Health and wellbeing 3-18 curriculum impact report

Partnerships in Sgoil Lionail, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

[Crofting Connections](http://croftingconnections.com/) is an interdisciplinary initiative, designed to enable children and young people, aged 3 to 18 living in remote rural communities throughout the Highlands & Islands, to learn about crofting past, present and future. The traditional crofting principles of providing food, shelter, clothing, energy and entertainment are very much aligned with the 21st Century need for sustainability and offer significant opportunities for outdoor learning and place-based education.

Sgoil Lionail in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES), has developed a very strong partnership with the Crofting Connections initiative over recent years. This has led to a range of diverse interdisciplinary learning projects being delivered in the school. The joint project allows connections to be made between Curriculum for Excellence, health and wellbeing as the responsibility for all and [Getting It Right for Every Child](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/g/genericresource_tcm4620244.asp?strReferringChannel=learningandteaching&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-852177-64&class=l6+d218750) (GIRFEC). Learners’ self–evaluation of their Crofting Connections project work is also directly linked to the principles of GIRFEC.

As an integral part Crofting Connections, the school works collaboratively with external community partners such as the fire service and police to explore specific health and wellbeing issues, such as reducing the potential for harm, particularly around issues with alcohol in the community. Community Learning and Development (CLD) workers also provide strong support for Crofting Connections and this has resulted in Dynamic Youth Awards for young people being coordinated with the school. Dynamic Youth Awards were presented to pupils last session following assessment and completion of portfolios of work done during Crofting Connections sessions. Parents described how they have seen the confidence of their children flourish through the support of the school and extended partnerships.

There are many outdoor learning opportunities through Crofting Connections and visits to the community, using the local landscape and wildlife as an extension of the classroom. Learners exercise choice in where they visit within the community to meet with their personal interests. CnES operates a formal strategy of articulating education provision with economic priorities. Crofting and land use is identified by economic development partners as a ‘high’ economic and social priority. In the absence of national ‘crofting’ qualifications, CnES worked with the Scottish Qualifications Authority to develop such a course for young people in the Senior Phase. In partnership with the University of the Highland and Islands, CnES are exploring the possibility of creating local modern apprenticeships in horticulture. By investing in the creation of these qualifications, and creating a progression pathway for learners, the school and education authority are contributing to instilling a sense of heritage and belonging within a community. It clearly shows the commitment by the school, education authority and its partners to look outwards as well as forwards to retain the skills of the young people within the community on the island, as well as equipping them with the skills and qualities to have the confidence to seek future employment on the mainland or beyond, should they choose to do so.