



**EILEEN YOUNG**  
PROFESSIONAL  
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# Introduction

**W**elcome to the 2018 edition of Leaders, the SLS Annual Review and Conference Guide. As Professional Learning Manager for the association, my role is to help deliver continuous professional learning for all involved in the education of young people across Scotland. We have a very full programme of events for 2018-2019 which includes this annual conference.

Leaders brings you contributions from staff and members of School Leaders Scotland as well as from many of the key organisations involved in Scottish education with whom School Leaders Scotland engage. The educational landscape in Scotland is continually changing and, possibly, never more so than in current times. These contributions reflect how so many

organisations are working with the common purpose of ensuring excellence and equity for the young people in our schools. New to this edition are contributions from SSERC, UCAS, Colleges Network, School Libraries and Regional Collaboratives.

I am also delighted to extend a warm welcome to our Annual Conference at The Old Course Hotel, St. Andrews from Thursday 22nd to Saturday 24th November 2018. A new venue for SLS so please give us your feedback! Thank you to all our speakers and presenters who are contributing to the conference with its theme of 'Improving Through Collaboration'. I am confident that you will find the sessions informative and benefit from time spent sharing practice with colleagues from other schools.

Thanks also to our Premium Partners and other business partners who continue to support the association in a number of ways. Please visit them during the conference and see how they might be able to help you in your school.

Finally, can I commend our Professional Learning programme to you? In response to feedback, we have included themes which are of interest to you as senior leaders in schools and more interactive sessions. Sessions are delivered by many of our own members and I am very grateful to those of you who have contributed.

I hope that you enjoy reading the 2018 edition of Leaders. Your feedback on its contents would be very welcome.

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**DAVID BARNETT**  
HEADTEACHER,  
ELGIN ACADEMY  
PRESIDENT SLS 2017 - 2018

## The Presidential Year

As I write this, it is still August, and I find myself wondering what the Scottish educational landscape will look like by the time of our annual conference in November. The pace of change over the past couple of years has been such that it is hard to predict exactly where we will be in three months' time.

However, in reflecting on the year which has passed, we can see a year of success, a year of hope and a year of disappointment. School Leaders Scotland continues to be an influential organisation whose views are sought as a matter of course at the highest levels in Scottish education, and we have representation on all of the significant national committees and working groups. This is one of the great strengths of our association.

The Governance review and the draft Education Bill, with its proposals for the Head Teachers' Charter, held a great deal of hope for many of us that schools would be given more powers in order to best meet the needs of our local school communities. The fact that this has not been brought forward into legislation has been disappointing for many of us. However, we will be playing a key part in ensuring

that the Head Teachers' Charter becomes a reality in the months ahead.

Furthermore, in a year when our theme has been collaboration, it is clear that schools will continue to do what good schools and good school leaders have always done - and that is to work collaboratively and collectively with other schools, and with the many partner agencies who support the education, welfare and progress of Scotland's young people. It is case of 'early days' for the Regional Improvement Collaboratives, but there exists in those arrangements a real opportunity to bring together expertise and experience from different authorities to allow schools to make a significant difference. There should no longer be any reason for schools not to work with colleagues whose schools lie across local authority borders.

As we continue to strive to close the poverty-related attainment gap, we very much welcome the additional money available to schools through the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the Pupil Equity Fund. We also have to be careful in terms of using this money to recruit additional professionals - the temporary

nature of the funding makes that recruitment process more difficult than perhaps it should be.

My year as president has passed so quickly that it is hard to believe that we are already contemplating our annual conference. It truly has been a hugely enjoyable, hectic and fulfilling year. My involvement in various national groups and committees has given me a real understanding of how the education system works at a national level, and I hope that I have been able to properly and accurately represent the views and needs of school leaders across the country. A key part of the role is to maintain our relationship with ASCL, and I have very much enjoyed the opportunities to hear about and learn from a different education system.

This work has involved working collaboratively with our SLS Staff - Jim Thewliss, Neil Shaw, Lyn Honnan and Eileen Young, and with the presidential team of Billy Burke, Graham Hutton, Stephen Miller and Andy Smith. Along with members of Executive and Council, School Leaders Scotland as an association is very fortunate to have such committed and talented people leading the way. My role, living in

the north of Scotland, has been more complex due to the factoring in of travel time - a two hour meeting in Edinburgh involves an eight hour round trip. However, I found this involvement hugely rewarding both personally and professionally. Collectively, we have continued to ensure that SLS has a voice where it matters most, and have also had a lot of fun along the way.

Tragic circumstances led to a change of conference venue this year, but I am delighted to welcome you all to the Old Course Hotel in St Andrews for our annual conference. Our programme looks very stimulating, with some innovations this year, and I know you will enjoy hearing and interacting with our guest speakers. As always, the opportunity to meet with fellow school leaders from across the country, and to discuss the many current issues which are occupying the time of all of us, will be a key highlight of conference.

I have enjoyed my year as president immensely and feel privileged to have undertaken the role. I will continue to be fully committed to SLS in the years ahead. I wish my successor, Billy Burke, every success in his Presidential Year.



*“School Leaders Scotland continues to be an influential organisation whose views are sought as a matter of course at the highest levels in Scottish education.”*



JIM THEWLISS  
GENERAL SECRETARY

### Heroes or Water Carriers

It is a matter of record that School Leaders Scotland viewed the introduction of a Headteachers' Charter in the way in which it was envisaged in the Scottish Government's 'Next Steps' document, as a significant opportunity, and at the same time a challenge. We welcomed the trust that it was placing in Scotland's Headteachers, seeing that as confirmation and vindication of the significant effort expended by individual school leaders and by this Association since the publication of Teaching Scotland's Future, in developing leadership capability at a time when leadership capacity in schools was being cut back. Further to this we felt that within the context of Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity funding, we had shown ourselves more than competent in targeting funding to address identified and specific need within our school communities.

*What it's about is the outcome of the team effort, and the importance of having a plan to achieve it.*

While being acutely aware of the challenges which the proposals presented for governance, and the increased accountability which they would place on Headteachers, we viewed them as having real potential to further progress the equality and equity agenda through the introduction of a National Fair Funding Formula and a Basic Minimum Staffing Standard. The empowerment of school communities by a Headteachers' Charter which devolves power over curriculum, improvement, staffing and funding has serious potential to bring the six drivers

of the National Improvement Framework to life in the context of every school and its unique community.

Above all we felt that the Headteachers' Charter would give us the opportunity to impact even more directly, positively and significantly on the life chances of individual, and groups of young people.

While we are disappointed in the move to implementation through the Education Reform - Joint Agreement we continue to be fully engaged with all partners in pursuit of equality and equity for the young people in Scotland's schools.

One of the less than uplifting aspects of the debate around the Headteachers' Charter was some of the rhetoric used by those who were less than enthused at the prospect. It was extremely disappointing to hear representatives of other Professional Associations regularly and publicly use the term 'Hero Headteachers' to describe our, and their, members and more so worrying to think that in their considered opinion this was an accurate description of Secondary School leaders.

You will understand that I left for my holiday in France at the beginning of July under somewhat of a cloud. Two things did however combine to lift my mood:

-I was able to watch France winning the World Cup in the bar of the local village, in a fabulous atmosphere, surrounded by a cosmopolitan mix of Europeans.

-I had taken with me a copy of Sam Walker's book 'The Captain Class' in which he describes the common attributes of the captains of the 16 most successful sports teams over the past 100 years.

One of the chapters of the book is devoted to Didier Deschamps who captained the hugely successful French national

football team between 1996-2000. At the time, Deschamps was described by the mercurial Eric Cantona as a 'water carrier', and while it was in no way meant as a compliment, Deschamps was happy and quick to adopt and promote the soubriquet. In his mind it described his role in leading the successful team. By analysing the actions of the captain, from a number of different sports, in the other chapters of the book Walker identifies a set of common characteristics which can be applied to the captains of the most highly successful teams.

- They exhibited an extreme level of doggedness and personal commitment.
- They constantly tested and challenged received wisdom and authority.
- They displayed a consistent willingness to do thankless tasks in the shadows.
- They gained moral authority by lowering themselves in relation to the team.
- They had a low key, practical and democratic style of communicating with the team.
- They were committed to motivating others.
- They had strong convictions and the courage to stand apart.
- They had ironclad self-control.

Walker presents the compelling case that successful captains are anything but 'hero leaders' but are in fact 'water carriers' who see it as their role to enable

others to perform at their best, see the success of the team as paramount, act as advocates for the team and are prepared to sacrifice self for the greater good of the team.

The school leaders I encounter in SLS are not the 'Hero Heads' of easy glib alliteration but the genuine and very talented leaders and servants of their school community. The school leaders I meet understand that it's not about the personal glamour or status: they know that what it's about is the outcome of the team effort, and the importance of having a plan to achieve it. For such school leaders, who day and daily lead without personal fanfare, a Headteachers Charter will be a welcome extension to the range of tools available to them to further empower that community.

Your Professional Association will continue to promote and support you in the vital role that leadership plays in sustaining the effective learning and empowering school communities and by so doing enhancing the life chances of Scotland's young people.

PS. Didier Deschamps - the water carrier, this summer became only the third person to both captain and manage a team to World Cup victory.

Eric Cantona does television adverts for a well known brand of lager.





**BILLY BURKE**  
HEADTEACHER  
RENFREW HIGH SCHOOL  
VICE PRESIDENT 2017 - 2018

# President Elect

*"As leaders of learning we strive to ensure that young people enjoy the best possible learning experiences we can provide."*

Scotland's secondary schools are filled with talented and committed professionals who are determined to make a positive difference to the life chances of young people. Despite the all-too-regular negativity which can surround education, learners across the country continue to impress through their attainment, achievement and the personal skills and qualities they develop and display every day.

I am very fortunate to lead a successful school which puts young people first. The vision, values and aims of Renfrew High School set a clear moral purpose for our work, and I am often humbled by the efforts of my staff and the achievements of our pupils. We are an inclusive, positive school, committed to doing our very best for all learners – and aware that achieving this equitably means trying even harder for the most vulnerable. Over the past five years we have raised attainment and achievement by investing in positive relationships, high quality personal support, and leadership of learning. As reflected in the HMIE inspection earlier this year, we are a school with wellbeing at its heart.

Leaders of the best schools across the country will tell you that success does not come easily, particularly in times of increased challenge – staffing and financial pressures, complexity of curriculum, competing policy demands, to name just a few. International evidence is clear that the key contributing factors to successful outcomes for schools and learners are highly effective leadership and excellent learning and teaching. It is as simple, and as complex, as that.

Head teachers in particular play a crucial role in setting the tone, the ambition and the direction in our schools. As leaders of learning we strive to ensure that

young people enjoy the best possible learning experiences we can provide. The analogy of 'spinning plates' is perhaps apt but this doesn't do justice to the complexity of school leadership. It is more like rowing a boat along a fast-moving river, trying to keep going in the right direction while traversing occasional hazards, keeping your eye on the surroundings and making sure no one falls out! Hopefully at points along the way, we can take time to enjoy the journey as a team and remember it can actually be fun . . .

The education system in Scotland is certainly fast-moving, and the Government's key stated aim of closing the poverty-related attainment gap has led to increased activity across the country in recent years. Welcome investment through the Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Funding has allowed head teachers to be more creative in how we take forward our priorities.

School leaders are well accustomed to identifying improvement priorities based on robust self-evaluation and careful consideration of what external research and best practice tells us. SLS has been, and remains, supportive of the principle that the people best placed to make the key decisions about young people's learning are those who work directly with them. The June 2018 Joint Agreement sets out to pave the way for us to move more closely towards a school and teacher led system. Increased empowerment for head teachers in relation to staffing, funding, curriculum and improvement will allow us, working closely with staff, pupils, parents and key partners, to drive the change that is required in our own individual establishments. Enhanced support and collaboration at local, regional and national level is also essential to further

improvement across the system. As Vice-President over the past two years I have been fortunate to work with a talented and committed team within SLS and wider to make a positive contribution to the complex issues facing school leaders. Our voice is heard and listened to, and while decisions do not always reflect our desires, it is clear to me that SLS has a strong, optimistic vision that a properly resourced, supported and empowered profession is the key driver for further improvement for Scotland's learners. We recognise that there needs to be improved equity in the tools available to head teachers to deliver success – there is too much variability in available resource across the country.

We trust and believe in school leaders and will continue to work positively in collaboration with all partners to achieve enhanced school empowerment as set out in the Joint Agreement.

I regularly use a quote from Henry Ford: "if you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got." Change is the only constant, and rightly so as improvement requires change. The note of caution, however, is that not all change necessarily leads to improvement. That is why it is vital that school leaders are well informed, advised and supported, and that head teachers continue to invest in our professional development

and that of those we lead. SLS is a leading provider in this area and, supported by our members and partners, strives to ensure school leaders are well placed to accept the challenges and embrace the opportunities across the education system.

For me, it is also vital that head teachers lead by example in terms of wellbeing. We know that learners and staff perform best when they are at their best and, as school leaders, we try to establish conditions where people can thrive. We do demanding jobs so need to remember to look after our physical, social, emotional and mental wellbeing, and encourage others to do the same.

It has been an honour to serve as Vice President and to be SLS Council's recommendation for President 2018-19. In this Year of Young People I am reminded that the youth of Scotland are not just the future, they are the present. They will, and do, make significant contributions to our country's success. My own daughter, Sofia, has recently started primary school and I am confident that she enters an education system which will look after, develop and inspire her.

Being a head teacher is the best job in the world. It is a privilege to be part of the profession which creates all others. I look forward with optimism to the year ahead.





**GRAHAM HUTTON**  
RECTOR  
GROVE ACADEMY  
VICE PRESIDENT 2017-2018

# Vice President's Outlook

Three years ago, I was just an ordinary member of SLS, getting on with running my school and attending the SLS annual conference (well it was HAS still when I joined in 1998!) and the occasional valuable CPD, but only when I could find some money down the back of the school sofa. Okay, there was the grievance from one of my

“Our association definitely has influence nationally both in policy and practice.”

staff where I needed the valuable help and support of the Field Officer, but apart from that SLS was very much in the background. Then I had a moment of complete madness and for some unfathomable reason, I volunteered to be the Dundee Rep on SLS Council. Well, that was me on the slippery slope! Within the year I was persuaded to be a headteacher rep on the Executive and that resulted in me being the SLS rep on the National 1+ 2 Modern Languages panel, since my background is Modern Languages! Mein Gott, I was being sucked into more than I had ever imagined. Then just over a year ago, at an Executive meeting at SERCC in Dunfermline, I was approached and handed the Black Spot! Would I consider being nominated as the junior Vice President?

“You talking to me?” I asked in my best Robert De Niro voice. It was an offer I couldn't refuse, to use a line from another film, The Godfather! So I said yes! So what joys and experiences has my year as Vice President brought me? My new Twitter account was a necessity! I have been involved in discussions at Executive and Council about the future pathway of the association. I have continued to be involved with 1 + 2 Modern Languages, a National Group on Discipline, the Education Leaders' Forum, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Education, and numerous meetings as part of the Presidential Team with Mr Swinney, the Scottish Government, SQA and Education Scotland amongst others. All these meetings have given me a far fuller appreciation of the influence SLS has

across all areas of Scottish Education. The movers and shakers listen to SLS and our association definitely has influence nationally both in policy and practice. I see clearly that we punch way above our weight, with regard to other Teacher Associations.

The Presidential Team, the General Secretary and the Field Officer work well together and the support from Lyn Honnan, Eileen Young and Mhairi Moore behind the scenes, evidence extremely good team work which results in members getting a superb deal in support, organisation and help, both personal and professional, from the Association. I am proud to have been a part of the team this year and look forward to being Senior Vice President, as our Billy takes over the President, with a very hard act to follow from our current President, David Barnett.

## COLLABORATION





**GEOFF BARTON**  
ASCL  
GENERAL SECRETARY

## A United Voice

**ASCL** Association  
of School and  
College Leaders

*ASCL takes great pride in supporting and representing the voice of thousands of school and college leaders across the UK, and as General Secretary Geoff Barton explains, the Association has ambitious plans on ensuring its deep and special relationship with Scotland continues well into the future.*

I'm delighted to have been invited to write about our work and our close relationship with SLS here in *Leader*.

As mission statements go, you won't find many better than ASCL's: "We speak on behalf of members; we act on behalf of children and young people". That's us. It's what we do.

After all, these are challenging times for school and college leaders and for young people. It's never been more important to have a bold and principled voice speaking and acting on their behalf. Because, in all kind of ways, it seems as if education in the United Kingdom – like society itself – is in the midst of an extraordinary period of fragmentation.

And ASCL is especially well placed to try to provide some coherence, some sense of connectedness.

Here's what I mean.

### Support when you need it

ASCL is very proudly a trade union. Our core role is to support members. This is what we do in our relationship with SLS, providing the kind of trade union support that backs you up when things go wrong, when you need advice, or when someone makes an accusation that leaves you feeling beleaguered and distraught.

As a headteacher in the East of England for fifteen years, I didn't have many times when I needed my union, but there were some very dark days when I most certainly did. Having an ASCL field officer alongside me in some of those pretty daunting meetings, knowing that someone was steeped in procedural and legal efficacy, and that someone was there to help me, was hugely reassuring.

And in an age when people are so much quicker to judge, to snipe, to criticise, and when so much more is expected of schools and colleges, and of those of us working in public service, we shouldn't be surprised that ASCL's casework continues to increase. From where I sit, I get to see just how fractious and isolated the work of school and college leaders can be, and how important it remains to have a calm, detached voice guiding you through.

That's ASCL as a trade union, and with more than 19,000 members in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England, we get to see the particular issues that keep members awake at night. Many, of course, are the same – funding, recruitment, retention, young people's mental health, and the day-to-day grief of running an organisation, such as capability and disciplinary issues.

### Strengthening our Association

In my fifteen months as General Secretary, it's been interesting for me to watch the increasing sense of divergence between our different education systems. Thus in Wales, as in Scotland, there's a radical move to shape a curriculum that is distinctively different from the (to my mind) worryingly narrower provision in England. In Northern Ireland I see the funding pressures, especially because of small school sixth forms, against a backdrop of political deadlock.

All of this shows a UK education provision that appears to be splintering, all of us going in our own ways.

And that's why over the coming year, we are doing some fundamental rebooting of the way ASCL works. We are strengthening the links with our members across all corners of the UK. We want every member in every different geographical context to feel that his or her voice is heard.

That's why we are reconfiguring our Association around a new ASCL UK board. This will consist of elected representatives from across the UK, taking decisions, overseeing finances, working to further build our influence, and, crucially, aiming to learn from what each education system is doing.

In other words, the new ASCL UK board will look at changes to conditions of service, or the curriculum, or school structures, or assessment, and we'll build our shared intelligence of what works and what doesn't. We will be uniquely placed to watch these educational experiments and provide informed insight into them.

*We speak on behalf of members; we act on behalf of children and young people.*

Once approved, the ASCL UK board will meet four times a year – once in Scotland, once in Wales, once in Northern Ireland and once in England. Each meeting will be chaired by its nation's respective president.

All of this is part of an ambitious plan to rethink how ASCL can best represent members, wherever they may live and work.

### Speaking on issues that matter to you

Meanwhile, we continue to focus on what we most have in common – leadership, pedagogy and young people. It's been easy for all of us in education to get swept along by endless talk of accountability and funding and how schools are measured.

Increasingly, ASCL is looking to shift the teaching profession away from being the passive victims of politicians' latest wacky wheezes and for us instead, to 'act on behalf of children and young people'.

You'll see us increasingly arguing that endless reforms are a distraction, that what matters most is recruiting, developing and retaining great teachers, freeing leaders to focus on this as much as possible, and focusing on giving every child from every background an entitlement to a rich, broad education.

You'll hear us speaking up more for the young people in the system who are too often on the margins, those easily dismissed because they are disaffected or disengaged.

With my background as an English teacher, I've always been interested in how language empowers humans, how – as philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein put it – "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world".

That's why in working with ministers and officials, we'll always ask how any policy proposal will play out for those on the margins – the young people for whom education could – and really must – make the biggest difference.

Geoff Barton is ASCL General Secretary





**MHAIRI MOORE**  
SLS HIGHER EDUCATION  
ADVISER

# Higher Education Report

2017-2018 has seen many changes in the world of higher education. The driver behind this is the *Commission for Widening Access* and Universities Scotland's response: '*Working to Widen Access*'. SLS has been fully involved in the consultative process.

The Association has been represented on the Universities Scotland's Admissions Working Group, the Articulation Workstream and the Language in Admissions Sub Group. Discussions have been wide-ranging and constructive, covering topics such as an appropriate measure of deprivation, barriers to entry to higher education, use of appropriate terms and pre-entry support mechanisms.

SLS conducted a survey of its members on behalf of Universities Scotland to assess the merit of Personal Statements by, and References for, widening access applicants. Responses showed that young people from a widening access background benefit from writing a Personal Statement. However, there is a need for universal support in this exercise to help these young people. Inconsistency among universities as to how much importance is placed on the Personal Statement was a frustration. While many regarded Reference writing as time-consuming and an exercise which diverts teaching / support staff away from teaching, it was recognised as being of value, although this was only the case if the references were read by the universities. A further area of concern was the inconsistency of staff provision for such activities at school level. If references are vital in the decision-making process, some applicants, may be disadvantaged where there is a poorer level of support.

In addition, SLS was asked to conduct a survey based on members' experience of Advanced Higher provision and the impact on the widening access cohort of the inclusion of Advanced Highers as entry qualifications. While many believed that Advanced Highers were of value and should be encouraged in all schools, some senior managers in rural or smaller schools, where Advanced Highers could not be offered, felt their young people were disadvantaged if universities required Advanced Highers. Unrecognised rural deprivation could prevent widening access in some areas. Our President sits on the Scottish Government's Working Group on Rural Poverty and has brought this issue to their attention. Full results are to be found in the members' area of the SLS website.

Glasgow University's Top Up Programme supports many pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and SLS plays an active role on the Top Up Steering Group.

Over recent years, Focus West (part of the national Schools for Higher Education Programme) has asked SLS to become involved with their work. This enhanced involvement with Focus West is very valuable and the association gains much in terms of knowledge of current practice of widening access partnerships.

**UCAS:** SLS is represented on the UK Council, Secondary Education Advisory Group and the Scottish Standing Group. Over the last 18 months, SLS and UCAS have had positive and constructive discussions concerning the way forward for Scotland. This has led to the formation of a Scottish UCAS Expert Group, which is welcomed and will enable

Scottish teachers to be fully involved in the consultative process with UCAS.

**Information for newly appointed UCAS advisers in schools:** As '*Working to Widen Access*' becomes embedded, universities will offer two sets of entrance qualifications: widening access academic requirements and non-widening access academic requirements. As a result, guiding young people through the higher education process will become increasingly complex. SLS has compiled a booklet offering information and advice to help newly appointed UCAS advisers or co-ordinators. Topics covered are: where to seek help, when to submit applications, how to navigate the UCAS system and what scholarships and bursaries are available. This booklet is available on the members' area of the SLS website.

**School activities:** In the past year, SLS has visited schools to lead workshops or speak at Parents' Evenings, Higher Education Conventions and Information Evenings.

**Practical issues which have arisen in the past year:** Over the past year, discussions with Universities Scotland, Focus West and UCAS have raised

various issues. As a result, it is worth highlighting the following:

Increasingly, HNC/HND qualifications articulate with university degrees. It is not unusual for Years 1 and 2 of university courses to be taught in colleges with Years 3 and 4 being delivered on the university campus. Young people should be encouraged to consider college and university courses and research the possibility of articulated courses.

The practice of Unconditional Offers being made to young people before they have sat their final examinations has been observed for several years in England. This has now crept across the Border as universities try to attract the best students to their institutions. This is a controversial issue and SLS would be anxious to be involved in future discussion as it seeks to promote the best interests of young people in Scotland.

Anyone seeking more information on higher education should contact Mhairi Moore:  
mhairimoore@hotmail.co.uk

Mhairi Moore  
SLS Higher Education Adviser





**KENNY MANSON**  
DEPUTE HEADTEACHER  
BERWICKSHIRE HIGH SCHOOL

## PT's and Progression

My affiliation with School Leaders Scotland began in 2015 when I was appointed Principal Teacher Curriculum, Health and Wellbeing at St David's RC High School, Midlothian. Upon commencing employment, the head at the time Wendy Sutherland, asked which union I was part of. I had been a member of one of the other larger unions since beginning my teaching career but had grown tired of their approach and thought the step into middle leadership would be a good time to move. She suggested the move to SLS, explaining the benefits and unbeknown to me at that time, the move to SLS would be so fruitful and offer much more than simply support in the broad sense of a traditional trade union.

The move to SLS has provided me with many opportunities which have been beneficial to not only my current practice but also in preparing for the next step in my teaching career and the move I have made to become Depute Head teacher

at Berwickshire High School, in the Scottish Borders. In fact I could probably go as far as saying if it were not for SLS I doubt I would have been prepared for the step up or able to make the step up to be part of a Senior Leadership Team so early in my teaching career. SLS has offered me access to a wide range of CPD opportunities which focus on many of the current themes in Scottish education. The quality of these professional courses is second to none with presenters able to draw from their extensive experience and provide excellent examples in practice. I have also been fortunate enough to be asked to present at an SLS CPD event which was a valuable experience in terms of my own development and also provided me with another opportunity to network with likeminded professionals from across the country.

My involvement within SLS has extended to being a Principal Teacher representative on Council and the Executive team and

currently a Depute Head Teacher representative on the Professional Learning team. Within each of these forums I have been able to build up an understanding of key educational issues, contribute to the SLS position in response to policy consultation and support the planning and organisation of professional learning opportunities. SLS has members within all major educational forums and links to all current key developments in Scottish Education. It provides an influential and respected voice which represents the views and interests of all of its members from across the country. For this reason being part of SLS means that your voice is heard and members are kept informed on a regular basis of the latest developments and the impact this will have in our schools.

Attendance at the annual conference in November is also another excellent opportunity to listen to inspirational speakers and take part in discussions and

workshops focused on key themes from Scottish education. It also offers another opportunity to network with colleagues from other establishments, which is something I have done previously and allowed for collaboration on key school priorities. It is clear from my experience that the very essence of SLS is focused on providing current and future leaders of Scottish education with the best possible platform to meet the needs of our learners. Therefore any principal teacher, business manager, depute or head teacher thinking of potentially joining SLS, would be foolish not to take advantage of the range of benefits and support which is on offer for all members.



**FIONA CRAIG**  
DHT  
PORT GLASGOW  
HIGH SCHOOL

### Depute Heads in SLS

I recall one of the first pieces of advice I was given when I secured my DHT post over a decade ago – it was to join SLS (at this time it was HAS). Someone said that should I have any issues with staff they would have my back. A slight wave of fear rippled through me... what I have let myself in for as a DHT? I am relieved to say I haven't had to call on SLS for support in this area, but I have on other areas, and it is always reassuring to know there is knowledgeable expertise and support at hand.

As a DHT it is very easy to be drawn into the daily workings of school (especially if new to the post), but it is important to keep looking outwards to keep on top of current education thinking and practices. SLS offers a wide range of high quality courses addressing current issues within education – these are delivered by experienced practitioners, who can give the real life applications/adaptations of practice. Events such as these also provide a fantastic opportunity to network with colleagues from across the country, to hear the perspectives of other and share good practice. Thus providing opportunities to

building your own personal and professional network.

As part of the SLS council, I have had the opportunity to gain a depth of knowledge in the shaping of educational policy and see first-hand how the voice of the educational practitioner can shape future policy and practice. It is very easy as a DHT to want to be an expert in our own remit, but dialogue at council meetings have allowed me to gain insight into areas outwith my remit, and to see how areas overlap. This allows me to be more open in areas that at first seem to clash with the priorities of colleagues. I can see the benefits of flexibility within the DHT role.

SLS provide support and career enhancing experiences and I recommend their services to other in a leadership role within schools.



**LAURA BLACK**  
BUSINESS MANAGER  
CRIEFF HIGH SCHOOL,  
STRATHGORN COMMUNITY CAMPUS

### SLS Business Manager

I have been a Business Manager for 3 years. I enjoy my job very much however it can be demanding, stressful and more than a little challenging! I was encouraged to join SLS by my Headteacher and initially, I had some reservations. As the majority of School Leaders in Scotland are teachers and given that teacher's terms and conditions are different to mine, I felt that SLS would not be equipped to support me. This, however, is absolutely not the case. SLS provide excellent training and development courses aimed specifically at Business Managers. I have attended several SLS courses in the last three years and they have all been extremely beneficial to me. They have also given me the opportunity to network with other Business Manager's throughout Scotland, allowing us to share our knowledge and best practice. SLS courses are well planned, the facilities are excellent, the venues are scattered throughout Scotland so are easily accessible and they cover a wide range of topics relevant to the Business Manager role. I have also been very impressed with the guest speakers at these events as their expert knowledge is invaluable.

SLS offer a wide range of courses, allowing me the opportunity to select the ones that are particularly relevant to me. Most importantly, I feel that SLS are somewhat 'ahead of the game' when it comes to wider issues relating to Education. Not only will SLS communicate these issues to me, they will also offer training to help and support me. Being a member of SLS and having access to training and events has given me the knowledge, confidence and most importantly, a platform to address and concerns I have.

As well as providing excellent professional development opportunities for Business Managers, I have also found that SLS are an invaluable source of support. I have, on occasion, required advice and support to deal with difficult situations at work and the SLS office and field teams have always been on hand to help.





NEIL SHAW  
FIELD OFFICER

## Field Officer Report

As I write this report I am obliged to note that a significant milestone in the recent history of SLS has been overtaken. Our records tell us that, in the period since Alastair Noble's appointment as Field Officer in 2002, we have opened files on over 2000 cases, including almost 1000 since I took over in September 2013. This rapid rise in contacts reflects the substantial increase in membership of SLS over the past five or six years and may also reflect the current increasing complexity and challenge contained within secondary education in Scotland.

The number of new cases opened in the past 12 months has been consistent with those of the previous 5 years. The complexity of cases ranges from hugely serious and potentially career threatening engagement with Employment Tribunals and referrals to GTCS to relatively straightforward

queries about pensions. Regarding the more serious cases I must note my gratitude for legal advice provided by the ASCL legal team in supporting SLS members at Employment Tribunals and in dealing with referrals to GTCS – their success rate, to this date, is excellent.

The "hot" topics with which I've been engaged over the past 12 months have remained consistent and include Grievance, some against SLS members and others requiring to be managed by them; job-sizing is a popular topic if one which seems to be misunderstood by many, including HR teams; parental complaints remain popular, if unwelcome and often demanding, situations. I would reflect from my experience that in most challenging situations facing school senior leaders they are making sensible and reflective decisions based on experience and appropriate use of local and national

policies and practices. As ever my advice would be that if you see trouble, of any sort, on the horizon get in touch.

Life would indeed be dull if it wasn't for the arrival of some new and complex legislation which requires to be accommodated within school, local authorities and organisations – this year's addition is, of course, the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). It is the case that local authorities have been required to appoint a Data Protection Officer to ensure a consistency of application of the new regulations. This person should be liaising with schools to provide advice and support. As an organisation we would recommend that a member of the senior leadership team in every secondary school should take on responsibility for raising awareness within the school of potential difficulties which may arise surrounding the creation and storing of

data. As an organisation SLS has had to do exactly the same and we have liaised with ASCL colleagues and consultants to ensure we are meeting the demands of the legislation.

A quick note on pensions – there is no new news for the moment but in the near future the Advisory Board will be meeting to review the Treasury's revaluation of the pension schemes across the UK. There is the potential that this review could alter the employers and/or scheme members contributions. As ever, if there are any substantive changes to the scheme, we will keep SLS members in the loop.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to be the Field Officer for SLS members and, along with our colleagues in ASCL, it is our hope that we continue to provide high quality professional advice to SLS members.





**GAYLE GORMAN**  
HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION/  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE EDUCATION SCOTLAND

# Education Scotland

I'm really pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to School Leaders Scotland Leader publication in my first year as Chief Executive of Education Scotland. As you might imagine, it's been a particularly busy first year for me and, at Education Scotland, we have had a significant focus on working collectively as a staff team, with our partners, to ensure that we are organised to deliver our shared ambition of ensuring that Scotland's children and young people and educators are at the heart of our education system. During this first year, it's been a real privilege to meet with many school leaders and young people, and I am always impressed and energised by the enthusiasm and commitment to maximise opportunities and life chances for Scotland's learners.

We are changing the way that we work in Education Scotland – for Scotland's children, with Scotland's teachers. We are clear that our work needs to focus on our five strategic priorities:

- Learning, teaching and leadership
- National collaborative professional learning networks
- Getting it Right for Every Child
- Best use of high quality evidence
- Effective partnerships

You will already have noticed changes in the way we work as an organisation. We've looked at how we organise and support our teams across Education Scotland – we know that we must ensure that our teams support your work in your schools, your local authorities and across the regional collaboratives. To help us achieve this, we have also undertaken a significant recruitment campaign, and the first phase of this was completed just before the start of the new school year, resulting in the appointment of over 37 new members to our teams. We are excited about the opportunity to build strong teams, combining extensive knowledge and experience in our existing staff teams with fresh thinking from new colleagues with significant recent experience in Scotland's schools and classrooms.

Hopefully you are already starting to meet and work with an increasing number of our colleagues in your local authorities and across the regional improvement collaboratives – we know that strong collaboration is crucial, and we are looking forward to working with you to strengthen this across our education system.

I'm particularly excited that, as part of Education Scotland's new and enhanced role, the Scottish College for Educational Leadership is now part

of our organisation. This provides us with a great opportunity to build on the work undertaken so far by the SCEL team, ensuring greater reach and increasing coherence with the wider professional learning work that we will develop across our organisation.

We have exciting plans to extend this programme significantly over the coming year, in response to your feedback, and to introduce some new learning opportunities as part of our commitment to support the delivery of the action plan for the

*It's important that you have the opportunity to lead learning and improvement in your contexts.*

Many of you will already be familiar with the SCEL leadership programmes that are already in place – we've been very pleased over the past year with the positive feedback on the Excellence in Headship programme, our continuous professional learning programme for experienced head teachers across Scotland. Participants have welcomed the opportunity to collaborate beyond their own local authorities and we've been encouraged by the continued commitment from school leaders to learn, and to share their learning, knowledge and thinking with others on the programme.

joint agreement reached in June between Scottish local government and the Scottish Government which sets out a shared commitment to empower our schools. The agreement recognises the vital role that head teachers have in leading and shaping this work – you know your communities and your schools, your young people and your staff teams – and it's important that you have the opportunity to lead learning and improvement in your contexts. We are committed to working with you to inspire and empower educators across Scotland to enable them to achieve the best possible outcomes for all.





**DR JANET BROWN**  
SQA CHIEF EXECUTIVE & SCOTLAND'S CHIEF EXAMINING OFFICER

## SQA Chief Executive and Scotland's Chief Examining Officer writes exclusively for School Leaders Scotland

This August, the Scottish Qualifications Authority certificated over 135,000 candidates with the results of the National Qualifications, Courses, and Awards that they completed over the past year.

This, as always, was a significant milestone not just in the lives of the young people receiving their results by text message or email (and even by good old fashioned postal delivery), but for the whole of Scotland's education community. Results Day is the product of a long-standing and effective collaboration that goes on between SQA, schools, and teachers.

Without the continuing support of School Leaders Scotland and its members, we would not be able to deliver the certification the country relies upon us for, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment, and your contribution.

Over the past year, thanks to the role played by SLS and other strategic partners, we were able to deliver significant changes to National 5 course assessments; which included producing streamlined support materials that would help teachers prepare candidates for the assessments they sat in April, May and June.

This year's National 5 courses were assessed using a mix of externally assessed coursework, question papers, and internally assessed course components, as

appropriate to each subject. Results show that the new assessment approach for National 5 courses worked well, the national standard was unchanged, and the credibility of Scotland's qualifications remains high.

As I observed in my Chief Examiner's Report, performance in National Courses and Awards remains fairly stable. We have seen small increases in the numbers undertaking the lower levels of qualifications, a small reduction in the number of candidates attempting National 5 and Higher, and a small increase in the numbers entered for Advanced Higher courses.

Throughout 2018, teachers have had access to the revised Higher Course Specifications, Higher Question Papers, and Sample Course Assessment materials to help them with the preparations for delivering and assessing Higher courses.

And we are continuing to provide our comprehensive Understanding Standards programme – which is available to all schools and local authorities – for all National 1 to Advanced Higher courses, including our series of events for Higher courses with new or significantly revised course assessment components.

The publication of our Course Reports has also been brought forward, giving practitioners direct feedback from Principal Assessors on which areas they should reflect on as they prepare candidates for next year's assessments.

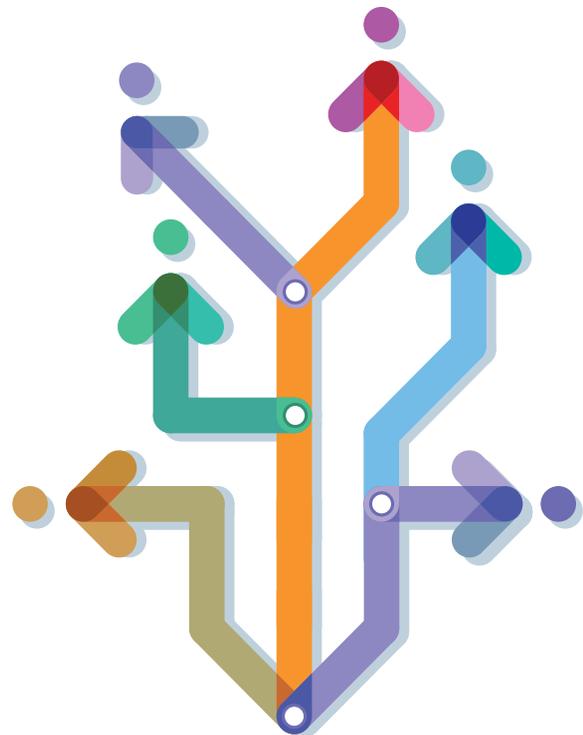
Our dedicated Liaison Team, and Subject Implementation Managers will remain available to assist schools and teachers with the adoption of the new assessments, and we will add to our extensive programme of subject support events, webinars and audio presentations throughout the rest of the year

I am proud of the broad offering of SQA qualifications that are available to candidates in schools and colleges across the country. The breadth of Nationals, Highers, and Advanced Highers, as well as Awards, Skills for Work courses, National Progression Awards, and National Certificates is one of the key strengths of Scotland's education system.

We are committed to providing young people a

variety of pathways – such as the development of Foundation Apprenticeships, developed in partnership with Skills Development Scotland – giving them the opportunity to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding at appropriate levels of demand that will assist them in taking the steps to their desired destination, whether that is continuing in education, moving on to work-based training, or seeking employment.

On Results Day, we all saw and heard first-hand the positive impact having a breadth of qualifications makes to the lives of candidates. All of us have a responsibility to enable young people to define their own success – whatever that may be – and to help them to realise their potential and achieve their ambitions.





**KENNETH MUIR**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
GTC SCOTLAND

## GTC Scotland: Key to Supporting Teachers and Improvement

“Just what do I get for my registration fee?” is a question I am regularly asked when speaking to groups of Headteachers and teachers. This is usually followed up by a question along the lines of “But surely once I have gained full registration (and I got that years ago!), GTCS does nothing for me?” Well, nothing could be further from the truth. It always gives me great pleasure to set the record straight in terms of what GTC Scotland does to support the teaching profession, enhance the leadership and professional learning of teachers and protect the integrity of the teaching profession through our fitness to teach process. GTC Scotland, as the professional body for teachers, also plays the lead role in promoting the reputation of the high quality teaching profession we have in Scotland – something that is acknowledged across the world, but sadly, not always within Scotland itself.

What isn't often recognised, is the breadth of the range of activities in which GTC Scotland is engaged as we make our contribution to supporting teachers and the education system in Scotland. The following lists shows just some of the work we do that has a direct impact on each and every HT and teacher.

- Maintain the Professional Standards on which the professionalism of all teachers is predicated.
- Register over 3000 newly qualified teachers every year. Registration by GTC Scotland ensures that only those who meet the highest standards are allowed to teach alongside experienced teachers in Scotland.
- Through the GTCS Student Placement System, create almost 18000 placements for students every year so that they gain experience of high quality teaching and are ready for joining colleagues in their induction year.
- Support every year all local authority probation managers and over 3500 probationer teachers to gain meaningful, quality induction through the Teacher Induction Scheme.
- Accredit all teacher education and TQFE programmes provided by Scotland's 10 initial teacher education universities.

This provides assurance to teachers and others that students receive up-to-date, relevant and high quality preparation for joining the teaching profession.

- Accredit new routes into teaching. In the last year GTCS has scrutinised and accredited 15 new routes, all of which are designed to attract more teachers into the profession at a time of acute teacher shortage.
- Handle nearly 200 fitness to teach referrals, investigating and holding hearings on those where teachers' fitness to teach is in question. This important role of public protection gives assurance to the public that only those teachers exhibiting high professional standards remain in the profession and also upholds the professional integrity of teachers.
- Sign off the professional learning of approximately 13500 teachers every year as part of Professional Update. This allows GTC Scotland to demonstrate to the public the confidence they should have in Scotland's teachers to keep their professional learning up to date and enhance their professionalism.

As well as the above list, each year GTC Scotland, amongst other things, also maintains two websites that provide valuable resources for students and teachers, provides five copies of the Teaching Scotland magazine to everyone on the register and delivers professional learning to almost 8500 teachers. In this current session, GTC Scotland is again involved in a number of pieces of work that relate directly and indirectly to

supporting HTs, teachers and others in the education system. A flavour of these is set out below.

- The Development of the Flexible Route Online Profile, available this autumn, which will provide more structured support to those probationers entering the teaching profession but not following the Teacher Induction Scheme. The online profile will continue to be accessed through MyGTCS and support materials will be available from [www.In2teaching.org.uk](http://www.In2teaching.org.uk)
- The national rollout of MyPL (previously MyGTCS), the national e-portfolio system being developed by GTC Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government. MyPL offers a range of additional services to users including access to a library of professional learning resources that is updated regularly; the ability to share professional learning resources, tools and ideas with other teachers; and an employment history and CV section that enables teachers to update their career progress.
- An increased programme of webinars, building on the success of those offered last session, and covering current topics that are most relevant to teachers.
- The provision of professional learning packages, based around EBSCO (the depository of over 1700 pieces of international research available free to teachers through their MyGTCS account) and covering a wide range of leadership and learning and teaching topics.
- The wider promotion of GTC Scotland's suite of Professional Learning

Awards which celebrate, promote and encourage teacher professionalism and professional learning at all stages of a teacher's career, and recognise the leadership of learning cultures in which teacher professionalism can thrive and bring about real impact. The Professional Learning Awards place a spotlight on the excellent work taking place in our classrooms, schools, colleges, universities, local authorities, education organisations and across a range of partnerships. The full suite of Professional Learning Awards can be found on the GTCS Website, and include:

- Professional Recognition
- Excellence in Professional Learning Award for Schools and Learning Communities
- Professional Learning Award for Organisations
- The GTCS Convener's Professional Values Award
- The George D Gray Award

Finally, with the recent appointment of two Development Officers (Sarah Stevenson and Jim Moore) we will be able to improve further our engagement with employers, teachers and HTs, alongside other key stakeholders, and explain more fully the valuable, but often unseen, work done by GTC Scotland to support teachers and the improvement agenda. Be assured that your registration fee is being put to very good use!





**LESLEY WHELAN**  
DIRECTOR OF  
SCEL PROGRAMMES  
EDUCATION SCOTLAND

## Director of SCEL Programmes Education Scotland

It's been a full and busy year for Scottish education and we're delighted to be contributing to the SLS conference again this year, supporting leadership and professional learning.

At SCEL we've continued to benefit from engaging with SLS in a range of ways including as stakeholders, contributors to programmes and through members participating in SCEL programmes and learning activities.

Our range of programmes has expanded again with a greater focus on system leadership and we continue to develop an enhanced offer for Excellence in Headship, our programme for experienced head teachers. There are now nearly 400 head teachers engaged in Excellence in Headship, creating their own learning pathway across this year's six key themes of:

- Critical self-awareness
- Leadership of learning
- Values based leadership
- People and partners
- Leading systems change
- Organisational effectiveness

As part of your role as leaders of learning you'll want to know about the new model of professional learning, launched at this year's Scottish Learning Festival. The new model comes as a result of collaborative working across stakeholders and teachers including the

Strategic Board for Teacher Education.

The new model is designed to support and strengthen professional learning for Scotland's teachers and outlines the kind of learning that will empower education professionals and enable them to best meet the needs of learners.

The model provides a renewed and enhanced focus on professional learning and leadership and can be used by those leading, developing, providing and supporting learning.

Education Scotland chief executive Gayle Gorman said:

*“Education professionals continuously engage in professional learning to stimulate their thinking and to ensure that their practice is critically informed and up-to-date.*

*This new national model of professional learning will support Scotland's teachers by building upon previous guidance*

## The national model of professional learning



and identifying the key principles and features of effective learning that will build capacity and promote collaborative practices.”

The new model is available on the Framework for Educational Leadership ([www.scelframework.com](http://www.scelframework.com)) and resources are available to support understanding and engagement with the model. You'll also see further developments to the Framework for Educational Leadership, reflecting the enhanced role of Education Scotland in professional learning and leadership.

For 2019, our recruitment window will be open from January until the end of March when we'll be recruiting to our aspiring heads programmes and teacher leadership programmes. You'll find further information on all our programmes and learning opportunities on [www.scelscotland.org.uk](http://www.scelscotland.org.uk) or get in touch with one of our team who'll be happy to talk you through what's available. Enjoy the conference and come and see us at our stand in the exhibition space.



MHAIRI SHAW  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

# Regional Improvement Collaboratives

The Scottish Government set out the rationale for the introduction of Regional Improvement Collaboratives in its Next Steps document of June 2016:

*The structure of the present system is too complex and support for improvement varies to an unacceptable extent across the country. Teachers and schools need consistently excellent education support services and consistently excellent improvement services. They do not all have these now and we must change that as quickly as we can. It is a collaborative effort, which starts with leadership in our schools and should be complemented by our local authorities and supported by new regional improvement collaboratives which are relevant to, designed by, and close to the communities they serve.*

The extract above is taken from the Cabinet Secretary's foreword to the document and indicates the belief that support for improvement for schools is at best variable. Subsequent negotiations between Scottish Government, COSLA, ADES and SOLACE (Joint Steering

Group) resulted in an agreement to form six Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RIC) with the agreed functions to:

- Enhance and improve professional learning;
- Offer a range of support, interventions and programmes in place to raise attainment and close gap;
- Identify, promote and share good practice through collaboration;
- Support schools to interpret and implement key educational developments;
- Offer subject specific support and advice;
- Offer sector-specific support and advice;
- Use improvement methodology through collaboration;
- Take a regional approach to staffing challenges, where necessary; and,
- Support wider collaborative working across system

Importantly the Joint Steering Group "was also clear that the introduction of RICs was about all partners working differently, as well as securing 'additionality' through collaboration, protecting against displacement or replication...". This principle has been at the core of our planning

ensuring that our primary purpose is to offer excellent support to schools, working in partnership where it is beneficial for partners to do so, while ensuring there is learning at all levels in our system.

Each Regional Improvement Collaborative was charged with producing an improvement plan, the first phase to be completed in January 2018, the second phase in September 2018 to include a workforce plan.

*It is a collaborative effort, which starts with leadership in our schools.*

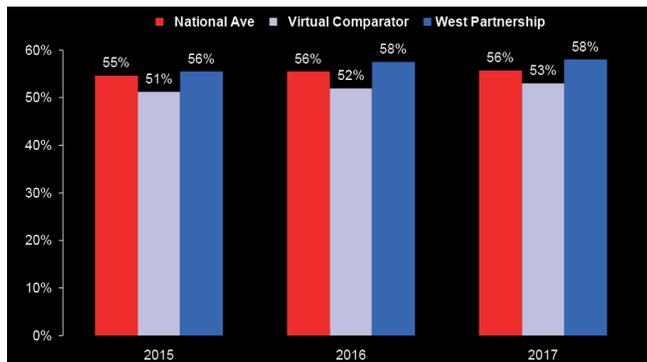
## Profile of the West Partnership

Of the six Regional Improvement Collaboratives, the West Partnership serves the greatest number of children with 34% of Scotland's school population, almost 250,000 learners, attending our schools. There are over 1000 nurseries, primary, secondary

and special schools in the West Partnership, serving mainly urban but also many rural communities. As such, schools vary in size from some of the smallest in South Lanarkshire to some of the largest primary schools in East Renfrewshire and the largest secondary schools in Glasgow. This broad range, as well as a fairly compact geography, gives the West a high capacity for collaboration and learning.

Our schools deliver education to a diverse group of learners, ranging from children and young people living with deep-seated poverty, with a mean SIMD of 4.6 compared to the national average of 5.4, to some of Scotland's most affluent communities. Five of the partners are involved in the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC), a sixth has Attainment Challenge schools and almost all schools in the region have an allocation of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Given well established links between attainment and poverty, the West Partnership's performance defies expectation, with the following graphs demonstrating our position of strength.

**S5: 1 or More A-C Awards at Level 6 or Better  
Comparison with National Average and Virtual Comparator**



### Phase 1 and onto Phase 2

Mindful of the need to ensure good governance and political oversight of the Partnership's plans, activities and impact, the Glasgow City Region Education Committee was established in Autumn 2017, made up of the Convener for Education from each of the constituent councils. The first improvement plan focused on three main themes: Improvement; Learner Journey and Early Learning and Childcare, with work groups established for each. Through the PEF events in March, we consulted with Head Teachers from across the region, seeking to determine whether the plan reflected their own priorities: 85% agreed we were focusing on the right areas. Further engagement has been undertaken with partners from Trade Unions, Further and Higher Education and parents to seek views and fed these in to the Phase 2 plan.

### Vision and Purpose

Since publishing the Phase 1 Improvement Plan, the West Partnership Board has developed its purpose and vision. *Equity, Excellence and Empowerment* encapsulates the culture we want to embed enhancing the work of each local authority to bring about further improvement in our schools and outcomes for our learners.

Over the period of the plan (2018 – 2021) we aim to build a learning system which will bring about *Equity, Excellence and Empowerment*. This system will promote a culture of learning and bring about improvement at all levels from the classroom to directorate.

We aim to deliver learning events, subject group forums which will focus on pedagogy, opportunities to share best practices in curriculum design to bring about equity,

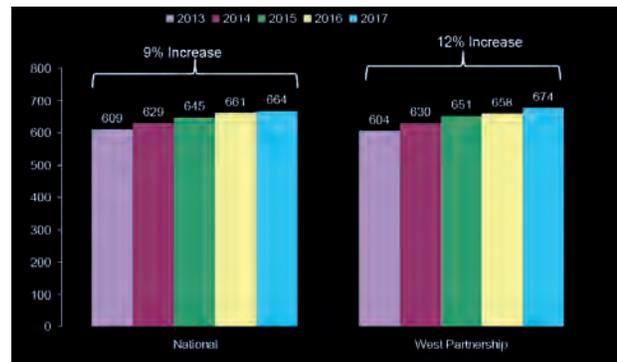
work with FE partners to improve the range of curricular pathways for young people across the region, learn from the systems we each have to bring about improvement, support each other to build leadership capacity and succession plan and to empower our schools, learners, families and communities.

Working groups, drawing together a range of Education Officers, teaching staff and led by a Director/Chief Education Officer, will be established, developing a programme of work to drive forward the aims of the Partnership and seeking to deliver on the primary goal – improved outcomes for all of our learners.

### Next Steps

With the second iteration of the West Partnership's Improvement Plan endorsed by the Regional Education Committee and submitted to Education Scotland's

**School Leavers: Average Complementary Tariff Points:  
Comparison with National Average**



Chief Executive and Chief Inspector, Gayle Gorman, it will be taken through the democratic machinery in each of the 8 councils. At its heart it's a partnership, a partnership about enhancing what each member already offers – and that's what we will continue to do.

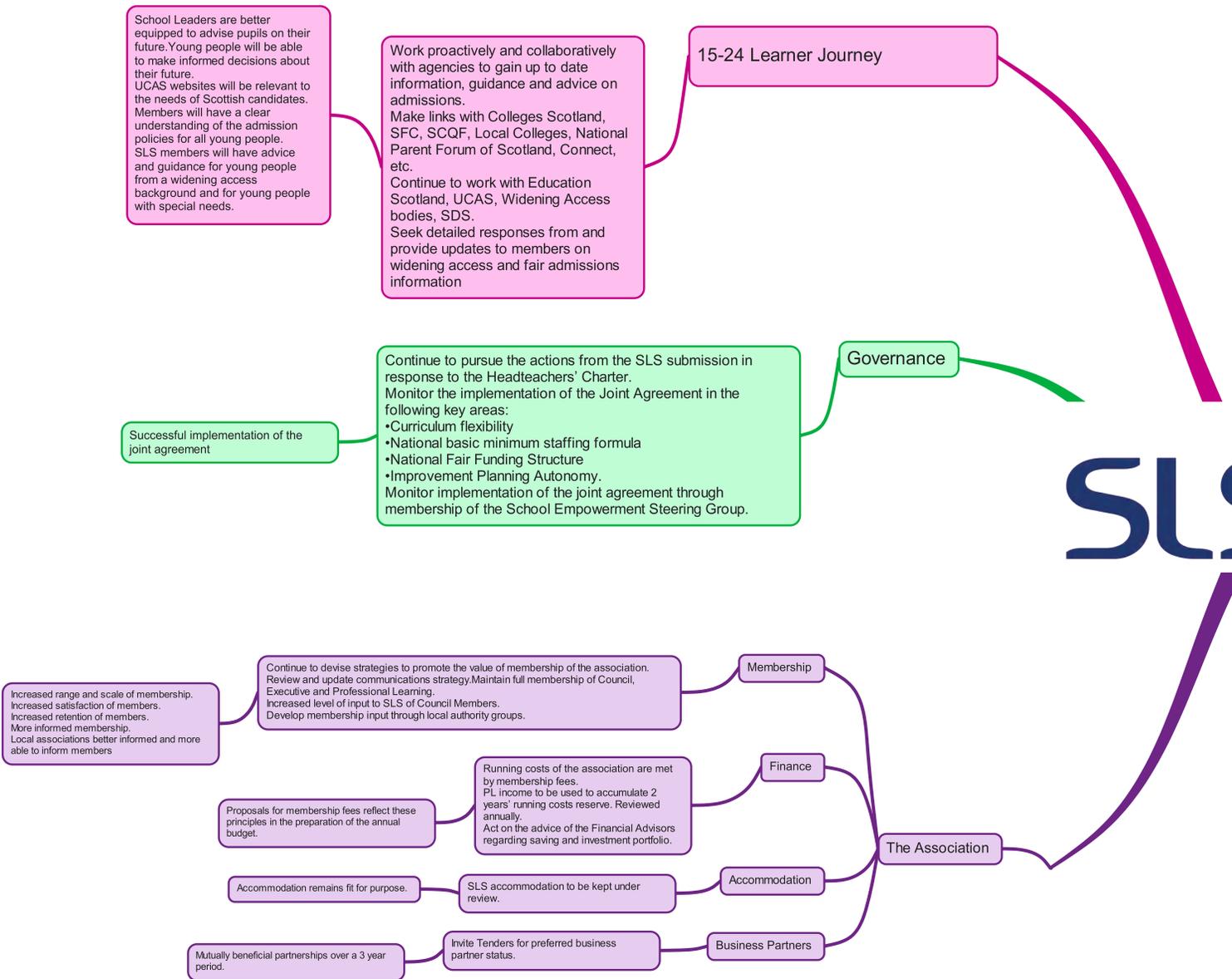
But this is only the start!

We know we need to raise the profile of the West Partnership – what are we here for and what will we do? We need to make sure schools and teachers know about and can access our offer, supporting them to deliver and improve attainment.

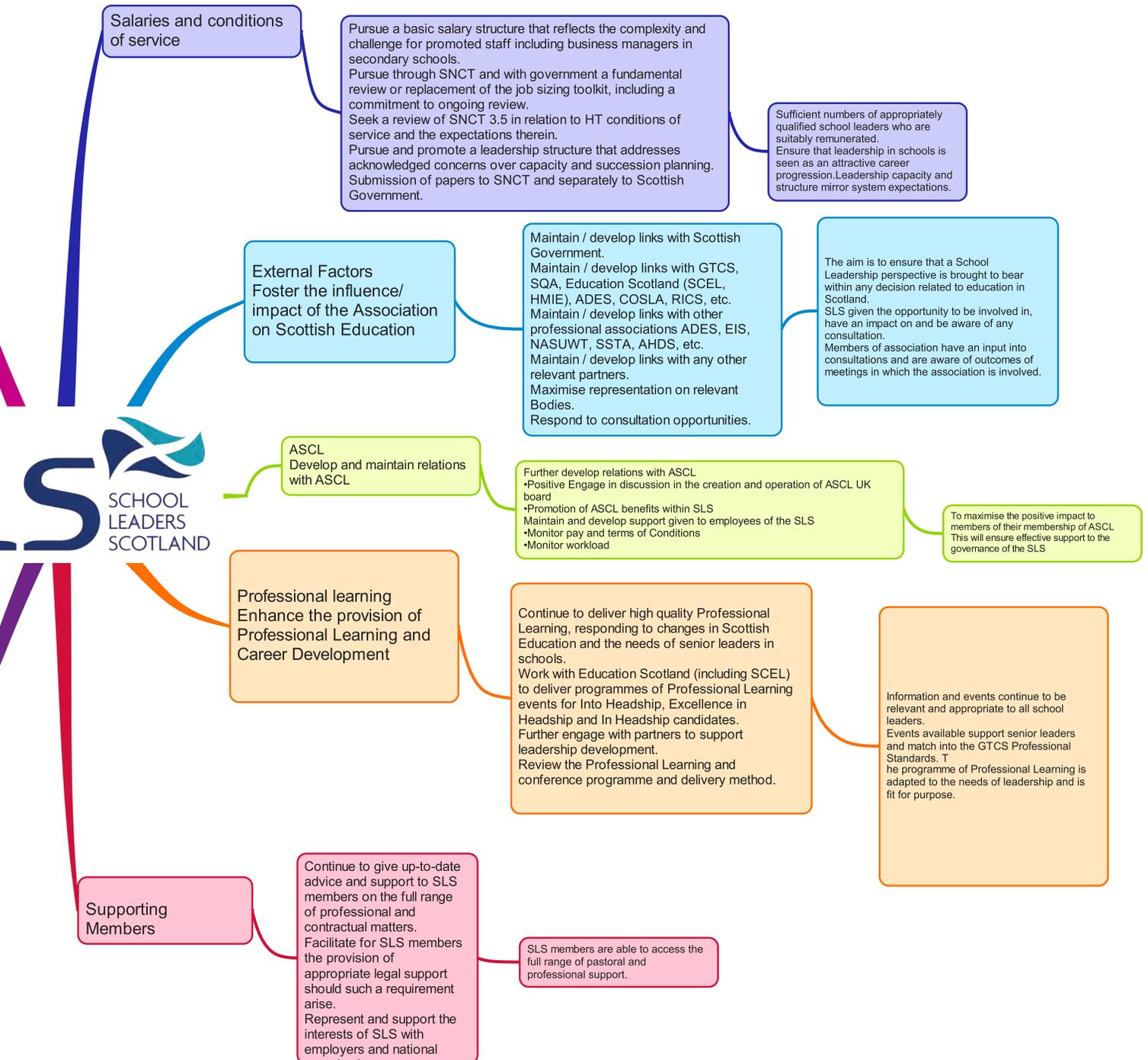
So.....Let's Go!

Mhairi Shaw  
Director of Education  
East Renfrewshire  
Council

# SLS STRATEGIC



# PLAN 2018-2021





LIZ CONNOLLY  
PRINCIPAL  
WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

## The School College Partnership (SCP)

provides a flexible and diverse range of opportunities across our nine teaching sectors, offering a wide range of specialisms and teaching expertise in many areas. WCS is proud of the specialist resources and dedicated facilities we have that enable the delivery of these programmes.

- We work across 6 local authorities
- Support 25 schools
- Deliver 46 School College Programmes
- 1,200 School pupils on College Vocational Programmes
- 12,800 hours of direct teaching to School pupils across our region

Communication is the key to any partnership in the West Region all partners work hard to ensure that there are as many channels as possible for communication to take place. The partnership is working hard to raise attainment and assist in helping to close the poverty related attainment gap.

We have school/college vocational partnerships

in every LA with all schools represented and these are supported by dedicated schools' liaison teams at each campus.

WCS is in constant communication which facilitates the successful working of the partnerships, running information sessions, attending school career events and information's evenings, parents' nights and guidance sessions in schools.

Courses on offer as part our SCP range from SCQF L1-L8, aiming to meet the needs of all ranges of ability of all our students. WE deliver Grow, Cook and Eat which is a L1 programme designed for pupils with additional support needs through to L8 Human Body, Structure and Function which is delivered to a group of pupils hoping to go to university to study careers allied to health e.g. dentistry, medicine, physiotherapy, pharmacy – and we offer everything in between!

Our West Region Partnership for Foundation Apprenticeship

programmes facilitates WCS to offer 9 frameworks in collaboration with our Local Authorities and business partners. The senior management in the college and the LA and schools set the criteria and define objectives for the operational work. We have a West Region FA Strategic Group and West Regional FA Operational group with partners from SDS, DYW, SQA, LAs and WCS

At WCS we work tirelessly to address and support STEM Initiatives such as Bloodhound and Greenpower, designed and sponsored by the Energy Skills Partnership.

### West College Scotland Senior Phase Programme

WCS College vocational education is not new, but it is different. Delivery of vocational programmes is taking place at college and in schools- this has benefits for pupils who might be anxious about coming to college but want to take the subject. There can be transition activity put

in place where they start the programme in school and transition to college nearer the end of the programme, or do a programme one year in school and come to college the second year.

Over academic year 2017/18 WCS have run a number of pilots where there has been shared or co-delivery in elements of the programme delivery. Innovative solutions have been put in place to address workshop constraints in the construction area. Sites have been identified across our partnership schools and/or dedicated facilities built to accommodate this demand so the young person is able to achieve their goals.

We continually support our schools by attending and hosting joint CPD events to discuss new initiatives, share ideas and learn about each other's activity and aims.

The College takes part in tours for pupils of all ages from primary pupils up to 6th year pupils. These tours can be in large groups or smaller groups who are

interested in a particular discipline or subject. It is beneficial for the pupils to take part in these as it takes away the fear factor and lets them see what other options are available to them when they come to select their subjects. Tours also take place for teaching staff e.g. subject specialist and also guidance, pastoral care staff and DYW leads.

### College Tasters – how they make a difference

The college delivers a range of taster options throughout the academic session to primary school children and also S1-S6 pupils. The taster “models” are developed in line with the LA/school requirement. These have been delivered at various points throughout the year and for varying lengths of time from 1 day – 6 weeks. Pupils have thoroughly enjoyed this and provided amazing feedback:

- Friendly environment
- Lots of different courses on offer
- Fun experience
- Different from School
- Helpful people
- Skills to learn
- Hard work
- Many job opportunities after College

The aim of the taster programmes is to introduce pupils to college and give them more understanding of the range of options available. The transition between school and college is a critical time for young people. This early intervention allows the pupils to experience subjects that they may not have had access to in school. This programme has an important part to play in raising awareness of the wide range of options available at all levels and gives young people information on subjects when considering their options in school. It facilitates them making a more informed choice about their own future.

### Broad General Education and Primary Schools

WCS have designed projects for BGE and primary schools to assist with literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and work extensively with primary schools across our 9 sectoral areas.

### Engaging Parents and Family Learning

The WCS Community Outreach Section is a critical part of the College offering. It delivers over 2000 hours of learning

facilitated through our communities’ team focusing on teaching adult education at a range of locations and outreach centres including schools where we are working with parents in adult groups and family learning groups.

### Disengaged, at risk and vulnerable young people

We work with vulnerable young people and those at risk of disengaging from education. WCS took part in the Renfrewshire Joint Employability Project where we delivered tasters for S2, S3, S4 groups of pupils. The S2 and S3 groups were targeted young people identified by the schools who were in poverty or vulnerable and unlikely to attend college in the future. The S4 group were pupils who had not chosen college as an option and who were at risk of disengaging or had already disengaged from school. 13/25 young people joined our College Senior Phase Vocational programme, reengaged in school and achieved a positive outcome.

Inverclyde Employability Programme – two of our Youth Programme team have been out in the Port Glasgow shared campus working with disengaged pupils delivering an employability programme - RESPECT. This has been very successful and is going to be rolled out to all schools in Inverclyde for session 18/19.

### So what? The reasons we believe in this partnership

- More and better understanding of School/College requirements and how the partnership can best benefit the pupils
- Reduce duplication, utilise specialisms and provide greater opportunity for young people
- Joint decision making and planning
- Informed choices
- Improved learning pathways leading to more effective transitions
- Improved attainment and positive sustained destinations



**PAUL BEAUMONT**  
DIRECTOR, PROFESSIONAL  
LEARNING, SSERC



SSERC, the Scottish School Education Research Centre, supports STEM curricular areas. Our portfolio covers three main stands of activity:

1. An Advisory Service
2. Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) for early years, primary and secondary teachers and school and college technicians
3. STEM Ambassadors in Scotland and wider STEM engagement activities.

#### Advisory Service

Health and safety legislation should not be a barrier to the provision of valuable learning experiences for young people. We offer a range of courses and materials which discourage bureaucratic and over complex methods of risk management. Our range of services include:

- Specialist Health and Safety advice for schools and Local Authorities.
- Specialist advisors in Primary Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Technology, Technician Services and Health and Safety.
- Guidance and compliance advice for Radiological Health & Safety legislation.
- Free Management of Health & Safety courses for Curriculum Leaders. Other specialist Health & Safety courses, including Radiological Protection, which are heavily subsidised or free.
- Access to the SSERC website – curriculum support materials, Health & Safety advice and resources.
- Professional learning programmes for

managers, teachers, and technicians.

- Recommendations on equipment and design of specialist accommodation.
- Free consultancy and technical information.
- Apparatus testing for safety, performance and conformance with standards.

#### Career Long Professional Learning

SSERC works with a range of partners, including Scottish Government, National STEM Learning Centre (NSLC), The Primary Science Teaching Trust and others to deliver a programme of experiential CLPL for early years, primary and secondary teachers, student teachers and technicians focussing on STEM.

A number of our courses are delivered through e-learning systems. Our curriculum coverage spans both primary and secondary sectors. Our portfolio is varied and includes:

- Courses for Probationer teachers.
- Subject specific courses.
- Transition courses to promote enhanced interaction between primary and secondary practitioners.
- The Scottish Universities Science School.
- Health and Safety courses for teachers and technicians.
- Design and manufacturing courses for technology teachers.
- Courses for support staff (many of these courses are levelled and credit-rated by SQA).
- Leadership courses for Curriculum Leaders and Heads of Faculty.
- The SSERC Science and Technology Conference.

Delegates may be eligible to receive grants to support their attendance. Teachers in Local Authority funded-schools in Scotland may qualify for an ENTHUSE Bursary from NSLC to offset the bulk of registration and accommodation costs associated with some of the courses.

#### STEM Ambassador Programme Liaison Lead in Scotland

SSERC, on behalf of STEM Learning, works in partnership with the three Scottish STEM Ambassador Hubs to ensure a seamless offering to support the education community. STEM Ambassadors work with young people to bring STEM subjects alive through real life experiences. STEM Ambassadors are volunteers from 17-70 years old, representing a vast range of STEM-related jobs across the UK. Our Ambassadors include apprentices, zoologists, set designers, climate change scientists, engineers, farmers, geologists, nuclear physicists, and architects. They not only inspire young people; they also support teachers in the classroom by explaining current applications of STEM in industry or research. STEM Ambassadors work with young people to bring STEM subjects alive through real life experiences.



SHELAGH TOONEN  
LIBRARIAN  
ELGIN ACADEMY

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School Libraries Group Scotland is part of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIPS). It encourages discussion of matters relating to school librarians; offers help and support to members throughout Scotland and keeps school librarians informed of issues and developments within the sector. Its committee meets once a term and is a forum for initiatives, support and sharing good practice. If your librarian is not aware of SLG, please direct them to <http://www.cilips.org.uk/branches-groups/special-interest-groups/school-libraries-group-scotland/>.

School librarians are pivotal in developing a reading culture across the school by providing young people with opportunities for reading for enjoyment and promoting the highest level of attainment in literacy for all young people. Numerous

other enriching learning opportunities are led by school librarians; libraries are ideal environments for learning across the curriculum and collaborative working.

High-quality learning opportunities should include access for all school pupils to a professionally trained librarian and information expert, located within the school and available throughout the school day. Access to and support from full-time, professionally qualified school librarians helps pupils to develop the skills needed to be successful and to participate fully in an information society, as well as to meet the needs of a changing digital world.

There are many exciting developments ahead for school libraries and for schools. The School Library National Strategy is about to be launched: the first of

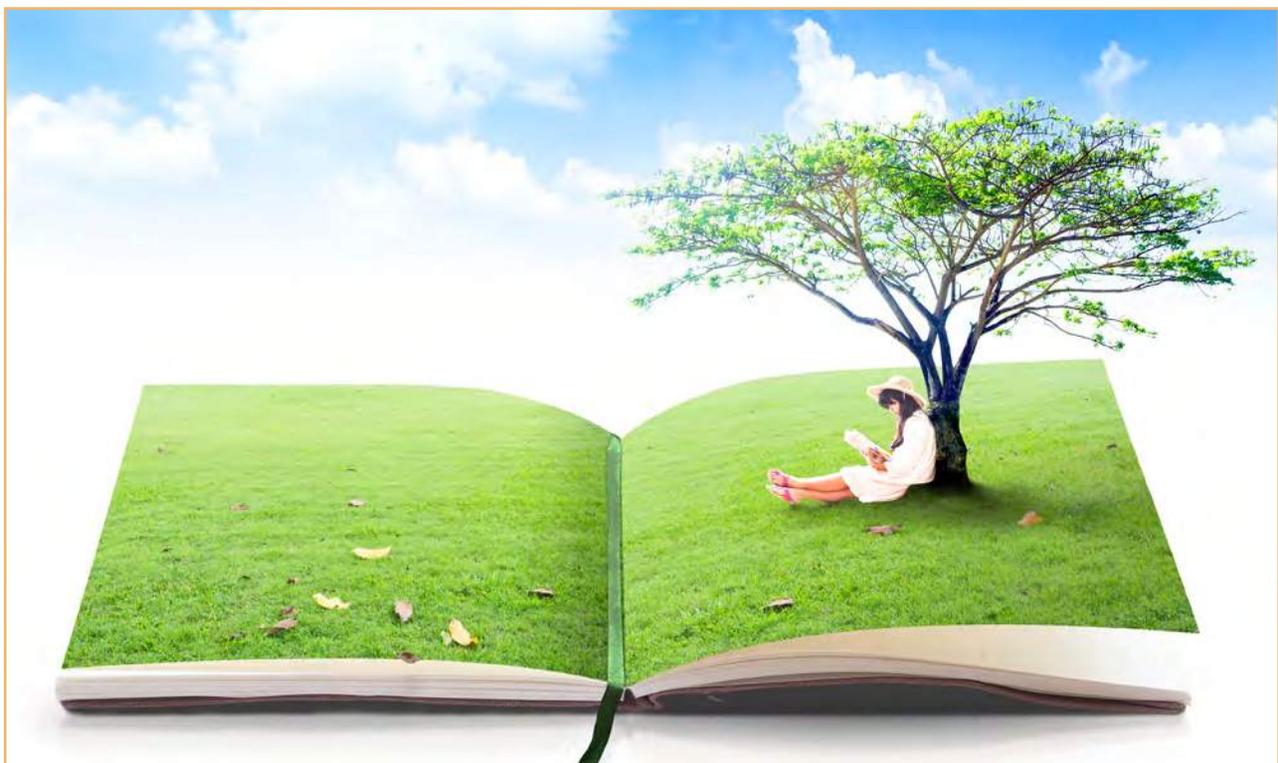
its kind in the UK. A number of school librarians across Scotland were involved in the working groups, which reported to SLIC in June and these findings helped to form the Strategy. Together with SLIF and initiatives and projects arising from successful bids, there are so many exciting developments ahead for school libraries and for schools. HGIOSL is now being used in schools and is a companion guide to the main "How Good Is Our School" framework. It aims to support library staff and senior managers to evaluate the specific contributions the library makes to school improvement. All of these developments illustrate the importance of school librarians within educational reforms and their role as indispensable education leaders.

Recently, school libraries have seen a number of damaging cuts such as

schools sharing librarians or reducing hours. It has been a difficult, stressful and life-changing few months for a number of librarians in Scotland and they relied on and were very grateful for the support available from SLG Scotland.

School leaders can, however, support their librarians taking an expansive role in supporting learning across the curriculum. Together, they can work towards a shared understanding about how a school library contributes to learning. This can be done at a local school level in CPD sessions, or at authority and national level through conferences and workshops.

The school library is a hub of inspiration, innovation, ideas and imagination and has a crucial role to play in the development of our young people. School librarians matter more than ever and need to be supported.





**JOSH KENNEDY**  
SCOTTISH YOUTH  
PARLIAMENT OFFICIAL

# Scottish Youth Parliament

Just over 19 years ago, the Scottish Parliament reconvened for the first time in 292 years. That date on 1st July 1999 heralded a new beginning for politics in Scotland. However, just one day earlier on 30th June 1999, another new political movement was ushered in, with the formation of the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP).

SYP is the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people, and as a fundamentally rights-based charity, its vision for Scotland is of a nation that actively listens to and values the meaningful participation of its children and young people. The goal is to make this vision a reality, in order to ensure Scotland is truly the best place in the world to grow up.

Every two years, elections are held in which young people – aged between 14 and 25 – across the length and breadth of Scotland

stand as candidates to become Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs). MSYPs represent constituencies in all 32 local authorities and across eleven national voluntary organisations.

Working with SYP gives young people the chance to strengthen their role as responsible citizens, effective contributors, successful learners and confident individuals. Whether standing as a candidate, voting in the elections or taking part in SYP engagement sessions in school, young people will be able to develop their knowledge and understanding of Scotland's place in order to develop their own informed views of complex issues affecting young people. There is also ample opportunity to apply critical thinking and take the initiative to lead, in terms of skills development.

In approximately six months' time, Scotland's young

people will be heading to the polls to vote for the person they want to represent them and their views at the Scottish Youth Parliament, and SYP is determined to make this election the biggest one yet but we need the support of schools across Scotland to make this happen.

Renfrewshire North MSYP, and SYP Trustee, Josh Kennedy MSYP, said: "I've been an MSYP now for a little over a year now, and the opportunities I've had have been unbelievable. As well as being able to represent the young people of my area at a national level, I've been able to speak to our country's decision-makers, from MSPs to Scottish Government Ministers, about the very real issues Scotland's young people face on a daily basis.

"I've not only learned more about Scotland's political landscape and how it affects me as a young person, but

I've gained so much in terms of personal confidence and the development of new skills.

"Being part of SYP has been such a rewarding experience – not many 16-year-olds can say they've been invited to speak in Geneva at the UN's General Day of Discussion on the subject of young people's rights!

"I would urge you to spread word of SYP's elections to any eligible young people you work with, and encourage them to consider standing for election. It's been one of the best decisions I ever made."

To find out more about SYP, visit [www.syp.org.uk](http://www.syp.org.uk) and for elections information, visit <https://elections.syp.org.uk/elections/>. If you, or a young person you work with, has any questions about the elections, please email [elections@syp.org.uk](mailto:elections@syp.org.uk).



# Lighthouse FA - About To Retire?

Lighthouse Financial Advice can provide financial advice throughout your lifetime, from starting out in life, through to mid-life and onwards to pre and post retirement. The main focus of this short article is aimed that those who are considering retirement.

Financially, things should be a bit easier now. Your children are probably independent and you may have already paid off your mortgage. You like the thought of taking it a bit easier, having more time to do the things you enjoy, perhaps even working part-time (in a non-teaching environment!) or just retiring early. Hopefully you are still in good health, but you may have the worry of caring for elderly relatives.

Your main priority is likely to be to preserve the value of your worth, investments and any money you have inherited, so you have enough to maintain your lifestyle when you retire.

You would like to retire early, but can you afford to? What impact would this have on your assets, including those outside your pension? Even if you are retiring at the normal age, you should check your pension and obtain projections to make sure you are on track. If not, should you consider making additional contributions? Do you have additional pension plans such as Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC), Free Standing Additional Voluntary Contributions (FSAVC) or Personal Pensions? Do you know when these plans can be accessed without penalty?

Save the date ..... A Planning for Retirement Seminar will be held on Wednesday 15 May 2019. For more information or to book a place please contact Sarah Codlin on Sarah.Codlin@lighthousegroup.plc.uk or 01273 523747

It may be the time to take a more cautious approach, for instance restructuring your investments to produce income – if you don't need the extra income now you can simply reinvest it, potentially further boosting your wealth. Typically, income from your pension is taxable, so check that your investments and savings are as tax efficient as possible.

If you haven't already done so and you have some spare cash, you could consider paying off your mortgage and any other loans. Your mortgage may allow you to make a substantial capital repayment each year, over and above your monthly repayments. Alternatively, you could repay more each month. Either way, you will repay your mortgage sooner, but make sure you read the small print – repaying more than your limit might mean you incur heavy penalties.

You may find yourself faced with the dilemma of caring for elderly parents or relatives. This is expensive and can quickly deplete the family's accumulated wealth. However, we can help you plan ahead to meet the cost of nursing home care without selling your hard-earned assets. In addition, inheritance tax now reduces the wealth of many families. Do you understand how it will affect yours? Are the Wills of all family members up-to-date and tax-efficient?

Many members of SLS and ASCL around the UK rely on Lighthouse Financial Advice for affordable, expert financial advice. As professional financial advisers, we have

the depth and breadth of knowledge and expertise required to provide practical, informed advice.

Our job is to make your money work for you, whatever your stage in life, so you can live the way you want to. As you progress through life, your outlook and goals evolve. The advice we provide is specific to you and could improve your financial situation. We can meet you at home, at work, or elsewhere. Alternatively, appointments can be conducted by telephone or Skype. We will explain how you could benefit from advice and how much it will cost. You can then decide whether to go ahead.

Our expertise covers all stages of financial planning, including:

- Foundation financial planning for younger people, in the early years of their working life
- Building wealth as efficiently as possible, as your income grows and you reach the peak of your earnings potential
- Preserving money and assets, to enjoy in retirement and pass on to your family

Should you wish to discuss your financial or retirement plans in more detail or arrange an in school pension presentation or financial surgery day please contact Bob Coburn at bob.coburn@lighthousefa.co.uk tel: 07968 214754, his colleague Iain Pollock on 07715 838414 iain.pollock@lighthousefa.co.uk, or Lighthouse Client Services on 08000 858590.

Bob Coburn & Iain Pollock are both Professional Financial Advisers who offer their services via Lighthouse Financial Advice and are authorised to offer a broad range of advice including Pensions & Investments. They have experience in providing advice to various affinity groups including Local Government, NHS & the Teaching Profession.

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Academy will also continue to provide hospitality at the SLS Annual Conference.

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**Live-N-Learn** has been working alongside SLS for 5 years however for over 10 years they have designed and delivered inspirational workshops for Students, Staff and Parents to raise achievement and aspirations in young people. They have worked in over 1000 schools UK wide and over 65% of Scottish Secondary Schools, delivering fun & practical workshops offering young people specific strategies to help them build confidence by grasping opportunities.

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hdc has enjoyed a wonderful relationship with SLS over the last 19 years. As part of their unwavering commitment to the Association, continued funding through the hdc foundation specifically aimed to enhance projects linked to the curriculum will be available.

Their products are designed specifically for Schools across Scotland to help in raising student achievement, parental engagement and can be tailored to exact requirements. As part of the partnership, our members have access to exclusive discounts and all members are entitled to free business cards for each member of their senior leadership team.

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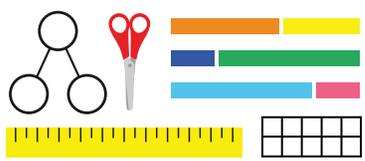

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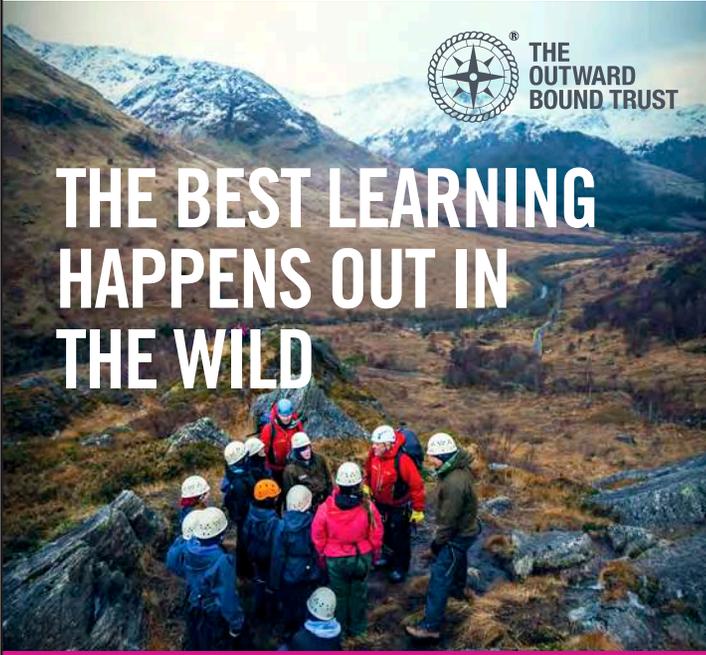
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## progress + achievement

The Progress+Achievement application is currently in development and will allow schools and Local Authorities to track, monitor, report and analyse data within Curriculum for Excellence and the National Improvement framework.

The full application is expected to be available for use in schools and Local Authorities by the start of session 2018/19.

The remaining application requirements will be delivered in two phases:

- BGE
- Senior Phase



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**SSERC** is a local authority shared service, providing advice, resources and professional learning courses that promote exciting and safe practical activities for schools in science and technology subjects.

SSERC's Professional Learning courses aim to improve knowledge and skills of student teachers, primary and secondary teachers, curriculum leaders and technical support staff. Programmes are offered in a range of formats, from interactive electronic "meets" and short face-to-face sessions to immersive residential events. Many courses attract external funding to offset registration fees.

SSERC has been awarded the 'GTCS Quality Mark as a Professional Learning Organisation'. GTCS noted that: *'Evidence from internal and external evaluation shows that those who participate in SSERC professional learning change their classroom practice, with an associated positive impact on pupils'*

# Do you know a young person aged 14-25 who's passionate about politics?

Expressions of interest to stand for the 2019 Scottish Youth Parliament Elections are open until 31st October 2018.

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A look at how 'Mindsets' unfold in the classroom and what we can do to influence young people's attitude towards their capacity for growth. Delegates reflect upon their own mindset, the language they use and pitfalls to avoid when creating a whole school growth mindset culture.

**RESOURCES**  
In addition to supporting staff, students & parents, we aim to increase impact and provide a sustainable approach. We include 10+ hours health & wellbeing lessons, evaluations with a baseline survey, student workbooks, online support and a set of 40 x A3 colour inspirational posters!



*"One of the best sessions I have experienced in 21 years of teaching!"* Teacher, Falkirk (October 2018)

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**The SCEL Framework for Educational Leadership**

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**Accessible**  
A free online resource accessible anywhere, any time – enabling you to shape your own and others' leadership development with high quality professional learning activities, research and resources.
- 

**Learning activities**  
Learning activities within the Framework are designed to be used flexibly to best meet your needs - learn independently, collaborate with colleagues or lead the professional learning of others.
- 

**A resource for all**  
The Framework is designed for leaders of early learning and teachers at every level. Learning activities are mapped to the professional standards of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).
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**Endorsed programmes**  
Access a variety of high quality leadership learning programmes endorsed by SCEL, which are informed by a model of professional learning, linked effectively to relevant professional standards and have a demonstrable impact on practice.

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