

**MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FROM PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND THE DFES MINISTER
WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES,
MARIA EAGLE MP,
FOR THE LEADING FOR THE FUTURE CONFERENCE
2 NOVEMBER, NEWCASTLE**

I'm sorry that that I am not able to join you today to discuss sustainability.

Formal education has a key role to play in creating a sustainable future, and it features prominently in the Government's sustainable development strategy released earlier this year.

We must ensure that young people of all ages and backgrounds understand the problems, such as climate change, poverty and social injustice and more importantly, that they become skilled at finding solutions to address them. It is for this reason that we have schemes in place, such as Growing Schools, Healthy Schools and the Global Gateway, along with the statutory teaching requirements in the National Curriculum.

Much good work has been done already, but we recognise that we need to do more.

By living and breathing sustainable development practices in the school buildings and grounds as well as learning about the issues in the classroom, schools and their pupils will become a good example for their local communities to follow and engage with.

The great work being done around ESD in the North East is an excellent example of this and I would like to extend my thanks to the significant contribution you have made so far and send my personal support and good wishes for a successful and productive conference today.