



---

## **Curriculum for Excellence Plus: Alignment or Overload?**

---

**23 May 2012, Stirling  
Management Centre**

---

**Conference report**

---

**ELT Events**

---

## **Curriculum for Excellence Plus: Alignment or Overload?**

**Wednesday 23 May, Stirling Management Centre**

### **Conference report**

## **Contents**

Introduction .....	1
The conference .....	1
Alignment or overload? <i>Professor Graham Donaldson CB</i> .....	2
Are we agreed? <i>Alan Armstrong; John Fyffe; Graham Donaldson</i> .....	5
Curriculum for Excellence and how it looks at St Joseph's Academy <i>Ben Davis</i> .....	7
Alignment: A primary perspective <i>Liz Ruddy</i> .....	8
How does it look from where we are? <i>Discussion groups</i> .....	11
Closing remarks <i>David Cameron</i> .....	13
References and resources .....	14
Annex 1 Conference programme .....	15
Annex 2 Speaker biographies .....	16

*The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of ELT Consultants.*

## Introduction

The overwhelming priority for Scottish Government is the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. The Government also wants to ensure ‘alignment’ so that all the changes being introduced are coherent and fit together. Despite this it can sometimes feel like one change and development after another – Curriculum for Excellence, Getting it right for every child, the Donaldson review, Devolved School Management, McCormac, Raising attainment... Schools and teachers can feel overburdened and challenged in terms of interpreting what it all means at their level. How does it all fit together and what will it look like if we implement it all? Does it all fit together? Do we need to implement all of it?

*This report provides a summary of the presentations and discussions held during the eighth of ELT's Curriculum for Excellence conference series. It was the last of 2011–12, with further events planned for next session.*

## The conference

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 86 school leaders, local authority directors of education and education officers came together at Stirling Management Centre to hear leading figures from the reviews and initiatives set out their idea of what schools can and should achieve.

**Graham Donaldson**, author of *Teaching Scotland's Future*, described the reform agenda as coherent and ambitious, with teachers and leadership crucial elements for its success.

Joining Graham in a panel session, **Alan Armstrong** of Education Scotland encouraged teachers to see themselves as continual curriculum innovators, while **John Fyffe** of Perth and Kinross Council said the focus should be on the alignment of outcomes.

Two head teachers also described how their schools had been approaching the challenges. For **Ben Davis** of St Joseph's Academy it is all about aligning what is asked of teachers with what is asked of the young people; for **Liz Ruddy** of Overton Primary School it's about creating a culture of engagement.

Delegates were able to spend time in discussion groups sharing their perspectives, and to engage with the platform in the panel session, and a final question and answer session.

In his closing remarks, **David Cameron**, who has been closely involved with a number of national developments, said it was time to get back to Curriculum for Excellence as it was intended, rather than it being a label that is getting in the way of change.

The outcomes for attendees included:

- Better understanding of the demands emanating from the Scottish Government
- Clearer idea about the priorities at national, authority and school levels
- Increased awareness of some of the strategies being used to manage change in authorities and schools
- Increased confidence in ability to deliver.

## Alignment or overload? Professor Graham Donaldson CB

Countries around the world look at what we are doing in Scottish education and admire our broad, coherent reform agenda; we are setting a benchmark internationally. Comments in the OECD 2007 report on Scotland [1] reinforced how important and daunting an agenda we had embarked upon. But resting on our laurels is not an option; nor is answering the frequent cry for less change. The demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century require our education system to be strong and constantly improving – we can improve because we are strong.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) should not be seen as another initiative, but as a change of thinking and a different approach to change. Traditional processes of reform have followed a similar pattern involving research, development, implementation and dissemination – the CfE approach is different. The answer lies in the classroom, with the focus on engaging the hearts and minds of every teacher.

### What are our fundamental strengths?

The 2007 OECD report presented a very positive basic message about Scottish education, including our approach to evaluation and self-evaluation, our well-respected, high performing teaching profession, and CfE. Over the years we have also been ahead of the game on a number of other fronts, such as with the establishment of the General Teaching Council for Scotland in 1965 and Glow. The picture was not all positive however.

*Scotland is a well-schooled nation by international standards...*

*Scotland performs at a consistently high standard in PISA...*

OECD, 2007 [1]

### What ‘wicked issues’ do we need to overcome?

*Scotland enters the twenty-first century burdened with the inequalities and institutional rigidities of the past and facing a future which will entrench these without clear-sighted and vigorous leadership.*

OECD, 2007 [1]

Too many of our young people are destined not to succeed at school. Compared with other education systems we perform less well, with the OECD report stating ‘who you are matters too much in Scotland.’ We need to think about what we can do to defeat this impact of destiny.

We need to keep on raising standards, particularly in maths, science and basic skills. For example, too many young people find it respectable to be ‘innumerate’ although maths education is a ticket to future success, and we are unable to keep many of them involved in learning languages. We convince ourselves that we are giving youngsters a broad general education, when the system is almost entirely geared towards achieving qualifications. Qualifications matter – they help to dictate life chances and society sees them as important – but they are not an alternative to a rounded education.

## Education has moved centre-stage across the world

Human capital in the form of a highly educated population is seen as a key determinant of social justice and economic success. There is therefore the constant need to search for improvement, and if those of us involved in education do not address this, an agenda will inevitably be imposed upon us.

*To succeed in this is not only important for a successful economy, but also for effective cultural and social participation and for citizens to live fulfilling lives.*

OECD 2008 [2]

We live in a world of change, driven by technology and globalisation which has profound implications for how we conceive education in the future, and for access to, and the pace of, learning.

### The search for success

Over the years the challenges that have led to education reform have included how to get more young people to stay longer in education; how to create more scientists; how to raise standards; and how to provide better information for parents. In recent times the focus has been on having more or better teachers (OECD 2005 [3]). For the profession, quality should be the critical agenda; given a choice between more or better quality teachers I would choose better teachers every time.

Now we need a new synthesis – how to achieve more engaging, enjoyable learning and teaching that inspires lifelong learning. Cloning the past is not an option; we need to rethink our approach to, and relationship between, teaching, leadership, curriculum and accountability.

### A coherent, ambitious reform agenda

Our current ambitious reforms, involving Curriculum for Excellence, *Teaching Scotland's Future* [4] and *Advancing Professionalism in Teaching* [5], have built in, not bolt on, coherence. It is one aligned agenda, offering a new paradigm of governance and change and a revitalised teaching profession.

The hardest aspect of CfE is getting the broad general education right – not sorting out Nationals and Highers. It is concerned with what we mean by an educated – not just a well-qualified – Scot. For the first time, for those aged 3 to 15, we can achieve a springboard to deeper learning by working together collectively. CfE is often described in terms of process, when it is fundamentally about raising standards, including of numeracy and literacy. It is also about an engaging, imaginative and purposeful pedagogy and about assessing what we profess.

### How much do teachers matter?

Evidence shows the crucial role teachers play in creating high performing systems.

*...research results indicate that raising teacher quality is vital for improving student achievement, and is perhaps the policy direction most likely to lead to substantial gains in school performance.*

OECD 2005 [3]

We need teachers who:

- have high-levels of expertise
- have secure values
- take prime responsibility for their own development
- use and contribute to the collective understanding of successful teaching and learning
- see professional learning as an integral part of educational change
- engage in well-planned and well-researched innovation.

There are many good things happening – we have moved a long way but we need to move further. *Teaching Scotland's Future* makes 50 recommendations for the way forward. In essence, we need to:

- select and develop high quality people into the profession
- review and reform initial teacher education
- develop a continuum of teacher learning and a framework of standards
- have closer alignment and partnership with schools, with universities as bigger players
- link standards to professional review and development as a point of reference for growth
- develop a culture of coaching and mentoring
- optimise the use of ICT for professional learning
- see Masters-level study as the norm
- relentlessly focus on the impact on young people's learning.

### **How much does leadership matter?**

If McKinsey [6] is correct, the prime job of leaders in education is to maximise the capacity of teachers.

Leadership in schools does not lend itself to off-the-shelf management guides; instead we need a culture

of leadership not followership. Where leadership is successful it can tap into that most important commodity – ‘discretionary effort’. Leaders need to create a more flexible, impact-focused, collegiate culture. They need to spot, capitalise on and coach talent, and the wealth of experience amongst longer-serving teachers.

*The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.*

McKinsey & Co 2007 [6]

### **Keeping our eyes on the prize**

How workable are these aims? Is this all ‘pie in the sky’? We need to win hearts and minds by reminding people of the prize, whilst paying attention to how the various aspects of reform join up. The alignment needs to be clear, and we all need to sign up to the developments. With a culture of aspiration and optimism, we can achieve success. We must not wait for reform to be done for or to us, we need more professional engagement with educational change. If we get it right Curriculum for Excellence will be less of a curriculum and more a way of life.

## Are we agreed? Alan Armstrong; John Fyffe; Graham Donaldson

The three panellists found much to agree upon, with each offering insights and raising different points from their own perspectives. There was also a lively, intelligent exchange with delegates, prompting further discussion throughout the rest of the day. Below is a taste of the main themes from the discussions.

### Alignment or overload?

It is important for the reforms to be seen as one agenda, with the focus on alignment of outcomes. A delegate stated that alignment was long overdue, 'even in a structural sense'.

*"Interest internationally is phenomenal – they think we've got it right."*

Alan Armstrong

### Assessment

Questions posed included: Are we assessing the right things? What will the learners' assessment journey look like? It was suggested that teachers tend to over-assess – with the best intentions, mainly to check that the process is appropriate and working. The S3 profile will have a vital role to play; young people need to leave S3 with a profile that has currency and credibility beyond the individual.

### Professional development

In the past, CPD has focused on a diet of one-off events; a different approach is needed with the notion of career-long professional learning at its heart. Learning set in the school environment is known to be effective and should be more prevalent. The instance of groups of teachers coming together – in person or virtually – to work on issues of importance is growing; the online blog pedagoo was quoted as one such good example.

Pedagoo is an attempt by a loose collection of educators in Scotland to move beyond the rhetoric and inevitable negativity that surrounds most new initiatives in education.

[www.pedagoo.org](http://www.pedagoo.org)

### External perceptions and impact

The three panellists referred to a submission by Arnold Clark's training provider GTG Training which was being presented that day to the Scottish Parliament's Finance Committee during a session on improving employability [7]. The submission had hit the headlines, stating that 81% of applicants to its apprenticeship scheme were 'unsuitable for any employment', with school leavers described as having unrealistic expectations and being

*"How do we raise morale... when Curriculum for Excellence gets a bashing in the press?"*

John Fyffe

unprepared for long working hours. There is a tendency to blame schools for the problems of society, or to look to schools for solutions. Although some of the concerns were recognised, it was agreed that the media does not always see the whole agenda and can generate panic because everything is not sorted out immediately.

It was suggested that CfE was designed to address the kind of issues raised in the Arnold Clark survey, via the broad general education, and the development of our highest achievers. It is important that it does both.

## Teachers need to take control

Teachers often feel powerless and impotent, and that change is imposed upon them. There was agreement that teachers need to take control of their own destiny, and that the reform agenda presents a genuine opportunity for them to do this. There is a need to keep things simple and to avoid complicating it by using a language that only professionals can understand.

*“Teachers need to see themselves as continual curriculum innovators.”*

Alan Armstrong

## Technology and the new digital divide

A delegate asked whether Glow's time had come and gone, and proposed that it was time to open up access to technology in schools. The opportunity to teach young people how to use ICT fully was being missed. The panellists raised the concerns local authorities have about risk, whilst being aware that it is becoming almost impossible to fight against the pervasive nature of ICT, and the many benefits of being able to use it fully. The new division between young people who do and those who do not have access to the most sophisticated ICT was also raised. It was suggested that devolving more authority to headteachers would enable more flexible, appropriate local approaches to be adopted.

## Curriculum for Excellence and how it looks at St Joseph's Academy

### **Ben Davis**

St Joseph's Academy is East Ayrshire's only catholic secondary school. Pupils travel for up to two hours to learn in the school and people talk passionately about the Catholic education which is at the heart of everything that happens there.

Having a clear vision and values for the school has become increasingly important. Our approach to Curriculum for Excellence is all about communication and relationships, with the emphasis on the quality of all that takes place in the classroom. Rapid and substantial changes in practice have led to improvements in outcomes. Although not unique, our approach is based on leadership supported by professional development across all staff.

*Parents trust the school because of our unique ethos and history.*

Developments include:

- A new teaching and learning policy
- Revision of vision, values and aims
- Interdisciplinary learning: 'Life School 360'
- New approaches to self-evaluation and sharing practice, such as mini-inspections carried out within departments
- Very strong, sustainable business and further education links developed with individual teachers rather than the school
- Placing skills, aptitudes and character at the centre of the curriculum
- A new school day structure
- A Diploma of Achievement for S3 pupils – a genuine and useful reflection to enable them to understand where their learning fits, and to provide them with an enhanced CV which can be built on later.

### Dreaming big or just sleeping?

In my opinion there is still a lack of alignment between aspects of the reform agenda. CfE could be even more radical but instead the curriculum is carved up as it has been for the past 60 or 70 years, and we are side-tracked by issues about course models – 2+2+2 or 3+3 – and the impulse to standardise and centralise. We have moved beyond this debate at St Joseph's.

### Joining the dots

At St Joseph's we are at an exciting, optimistic tipping point. There are so many pressures on the school it would be easy to take a step back from change, but by staying ahead we can be more in control. We have chosen to raise the bar – to be ambitious and aspirational. The background of financial constraints has also meant we have had to be more creative and radical in our strategy. We are seeking to redefine and reinvent ourselves, whilst keeping our core identity and values intact.

*Creativity is the defeat of habit by originality.*

Arthur Koestler

It is easy to talk the language of CfE, but we have translated that into the values and needs of St Joseph's. Our priorities include:

- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- Teacher training, recruitment and professional review and development
- Transitions, including joint planning with primary colleagues
- Working through the 'bulge years', when both the current and new National Qualifications are running in parallel
- Leadership from all staff – to increase our capacity to handle enhanced expectations we look for teachers to lead on the things they love, rather than senior management always taking responsibility.

We have also aligned what we ask of staff with what we ask of young people, sharing skills, values and aspirations, and leading, rewarding and recognising what is important. This approach relies upon school, teacher and learner autonomy.

*We ask teachers the same question we ask pupils: 'What can you bring to our journey to excellence?'<sup>19</sup>*

### **Big questions**

The big questions remain as we look to the future: What is a school and what does it do? Who is a teacher and how are they developed? What, where and how do they teach? How do we maintain the pace of change?

We need to develop a philosophy through CfE rather than for CfE. This requires strong communication and leadership at all levels, shared values and a clear direction.

## **Alignment: A primary perspective *Liz Ruddy***

Overton Primary School sits in a mixed catchment area in Inverclyde; we have 36 per cent FME, significant social work involvement and a high proportion of pupils with additional support needs. With the focus on our pupils, we place health and wellbeing, care and welfare at the centre of all that we do. We are also in the process of significant change, as we move towards amalgamation with Highlanders Academy in June 2012.

### **A culture of engagement**

It is possible to view the reform agenda, all of the documents and reviews that need to be addressed, as overload – but this is not the way we see it at Overton. We have developed a culture of engagement, involving staff and pupils, which enables us to address the reforms through our normal practice.

How did we move from a culture of 'just give it to me and I'll do it' to one of complete, collective responsibility?

Our approach includes having:

- a clear whole school vision communicated across the community with shared values and aims
- high, aspirational, staff and learner expectations
- staff who are creative, innovative and reflective
- leadership at all levels
- commitment to the development of the four capacities of CfE
- involvement of whole school community and partners, with stakeholders who are all equally focused on improving outcomes for children.

We live the vision and values – we are all, staff included, ‘Overton boys’ and ‘Overton girls’, and are proud of the brand.

### **Putting children at the centre**

Our reputation for care and welfare is based on our strong values, but we still ask ‘what can we do to make it better?’ We start from the belief that there is a mainstream solution for all children. We have spent a lot of time revisiting our processes and procedures and working with other partners and families to ensure protection and to safeguard the most vulnerable.

Young people in the past were sometimes on the outside of the decision making process, but we have achieved more success by including them as full partners and seeking out their views.

*<sup>¶¶</sup> In many respects the young people run the school!<sup>¶¶</sup>*

They are encouraged to articulate their own and others’ rights and have full involvement in the school self-evaluation process and curriculum planning. Children act as mentors to others, are involved in peer working, and have leadership roles across the school.

### **The enriched curriculum**

Curriculum for Excellence has brought many changes and challenges, but it has also presented many opportunities. It has allowed us to be creative and imaginative, to take risks and challenge convention. We have been able to pursue original thinking and innovative ideas – Overton is an interesting place to be.

*<sup>¶¶</sup> Professional dialogue is at the centre of everything.<sup>¶¶</sup>*

From the arrival of the first document we transferred our thinking to CfE – we literally threw away the 5–14 documents! Not everyone is comfortable with the use of online support, so every document, newsletter and ideas sheet has been printed

out for staff. We have made ‘creative use’ of the working time agreement to facilitate awareness raising and discussion, setting aside time in school every week for professional dialogue. CfE has been a standing item at every staff, stage and progress meeting.

As a ‘stalker’ of professional opportunities I have tried to get the school involved at the ground level, when you have the chance to make mistakes. It is hard at the beginning, but it does get easier.

## Learning and teaching at the core

Staff have worked together to unpick the Experiences and Outcomes and have been in and out of each other's classrooms gaining the best kind of professional development. We carried out a detailed and honest audit – warts and all! Teachers have become comfortable with the learning and teaching Quality Indicators as the focus for self-evaluation. We identified the main areas for development and the key players to drive them forward.

We have used and embedded a range of strategies, including:

- Assessment is for Learning
- Talking Round Corners [8], an approach developed in Inverclyde which focuses on dialogic teaching involving higher order questions, using Bloom's Taxonomy
- Active learning
- Enterprise education
- Accessing the local and wider community
- The Learning Walk, which involves focused classroom visits followed by feedback and reflection.

## Leadership is crucial

Effective leadership across the school is utterly crucial. All members of staff have a curricular or 'life of the school' responsibility; they are encouraged to know about whole school priorities and learning outwith their own immediate stage. Members of staff take the lead on initiatives and get involved in working groups at local and national level. We ensure there is access to high quality CPD, support those who are interested in pursuing additional qualifications and modules, and enable collaborative and team teaching.

*[Stress rarely comes from the 'change' but from not understanding what is happening<sup>99</sup>]*

## What does this mean for headteachers?

The headteacher has a crucial role to play as leader and the driving force behind all developments in the school, keeping the outcomes for children as the main focus. Being headteacher also means offering autonomy to staff, sending out a message of trust and value to everyone. It means promoting innovation, but it also requires establishing a rigorous self-evaluation framework. It involves providing support as well as challenge, and living and breathing the expectations.

## How does it look from where we are? *Discussion groups*

*Working in small groups, delegates considered what they had heard so far and shared their views in answer to the following questions:*

**Graham Donaldson has suggested that we are dealing with alignment of necessary changes rather than an overload of initiatives. Is this how it feels to you?**

- Making sense of it all can be perceived as overload
- Very mixed views depending where one sits in the system; we suspect most classroom teachers feel overwhelmed
- Staff in small schools are particularly overloaded.

**What are the essential changes that we need to make to ensure that Scotland has an education system fit for the 21st Century?**

- **Learning and teaching:**
  - Ensure classroom teachers know that CfE is about improvement and raising standards
  - Improve learning and teaching in the classroom
  - Build professional learning communities with shared understanding & planning for assessment
  - Promote more collegiate working through distributive leadership
  - Provide parity between sectors re the time and support being given
  - Develop deeper understanding for all learners
  - Ensure the senior phase meets all needs
  - Enable more flexible use of ICT, responding to change and emerging technology
  - Examine how to teach fundamentals, & how progress is sustained & built on into secondary
- **Assessment:**
  - Spend more time on planning & collegiate working – too much time is spent on assessment
  - Message for everyone that assessment should be to improve not prove
- **Skills:**
  - Embed skills in the curriculum – revisit *Building the Curriculum 4*
  - Pupils need to be able to reflect on skills they have learned/used
  - Look at skills development and use in context
- **Teacher selection, performance and development:**
  - Create a more rigorous selection process ITE plus raised expectations for qualifications
  - Universities must fail students who do not meet the standard – extension is not the answer
  - Governing bodies need to support schools and local authorities when they move on GTCS cancellation for probationers or dismissal of teaching staff
  - Provide more help to get poor quality teachers out and bring good quality in
  - Change the culture of career-long learning and university
  - Learn from nursery staff – they are usually more forward thinking
- **Partners and stakeholders:**
  - Increase community, parent and pupil involvement
  - Be more consultative with all stakeholders
  - Improve links to further education
  - Ensure external providers take forward the wider achievement agenda
  - External and local authority scrutiny must reflect and acknowledge unique contexts as well as national benchmarks and standards
  - Messages need to be heard at local and national strategic level

## Are you coping? Is your school coping?

- Primary schools are coping better than secondary schools
- Coping but generally not enjoying, feeling excited or confident
- There is huge pressure on headteachers

## What are the particular challenges you feel you are facing?

- **Learning and teaching:**
  - Deciding what needs to change and what doesn't
  - Limitations of broad general education
  - Some people trying to 'force the new curriculum into the old'
  - Skills progression
  - No local flexibility/creativity in secondary curriculum
  - CfE levels (developing, consolidating, secure) poor terminology, differing interpretations
  - Primary schools need to pick up the pace and review curriculum structure
  - HMIE has increased expectations
- **Assessment:**
  - Pupils need to become more used to the language of assessment, be able to articulate this and record their learning
  - Continuing the principles of CfE at National 4 & 5, taking account of different methods of assessment
- **Technology:**
  - Local authority systems and attitudes to introducing emerging technology
  - A reticence to get involved with Glow
- **Teacher performance, development and morale:**
  - Staff can still be blinkered to change and improvement
  - Getting CPD right for teachers
  - Poor staff morale due to lack of jobs; difficult progression beyond probationary year; no recognition of current commitment

## Are there any steps you have taken to deal with the challenges you feel have worked well?

- **Cluster working:**
  - Bringing staff together on specific themes
  - Promoting positive professional conversations & experiences that directly impact on learning & teaching
  - Sharing costs
- **Local authorities responding to the needs of the school:**
  - Providing CPD that gives senior leaders experiences that have a learning community, high academic and intellectual content/focus
- **Professional dialogue and sharing expertise:**
  - Building on professional learning communities
  - Planned collegiate time for professional dialogue
  - Online professional forums for sharing practice
  - Learning rounds/trios/pairs
- **Leadership:**
  - Identifying leaders who then work together to lead CPD across a cluster
  - Teachers having coordinator roles – time taken from collegiate hours and from PPD time; used in different areas but with whole school impact
  - Lead teacher programme in conjunction with Stirling University – leading whole school CPD, targeting and utilising team expertise

## Closing remarks *David Cameron*

David Cameron ended the day's discussions by pulling together a number of threads and offering some personal views. He commented on the dual rhetoric of Curriculum for Excellence often heard from the same mouths: that CfE is both the most radical change and it is building on good practice. Parents know that something important is happening but find it difficult to see the clear purpose.

CfE was meant to be the 'spirit level', rather than the alternative Schools of Ambition approach which was prompting change in different directions. He suggested it is time to revisit the work that has been largely ignored, such as that on higher order skills, and the unpublished report on creativity.

*"Curriculum for Excellence has become a label that's getting in the way of change."*

David Cameron

David observed that there is a real energy in the system and that we need to grasp it or CfE will be a missed opportunity. A high level of teacher professionalism and clarity is needed; it is essentially about the quality of leadership. He ended by stating that the tragedy is we have known this for years and 'not nailed it' – we no longer have an excuse.

## References and resources

Presentation slides can be viewed on the [ELT Events website](#)

Below is a list of some of the resources and publications referred to by contributors during the day.

1. [\*Quality and Equity of Schooling in Scotland\*](#). OECD 2007.
2. [\*Innovating to Learn, Learning to Innovate\*](#). OECD 2008.
3. [\*Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers – Final Report: Teachers Matter\*](#). OECD 2005.
4. [\*Teaching Scotland's Future: Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland\*](#). Donaldson, G. Scottish Government 2011.
5. [\*Advancing Professionalism in Teaching: Report of the review of teacher employment in Scotland\*](#). McCormac, G. Scottish Government 2011.
6. [\*How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top\*](#). McKinsey & Company 2007.
7. [\*GTG Training submission to the Scottish Parliament's Finance Committee\*](#) ahead of a session on improving employability, 23 May 2012.
8. [\*Talking Round Corners\*](#), Inverclyde Council.
9. [\*Cumulative and residual effects of teachers on future student academic achievement. Research Progress Report\*](#). Sanders, WL & Rivers, JC. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center 1996.
10. [\*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work\*](#). Scottish Government 2009.
11. [\*Getting it right for every child\*](#). Scottish Government.
12. [\*Devolved School Management Review\*](#). Cameron, D. 2011.
13. [\*Raising attainment for all\*](#). Education Scotland.
14. [\*The Florida Virtual School\*](#)
15. [\*Curriculum for Excellence and Community Learning and Development\*](#). YouTube video, the North Alliance, narrated by Keir Bloomer. CLD Aberdeenshire 2012.
16. [\*Radio EDUtalk\*](#). Recording of Graham Donaldson's presentation at the conference.

## Annex 1 Conference programme

- 09.00 – 09.50 Registration with Exhibition & Coffee
- 09.50 – 10.00 Welcome and Introduction  
Mike Kincaid, ELT Events
- 10.00 – 10.45 **'Alignment or Overload'**  
Graham Donaldson CB, Honorary Professor, School of Education, University of Glasgow  
What are the demands? Do they fit together? What do we really expect of schools? Is it manageable?
- 10.45 – 11.15 Exhibition & Coffee
- 11.15 – 12.00 **Are we agreed? Panel Session**  
Alan Armstrong, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Education Scotland,  
Graham Donaldson and John Fyffe, Executive Director (Education & Children's Services), Perth and Kinross
- 12.10 – 13.00 Discussion groups – how does it look from where we are?
- 13.00 – 14.00 Lunch followed by exhibition & coffee
- 14.00 – 14.20 How it looks in our school – current situation and plans  
Ben Davis, Acting Head Teacher, St Joseph's Academy, East Ayrshire Council
- 14.20 – 14.40 How it looks in our school – current situation and plans  
Liz Ruddy, Head Teacher, Overton Primary School, Inverclyde Council
- 14.40 – 15.10 Question and answer session  
Graham Donaldson, Ben Davis, Liz Ruddy
- 15.10 – 15.30 Closing remarks – David Cameron, Education Consultant

## Annex 2 Speaker biographies

### **Alan Armstrong, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Education Scotland**

Alan and his Directorate team have been actively involved in working with all sectors of education to develop and support the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. This has included preparing support for practitioners through exemplification for the eight curriculum areas, and the organisation of curriculum delivery in ways that take account of CfE policies and reflect local contexts and priorities.

Through very close liaison with education authorities, his Directorate provides support and guidance to promote key national initiatives, such as approaches to assessment that underpin CfE. Current activities include building capacity across education authorities and their partners in taking forward key aspects of Quality Assurance and Moderation, and in preparing materials for inclusion in the National Assessment Resource.

### **David Cameron, Education Consultant**

David is an independent education consultant with extensive experience in school management. He was a senior manager with Fife Council, Head of Education in East Lothian Council, and Director of Children's Services with Stirling Council. He was also President of the Association of Directors of Education, Scotland (ADES). He has been involved in a range of national developments notably on Curriculum for Excellence. He co-authored the recently published CfE guides to developing professional practice and he chaired the Government's Working Group on the review of class sizes. He also chaired the Government's Review of Devolved School Management.

### **Ben Davis, St Joseph's Academy, East Ayrshire Council**

Ben is Acting Headteacher of St Joseph's Academy, Kilmarnock. As DHT he led the development and implementation of interdisciplinary learning and the school's Curriculum for Excellence work in general. He was a Teacher of Drama and English and established a successful Drama Department and young people's touring theatre company at the school. He has presented at several national conferences and seminars on CfE and interdisciplinary learning. He writes regularly for the *Times Educational Supplement Scotland*.

### **Graham Donaldson CB, Honorary Professor, School of Education, University of Glasgow**

Following his retirement from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), Graham was asked by the Scottish Government to undertake a national review of teacher education. The review was successfully published in January 2011. Thereafter he has worked part-time at Glasgow University where he is an Honorary Professor and has also operated internationally including participating in OECD country evaluations. Graham was made a Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (CB) for his services to education in the 2009 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Graham joined HMIE in 1983 and was HM Senior Chief Inspector of Education from 2002 to 2010. In that role, he was Chief Executive of HMIE and Chief Professional Adviser to the Scottish Government on all aspects of education outside the university sector. Graham is the current President of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) which has 33 member inspectorates from across Europe. Graham began his teaching career in 1970 and taught in schools in Glasgow and Dunbartonshire. He worked as a Curriculum Evaluator for the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum. During this period, he was seconded to BP to review links between education and industry. His report, *Industry and Scottish Schools*, was published in 1981.

### **John Fyffe, Executive Director (Education & Children's Services), Perth & Kinross**

John was appointed Executive Director (Education & Children's Services) in Perth & Kinross in November 2007 and has been a corporate director within the Council since that time. His responsibilities include Nursery, Primary and Secondary Education, Children's Services, Community Learning & Development, Cultural Services, Corporate IT, Corporate Improvement.

John left school at 16 and served an apprenticeship as a toolmaker with Timex Corporation in Dundee. He continued to work for them for a further three years before leaving to train for a career in teaching. His teaching career spanned 25 years in six schools in two local authorities finally culminating as Headteacher of Blairgowrie High School. John is chair of ADES Resources and Infrastructure Network and a member of the Scottish Government's Preventative Spend group. He is past President of the Technology Teachers Association.

John has extensive knowledge of education, management practices and improvement issues. He is married with three children.

### **Liz Ruddy, Head Teacher, Overton Primary School, Inverclyde**

Liz has been Head Teacher at Overton Primary School and Nursery Class for eight years and a head teacher for 10 years in total. She has been in teaching for 25 years and has recently been appointed as Head Teacher of Whinhill Primary School in Greenock which will be formed from the amalgamation of two schools. She has been an Associate Assessor with HMIE and completed the leadership training at Harvard University. She has also been a member of many local and national working groups including the literacy excellence group, the Early Adopters Group in association with Education Scotland and the International Futures Forum. Her particular interests are curriculum development, self-evaluation and leadership.