



**Children in Scotland**  
every child - every childhood

**Media Release 03/06/09**

## **Fiona Hyslop a keynote speaker at Children in Europe Annual Conference 2009 – *Exploring the world and beyond: young children as scientists***

**At a time when Scotland is facing significant challenges in maintaining and developing children's interest in science, the Children in Europe Annual Conference, being held in Edinburgh in September, will bring together politicians, scientists and educationalists from across Scotland and Europe to look at developing and maintaining children's interest in science.**

Capitalising on young children's fascination with exploration and discovery is the key to making science exciting, dynamic and relevant and to increasing the number of children choosing to study science at a higher level later in their school career.

Speakers will include Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning; Professor Anne Glover, Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland; Professor Geoffrey Boulton of the University of Edinburgh, member of the Prime Minister's Council for Science and Technology; and Heather Reid, BBC Scotland's Senior Broadcast Meteorologist on 'My Life in Science'.

Kate Bellingham, former presenter of science programme *Tomorrow's World* and National STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Careers Coordinator, will chair the Conference, which will look at:

- why science learning is important for young children;
- Scottish Government plans for the development of science and education, with a focus on science within Curriculum for Excellence;
- international approaches to science education; and
- challenges facing teachers and educators.

Professor Anne Glover, Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland, said:

"Children are born scientists, always asking questions to make sense of the world around them. Capturing and maintaining that enthusiasm as they grow –

inspiring our next generation of scientists – is the key to maintaining Scotland’s position as a science nation.”

Keir Bloomer, Vice Convener of Children in Scotland, said:

“Teaching science from a younger age is vital in engaging the interest of children and young people in science and scientific discovery. It is second nature to young children to question and explore the natural environment. We should build on this and not wait until children are older if we are to maintain and develop successfully their awareness of the challenges and opportunities science presents. This conference will provide an ideal opportunity to explore and discuss ways of reinvigorating our science teaching in Scotland.”

– Ends –

### Notes for Editors

1. The Children in Europe Annual Conference 2009, ***Exploring the world and beyond: young children as scientists*** will take place on 16 September at Our Dynamic Earth, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh.
2. Speaking in May at Scotland’s first-ever School Science Summit, Education Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: “As we bring in the biggest changes to Scottish education in a generation, with curriculum reforms and refreshed national qualifications, it is a key priority that science teaching and learning is reinvigorated”.
3. **Children in Europe:** Children in Europe is a magazine for everyone working with and for children and those interested in children’s issues. It is published simultaneously in 15 languages and 17 countries by a network of national magazines across Europe. It aims to provide a forum for ideas, practice and information and to contribute to the development of policy and practice at European and national levels. It is published in the UK by Children in Scotland. Children in Europe Issue 16, ***Exploring the world and beyond: young children as scientists*** was published in March. For more information visit [www.childrenineurope.org](http://www.childrenineurope.org)
4. **Children in Scotland** is the longstanding national ‘umbrella’ agency for the whole of the children’s sector, reaching over 250,000 individuals through our extensive membership of more than 450 statutory agencies, voluntary sector organisations, professional associations and community groups. For further information visit [www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)

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