

Next Ten year modelling

Long term vision - Detailed future plans

Those responsible for the future changes in education have to have a long-term vision and detailed plan that is framed by ethical considerations.

Could the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals be a starting point?

A child starting school this September could go to University in 2038 (if Universities have adapted to equip students with the skills required to succeed in 2038) and enter the workforce in 2041 or 2042. The principles of parental choice and a belief in wanting the best possible future for their children is making new parents question the validity of the current system.

What about new parents? Who asks them about their vision for the future?

If you agree that the system is broken, then what is needed is a comprehensive redesign creating something holistic with the essential learning dimensions - a multidimensional framework allowing students to 'come out the other side' with the analytical and creative skills that they will need as they start their life journey.

Some aspects of the next generation's future will be complex and uncertain: the global balance of political and economic power; the forward march in artificial intelligence; global warming; terrorism are all so big that it is difficult to imagine outcomes for, and combining them will be a real challenge for all of us who have a passionate and vested interest in children's future.

Furthermore, the challenge of change that we and our families are all faced with has the most influence on our children. Across the world schools are starting to realise that 'not to act' and instead continue 'self-preservation' is unacceptable. The urgency to initiate a formal transition towards sustainable learning centres that empower young people to provide solutions is upon us.

Oh yes, have we not mentioned the students? Shouldn't they be at the centre of everything that we do? Do you trust them to be the change-makers?

Are you adapting? Are you a leader in next generation learning?

Could the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals be a starting point? Good health and wellbeing; gender equality; affordable and clean energy; economic growth; industry; innovation; infrastructure; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; peace; justice; and strong institutions. Changing our education to reflect these goals is inevitable and so those responsible for education have to have a long-term vision and plan for the future that is framed by these ethical considerations.

According to the 'Future of Jobs Report 2020' by the World Economic Forum, we should be teaching children the skills of complex problem-solving; critical thinking; creativity; people management; coordinating with others; emotional intelligence; and negotiation. Businesses are less likely to place value on traditional GCSE and A level qualifications which will surely have important ramifications for education. Are you adapting? Are you a leader in next generation learning?

What was your schooling like? Was it like the experience of Winston Churchill?

“The only time my education was interrupted was when I was at school.”

Did your education require you, lesson after lesson, day after day, to copy down facts, remember them accurately and reproduce them when required? If it was, it was the skills of note taking and memorisation that you were practising, along with the attitude of unquestioning acceptance.

If, on the other hand, your curriculum was built around groups researching self-chosen projects rooted in the real-world application of learning, then it was the skills of collaboration, discussion, and problem-solving, and the attitude of self-organisation that you were developing.

With the recent school closures all over the world it gives us all an opportunity to reflect on what we teach, why we teach it, and how we teach it.

Way back in 2008, Guy Claxton wrote his seminal book, ‘What’s the point of school?’ It was considered by many to be a thought-provoking and timely insight into why schools are built to fail: “Schools must change. The case is overwhelming. It is education’s core responsibility to prepare young people for the future and it is failing in this duty.” (Claxton, 2008).

The book offered suggestions on how to redesign schools to satisfy the needs of the modern world, yet little seems to have changed. Indeed, one could argue that the current education system as we know it is not fit for purpose.

Whether it is to generate global problem-solvers, to produce a suitably energised and skilled workforce to tackle the big issues that our global society faces, or to give parents more choice, there is a growing opportunity to redesign education.

If you have not got a long-term detailed plan you are going to be playing ‘catch-up’ as a growing number of ‘education thought-leaders’ are already designing educational, sustainable life centres.

The needs for an agile learning future are being recognised and the seeds have been sown.

You reap what you sow.

Matt Messias and David Hollands



Matt Messias

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