

The Scottish
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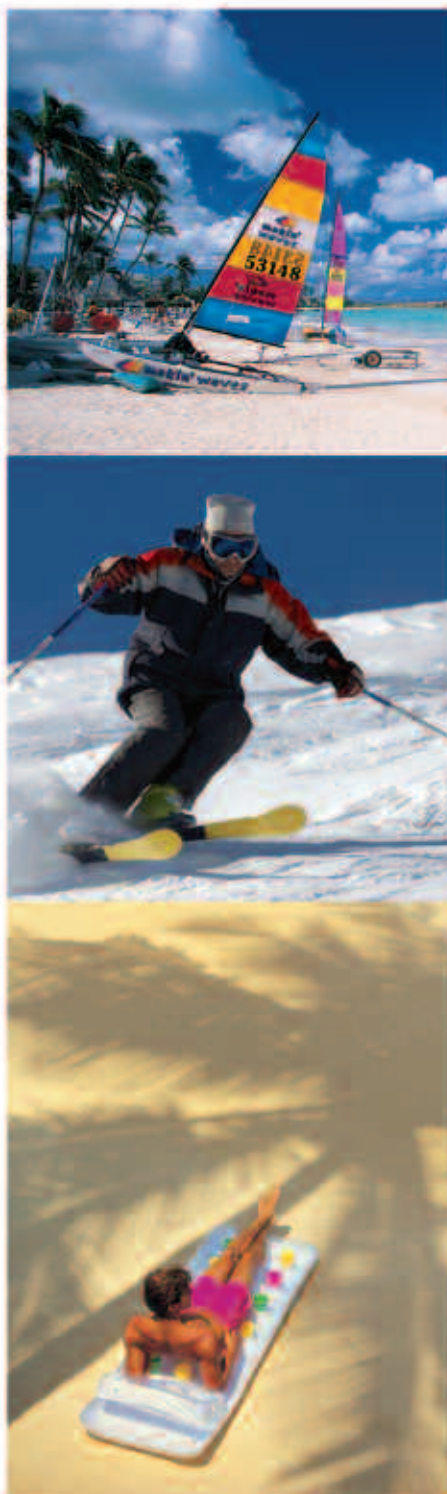
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Comment



“Access” – Your flexible nursery commitment?

In this month's cover feature, the SEJ examines the evolving position of nursery education across Scotland. The expansion of nursery education, so that all 3 and 4 year old children now have the opportunity to experience free part-time nursery schooling, has been a considerable advance for Scottish education and welcomed by parents across the country.

The EIS has warmly welcomed this expansion in nursery education for the many benefits that it brings to young children, particularly those from less affluent backgrounds who often gain the most from exposure to the structured play and early educational opportunities that nursery education offers.

The Scottish Government has stated its commitment to nursery education, and has committed to expand the sector further by increasing the annual entitlement for all nursery pupils, initially targeted at areas of deprivation. These are positive developments that are supported by the EIS.

However, one issue that continues to undermine the foundations of enhanced nursery education is the lack of uniformity regarding the staffing of nursery schools and nursery classes. Unlike their older brothers and sisters in primary and secondary schools, nursery children have no established right to be taught by a GTCS registered nursery teacher. While the Scottish Government has stated its preference for nursery teacher involvement in all nursery settings, it currently has no plans to compel local authorities to employ teachers in their nurseries.

The Scottish Government's aspiration that all nursery children should have "access" to a nursery teacher has given local authorities considerable flexibility in how they staff their nursery establishments. While many local authorities continue to commit to employing nursery teachers in all their nursery schools and nursery classes, for which they should be commended, other authorities are now choosing to remove teachers from their nurseries completely or to share teachers across several establishments on a cluster-model basis.

The EIS is concerned at the emerging variances in nursery provision across the country. All the evidence, from the HMIE and others, consistently highlights the many positives and high quality of teacher-led nursery education. With the evolution of A Curriculum for Excellence and the introduction of a 3-18 model of curricular development, there has never been a greater need for teachers in all nursery settings.

To support our ongoing campaign, the EIS is publishing a new booklet highlighting the positives of teacher-led nursery education. Look out for this booklet in your establishment soon, and get involved to protect the role of professional teachers in all nursery establishments right across Scotland. ■

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EIS Election

New President and Vice President elected

Nominations for the election of the next EIS President and Vice-President have recently closed. With only one candidate being nominated in each category, the new President and Vice-President for 2008/09 have been elected unopposed.



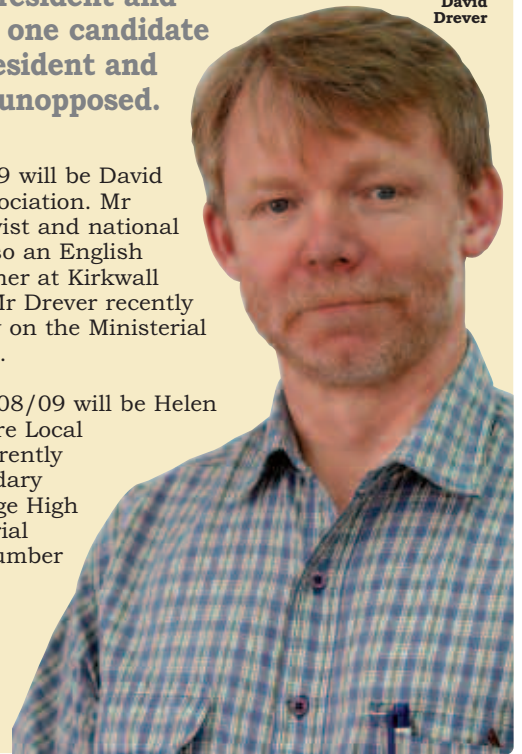
Helen Connor

The new President for 2008/09 will be David Drever from Orkney Local Association. Mr Drever is a long-time EIS activist and national EIS Council member. He is also an English teacher and Deputy Headteacher at Kirkwall Grammar School in Orkney. Mr Drever recently represented the EIS nationally on the Ministerial Working Group on Class Sizes.

The new Vice-President for 2008/09 will be Helen Connor from North Lanarkshire Local Association. Ms Connor is currently employed as a primary/secondary transition teacher at Coatbridge High

School. Ms Connor also represented the EIS on the Ministerial Working Group on Class Sizes, and currently serves on a number of EIS Committees and the national EIS Council.

Both Mr Drever and Ms Connor will formally take up their new posts at the EIS AGM in June, when current national President Kirsty Devaney will also move into the post of immediate Past-President.



David Drever

“The EIS is pleased that its campaign has succeeded in highlighting the importance of protecting the charitable status of our FE Colleges.”

Ronnie Smith, EIS General Secretary



Ronnie Smith

EIS welcomes move to protect charitable status

The EIS has commended the Scottish Government’s move to protect the charitable status of Scotland’s Further Education Colleges. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Fiona Hyslop, recently announced that the Scottish Government will introduce legislation which aims to ensure that colleges and some so-called ‘new’ universities can continue to qualify as registered charities.

Commenting on the move, EIS General Secretary Ronnie Smith said, “Charitable status brings real benefits to Scottish Further Education Colleges and for students and staff. The total estimated value of charitable status to Scotland’s FE sector is approximately £25 million every year. Were charitable status to be removed from FE Colleges, as looked likely following a ruling by Scotland’s charity regulator last year, then the end result would be a massive black hole in the funding of many FE Colleges across Scotland. Thankfully, this now looks unlikely to happen, and the Cabinet Secretary and the Scottish Government should be commended for taking a

common-sense approach aimed at protecting the vital work of Scotland’s highly inclusive Further Education Colleges.”

Mr Smith added, “The EIS is pleased that its campaign has succeeded in highlighting the importance of protecting the charitable status of our FE Colleges. Scotland’s FE Colleges do much good work to widen access to education and to combat social exclusion, and it is encouraging to witness recognition of this fact at Government level. The EIS would urge all political parties to support the Scottish Government’s proposals to preserve the vital charitable status of FE Colleges.”

School exclusions rise



School exclusion figures for 2006/07 indicate a 4% increase in exclusions compared to the previous year.

Commenting on the figures, EIS President Kirsty Devaney said, "The option to exclude pupils for persistent poor behaviour must always remain an option for headteachers in our schools. We must recognise that persistent low-level pupil indiscipline remains a serious problem in many schools and can only be addressed through robust discipline policies including the right to exclude in more extreme cases. No-one wants to see pupils excluded from school, however, in some instances it is necessary to maintain discipline and to allow a suitable learning and teaching environment for pupils and teachers."

Ms Devaney added, "While any increase in exclusions will always be a concern, it is a reflection of the recurring discipline problems which blight the daily lives of teachers and the majority of well-behaved pupils. With the removal of politically motivated targets which aimed to reduce exclusions year on year, we are now beginning to see a more accurate picture of the level of indiscipline in our schools. Only by schools and teachers working together with parents and pupils, free from undue political influence, can we hope to take the necessary steps to tackle the growing indiscipline problem in our schools".

Supporting language teaching for migrant workers

The EIS has welcomed the recent Scottish Government announcement of a funding boost to support English Language training for migrant workers in Further Education Colleges. But the EIS has warned that the children of migrant workers also deserve specialist support, and that substantial additional funding is needed to enhance specialist language teaching and resources in schools across Scotland.

Commenting, EIS General Secretary Ronnie Smith said, "The EIS commends this funding boost which will support the very good work currently going on in colleges across the country to support migrant workers in learning English. We welcome these workers from across Europe and beyond and believe that they continue to bring much to communities in all parts of Scotland. It is right that we offer as much support to migrant workers as possible, as they attempt to adapt to their new home in Scotland."

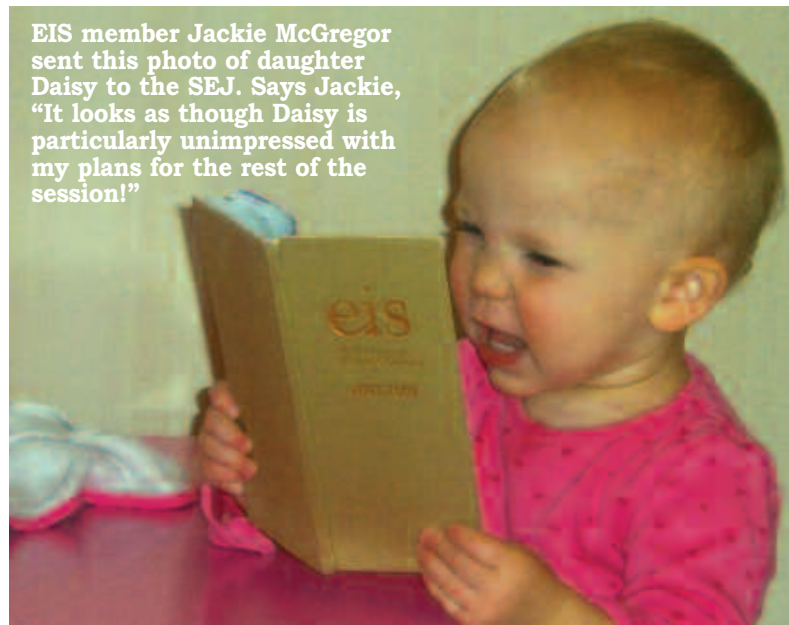
But Mr Smith also warned, "While this additional support for adult learners of English is welcome, we cannot forget that the children from migrant families also deserve our full support as they attempt to learn English and to integrate into our schools and our society. With the massive increase in pupils who are new to English, schools and teachers are becoming seriously overstretched due to a lack of sufficient specialist support available for these pupils. The EIS is calling for additional resources and training for teachers, together with an increase in specialist language teachers to support pupils from migrant families. These young people should have the same opportunities to access the curriculum in our schools as Scottish children, but this can only be achieved if we put in place the specialist support required to allow them to make the most of their educational opportunities."



"While this additional support for adult learners of English is welcome, we cannot forget that the children from migrant families also deserve our full support."

Ronnie Smith, EIS General Secretary

EIS member Jackie McGregor sent this photo of daughter Daisy to the SEJ. Says Jackie, "It looks as though Daisy is particularly unimpressed with my plans for the rest of the session!"



Fund-raising

International friends

The pupils and staff at Dalmeny Primary School held a Sponsored Skip on 1 February to raise funds for Bajana Yiriwa Nursery School in Gambia. The nursery school which opened in September 2004 receives no Government or formal funding and relies on donations to support the children's educational needs. The nursery school provides education for children between the ages of 3-7 and is the first of its kind to open in Bajana which is located in the lower river region.



Dalmeny School became involved with the Bajana Yiriwa Nursery School in November 2007 when the children in P3/4 undertook an enterprise project to raise awareness of the poverty and lack of resources in this area of Gambia. The children distributed leaflets and posters and collected clothing, shoes and toys which were personally delivered to the Bajana Yiriwa Nursery School on 1 January 2008 by Sam Ramsay, who is a Nursery Nurse at Dalmeny School.

The sponsored skip also links with Dalmeny's Healthy School Initiative and with A Curriculum for Excellence as all the pupils were responsible for the fundraising.

Dalmeny Primary has decided to make a permanent link with the Nursery School and is planning many more fundraising activities to help support the development of Bajana Yiriwa. The sponsored skip and money raised by the Parents' Forum totalled £1,200, some of which has already bought new school uniforms, blackboards, drinking cups, buckets to collect water from the well, outdoor play equipment and general teaching resources. A blackboard only costs £30. A little goes a long way and is greatly appreciated by the parents, pupils and staff at Bajana Yiriwa Nursery.

"Irrasshaimase!" – The EIS recently welcomed a delegation of Japanese teacher trade unionists to Moray Place. Pictured are Minei Masaya, Ikeda Kenichi, Fukuta Seiji and Inuzuka Noriko of the Japan Teachers' Union (JTU), together with Sugita Kaori from the University of Tsukuba and interpreter Nishida Yukiyo. Also pictured are EIS Assistant Secretary Drew Morrice and National Officer Louise Wilson.



Photo: Mark Jackson



Photos: Sam Ramsay, Gillian Stewart

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Music to our ears - The EIS National CPD Conference (pictured) for staff working in the music instruction service, held shortly before March's Council meeting, was a significant success. EIS President Kirsty Devaney (Inset) said, "This was the first event of its type ever held in Scotland, and we thank the Scottish Government for their support and funding that helped the event to come together. The Conference contained three vital elements which are central to the way in which education and our schools are developing - partnership working, the important role of the music instruction service and the growing emphasis on inclusion in education and in particular of the Additional Support for Learning Act and other related legislation."

Misuse of Mobile phones

Council approved an updated policy paper which offers advice to members on the misuse of mobile and camera phones by pupils. Introducing the paper to Council, the convener of the Employment Relations Committee, Alana Ross, said, "It is crucial that all Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers (LNCTs) have clear and robust policies on this issue for the legal protection of our members."

Occupational Health provision

A new position paper, setting out advice on best practice regarding Occupational Health provision, was approved by Council. Employment Relations convener Alana Ross said, "While there is a general recognition that improvements are being made in this area, comprehensive occupational health provision is still to be developed across the country. This paper offers advice on how best to pursue

Occupational Health matters at an LNCT level".

A Curriculum for Excellence

Education convener Larry Flanagan updated Council on recent discussions around *A Curriculum for Excellence* and the need for proper consultation with the EIS on the progress of the development programme. Mr Flanagan also reported to Council on his recent appearance before the Scottish Parliament's

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee where he presented evidence on behalf of the EIS, outlining teachers' concerns regarding the varying pace of development of *ACFE* across the country and questioning the lack of funding and resources to support such a wide-ranging and ambitious initiative.

Supporting Nursery Education

Council approved an updated booklet outlining EIS support for teacher-led nursery education (see cover feature on pages 8 - 11 of this SEJ). The new booklet was warmly welcomed by numerous members of Council as an important resource in the campaign to protect quality nursery education. The booklet will now be printed and distributed to schools as soon as possible.

"World Against War"

Following a successful motion proposed by Andrew Fullwood (South Lanarkshire), Council agreed to support the "World Against War" demonstration due to be held in Glasgow, and to make a donation towards the funding of the event.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008

OBSERVERS

The EIS Annual General Meeting will be held in the Caird Hall, Dundee on 5, 6, 7 June 2008. Any member wishing to attend as an observer should contact the General Secretary no later than 12 May 2008.

FEIS

The Statutory Meeting of Fellows of the Institute will be held in Committee Room 3 of the Caird Hall, Dundee at 1.45pm on Thursday 5 June 2008.



The Educational Institute of Scotland

GTCS REGISTRATION: Important dates

The General Teaching Council for Scotland would like us to remind all registered teachers that the current registration period comes to an end on 31 March and that a fee of £40 will be payable for retention on the Register during the period commencing 1 April.

Registration is essential for all teachers working in Scottish schools - without registration, teachers are not legally entitled to work in any school in Scotland.

Full details of the arrangements for payment of the fee are available on the GTCS website www.gtcs.org.uk

“Now that all of Scotland’s 3 and 4 year olds have the opportunity to experience pre-5 education, the benefits of nursery schools and classes with qualified teachers are becoming ever more apparent.”

Providing the best for nursery children

As the EIS continues its campaign to promote high-quality nursery education led by professional nursery teachers, the SEJ takes a look at some of the key issues facing nursery education today. While the Scottish Government has stated its commitment to nursery education, the EIS remains concerned that the sector could suffer in the light of a budget squeeze in some local authority areas. Already some Councils are scaling back the employment of permanent teachers in their nurseries, heightening concerns of a ‘postcode lottery’ of provision across the country, with nursery children in some areas potentially receiving a superior educational experience than children in other parts of the country. A new booklet, set to be published by the EIS shortly, will highlight the importance of teacher-led nursery education for all young children.

Nursery schools and nursery classes with appropriately qualified teachers mean quality educational provision for youngsters before they move on to primary schools. Now that all of Scotland’s 3 and 4 year olds have the opportunity to experience pre-5 education, the benefits of nursery schools and classes with qualified teachers are becoming ever more apparent.

child in areas of deprivation. Recent research, together with policy statements from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), from the Scottish

The Scottish Government, elected in 2007, is committed to the provision of access to a teacher for every nursery age



Supporting quality nursery education – for all Scotland’s 3 and 4 year olds

Government and from Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Education (HMIE) all point to the important role qualified teachers play in nursery education. Parents also value high quality nursery education provision.

But not all youngsters in Scotland have access to the quality of provision which is guaranteed by access to qualified teachers. In recent years several Councils have reduced the number of qualified nursery teachers they employ. University graduates who wish to teach in nursery schools are finding it hard to gain fully supported experience in nursery schools/classes as part of their initial teacher education. The commitment by the new Government to additional funding is welcome. However, the recent budget agreement between the Scottish Government and local Councils could endanger the future of nursery education provision.

The “outcome agreements” between Government and Councils will mean flexibility for Councils to decide on the number of nursery teachers they employ. That is why it is important for all those concerned with quality nursery education provision to continue to campaign for qualified nursery teachers in every nursery school and nursery class in Scotland.

How do we know that nursery education really ensures quality?

One of the most important pieces of research has been carried out by the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) project from three universities. The original research was carried out in 2004 with additional research in 2007. Among the important findings are the following:

- Quality pre-school experience enhances children’s development.
- An earlier start in education is related to better intellectual development and improved independence, concentration and sociability.
- Children from areas of disadvantage, in particular, can benefit from good quality preschool experiences.
- The quality of pre-school education is directly related to better intellectual and behavioural development in children.

EIS national Council member and Vice-Convenor of the Education Committee Norma-Anne Watson – a former nursery school headteacher – outlines the EIS position on nursery education. Ms Watson argues that budgetary concerns should never take priority over providing the best for very young children.

The EIS has welcomed the Government’s commitment to nursery education, and the injection of additional resources which have been initially targeted in areas of deprivation. We also welcomed the Government’s stated commitment to a 50% time increase in the free entitlement for all nursery children. However, the EIS does retain serious concerns that the Government’s aspiration that all nursery children should have “access” to a nursery teacher does not necessarily mean that all nursery schools and nursery classes will have full-time teacher involvement. All the evidence is that nursery education led by qualified GTCS registered teachers provides the best start in education for young children before moving into primary education.

Quality nursery education means that youngsters get the best start in life. Children aged 3 and 4 years are taught under the supervision of a fully qualified and registered teacher. They have educational opportunities suited to their particular needs. Quality nursery education means that children enjoy structured and stimulating play in the years before primary education. Such play is particularly important to allow youngsters to develop properly at a vitally important stage in their lives. Children in

nursery schools/classes learn language skills, and how to play and work with other youngsters and with adults. Nursery education promotes equality of opportunity for children in their earliest years. Also, the needs of many youngsters with additional learning requirements are addressed in nursery schools/classes.

With the many benefits of nursery education, it is worrying that a patchwork in provision is beginning to emerge. With no firm obligation on local authorities to employ teachers in their nursery schools and nursery classes, some Councils have started to remove nursery teachers or to reduce drastically the amount of time they spend in individual schools or classes. The EIS remains certain that, for quality to be ensured, each nursery school or nursery class should have its own

permanent teacher. The emerging model in some areas, with a single teacher being shared across several nurseries, falls far short of providing the full-time access to a nursery teacher that our young children deserve. While many local authorities are to be commended for their continuing commitment to employing nursery teachers in all nursery settings, others are beginning to put financial savings ahead of ensuring quality nursery provision. This is a worrying development that adds to growing concern of a postcode lottery in nursery provision. All our young children deserve the best start to their education, and this can only be achieved if all local authorities commit fully to employing teachers in all nursery schools and nursery classes.



“With the many benefits of nursery education, it is worrying that a patchwork in provision is beginning to emerge.”

Norma-Anne Watson

- Overall quality in early years education is higher in settings such as nursery schools and nursery classes.
- Pre-school settings where there is a high proportion of trained teachers show higher quality and children in these settings make more progress.
- Where there are qualified trained teachers working with children in pre-school settings there is the highest impact on children’s pre reading and on social development.
- Children tend to make better intellectual progress in settings such as nursery schools.

The OECD published *Starting Strong II: Early Childhood Education and Care* in 2006. In

the report OECD stresses the importance of early childhood education and care and in particular the following:

- The social context of early childhood development.
- Placing wellbeing, early development and learning at the core of early childhood education and care work.
- Ensuring that there are the structures in place to ensure proper accountability and quality assurance for early childhood education.
- Developing broad guidelines and curricular standards for all early childhood education services.
- Reduction in child poverty and exclusion.

continued over

- Encouraging family and community involvement in early childhood services.
- Improving the working conditions and professional education of all staff in early childhood education.

The HMIE document *The Key Role of Staff in Providing Quality Pre-School Education* was published in November 2007. The report states, "The evidence from HMIE inspections highlighted characteristics which led to very effective professionals in early education, most often, but not wholly, found in pre-school centres where teachers were employed. Teachers played an important part in equipping their colleagues who are not teachers with the right knowledge, skills and training to meet the changing and increasing demands required of a high quality, pre-school education. Teachers demonstrated very effective skills in coordinating partnership working. Within local authority and independent school nursery classes, qualified teachers operated often as the day to day managers with responsibility for the nursery. In these circumstances, teachers as team leaders regarded nursery nurses as valued colleagues and they worked well together."

Elsewhere in the HMIE report it is stated, "Local authorities need to ensure that, when they review the role and remit of teachers in early education, they make appropriate and effective use of the particular skills and expertise of teachers to ensure that they maintain the consistently high standard of provision and support for pre-school children's development and progress."

There are a number of other conclusions within the HMIE report. In general:

- Staff/child interaction is better in centres with a teacher than in those without.
- Staff/child interaction is better in local authority provision than in private or voluntary centres.
- Meeting children's needs is better in centres with a teacher than in those without.
- Meeting children's needs is better in local authority provision than in private or voluntary centres.
- Support for children with additional support needs is better in centres with a teacher than in those without.
- Leadership is better in centres where a teacher is employed.

"Research shows that the level of qualifications of staff affects the quality of education provided in the nursery school or class."



What makes nursery teachers important?

Nursery teachers receive the same training as teachers in primary and secondary schools. As part of their initial teacher education, all future primary teachers receive training on nursery education and, thereafter, may choose to work with very young children. Many will have additional qualifications or professional development on working in early education. All nursery teachers are registered with the General Teaching Council for Scotland which guarantees professional standards for all teachers in Scotland throughout their careers.

Research shows that the level of qualifications of staff affects the quality of education provided in the nursery school or class. Much work has been done in recent years to develop the qualifications of other staff working within a pre-5 setting so that they can have access to development and qualifications within a recognised framework.

This increasingly leads to improved professional interaction and high quality working together within pre-5 settings. However, a

teaching qualification and the standards set by GTCS mean clear and distinct qualifications for teachers working in nursery schools and classes.

The Scottish Government is committed to providing access to a teacher for every nursery aged child in deprived areas. It is the clearest commitment of any recent Government to the quality that is provided through nursery teachers working with nursery schools and classes. There is an expectation now that local Councils will deliver on the Scottish Government's commitment. However, the budget settlement between the Government and local Councils means that Councils retain a great deal of flexibility as to the kind of service they provide. In addition the Councils are directly responsible for the funding of pre-5 provision. Unless there is real commitment on the part of every local Council and proper funding support from Government the EIS believes that there are real dangers ahead.

What are the challenges today for nursery education?

There is a risk that quality nursery education provision within nursery schools and classes could be

diluted. Access to a nursery teacher is not the same as being taught by a nursery teacher. Budgetary constraints could well mean that access to a teacher is limited and reduced. The EIS is concerned that some pre-5 establishments will be managed by staff other than qualified teachers. Some Councils may still develop forms of pre-5 provision which will be cheaper than nursery schools or classes and without quality education input.

The EIS believes that all concerned with the provision of

quality nursery education should continue to campaign for such provision to be readily available in the future.

What can you do to help ensure that your local Council continues to provide quality nursery education?

Get in contact with nursery colleagues in your area and discuss with them the work that they do. Find out how nursery education operates in your area. Find out how the budget

settlement between Government and local Councils will affect nursery provision in your area – and in particular the “outcome agreement” between Government and your local Council. Make your views on nursery education known to local councillors in your area. In any contact with MSPs locally find out their views on nursery education and make known your support for quality nursery education provision. Make sure that friends, colleagues and parents know about the arrangements for nursery education in your area. ■

Early progress on early years aims



Adam Ingram MSP, Minister for Children and Early Years, writing exclusively for the SEJ, highlights the Scottish Government's commitment to pre-5 education and outlines progress to date and plans for the future in the nursery sector.

Children are any country's most vital asset and it is essential that they are given the best possible start in life if

they are to contribute positively to society. That is why this Government is putting children at the centre of our focus, especially during their initial, formative years. The support we give to early years and early intervention will make an important contribution to the kind of country we want Scotland to be: one which is smarter, healthier, greener, wealthier and fairer, as well as safer and stronger.

High quality pre-school education and care is a major factor in supporting children's development. We know how much pre-school benefits children and how important it is to parents who struggle to juggle work and family commitments. So, within a few months of coming to power, this Government levelled the playing field on nursery entitlement, ensuring that every three and four-year-old in the country is entitled to 475 hours of free nursery provision. This has set the foundation on which we intend to build a fair system of pre-school education.

This was just the beginning. As part of the historic agreement that we have reached with local Government, every child will receive 570 hours of free nursery education every year from 2010. This is a significant step towards our aim of increasing entitlement by 50 per cent. I will be working closely with Councils over this year to prepare the way for implementing this important development.

But it is not just the Scottish Government that recognises the importance of good quality nursery provision. A comprehensive UK study into the lives of young children highlighted the extent to which pre-school attendance supports children's all-round development. *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE)* study showed that high quality pre-schooling is directly related to better intellectual and social development in young people.

The EPPE study also highlighted the contribution that teachers and high quality staff make to improving outcomes for children in pre-school. That is why we are committed to providing access

to a teacher for every pre-school child and are developing degree equivalent level qualifications in childhood practice. Local authorities are now working on how they can make year on year progress towards providing access to a teacher in pre-school.

Play has a big part to play in this stage of life and in helping children develop their social skills and build up the confidence they need to get involved in activities, try new things and learn about themselves and the world around them. That is why we are placing such a strong focus on active learning in the development of Curriculum for Excellence, not just in pre-school but into early primary and beyond.

Recent results from a long-term study into the lives of children across the country showed 80 per cent of children look forward to going to nursery and are quick to tell their parents about their experiences of making friends, learning new skills and having fun. The *Growing Up in Scotland (GUS)* study – which tracks over 8000 children from birth through to their teenage years – showed that children are adjusting well to their first taste of education and I want to acknowledge the hard work that staff in pre-school centres do to make that such a positive experience. Such ringing endorsements show the strength of our current pre-school provision and that we have much that is good that we can build on.

The commitments we have made to improve and extend pre-school entitlement and cut class sizes in Primary 1 to Primary 3 have grabbed most of the headlines up to now, but we are also developing a broader agenda. We are working on the first comprehensive early years framework for Scotland, which we aim to publish later this year. This will look at how we build capacity in families and communities, deliver services that meet their needs in a joined up way and ensure we have the workforce to achieve our ambitions in early years.

At one time, pre-school and early years were seen largely as preparation for school. We have moved on from that narrow view to seeing it as a critical period of skills formation and social development. Putting early years at the heart of our programme is a key element in providing the opportunity for each individual child to be a successful learner and a confident individual, able to be an effective contributor to society and a responsible citizen. This is an exciting time for early years learning and I look forward to working with teachers and others to put this ambitious agenda into practice.

“Children are any country's most vital asset and it is essential that they are given the best possible start in life.”

“The comprehensive school system enjoys widespread support and private schools are virtually non-existent. Following comprehensive school, nearly all children continue to upper secondary or vocational college.”

The achievements of the Finnish schooling system are receiving a lot of international attention following the latest success in the OECD PISA survey. Education journalist Daniel Murphy, the former editor of the journal of the Australian Education Union and now enrolled on Masters Programme in Education and Globalisation at the University of Oulu in Finland, offers an overview of Finland’s highly valued comprehensive education system and highlights some of the reasons for its notable success.

Nordic light

Finland Continues to Shine in International School Comparisons

Visitors are a common sight in the corridors of Finland’s schools these days. Teachers and policy makers are blazing a trail to this small Scandinavian country to find out why it keeps topping international surveys of student ability.

When results of the *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)* were released last December, Finland was again the big story. Its students posted a record score for science and ranked a close second in literacy and maths. Since PISA’s inception in 2000, Finland has been at or near the top of every performance measure.

PISA is conducted every three years by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It uses common tests to assess the proficiency of 15 year olds in 58 countries, with an emphasis on applying knowledge in practical situations.

Professor of Global Education at the University of Oulu, Rauni Räsänen is regularly asked what the secret of Finland’s success is. “It can’t be an accident that we have been on top in PISA for so many years,” she says. “Exactly what it tells is hard to say but I think Finland has certain strengths. One is systematic and professional early childhood education delivered by teachers with masters degrees.”

Pre-school teachers, like those at all levels, must complete a five year masters degree – including writing a thesis – before taking charge of a class.

At age seven children begin nine years of compulsory schooling.



Subjects include Finnish and Swedish, foreign languages, environmental studies, civics, religion and ethics, maths, sciences, and music. Values underlying basic education include human rights, equality and

multiculturalism and there is a genuine commitment to pursuing them, particularly through teacher training. Encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning is also a feature of Finnish schooling.

Languages are a priority and by the time they leave school most students can speak Finnish, Swedish and English. Migrant children receive intensive Finnish language instruction at specially-equipped schools, with the aim of integrating them into mainstream classes as early as possible. Where four or more immigrant children from one country attend the same school they are entitled to receive classes in their native tongue.



Class sizes vary from 20 to 30 although there is no strict maximum. All students receive a hot meal daily, free health and dental care and all learning materials. Comprehensive schooling is the foundation of the Finnish system and central to its success, as Professor Räsänen is keen to point out.

“There is a clear value basis which is equity,” she explains. “This shows in the PISA results. One reason Finland is so high is there is very little difference between schools and areas.” Moreover, the relationship between parents’ socio-economic status and student achievement is one of the weakest of all countries.

Finnish educators speak proudly of their remedial teaching system. Emphasis is on early identification and small group tuition free from stigma. Repetition of a form is exceptionally rare. The comprehensive school system enjoys widespread support and private schools are virtually non-existent. Following comprehensive school, nearly all children continue to upper secondary or vocational college. Those not pursuing either of these options can complete a tenth year of basic education.

Although Finland regularly tops international rankings, it eschews the use of ‘league tables’ based on standard test results for its own schools.

Education advisor to the World Bank and EU, Dr Pasi Sahlberg, believes the international trend to standard testing has passed its peak, in part because Finland provides an example of a successful alternative.

“Before this trend became global, Finland had built a strong professional foundation for teachers,” he explains. “Schools and parents have long believed that teachers know better than external assessors how well their pupils are learning.”

Teachers are not judged on students’ test results or subject to intrusive classroom evaluations. Rather, they enjoy the high levels of public respect and trust. With staff educated to masters level, schools are knowledge rich environments and given considerable scope to implement the national curriculum.

Teaching remains a popular career

Experiencing the Difference

Marja Peedo, 43, a sixth grade teacher at Oulu International School, was born in Finland but lived for many years in Australia where her children started school and she completed her practical training.

“Students are given all their pencils and books so someone who isn’t well off or can’t afford them isn’t disadvantaged.”



“The one free meal a day also puts people on an equal basis. I know of schools in Australia trying to teach children whose parents don’t supply them lunch. How can you learn when you’re hungry?”

Marja’s colleague Kelvey Marden, 35, has worked in Finland for seven years after starting his career in British schools.

“In England, as the teacher I’m in charge and it’s more formal. Here it’s Kelvey, not Mr Marden. I can dress casually and there’s not the same power difference. Of course I’m still in charge and have discipline problems but it’s a lot more relaxed.

“Also, the status of a teacher is a lot higher here and although the salary is lower, my money goes further so I’m better off.”

“The relationship between parents’ socio-economic status and student achievement is one of the weakest of all countries.”

and attracts the best and brightest high school graduates. Earnings for experienced classroom teachers rise to 53, 000 euros (£39, 925) – moderate by Finnish standards – and there is some disquiet over low starting salaries. Virtually all teachers are members of one union, the OAJ, which negotiates the national wage agreement. It is recognised as the legitimate voice of teachers on professional issues and is represented on official policy setting boards.

Recent studies indicate Finnish students experience lower levels of stress and anxiety. Pasi

Sahlberg believes this is due in part to the absence of high stakes testing. Finns have a word, *työrauha*, to describe a calm atmosphere conducive to work, which is often applied to schools. The learning environment is enhanced by well designed and fitted-out buildings which maximise use of natural light.

Surprisingly, spending on education is not particularly high. At 6.1 per cent of GDP, Finland ranks slightly below the OECD average.

When making comparisons with Finland it is important to understand the role culture and history play. Respect for education runs deep. It is considered one of the values – along with hard work – that helped the country rebuild from ruins after WW2. Finns are also the world’s greatest users of libraries.

Belief and wise investment in education are behind Finland’s successful economic transformation over the last few decades. From an agrarian society reliant on forestry industries, the country has become a leading exporter of mobile technology and software.

No education system is perfect but Finland’s commitment to quality and equity is generating impressive results and making the rest of the world take notice. ■

More information:
virtual.finland.fi
www.minedu.fi
www.pasisahlberg.com

The PISA Backlash

Education International, the Geneva-based umbrella organisation of teacher unions, urged parents and policy makers to read reports of the latest PISA results with a sceptical eye.

Secretary Fred van Leeuwen warned, “PISA can offer only a snapshot of how a group of students respond to a set of questions. It does not, and cannot, portray a full and nuanced picture of education in any country.”

Officials at the OECD are known to be privately unhappy with the superficial way their findings are handled by politicians and the media. Many educators see PISA as heaping more pressure on them to perform.

While these criticisms contain some truth, they do not alter the fact that PISA is a rigorous study with a high degree of validity. The wealth of information accompanying the results ranges from the impact of parents’ income on test scores to measures of children’s optimism that environmental challenges will be met.

More information: www.oecd.org/pisa

SEND MY FRIEND 08

Schools join the fight to ensure world leaders meet their target of education for all children.

With only 7 years to go to meeting the Education For All targets, 72 million children are still missing out on a primary education, with millions more forced to drop out of school before they can complete even a basic education. The Send My Friend to School '08 call to action launched on 14 March inviting UK schools to ask all politicians and decision makers to speed up their efforts to provide a primary education for all by 2015.

The Global Campaign for Education has led some powerful actions over the past 3 years including sending one million cut out messages - known as buddies - to world leaders when they met at the Gleneagles G8 in 2005.

This year, there are two challenges: One is to get as many UK MPs as possible to use their artistic talents to show how they will be supporting the campaign. Children will be raising awareness about the issue by creating giant displays in their own schools. MPs will be asked to contribute to the display by creating a montage to show what they would have missed out on if they had not received an education. It is hoped that each MP montage will include a pledge by the MP explaining what they will personally be doing to help reach the Education for All children target. Schools will be asked to 'capture' their work, by photographing the display or by collapsing it and sending the individual cards to Gordon Brown by 30 June, before he flies off to the G8 in Japan.

The other is to get as many students as possible involved in an attempt to get into The Guinness Book of Records by taking part in "The World's Biggest Lesson" on Wednesday 23 April, when young people in 120 countries will be taught the same 'core lesson'. Gordon Brown and other MPs will also be invited to attend "The World's Biggest Lesson" in one of their constituency based schools.

Recent estimates of the number of children out of school have fallen by nearly 30 million since 2005, thanks to the concerted efforts of campaign supporters over the last few years. However, if we continue at current rates of progress, those children will not receive an education in our lifetimes, let alone by 2015.

The Global Campaign for Education is therefore calling on the UK Government to:

- Ensure quality by investing in teacher recruitment, training and retention now, especially in countries furthest from achieving the Education for All goals.
- Support poor countries to enable girls, children with disabilities, child labourers and children from linguistic and other minority groups to complete a good quality education - for example by training teachers to be able to work with all children; by providing their families with financial support to enable them to send their children to school; and by delivering on aid promises quickly.
- Deliver on aid promises and continue to increase investment in education in countries affected by conflict and war - many of which are furthest from achieving the Education for All goals.

Owain James, International Co-ordinator for the Global Campaign for Education says:

"Possibly one of the greatest injustices of all is that where we live and who we are makes all the difference to whether we get a quality education; 57% of children out of school are girls, 33% have a disability and 50% of children who don't go to school live in war zones. Education is a human right and the quickest way out of poverty. We are now only 7 years from the target date for Education For All and unless the increase in education aid comes on stream in the next two years millions of children, often the most vulnerable, will continue to be denied the most basic of human rights."

Free resources to support this year's Global Campaign include:

- An eight minute DVD presented by our young Ambassadors, Lily Taylor King and Jenade Sharma, two secondary school students who have become the 'face' of the Send My Friend campaign;
- Campaign leaflet including a pledge postcard to be sent to the school's local MP;
- Materials for making displays;
- Stickers.

A range of in-depth information is available via the website to support the pack:

- Ideas to help make your Send My Friend wall displays, mobiles and sculptures;
- Lesson plans and activity ideas;
- Short film showing the story so far;
- Stories from children who miss out on school;
- Photos from around the world;
- World's biggest lesson registration form. ■

For FREE Send My Friend 08 packs visit www.sendmyfriend.org or call ActionAid on 01460 238000.

Rutie Ermelinde is 12 and is attending primary school in Mozambique



Welcoming new Scots

Show Racism the Red Card judging day – the winners are chosen

The judging for this year's schools' art competition, organised by the EIS in partnership with the charity Show Racism the Red Card, recently took place at EIS HQ in Edinburgh. The competition, now in its 6th year, had the new theme 'Welcoming New Scots – Challenging Racism – Celebrating Diversity' this year and was aimed at broadening the anti racist message to include the new Scots from accession countries who have come to live and work in Scotland. Here, the SEJ takes a look at the judging day as the panel of four judges undertook the extremely difficult task of choosing the winners from among the many hundreds of impressive artworks that were submitted from schools right across Scotland.

As the judging panel assembled at EIS HQ in Edinburgh to judge this year's Show Racism the Red Card art competition, it was clear that they were going to have a very difficult task, and a long afternoon, ahead of them. With each passing year, both the quantity and the quality of entries continue to surprise everyone involved with the competition. This year, a new theme for the competition that shifted the competition's focus to welcoming newcomers to Scotland helped to inspire young people from across Scotland to produce some exciting new poems, drawings and paintings.

A lot of thought goes into the judging day to ensure that the judging is fair and unbiased and that all entries are given equal consideration. The judging process actually starts in advance of the judging day, as copies of the poetry entries are circulated to all members of the panel in advance to allow them sufficient time to read all of the entries at their leisure. This means that, once the judging day arrives, the judges arrive with their own lists of preferred poems for which they are prepared to argue a case...and argue (in the most polite and civil meaning of the word) they most certainly do.

The judges take the day extremely seriously and take great care in judging all entries fairly, with due consideration to both the originality and thought behind each entry as much as to the quality of the artwork itself. It is once these thoughts are combined with scores for how successfully entries address the competition's themes that the judges manage to agree the prize-winners in each category.



Judges Jim Duffy, Mark Fernandes, Yvonne Strachan and Dan Gerrard with the category winning entries

All entries in all categories of the competition are anonymised so that there is no question of any bias in the judging. None of the judges know the name, gender or ethnicity of any entrants, nor the school or even the geographical area that any of the entries come from. All entries are simply put in age categories and assigned a random number by which they are identified. This ensures that all entries are judged solely on their merits, with no pressure on the judges to take any other factors into account.

One issue which was discussed during the judging day was the issue of entries which were almost "too good", which could raise questions about possible assistance from parents or older brothers and sisters. However the judges agreed that all entries must always be taken on trust, particularly since teachers would have selected the winners in their own schools on merit and with full knowledge of the talents of the individual pupils involved.

Watching the judges at work and listening to them debating the merits of each of the entries is a fascinating process, which never

fails to surprise. The instant positive reaction from all of the judges to some pieces made the judging in some categories relatively straightforward while, in others, there was much debate, with individual judges making the cases for their own preferred choices, before a consensus could eventually be found.

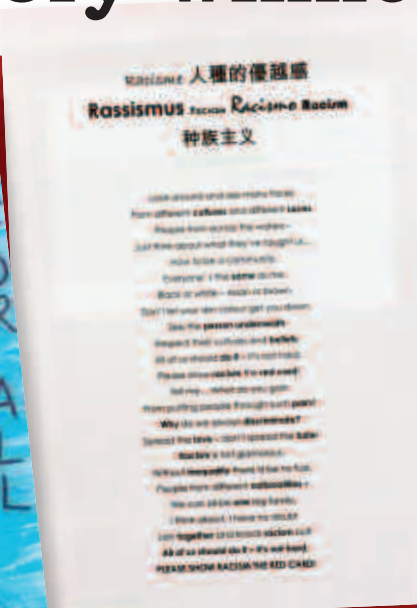
At the end of a long afternoon of intensive judging, the panel were confident that they had found worthy prize-winners in each of the categories. To the victors go the spoils, and each of the winners will now be invited to the special ceremony at Hampden Park to receive their prizes from some of Scotland's best-known football talents. Congratulations to each of the winners for their excellent works, and many thanks to the judging panel for their dedication and hard-work in selecting the winning entries.

See over the page for a full list of winners and pictures of the winning entries, as well as pictures of some of the other excellent entries received.

The category winners...



Eilidh Gray, Hecklegirth Primary School



Casey McDaid, Kilmarnock Academy



Hannah Worthington, St Cyrus School

SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD 2008 PRIZE WINNERS

Primary 1-4 Poetry

1st prize

Christopher MacKay, Shelibost School, Harris

2nd prize

Ellen Smith, Aberlady Primary School

3rd prize

Charlotte Fulton, Calderwood Primary School, Rutherglen

Primary 1-4 Artwork

1st prize

Eilidh Gray, Hecklegirth Primary School

2nd prize

David Baillie, Ardgowan Primary School, Greenock

3rd prize

Orange class and buddies, James McFarlane School, Ardrossan

Primary 5-7 Poetry

1st prize

Primary 6/7, South Primary School, Wick

2nd prize

Megan Leese, Holy Family Primary School, Lenzie

3rd prize

Jack McShannon, Lawmuir Primary School, Bellshill

Primary 5-7 Artwork

1st prize

Hannah Worthington, St Cyrus Primary School, Aberdeenshire

2nd prize

Sam Mackenzie, Greenwards Primary School, Elgin

3rd prize

Amy Dickson, Braidbar Primary School, Giffnock

Secondary Poetry

1st prize

Casey McDaid, Kilmarnock Academy

2nd prize

Anna MacLeod, Ullapool High School

3rd prize

Jed Graham and Ross Hunter, Hamilton College

Secondary Artwork

1st prize

Sylvie Clark, Banchory Academy

2nd prize

Amanda Bryce and Daniella Medinelli, Greenock Academy

3rd prize

Rachel Hayes, Lenzie Academy

The judges take the day extremely seriously and take great care in judging all entries fairly, with due consideration to both the originality and thought behind each entry.

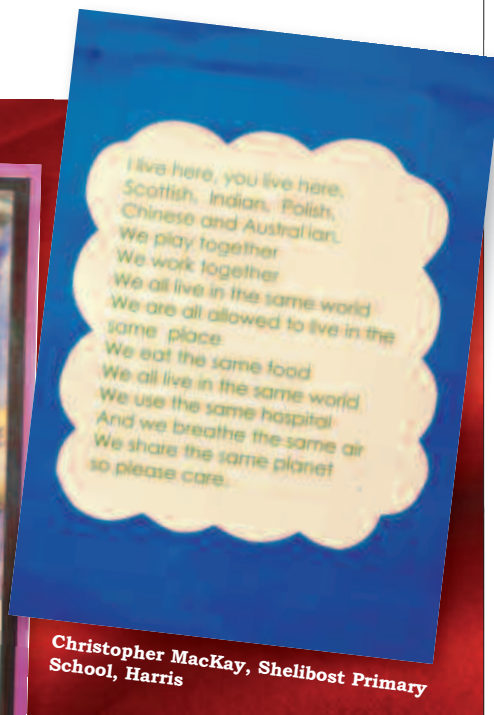


Photos: Mark Jackson





P6/7, South Primary School



...and some of the best of the rest



Too hot to handle?

HSE takes action following EIS complaint over environmental conditions in Glasgow schools.

Since 2002 the EIS has been pursuing the issue of inadequate ventilation in the schools built under the 'Public-Private Partnership' (PPP) for Glasgow City Council (GCC) by the 3ED consortium. Here, EIS National Officer Louise Wilson examines this long-running saga, with input from Glasgow Local Association, from teachers in some of the schools, as well as from the Health & Safety Executive.

There were many problems with both Glasgow's new build schools (6 high schools all built to the same design) and with the 23 refurbishment projects. The main issue was the effects of inadequate natural ventilation systems, which caused overheating, low humidity and uncomfortable, unhealthy and unacceptable teaching and learning conditions.

EIS Safety Representatives in the newly built Glasgow schools were diligent in raising the issues and ill health effects of our members but were being met with absolute denial from their employer and 3ED. The Local Association used every GCC internal mechanism and forum to attempt to have the situation investigated and resolved. Complaint reports were numerous, grievances raised and the issue was pursued both with the Education Department and through the Safety Committee structure.

Eventually the Council agreed, following pressure from the EIS, to carry out a survey of conditions in Hillpark, Rosshall Academy and Drumchapel High.

Unfortunately, their survey was so methodologically flawed that the results reported were inaccurate and misleading. However, this report was used to verify 3ED and GCC's position which was that there was no problem.

They denied that there was any problem with the design of ventilation systems in any of the schools built or refurbished by 3ED. Senior officials from the Council were willing to put this all down to teachers' perceptions.

The EIS Local Association, working with EIS HQ, eventually secured GCC's co-operation to allow the EIS access to two of the schools and for the EIS to have a survey of the ventilation systems carried out by an independent expert. The EIS Employment Relations Committee approved funding for this work and Douglas Burford of SVM Consulting

Engineers was appointed. Douglas is an expert in the design of ventilation systems and both he and his company are well respected. Douglas carried out surveys in Rosshall Academy and Drumchapel High in October 2005 and his report concluded that "the main problem with the internal conditions in the schools is as a result of ineffective natural ventilation". The report also noted that "in both schools the requirements for natural ventilation, as laid down by the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations 1990 are not being met in all the classrooms".

Armed with the SVM report the EIS team, Willie Hart (Local Association Secretary) and Bob Dow (Senior Safety Representative), met with GCC and 3ED representatives and were hoping that the recommendations identified by SVM report would be implemented. They raised the issue of lack of compliance with the Building Standards Regulations, which had been raised by them and by the EIS Safety Representative at Drumchapel High, Cyril Clements, in 2003. Cyril's measurements of window openings were not enough proof for GCC or 3ED and nor was a detailed survey and report from an expert!

Again the EIS were faced with a wall of denial and a refusal to take any action. In the face of this the only way forward was to make a formal complaint to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The HSE investigation of the EIS complaint focussed on Rosshall Academy and Drumchapel High and it was agreed that the results



from these two schools would inform HSE's approach to all 29 schools and particularly to the other 4 built to the same design specification.

The report from HSE has now been issued and the EIS complaint has been upheld. HSE are requiring GCC to implement a programme of work which will introduce air conditioning to the rooms in which heat is generated, Home Economics, ICT and Drama. HSE have also committed to monitoring GCC's response and reviewing the situation once the remedial actions have been taken. The cost to GCC, from the improvements required by HSE will be considerable; "millions of pounds" of work will be required.

HSE's report also recommended that: "The natural ventilation provision at both Drumchapel High School and Rosshall Academy should be investigated in terms of compliance with the Building (Scotland) Regulations. The impact of any non-compliance should be assessed and remedial action taken as appropriate."

It is HSE's view that Building Control is the enforcement body and HSE have written to them to pursue this further. The irony of this is that it was Building Control who issued the certificates which GCC and 3ED constantly relied on to prove, to the EIS, that there was no problem because the schools met the Building Standards Regulations. The EIS are taking this matter forward and the questions which we need answered are: "Why were these schools certified by Building Control?" and "What are GCC and 3ED going to do to bring these schools up to the requirements of the Building Standards Regulations?"

There is plenty of blame to be shared between GCC and 3ED. The EIS hopes now that GCC and 3ED will accept responsibility and share in finding and funding a resolution.

Miles better?

The Glasgow view by LA secretary Willie Hart

Project 2001, the rebuilding and renovating of Glasgow's 29 secondary schools, was a very controversial affair in terms of the politics and the gross upheaval involved. Nevertheless the EIS expected that at the end we would have modern commodious premises conducive to effective teaching and learning. Sadly that wasn't the case.

Major problems with overheating and very poor ventilation manifested themselves from the start. Despite copious details of temperature in excess of 28° and reaching 35°, complaints of ill-health with headaches, nausea, dry throats etc across the estate our complaints were brushed aside as 'political attacks on PPP', 'ungrateful moaners' and ultimately as 'problems of perception'.

The Local Association pursued this matter assiduously through the LNCT, by intervention from the Teacher Representatives on the Education Committee and the City Council Health and Safety Committee. Despite the Council's own research substantiating our concerns to some extent nothing was done. Some first class research by a school EIS H&S Rep produced irrefutable evidence that building regulations had been breached in a number of schools. The lack of windows for the areas concerned contributed in no small way to the lack of fresh air and proper air circulation. Unfortunately the City Council is the agency responsible for validating that new buildings conform to building regulations and had signed-off its new schools as meeting these regulations when they weren't even close to doing so.

Environmental factors and, especially crucial ones like reasonable ventilation, are a key factor in staff and pupil health and welfare, and must impact on the educational outcomes of the school.

In 2003 the Local Association in conjunction with the National H&S Officer approached HSE but they too were unable to apply effective pressure to GCC at that point. In due course the Institute's Employment Relations Committee then agreed to hire in H&S consultant engineers to investigate two of the schools with particular problems. The consultant's report from that investigation broke the logjam as it gave us the hard evidence to seek a hands-on review from HSE.

The full technical inspection carried out by the HSE has vindicated our members' concerns and we welcome that. Crucially we must now keep up the pressure for GCC to initiate and fulfil essential remedial work.

The lessons for the EIS and our members are that joint school, LA and HQ determination and work can move an obdurate and unbending employer and that your trade union can and will protect your health and safety. The lesson for GCC is that they can't short change staff and students welfare and that the £8m repair bill they face might have been considerably less if they'd dealt with this matter 5 years ago.

Oh and who did sign the Building Certificates?

"Major problems with overheating and very poor ventilation manifested themselves from the start."

View from the schools

"When we moved into the newly built and newly named Rosshall Academy 6 years ago none of us realised that we were about to exchange one set of heating and ventilation problems for another set.

From that first year, staff realised that we faced serious issues with working in the new building. The building was so thermally efficient that many rooms became excessively hot and uncomfortable to work in. The atmosphere was also sapping. We also faced a problem with the water. In the science department in particular, and in other areas of the building, we occasionally got 'green' water out of the taps.

Many staff found that they were suffering from an increase in headaches, sore throats and sore dry eyes. We were aware of at least 7 staff suffering from 'dry eye' and had attended their GPs. One union

representative enquired as to the normal rate of such a condition and was told that it should be less than 1 in a 1000; we had 7 in 100. Throughout all of this time, the Senior Management in the school worked hard on behalf of the staff but often met the same responses from our employers as did the unions.

It took two and a half years before a meeting with representatives of Glasgow City Council and 3ED started to face up to trying to resolve the issues. Scottish Water had been brought in to examine the water problem. Scottish Water uncovered the fact that the school had been built with a water-storage of 40,000 litres, in tanks which were too large. A building of our size should have storage of no more than 2500 litres. We had so much water we could not use it quickly enough before some of it went stale.

continued over

continued

At the same meeting when the scale of the water supply was highlighted the design of the ventilation was explained. 3ED had built it on the basis of opening all of the windows to full extent, but the Council safety requirements resulted in fitting safety catches which restrict opening to 6-8 inches. To aid air circulation, fire doors are now held back by magnetic catches which release when the fire alarm is set off. This improved the flow of air in the corridors, but did not help in classrooms.

The staff at Rosshall await Glasgow City Council's response to HSE, hoping that it will resolve the problems and give us a comfortable and healthy, working environment."
- David Harvey, School H&S Rep

"Dealing with the Heating and Ventilation problems in Drumchapel High School on behalf of my colleagues in the EIS over the past six years has been the most frustrating experience of my 37 years in teaching. The problems started immediately we moved into our new building in January 2002 and have continued up to the present day. I have two full lever arch files of comments, complaints and correspondence.

The Local Association presented a Formal Grievance on behalf of Drumchapel, Rosshall and Hillpark that our employer was in breach of his "Duty of Care".

In June 2006 the EIS made a formal complaint to the HSE and I thought my frustrations were at an end when the HSE agreed to the Investigation as did my colleagues who stopped completing complaint forms.

In June 2007 a survey/Inspection was carried out by the HSE and the report states clearly the Council has breached H&S Regulations in Home Economics, Computing and Drama. The report also stated that the Inspection appears to show non-compliance with Building Regulations in relation to Ventilation provision.

I am hopeful that the referral to Building Control by the HSE in relation to the apparent non-compliance with Building Regulations will be upheld so that an agreed works programme can be put in place to provide adequate ventilation in every classroom in Drumchapel High School."
- Cyril Clements, School H&S Rep

HSE



Glasgow H&S Reps Cyril Clements and Bob Dow raised concerns with the Council and the HSE.

If you have concerns about health, safety or welfare within your school, you should let the persons in charge of the building or your employer know.

Viewpoint

Environmental conditions in schools

Officers of the Health & Safety Executive explain the HSE's role in schools.

Environmental conditions in schools are specified by a variety of standards. These include building technical standards, those to facilitate education and UK-wide health and safety law. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) deals with the latter. The duty to provide adequate environmental conditions in schools falls on the employer and any body with control of the building. This could include the local authority, Board of Governors or a PPP school provider. The duty holder is required to assess the risks to staff and pupils under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and this should identify if any requirements are not being met.

New buildings and refurbishments are expected to meet building standards laid down by the Scottish Government. These standards set out the detail for designers that should ensure that temperature, ventilation and flooring are going to be suitable. The local authority building control department has the responsibility of ensuring that buildings meet the technical standards.

HSE's remit covers a large number of premises and risks consequently we prioritise the work that we do. So matters that might kill, seriously injure or cause lasting health effects take precedence. Health and Safety law also overlaps with legislation, and the HSE with many other agencies. Where legislation that HSE enforces overlaps with other authorities, HSE will leave action to those bodies with more specific legislation, such as building control. As a matter of law, HSE cannot demand any provision greater than the current building standard except in some particular cases.

Health and Safety law is generally not prescriptive. So, for example, the temperature must be reasonable and the ventilation sufficient. HSE will look at the combined effects of several factors not simply temperature or ventilation alone when considering if the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations have been met. Usually natural ventilation should be sufficient in a general classroom environment. However if there are additional heat sources, e.g. in an I.T room, this might not be sufficient.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (CoSHH) will apply where fume is produced, such as cooking fume. Given the shorter use compared with a commercial kitchen the level of control will be less onerous. However to deal with the heat gain and fume well-designed general ventilation should be sufficient to manage any fume but should also control temperatures, relative humidity etc.

If you have concerns about health, safety or welfare within your school, you should let the persons in charge of the building or your employer know. If the problems continue, you should let your health and safety rep or TU rep know so they can raise this formally with your employers.

To find out more about the HSE's approach to enforcing standards on health, safety and welfare, visit our website at www.hse.gov.uk. If you have specific queries, we have an information line (0845-345-0055).

The Scottish Government publishes "Guidance for local authorities on internal environmental conditions in schools" www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007 ■

A 10 year Generation

Generation Science tours primary schools throughout Scotland from Stranraer to Shetland. Each year from January to May, their team of over 30 science communicators visit over 600 schools and reach more than 55,000 pupils with their lively and entertaining mix of shows and workshops which not only aim to engage pupils in science, but support teachers in the delivery of the curriculum.

Currently the largest science schools touring programme in the UK, Generation Science is about to come under scrutiny by the Scottish Government. After ten successful years the tour is next in line for investigation by Professor Jack Jackson, recently retired HM Inspectorate's national and science specialist.

Welcoming the review and looking forward to seeing the results which should be delivered this summer is newly appointed Chief Operating Officer Fiona Logue, whose role at the Edinburgh Science Festival is to develop Generation Science further and strengthen the organisation as a whole, over the next three years.

"This review comes at a crucial time for us. 10 years on Generation Science needs to know more about the longer term impact it is having on young people and schools science. We need to be sure that we are more than just an hour of fun away from the curriculum and that pupils are being inspired and learning something of value from their experience."

Each of the 17 Generation Science shows and workshops currently touring Scotland come with a set of comprehensive teachers' notes to assist with any follow-up work in the classroom after Generation Science has been and gone. Granton Primary School in Edinburgh considers this follow up work and the work done prior to Generation Science's visit as the most essential part. "The main reason why we are so enthusiastic about this is because Generation Science fits in well with the teaching we are doing. For example Dr Bunead's Exploding Energy show was ideal for P7 who are currently studying energy and a perfect stimulus to enhance understanding and enthusiasm for the topic and science in general."



Photo by Gillian Whisker

The shows and workshops on offer fall into three areas: Our Living World looks at nature and the human body and uses live animals, actors with fun names such as Nurse Treat-it-better and Roam Zeglobe and a giant bee to explain science in a fun and informative way; Dr Bunhead, TV's most extreme scientist (from Brainiac) takes the lead in Our Material World looking at the properties of air, time and how planets move in space; and Our Physical World includes workshops on light, sound, electronics and circuits.

One of this year's new shows, Future Earth, is proving extremely popular with schools. It was created following the success of a series of workshops that ran during last festival, focusing on sustainability and the environment. Using two actors and a series of simple props it follows the journey of Alu who lives in a world 100 years from now and who travels back in time to tell us about the importance of recycling and reusing our resources.

Kick-starting with the sciences later this year, Simon Gage, Director of the Edinburgh Science

Festival believes that the Curriculum for Excellence, which promises a radical updating of school science, is long overdue. "When I was at school in the 1970s, the transistor had only just made it onto the curriculum, now physics can offer a wealth of fascinating tools for studying areas like astronomy such as remote-controlled telescopes. The Curriculum for Excellence will allow teachers to oversee project work entirely about contemporary issues. We need to engage kids in this kind of science and ensure that Scotland remains THE world leader in science."

"There is no doubt that what is needed to help kids get into science and understand that there is more to it than white coats and microscopes, are those unforgettable moments early on in the classroom" says Gage "the epiphanies – those times when they think blimey I'll never forget that."

To bring that 'unforgettable moment' to your classroom visit www.generationscience.co.uk or call 0131 557 5588. Places are still available for the summer term which runs from 14 April to 23 May 2008. ■

Science



Special Discount for SEJ Readers

Generation Science is Edinburgh International Science Festival's national science touring programme for schools. This year's Science Festival runs from 25 March to 5 April. SEJ readers qualify for concessionary rates on all adult talks in this year's programme including the chance to hear Professor Chris Rapley, winner of this year's Edinburgh Medal, talk on the dangers of climate change and our dependency on the planet's ever depleting energy resources. To book your discount tickets visit www.sciencefestival.co.uk and enter code 103-SEJ

CPD Focus

As part of our continuing coverage of issues surrounding Continuing Professional Development, the SEJ hears from two teachers who have utilised the support available from EIS Learning Representatives to further their own CPD. We also hear of an innovative E-Twinning project between Scotland and Poland, and round up some of the latest CPD events being organised across the country.

Gaining professional recognition

“My GTCS qualification is as a secondary teacher, but because there were no substantive posts in my subject area, I was offered a permanent supply contract within East Dunbartonshire’s Education Authority. I was working within the authority’s “Support for Learning Service”.

To give me the necessary ‘credibility’ to operate as an additional support for learning teacher, I embarked on a modular course of study in order to obtain the postgraduate Support for Learning Diploma at Glasgow University, as this was the career path I decided to pursue.

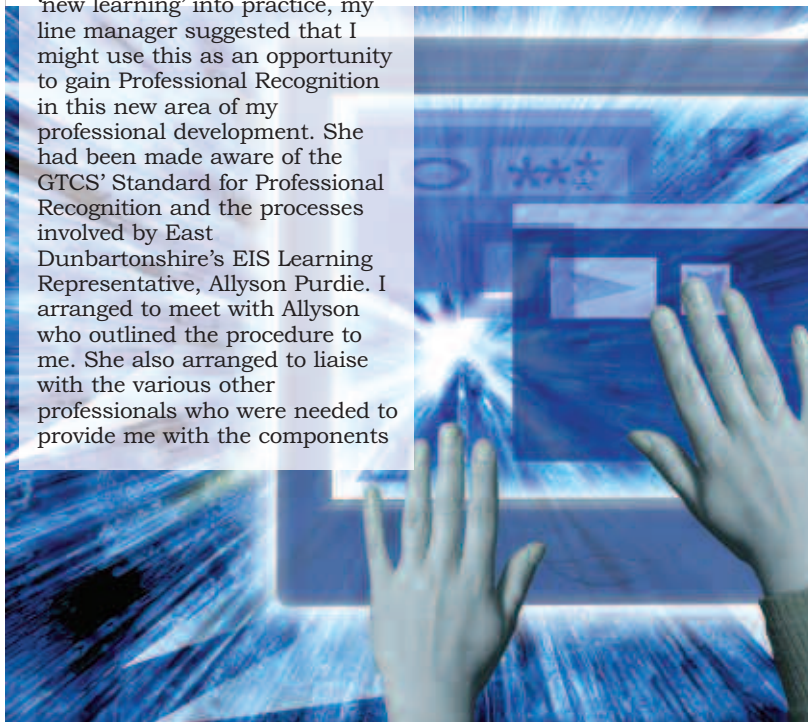
While working as a support teacher, almost exclusively, in primary schools, supporting children of a range of ages who were having literacy difficulties, these postgraduate modules enabled me to put theory into practice. Since I was putting my ‘new learning’ into practice, my line manager suggested that I might use this as an opportunity to gain Professional Recognition in this new area of my professional development. She had been made aware of the GTCS’ Standard for Professional Recognition and the processes involved by East Dunbartonshire’s EIS Learning Representative, Allyson Purdie. I arranged to meet with Allyson who outlined the procedure to me. She also arranged to liaise with the various other professionals who were needed to provide me with the components

necessary to ratify my claim for Professional Recognition. The only pre-requisites were that I held full GTC Scotland recognition and that I had taught for two further years.

The process itself involved self-evaluation, professional action, which in my case was covered by undertaking the postgraduate course, professional discussions with my line manager, reflection and sharing insights with colleagues. It was also necessary for me to gather as much evidence as possible, to support my application.

As a result of completing the necessary paperwork, I received GTCS recognition to teach literacy and support pupil learning. I greatly appreciated the work of the Learning Representative and the collegiate support of my colleagues during the application process.”

– Lorna Crichton



“Since I was putting my ‘new learning’ into practice, my line manager suggested that I might use this as an opportunity to gain Professional Recognition in this new area of my professional development.”

Lorna Crichton

Learning Charter

“After being a teacher in a primary school for six years I had been considering how to develop my career further. After reflecting on different pathways in management and leadership roles I decided I wanted to remain in the classroom. However I had also become aware of the importance of continuing to develop professionally and personally.

I approached a colleague who was the EIS representative within the school and asked if there was someone who could offer me further support. Using the information given I contacted one of the Fife Learning Reps. Isobel Schröder returned my call and we arranged an informal meeting. During the meeting Isobel asked me about my interests and innovations within the class and the school. As the discussion continued it became clear that I had a lot of experiences and evidence that could be used in an Accreditation of Prior Learning claim and progress towards Chartered Teacher status.

A month later Isobel contacted me to tell me about the Fife CPD event which Fife local authority and the Fife Learning Representatives had organised together and was taking place in April. She suggested that it would be of benefit to me as there would be various university providers there to explain their chartered teacher courses and other professionals would be there to share their experiences. Presentations would also be given from members of GTC(S) and the EIS.

After I had decided to embark on the chartered teacher route Isobel provided me with the opportunity to look at a full Accreditation of Prior Learning claim for Chartered Teacher. This allowed me to gain an insight into the level of writing and evidence required.

E-Twinning in Carnwadric Primary School

– Gayle Brown and Laura Hamilton

When the opportunity arose to attend a twilight course on e-twinning in Hillpark Secondary organised by Hugh Donnelly, Glasgow Learning Representative, we signed up straight away. The presentation by Lesley Atkins, teacher at Shawlands Academy Ambassador for Comenius, was inspirational and provided all the information we needed to begin. In December we gained further insight by attending a celebratory evening held in Glasgow's Tall Ship, sponsored by The British Council, and we began our own project in January.

Teaching in a deprived area of Glasgow, E-Twinning seemed an excellent opportunity for our pupils to experience a different culture and way of life. It also ties in perfectly with our upcoming Celebrating Diversity Day. Carnwadric Primary School is working towards A Curriculum for Excellence, and we felt that E-Twinning encompassed all four capacities. We also hope that our experience can be a model for other schools in our Learning Community.

We had our first experience of E-Twinning and International Education early this session when Edna Paterson, Advisor for International Education, gave a presentation to the staff at Carnwadric Primary on an in-service day. In Carnwadric Primary, international exchange is limited, so we were encouraged to take this forward.

With the support of our school management team, we registered our project on the E-Twinning website (www.etwinning.net). Renata Oska, a teacher from the Polish town of Miedzzyzdroje contacted us. Two of the classes in

These events happened over a year ago and I have now completed Module One and have made a successful APL claim. I am in the process of my second APL claim. My aim for the end of this year is to have advanced further to fulfil the standard for Chartered Teacher.

Without Isobel's support and encouragement the situation could have been very different for me. I could have been less active in beginning a course of study or tried to seek a principal teacher position and run the risk of not continuing to develop professionally which would affect the learning of the children I teach. I do think at present the chartered teacher route is the right decision for me and that my classroom practice is continuing to develop. This is something that can only be of benefit to the children I work with."

– Gillian Hepburn

her school, Boleslaw Chrobry, were interested in taking part in a "travelling bear" project. A Polish bear, Kubus, will be sent to Carnwadric Primary School and the pupils will have the opportunity to show him Glasgow landmarks. The school has received some funding from Glasgow City Council (through Edna at the International Office) which will be used to transport the children around the city of Glasgow. The children from both schools have recently introduced themselves by swapping personal fact files and are eager to begin working in a partnership.

In the near future and beyond,

it would be excellent if we could work in partnership with schools in our Learning Community, build on some primary/secondary liaison if possible, and contribute to further professional development with other interested EIS members. Anyone interested in this scheme can find out more from their local Learning Representative on the EIS website or at www.britishcouncil.org/etwinning.htm

Quotes from children about E-Twinning

"I'm happy because I get to find out about other people and how their lives are."

Wendiejo, aged 8.

"It's good to make new friends."

Stephen, aged 8.

"It will be brilliant to hear about life in a real Polish school"

Jamal, aged 10.

"It'll be good to hear about what their hobbies are in Poland."

Jodi, aged 10.

CPD Events round-up

University of Aberdeen

The second open event under the auspices of the EIS and University of Aberdeen partnership will take place on 26th April. It is a free CPD Fair, hosted by the University in the MacRobert Building from 10.00am till 3.00pm. During lunch, provided free, you will have time to view CPD, Programme of Study displays presented by EIS and the University. After the launch of the University summer programme you will have time to meet with EIS Learning Representatives and University staff to discuss any issues relating to your future CPD plans.

Partnership working. The second Fife Council/EIS joint CPD Event – "Your Journey to Excellence."

Fife Multi-establishment Learning Representatives Paddy Miller, Isobel Schröder and Colin Davidson are happy to announce that preparations are well underway for the second annual joint CPD event to be held in the Auchterderran Education Resource Centre in Cardenden, Fife, on Saturday 19th April 2008 from 9.30am – 12.00noon.

Promotional posters and leaflets should now be on notice boards in all Fife schools. Anyone interested in attending is asked to register either by returning the tear-off slip on the leaflet to the address listed or by e-mailing either Jennifer Donnelly: jennifer.donnelly@fife.gov.uk or Isobel Schröder: issysch@yahoo.co.uk.

Fife EIS Local Association Executive has again offered its support by providing the breakfast on the day. This CPD Opportunity will be provided free of charge to all Fife teachers and can be included in the contractual CPD.

Further Forward

Annie'sland College is hosting a CPD event on Thursday 3rd April 2008, 5pm-7.30pm in partnership with the EIS Learning Representative programme to promote CPD to staff, including speakers from SFEU and GTCS.

It is hoped that this event will encourage members to celebrate their own success and initiate a framework that will allow them to gain Professional Recognition for their currently unsung (and unpaid) achievements.

We hope to ensure that our members are provided with real opportunities to access relevant CPD programmes that support them in updating their skills and knowledge in their curriculum specialisms and also in appropriate learning and teaching methodologies. ■

EIS LEARNING REPS – SUPPORTING YOUR CPD EIS Learning Representatives are changing the professional lives of members. The joint CPD events we are holding with local authorities are proving to be an excellent way to make teachers aware of all the CPD opportunities available to them. If you want to receive information, advice and support on CPD you can contact the EIS LR for your area. The names of all our LRs are listed on the LR web-site which is contained within the main EIS web-site. If you want to know if a CPD event is due to be held in your area or if you are interested in becoming an LR and wish further details please contact Lyn McClintock, LR Administrator: lmccintock@eis.org.uk or telephone 0131 225 6244.

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A (continuing) lesson from Uncle Sam?

In the second part of the report on her visit to the USA, 2007/08 Page Scholar Elspeth Stewart describes her experience of visiting colleagues in Boston, Phoenix and Tulsa. Elspeth, an English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher was visiting the USA, with the support of the EIS and the English Speaking Union, to study ways in which pupils who do not speak English as their first language are supported in schools and colleges across this most diverse of nations.

My first visit in Boston was to Epiphany School where I was met by John Finley IV, head of school and co-founder in 1997. This is a unique school, made up of 85 pupils of whom 73% are black, 19% Latino, 4% Asian and 4% white. They are 11-14 year olds who have been selected from families who are on or below the poverty line, referred by the state as abused or neglected, or are fostered. These pupils, all of whom have been victims of, or witnesses to, violent crime, attend school 12 hours a day, 11 months of the year, with parents obligated to give at least two hours of their time per week, supporting the school. The pupils work in small classes of not more than ten and are given intensive educational and social support, with built-in free health care, which is funded solely through private donations, which must amount to 2.2 million dollars per year. They do not receive specific EAL support, as teachers feel able to support pupils appropriately in their smaller classes and they did

appear to have well developed English language skills. This is an amazing programme which transforms the lives of children who might otherwise have been trapped in a cycle of poverty, violence and drug taking, with John Finley stating that four times more pupils graduating from this school go on to graduate from High School than the national average.

The following day I was escorted by my host, in her 1985 Cadillac, to Simmons College, where I met with Paul Abraham, Director of the Teaching English as a Second Language programme there and Janet Chumley, Director of MA Teaching English as a Second Language Student Teaching. We had an extremely stimulating discussion, where it was obvious that they were both passionate about their field of work.

They explained that from 1971 Massachusetts had been required to have a Bilingual Education Programme, where English Language Learners (ELLs) were

taught initially, primarily in their first language with a gradual transition, over three years, to being taught primarily in English but that this had been reversed in 2002 after a referendum which voted for English being the target language from the outset, with teachers using a pupil's first language only to clarify but not to instruct.

No Child Left Behind

They also explained that structures for assessing and teaching ESL varied from state to state, but that pursuant to federal "No Child Left Behind" ACT 2001, legislation had demanded that all ESL pupils now be assessed in line with the national exam system but that new English Language standards with benchmarks had been introduced – MEPA (Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment) carried out annually and MELA(O) (Massachusetts English Language Assessment (Oral)) as a partner initial oral assessment.

From 2002 it was now recommended that students would have a year of special English intervention and would thereafter be fully mainstreamed, but in practice ESL teachers found that students would often require more than a year of support before being ready to exit the programme.

After tearing myself away from two very interesting colleagues, I was driven by Sue, another ESU member, through magnificent fall foliage and past the site of the start of the American Revolution to Hudson High School, West of Boston, which had a good percentage of Portuguese pupils, where we met Dennis Frias, Multilingual Councillor and ELL Coordinator, another dedicated and bilingual professional, who was convinced of the value of the previous Transitional Bilingual



Programme, which had been abandoned in 2003 and had actually completed research which showed that dropout rate had decreased in Hudson High from 13% to 2% while this programme was running and success in college was also significantly increased.

Making advances

However he felt that the current programme, where beginner ELLs received 90 minutes of English, 90 minutes of ELL reading and an immersion Maths class, with language Arts Computer, as well as a practical mainstream subject daily, was also supportive.

More advanced English Language Learners would receive decreasing amounts of ESL support and more mainstream teaching, as they progressed through three levels.

However he stressed that the success of the programme was dependent on mainstream teachers being trained in sheltered English instruction, like the New Jersey SIOP training, which was now happening more systematically, after a mid cycle audit of the new English Immersion Programme.

Interestingly, students at Hudson High can sit Portuguese Advanced Placement Literature – the only High School in the US where this is offered, which means that these pupils are able to leave school with advanced literacy skills in their first language

Sue, who had stayed with me throughout, then drove me back to Boston, via a preserved old schoolhouse, where it was claimed the nursery rhyme, Mary had a Little Lamb, had been written as an actual experience by a pupil, and past the home of Louisa May Alcott, author of Little Women!

Saturday was a very enjoyable day, spent as a tourist in Boston, including a visit to Harvard University, again supported by the ESU, before I departed for my next destination, Phoenix.

My host Barbara had most kindly arranged for us to have a meal with two of my cousins, whom I had not seen for eighteen years as well as a trip to the truly spectacular Grand Canyon, before I visited Moon Mountain Elementary school.

Raising Arizona

Interestingly, Arizona is 49th out of 50 states in terms of per capita



“Students at Hudson High can sit Portuguese Advanced Placement Literature – the only High school in the US where this is offered, which means that these pupils are able to leave school with advanced literacy skills in their first language.”

spending; \$3000 per year was spent on each pupil compared to \$14000 per year on the east coast of the USA. Apparently Arizona has traditionally been known as a low tax state (education is funded through taxes) whereas taxes on the east coast are much higher.

Schools are required by the state to keep ELL monitoring notebooks, with very detailed information on the stage of their English Language Development, how long they had been registered as ELL, what support they were receiving and what testing had been done and the results of this. All pupils had numbers by which they could be identified by the state, with information on pupils available state wide, on their computer system.

English language support in this school was provided through the Rosetta Stone computer programme also used in New Jersey, with pupils assessed through the programme for their level of English and then started at the appropriate point. ELL pupils were carefully monitored to ensure that they were all accessing this.

While ELL pupils may not receive a specific English language programme, apart from Rosetta Stone, this school has obtained funds for a literacy centre, where targeted pupils, including ELLs, are taught core reading, writing and comprehension skills from age 5-8, which include phonic and decoding skills as well as vocabulary building, as many of their pupils come from a very deprived language background in their first language and therefore have few skills to transfer.

A Grade 3 teacher offered me the opportunity to observe an extremely well scaffolded lesson, which all pupils were able to access. The aim of the lesson was for the pupils to be able to write a story problem about things that come in groups. She started with brainstorming with the class, asking for ideas of what came in groups, so they were able to use their own experience and familiar language to suggest hands, arms, eyes etc. She then put this information on to a matrix on the whiteboard, so the information was clearly laid out and easy to understand. Next she modelled the sentence structure required for pupils to write their own story problems.

From observing the pupils, I could see that all the pupils, including beginners to English, were able to understand and successfully complete the task.

In addition to Moon Mountain Elementary School, I also visited my host Barbara’s school, North West Christian where I was able to talk to the Junior High School Principal, Liz Moenich, who was very knowledgeable about legislation and training for ESL teachers, which all her staff were in the process of completing.

While I was in Barbara’s school I was also given the opportunity to give a presentation to older pupils about Scotland and to teach them some popular Scottish dances, which was very much enjoyed by all!

Last stop was Tulsa (not 24 hours to, thank goodness!)

Here the main focus was on pupils who had not managed to

graduate from high school and on young adults who were seeking to learn English or were identified by the workplace as requiring language support.

We visited Union High School, where John McHendry, ESL adult project co-ordinator, told us about the GDE (General Education Diploma) which young adults could sit as a substitute for their High School graduate diploma, which would give them more credibility in the workplace and provide a step into further education.

In the afternoon we visited a Community Education class for adult ESL students. This free class (with free child care) was run for two hours, three days a week with some of the students also attending additional college classes.

The class had a mix of cultural backgrounds and language levels, with all extremely well motivated and focussed. Again the teacher focussed on topics which were relevant to their everyday lives and would help them integrate into society. Today they were looking at recycling, the language and vocabulary associated with this, looking at which materials could be recycled, why this and general energy saving was a good idea in today's climate and the procedure to follow should they chose to recycle.

It was interesting to observe a more experienced learner supporting a beginner, in her first language, Spanish, so that she could more easily access the lesson. The teacher could also speak Spanish and use this on occasion to clarify. Following a not uncommon trend for Latino immigrants, the beginner learner

appeared to have no literacy skills in her first language and therefore learning to read and write in English was a great effort, as she had no skills to transfer. I was very impressed at how desperate she was to learn and at how seriously she was taking the lesson.

At the end of the very interesting lesson, we were all given free pencils which had been made from recycled dollar bills – a very nice touch!

That evening, my hosts Kay and Franklin hosted an ESU gathering where I did a Power Point presentation about Scotland, its history and its beautiful scenery followed by a talk on my findings as a Page Scholar, looking at how English Language Learners are supported in the USA, which was very well received indeed

In order to investigate Adult Education more, as providing good quality English classes for our Polish adults in Moray is an issue just now, we met two ESL teachers for a working lunch on Saturday.

It was interesting to find out that all adult ESOL teachers not only had to have a degree, but also had to be Oklahoma teacher certified and that a comprehensive training programme was in place. They also explained that stringent accountability measures were stipulated, where students had to be pre and post tested, show evidence of progress and attend for at least 12 hours for the teachers to be given funding for them. They are obviously a step ahead of Moray in this respect and offered to send me the handbook they used "Equipped

for the Future" Content Standards; What Adults need to know and be able to do in the 21st Century. This would be a very useful publication, by the National Institute for Literacy, for course organisers preparing to put together a training programme and qualification for our ESOL teachers in Scotland. The ESL teachers also offered their services as trainers in Scotland, should this be required. Desri Richardson, Adult and Community Education Coordinator, was determined that Oklahoma would have a good reputation for Adult ESOL Education and was in charge of a large number of classes and working on building close partnership with schools, so that parents of EAL pupils could be advised of the location of ESOL classes and attend one most appropriate to their needs.

The grand finale on Saturday night to my trip to the States was a cocktail party held in a beautiful private school in Tulsa where we listened to the finalists of the District Metropolitan Opera auditions and then moved on to a spectacular rendition from the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra.

This trip really was an incredible experience, thanks to the dedication and support of the ESU members and in particular my hosts, Roberta, Marrian and Richard, Sue, who showed me round Boston, Barbara Mark and Helen and last but not least, Kay and Franklin.

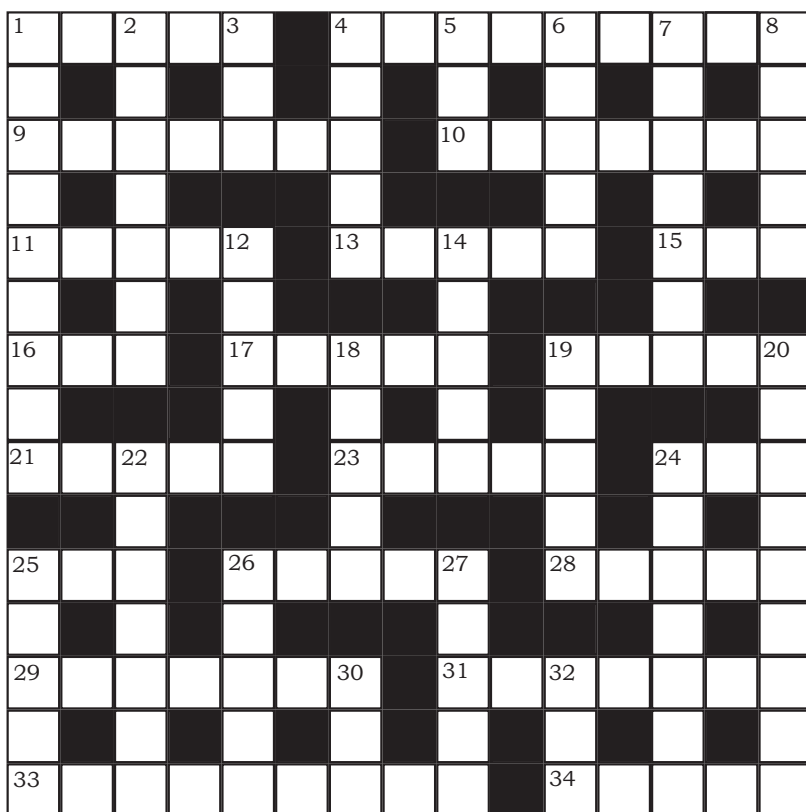
I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to my hosts for their efforts in researching and negotiating visits to schools in their area where there was evidence of good practice in teaching EAL.

The staff and pupils in the schools are also owed a huge thank you, for the welcome I was given and for the efforts they made to make sure that I gained the maximum benefit from my visit. The arrangements made for me were spectacular in their planning and forethought and for that I am truly grateful. I have made strong links with colleagues throughout the USA and hope to maintain this bond so that we can continue to share our ideas and practice over the years to come, in this exciting field of Education. ■

– Elspeth Stewart
(Central Support Services
Beechbrae Education Centre
ELGIN)



Crossword 50



Answers to crossword no.49

Across: 1 Games, 4 Catalysis, 9 Ennoble, 10 Library, 11 Tutor, 13 Study, 15 Die, 16 Air, 17 Grant, 19 Sepal, 21 Light, 23 Class, 24 Her, 25 Don, 26 Put-up, 28 Linen, 29 Opossum, 31 Perfume, 33 Practical, 34 Basil.

Down: 1 Great hall, 2 Monitor, 3 Sub, 4 Chess, 5 Tel, 6 Lobby, 7 Stand-up, 8 Style, 12 Right, 14 Ultra, 18 Ascot, 19 Sisal, 20 Laryngeal, 22 Gondola, 24 Honours, 25 Droop, 26 Posit, 27 Pupil, 30 Mac, 32 Rob.

CROSSWORD WINNER –

Congratulations to **Sophia Tierney**, Glasgow, who was the winner of SEJ cryptic crossword no 49. Sophia receives a £20 book token.

CLUES

Across

- 1** Sounds like a very bad Morningside pancake (5)
4 Football team could lack ned by Glenhead Park (9)
9 Witty reply softens ire about late mail (7)
10 Small matter of little moment out east with excellent backing (7)
11 Internal head gaps in use all the time (5)
13 Escape with an itinerant eastern Pole (5)
15 Earlier in time revealed no clue (3)
16 Whiskey grass perhaps (3)
17 Shows where you're going and where you've been (5)
19 Songs about kisses? (5)
21 Athletic football team down south (5)
23 Do they play at the airport ? (5)
24 Facial spasm in the east end of Glasgow (3)
25 Kiss the south goodbye and arrange winter sport (3)
26 Cater badly and respond to criticism (5)
28 Beginnings of cloud in round, regular iridescence (5)
29 Whip CIS club at Portman Road (7)
31 Keep your nose in a newspaper article (7)
33 Regulators we fleshly types don't like (9)
34 It was a travesty letting eclat enter (5)

Down

- 1** Ship's company from Irish city opened the bottle (4-5)
2 Remove from record,old play on words say backwards (7)
3 Squarely dashes the European Monetary System (3)
4 Alexandra joins reported company at Gresty Road (5)
5 Sweet potato may be manufactured (3)
6 The milkman picked premium bonds (5)
7 Thirties redcoat style maybe! (3,4)
8 Jack navel has prince inside, just look! (5)
12 What many students did in the seventies it inspired them (3-2)
14 Roughly towel the young bird (5)
18 Another 21 across in Clackmannanshire (5)
19 Threw coins to make sound (5)
20 Small bag to annoy say reversed blasphemy (9)
22 Fairy tale writers reportedly beside team from Blundell Park (7)
24 Club found in director quayside ground (7)
25 Partly best if found erect (5)
26 Sounds like a ghost found at Stark's Park (5)
27 Elegantly dressed men sent off several times (5)
30 Oh 'e can't work with that in the garden (3)
32 Bottom of the class? (3)

Work out and win

A £20 book token is the prize in the SEJ cryptic crossword. Send your completed entry to the SEJ Editor, 46 Moray Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6BH by **Friday 25 April**. The first all correct entry picked at random will win. Details of the winner, along with the solutions to this month's puzzle, will be published in the next SEJ. Employees of the EIS and their families are not eligible to participate in the competition.

Name:.....

Address:

Return to: SEJ, 46 Moray Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6BH

Mini quiz answers

1. Monty Python's *Flying Circus* 2. John Stuart Mill
 3. MDCCCCLX 4. Audrey Hepburn 5. Madonna

Sudoku

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Sudoku

To play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and every three-by-three box contains the digits 1 to 9. Just use the logic to solve - no maths required! Have fun! **Rating: medium**

supplied by: Lovatts Publications

4	6		1			2	3	
	8	3				2		
2			6			3	4	8
		7		8				6
				6				
6				3		7		
8		9	5		6			4
			8			1	6	
	1	6			4		8	5

SEJ Feb 08 Sudoku solution

1	3	9	6	8	5	2	7	4
8	6	4	3	7	2	5	1	9
5	7	2	9	4	1	6	8	3
3	2	6	4	1	7	9	5	8
9	4	8	5	2	3	7	6	1
7	1	5	8	9	6	3	4	2
4	8	7	2	5	9	1	3	6
6	9	1	7	3	4	8	2	5
2	5	3	1	6	8	4	9	7

5 Minute Quiz

1. The Liberty Bell, a march composed by John Philip Sousa, was the title music for which UK comedy series?
2. Which 19th century English philosopher published *On Liberty* in 1859?
3. What is the year 1859 in Roman numerals?
4. Which Belgian-born actress won the Academy Award for Best Actress in the film *Roman Holiday* in 1953?
5. Who had a hit with *Holiday* in 1983?

Answers on page 29

Reform of the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme (STSS) – April 2007

Since the reform package came into force in April last year, the change that has prompted the largest number of queries, to us at EIS Financial Services, has probably been the subject of Pension Commutation. From April 2007, retiring teachers are now able to reduce part of their pension to get an increase in their tax free lump sum. From the calls we have taken, most members want to know how to calculate the lump sum increase, what the implications are and should they do it or just stick with what they have. I shall try and address these points as simply as possible.

Members can now receive 25% of their "pension pot" as a tax free lump sum. To maximise your lump sum you must give up part of your pension. This process is known as commutation and for every £1 of your pension you commute you receive an additional £12. Members cannot commute any of the pension they receive from their employer as mandatory compensation or discretionary enhancement under the Premature Retirement Compensation (PRC) arrangements.

To calculate 25% of your "pension pot" you should use the following formula:
$$[(\text{Pension} \times 20) + (\text{Lump sum} \times 20/12)]/4.6667$$

You then deduct your lump sum from the answer to get the maximum amount of additional lump sum you can receive. Divide this by 12 to get the maximum amount of pension you can commute.

E.g. using a pension of £10,000 and a lump sum of £30,000 the maximum amount of lump sum you can receive is £53,571. The additional lump sum you can receive is therefore £23,571. You must commute £1,964 to receive this.

An estimate of the amount you can commute is 19.64% of your pension. Multiply by 12 to calculate the maximum additional lump sum you can receive.

The question of whether or not you should commute it really is a matter of personal choice. There is no right or wrong answer to this question. Different sets of personal circumstances will lead to different decisions. Some key points that should be considered:-

- ◆ The lump sum is tax free. The pension is taxable.
- ◆ The lump sum can be invested to produce more income and in some investments with little or no income tax payable.
- ◆ Although taxable, the income from the pension will increase each year. Income from investing the lump sum would be likely to remain around the same level.
- ◆ On death, a maximum of 50% of the teacher's pension will be passed to the surviving spouse.
- ◆ The lump sum, as with all savings, can be passed to the surviving spouse on death without a tax liability.

If you have any questions regarding this change to the pension scheme or need help with the calculation or indeed working out how to use the lump sum as efficiently as possible, then call your local EIS Financial Services Independent Financial Adviser on **0141 332 8008** or send your question by email to **SEJ@eisfs.co.uk** For further information on all of the pension reforms just follow the link on our website

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| <input type="checkbox"/> ISAs | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

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|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
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