



# Annual Review

2014-15

# Foreword

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Welcome to this review of the work of Education Scotland over the period April 2014 to March 2015. It documents some of the highlights of a year that has been challenging, but which has also been marked by some very substantial achievements as we have worked with our partners to promote progress and improvement in Scottish education. I am proud of what our staff have achieved as we enter the third and final year of the period covered by our first Corporate Plan.

Education Scotland continues to play a lead role in influencing and implementing key programmes of reform and driving improvement across all sectors of education. We have made a huge commitment to supporting the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence through a key phase in its development as the first new National Qualifications were delivered to pupils and students across the country. I was delighted to see the successful outcomes achieved by learners thanks to the collective efforts of all partners concerned and, of course, the efforts of young people and their parents and carers themselves.

The review also shows that there are many other equally important initiatives in which our teams played a key role during the year. In close alignment with our Curriculum for Excellence work, we have, for example, worked intensively with government colleagues and partners on the 'Developing the Young Workforce' programme, with a focus on improving work experience, career education and generally improving more coherent pathways to employment through the Senior Phase and beyond.

Our role in developing and influencing policy continues to grow. There are many examples contained in this review ranging across broad areas such as our role in developing and implementing the new Youth Strategy and the Adult Learning Statement of Ambition, to many more specific areas such as developing guidance on Gaelic Education and Scots Language and contributing to Ministerial and National sub-groups on Child Sexual Exploitation.

As public finances continue to tighten, for ourselves and for the providers of education that we support, I am very clear that it is vital we find innovative and creative ways of engaging with practitioners across all sectors to sustain and grow our impact. The use of digital technologies to support learning and teaching has great potential in this regard and I am delighted that this review includes our contribution to the launch of a radically re-designed version of Glow, our national digital learning environment for education. Focusing on maximising the use and benefits from the new system will be a key priority for the year ahead.

Looking forward, there are exciting new opportunities ahead which were only beginning to take shape towards the end of the period covered by this review. We are now playing a key role in partnership with Scottish Government colleagues in taking forward the new Scottish Attainment Challenge and the new National Improvement Framework for school education. These new initiatives have the potential to make a decisive impact on one of the defining challenges of our age – how to ensure all learners in Scotland can achieve their full potential, regardless of social circumstances and background. I very much looking forward to reporting progress on these significant reforms to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), in our next Annual Review. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy reading this review of a busy but successful year for Education Scotland and Scottish education.

*Bill Maxwell*

**Bill Maxwell, Chief Executive**



# Our Purpose

Education Scotland is the national improvement agency for education in Scotland.

We deliver a coherent and balanced blend of activities to support improvement in Scottish education. This includes support activities such as working in partnership with education authorities through the area lead officer network, advice on curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment and support across sectors; and challenge activities, such as evaluation, inspection and review.

# Our Vision

Learners in Scotland will progress in one of the most effective education systems in the world, renowned for the ability of national and local partners to work flexibly together to achieve high-quality and equitable outcomes for all.

# Our Mission

To provide the best blend of national support and challenge to inspire and secure continuous improvement in experiences and opportunities for all learners in Scotland.

# Our Ambition

To ensure that Scottish education ranks among the best in the world, demonstrating excellence at all ages and stages from early years to school years to post-school education and training and on to adult learning provision.



# Our Objectives

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To support the achievement of our vision and mission, we have identified six strategic objectives which we believe can help us to make the strongest contribution.

## **Strategic Objective 1:**

Build a world-class curriculum for all learners in Scotland

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## **Strategic Objective 2:**

Promote high-quality professional learning and leadership amongst education practitioners

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## **Strategic Objective 3:**

Build the capacity of education providers to improve their performance continuously

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## **Strategic Objective 4:**

Provide independent evaluation of education provision

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## **Strategic Objective 5:**

Influence national policy through evidence-based advice

## **Strategic Objective 6:**

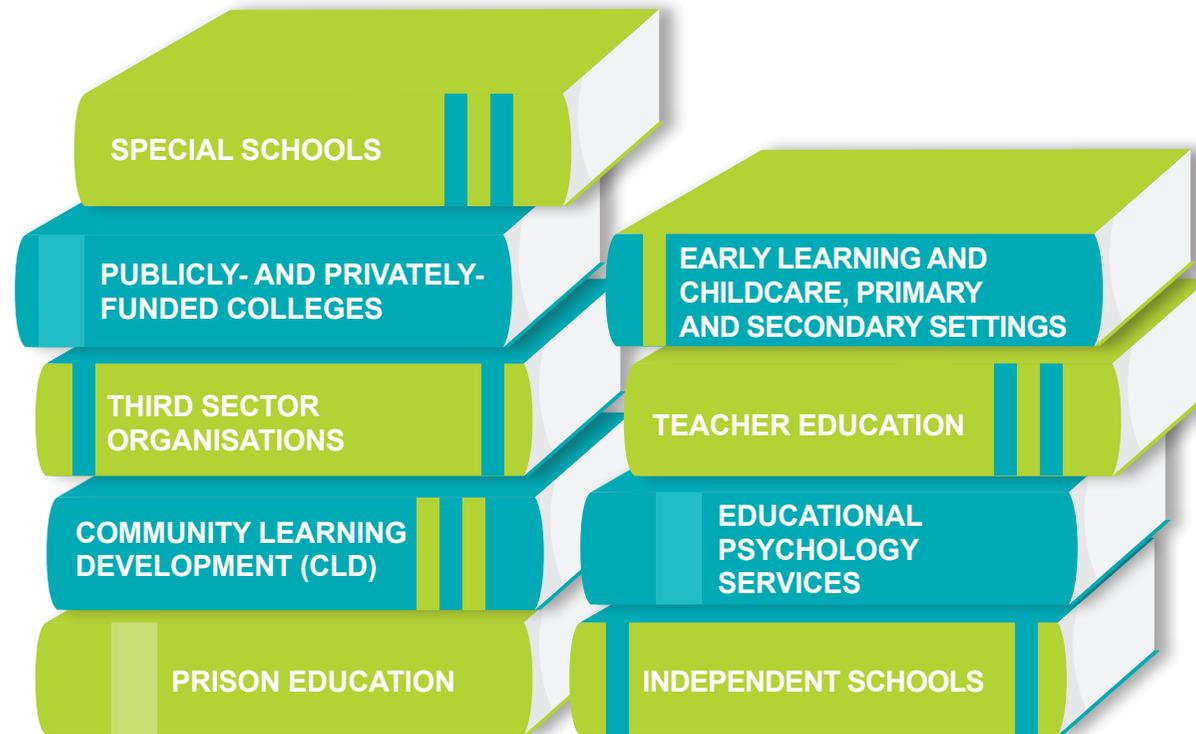
Improve our organisational capability and invest in our people



# Our Reach

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Our work covers the full range of education provision in Scotland for all learners in:



# Our Impact

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This year, we have started to evaluate our impact more systematically by identifying key outcomes and performance indicators for each Strategic Objective. We are in the early stages of this work and where we can, we are highlighting where we know we have made a positive impact. We have drawn on surveys undertaken with Directors of Education, Associate Assessors and evaluations from conferences and events. We have also drawn on evidence from externally evaluations such as the review of Game On Scotland. Our increasing focus on evaluating our work will enable us to provide more evidence of impact in next year's Annual Review.

# What We Achieved in 2014-15

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# Strategic Objective 1: Building a world-class curriculum for all learners in Scotland

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We have a key role in leading the development of national guidance on the curriculum, learning and teaching assessment, and in supporting its implementation by practitioners. This applies to the Curriculum for Excellence, covering ages 3 to 18, but we also provide guidance and support in relation to early learning before the age of 3 and learning beyond age 18, including adult learning.

## Highlights/Key Priorities

Support for the implementation of CfE was a significant priority for Education Scotland again this year. Much of our work focused on providing support and advice to establishments and local authorities on tackling bureaucracy, streamlining assessment practices and in working with practitioners to develop and publish further resources to support learning and teaching in the new National Qualifications. This year we published support for the new courses in Nationals 1 and 2 as well as support materials for every Advanced Higher subject. We continued to publish a wide range of curriculum and assessment support materials on our website and hosted many events – large and small – to support practitioners across all sectors and across every curriculum area.

In partnership with Scottish Government, in August 2014, we published *Building the Ambition* – national practice guidance to support staff in providing high-quality early learning and childcare. It provides support for putting theory into practice by offering case studies and reflective questions to provoke discussion and to help support improvement. Since this document was published, further case studies exemplifying innovative practice have been developed and published on our website.

In 2014, we began to develop a collaborative approach with the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) to support the extension of CfE for the young people aged 16-18 who are presently in Her Majesty's Young Offenders Institution (HMYOI), Polmont. This resulted in the publication of the first ever learning prospectus for HMYOI, Polmont.

In December 2014, the *Youth Employment Strategy* for Scotland was launched by Scottish Government. The strategy incorporates a seven-year programme of work – Developing the Young Workforce – that aims to better prepare children and young people from 3-18 for the world of work. We have a key role to play in delivering this programme, building on the foundations already in place as part of CfE and on work already undertaken in relation to colleges.

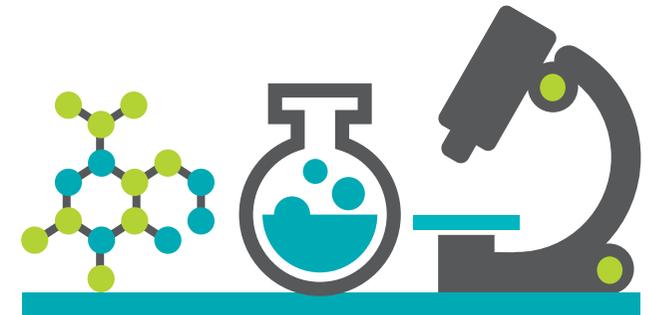
This year also saw the introduction of our Curriculum Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Support (CLTAS) Forums the purpose of which is to secure, consolidate and embed improvements to the curriculum, assessment and support.

## Strategic Objective 1: Building a world-class curriculum for all learners in Scotland

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### Facts and Figures

- We published support materials for all National 1 units, all National 2 courses, all Advanced Higher courses and Route maps through learning, teaching and assessment for all Advanced Higher courses.
- We supported 21 local authorities on assessing progress and achievement in significant aspects of learning.
- Over 250,000 children and young people in Scotland and 1 million worldwide took part in the Game On Scotland programme linked to the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.
- During our first Digital Learning Week six Glow TV events took place with audiences ranging from five to 400 from across 17 local authorities.
- 200 of our key stakeholders joined our new CLTAS Forums in 2014-15.
- 29 local authorities have nominated a National Numeracy hub champion to receive training from Education Scotland in numeracy and mathematics, progression, action planning, evaluative writing, presentation skills and live broadcasts through Glow communications.
- 24 local authorities accessed funding for Creative Learning Networks to build capacity for creativity across learning.



Our sciences team held **84 events** reaching **4944 practitioners**. They supported **900 teachers** through a Glow meet programme.

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Food for Thought grant funding supported **411 educational establishments** involving **18,679 pupils**, **1265 teachers**, **191 senior managers**, **426 support staff**, **3273 parents** and **284 business links**.

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## Strategic Objective 1: Building a world-class curriculum for all learners in Scotland

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### Case Study: Game On Scotland

Game On Scotland was the official education programme around the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. This was a partnership between Education Scotland, Scottish Government, Glasgow 2014 and Glasgow City Council. The Game On Scotland website, which was the outward-facing platform for the programme provided free access to a range of resources and media items which outlined background information about the Games and the Commonwealth. Using the Games as a context for learning, the website helped practitioners create engaging learning opportunities for children and young people across Scotland and beyond.

Almost 900 schools representing all 32 Scottish local authorities registered their unique Game On Challenges which were designed around local circumstances, many of which involved partnership working within communities. Active Schools coordinators and schools arranged cluster activities. Many schools involved local volunteers and sports clubs to offer taster sessions for children and families.

The Games provided a rich context for learning around global citizenship. Children and young people had opportunities to develop an increased awareness and understanding of international issues.

Working with Glasgow 2014 colleagues, Game On Scotland supported visits by the Glasgow 2014 mascot, Clyde, to 162 schools in 30 local authorities. These helped to build deeper understanding of sports and venues for the Commonwealth Games.

Over 9000 pieces of artwork produced by children and young people from 774 schools across Scotland were displayed in the athletes' village during Games time.

In October 2014, over 100 young people from 22 schools across Scotland were invited to participate in the culmination of the Game On Scotland programme at a celebration event held in Glasgow City Chambers. Young Ambassadors shared their experiences and perspectives of the Games. Presentations and activities led by young people showcased some of the many Commonwealth Games-themed learning experiences enjoyed by schools and communities across Scotland.

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**Almost 900 schools representing all 32 Scottish local authorities registered their unique Game On Challenges which were designed around local circumstances.**

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## Strategic Objective 1: Building a world-class curriculum for all learners in Scotland

### Case Study: Her Majesty's Young Offenders Institution (HMYOI) Polmont

Young people in custody in Scotland are amongst the country's most vulnerable. To help improve their future life chances, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and Education Scotland embarked on a unique partnership to help to turn HMYOI Polmont into a 'Learning Environment'. Both executive agencies recognised that their complementary expertise could form a powerful combination to benefit these young people. The key aim is to better meet the needs of young people and provide opportunities for greater equity of access to learning within a custodial setting. As a result, vulnerable young people will develop critical skills for learning, life and work that will improve their life chances. Examples of this include:

- early mapping exercise of partners' contribution to the learning environment using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) helped remove duplication of activities, increased collaborations, clarified progression routes and enhanced opportunities for learners;
- extending the range and quality of learning to better meet the needs of young people, including mapping against CfE's four capacities;
- extending range and uptake of wider achievement and accreditation opportunities;
- capacity building with staff and partners taking on new roles and ongoing support/mentoring;
- development of DVDs and a supporting educational group work toolkit for use by SPS, within communities and schools to raise awareness of crime and consequence;
- development and publication of the first ever prospectus for use by young people, staff and partners;
- co-delivery approach to Social, Emotional, Health and Wellbeing training to 388 Prison Officers.

This partnership has had a significant positive impact on strategic and operational staff, wider partners and offenders, as new and improved ways of working have evolved.



Young people:  
**'My advice for anybody just coming in is sign up for everything, do as much education as you possibly can, buy into the system.'**

**'I've realised there are organisations out there that help.'**

Chief Inspector, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland:

**'The partnership with Education Scotland is delivering tangible results, improving the positive outcomes for young men at Polmont and for the good of Scotland as a whole.'**

## Strategic Objective 1: Building a world-class curriculum for all learners in Scotland

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### Impact

#### Some indications of our impact are:

- Participants at Education Scotland early learning and childcare learning events held in 2014-15 agree that there has been a positive impact on learning and teaching as a result of participating/attending the event.
- Directors of Education and participants report that collaborative outreach activities led by Area Lead Officers in 2014-15 had a positive impact on learning and teaching.
- Participants report that collaborative outreach activities in CLD led by Education Scotland in 2014-15 had a positive impact on learning.
- An evaluation of the initiatives developed by sportscotland and Education Scotland has found that the number of primary and secondary schools meeting the 2-hour or two-period target for physical education has increased from 89% in 2013, to 96% in 2014.
- Headteachers and depute headteachers across Scotland report increased confidence in implementing CfE in languages, literacy and Gaelic.
- Evaluation has shown that training on Social Emotional Health and Wellbeing has helped staff to understand and support the young people better, improving interactions and relationships between staff and young people.



## Strategic Objective 2: Promoting high-quality professional learning and leadership amongst education practitioners

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We have a key role in promoting professional learning in all education sectors. This includes our work in implementing the recommendations to improve teachers' professional learning set out in the *Teaching Scotland's Future* report, but it also applies to our work in education sectors beyond schools, such as early years settings and adult services and for professionals beyond teachers, such as educational psychologists and those with the Childhood Practice Degree.

### Highlights/Key Priorities

This year, we have continued to lead on delivery of the *Teaching Scotland's Future* agenda. We are taking a strong lead in working with our national partners to implement effective approaches to the development of career-long professional learning (CLPL) including masters level learning and improving leadership capacity in Scottish education. We are working closely to support the development of the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) and its key programmes of work.

The Flexible Routes to Headship (FRH) Programme continues to make a significant contribution to our work in increasing leadership capacity in Scottish education. Professional learning resources which have been developed include the Framework for Educational Leadership, Mentoring Matters, the Teaching Scotland web resource for aspiring and new teachers and Professional Learning Find, an online resource which offers practitioners a place to find out about professional learning opportunities. We have been working to increase the range of our professional learning

activities for practitioners from a wide range of roles and sectors. We have had a particular focus on developing inclusive practices and strategies for tackling inequity. This has included the School Improvement Partnership Programme (SIPP) which has been creating leadership opportunities and professional learning through collaborative enquiry.

Through participation in college external reviews, annual engagement visits and aspect task activities, we have supported college-based Associate Assessors (AAs) to improve their knowledge and understanding of educational best practice approaches adopted across the sector. They also benefit from tailored training delivered by Education Scotland college HMIs, which enhances their ability to bring about improvement back at their own college. During 2014-15 over 50 AAs contributed to, and benefited from, engagement activities with other colleges.

A series of five leadership conferences were held in September and October 2014 to support primary schools with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. Places were made available for 40% of primary school leaders in each local authority, and the events were also attended by representatives from local authorities and professional associations.

In addition, a series of four secondary headteacher and depute headteacher leadership conferences was held in January and February 2015 to support secondary schools and local authorities with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. Headteachers and depute headteachers were invited to attend along with representatives from local authorities and professional associations. Education Scotland planned the events in partnership with Scottish Government, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and School Leaders Scotland (SLS).

## Strategic Objective 2: Promoting high-quality professional learning and leadership amongst education practitioners

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### Facts and Figures

- The 2014 Scottish Learning Festival (SLF) attracted 3015 visitors from Scottish establishments and local authorities as well as 120 international delegates and 150 exhibitors.
- There were 103,000 visits to the professional learning area of the Education Scotland website.
- 822 primary headteachers attended the CfE leadership conferences for primary schools.
- 34 participants in the Flexible Routes to Headships Programme graduated in March 2015 with a further 64 currently taking part in the Programme.
- The Teacher Education Aspect Review (Phase 1) involved nine partnerships between Teacher education Institutions (TEIs) and Education Authorities with 21 associate assessors and nine student members being appointed.
- We are working with 29 local authorities in supporting professional learning for positive relationships, behaviour and wellbeing for teachers and probationers, support assistants and adults working with children.
- 70 early learning and childcare staff participated in learning about the national approaches to promoting positive relationships and behaviour.
- Support staff from 26 local authorities and wider organisations engaged in professional learning which developed their awareness of their role in promoting positive relationships and behaviour. Most respondents were able to identify clear next steps from their learning experiences.
- In fulfilling recommendations from the Scottish Government's response to the Doran Review, we supported three conversations and national events for staff making provision for those with complex needs for over 400 practitioners from across Scotland.
- 100 young people demonstrated their leadership through the Peer Education event on a range of aspects of equality and diversity.
- The School Improvement Partnership Programme has involved 14 local authorities, over 15 primary schools and 20 secondary schools and their partners working innovatively to tackle educational inequity.
- 200 early learning and childcare practitioners and managers engaged in professional learning conversations about approaches to improving practice – 70% of participants successfully followed up on pledges made.



**659 headteachers and deputy headteachers attended the CfE Leadership conferences for secondary schools.**

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## Strategic Objective 2: Promoting high-quality professional learning and leadership amongst education practitioners

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### Case Study: Making Sense

Education Scotland published the *Making Sense* report in April 2014 on the review of education for children and young people who have dyslexia was carried out on behalf of the Scottish Government. The review covered the experiences of learners in primary, secondary and special schools. It also looked into the provision made by local authorities and at the programmes of initial teacher education currently offered by universities in Scotland. The review identified the need for teachers, support staff and local authority staff to have access to a wide range of high-quality career-long professional learning opportunities at school, local and national level related to meeting the needs of children and young people with dyslexia.

As part of the response, Education Scotland is developing an interactive career-long professional learning (CLPL) route map for Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice in partnership with Dyslexia Scotland, the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit, student teachers from Dundee University and stakeholders. The group is working together to identify relevant and current best practice and advice and considering ways to present the route map in accessible formats. The student teachers value highly the opportunity to engage with experienced practitioners in development work focused on their future careers.

The route map aligns with the General Teaching Council for Scotland's standard for CLPL to support professional learning for Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice. It provides a context of literacy and dyslexia as part of inclusive practice together with key resources, advice and research to support professional learning for any practitioner and also for those seeking Professional Recognition.

**The group is working together to identify relevant and current best practice and advice and considering ways to present the route map in accessible formats.**

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## Strategic Objective 2: Promoting high-quality professional learning and leadership amongst education practitioners

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### Case Study: A nationally coordinated approach to improvement in the sciences

As the first cohort of learners was preparing to sit the new CfE externally-assessed exams, in 2014 it became clear that further support was required to assist with the implementation of the sciences qualifications. Key issues were emerging around the need to better understand national standards, uncertainty about new approaches to assessment as well as resourcing and workload issues.

In response, we organised a programme of cross-authority science network events for secondary science teachers. All 32 local authorities were invited to nominate experienced science practitioners to these events to work collaboratively with colleagues.

By the end of the first event in January 2014 the participating teachers had created their own online community to host the resources they had co-developed. This was hosted on Glow, Scotland's national educational intranet. This meant that the resources being developed by the core network could be shared instantly with every practitioner in Scotland.

By June 2015, over 300 practitioners had attended the cross-authority events and some 3000 classroom resources had been co-developed and shared. Around 1000 unique users accessed the sciences Glow community in the first three months of 2015. This equates to about one-third of the secondary science specialist practitioners in Scotland. The cross-authority approach is now being extended to include practitioners responsible for science in early learning and primary sectors.



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Attendees of science network events:  
**'The impact has been huge.  
I would have left teaching if it  
wasn't for this type of support.'**

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**'If you are teaching in a small school  
then this is your safety net.'**

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**'The cross-authority events have been brilliant for  
resources and networking.'**

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## Strategic Objective 2: Promoting high-quality professional learning and leadership amongst education practitioners

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### Impact

#### Some indications of our impact are:

- Participants at education learning events held in 2014-15 report that it has been helpful in developing and improving their own professional practice.
- Participants at Education Scotland learning events in relation to inclusive practices held in 2014-15 report that they have been helpful in developing and improving their own professional learning.
- All eight partnerships participating in School Improvement Partnership Programme agree that they have increased their knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence following engagement in collaborative enquiry approaches and how to tackle inequalities during 2014-15.
- Headteachers report that professional dialogue which took place during inspection has been helpful in developing and improving their use of Insight.
- Responses from participants in the Educational Psychology Services Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) professional learning indicated that it had increased their knowledge and readiness to engage in VSE.
- Participants in the Flexible Routes to Headship (FRH) programme are very positive about the impact of the programme on their practice. They pursue areas within their own remit to provide evidence of the Scottish Qualification for Headship. In terms of impact, whatever the focus, there is evidence of participant's building greater accountability across the school, and supporting improved self-evaluation skills within staff teams.
- The Glow! 'EarlyLearn' community is impacting positively in terms of numbers of interactions and in the high quality of engagement around pedagogical issues and sharing of resources.

Flexible Routes to Headship  
Participant (DHT secondary):  
**'Involvement in the FRH programme has made me much more aware of the strategic approach and in terms of my relationships with others, the FRH has had a huge impact. There has been whole school impact in terms of learning and teaching as a result of reading and research, talking with fellow candidates, talking through approaches and issues with my coach/mentor and being so involved with thinking about the role (of headteacher).'**

## Strategic Objective 3: Building the capacity of education providers to improve their performance continuously

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We give a high priority, across all the areas in which we work, to promoting improvement in the capacity of education professionals to self-evaluate and drive improvements in their own performance. We do this through a variety of mechanisms including providing national resources and training and through the way we engage with practitioners who work alongside us or who we meet in the course of inspections and other activities.

### Highlights/Key Priorities

In 2014-15 we continued to work with partners to explore new and innovative approaches for building the capacity of education providers in a range of settings. We also seek to build capacity through our inspection programme.

Working with local authorities continues to be an important aspect of our work and we now have in place partnership agreements with every local authority in Scotland. These agreements, which are coordinated by our Area Lead Officers, are being used to plan and coordinate a range of support from Education Scotland to build capacity in the local authority. We worked with South Ayrshire Council on a Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) exercise which focused on three themes, each with a different emphasis on equality of opportunity to learn and achieve across the council. We also provided targeted support to build capacity in Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, and Midlothian Councils.

We have also supported Action Learning Pilots in three colleges in Scotland. The pilots are a tripartite arrangement between ES and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), and each individual college. The focus of the pilots is to explore new, effective ways of engaging in evaluative activities to bring about improvement. Much of the work has focused on building the capacity of staff in colleges to engage jointly with ES and SFC in evaluating provision within a regional context. Staff in ES and SFC have also benefited from the pilots to widen their knowledge and understanding of the impact of regionalisation and potential benefits. Within the three colleges, most staff have been involved in development activities designed and delivered by ES staff to support improvements.

We have delivered sessions on Transformational Change to a wide range of national and international audiences to build on effective self-evaluation and promote future planning for improvement. We have entered into a partnership with the British Council that includes five schools using Transformational change tools to lead to improved outcomes in international partnership work.

Finally, we have significantly increased our work with the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) and are now advising and supporting them in their development of a quality assurance system around learning in prisons, their new learning contract as well as the ongoing work with HM Polmont Young Offenders Institution.

## Strategic Objective 3: Building the capacity of education providers to improve their performance continuously

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### Facts and Figures

- Partnership Agreements in place with every local authority in Scotland.
- Presentation to 18 Sheriffs (12% of total Sheriff population in Scotland) on the development of the Polmont Learning Environment.
- Roll out of Social Emotional Health and Wellbeing training to all HMYOI Polmont staff plus training the trainers session
- Eight local authorities are engaged in the GIRFEC task in reviewing, developing, planning and implementing their policies in a collaborative cross-sectoral approach.



**50 residential special schools and secure care accommodation services engaged with link officers in building capacity in implementing Curriculum for Excellence.**



**14 local authorities are working with Education Scotland in the School Improvement Partnership Programme (SIPP).**

We consulted our stakeholders to seek their views on the development of the revised edition of *How good is our school?* by:

- Carrying out structured interviews with a sample of Directors of Education and Headteachers.
- Inviting all local authorities to send staff to one of our conversation days which were held in locations across Scotland. Our conversation days also included staff working in CLD, early years, FE and local authorities as well as independent schools.
- Inviting all local authorities and members of our external stakeholder group to a national conference in May 2015 where we shared our ideas for improving the framework and took feedback from all participants through workshop activities.

## Strategic Objective 3: Building the capacity of education providers to improve their performance continuously

### Case Study: School Improvement Partnership Programme

Through the School Improvement Partnership Programme (SIPP), we are working with local authorities and universities to broker and facilitate partnerships within and across schools and local authorities. In the spirit of action research, the programme aims to encourage staff to learn from each other, experiment with their practice and monitor and evaluate change. The partnerships share the commitment to improving outcomes and raising attainment for all children and young people from the most deprived backgrounds.

The external evaluation by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change and teachers' own enquiry has provided evidence that the SIPP is making a demonstrable impact. Participants identified that SIPP has supported the development of leadership and professional learning of staff at all levels. The most apparent progress has been partnerships establishing collaborative networks that have supported teachers' learning and teaching approaches to address inequality as well as their ability to integrate research and enquiry to assess progress and inform developments.

### Case Study: Action Learning Pilot – Ayrshire College

During 2014-15 the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) established Action Learning Pilot projects in three colleges to explore alternative approaches to quality assurance and scrutiny in the new regional landscape. Education Scotland participated in these pilot projects along with staff from SFC.

For Ayrshire College, this was an opportunity to develop a new quality enhancement framework and engage with staff in the context of a complex merger. We provided advice to senior managers and facilitated workshops for staff during the development of the college's internal evaluation processes around the key themes of High-Quality Learning, Learners' Progress and Outcomes, Learner Engagement, Leadership and Quality Culture and Capacity to Improve.

A key element of the engagement between Education Scotland and the college has been the support provided for capacity building within the college, particularly in relation to delivering the aims of Developing the Young Workforce. This input and guidance has greatly assisted the college with their direction for evaluation and validation of quality arrangements, including the college's capacity to improve.

Following the input to development workshops throughout the year, we participated in comprehensive end-of-year evaluative activity, including participation of employers, schools and student focus groups. Outputs from these evaluations, shared with SFC and an independent Education Scotland representative, were compared with the college's own self-evaluation in order to validate their quality processes.



## Strategic Objective 3: Building the capacity of education providers to improve their performance continuously

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### Impact

#### Some indications of our impact are:

- Participants in CLD learning events held in 2014-15 report that it has been helpful in improving their approaches to self-evaluation.
- Staff in special schools, including residential special schools agree that engagement provided by Education Scotland, during the Building Capacity in Residential Special Schools, (BCRSS) task has been effective in providing support and challenge to support continuous improvement. Almost all schools valued opportunities to work in partnership with Education Scotland towards improved outcomes for young people.
- Directors of Education agree that tailored support provided through the local partnership agreement has been helpful in developing approaches for continuous improvement.
- Colleges agree that engagement provided by Education Scotland has been effective in providing support and challenge to support continuous improvement.
- Local authorities who have used the Educational Benefits self-evaluation toolkit for Schools Consultations have found it has contributed to improving educational benefits statements.
- Through approximately 260 lesson observations conducted during five college external reviews, teaching staff evaluated their teaching approaches through discussions held with observing HMIs and Associate Assessors.

RSS staff member:

**‘We believe that our relationship with the (BCRSS) link inspector has contributed positively to the positive changes that have allowed us to extend our reach and influence in our young people’s lives.’**

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RSS staff member:

**We were able to work collaboratively with yourself and other schools in sharing ideas about Literacy, Numeracy and Wellbeing across care and education. This helped us develop what we think is a very useful and effective system tailored to the very specific needs of our young people.’**

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## Strategic Objective 4: Building the capacity of education providers to improve their performance continuously

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Providing independent evaluation continues to be a core function of Education Scotland, through individual establishment inspections, thematic reviews and other means. Through doing so we aim to provide assurance on the quality of Scottish education whilst also generating evidence to inform policy making and valuable feedback for front-line services and professionals, designed to help them plan their next steps in improving outcomes for learners.

### Highlights/Key Priorities

Each year, we inspect and report on the quality of education in a sample of early learning and childcare centres, primary, secondary and special schools, community learning and development services, colleges, and residential educational provision. In the course of 2014-15, we have introduced new review programmes relating to careers information advice and guidance, and modern apprenticeships. To support improvement, inspectors focus on the quality of learners' experiences and achievements. This year, we carried out a total of **298** inspections.

We launched a wide-ranging review of our approaches to inspection at the Scottish Learning Festival in September 2014. The review applies to all sectors and all types of scrutiny activity undertaken by Education Scotland. It is a long-term review, founded on a desire to ensure that inspection is fit for purpose and as effective as possible in bringing about improvement across Scottish education. We successfully ensured an authorising environment for the review through the creation of an External Reference

Group which has over 35 members from all sectors of education and other relevant backgrounds. The consultation phase is now complete, and drawing on its findings, we shall try out some potential new approaches to inspection between October 2015 and March 2016.

Other notable activities from Education Scotland this year have included:

- The introduction of the use of *Insight*, the senior phase benchmarking tool, to evaluate improvements in performance in secondary schools.
- In partnership with Skills Development Scotland, the introduction of new programmes to review Careers Information, Advice and Guidance; and Modern Apprenticeships.
- On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council, the evaluation of provision in the college sector for: engineering; CfE; and understanding learners achieving with partial success.
- We worked in partnership with colleagues from culture and sport on Learning Community inspections. We now have a better understanding of the contribution that culture and sport activity makes to improving life chances for learners.
- Through learning community inspections we identified examples of innovative practice with marginalised groups. These include Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-sexual (LGBT) young people and those disengaged from learning.
- Support for the States of Guernsey Education Department in an ongoing programme of educational improvement.

## Strategic Objective 4: Providing independent evaluation of education provision

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### Facts and Figures

#### Inspection and Review 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015

- 21 secondary schools
- 1 all-through school
- 14 day special schools
- 4 residential special schools and secure care services
- 1 school care accommodation service
- 8 college reviews, including three piloting new approaches
- 4 prison education settings
- 14 learning communities
- 6 children's services
- 6 independent schools
- 16 annual engagement visits to Scotland's colleges
- 9 annual engagement visits, on behalf of the UK Border Agency, to centres which wish to deliver courses to international students.
- 5 external reviews of Career Information, Advice and Guidance delivered in partnership with Skills Development Scotland



**61 stand-alone** early learning and childcare settings

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**95 primary schools**, including **63** with a nursery class

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### Case Study: Review of Sistema Scotland

In September 2014 Education Scotland carried out a review, the impact of Sistema Scotland's Big Noise programme in Stirling, which contributed to a the long-term evaluation of Sistema Scotland commissioned by Scottish Government and being led by Glasgow Centre for Population and Health in partnership with Audit Scotland. The aim of the review was to assess the community impact of Sistema Scotland's work in Raploch, Stirling. It was conducted by a multi-disciplinary team of HMI and Associate Assessors, using a blended approach to evaluation drawing from three main inspection tools: *How good is our school 3?*, *How Good is our Community Learning and Development 2?* and *How Good is our Culture and Sport?*. These tools enabled the team to look at educational, community and cultural impacts of the Big Noise programme, which crosses school and community boundaries in its aim to transform lives through music.

### Case Study: Technologies 3-18 Curriculum Impact Review

In March 2015, The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning launched the *Technologies 3-18 Curriculum Impact Review* at a conference organised by Education Scotland. The report evaluates the quality of young people's learning and achievements in the technologies and contributes to the overall picture of what it is like to be a learner in Scotland in the second decade of the 21st century. The report is based on evidence and data gathered from around 40 exploratory visits to early learning and childcare settings, primary, secondary and special schools in Scotland. It also draws on evidence from research across Europe and beyond.

This is a new type of report from Education Scotland which represents the increasingly successful 'symbiosis' between our evaluative and support functions. It highlights clear links with the Computing and Digital Media report for our colleges and emphasises the importance the technologies have in contributing to Scotland's bright future. It recognises the technologies' particular and unique contribution to the Broad General Education, the Senior Phase and beyond. It also underlines the special relationships with creativity, enterprise and entrepreneurship and with the world of work. It has a specific role in ensuring some of the key objectives of the Developing the Young Workforce are achieved by preparing Scotland's young people for employment in the digital industries.

Education Scotland is now focusing on ensuring maximum impact, embedding the report's key recommendations explicitly in activities for 2015/16. Publication of *Technologies at Work*, a direct product of the TIR report, sets out our plans for further committed support and leadership activity and associating the technologies closely with priorities for Developing the Young Workforce.

## Strategic Objective 4: Providing independent evaluation of education provision

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### Case Study: Early Learning and Childcare Impact Visits

On top of our early learning and childcare (ELCC) inspection programme, we carried out a series of Impact visits from September 2014 through to May 2015. We visited a sample of 18 ELCC settings in 14 authorities. These were a mix of private providers, voluntary sector provision and local authority settings where we had agreed that Education Scotland did not require to provide any further support through engagement. We wanted to know what impact engagement through inspection had on taking improvement forward.

Analysis of records of impact visits suggest that we have had positive impact on developing further approaches to planning, notably with planning of Curriculum for Excellence and of involving children more in planning their learning. Professional dialogue during inspection and sharing Record of Inspection Findings after inspection both featured strongly as support for taking improvement forward. Input during inspection from Education Scotland and, where appropriate, Care Inspectorate staff also contributed to increased confidence in developing children's experiences, especially their outdoor learning, as well as making more effective use of partnerships with key stakeholders such as parents, local and wider community partners and engaging with local authority improvement officers.



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## Strategic Objective 4: Providing independent evaluation of education provision

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### Impact

#### Some indications of our impact are:

- Early learning and childcare establishments inspected report that the inspection has made a positive contribution to change and improvement after one year.
- Special schools, including residential special schools, inspected report that the inspection had made a positive contribution to change and improvement after one year.
- As a result of Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG), college, Modern Apprenticeship and prison external reviews, aspect tasks and action learning pilots, establishments report that there has been a positive contribution to change and improvement and a positive impact on learning and teaching.
- Independent schools where we carried out Quality Improvement and Professional Engagement visits report that the visits made a positive contribution to change and improvement after one year.
- Primary and secondary headteachers report that inspection undertaken in 2014-15 has had a positive impact on learning and teaching.



## Strategic Objective 5: Influencing national policy through evidence-based advice

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We place a high priority on ensuring we use our unique range of evidence and the professional expertise of our staff to provide policy colleagues and Ministers with authoritative professional advice to inform their development of national policy. In many areas we work closely with colleagues in Scottish Government policy directorates as they provide policy support for Ministers and in some areas like Youth strategy and Adult Learning we provide policy advice to Ministers directly.

### Highlights/Key Priorities

This year, we have continued to devote significant senior resource and emphasis on providing support and advice to shape and influence the development of policy in education and lifelong learning. In a year of intense focus on education, our role in this respect has become increasingly important and has included our involvement in high-level working groups, chairing and attending programme boards and reporting to parliamentary committees.

Our Chief Executive continues to Chair the CfE Implementation Group and to report to the CfE Management Board on progress towards full implementation of CfE, including the new National Qualifications. Senior members of staff have also provided evidence to the Education and Culture Committee in relation to the implementation and impact of Curriculum for Excellence, raising attainment, and more specifically in relation to learners with sensory impairments.

In February 2015, we published *Advice on Gaelic Education*. This provides important information on the national context for Gaelic Education, and describes best practice to support practitioners and local authorities in evaluating and planning for improvement in Gaelic Education.

This year, we worked with key partner organisations to develop two new national policies, the *Youth Work Strategy* and the *Adult Learning Statement of Ambition*. Both of these documents had significant Ministerial involvement and interest and both have been well received by the CLD sector in Scotland.

We contribute to the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Ministerial and National sub-groups to provide policy advice and contribute to the delivery of the CSE action plan which includes the develop curriculum resources for schools.

Through our contributions to the Ministerial advisory group on relationships and behaviour in schools we provide policy advice and are supporting the implementation of the Better relationships, Better learning, Better behaviour policy and are working with a number of local authorities to support improvement in practices.

Finally, we continue to build our policy and partnership working across Education and Justice by working with colleagues in the Scottish Preventing Violent Extremism Unit and through the Prevent sub-group contribute to the Counter Terrorism Implementation Plan including further developing existing and new resources to tackle radicalisation and terrorism.

## Strategic Objective 5: Influencing national policy through evidence-based advice

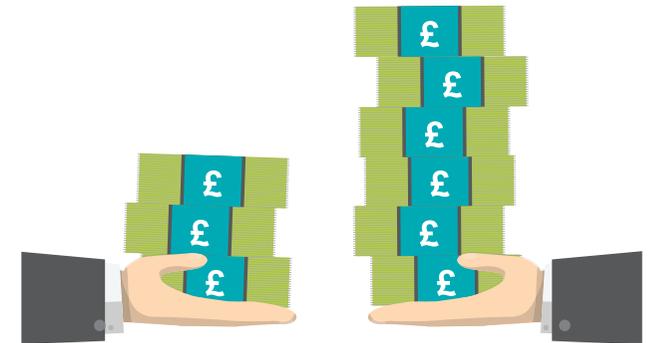
### Facts and Figures

#### Membership of Key Groups and Boards

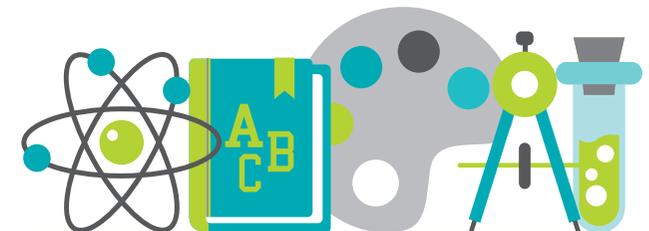
- Digital Learning and Teaching Programme Board
- GIRFEC Programme Board
- Languages Strategic Implementation Group
- Tackling Bureaucracy Working Group
- CfE Management Board, including the sub-group which reflected on the first year of new National Qualifications
- CfE Implementation Group
- Scotland's Wide Area Network (SWAN) Programme Board
- STEM Education Committee
- Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) Board

#### Grants and Funding 2014-15

- Food for Thought Fund: £644,000
- School Improvement Partnership Programme: £550,000
- Support for PE £529,700
- Our CLD team delivered organisational support and funding to 23 national organisations as part of the Strategic Funding Partnerships. This was an increase from nine organisations in 2013-14 and there was a subsequent increase in grant funding of over £1m



Grants payments in 2014-15 totalled **£5.9m** compared to **£3.3m** in 2013-14, an increase of **£2.6m**



Access to Education Fund: **£1.5m**

### Case Study: Ministerial Advisory Group for Additional Support for Learning (AGASL)

Education Scotland is a key contributor to the Ministerial Advisory Group for Additional Support for Learning (AGASL) which continues to play key role in maintaining the focus on the needs of children and young people by advising and supporting the development of national policy. We have a legislative duty to contribute evidence to implementation of the Education (Additional support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. The four years of reporting by Scottish Ministers has begun to establish patterns in the more accurate identification and recording of the numbers of children and young people with additional support needs. For the latest *Report to Parliament, March 2015* Education Scotland carried out field work to identify best practice in meeting the needs of looked after children and young people across a range of local authorities and independent schools in Scotland. This was reported as key features of successful approaches to meeting the needs of looked after children and young people at all stages. Overall, this latest report indicates that while there is still an attainment gap that is too wide for those with additional support needs, evidence suggests that the gap may be closing for some groups of children and young people with additional support needs.

### Case Study: Implementation of the *National Youth Work Strategy*

The aim of the *National Youth Work Strategy*, which was published in April 2014, is that all young people, in every part of Scotland, should have access to high-quality and effective youth work practice. Altogether over 400 people and young people engaged in the National Discussion, helping to shape this strategy. The Minister noted that the co-production approach to develop this strategy was central to its ambitions and had ensured buy-in from young people, youth work organisations, local authorities, Third Sector groups and schools.

To achieve this the Strategy sets out five key ambitions:

- Ensure Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in
- Put young people at the heart of policy
- Recognise the value of youth work
- Build workforce capacity
- Ensure we measure our impact

Since the launch of the Strategy, a Stakeholder Reference Group has been established, co-chaired By Education Scotland and Youthlink. Membership is drawn from across the CLD sector including colleagues from Scottish Government and work is progressing on taking forward the key strategic outcomes. Champions have been identified around those areas and developments in workforce and research are progressing. The recommendations from the workforce survey are being taken forward and youth work questions are being included in the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) survey. A national event is being planned for January 2016 as part of the monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy to report on progress.

## Strategic Objective 5: Influencing national policy through evidence-based advice

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### Impact

#### Some indications of our impact are:

- Policy colleagues and Ministers are generally positive about the quality of advice provided.
- External partners working in Post 16 education sectors provided positive feedback about the level and type of information provided by Education Scotland to help them carry out their role. This includes feedback from the Scottish Funding Council on advice given in relation to the impact of regionalisation colleges and future considerations for supporting improvement.
- Positive feedback from Ministers and stakeholders on the purpose, scope and depth of the adult Learning Statement of Ambition as a catalyst for engaging and empowering adults through learning.



## Strategic Objective 6: Improve our organisational capability and invest in our people

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Our success in pursuing the previous five strategic objectives will, to a large extent, rely on how effective we are at improving our own organisational capability and realising the potential of our staff. We are, therefore, committed to continuous improvement of our systems and practices, both in terms of investing in our people and ensuring they have access to high-quality corporate systems which give them the support they need to do their job.

### Highlights/Key Priorities

As an organisation we have undergone a period of sustained change and development since our inception in 2010. In recognition of that, and to support our existing governance structure, in 2014-15 we introduced the *Change Board*. The function of this board is to ensure that change projects are established and monitored so that they deliver expected outcomes within the resource and time budgets allocated.

Our *People Board* goes from strength to strength and has played a key role in developing a positive, value-based ethos and culture in Education Scotland. This year we published our *People Strategy* which requires us to:

- ensure that all strategies, plans, actions, systems and processes across the organisation reflect and support the vision and principles of the *People Strategy* in their delivery;
- ensure that all staff are enabled to support the vision and requirements of the *People Strategy*;
- work in partnership with staff and their representative bodies; and
- ensure that all staff benefit from the *People Strategy*.

Education Scotland's baseline budget has steadily reduced over the years from **£28.8m** in 2011-12 to **£21.8m** in 2014-15. This has provided a significant challenge to our Resources Board, which was formed to oversee the efficient and effective use of our budget and staffing.

We continue to develop our performance management framework and to monitor the effectiveness and impact of our work through our Strategic Impact Board. There is still work to be done in ensuring this is fully embedded in all that we do, but there has been significant progress during the year and whilst performance measures are limited for 2014-15, for 2015-16 and beyond these will become more robust.

**A significant step forward for us this year was the integration of our IT systems so that we are now all operating from a single platform. This has improved our ability to communicate with each other and has facilitated information and knowledge sharing. We also developed a new intranet this year, which allows us to engage effectively with our staff and to keep them up to date with organisational developments.**

Our programmes of work are supported and informed by the collation and analysis of evidence provided by our internal Knowledge Management team. For example this year support was provided for the evaluation of the Food for Thought: Education Fund, Game On Scotland and the Scottish Learning Festival. In partnership with the Robert Owen Centre, we undertook research to inform how Education Scotland can best support practitioners to put knowledge into action. We have also worked closely with Scottish Government this year on the new Insight tool and in June 2014 published the next in the National Performance Framework publication series, *Summary of Reference Quality Indicator Evaluations June 2014*.

## Strategic Objective 6: Improve our organisational capability and invest in our people

### Facts and Figures

#### Our locations

We have offices in:

1. Inverness
2. Aberdeen
3. Dundee
4. Edinburgh
5. Livingston
6. Clydebank
7. Glasgow



#### Our people

Our staff is made up of a mix of permanent, temporary and seconded staff, bringing together a rich mix of different skills and expertise, including curriculum development specialists, HM Inspectors, corporate service specialists, analysts, and experts in research, information, communications, technology and other areas. The mix of permanent and temporary staff means we are able to ensure a balance of continuity with refreshed thinking and approaches from recent practitioner experience.

Permanent staff	253
Fixed-term appointments	9
Seconded staff	54
Agency staff	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>334</b>

#### Our costs

In 2014-15 our operating budget was **£35.4m**

#### Our website

- 23,077,425 page views
- 4,833,787 users
- 7,170,114 sessions
- Facebook 5100 Likes
- Twitter 16,000 followers



#### Our communications

- 3216 calls received to our central support line
- 2891 emails received to our enquiry inbox
- 5540 weekly news subscribers
- 38,104 subscribers to our range of e-bulletins

#### Our approach to sustainability

- We decreased the amount of waste sent to landfill by increasing the volume recycled by 8% and reduced water use by 1%.
- Established a Health, Safety and Sustainability Management System to provide a framework for driving forward further improvements.

#### Our efficiency savings

- During 2014-15 we made procurement savings of £0.5m
- Through our voluntary exit scheme, 12 staff left the organisation at the end of 2014-15, result in ongoing annual savings of £0.5m in salary costs.

## Strategic Objective 6: Improve our organisational capability and invest in our people

### Case Study: Modern Apprentices in Education Scotland

The Modern Apprenticeship scheme helps us to improve our organisational capability, invest in our people and build a skilled and talented workforce. It is important that we are an exemplar learning organisation and that we provide opportunities for young people to continue to grow and develop and realise their potential.

By investing in young people through the Modern Apprentice programme, our organisation benefits from new ideas and new people, with new skills and knowledge. The Corporate Support Office currently has four members of staff who were, or are currently, Modern Apprentices. We find that young people bring new energy to the Corporate Support Office.

As a learning organisation, we have a responsibility to our local community and wider society. By taking on a Modern Apprentice we could be increasing the life chances of those young people we employ. We are demonstrating that our business is socially responsible and raising our profile in the community.

The Modern Apprentices we have taken on are extremely positive about their work and future prospects.

Brett Hillman started as a Modern Apprentice back in 2012 and is now a permanent member of staff. He says:

*'Getting the opportunity to be a Modern Apprentice at Education Scotland has allowed me to work with a diverse group of colleagues who are friendly, talented, inspiring and are fully committed to improving education for all learners in Scotland.'*

Fiona Sinclair was taken on in June 2014 and is now a permanent member of our staff. She says: *'Being taken on as a Modern Apprentice in Education Scotland has been a great experience for me. I had lots of opportunities to develop my skills and this allowed me to complete my apprenticeship successfully. I now have a permanent job with Education Scotland.'*

Erin Middlemass was taken on in January 2015 and is thoroughly enjoying the experience she is having. She says: *'Getting the opportunity to be a Modern Apprentice at Education Scotland has been a fantastic chance for me to realise my own strengths and develop new skills.'*

Modern Apprenticeships are an investment, they give our workforce the right mix of skills and ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right roles.

**The Modern Apprenticeship scheme helps us to improve our organisational capability, invest in our people and build a skilled and talented workforce.**



# International Education

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In 2014-15 we continued to implement our International strategy with some notable successes. We have strengthened our partnership working with British Council (Scotland) and created a joint one-year post focused on building the capacity of teachers and other educational staff to support learners at all stages to develop an international mind set.

In collaboration with the Malawi government and the Scottish Malawi Partnership we ran a practice-sharing conference for over 100 delegates in June 2014. This conference brought together the educational community working with Malawi for the very first time. We currently have 120 active school partnerships with Malawi in Scotland.

To support our improvement journey we have actively sought to learn from others, share ideas and experiences, and collaborate to raise the educational standards of Scotland's children and young people. Education Scotland has researched and explored what works in other countries and learnt more about innovative practices and how they could be applied in Scotland. For example, study visits organised and supported by the British Council to look at employability skills in Austria, and STEAM in Vietnam. We have actively strengthened our capacity to engage strategically with a wide range of partners across the world including SICI (Standing International Conference of Inspectorates), CIDREE (Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe), the OECD, the European Commission and the British Council.

Education Scotland's international engagement includes receiving international visitors, making presentations and providing advice on quality improvement to senior educationists and government ministers from other countries, addressing international conferences, membership of international groups and involvement in long-term international projects including training of policy officers and inspectors.

- In 2014, we hosted 27 visits from high-level government officials, researchers and educators who came to learn about current initiatives in Scottish education and share information about their countries' education systems, policy and political contexts; including representatives from countries including Norway, China, Lithuania, and Greece. The evaluative feedback from international visitors is always sought, and is overwhelming positive. While impact measures are hard to source, it is clear a number of countries actively use the Scottish approach to inspection Iceland and Chile, while others have incorporated aspects of Curriculum for Excellence into their education systems.
- We also made a number of visits to other countries for conferences and study trips, in many cases paid for by global agencies such as the British Council or the government of the country concerned. Education Scotland colleagues visited Malawi, Poland, Pakistan, South Korea and China. Our contributions are highly valued and are proven to make an impact. A number of our transformational change approaches have been taken on board by the South Korean government.
- In 2014-15, we were commissioned to undertake a Strategic Inspection of the States of Guernsey Education Department. During this work, Guernsey Education Department also asked us to work with them to support ongoing self-evaluation and to develop a model for validating their schools self-evaluation.

# Our continuing story:

By continuing to focus on our Strategic Objectives we will seek to make a significant contribution towards achieving Scotland's collective ambition for education.

This collective ambition is to ensure that:

- educational outcomes for all learners are improving;
- inequity in educational outcomes is eradicated;
- public confidence in education is high.

During 2016-17 we will publish a comprehensive review of available intelligence, evidence and research on how well the Scottish education system is performing. It will make use of all available data, such as inspection evidence and achievement data, but also draw from international research and broader intelligence to relate education within its broader social and economic context.

We will also publish our new three year corporate plan outlining how we will contribute to improving the Scottish education system, in light of our review, in the medium term.

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