

**CILIP in Scotland – Draft Response to: Consultation on the development of a Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy for Scotland (submitted online)**

**Q1: Is the strategy founded on the right principles? Are there other principles that should be considered as we continue to develop the strategy? (Page 11)**

CILIP in Scotland welcome this strategy and believe it is founded on the correct principles. We fully support the Scottish Government's aim of raising attainment for every child. For Scotland to be the best place to grow up and learn, children should have the right to access well resourced school library services staffed by an information professional working in partnership with teachers. Research has found that schools with libraries and librarians achieve higher exam scores; higher quality project work; successful curriculum and learning outcomes; positive attitudes towards learning and increased motivation and self-esteem among pupils.<sup>i</sup> We advocate that high quality learning opportunities should include access for all school pupils to a professionally trained librarian and information expert with a knowledge of learning styles who is:

- located within the school and available throughout and beyond the school day;
- managing a safe, secure and supportive environment for formal and informal learning;
- responsible for curating resources to support the curriculum;
- partnering teachers in supporting delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence;
- engaging pupils in information seeking and discussion;
- promoting information literacy across the curriculum; and
- developing critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers and ethical users of information.

**Q2: Are the four key themes identified the right ones to focus on? Are there other themes that should be considered? (Page 15)**

We welcome the key themes and, in particular, the aim of 'Extending the skills and confidence of teachers in the appropriate and effective use of digital technology' which we contend is of equal importance to digital access. We suggest this could be widened to include the broader concept of 'digital and information literacy'. Being digitally literate means not only the ability to use a range of technologies to access information, but having the skills to locate, evaluate and use digital information effectively. This is best achieved by partnership work with school librarians whose role in supporting this type of learning was acknowledged in the recent Royal Society of Edinburgh publication on the benefits of digital participation.<sup>ii</sup>

We would recommend, that in order to achieve its aims, the strategy sets out a clear definition for the term 'digital literacy' that recognises both access and the ability to understand and use digital information effectively.

**Q3: Do you agree with the priorities for action outlined in the 'leaders' theme? Are there other actions that should be considered? (Page 16)**

Digital literacy skills are fundamental to classroom performance, works force readiness and effective citizenship. For this reason we believe that the first priority in the 'leaders' theme should be widened to include 'digital technology and digital literacy'.

**Q4: Do you agree with the priorities for action outlined in the ‘access’ theme? Are there other actions that should be considered? (Page 17)**

We agree with the priorities set out in the ‘access’ theme. We particularly welcome the aim to increase consistency of access as cuts to budgets and services have led to variation of provision.

We urge the Scottish Government to take further steps to increase access as well as ensuring local authorities maintain the employment of specialists, a role that school librarians play if qualified and working in a school in a full time capacity.

We believe that, in order to improve access, stakeholders such as local authorities, Further Education and Higher Education institutions and the third sector should co-ordinate their work in this area. Also, the role that both public and school libraries and librarians can play in supporting and increasing access must be recognised.

**Q5: Do you agree with the priorities for action outlined in the ‘curriculum and assessment’ theme? Are there other actions that should be considered? (Pages 18-19)**

The priorities set out under ‘curriculum and assessment’ are useful and well thought out. The section could further benefit from highlighting the importance of digital and information literacy skills. These skills are often delivered in partnership with school librarians and are an important component of teaching effective digital skills and linking with the curriculum for excellence. The role of school librarians and the information expertise that they bring to a school are vital in closing the attainment gap and improving standards.

**Q6: Do you agree with the priorities for action outlined in the ‘teachers’ theme? Are there other actions that should be considered? (Pages 20-21)**

We agree with the priorities outlines in the ‘teachers’ theme and would again emphasise that digital literacy needs to address both the ability to use a range of technologies for information access and the skills needed to use digital information effectively. We therefore suggest that consideration is given to the role that trained and qualified information professionals can play in supporting this within the school setting.

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<sup>i</sup> [www.scottishlibraries.org/school-libraries](http://www.scottishlibraries.org/school-libraries)

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.royalsoced.org.uk/1058\\_SpreadingtheBenefitsofDigitalParticipation.html](https://www.royalsoced.org.uk/1058_SpreadingtheBenefitsofDigitalParticipation.html)