. He convinced me that it was a worthwhile activity. I was persuaded and found myself at meetings of the Council. Many of that original cohort of the Council have moved on and a whole raft of new senior managers have joined. I am pleased to have been involved in a phase which has brought more coherence and direction to the association and where new senior managers have sought to become involved. The association now has a clearer direction and focus in the form of a Strategic Plan and I urge all of you to become familiar with this document. Somehow from that first Council meeting, I found myself quickly involved in a committee and then a member of the Executive and then Vice President and then President. It does all seem a bit surreal. My involvement in SLS has given me many opportunities to meet those who influence and determine policy and practice and it has allowed me to represent the senior managers in schools across Scotland in a very positive way. During my time with SLS, as a member of the

Executive and then as Vice President, I have been fortunate to be involved in a range of meetings and discussions about educational and leadership matters. Last Session I represented SLS on the Scottish Government Languages Working Group which was an interesting insight into how a Government's manifesto pledge becomes policy. I also represented SLS on the SCQF CfE task force group which considered how best to communicate the work of SCQF. I was also asked to join the Framework for Educational Leadership group which is taking forward an aspect of the Donaldson review. I have been to meetings with Education Scotland and engaged in discussion about CfE, inspections and their strategic plan. I have also met with Mike Russell at the Scottish Parliament to present issues and concerns. Some of the work of the association is to respond to draft documentation and I am pleased that the opinion of the Presidential Team continues to be sought by the Scottish Government and other organisations. I have attended a range of conferences including ASCL events in London and Warwick. In London, I had the opportunity to witness Michael Gove's interaction with Head Teachers south of the border. As an SLS representative, alongside my Presidential Team colleagues, I have attended meetings with SQA, Audit Scotland and those working to drive forward the new Leadership

College. It is a privilege to be able to influence practice and policy in this way. This Session I have attended meetings of the Scottish Government's Workforce Planning Group which has been considering how best to improve the process of recruitment and retention of the teaching workforce for Scottish schools.

Last year Ronnie, the outgoing President, identified Curriculum for Excellence, the Donaldson Report on Teacher Education, changes to pensions and the financial pressures on schools as important developments. These continue to pervade the scene. I embark on my year as President of SLS in the year of the Nationals when most S4 pupils in Scotland will complete qualification courses they have been preparing for since the introduction of CfE. I know that teachers across Scotland have been working hard to ensure courses are in place and assessment and evidence gathering is ongoing. They have been ploughing through the enormous amount of information being generated by SQA and Education Scotland as well as responding to local authority initiatives and advice. By December we will all know the outcomes of the first round of SQA verification and whether or not our assessment practice is fit for purpose. I know that teachers across Scotland will be determined to ensure the best outcomes for the young people. However, I also know that they are looking further forward towards the new Higher examinations as well as back at all of the work they have done to secure courses for pupils from S1 to S3.

Schools continue to struggle to cope with decreasing budgets and fewer teaching, support and administrative staff. The outlook for local government coffers is not bright and whilst education remains a high priority with local authorities the reality of their budget remains a challenge. This presidential year will also witness the outcome of the independence referendum which, whatever the outcome, will have consequences for schools and their cohorts. I urge all who are interested in getting involved to get involved, come along to Council, attend the popular CPD events we run, complete the surveys we issue and send in comments and queries you may have. All are important and all are considered. I have enjoyed my involvement so far and I look forward to an interesting year of involvement representing you all.



CAROLINE AMOS
HEAD TEACHER, PAISLEY
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
(VICE PRESIDENT: 2012-2013)

Committee Reports

communications

Effective communication is central to any good organisation and SLS strives to keep its membership informed about current activities and events. We do this in a variety of ways:

- Our regularly updated website (with a secure portal for members only) which contains current topics of interest, e.g. pensions, forthcoming CPD events including the Annual Conference and contact details for key personnel within the organisation. (www.sls-scotland.org.uk)
- Regular email bulletins giving the latest news and activities of SLS
- Press releases
- Surveys
- Annual publication – *Leaders: SLS Annual Review and Conference Guide*
- ASCL magazine

It is important that we have correct information about you in our database, so if you have changed address, bank, e-mail, phone, etc, please contact Lyn or Margaret at the SLS office (info@sls-scotland.org.uk) to update your details. This is particularly pertinent with regard to e-mail now that there have been changes within GLOW.

We are also grateful to those of you who respond to our surveys via Survey Monkey; the information gained from these is vital for the Presidential Team when they are in negotiation with a number of national

bodies; ***fact is far more powerful than rhetoric!***

Two of our recent surveys on recruitment and Curriculum for Excellence have been invaluable in this way and also received national media coverage which was good for the profile of our association. Finally, contributions to our e-mail bulletins are always welcomed as are suggestions for improvements and additions to the website; our aim is to give you the best possible service within the resources we have available and to keep you fully updated with SLS activities. I hope you have an enjoyable Conference and look forward to meeting many of you.



GRAHAM HERBERT
HEAD TEACHER,
LOCKERBIE ACADEMY
(COMMUNICATIONS
COMMITTEE CONVENER)

education

The last year in Scottish education has been an interesting one given the continuing development of our curriculum. The materials to accompany the arrival of the new National Qualifications have been eagerly anticipated, have now been pored over and we are all engaged in a race against the clock to ensure that our young people are prepared fully for the new exam diet.

SLS continues to play a key role on the national stage and part of my role as Education Convener is to represent the association on the CfE Management Board. The Board is made up of representatives from a number of organisations including the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, the National Parent Forum and a number of professional associations. The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the programme of curriculum change is delivered. In addition to the professional learning and the opportunity to influence national educational strategy, it is fascinating to be involved in curriculum change at a national level and to see the associated consultation processes.

The forthcoming year promises to be an eventful one as our young people sit new exams, appeals all but disappear and there is a great deal more internal assessment and moderation at a local

level. We welcome the opportunity to exercise professional judgment as we measure the progress of our young people towards national standards. However, there still remains some anxiety with parents, the teaching profession and our young people. Our task as school leaders is to ensure that we influence and support curricular change whilst managing the expectations and concerns of our communities in this time of significant change.



ANDREW SMITH
TEACHER, CARLUKE
HIGH SCHOOL
(EDUCATION
COMMITTEE CONVENER)

professional support

Over the past year the Committee has seen a number of personnel changes which continues to energise and enhance our discussions.

Much of our activity recently has focused on our contribution to the Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018. The aim of our future endeavours will be to ensure that the Association is responsive to the needs of our members in the various roles they fulfil. Specifically we will produce guidance and advice to members on the following areas:

- The Role of the Business Manager
- Budgets, Savings, and DSM
- Staffing, staffing structures, recruitment and supply
- Central Support Services – Local Authorities
- Scrutiny
- Communication with press and media, with parents, with partners and with your community.

Our intention over the next few years is to produce annually two or three advice papers to support our various categories of members: Head Teachers, Depute Head Teachers, Principal Teachers and Business Managers. In addition, over the past few months the Committee has represented SLS in discussions on Curriculum for Excellence: Impact on Universities. This project,

under the auspices of QAA Scotland is being led by the University of Glasgow School of Education and will involve regional workshops promoting engagement across sectors on the Enhancement Theme – Developing and Supporting the Curriculum. On behalf of the Committee I will be attending a short life working group convened by the Scottish Government looking at Curriculum for Excellence: Tackling Bureaucracy. This group has met once and will seek to produce practical suggestions by November 2013. My personal thanks to all the Committee members for their support and their professional expertise.



DAVID MITCHELL,
HEAD TEACHER,
BO'NESS ACADEMY
(PROFESSIONAL
SUPPORT COMMITTEE
CONVENER)

In November 2007 Council endorsed an Executive proposal that a major review of the association's operational and strategic activities be undertaken and that a five year Strategic Plan be created. Such an approach would enable the association to:

- return to financial viability
- function effectively in supporting members' interests
- respond to changes in the educational and political environments
- place itself at the centre of any educational debate
- manage the workload of the association's Officers and General Secretary effectively.

Supported by the five year plan and guided by Executive, the association has been transformed internally and in its level of engagement with the wider education community. Over the course of the plan:

- the association's name was changed
- membership categories have expanded and overall membership increased by over 60%
- CPD activities have expanded and have been targeted to meet the identified needs of members
- the office support structure streamlined
- there has been a major review of operational finance – professional auditors appointed
- the Committee structure has been streamlined
- Strategic Planning Group has been created
- the level of engagement across Scottish education has been expanded
- a new constitution has been written and accepted by members
- an updated website has

- been launched
- a corporate rebranding exercise has been conducted
- the communication system has been overhauled

The association has completed significant stages towards ensuring that over the period of the first strategic plan we have brought ourselves to a position where:

- We present the face of a professional body whose expertise has to be sought and heeded by anyone who would seek to influence Scottish education
- The views of school leaders are given prominent credence in any decision making process
- As an association we operate as a financially prudent organisation
- Our members see us as the first port of call for professional support and guidance

Since February of this year Council has been reviewing the first plan and taking forward discussion of the next five year plan. Unlike 2007 we are building from a position of significant strength:

- We are a structurally sound and robust organisation
- We have reached the position of financial stability where the association activities are sustainable from the membership fees
- Our credibility in the educational debate is established.

However given the potential uncertainty of the incoming years it is important that we are clear in our vision of the way forward for the association while at the same time ensure that our strategic planning process is able to adapt to changing

strategic plan



circumstance. The key features of the Strategic Plan 2013-2018 are:

- Fostering the influence/ impact of the association on Scottish education
- Preparing the association for potential changes in national and local governance
- Ensuring the association's paid employees benefit from effective pay and conditions
- Promoting prudent stewardship of the association's finances
- Maximising the efficiency of the association's administration
- Ensuring that our CLPL programme meets the needs of members
- Continuing to develop effective strategies to communicate with members
- Developing closer links with the Higher Education sector
- Developing the level of support given to Business Managers
- Developing support for members across

all aspects of school leadership

In addressing these issues SLS is adopting a surefooted approach to developing the association in a manner which will empower it to meet future challenges and potential changes in the educational and political environment.

Full details of the Strategic Plan can be found on the association website as will monitoring updates throughout the duration of the plan.

If you as an individual or as a local group have any issues over or questions relating to the plan, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

**JAMES THEWLISS,
HEAD TEACHER, HARRIS
ACADEMY (PAST
PRESIDENT: 2012-2013)**

The Field Officer's Last Post

I retired from the position of SLS Field Officer on 31 August this year, after eleven very interesting and challenging years in the role. It was my second retirement, as I had already retired from a Head of Service post in South Ayrshire in 2001. Not everyone gets to retire twice, and all I can say about my age is that I am not nearly as old as I look!

I am delighted that Neil Shaw, formerly head teacher of Boclair Academy, East Dunbartonshire, has been appointed to the post of Field Officer from 1 September. We have tried to ensure a seamless transfer, and Neil's extensive experience of school leadership, as well as his close involvement with SLS, will be valuable assets in his new role.

I would want to offer my thanks to a number of colleagues. Firstly, I am grateful to SLS for the opportunity to do not only a necessary job but a most rewarding one. It has been an enormous pleasure to work with the members of Council, Executive, Presidential Team and Office Staff, as well with colleagues in ASCL who operate in the rest of the UK. Secondly, I offer my thanks and best wishes to all the members of SLS, and particularly to those with whom I have most direct contact. You have been unfailingly appreciative of the work I have done on your behalf, even when the outcomes were not always as good as might have been hoped for. It has been an honour to serve you. Thirdly, to all the officers

of local Councils and national bodies, members of independent school boards, and the staff of other agencies with whom I have dealt directly, I would want to express my appreciation of the professionalism, courtesy and fairness which has been consistently shown to me in my work.

I leave the post with warm and enduring memories of colleagues who strive for the highest professional standards in their work and who show great commitment to the education and welfare of the young people of Scotland.

As you would expect, there is a certain predictability about the work of the Field Officer. Dealing with complaints, grievances, interpersonal tensions, disciplinary matters, health issues, salaries, pensions and the like, as well as offering general procedural advice to school leaders, form the normal routine. But there is always the unpredictable and occasionally the bizarre! All of which makes the member support dimension of SLS a critical part of its work.

To all SLS members I would say again that it is never too soon to speak to the Field Officer about a difficulty, real or perceived, and that you should not be deterred by thinking that your personal professional concern is trivial. SLS and its related organisation ASCL together have the time, expertise and resources to deal with the professional difficulties members encounter, whether they be minor or major. Normally the Field Officer can access particular expertise and bring a degree



ALASTAIR NOBLE
FIELD OFFICER
(2002-2013)

of external objectivity to professionally and personally stressful situations.

The demands on the SLS Field Officer have steadily increased over the period I have held the post. From around 60 contacts with members in the first year, the number has risen steadily to nearly 200 in the last year. As a proportion of the total membership of the organisation contacting the Field Officer in a year, this represents a rise from just over 10% to almost 30%. These contacts range, of course, from the fairly routine to the deeply serious, and, at any one time, the Field Officer might be dealing with around ten cases at varying stages of progress. Nevertheless, it has been the aim to try to respond to members' first contact within 24 hours.

I have written previously about the possible reasons for such a significant increase in demand for the Field Officer's services in just over a decade. My diagnosis remains much the same. It seems

to me that the detailed codification of teachers' work in the McCrone Agreement introduced unintended elements of inflexibility and potential professional conflicts; the job-sizing exercise continues to throw up frustrating anomalies; the national achievement and curriculum development agendas make ever more professional demands on staff; the proposed changes in pension arrangements understandably give cause for concern; and the continuing financial constraints on schools and Councils certainly don't relieve the pressure. But having said all that, in my experience, most school leaders relish the job, and many describe it as the most rewarding career they could have visualised. I am certainly of the view that Scotland, and particularly its young people, are very fortunate to have such a talented pool of school leaders. Keep up the good work and, once again, thanks for having me around for so long!

The new Field Officer



**NEIL SHAW
FIELD OFFICER**

I was absolutely delighted to be appointed as the new SLS Field Officer, as the replacement for Dr Alastair Noble. I have been told by many people, from all over the UK, the substantial challenge I will face in filling Alastair's shoes. Over the past eleven years Alastair has been an outstanding asset to SLS and its members and I am sure you will join with me in thanking him for the support he has offered to many and in wishing him

a long and happy second retirement, as a well-deserved Honorary member of SLS.

I would like to offer a personal thanks to Alastair for the advice and support he afforded me in the run up to taking over the FO rôle.

In taking over from Alastair I inherited about 20 "live" cases, across the full range of Field Officer involvement in the issues affecting school leaders – from relatively simple advice on the not-so-simple issue of job sizing to having to contact ASCL's team of solicitors for legal advice on contractual and other matters. It cannot be over-stressed the value SLS attaches to its relationship with ASCL and the ready access to first-class, specialist legal advice – it is most reassuring.

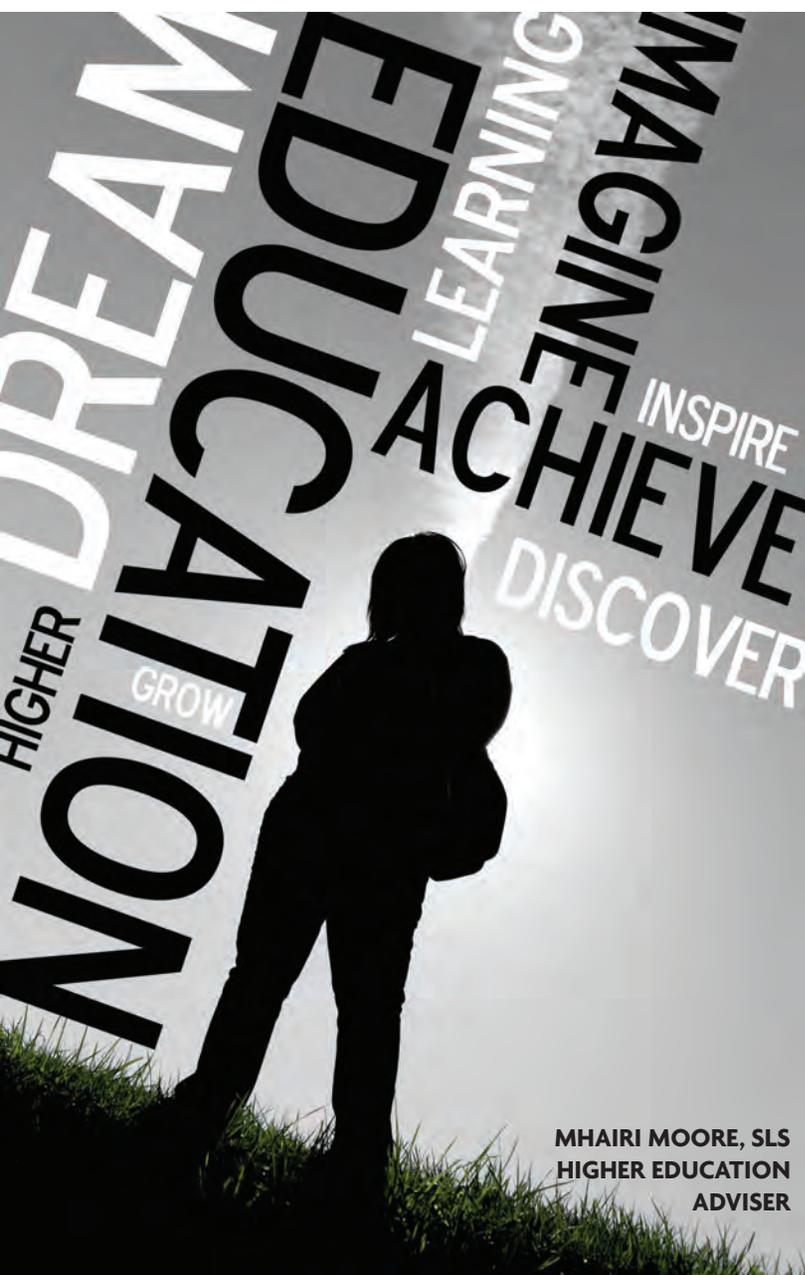
Thus far I have had a busy introduction to my new job, with an average of three new contacts arriving per week. It appears, even at this early stage of my new career, that staff, parents and local authorities are often resorting to quite formal measures to resolve what could have been described historically as relatively trivial matters. To each SLS member involved in such scenarios however these matters are always stressful and time consuming, no matter how ridiculous the complaints

may be.

Although the Field Officer's contract suggests a 24.5 hours per week commitment I have already discovered that, like the notional 35 hours per week for teachers, in most normal weeks time will be elastic in order to cope with the demands of the post. This is in no way a complaint but a note to members that I have no fixed working pattern or "days" of SLS work – I am contactable by phone or e-mail (details on the SLS website) and, as did Alastair, will respond, in normal circumstances, if not immediately then within 24 hours of a first contact.

As a follow up to my earlier observation about our link with ASCL and the support it offers SLS and its officers, they are providing me with around ten days training and support over the course of this Session. This is particularly useful in catching up with other Field Officers as it gives us the opportunity to compare and contrast the hot topics and share good practice. I stated earlier I am looking forward to the challenges which will be presented to me in my new career and hope that the service provided to members will continue to maintain the high standards set by my predecessor.

Higher Education



**MHAIRI MOORE, SLS
HIGHER EDUCATION
ADVISER**

School Leaders Scotland has been heavily involved in the field of Higher and Further Education this year. It has been represented at the Royal Society of Edinburgh where a round table discussion was held on the development of Higher Education and the articulation between schools and colleges and universities.

SLS was also invited to submit views on a research report written by the Centre for Research in Education Inclusion and Diversity and the University of Edinburgh, commissioned by the Universities Scotland, entitled 'What works in Widening Participation?' This has resulted in several wide ranging debates on the success of the numerous widening access projects

across Scotland. The annual Focus West meeting enabled SLS to be kept abreast of current issues and developments with the widening participation field. In addition to the many successful widening access projects offered to secondary pupils throughout Scotland, Glasgow Caledonian University's Caledonian Club has been working with Glasgow's primary children and parents in an attempt to raise awareness of Further and Higher Education opportunities amongst the city's youngest pupils. Such projects ensure that pupils of all ages are given appropriate guidance, support and encouragement. SLS has also supported sessions at Strathclyde University's Summer Academy as well as being involved in the training of Glasgow University's Top-Up Tutors. SLS has continued to offer CPD courses on entry to Higher Education. This is becoming an increasingly complex subject and school leaders are urged to encourage their young people to research their options carefully. The status of the two year Higher, Highers taken over S4, S5 and S6, as well as the complex recognition of Advanced Highers, have all been investigated on behalf of members. Higher Education Institutions were asked to complete a questionnaire, the responses from which indicated a possible increase in status of Advanced Highers over the coming years. The status of Advanced Highers

varies from institution to institution, and even within an institution. Universities have issued their statements on Curriculum for Excellence and school leaders are urged to pay close attention to these. While young people have the opportunity in some schools to sit Highers in each year of the Senior Phase, each institution has its own regulation about the number of Highers to be taken in one diet. Some courses expect applicants to attain all five Highers in one sitting but the definition of 'one sitting' may vary. SLS informs its members via the website and through CPD of changes to or points of note in Higher Education admissions. At school level SLS has offered support to senior management teams and pastoral care staff who are responsible for guiding and offering advice to young people applying for (or considering applying for) higher education courses. In addition to this, SLS has been in attendance at parents' evenings where there has been an opportunity to discuss entry qualifications, variations between institutions, UCAS Guides, funding, Clearing and Adjustment, and widening participation events. During the past year, part of the work has been to consider the development of Higher Education advice and to include this in the overall Strategic Plan. SLS will continue to provide information and support to colleagues which will in turn enhance the opportunities of the young people in our schools.

Education Scotland



BILL MAXWELL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
EDUCATION
SCOTLAND

As curricular change continues to bring the new Senior Phase to life, school leadership of the highest quality has never been more important. As we see time and time again, it is an essential driver in ensuring that learners receive the full benefits which Curriculum for Excellence offers. Over the past twelve months a great deal has been achieved. CfE has remained on-track, thanks to the commitment and efforts of teachers and their leaders across Scotland. As you would expect in such a major transformation as

introducing CfE, there are a range of practical issues in some schools that need to be resolved, but momentum is strong and these issues are being addressed with a 'solution-focused' mindset. The first cohort of 'Senior Phase' pupils are now experiencing a new, richer, more flexible programme of learning and, as Chair of the CfE Implementation Group, I know very well that practitioners have been doing a huge amount of work to ensure this is so. This has involved contributions to new developments and detailed re-organisation of course provision, whilst simultaneously gaining the commitment of parents, pupils and other stakeholders to the changes. In all this there has been increasing use of the extensive support materials and resources which, thanks to ADES and many education professionals, we've been able to pull together and put on the web. This 'virtual campus' resource bank, in which locally-developed materials are combined with nationally-produced resources, has become powerful, and I hope enduring, legacy from the last year. Local authorities and schools have been adding to the materials to enable sharing and cross-fertilisation as new units and courses at NQ1 to NQ3 and Higher are introduced. Leading schools through these changes has presented huge challenges to school leaders, particularly as change impacts on the 'high stakes' area of national qualifications and curricular structures. To achieve success, it has required clarity of vision and purpose and a relentless focus on engaging with staff, pupils and parents to develop new models that can take more young people to broader and higher achievement. This has created the momentum we needed to drive progressive change. It has been evident in

the many excellent examples we now see of schools really grasping how to develop a Broad General Education and prepare for the Senior Phase. It's been good to see some of these examples, sometimes highlighted through inspection, receiving wide attention and prompting debate and thinking elsewhere. As the implementation of CfE continues, we need Scotland's education leaders to be innovative and creative. Schools must look at new ways of doing things to fully exploit CfE's flexibility and meeting the needs of all they serve. More than ever, we need school leaders who are focused on the quality of learning and teaching, and ensuring that the experience of young people within and beyond their classrooms is really unleashing their potential. Education Scotland is committed to promoting innovation and spreading the results. We need to have an education system which is excellent at learning itself, as well as promoting learning in others. Far from resisting anything that doesn't fit a 'standard model', our inspectors and development staff alike are looking for creative, well considered innovation, combined with professional reflection and evaluation to generate learning about how practice might evolve further in the future. Our website reflects this approach very clearly. The ability to adapt and manage continuous change is now essential in education, and we need leadership and systems which will help ensure we keep evolving what we're providing. Worldwide, education systems are modernising to better prepare young people for life and work, and these young people are increasingly competing directly with ours. Scotland needs to be at the forefront of the wave of

change, setting the pace with other progressive education reformers. Whilst a static, inflexible curricular model might have been acceptable decades ago, now it simply won't do. So with the 'status quo' clearly not presenting a sustainable option, we should be proud that CfE – developed collaboratively by all of us in Scottish education – has the in built flexibility to ensure it is capable of addressing the challenges ahead of us. New challenges will certainly arise – Sir Ian Wood's commission on the development of Scotland's young workforce, for example, highlights issues about how well the current system serves some young people. But we can respond knowing that CfE embraces the key skills, competencies and capabilities for success in the world of work, including social skills, as well as academic and intellectual skills, as we all strive to deliver better on CfE's aims and objectives. Through CfE and the implementation of 'Teaching Scotland's Future', Scotland can develop world-leading improvement, in which a highly professional teaching, highly autonomous workforce – with excellent leadership – can develop their practice within broad national guidance, engage in collaborative professional learning and evaluation, and provide widespread cross-fertilisation and sharing of effective practice. That is the 'virtuous cycle of improvement' which Education Scotland aspires to create in partnership with the whole education profession.





JANET BROWN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
SCOTTISH
QUALIFICATIONS
AUTHORITY

Operational Delivery of CfE

The new school year is now well underway and 2013 - 2014 is a significant period in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence as schools, teachers and pupils implement the new Nationals at levels 1 to 5. The new qualifications are the culmination of many years of consultation, and commitment, partnership and hard work have helped us reach this point successfully. I believe this commitment is part of a wider desire to make the system work for Scotland, and I am optimistic that together we will deliver a success story for this generation of young people and those to come. To facilitate smooth delivery and ensure that schools and teachers are fully supported in implementing the new qualification, SQA has hosted a number of events for subject teachers and SQA Co-ordinators. This year 7,500 staff took part in subject events for the new Nationals, which were held across Scotland. Six hundred and fifty SQA Co-ordinators also attended the Co-ordinator Conferences – again hosted in venues across Scotland. In June 2013 a new partnership approach to quality assurance was introduced. These arrangements will ensure continued credibility of National Qualifications and

will support knowledge and understanding of the new qualifications within schools, as well as helping to increase the confidence of teachers in assessment decisions and understanding standards. There is now a new role for SQA appointees – the Nominee – and around 2,000 Nominees have been trained. The nominees will be sharing their knowledge and expertise with colleagues at a local level and some will be participating in verification activities. Verification started at the beginning of November and will involve further rounds of verification activities in February and May 2014. We will publish key messages after each verification round to help teachers. Verification is a significant aspect of SQA's quality assurance processes but it will also play an important role in identifying best practice. We will publish exemplification of standards material and this will ensure the dissemination of best practice within subject areas. We also offer a prior verification service for centre devised assessments and once these are approved we will publish these on our secure site. Some assessment materials have already been approved and uploaded to the secure site. The new Result Services (developed through wide ranging consultation and review) will also be implemented in this

academic year, with the aim of providing better support for learners and reducing the burden on teachers and schools. The Exceptional Circumstances Consideration service provides the opportunity to present alternative evidence of attainment where a learner has suffered as a result of exceptional circumstances (eg bereavement). The Post Results Service will offer a clerical check and/or a marking review of a candidate's exam paper. This re-establishes the original intention of the appeals process – to provide a safety net to those who suffered disadvantage through exceptional circumstances. Our new on-line customer portal – SQA Connect – went live on 1 October. The portal allows access to a range of SQA services that provide delivery and operational support for our qualifications, eg the Result Services and uplift dates for verification evidence. Centres must be registered to access SQA Connect. Of course, as we get to grips with the first year of implementation of the new Nationals, we are looking ahead to, and preparing for, the introduction of the new Highers in the 2014/15 academic year. With this in mind, we are running over 140 subject events to support the introduction of the new Highers. Starting in November and finishing in March, a total of 11,500 places have been allocated to cover demand. In addition to these

events, our CfE Liaison Team continues to work with every school and college throughout Scotland to provide advice and guidance on implementation. The team also gathers feedback and seeks to resolve issues in consultation with other SQA colleagues. As we approach the 2014 marking season our aim is to have 50% of external assessments e-marked. This will include the majority of external assessments for the new National 5 qualifications. E-marking assists markers, builds confidence in assessment decisions and brings about logistical efficiencies. The high level of interest and participation in the development and implementation of CfE is a testament to the leadership that has been shown at local and national level. I am confident that this will continue and this reinforces my positive view of implementation. Undoubtedly there are challenges that come with the introduction of a new curriculum and qualifications. However, we have a strong history of the education community working together and a strong foundation on which to build, and I believe we can achieve this particular transformation in a way that minimises any disruption to learners and which optimises the benefits to all.

General Teaching Council for Scotland

The last twelve months have certainly been a busy time at GTC Scotland. Two significant areas of our work have been the continued planning for the national implementation of Professional Update and the delivery of the revised suite of Professional Standards – two developments which aim to support the professional learning of Scottish teachers at all stages of their careers. What progress have we made so far with Professional Update?

It has been well documented that we are aiming to develop a system of Professional Update to support the needs of the profession. Our Professional Update Working Group, with representation from key stakeholders in Scottish education, continues to meet regularly to review progress and to plan the next stages of development. The direction of Professional Update is clear: it is based on effective, consistent Professional Review and Development and high-quality professional learning focused on outcomes for a teacher's own development as well as aiming to improve outcomes for children and young people. Since August 2012 we have been piloting Professional Update with three local authorities: East Renfrewshire, North Lanarkshire and Perth & Kinross, as well as with Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools in the independent sector. Feedback from teachers participating in the pilot has been positive, and we have used this feedback to help prepare for the next stages of the pilot as well as for the national roll out of

Professional Update which will begin in August 2014. This Session we have extended the pilot significantly and we are now working with almost half of the local authorities in Scotland, six independent schools as well as colleagues in the University sector and Education Scotland.

So what have teachers who have been engaging in the pilot been doing? The Professional Update process requires the following of teachers:

- An annual update of contact details to GTC Scotland
- Engagement in professional learning
- Self-evaluation against the appropriate GTC Scotland Professional Standard
- Discussion of this engagement and the impact of this, as part of the PRD process
- Maintaining a professional learning record and portfolio of evidence
- 5 yearly confirmation of this engagement to GTC Scotland

As well as developing this process, it has been really important to ensure that we have systems and resources in place to support teachers as they engage in Professional Update.

To update contact details, teachers can visit the GTC Scotland website and create a MyGTCS account, enabling them to refresh their details easily. Guidance documentation on Professional Update, to be published in the coming months, will include detailed advice on professional learning opportunities that teachers might engage in as well as guidance on

maintaining a portfolio of evidence. In addition, we have recently revised the Professional Standards to ensure that these meet the needs of teachers at all stages of their careers. The Standards for Registration, which include the Standards for Provisional and Full Registration, are the mandatory standards, with the Standard for Full Registration required to be maintained by all teachers throughout their careers. This Standard is the benchmark for teacher competence in Scotland. We have developed a standard for Career-Long Professional Learning for teachers who choose to reflect against this Standard. This is an aspirational Standard which helps support teachers engaging in self-evaluation and in planning their professional learning. The Standards for Leadership and Management support the development of those in or aspiring to leadership roles in our schools and includes a Standard for Middle Leadership, which should be of particular help to aspiring Principal Teachers as well as those already in post. To support teachers in using these Standards we have developed a range of support materials which can be accessed on the GTC Scotland website at www.gtcs.org.uk/standards. We have also developed an online profile for teachers to record their professional learning, linked to their MyGTCS account, and teachers in Perth & Kinross and the Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools have been piloting this for us. Again, their feedback has been really positive, and useful in helping us to develop the system further as we work

with an increasing amount of teachers across Scotland. It remains important for GTC Scotland to continue to communicate with all teachers to ensure that they are aware of this forthcoming change in their engagement with their professional body. The Education Team at GTC Scotland spends a significant time out in schools and local authorities presenting this information – so keep an eye out for us in a school or local authority near you! Please also keep reading Teaching Scotland magazine and our e-newsletters for further information and don't forget to visit www.gtcs.org.uk to find out more about the Standards and Professional Update.



GILLIAN HAMILTON,
HEAD OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES,
GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR
SCOTLAND

National Implementation Board

The Scottish Government established the NIB in November 2012 to take forward work on implementing the proposals outlined in the paper from the National Partnership Group and the report produced by Graham Donaldson – Teaching Scotland's Future. The so called Donaldson Report while highlighting the commitment and significant strengths of Scotland's teaching force also recognises the rapidly changing and variable needs of learners. It is clear in identifying the crucial role to be played by teachers in meeting learners' needs. Teaching Scotland's Future said that there was clear evidence that "the foundations of successful education lie in the quality of teachers and their leadership. High quality people achieve high quality outcomes for young people." The significance of such a statement has profound implications for school leaders on a number of levels. It is hence crucial that we have a seat on NIB in that it is this group who will chart the future course of teachers' professional learning in Scotland. In its key role of overseeing the NPG proposals on teacher education NIB will over the next three years:

- Take forward those actions remitted to it in the NPG report
- Consider other priority issues and actions on teacher education

which contribute to and build upon the approach in Teaching Scotland's Future

- Hold to account partners who have been remitted to take forward actions
- Ensure pace and challenge are brought to the process of implementation

NIB has an Independent Chair, Professor Petra Wend, Principal and Vice Chancellor of Queen Margaret University. Other partners represented on the Board are drawn from the Scottish Government, STEC, ADES, Education Scotland, GTCS, COSLA and teachers' professional associations. Through an agreement with our AHDS colleagues SLS represents interests of Head Teachers on the Board. As is reflected by NIB membership the Board seeks to co-ordinate and take forward the activities of all parties who have a locus in teachers' professional learning. Such is the complexity of co-ordinating activities within a set time scale that an early priority for the Board was the creation of a clear work plan to focus activity, to ensure monitoring of progress at Board meetings which take place approximately every six weeks and to identify clear lines of accountability. The work plan which has 22 clearly defined projects allocates responsibilities to key parties, clearly identifies key tasks with associated completion

dates and details progress towards longer term targets. Over the course of the past year monitoring of progress in this manner has ensured that the vast majority of projects have maintained "green" status with minimal time slippage taking projects to "amber." Current active NIB projects include:

- Ensuring that all local authorities and universities enter into partnership arrangements for the provision of initial teacher education. These partnerships will involve school staff in becoming more involved in the assessment of students while on placement and working with university staff as new ITE programmes are introduced.
- Establishing pilot programmes to test a new approach to professional learning. The pilots will look at mentoring and masters level learning with a focus on professional enquiry and seek to measure the impact on teachers and on learners.
- A stakeholder group developing a framework for the accreditation of prior learning at masters level. The Scottish Government will also support several projects that will aim to have local authority learning programmes accredited by the universities.

- The establishment of the Scottish College for Educational Leadership the main aim of which is to "enable" those individuals interested in developing their leadership skills to access appropriate learning opportunities. The college will also "ensure" experienced school leaders have opportunities to refresh and develop their skills.
- A related project is the GTCS piloting of Professional Update in three local authorities in advance of its roll out across the country in August 2014.
- Education Scotland through the creation of the National PRD Steering Group will publish revised guidance to identify and add case study/exemplification of good practice in relation to PRD.

As you might have gathered the implications of the work of NIB are potentially very significant for the strategic and operational leadership of schools. SLS is engaged at the highest level and the Executive is kept fully briefed on developments. Should you as an individual, or as part of a Local Association, wish further detail do not hesitate to contact me.

JAMES THEWLISS, HEAD TEACHER, HARRIS ACADEMY (PAST PRESIDENT: 2012-2013)

Whole school health and safety

For decades, the Scottish Schools Education Research Centre (SSERC) has been the source of advice on safe, innovative practical work in science and technology classes. SSERC was one of the first local authority shared services, removing the need and associated expense of each local authority appointing staff to interpret legislation, issue guidance and run training on health and safety within science and technology. Risk aware rather than risk averse, the Centre's officers have always seen the benefit of the "hands on" approach in science and technical classes. "We tend to ask ourselves how an activity can be carried out safely," says SSERC CEO Fred Young, "rather than look at reasons for not doing it." SSERC physicist Gregor Steele agrees. "We're not about banning things on safety grounds. There's a myth that children aren't allowed to do the sorts of activities that were the norm twenty years ago. In truth, very little is banned that wasn't banned then, and if it is banned now, it is banned for a very good reason."

This approach means that SSERC is well placed to look at whole school health and safety. Working with the Health and Safety Executive on an overall strategy and with Aberdeenshire Council on documentation, the organisation is creating a series of generic risk assessments and protocols relating to issues such as manual handling, school visits, working in a school kitchen and even hiring a bouncy castle. "As with any generic risk assessment," says Fred Young, "we'd expect the school to

look at it and decide how suitable it is for their own particular circumstances. Our documents are pretty comprehensive. Most schools will be removing bits that don't apply to their own situations rather than adding to them." Central to the SSERC approach to health and safety is the belief that paperwork on its own never stopped anyone from getting hurt or ill. Unnecessarily bureaucratic management of health and safety and an overly zealous approach to trivial hazards are seen as the twin enemies of sensible risk management. Fred Young has experienced this in a science teaching context. "Homing in on the trivial alienates employees. They see health and safety as a needless imposition and stop taking it seriously. Worse than that, if you get bogged down in trivia, you can miss the real issues." Gregor Steele has been working on some case studies to complement the risk assessments. "When health and safety case studies are mentioned," he says, "you tend to think of tales of litigation and prosecution. The HSE were keen for us to avoid this. Rather, they encouraged SSERC to highlight real-life situations where sensible risk management and dialogue between teachers and health and safety specialists enabled innovative learning to take place."

With the advent of Curriculum for Excellence, the SSERC team see health and safety as an integral part of children's education. Fred Young is keen to point out that the world outside school is not completely risk free, and for innovative learning to take place, there will

always be an element of risk associated with an effective education. "The trick is to control these risks, make them tolerable." Gregor Steele, who, like Fred Young, is a former science teacher, adds, "Children who have never experienced a degree of risk can be a danger to themselves and others. They grow up with no real concept of how to keep themselves safe." Good teachers have always known this, he claims. "In science, you show the pupils something like an acid bottle with a hazard label on it and ask them what they think they should do to use it safely. They are informally involved in risk assessment from an early age." Whole school health and safety is about more than keeping children safe.

Teachers, technicians, cleaners, administration, kitchen and janitorial staff are all part of the picture. The key message from SSERC is one of establishing a culture of safe working where risk management is effective but not overly intrusive. Fred Young is a firm advocate of the HSE's "Five Steps" approach but points out that unless the results of a risk assessment are conveyed to the people taking part in an activity or carrying out a process, then risk assessing has been a waste of time. Ultimately, though, he is upbeat. "If we get this right, and we involve the pupils too, we are giving our children an effective, exciting education and at the same time preparing them well for the world beyond school."



SSERC is a Local Authority shared-service providing support across all thirty-two Scottish Education Authorities. Our services are available to elected members and officers of Local Authorities, teachers, student teachers and technicians. In addition, the majority of FE colleges and independent schools within Scotland are members of our organisation.

We offer a broad portfolio of services, principally in support of the science and technology areas of the curriculum, including:

- Health and Safety advice for schools and Local Authorities,
- Professional development programmes for managers, teachers and technicians,
- Guidance on experiments and practical work
- Recommendations on equipment & design of specialist accommodation,
- Consultancy and technical information,
- Apparatus testing for safety, performance & conformance with standards,
- Radiation protection advisory services,
- Publications including quarterly Bulletins (primary and secondary), specialist health and safety guidance, and web-based materials (www.sserc.org.uk)

With a little help from my friends: a university for children



Learning for yourself, out of school hours, and with a little help from your friends, was an idea too big to go away. The Children's University (CU), originally established by Professor Sir Tim Brighouse, then Education Director in Birmingham, and Sir David Winkley, a leading Birmingham headteacher, was revitalised as a charity six years ago with a handful of centres and a management team of two, based in Manchester. The major credit for the continuing growth of the CU nationally, and now internationally, is owed to Ger Graus, its creative and apparently tireless Chief Executive, only rarely to be found in his office as his diary takes him on a daily basis to CU centres around the country as well as to other countries interested in finding out more about the Children's University – Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Estonia, Italy, Portugal, Ireland, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Pakistan, China, USA. By April 2013 in the UK there were 115 local CUs, accounting for 3,500 schools and academies and over 135,000 children, with a total of just over 2.5 million hours of attendance. While centres have grown exponentially, the Manchester management team has remained intentionally small with six staff members, demonstrating

that the vitality of the CU lies 'out there' in local schools, universities and communities and the many agencies and 'learning destinations' that become partners.

An important principle of the Children's University is that participation is voluntary. It is intentionally something other than school – with a different ethos, different activities and often a different location, staff and peer group. The ultimate testament to the effectiveness of the Children's University is that young people give up their time to attend and that they begin to realise that learning can be "a satellite navigation system to better places in life". Children are also increasingly playing a much more proactive role in generating ideas for future activities and exercising their agency and leadership.

Each local Children's University has a link with a Higher Education Institution and is encouraged to appoint its own Chancellor. Local CU Chancellors include the authors Louis de Bernières and Gervase Phinn, BBC's Anita Bhalla, Major General Christopher Callow and Olympic medallist Nick Gillingham. The national CU Chancellor is the children's author Michael Morpurgo.

Opportunities to learn out of the classroom are a distinguishing aspect of the Children's University. The more the potential to learn in sites outside

school is opened up, the more imaginative and unexpected the result. One of the latest additions to the repertoire of learning destinations is a cemetery. What questions might be provoked by structured and focused explorations in a cemetery? Family histories? Child mortality? The mathematics of age? The 2,750 CU public learning destinations so far include BBC, Houses of Parliament, Shakespeare 4 Kidz, Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, Engineering for Life, Doncaster Minster, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence ...

Many of the learning destinations and out-of-hours activities are suggested by children themselves. CU lectures have proved hugely popular. In Plymouth the first lecture attracted 30 young people. Now over 150 young people regularly attend, as the success of previous events spreads both by advertising and by word of mouth. Lectures in different parts of the country have included:

- *How insects see the world* – Professor Peter Smithers
- *Polar Exploration* – Anthony Jinman
- *Marine Photography* – National Marine Laboratory
- *Pyromania* – Professor Roy Lowry
- *The Truth behind Finding Nemo* – The National Marine Aquarium
- *Geology* – Professor Iain Stewart (presenter of BBC's *Journeys from the Centre of the Earth*)

Local libraries also sign up

and display the learning destinations logo. CU passport holders can claim up to six hours of credit for reading six books, plus a further four hours for additional challenging activities related to literature. Collaboration with UTV media, based in Wigan, is an e-learning programme which enables children to create their own radio promotions, with the help of the UTV creative team, writing and recording a radio or video 'commercial'.

The creation of passports which give entry to learning destinations and merit a stamp for every validated learning hour has proved a major success. By March 2013 250,000 passports had been issued. The prototype with squared corners was rejected by children who pointed out that real passports have rounded edges. Passports, now with rounded edges and embossed with gold, are so valued that the loss rate of around 2 per cent compares with an adult rate of nearly 20 per cent. Graduations take place in universities, often in surroundings described by children as "awesome" and by parents as "breathtaking". They are very often presided over by the Vice Chancellor, handing out certificates to children be-gowned and wearing tasselled mortar boards. Ten headlines in the 2010 evaluation were:

1. **Being in the CU significantly improves school attendance.**

A recurring theme in the evaluation of the CU is children's increased attendance because, as

they told researchers, they don't want to miss CU activities, however engaged, or disengaged, they may be during timetabled lessons in school.

2. Achievement is significantly better at ages 7 to 14 for children who participate in the Children's University compared with non-attenders.

In the second reading of the Education Bill in England, Michael Gove pointed to the progressively widening gap between those on free school meals and those not. A gap in reading scores of 16 points at age 7 grew to 21 points by age 11 and 28 points by age 16. That gap narrows for the most disadvantaged children who participate in CU activities.

3. The further children engage with Children's University, the better their attendance and achievement.

As the evidence shows, the greater and more sustained the opportunities for learning activities beyond the classroom, the higher the achievement. Engagement with CU has been shown to set in train a virtuous circle of engagement-satisfaction-raised-motivation-higher-aspiration-higher-achievement.

4. Children's University provides an environment for self-driven, confident and collegial learning.

While school is, for many children, a place in which success comes easily, for others, school is an experience of struggle and failure, with very few incentives and rewards for

the return on investment. For such children the CU environment has proved to offer a lifeline, restoring self-esteem and satisfaction in learning.

5. Children's University provides a safe haven and models positive relationships.

A sense of safety and friendship offered by CU is valued particularly by vulnerable children – a safe place to talk with teachers about bullying and racism, typically concealed and suffered in silence. Relationships forged within CU among pupils, and between pupils and teachers, carries over into the main stream of school – a raised awareness and readiness to deal with incidences of bullying or intimidation.

6. Pupils and teachers testify to life changing experiences.

Opportunities to complement and enrich classroom learning can be life changing. Disillusion can become ambition and failure turned to success. Often overlooked is the life changing experience for teachers: the escape from the classroom allowing them to engage with children in a different environment; to listen free from pressures of time and impatient targets; gaining a new understanding of children's lives and learning in differing contexts.

7. 'Opportunity costs' are high for children in disadvantaged areas who do not attend Children's University.

Young people who do not attend CU are often by default to be found hanging around shops and street corners, vulnerable to trouble makers, to drugs and other inducements.

They are also likely to fall foul of the law. Those who do attend prove to be much less prone to trouble and police 'harassment'.

8. Certificates, credits, Passports To Learning and graduations are valued incentives and rewards.

Access to learning destinations validated by CU as learning sites have proved to be highly motivational, the stamp on children's learning passport providing a cumulative record of their achievements, leading to the excitement of graduations and impetus to engage further.

9. University settings help to inspire and raise aspirations for children, and their parents.

Through CU graduations, which a majority of parents attend, through visits to Universities and through a keen interest taken by Vice-Chancellors, children and their parents are offered a vision of what might be, raising aspirations and making a university education less beyond their reach.

10. Children's University has helped to make

learning a reality beyond academic studies.

The range of activities encompassed within the CU helps to cultivate many of the skills and dispositions that are at a premium with employers. Initiative, self-direction, reliability, ability to work in a team, willingness to learn, emotional intelligence, while less likely to be the product of direct teaching, have been shown to be the product of engagement in CU activities.

Adapted from: Education and schooling: myth, heresy and misconception, by Professor John MacBeath (Routledge 2013)

(For more information about the Children's University please visit www.childrensuniversity.co.uk)

JOHN MACBEATH IS PROFESSOR EMERITUS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE AND GER GRAUS IS THE GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY (CU) TRUST.



The Changing Face of Young Enterprise Scotland 40 Years Young

As one of Scotland's leading providers of Enterprise Education we offer innovative solutions for the education market place. Whilst we celebrate our 40th Anniversary YES has worked hard to ensure that the wide range of training and development opportunities remain fit for purpose.

The Company Programme is still the ultimate business experience. S5/S6 students are mentored by a YES Business Adviser and set up and run their own real business. The materials have been updated and are available online, providing an innovative suite of business tools and guidance. Students can, for the first time, use 'CashFlows' to take on-line payments from customers and through 'Enterprise without Borders' can form trading links with other YE companies throughout Europe. All students have access to the University of Strathclyde exam and on-going training and support.

YES believes that the delivery of Enterprise Education has three very strong themes of Entrepreneurship, Employability and Enterprise. All programmes are practical and are delivered with the 'Learning by Doing' ethos. A significant development over the last couple of years has seen YES introducing a range of programmes designed to reflect the Four Capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, with opportunities to work towards relevant SQA qualification at a variety of levels. In providing these new opportunities for

more meaningful training and development, we have moved from the traditional day programmes to programmes delivered in a double period for between 12 and 16 weeks. These changes sit comfortably within wider achievement in schools, offer recognition for students who take part and, of course, positively contribute to senior phase benchmarking.

We have developed a structured offering to schools which includes a formal partnership agreement with each school, weekly registers outlining attendance and delivery and vital information on the young person's intended destination. This valuable information is shared weekly with all partners including school link, Guidance teachers, vocational and senior phase contacts and as appropriate the SDS link within the school. A referral system has also been put in place to ensure that all young people we work with are offered the best possible service.

Evaluations have been extremely positive from both young people and staff and repeat business for these programmes has increased by 75% indicating that the training was not only meaningful but of a high quality. We are also able to deliver the majority of these programmes at a reduced price due to the generous support of our Corporate Partners and Trusts and Foundations. As indicated earlier we would not be the entrepreneurial YES if we did not constantly respond to opportunities.

YES has traditionally worked within the FE Colleges on a number of programmes. The '**Bridge 2 Business**' is an innovative programme aimed at the FE market place to enhance their entrepreneurial skills and ambitions. The programme ensures that every college student is given the opportunity to be inspired by business, to be connected to business and to be supported into business should they wish so.

This programme was developed following the Carnegie UK Trust report 'Enterprising Minds' – a study researching the attitudes of 16-21 year old further education students to entrepreneurship, flexible employment and the future economy. One of the main recommendations was: *"Colleges and supporting organisations should create more opportunities for students to develop practical enterprise skills that build on their retail experience and extracurricular interests. This may include student-led projects, competitions, and opportunities to design retail ideas with industry experts"*.

With the support of the Scottish Government this programme is being

launched in the City of Glasgow College with a planned roll out to all of Scotland's Colleges over the next 3 years.

The second major initiative relates to YES taking responsibility for operating the Vocational Training Facility for East Renfrewshire Council. The establishment of the **YES Academy** will enable YES to deliver a range of vocational qualifications including hard and soft landscaping, administration and the Certificate for Work Readiness.

Having signed an initial 4 year lease YES will develop partnerships with local business, the first of which is Mansell Homes who are commencing a major development within the area and will provide both financial and training support for 3 modern apprentices. YES will deliver a range of biology and horticulture programmes for school pupils and are creating a number of 'green' qualifications.

The above two initiatives enable YES to provide elongated support for young people to enable them to obtain sustainable positive outcomes in the work place.

Stuart Miller,
Chief Executive,
Young Enterprise Scotland



The Referendum – Electoral Commission Advice



**JOHN MCCORMICK,
ELECTORAL
COMMISSIONER FOR
SCOTLAND**

On 27 June 2013 the Scottish Parliament passed the Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Act which will enable 16 and 17 year olds to vote at the referendum in 2014.

Like every voter, young people will get their information about the referendum from a number of sources and will hear competing views from campaigners, media, family and friends. This public debate is a natural part of a healthy democracy. But if we want our young people to be equipped to engage in this debate then there are two aspects to the referendum – and how young people receive

information about it – where it will be important for there to be a consistent approach that ensures they receive information in a clear, neutral and accessible way. This includes ensuring that young people know how to register and how to vote and have the political literacy skills needed to reach their own view. The Electoral Commission will be providing young people with the information they need to be able to register and to vote at the referendum. However, a number of different organisations will also have important roles to play so we have been working with Education Scotland, School Leaders Scotland and ADES – who have the expertise both in supporting the development of young people's political literacy skills and in providing guidance to teachers – to ensure there are helpful resources and guidance available for anyone who wants to engage in this important work with young people.

Ensuring young people are registered and know how to cast their vote

Information on registration and voting will be most effective if young people receive it at a time when they are able to act on it. For the referendum this will mean reaching young people with information on registration from October 2013 when local Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) will send registration forms to all households to confirm the details of all people

who will be aged 16 or over by the referendum poll date of 18 September 2014. From October the Electoral Commission will be supporting EROs' local activity by running radio and online advertising targeted directly at young people to provide clear and accurate information on how to register and vote at the referendum. We will also be making resources available to support anyone else who wants to get involved in providing this information to young people. The resources will be available from 1 October at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk and will include downloadable posters and registration forms for young people along with clear fact sheets on how to register and vote at the referendum. Education Scotland will also be running communication activity to raise awareness in schools of how young people can register to vote. The local Counting Officer (usually the Chief Executive at the council) and the ERO will be running information campaigns to provide locally tailored information on how to register and vote at the referendum and schools will find it useful to make contact with them ahead of any planned referendum activity.

Ensuring young people understand the issues and are able to make an informed choice

The independence referendum provides a live opportunity to promote young people's political literacy. Education Scotland

has published CFE Briefing 14 which explores the place of political literacy within the Curriculum for Excellence. The Education Scotland webpages are also being developed to provide access to teaching resources, guidance, case studies and links to information on the referendum. The CFE briefing and political literacy resources are available from www.educationscotland.gov.uk.

Teaching about the referendum can also, of course, expose teachers to the risk of challenge if any information or activities are perceived to be weighted towards one side of the debate over the other. To minimise these risks it will be important for teachers and head teachers to have access to clear and consistent guidance on ensuring a balanced approach. Education Scotland, ADES and School Leaders Scotland will be taking a collaborative approach to providing advice and guidance to practitioners, head teachers and education authorities. Councils will also issue their own code of conduct to staff ahead of the referendum to ensure that the council acts at all times in a politically neutral way. All voters should have an equal opportunity to participate in the referendum so we hope you will make use of the guidance and resources available over the coming year to work with us to ensure that our young people can be informed and confident voters.

Pensions Update

Last year I penned for this publication a less than cheery update of the pensions negotiations. I stated that there was no particularly good news at that time and sad to say that remains the position. Negotiations, such as they were, have been stymied to a great extent by the Treasury at Westminster, which appears totally committed to the creation of a UK-wide Teachers' Pension Scheme, with little room for local (ie Scottish) negotiation. Throughout the process I have felt a little sorry for Scottish

Government civil servants as they have appeared to negotiate in good faith only to have their position blocked by their UK counterparts. The Pensions Act is now enshrined in legislation and is deemed to have created a scheme which is sustainable financially for the next quarter of a century (so were the 2007 changes). There is a presumption contained within the Act that successive governments will stand by its proposals – but that is only a presumption; there is a “get-out” clause – time will tell! A significant amount of time in this year's negotiations was focussed on three key areas – the “tiering” of

contributions, rates of contribution and a “Scottish” variant to the UK wide scheme. SLS has consistently opposed the tiering proposals. In a CARE scheme (Career Average Revalued Earnings) there is no actuarial basis for contribution rates to increase as a teacher progresses up the pay scale. This of course disproportionately disadvantages senior staff in schools. We will continue to argue against this feature. With regard to contribution rates the notion that they would be 40%, 40% and 20% over three years has flown out of the window at the Treasury's insistence. One potentially positive note is that the third year's rise may not be as high as was anticipated. It has been suggested that income from the first two years' increases have slightly surpassed expectations – we will see! There has been protracted discussion surrounding a “softer landing” for Scottish teachers than in the UK scheme for teachers wishing to retire before 68. The current proposals suggest a 3% actuarial reduction for each year back to 65, before reverting to the

normal 5% per annum. A proposal, from the larger Scottish unions, would have reduced the 3% to 1% per annum for those three years. On the face of it this seems like a good idea. However it has to be accomplished within a cost envelope. The upshot of this is that everyone would be slightly worse off in terms of their final pension. SLS did not agree with this proposal and it is unlikely to happen. Details of the post 2015 scheme have not yet been discussed far less decided and I will continue to represent SLS members on the negotiation group. A follow on from the negotiation group is the creation of a Teachers Workforce Planning group and I will also represent SLS on that body – I get all the good jobs. If any SLS member wishes to speak to me about the pensions issue then I will be available throughout Conference and at the contact details on the website. As always I am indebted to David Binnie (ASCL Pensions Specialist) for keeping me up to date with developments south of the border.

**NEIL SHAW,
FIELD OFFICER**



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Established in 1840, McClures is an old firm with a modern approach to solving clients' problems. We are one of the few nationwide legal firms, authorised and regulated in Scotland as well as England and Wales. With Offices throughout the UK, we offer a modern client-friendly approach to the provision of specialist legal services. McClures are dedicated to providing top quality, client-focused legal services and are committed to maintaining the highest standards in the advice and services which we provide. We know that when you instruct a solicitor you are making a very important decision. McClures commitment is to offer clients professional and impartial advice, tailored to clients' particular needs and circumstances.

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In Scotland we do everything that solicitors do but throughout the UK we specialise in Wills, Powers of Attorney, Inheritance Tax Planning and Lifetime Trusts. We developed the Lifetime Trust into a product known as the Family Protection Trust. To date we have established about 12,000 such Trusts over the last ten years and at present arrange around 300 per month. Many other businesses such as Building Societies, Independent Financial Advisers and the Civil Service use us.

Our Products

1. Wills

If you don't have a Will, the Law decides what happens to your possessions when you die. Many assume that everything will go to their next of kin – THAT IS NOT CORRECT! If you have no Will, or an out of date Will, it could cost your family and loved ones dearly. No Will means additional expense, hassle and delay for your loved ones and the possibility they could lose out.

2. Power of Attorney

This allows you, not the courts, to choose someone to deal with your day-to-day affairs should ill-health or age mean you are unable to deal with this yourself.

3. Family Protection Trust

a. Executry costs can be avoided Winding up an estate is often a lengthy and costly process. Any assets held within the Trust do not require to go through the normal executry procedure in the courts avoiding these often complicated and costly procedures.

b. Couples – ensure your family's inheritance is protected

When one dies, the survivor would normally inherit the whole estate. However, if the survivor later re-marries without making proper provision, there is a real risk that the whole estate will pass to the new partner and their family. The original family may therefore be effectively disinherited.

c. Beneficiaries inherit when it suits them Often it is not

in your loved ones' interest to receive their Inheritance at the time of death. For example: they may be on means tested benefits or have Inheritance Tax issues themselves. In either case it might be advantageous to hold their benefits in the Trust.

d. Avoiding challenges to your Will

If a dependent relative does not consider that they have been adequately provided for in the Will, they may be able to make a claim. A Family Protection Trust could avoid that.

e. Incapacity Worries If a loved one has not had the opportunity to put in place a Power of Attorney and they subsequently lose capacity due to ill-health or age this could result in substantial problems for the family. With a Family Protection Trust, the assets in the Trust will be looked after "as normal" by remaining Trustees.

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Niall Fraser, Operations Director, WW&J McClure



Partnership with Lighthouse Financial Advice Limited

Inheritance Tax - Could you end up leaving a huge tax liability?

In order to protect family and loved ones, it is essential to have provisions in place after death.

The easiest way to prevent unnecessary tax payments such as Inheritance Tax is to organise your tax affairs by obtaining professional advice and having a valid will in place to ensure that your legacy does not involve just leaving a large Inheritance Tax bill for your loved ones.

Effective Inheritance Tax planning could save your beneficiaries thousands of pounds, maybe even hundreds of thousands depending on the size of your estate.

At its simplest Inheritance Tax is the tax payable on your estate when you die if the value of your estate exceeds a certain amount. It is also sometimes payable on assets you may have given away during your lifetime, including property, possessions, money and investments. Inheritance Tax is currently paid on amounts above £325,000 (£650,000 for married couples and registered civil partnerships) for the current 2013/14 tax year, at a rate of 40%. If the value of your estate, including your home and certain gifts made in the previous seven years, exceeds the Inheritance Tax threshold, then tax will be due on the balance.

Without proper planning,

many people could end up leaving a substantial tax liability on their death, considerably reducing the value of the estate passing to their chosen beneficiaries.

Your estate includes everything owned in your name, the share of anything owned jointly, gifts from which you keep back some benefit (such as a home given to a son or daughter but in which you still live) and assets held in some trusts from which you receive an income.

Against this total value is set everything that you owed, such as any outstanding mortgages or loans, unpaid bills and costs incurred during your lifetime for which bills have not been received, as well as funeral expenses.

Any amount of money given away outright to an individual is not counted for tax if the person making the gift survives for seven years. These gifts are called 'potentially exempt transfers' and are useful for tax planning.

Money put into a 'bare' trust (a trust where the beneficiary is entitled to the trust fund at age 18) counts as a potentially exempt transfer, so it is possible to put money into a trust to prevent grandchildren, for example, from having access to it until they are 18.

However, gifts to most other types of trust will be treated as chargeable lifetime transfers.

Chargeable lifetime transfers up to the

threshold are not subject to tax but amounts over this are taxed at 20%, with a further 20% payable if the person making the gift dies within seven years. Some cash gifts are exempt from tax regardless of the seven-year rule. Regular gifts from after-tax income, such as a monthly payment to a family member, are also exempt as long as you still have sufficient income to maintain your standard of living.

Any gifts between husbands and wives, or registered civil partners, are exempt from Inheritance Tax whether they were made while both partners were still alive or left to the survivor on the death of the first. Tax will be due eventually when the surviving spouse or civil partner dies if the value of their estate is more than the combined tax threshold, currently £650,000. If gifts are made that affect the liability to Inheritance Tax and the giver dies less than seven years later, a special relief known as 'taper relief' may be available; the relief reduces the amount of tax payable on a gift.

In most cases, Inheritance Tax must be paid within six months from the end of the month in which the death occurs. If not, interest is charged on the unpaid amount.

Inheritance Tax planning can be a complicated area with a variety of solutions available. Lighthouse Financial Advice can

help you explore these solutions in order to provide an appropriate plan to mitigate such a tax liability.

To ensure that your family benefits rather than the government, it pays to plan ahead.

Should you wish further information in respect of this topic or any other areas of financial planning such as Retirement, Investment or Protection please feel free to contact Bob Coburn on 07968 214 754, email bob.coburn@lighthousefa.co.uk or call the Lighthouse appointments team on 08000 85 85 90.

Please also visit the Lighthouse Financial Advice stand during conference where we will be happy to assist with your queries.

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Bob Coburn DipFA
MIFS, Financial Planning
Consultant, Lighthouse
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School Leaders Scotland National Education Conference

Thursday, 14 November - Saturday 16 November 2013

Working Together for Scotland's Young People

THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER

- 10:00 **Registration**
- 10:45 **Welcome & Opening of Conference**
- 11:00 **Doug Wilson**
*UK Director, General Services & Health & Safety
Scottish Power*
- 11:45 **Susan Walsh**
Principal, Glasgow Clyde College
- 12:30 **Lunch**
- 13:30 **Workshop 1: SSERC**
(Scottish Schools Education Research Centre)
Fred Young, Chief Executive
- Workshop 2: Social Media Safety**
Detective Sergeant Kevin McDade
*e-Crime, Specialist Crime Divn, Organised
Crime & Counter Terrorism, Police Scotland*
- Workshop 3: SCHOLAR**
Supporting the Senior Phase
Professor Phillip John
*Senior Dean, Heriot Watt University
Executive Chair SCHOLAR*
- 14:30 **Workshops (Repeated)**
- 15:30 **Tea & Exhibitors**
- 16:00 **Presidential Address**
Ronnie Summers
Head Teacher, Musselburgh Grammar School
- 16:30 **Professor Petra Wend**
*Principal & Vice Chancellor
Queen Margaret University
Including Scottish College for Educational Leadership
Isabelle Boyd, John Daffurn*
- 17:30 **David Binnie**
ASCL Pension Specialist
- 18:00 **Free Time**
- 19:00 **Pre-Dinner Drinks Reception**
Sponsored by Hodder Gibson
- 19:30 **Pre Dinner Entertainment**
The Inveroran Folk Group
Boclair Academy
- 19:30 **Dinner**

FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER

- 09:15 **Annual General Meeting**
- 10:15 **Ger Graus**
Chief Executive, Children's University
- John MacBeath**
*Professor Emeritus
University of Cambridge*
- 11:15 **Coffee & Exhibitors**
- 11:45 **Ian Small**
*Head of Public Policy & Corporate Affairs
BBC Scotland*
- 12:30 **Homework Diary Company Award**
- 13:00 **Lunch**
- 14:00 **Mike Russell MSP**
*Cabinet Secretary
Education and Lifelong Learning*
- 14:45 **Keri-Anne Payne**
Skillforce Ambassador & Olympian Silver Medallist
- 15:30 **Tea & Exhibitors**
- 16:00 **Group Facilitated Discussion**
Group 1 **CfE: Emerging Issues**
Craig Munro,
*Strategic Director - Strategy
Education Scotland*
- Group 2 **Assessment**
Roddy Gillespie
*Head of Curriculum for Excellence
Scottish Qualifications Authority*
- Group 3 **Emerging Good Practice in
Transition to HE/FE**
Mhairi Moore,
SLS Higher Education Adviser
- 17:00 **Free Time**
- 19:00 **Pre Dinner Drinks Reception**
Sponsored by Hodder Gibson
*Including Presentation of Honorary Membership
to Alastair Noble and Colin Sutherland*
- 19:30 **Annual Dinner**
- 21:30 **After Dinner Speaker**
Jock Brown
*Consultant
Brodies LLP*
- 22:00 **Toast to School Leaders Scotland**
Ian Bauckham, President ASCL
Reply
Caroline Amos
*Head Teacher, Paisley Grammar School
President, SLS*



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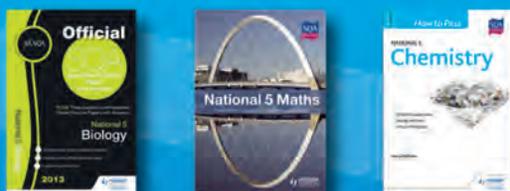
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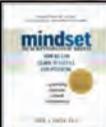
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For further information about our services, to arrange a visit to school, or request a meeting with your local Financial Consultant, contact:
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