



12
My
induction
year



14
CfE in
action



Dec 2009
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What a Pantomime!

Ugly cuts ahead
for education?

08

also...

07 News from EIS Council

24 EIS Contacts

29 Crossword

eis

The Educational
Institute of Scotland

05

Happy
Hogmanay!
Exclusive Arts
Ticket offer

16

End of
year Quiz
Win an iPod!

18

The Learning
Agenda
Latest CPD news



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Rags or riches for Scotland's school pupils?

This month's SEJ cover story highlights the difficult times currently facing Scottish education, and warns of even tougher times to come as politicians pursue a wide-spread budget-cutting agenda. It is vital that we continue to stand up for education, in order to protect learning and teaching in our schools. The EIS believes that education should never be seen as expenditure, but as an investment in our young people and for the future of Scotland and its economy.

Our front cover illustration may be light-hearted, but it has a serious message for politicians of all political parties. It is simply not acceptable to impoverish Scottish education in order to fix a problem created by the worst excesses of global financial institutions – excesses that were often enabled by the free reign afforded to them by Governments around the world.

It is also disingenuous for our elected representatives to pass the buck between each other – with Westminster blaming Holyrood, who blame local authorities, who blame Holyrood or Westminster – each is equally culpable for the state of public finance and each has a duty and responsibility to protect public services, especially the education of our young people.

The threat to the funding of education is very real. Already we have seen very deep cuts in school budgets across the country. There are now 1,000 fewer teachers employed in our schools than was the case just a year ago, while numbers of support staff are also falling as local authorities look to cut costs. CPD opportunities are being scaled back, while even classroom resources such as books, jotters, pencils and photocopied worksheets are increasingly scarce in many schools.

How are schools and teachers supposed to deliver the bright new future for pupils envisioned by the *Curriculum for Excellence* in the face of such cuts? The simple answer is that they cannot. Our politicians, both local and national, need to stand up and be counted and take the necessary steps to protect our education system by ensuring it is properly funded. Cutting back on education in the midst of a recession is the worst thing they could possibly do, and would only serve to worsen the position that the country already finds itself in.

Now is the time to invest in education, for the future of our children and for the good of our country as a whole. To sell education short is to sell our country short.

Season's Greetings

The SEJ wishes all its readers the best for the festive season and a Happy New Year!

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What a Pantomime!


Cover Story **08**

CONTENTS

12

New Beginnings
Probation in Dundee

14

The Art of Excellence
CfE in action 

16

End of Year Quiz
Small prize to be won in big quiz!

18

The Learning Agenda
CPD update

20

Personal Injury
Supporting EIS members

Special features
Road Safety 22
Researching Teaching 26

Regular features
News 04
Council News 07
EIS Contacts 24
Crossword 29
Sudoku/Box ads 30
Letters 31



EIS welcomes positive report on vital role of CPD and Chartered Teachers in supporting new Curriculum



Ronnie Smith

Image: Alan Richardson

The EIS has welcomed publication of the report *Learning Together – Improving Teaching, Improving Learning* by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe). The report covers a number of new ways of working in schools since the 21st century agreement in 2001.

Commenting, EIS General Secretary Ronnie Smith said, "This report highlights the excellent work that teachers across Scotland are undertaking as they continue the process of implementing the new *Curriculum for Excellence*. The examples of good practice which are highlighted in the report demonstrate how creative leadership, collegiate working and quality CPD in schools can bring benefits to both teachers and pupils.

"The Report also emphasises the important role that will be played by Scotland's growing number of Chartered Teachers as schools work to embed the aims of CfE across all subject areas, and the fact that continued funding for quality CPD for all teachers remains absolutely essential if *Curriculum for Excellence* is to succeed." ●



Image: Mark Jackson

Going Green

The EIS was present at the recent Scottish Green Party Conference in Dumfries. The EIS held a fringe event on the challenges facing Scottish education, chaired by EIS Vice-President Kay Barnett (left) and with speeches by EIS President Helen Connor and Green Party MSP Robin Harper. ●

Improvement in school discipline

The EIS has welcomed publication of the Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2009 report by the Scottish Government. The report, based on research by Professor Pamela Munn and a team of researchers at the University of Edinburgh, identifies overall improvements in pupil discipline across Scotland.

Commenting on the report, EIS General Secretary Ronnie Smith said: "The EIS welcomes the report, which is based on substantial research on discipline in Scottish schools. The improvement in discipline identified in the report is partly a result of the high priority given to tackling this issue by a succession of Scottish Education Ministers. Therefore, it is essential that there is no let-up in the priority given, or the resources invested, in improving school discipline. Any cuts to education funding would only put at risk all the progress made on improving discipline to date." ●

Gwen Mayor Trust Awards 2009/10

The Gwen Mayor Trust recently announced its awards for 2009/10. Nine school projects from across Scotland have been successful with amounts ranging from £200 to £750 being awarded. A total of £4700 has been awarded from the Trust fund this year.

The Gwen Mayor Trust was established by the EIS in memory of Gwen Mayor, the teacher who lost her life in the tragic shootings at Dunblane Primary School in March 1996.

The purpose of the Trust is to advance education by providing financial support for projects in connection with the arts, culture, music or sport. Gwen Mayor's daughter and a former colleague from Dunblane Primary School are among the trustees to the fund. Originally, funds were raised from teachers in Scottish schools in the months following the tragedy and since then a number of organisations, including trade unions, and many individuals have contributed to the fund. All primary schools in Scotland are eligible to apply for Gwen Mayor Trust funding. ●

- Middleton Park Nursery/ Primary School, Bridge of Don – Awarded £450 for their playground art project.
- The Community School of Auchterarder – Awarded £200 for their international arts project.
- North Ronaldsay, Eday, Flotta and Papa Westray Community Schools in Orkney – Awarded £750 for their collaborative art project.
- Kelbourne Primary School, Glasgow – Awarded £750 for their joint mainstream / ASN expressive arts project.
- Crossgates Primary School, Fife – Awarded £200 for their drama project.
- Whitelees Primary School, Cumbernauld – Awarded £750 for their environmental and drama project.
- St Fergus Primary School, Dundee – Awarded £600 for their cultural project.
- West Mains School, East Kilbride – Awarded £250 for their ASN social and wellbeing project.
- Glenelg Primary School, Kyle – Awarded £750 for their environmental and social project.



Hasta La Vista, Christine

EIS HQ lost its "Terminator" this month, with the retirement of long-time EIS Cashier Christine Lawrie.

Christine was well-known to elected EIS members and staff as the controller of day-to-day EIS expenditure and finance. Christine's scrupulous examination of all expense claims and expenditure helped to ensure that all EIS funds were carefully and properly controlled. Christine also had a number of responsibilities in relation to office staffing. Christine, pictured here with General Secretary Ronnie Smith, retires after 27 years of service to the EIS. The SEJ wishes Christine all the best in her well-earned retirement. ●

24 Chartered Teachers graduate from UWS & EIS Partnership

24 new Chartered Teachers graduated from the University of the West of Scotland at a ceremony at Troon Concert Hall on 6 November.

These experienced classroom teachers all graduated from the University's MEd Advanced Professional Studies (Chartered Teacher) programme.

Since its launch in 2003, over 80 teachers from across Scotland have graduated from the Chartered Teacher programme, which is run by a partnership led by the University of the West of Scotland and the EIS, together with Learning & Teaching Scotland, Argyll & Bute Council and South Ayrshire Council.

The following teachers graduated from the University's Chartered Teacher programme at the ceremony on 6 November: Joyce Adrain, East Ayrshire; David Beveridge, Edinburgh; Helen Celnik, Aberdeen City; Aileen Clark, Aberdeenshire; Blair Crossan, Dumfries & Galloway; Ruth Foster, Fife; Eileen Geddes, Glasgow; Joyce Harper, Argyll & Bute; David MacLeod, Western Isles (Eilean Siar); Elizabeth Monaghan, Dundee; Philip Radwell, East Ayrshire; Margaret Rankine, Renfrewshire; Lavinia Thomson, Renfrewshire; Adelaide Thomson, East Renfrewshire; Julie Tormey, Inverclyde.

The following graduated in absentia: Marie Love, North Lanarkshire; Margaret MacDonald, Glasgow; Sandra Macniven, East Lothian; Stephen (Tom) McGuire, East Dunbartonshire; Anne McKinnon, Scottish Borders; Mark Murphy, North Lanarkshire; Carla Risi, Glasgow; Ian Williams, Highland. ●



Religious Observance: Design and Practice Course

This new Course has been accredited at masters module level in the delivery of Religious Observance and is delivered in partnership with the University of Glasgow, The Church of Scotland, Scripture Union Scotland and others. Successful participants will earn 20 masters level credits which will be recognised as a complete unit or which can be used towards a certificate (60 credits) or a Masters (180 credits).

The Course commitment consists of a residential event in Glasgow on 15/16 January, half day events on 4 March and 22 April, 9 hours internet based work and a 3000 word essay due in June 2010. The whole course will cost £50 plus overnight accommodation which will be available at a discounted cost. ●

Further information can be obtained from:

Ewan Aitken

Council Secretary, Church and Society Council
Church of Scotland
Direct Line 0131 240 2206
www.churchofscotland.org.uk/councils/churchsociety/csnews.htm

or can be accessed on
www.gla.ac.uk/departments/religiouseducation



Put a spring in your step this Hogmanay, with Off Kilter at the Festival Theatre!

Off Kilter is a feisty and fabulous celebration of dance styles alive and kicking in Scotland today: from ballet, hip-hop, and traditional Highland, to Indian classical and contemporary dance – all choreographed to an exhilarating soundtrack featuring the very best in Scottish music.

This fantastic production gathers together world class artistry from **Mark Morris** to **Ashley Page**, plus a host of guest choreographers, with live and recorded music from **Beethoven** to **Martyn Bennett**, **Ivor Cutler** to **Franz Ferdinand** and **Tom Bancroft** to **Calvin Harris**.

A scintillating evening's entertainment guaranteed to help you welcome in the New Year with a bang!

SEJ readers can buy top price tickets for just £15 – simply phone the Festival Theatre Box Office on 0131 529 6000, or visit the theatre in person at 13 – 29 Nicolson Street

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Image: Mark Jackson

EIS members participate in Gude Cause march in Edinburgh

On 10th October, hundreds of people took to the streets of Edinburgh to pay tribute to the women in Scotland who campaigned to obtain women's right to vote and celebrate 100 years of women's activism as they re-enact the original procession.

The day provided an energising focus and raised the profile of women's activism as it demonstrates the power of women's contribution to society, culture and all aspects of public and private life in 21st Century Scotland.

The EIS played a prominent role (above left) as did Ministers including Cabinet Secretary Fiona Hyslop (below left).

Votes for Women Competition

In the May edition of the SEJ we publicised the 100th anniversary of the Suffragette Pageant and March held in Edinburgh on 9 October, 1909 organised by the Women's Social and Political Union. The Equality Committee of Edinburgh Local Association of the EIS decided to mark this centenary by organising a school Votes for Women competition. It was launched in June and prize winners were announced a few days before the Gude Cause event on 10 October.

The aim of the competition was to encourage pupils to learn more about the campaign for women's suffrage and think about its contribution to widening democracy and its impact on women's lives then and now. Entrants were encouraged to show their learning in creative and imaginative ways: in writing; any kind of art work; IT –web page, film, power point; or music. There were 3 age categories P6/7, S1-3 and S4-6 with individual and group sections.

A wonderful variety of entries was sent to the Edinburgh EIS office by the closing date. We received short stories and posters; ballot boxes and jig-saws; banners and booklets; films and peg dolls; even a life-size suffragette called Sally.

The prize winners, parents, teachers and school EIS reps were invited to an evening prize-giving and reception in the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood hosted by MSP and EIS member Robin Harper. Our three judges were Margo MacDonald MSP; Marilynne MacLaren Convenor of the City of Edinburgh Education Committee and Helen Kay from Gude Cause. They were hugely impressed by the entries and the amount of work today's young people and teachers had put into producing a fitting tribute to the efforts of the suffragettes of a 100 years ago.

Annie McCrae

Gude Cause 1909 – 2009

*The Right To Vote An' A' That:
A Hundred Years of Scottish Women Singing*

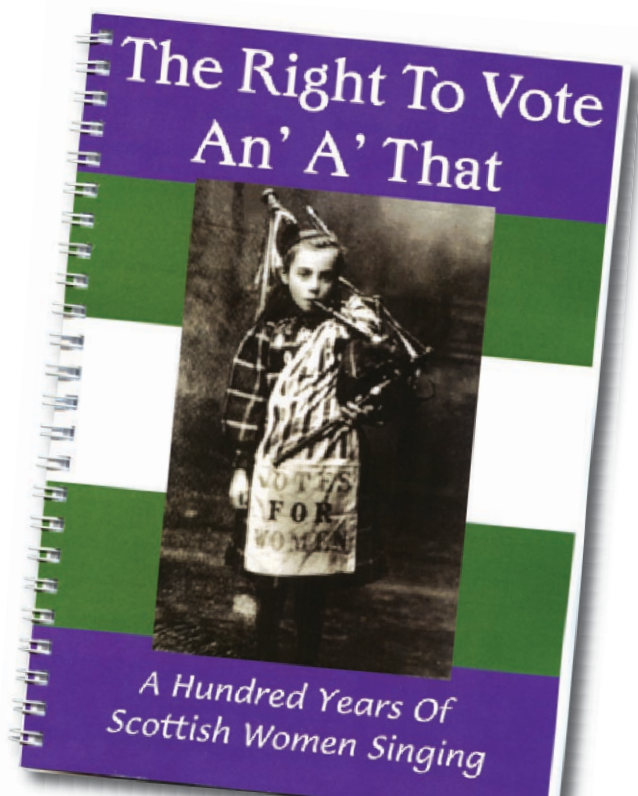
The Gude Cause campaign came about because a group of women wanted to organise a procession to celebrate one hundred years since the huge women's suffrage procession in Princes Street, Edinburgh and draw attention to the importance of women using their vote.

Gude Cause was never just about the procession day but also about engaging with and reminding people that the struggle for gender equality is not over. As part of this we wanted lasting records as well as a great day on the streets of Edinburgh.

A song book which also serves as a history about women's lives seemed a creative and lasting testimony. Songs range from Witches' Reel, about the time when women were accused of being witches, songs about women working in jute mills and in the fishing trade, to songs written for the 2009 campaign. All songs have introductions which explain their historical context, and words and notation are included.

Songbooks are available at £5.00 each from:

Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre,
St John's Church Terrace, Princes Street, Edinburgh or
contact@peaceandjustice.org.uk 0131 229 0993



NEWS & COUNCIL NEWS

November Council News

Anti-Cuts Demonstration to be Held on 6 March

The EIS campaign to fight cuts to education spending will kick off in earnest on Saturday 6 March 2010, with a national demonstration in Glasgow. At its November meeting, EIS Council discussed timing and strategy for the campaign and agreed that a Rally should be held in March as the first major step in a planned long-running campaign to fight the cuts. An amendment proposed by John Dennis (Dumfries and Galloway), calling for the event to be brought forward to February, was rejected by Council.



Kay Barnett: Sustainable Campaign Vital
Image: Alan Richardson

Outlining the planned campaign strategy to Council, Vice-President Kay Barnett said, "We need to build capacity to sustain the campaign in the long-term. We need to work with others in the public sector, and we need to build a coherent and consistent campaign. The campaign

will be all about getting people out on the streets to support us in our fight to protect education and stop the budget cuts."

The outline campaign strategy paper, approved by Council, emphasised the need to fight the emerging political consensus on a need for savage public sector cuts. A key theme in the campaign will be that children and young people should not be forced to pay the price for the worst excesses of global financial institutions and the governments which allowed them such free reign over the world's economy.

Discussions around all aspects of the campaign – from the March and Rally to publicity materials and all aspects of political lobbying – will now take place at a national level, with further information to be made available to all members in the coming months. Look out for more information in the February edition of the SEJ, and watch for additional publicity in your establishment soon. ●

Meritorious Award for EIS Officer

At the STUC Women's Conference on 10 November Veronica Rankin, EIS Education and Equality Officer, was presented with the Meritorious Award.

Presenting the award, conference chair, Pauline Rourke, told conference that the award is made annually to a woman who has made an outstanding contribution to her union or to the advancement of trade unionism. She paid tribute to Veronica's contribution to the STUC. A former chair of the women's committee and conference, Veronica had been an outstanding role model and mentor to her and to many other women within the trade union movement, helping them move forward in the STUC and within their unions. ●

Cuts Issue Highlighted by Fall In Teacher Numbers

As EIS Council members met to discuss the problem of declining education funding, the Scottish Government issued their annual report on the number of teachers employed in Scotland's schools. The report, which showed a significant decline in teacher numbers across Scotland – with 1348 fewer teachers employed across the country – gave a stark illustration of the front-line impact of continuing budget cuts.

Speaking to journalists outside the EIS Council meeting, General Secretary Ronnie Smith spoke of the scale and impact of the increasing crisis: "Figures on the number of teachers employed in our schools make bleak reading for everyone with an interest in Scottish education. We have again seen an acceleration in the reductions of the number of teachers employed in our schools, with 1,348 fewer teachers across Scotland as a whole. Following on from a cut of 975 the previous year, it is clear that cuts in teacher numbers are an emerging crisis for Scottish education," said Mr Smith.

He added, "Local Authorities and the Scottish Government are failing to meet their obligations to our schools, pupils and teachers. These drastic cuts in teacher numbers are leading to larger class sizes, reducing the individual teacher attention for every pupil, and damaging opportunities for our young people. The cuts in teacher numbers are also threatening the delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence, which simply cannot be delivered in an environment of continuing cuts to education budgets and drastic reductions in teacher numbers."

"It is not acceptable for the Scottish Government and Local Authorities to continue to blame each other and attempt to wash their hands of responsibility. We are reaching crisis point, and without urgent and sustained action at both Scottish Government and Local Authority level, the damage to our education system and to our children's futures could be catastrophic," warned Mr Smith. ●

Council Elections 2010/2011

Members interested in standing for election to Council for 2010/2011 should follow the procedures described below:

- 1) Members employed in the schools sector should contact their Local Association Secretary to obtain the required nomination form.
- 2) Members employed in the Further or Higher Education sector should contact their Branch Secretary to obtain the required nomination form.

Guidance on election procedures and nomination requirements will be issued to prospective candidates together with the nomination form.

Completed nomination forms, irrespective of sector, must be sent DIRECTLY to the General Secretary of the Institute at 46 Moray Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BH to be in his hands by the closing date of 1 February 2010.

Any members having difficulty in obtaining a nomination form are asked to contact the Membership Department on 0131 220 2268 or email lbuchart@eis.org.uk before Thursday 14 January 2010.

The Cutting Edge

Defending Scottish Education from Budget Cuts

EIS President Helen Connor examines the current picture of education funding, and warns that worse is yet to come as local and national Government look to pass the blame over who is responsible for the cuts. The EIS is committed to fighting public sector spending cuts in order to protect education funding.

No matter where we turn these days we hear of the inevitability of the cuts which are needed in this country and that they must happen within the Public Sector. This comes as a direct result of the major recession which this and most countries around the world are in at the moment. This however did not happen due to any mistakes made by the workers in the Public Sector, it happened due to the catastrophic bumbles made by the financial sector across the world. Why then are Public Sector workers including teachers being asked (nay told) that they must face major cutbacks not only this year but over the next few years? Indeed this year we are told is the "easy" year!

There is a general acceptance that this inevitability should not be challenged and that we should all work together to make the pain less and to become involved with identifying cuts which will be more "acceptable" to our schools. I would argue very strongly that this premise should be challenged by the EIS and other public sector workers. How many billions of pounds are being spent by the Government on Trident and maintaining troops within Afghanistan? Although the Council Tax freeze is popular amongst the electorate the reality is that services to the public suffer as a result of this.

It is time that we as teachers started to question this inevitability and the constant comparisons made between the major difficulties faced by the private sector and the apparent security of working in the public sector. This is allegedly particularly true when it comes to pensions!

So, what is happening across the country?

We are only at the beginning of the budget setting process within Local Authorities and already we are seeing fairly major cuts across the country. They do differ depending on both the size and location of the authority and it is only possible to give a few examples of the types of cuts which we have become aware of. Do any or all of these sound familiar?

- Support staff being cut meaning that the Additional Support Needs Act is not being fulfilled in the way it should – with the result that the teaching and learning of all being affected.
- Class sizes in a number of authorities going up. S1/2 Maths and English no longer at an average of 20 in more and more authorities.
- Attacks coming on the Staffing Standard resulting in major difficulties in delivering personalised learning.
- Parent Councils fundraising for textbooks and even repairs to playgrounds.
- Schools being told that they cannot have any more photocopies as early as November - we have a long way to go till the end of the financial year.
- Learning Support staff not being replaced or being asked to cover many more schools than previously - so much for the Inclusion Agenda working.
- At least one Local Authority looking into the possibility of Trust Schools in order to get funding.
- CPD provision being cut or at best restricted across almost every local authority - how do we then equip the profession for *Curriculum for Excellence* and the new National Qualifications?
- Quality Improvement Services being slashed whilst still expecting schools to raise attainment and implement new initiatives.
- School closures across the country.

The list goes on and we are told that this is the "easy" year!!

So, who is to blame?

Depending on whom you talk to, you will get a different answer to this question. The Scottish Government will be very clear that they have given the Local Authorities the money and indeed can quote the amounts of money allocated. The Local Authorities will equally clearly say that they do not have the money. Part of the difficulty with the Concordat Agreement is that there is no longer ring-fencing and therefore even if (and it's a big if) the money has been allocated to Local Authorities there is no guarantee that this will go to schools.

"No matter who's to blame it is clear who are suffering and that is the children who are the future of this country."

COVER STORY

No matter who's to blame it is clear who are suffering and that is the children who are the future of this country.

What can we do?

One of the most important things which teachers can do is to let the EIS know of any examples of cuts which are happening within your schools. The other thing which we will be doing is

having a major Demonstration and Rally early in 2010 to make it clear to both the politicians and the general public exactly the threat to Scottish Education. Watch this space for further information on this very important demonstration. ●

Helen Connor, EIS President



We will need you on the streets with us in 2010 to defend Scottish education





Conjuring up a moral panic: school spending in Scotland

Responding to a recent widely-publicised report which claimed that Scottish education was over-funded and under-performing, Terry Wrigley – Senior Lecturer at the University of Edinburgh’s Department of Educational Studies – debunks some common misconceptions and inaccurate comparisons which are being used to promote a hugely damaging budget-cutting political agenda.

Recent weeks have seen alarming attempts to stir up concerns about school spending. Economist John McLaren has gained widespread media attention with claims that Scotland is spending much more than England on schools, and to little effect. Needless to say his claim that up to £680,000,000 can be cut without damaging educational quality is warmly welcomed by politicians desperate to recoup from the public what they have dished out to the banks.

McLaren’s research is seriously flawed. Singling out 50% increased spending in Scotland (from what kind of baseline?), he fails to mention an average increase of 39% across the OECD over 10 years. Its simple input-output model (spending vs exam results) assumes that higher spending will immediately convert into exam success, whilst neglecting the many other benefits of education that cannot be measured.

This article will outline a faulty use of both financial and attainment data. Whilst there are serious issues of concern for Scottish schooling, these are not addressed by McLaren’s call for budget cuts.

Inputs

McLaren’s research briefing asserts that school spending per pupil in Scotland is far higher than in England. There are some obvious reasons, some of which the paper admits, though this rarely reaches the mass media:

- i) Population sparsity leads to many small schools, with higher management, buildings and transport costs. This can also affect class size.
- ii) The expensive 16-18 stage generally shows up as school spending here, but largely as FE in England. (Even half of A-levels are taken in colleges.) The lower secondary stage is longer in England (Years 7-9) than in Scotland (S1 and S2). Thus, 4 out of 6 school years are more expensive in Scotland because of option choice, as opposed to 2 out of 5 in many English schools.

McLaren also admits unreliability because it is unclear whether or not pre-primary and special schools, as well as support services and contributions to capital spending, are consistently excluded.

Pupil-teacher ratios are now better in Scotland than England: Westminster on the other hand has been determined to

substitute low-paid assistants. This has negative effects, including low-qualified assistants teaching lower achievers. We also need to consider the cost of Scotland’s important policy emphasis on inclusion and social justice.

Outputs

Here comparisons are equally flawed.

School leaver qualifications

McLaren claims that England has caught up with, indeed overtaken, Scotland in the percentage achieving “5 or more grades A-C GCSEs or SNQ equivalents”.

He is clearly unaware of the ploy used by Westminster politicians to create an illusion of fast rising results. Recent years’ statistics have counted a GNVQ (Intermediate) as the ‘equivalent’ of GCSE A*-C in four subjects. For example, a pupil with a GNVQ in computing and a C grade in art is classed as having “five A*-C grades or the equivalent”.

In addition to the quantitative ‘equivalence’ (1 subject = 4 subjects), no Government agency has attempted to evaluate the qualitative equivalence. My own comparisons indicate that a borderline GNVQ equates with an E grade rather a C, and that only half of pupils passing GNVQ would achieve a C at GCSE.

	Scotland	England	Eventually the Government were forced into using a new criterion, ‘five A*-Cs or equivalent including
English	69.8	60.2	English, Maths and one GNVQ (3 subject =5 subjects).
Maths	48.3	54.6	
Science	57.0	51.3	
Languages	48.6	30.9	

English and Maths’, though even this only requires English, Maths and one GNVQ (3 subject =5 subjects).

This is not a prejudice against vocational qualifications, merely against crooked statistics.

This illusory comparison can be contrasted with Scotland’s superior attainment (06-07) in English, Science, and Modern Languages, though it has been overtaken in Maths.

International tests

McLaren uses raw scores in international tests to argue that Scotland is generally weaker than England and that standards are falling behind. This claim disintegrates with closer study.

“ Budget cuts are likely to make teaching less attractive, force school closures, and herd pupils into very large and troubled schools. ”

COVER STORY

TIMSS (maths and science in "4th and 8th grade")

The sampling for TIMSS has always been a problem. Since it is based on all the children in a school year, rather than a specified age group, large differences emerge between countries. The cut-off point for school entry is August in England, not February. In many countries, large numbers of low achievers repeat school years, so that a quarter of a class might be 1-2 years older. Some countries place large numbers of low achievers in special schools, outwith the sample.

For TIMSS 2007, the Scottish average age (9.8) was younger than almost every higher-scoring country (England 10.2, Sweden 10.8, Denmark 11). Similarly for secondary pupils, Scotland (13.7), England (14.2), higher attaining countries' average (14.4).

PIRLS (literacy, around the age of 10)

McLaren states that 'while the England reading score fell by more than the Scottish score between 2001 and 2006, it remained significantly higher.' This is a loaded interpretation. The fall in the English score was dramatic (from 553 to 539), Scotland's fall was trivial (528 to 527). Scarcely evidence for the 'success' of England's tightly regimented literacy hour.

Again, Scotland's sample (9.9 years) was younger than higher scoring countries (England 10.3, the rest ranging from 10 to 11.4). Some countries even exclude linguistic minorities from the test (Israel excluded 20%).

PISA (Maths, science and reading, age 15)

This is often considered to be the most reliable of the major international tests, since it uses pupils' actual age. There is certainly no foundation here for a moral panic about school achievement in Scotland, or for adverse comparisons with England.

- Of the 34 OECD countries (with UK subdivided), only 4 are significantly higher than Scotland in science, 8 in maths and 5 in reading. Scotland is equal or above England in all three.
- Despite Scotland's high poverty levels, only Finland has significantly fewer pupils below level 2.
- Only Finland has significantly more pupils at the top level (5) in science. Only Finland, Canada, Korea and New Zealand have more pupils at levels 4 and 5 in reading. [Scottish Government social research: PISA 2006 Highlights from Scotland's results.]

There are differences of detail between the subjects, but no cause for a moral panic and a danger in jumping to conclusions. It has been suggested that a drop in reading scores from 2003 to 2006 at age 15 was caused by Scotland's failure to introduce an English-style literacy hour in lower primary. How can a literacy hour introduced in 1999 impact on scores for 15 years olds in 2006? It makes more sense to develop literacy across the curriculum in the upper primary and lower secondary years.

Conclusions

There are further dangers in simplistic comparisons. Other research (e.g. Tymms, Shayer) has shown that teaching to the test gives an appearance of improved attainment while real standards fall.

Rather than comparing us with England, let us look to the highest scoring country, Finland:

- teachers qualified to Masters level
- excellent learning support
- outstanding libraries
- very small secondary schools (average 300)
- free healthy school meals.

Budget cuts are likely to make teaching less attractive, force school closures, and herd pupils into very large and troubled schools.

There are undoubtedly serious concerns for Scottish education, especially underachievement linked to poverty, exaggerated in the secondary years. In deprived areas, I believe we should initiate controlled experiments such as the Scandinavian patterns whereby a team of 4 or 5 teachers covers most of the curriculum and provides pastoral and learning support to 60-100 pupils. This would provide social stability and support and could lead to higher achievement at no greater cost.

To raise test scores along with the wider quality of education, we also need:

- a better-supported introduction of *Curriculum for Excellence* to engage more young people and raise standards
- strong CPD support in thinking skills and cognitive development, and a new initiative on reading across the curriculum in upper primary and lower secondary
- more authentic forms of assessment to improve engagement and academic challenge, e.g. Queensland's 'rich tasks' to replace NABs.

Statistics can raise questions but rarely provide ready answers. We must not become obsessed by relatively small national differences in test scores which can distract us from wider educational and social aims. We have much to learn from other countries, but there are serious dangers in copying England's broken system. ●



Terry Wrigley





New Beginnings:

My probation year in Mill of Mains Primary School, Dundee

Terri Lloyd, a new teacher who recently completed her probation year at Mill of Mains Primary School in Dundee, shares her perspective on the teacher induction scheme. Here, Terri explains how the support and mentoring she received from colleagues and the local authority helped to smooth her journey from teaching graduate to fully qualified professional teacher.

When I heard that I was going to do my Probation Year in Mill of Mains, I was absolutely delighted as I had spent some time there during my training and had become good friends with many of the teachers. Also, as I knew the entire staff, the school layout and many of the children, this did reduce the anxiety (a little anyway) I'm sure everyone faces when going to a new place of work.

Mrs Tipping, the Head, informed me that my Mentor for the year was Mrs Whyte. As I had worked with Carolyn in my Early Years Placement, I just couldn't have been happier. Whilst a very experienced teacher, this was Carolyn's first mentoring position and it was great to be able to share our learning experiences.

As a Probationer, in Dundee anyway, you are given one day each fortnight when you come together with other Probationers at the Local Authorities Education Centre. This was a fantastic time to meet with peers, share experiences, get ideas and share concerns. The Local Authority arranged for many specialists to visit us and this gave us a great insight into a whole range of subjects i.e. story-

telling, voice management, psychology, craft, ICT – to name but a few!

During the week when you were at school, you were still given a day out of class to widen your experience. I did so many things during this day and really appreciated being given the time to explore. I made sure that I spent time with all the teachers within the school to glean ideas from their teaching. I visited another school within the cluster to observe a P6 class, again looking for ideas to try with my P6. I went to a Resource Base, visited an Offsite Provider and observed a Specialist Unit. My Mentor and the Management Team were so helpful in enabling me to organise these meetings. I also spent time going through the cupboards as you tend to find the main resources quickly but there are some fantastic little gems found elsewhere in the school!

My Probationer Year was just brilliant, yes there were highs and lows but I was really lucky that I had the support of the most patient, innovative mentor anyone could have wished for. Everyone in the school was supportive and always on hand for advice. Also, the Local Authority appointed a designated person that "looked after" all the Probationers and Michelle was the Facilitator at our together days and always at the end of the line if you need a chat.

My advice for anyone either in training or in their Probationer Year is just to put your heart and soul into the job. Yes, things may not quite go to plan but reflect and ask yourself why they didn't work this will give you a great starting block to try it differently the next time. If you do have a problem, speak to your mentor. I always liked to try and think of a few solutions and then we'd bounce ideas around until we had the best one.

I was asked to give a short talk to the Probationers this year and my best advice to them was not to stand on the side lines but to get into the game. Relish the challenge (as it is one) as it is only a few short months until they become the main player in the classroom. ●

" Everyone in the school was supportive and always on hand for advice. "

" My advice for anyone either in training or in their Probationer Year is to just put your heart and soul into the job. "



NEW TEACHERS



Images: Mark Jackson



NEW Classroom Rewards & Motivators **SUPER STICKERS** and much more!

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*Offer includes stickers, stampers, customised, certificates, rulers, doorhangers, pencils, erasers, notepads, badges, magnets, bookmarks, progress charts, class charts & superpacks.

The Art of Excellence

As schools across Scotland continue to work on embedding the ethos of *Curriculum for Excellence* throughout their teaching and learning, the EIS continues to support this process. The EIS has recently published the third edition of its dedicated *Curriculum for Excellence Bulletin* and this is available in schools now. Here, the SEJ highlights some of the key questions that teachers have about CfE, and looks at one school that has embraced the cross-curricular nature of CfE to create a highly positive learning experience for pupils.

CfE Case Study: New Beginnings

Nicola McBride, Principal Teacher of Art at Blairgowrie High School, offers her own first-hand perspective of putting *Curriculum for Excellence* into action. Here, Nicola explains how addressing key CfE themes through a wide range of creative processes helped pupils deliver a challenging and thought-provoking collection of artworks.

After almost a year's work on our project, New Beginnings, it was finally time to display the fruits of our labour. As much of the presentation was to take place in our new sculpture garden, we were counting on good weather. Surely, we thought, scheduling the event for June more or less guaranteed this. But this, of course, was Scotland.

With an hour to go before the invited guests were due to arrive, the heavens opened and we looked on in quiet desperation as our sculpture garden became waterlogged and the sculptures themselves looked in serious danger of floating off.

Perhaps the greatest strength of a *Curriculum for Excellence* is the professional space it provides for teachers to approach learning in new and innovative ways. Sometimes this can involve achieving a range of aims from the initial seed of an idea. It can also be about making connections across traditional curriculum and age divides in order to maximise the impact of an imaginative project. This was the case with the Blairgowrie High School storytelling project.

The initial idea arose from a discussion I had had with the Perth and Kinross Culture Co-ordinator Kirstie Baillie about how we could ease the transition to secondary school for our incoming P7 pupils. We looked at how we might use poetry as a vehicle to help these pupils confront anxieties about the big change that was about to take place in their lives.

This original modest plan grew in time to involve eight of our associate primaries, three local community groups, S1 English and

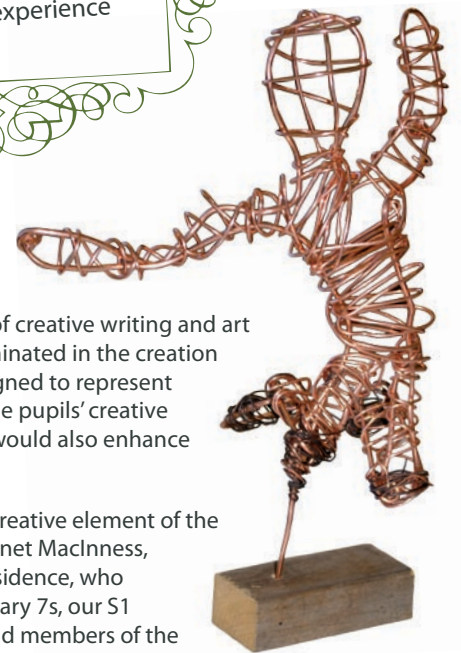
S3 Art classes in a variety of creative writing and art activities. The project culminated in the creation of life-size sculptures designed to represent the themes arising from the pupils' creative writing, which we hoped would also enhance our school environment.

The initial catalyst for the creative element of the project was provided by Janet MacInness, the Authority's writer in residence, who collaborated with the primary 7s, our S1 English classes, and members of the community. Pupils were asked

to write about a location, such as a secret den or favourite place, which brought a smile to their face when they spoke or thought about it. The idea was to harness this image as an effective counterbalance to the anxieties they may have about entering the unknown and sometimes frightening environment of a secondary school.

This work, in turn, provided us in the Art Department with a rich creative resource upon which to build a connection with our S3 curriculum. Our pupils used these poems as a starting point to develop life-size sculptures based on their reflections on the hopes and fears new pupils experienced through the primary/secondary transition. At this point we also saw an opportunity to build a connection with the work being done by the Authority's artist in residence, Malcolm Cruickshank, and he was invited to work with our pupils alongside their Art teacher for six workshop sessions.

Using writing as a starting point for Art proved a powerful stimulus for pupil creativity. The younger pupils' writing was used to inspire collage work based on a series of opposite emotions within the poetry. Light and shade; life and death; and loneliness and friendship were amongst the profound opposites investigated. Pupils then used these opposites as the basis of photographic still shots of each other which were to be a stimulus for thinking about three dimensional compositions.



"...the finished sculptures emanated a real and lasting sense of energy and animation."



CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

I had worried that asking pupils to move through a variety of forms in the creative process - from poetry, through tableaux and photography, to three dimensional work - may prove too challenging. However, I made that mistake, all too common to teachers used to doing things in a particular way, of underestimating the adaptability of our pupils. In fact, these cross-curricular transitions through forms came remarkably easily for the pupils and the resulting forty or so miniature models were visually impressive.

The final weekly session involved reintroducing the poetry using carefully selected phrases which linked back with the visual themes of liveliness and vibrancy and those, arising from the poetry, of friendship, support and protection. To bring the project full circle, primary pupils were then invited to the school to help arrange the sculptures and selected phrases from the poems into our permanent sculpture garden.

It would be nice to say that the rain eased in time for the presentation, but this was not to be. However, the final contribution from Depute Head, John Devine, who had supported the project throughout, was to organise prefects to source every available umbrella in the building and then to escort our worthy guests to and from the sculpture garden so that they could appreciate the fruits of our pupils' creativity entirely unencumbered by the Scottish weather.

The presentation proved a great success and the finished sculptures emanated a real and lasting sense of energy and animation. The pupils' and teachers' willingness to explore new ways of learning, progressing from the written word to permanent sculpture, illustrated the creative potential that a *Curriculum for Excellence* can unleash if we are willing to innovate and grow into the professional space that has emerged. ●



Your CfE questions answered

What will a CfE school look like?

In contrast to where schools are now, the key differences should revolve around pedagogy and professional freedom. Staff will be less constrained by the directives of a prescribed curriculum and teaching and learning will be based on the developing practice of active learning, cooperative learning, AiFL etc.

Is there any other country to have embraced the four capacities and changed their curriculum accordingly?

Some aspects of CfE are common to changes in other countries e.g. assessment approaches associated with AiFL but we are unaware of anything as comprehensive as the CfE project being undertaken elsewhere.

How can we control workload?

The EIS is very clear that the support for CfE does not equate to an open-ended commitment to increased workload. EIS AGM resolutions made clear that development work has to be managed within the parameters of our contracts and current working conditions. Schools have been advised to use School Improvement Plans and Working Time Agreements to ensure that workload is controlled and colleagues should say 'No' to excessive demands.

Can Secondary teachers be compelled to teach 'subjects' in which they are not qualified?

No – normal GTCS arrangements apply.

How realistic is the implementation timetable?

To a certain degree the 'timetable' is entirely artificial. Essentially it has been worked back from the notion that next year's S1 cohort will be the first to sit the new qualifications – but again that is the assessment tail wagging the curriculum dog! It remains to be seen whether SQA can put in place the necessary arrangements for new qualifications to proceed in 2013/14 – if it can't be done the qualifications programme will need to slip (the most likely outcome, in our view) but the curricular and pedagogical developments should be ongoing. Essentially, implementation is a process not an event.

2010: "Milestone not a Destination"

A number of colleagues have been exercised by various references to Autumn 2010 being the date for full implementation of CfE. Some have seen it as a launch date and others as a date for completion of a programme. Implementation, however, is an ongoing process, subject to the time and resource available to establishments to move forward their own school improvement plans.

To help clarify the situation the EIS recently raised the matter with HMIE in terms of their understanding and their aims for school inspections. The answer was clear, that HMIE see the date as indicative of when schools should be 'fully engaged with the implementation process' but not when CfE need be 'fully implemented'.

If you're not completely scunnered with metaphors about journeys, it's a milestone not a destination!

What CfE questions would you like to see answered?
E-mail: edavidson@eis.org.uk

The third edition of the EIS *Curriculum for Excellence* Bulletin is in schools now. See your EIS Representative if you have not yet received your copy. The EIS CfE Bulletin is also available at www.eis.org.uk






End of year quiz

Greetings! As another year speeds by, it is time to sit back and get ready to undertake the challenge that is the EIS End of Year Quiz. Designed to make you a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor, the Quiz is packed full of simple teasers, general knowledge and the downright obscure. Once again, no expense has been spared and all four corners of the globe (Does a globe have corners? - Ed) have been harvested to secure our coveted prize which will be awarded to the first correct entry drawn from our postbag. Simply send your completed entry form below to QUIZ COMPETITION, SEJ, 46 Moray Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BH. All entries should be received by FRIDAY 8 JANUARY 2010. Enjoy!

Section 1

2009 – Were you paying attention?

- Who was confirmed as United States Secretary of State on 21 January 2009?
- Having turned down numerous invitations, who finally agreed to perform at the Superbowl XLIII halftime show in Florida on 1 February 2009?
- As part of its campaign to save 900 jobs across Diageo's Scottish-based operations, what did Unite the Union urge Scots to boycott on 17 March 2009?
- More commonly known as "swine flu", the main strain of virus has been termed AH1N1 by scientists. In which country was this virus first observed in April 2009?
- Which country conducted nuclear tests and launched several ballistic missiles despite the United Nations Security Council's warning of possible international sanctions in May?
- Who replaced Michael Martin as Speaker of the House of Commons on 22 June 2009?

- Discovered in 1996, what was the name given to element 112 which was added to the periodic table of elements on 16 July 2009?
- Which Scottish player was sent off during the 4-0 defeat by Norway in the World Cup Qualifier played on 12 August 2009 in Oslo?
- Which band parted company with their final founding member in September 2009?
- In order to highlight men's health issues, what were men encouraged to grow in November 2009? 

Section 2

Advertising

The following statements are advertising slogans. Honest. Some are current and some are not so recent. For each slogan or tagline, simply name the product associated with the slogan.

- "Connecting people."
- "The sweet you can eat between meals without losing your appetite."
- "Central Heating for Kids"
- "Vorsprung Durch Technik."
- "The Appliance of Science."
- "Liquid Engineering."
- "Just do it."

- "Let your fingers do the walking."
- "Reassuringly expensive."
- "Made in Scotland from girders."

Section 3

1909

The answers to the first 5 questions in this section can be found in the EIS Equality Bulletin 2009 which was published to commemorate the National Women's Suffrage Movement Procession in Edinburgh in 1909. The publication can be accessed of the EIS website at the following address www.eis.org.uk/images/pdf/EqualityBulletin2009.pdf

- What was the date of the National Women's Suffrage Movement Procession?
- In 1909, what was the address of the EIS Head Office in Edinburgh?
- After she had addressed a large suffrage meeting in Trafalgar Square, who became Dundee's first suffrage prisoner in Holloway Jail, London in August 1909?
- Who wrote the following words in a poem?
"Fellow men! Why should the lords try to despise
And prohibit women from having the benefit of the parliamentary Franchise?"
- In which Scottish town did the EIS hold

its annual Teachers' Congress in 1909?

O.K. The following are NOT in the EIS 2009 Equality Bulletin. So don't look. You'll be disappointed. And a little peeved.

- Who succeeded Theodore Roosevelt as the 27th President of the United States?
- Later to become the World Number 1 male tennis player, who was born on 18 May 1909?
- The construction of which ship began on 31 March 1909?
- Regarded as one of the finest film actors of the 20th century, which film star of "North by North West" and "The Verdict" was born in Huddersfield on 15 May 1909?
- Which civil rights organisation was founded in the United States in 1909?

Section 4

Waxing Lyrical

No quiz would be complete without the Song Lyrics section. Simply identify the artist and the song containing each of the following lyrics. Where "cover versions" have been used marks will be awarded for either the original artist or the cover artist.

- "And I've often wondered, how did it all start
Who found out that nothing could capture your heart like a melody can?"

QUIZ



2. "The sun is breaking in your eyes to start a new day.
This broken heart can still survive with a touch of your grace."
 3. "I've looked at the ocean tried hard to imagine
The way you felt the day you sailed from Wester Ross to Nova Scotia."
 4. "We watch the shows - we watch the stars on videos for hours and hours."
 5. "You've done it all, you've broken every code
And pulled the rebel to the floor."
 6. "In your heart I see the start of every night and every day
In your eyes I get lost, I get washed away."
 7. "So I've been telling old stories, singing songs that make me think about where I came from."
 8. "And I need you now tonight and I need you more than ever
And if you'll only hold me tight we'll be holding on forever."
 9. "I've got to heat it up, Doctor, got to heat it up
I've got till 3 o'clock; I've got to rock until you drop."
 10. "I like to see you, but then again, that doesn't mean you mean that much to me."
- Section 5**
And finally...
1. According to the Highway Code, what is the maximum speed limit for a car towing a caravan on a UK motorway?
 2. What was the name of the Western television series that originally aired from 1971 to 1973 and featured the characters Hannibal Heyes and Kid Curry?
 3. Barack Obama was inaugurated as President of the United States on 20 January 2009. How many individuals have been elected to, or succeeded to, the office prior to that date – 40, 41, 42 or 43?
 4. Who succeeded John Monks in 2003 to become the 9th General Secretary of Trades Union Congress?
 5. A man had an energy intake of 12750 kilojoules per day. If 26% of this was supplied by fat, how many kilojoules would this represent?
 6. Which NFL team plays its home games at Gillette Stadium?
 7. What do the initials FTSE stand for?
 8. What novel opens with the following?
"Now what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life."
 9. Which newspaper was nicknamed "The Thunderer"?
 10. How many Regional List MSPs are there in the Scottish Parliament? ●

Quiz compiled by Tantalus



Answer sheet

Section 1

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Section 2

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Section 3

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Section 4

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Section 5

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Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

The SEJ rounds up
the latest Continuing
Professional
Development news
and events from
across the country.

The learning agenda

CPD update

Union Learning Fund - update

Members are aware that the EIS was successful in its bid to the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF 7) to take forward the CPD/Learning Representative agenda. Funding has been provided for two years and as part of that funding the EIS has seconded two Learning Representatives (LRs) - Patricia Duncan, Perth and Kinross, and Stephen McCrossan, North Lanarkshire.

The two main aims of the SULF 7 Project are CPD Events, both with local authorities and further education colleges, and to secure Learning Agreements. The two seconded LRs are involved in taking forward these two main aims as well as being involved in other areas of supporting LRs including the recruitment of members wishing to undertake the training to become LRs.

CPD Events

Several successful CPD events have taken place this year including events in Clackmannanshire and Renfrewshire which were reported in an earlier edition of the SEJ.

An event was held in Glasgow in May which was the first Partnership Learning Conference on the theme of Leadership and Learning which has been held in Glasgow. The keynote speaker was Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning. The event was also addressed by Grahame Smith, STUC General Secretary and Margaret Doran, then Chief Executive of Education and Social Work, Glasgow City Council. Workshops formed part of the event and these included the creation of professional communities, leading through teams, active learning in the classroom, additional support for learning, a focus on equality and diversity, new technologies and the role of IT. A panel of educationalists presented the plenary session. Over 120 teachers attended and the initial feedback is that those who attended found the event extremely useful.

A CPD Event, "Excellence in Practice", was held in partnership with Fife Council on Saturday 16 May. The event was attended by 140 teachers and was addressed by Professor Walter Humes, University of the West of Scotland, on "Collegiality: Intention, Perception and Practice". The event mainly focussed on several workshops and these included Active Learning, Interactive Digital Imaging, New to English and Self-Regulation. The New to English workshop was "hands on" involving games and activities to involve children whose first language is not English to be active participants in learning together with their classmates. Initial feedback indicates that the participants

gained many ideas and strategies to take back into their classrooms. One of the Fife Learning Representatives gave a workshop on constructing and maintaining a CPD Portfolio. There were also 16 showcases of current, innovative work which schools from across Fife had been invited to demonstrate. Attendees indicated that they were impressed by the quality and variety of work demonstrated by nursery, primary and secondary colleagues.

A joint CPD event was held at Dundee College on Tuesday 23 June. Local Learning Representatives from the EIS and GMB worked in conjunction with Dundee College's staff development team to plan the event to complement the College's Good Practice Day activities which was open to 200 staff members. This was a wide ranging event which the College has held previously but this is the first time a joint CPD event was held within the main activities. The event organised by the local Learning Representatives offered presentation of *Journey to Excellence* by Peter Connelly, HMIE and the role of Learning Representatives by the EIS Dundee College Learning Representative, Catherine Matheson. 25 lecturing staff attended the presentations. Staff commented that the presentations were both interesting and useful particularly in relation to the FE perspective for *Journey to Excellence* as this gave some very good examples of how FE staff can achieve excellence in teaching and learning, within these colleges as well as in other Further Education colleges throughout Scotland.

Evaluation of these CPD events is crucial to ascertaining the impact these events are having on the uptake of CPD. Those who attend are asked to complete a short evaluation form advising the types of CPD they are considering undertaking. A short follow-up evaluation form is sent around three weeks after the event to discover whether or not attendees have taken their CPD aspirations forward.

Learning Agreements

The establishment of Learning Agreements is very important to building partnership working on the CPD agenda with

" The two main aims of the Project are CPD Events, both with local authorities and further education colleges, and to secure Learning Agreements. "





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Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland



local authorities and with further education colleges. These Learning Agreements set out the commitment, both of the employer and the union, to the CPD agenda and the promotion of LRs. A model Learning Agreement was formulated by the EIS and distributed to Local Association Secretaries as the basis for negotiation. The main aim of this model Learning Agreement is to ensure that teachers have access to quality CPD.

Agreements have been secured with several local authorities. In terms of further education colleges, a new model Learning Agreement is being discussed and will be finalised shortly. The seconded LRs have been involved, and will continue to be involved, in supporting this area of work.

“ Staff commented that the presentations were both interesting and useful... ”

Future CPD Events

Dumfries & Galloway - An event will be held in the Dryfisdale Country House Hotel, Lockerbie from 4.30 pm to 6 pm on 27 January 2010. A buffet will be available from 4 pm. There will be two keynote speakers, Professor Walter Humes, University of the West of Scotland, and Rosa Murray from GTC(S) as well as local colleagues talking about their experiences of Chartered Teacher and Professional Recognition. This will be followed by a Question and Answer Session.

Promotional material will be distributed shortly but if you have any queries or wish to register an interest in attending please contact John Thomson, EIS Dumfries & Galloway LR, jthomson@eis-learnrep.org.uk

Tel: **07802 722407** (mobile); **01387 243918** (work).

Other upcoming events are scheduled to take place in East Renfrewshire, East/West Dunbartonshire, John Wheatley College, Motherwell College, Orkney (2 March) and Renfrewshire. Discussions are taking place regarding other CPD events and these will be notified on the CPD events page which is located on the main EIS website. Promotional material will also be distributed. For any queries on upcoming CPD events please contact Lyn McClintock, LR Administrator lmcclintock@eis.org.uk Tel: **0131 225 6244**.

Interested in Becoming an EIS LR?

If you are interested in training to become an EIS LR - multi-establishment, college or school - please contact Lyn McClintock, LR Administrator to receive an Information Pack. Contact details for all EIS LRs are featured on the LR website which is located on the main EIS website.



Personal Injury

Making a claim

David McIntosh of law firm Balfour and Manson, who work with the EIS on many cases on behalf of members, outlines the legal complexities of making a claim for personal injuries as a result of a workplace injury.



Despite their best endeavours many people are involved in accidents as a result of which they suffer varying degrees of injury. Where this happens in the workplace or due to work activities, the EIS provides support for seeking legal advice. In a significant number of cases an injured person is totally blameless and they have in law a right

to pursue a claim for personal injury as a result of the accident. The law firm in which I am a partner has provided advice for EIS members for 27 years. I have worked to help gain compensation for EIS members over the last 8 years. Below is an explanation of the key elements to pursuing a claim for personal injury.

There are four elements to pursuing a claim for personal injury:

- 1) Establishing that an accident has occurred and that your injuries are a direct result of that accident. Quite often there may be a dispute on the facts which requires to be investigated for you. Whilst the majority of accidents involving you will occur in Scotland accidents may also occur elsewhere in the UK or in Europe. The fact that your accident did not occur in Scotland does not always mean that you cannot pursue your claim through a Scottish Court.
- 2) Duties – you need to prove that the person who caused the accident owed certain

duties to you and as a result of breaching those duties they have acted negligently. As an example a car driver owes duties to other road users to drive with reasonable care and attention. An employer owes a duty of care to an employee to ensure they work in safe conditions.

- 3) Establishing the cause of the accident – it is necessary to establish that the defender acted negligently and that as a result of the negligence caused the accident. A failure to establish a breach of the duty of care means that any claim will not succeed. Usually where there is blame there is a claim. For example, where an employer fails to provide the correct equipment for the job or fails to maintain equipment in safe order; where a workplace is dangerous due to holes in the floor, spillages or stairs are too narrow and the surface is uneven.
- 4) Loss, Injury and Damage – this means proving physical injury, mental injury and financial losses which you sustain as a result of the accident. Doctors will prepare expert reports identifying physical and mental injuries. As a result of injuries you may not be able to work for a period of time in which case you may sustain a loss of earnings. You may also have a pension loss claim as a result of reduced income. In cases of serious injury you may require professional paid care or care from your family. It may also be necessary to pay for specialist equipment and to have your house adapted because of your resultant disabilities.

“ The law firm in which I am a partner has provided advice for EIS members for 27 years. ”

If all four elements above are established then you will be entitled to an award of compensation. The lawyer's job, having established liability, is to then value the claim having regard to witness statements, medical reports, expert opinions and vouching of financial losses. Often where liability is not disputed the defender's insurers will be willing to have settlement discussions. If however it is not possible to negotiate the claim then a Court action must be raised no later than three years from the date of the accident. Depending on the value and complexity of the claim an action can be raised either in the local Sheriff Court (where the accident took place) or in the Court of Session in Edinburgh which has jurisdiction to deal with all significant claims occurring in Scotland. Although a Court action may have to be raised the vast majority of actions settle without you (as the pursuer) having to give evidence. The current percentage rate of settlement is approximately 98% so you need not be daunted at the prospect of becoming involved in a Court action as there is little likelihood of you having to appear in Court.



FINANCES

Because of the prevalence of accidents today it is likely that at some point in the future either you or someone that you know will be involved in an accident. You need expert advice and guidance on how to deal with a claim arising from an accident, otherwise, if you deal with the claim yourself, the insurers will undoubtedly attempt to settle the claim for as little as possible. Given the experience which we have in pursuing claims of this type we can maximise your recovery of damages so that you can be sure you are getting the best possible settlement. We have extensive experience of successfully pursuing claims for EIS members and those claims successfully concluded in the client past include:

- £80k for a member exposed to chemicals in the dark room of a college;
- £80k for a member who developed throat nodules due to excessive noise in the classroom.

The EIS provides legal support for injuries relating to work as a teacher or lecturer. All members who are injured at work should first contact either their Branch Secretary (for College

or University lecturers) or Local Association Secretary (for teachers or associated professionals). ●

For road traffic accidents, or other incidents, not related to your work as a teacher or lecturer you can contact David McIntosh directly on **0131 200 1220, david.mcintosh@balfour-manson.co.uk**

David McIntosh is a partner with Balfour + Manson LLP. David is accredited by the Law Society as an Expert in Personal Injury Law and by the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers as a Senior Litigator.



b+m balfour+manson solicitors

Balfour + Manson's Personal Injury, Medical Negligence and Family Law practices are top-rated in both Chambers' Guide to the Legal Profession and Legal 500.

**If you've had a Road Traffic Accident,
contact David McIntosh on 0131 200 1220 for a free consultation (for EIS members)**

Additional services which the firm offers are:

- Property sale and conveyancing - free pre-sale valuation for EIS members
- Wills, trusts and executries - 10% discount for EIS members
- Family law

Balfour + Manson is on the panel of approved solicitors for the EIS in relation to injuries caused during the course of employment.

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Road Safety and the Curriculum for Excellence



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scotland
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT



Streetsense2 is a new resource for primary schools, which aims to help teachers to utilise the cross-curricular CfE themes of health and wellbeing to enhance pupils' understanding of personal road safety.

For many primary teachers struggling to find ways to integrate Health and Wellbeing into their teaching plans, Streetsense2 is a perfect tool. The ring-binder resource, available free of charge to all teachers in Scotland from Road Safety Scotland (RSS), arms teachers with cross-curricular year plans, worksheets and teacher notes, which makes delivering the programme easy.

Created in collaboration with primary school teachers and Road Safety Scotland, the resource has curriculum links across literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Streetsense 2 was designed to challenge young people to think differently about road safety and embrace the four capacities central to *Curriculum for Excellence*, enabling young people to become confident individuals; responsible citizens; effective contributors and successful learners.

The main aim of Streetsense2 is to provide all primary school children aged 5 to 11 years, inclusive of pupils with additional support needs, with the essential core element of road safety education. Pupils learn through critical thinking in a variety of non-worksheet based practical activities while www.streetsense2.com compliments the resource by bringing together colourful, interactive, child-friendly games in which users discover the implications of personal choices in road safety scenarios in the comfort and safety of the classroom.

The storybook / cartoon vision actively engages pupils who have shown great support for the resource since its launch. Freddie Mudge, age 6, is one of thousands of children to have undertaken the Streetsense programme, and still revisits many of the tasks in his spare time. He said:

" I like how you get to play games - it's really fun."

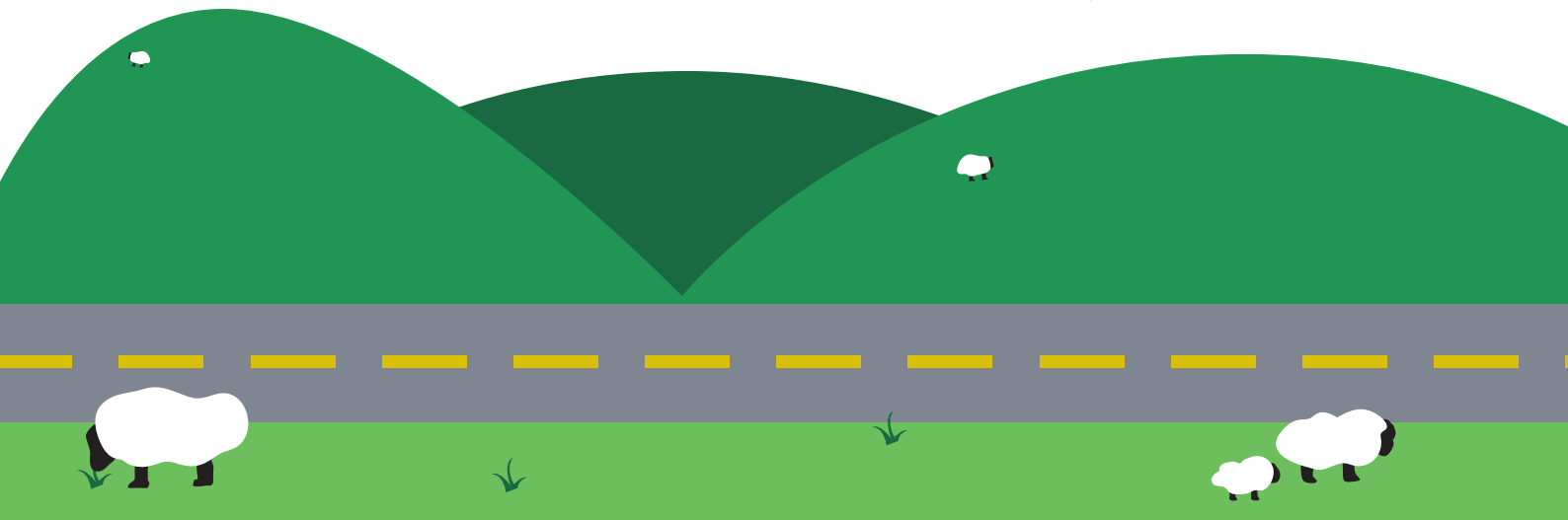
"The little boy on the computer shows you how to be safe near the road and I remember what he says when I'm on the street."

Web designers have also ensured that this resource is compatible with interactive whiteboards, therefore the website is not only an educational resource but also encourages active learning.

" The little boy on the computer shows you how to be safe near the road and I remember what he says when I'm on the street. "

It is no surprise that teachers and probationers across Scotland are being encouraged to take advantage of Streetsense2. There has been a remarkable decrease in the number of children killed and injured on Scotland's roads, which suggests that Streetsense has played its part in making a significant impact in improving the safety of children on Scotland's streets. Teachers have also played a huge part in this success, so much so that RSS is confident that Streetsense has contributed to beating Scottish Government road safety targets set for 2010, while further reductions in casualties and injuries are set to continue.

Such statistics are further reinforced by a 2005 independent evaluation of Streetsense which looked at the scheme running in 400 schools, which uncovered extremely positive results. 60% of Scottish schools were using the resource and 47% of teachers felt that Streetsense has made a significant impact on children's knowledge of road safety. 33% of teachers indicated a significant improvement in pupils attitude, and over 79% of children declared that they enjoyed using Streetsense. It is, as a result, highly-commended by teachers - easy to use, well presented and teacher-friendly.



ROAD SAFETY

Primary Head Teacher Jennifer Deans of Warddykes Primary School is just one of the many Streetsense2.com fans. One of the major assets, she says, is that it's simple to incorporate into her lessons.

She said: "The resource is really colourful and instructions are clear, which makes it really easy to understand."

She added: "The worksheets really help in reinforcing messages, if required, and the visual identity of the website helps lodge such knowledge in students' minds."

Jennifer also notes however that although it is easy to use, the resource is also a really useful tool in the primary school curriculum.

She said: "With regards to *Curriculum for Excellence*, the text is extremely appropriate - children can be directed to an appropriate level for them to achieve success, while differentiated tasks within levels can meet learners' needs, therefore it is self-corrective."

To request a free Streetsense2 ring-binder resource please contact Road Safety Scotland on **0131 472 9200** or at Heriot Watt Research Park (North), Riccarton, Currie, Edinburgh EH14 4AP or email enquires@roadsafetyscotland.org.uk 



Other useful resources

There are a host of road safety resources, which can be used alongside Streetsense2 to help build lessons. You can find out more here:

www.streetsense2.com

www.jrso.com

www.a2bsafely.com

www.crashmagnets.com

www.getinlane.com

www.roadsafetyscotland.org.uk

www.sustrans.org.uk

www.rosipa.com

www.highwaycode.gov.uk

www.iam.org.uk

www.redcross.org.uk

www.getinlane.co.uk

www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk

www.streetwiseguys.co.uk

www.LTScotland.com

www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk

STREETSENSE2 Helping to keep children safer when using roads.



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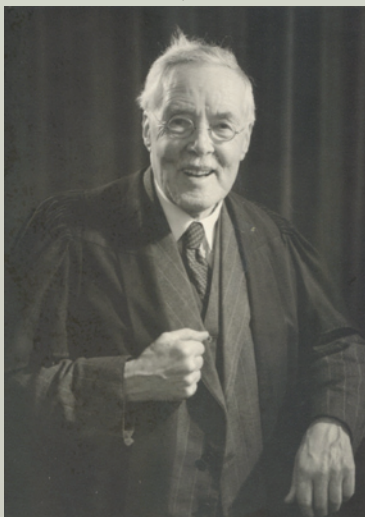
Researching Teaching

William Boyd and the EIS Research Committee in the 1920s

Caroline Brett, Research Associate at the University of Edinburgh, takes a look back at the work of the EIS Research Committee in the 1920s with a particular focus on the influential roles of both future EIS President William Boyd and of the Scottish Educational Journal itself. The EIS pioneered the idea of teachers being involved directly in research projects.

In my capacity as a researcher on a project on the history of Scottish educational research, I spent several months at the EIS headquarters leafing through all of the issues of the SEJ from 1919 to 1955. In many ways the Scottish Educational Journal in 1920 resembled the SEJ in 2009. It was packed full of meeting reports, notices, news updates, advertisements for EIS services and the latest fashions, letters to the editor, opinion and debate on salary and employment conditions for teachers, and interesting articles on new developments in education both in Scotland and abroad. The SEJ acted as the voice of the EIS, providing its members and Fellows with weekly updates on its work and aims. It connected teachers throughout Scotland and beyond. However, as I read through the issues I discovered that, during the 1920s, the SEJ was the scene of one of the largest mobilisations of teachers into research the world had ever seen.

In 1915 the Scottish Educational Reform Committee was formed to investigate the ways in which Scotland's education system could develop and adapt to the changes implicated in the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918. One of its chief recommendations was the development of research within the teaching profession. It argued that teachers needed to become experts in their own subject in order to be considered seriously as professionals (SERC, 1917). On this committee was Dr William Boyd, Lecturer in Education at Glasgow University and, later, EIS



Dr William Boyd, EIS President, 1919-1920

President, 1919-1920. A teacher himself, Boyd was an outspoken idealist who was drawn to political debate on the inner workings of his profession. He passionately believed in the intelligence and abilities of his fellow teachers, and argued that research within the classroom could play a crucial role in achieving professional status. Boyd's ideas fell on fertile ground in the EIS, who had long championed teaching as a profession, and a Research in Education Committee was formed in 1919 at Boyd's suggestion and with Boyd at the helm.

Boyd and his Committee wasted no time. The SEJ published Boyd's outline of the Research Committee's aims on November 14, 1919. These included planning and carrying out investigations and offering expert guidance for teachers wishing to undertake research work. The involvement of teachers was crucial right from the start: "The one condition of success is that it should be able to count on the co-operation of the whole profession" (SEJ, Nov 14, 1919).

" The Research Committee's work under Boyd was groundbreaking. "

Two weeks later Boyd announced the first projects, which had as their focus the development of standards for assessment in the three core primary school subjects: composition, arithmetic and spelling (Boyd, 1924). The projects were ambitious and involved teachers at every stage. For composition, Boyd invited teachers to submit essays written by their pupils. These were published in the SEJ and teachers invited to mark them. These marks were then compiled by the Committee (i.e. Boyd) into a comprehensive scoring system and again published in the SEJ. For arithmetic, Boyd published sample questions in the SEJ and invited teachers to give these to their classes and report back on their performance. This information was used to create a set of sample questions that pupils of different ages might be expected to complete. For spelling, Boyd was even more ambitious. Teachers were asked to submit words that might reasonably be spelled correctly by children of different ages and these were compiled into several spelling lists, which were then modified using feedback from teachers and published both in the SEJ and as separate books for sale (Boyd, 1923, 1926). The Spelling Lists sold huge numbers of copies and Boyd used the royalties to fund an essay competition. This was run entirely through the pages of the SEJ, in which teachers and students were invited to submit research essays on historical aspects of education or experimental research work they had carried out.

In 1924-1927 the work of the Research Committee focussed largely on assessment and examinations, initially for promotion to secondary school and latterly for all ages. As a topic of fierce debate within education, Boyd felt that an understanding of assessment (including intelligence tests) was crucial for teachers, and urged every teacher to become his or her own test-maker, rather than relying on Education Authorities or universities to dictate the everyday assessment of their pupils.

The Research Committee even made an attempt at distance learning. In 1925 Boyd published the details of a French spelling



EIS

experiment and invited teachers to participate in developing a Scottish version, only publishing the next stage after sufficient feedback had been received. The results of the experiment were themselves unimportant; rather, Boyd used the experiment to demonstrate the techniques and practices of educational research and to enlighten teachers as to "the possibilities of experiment in the advancement of educational science" (SEJ, Nov 20, 1925).

The Research Committee's work under Boyd was groundbreaking. It demonstrated that large-scale projects involving teachers working collaboratively were possible in Scotland. The level of co-operation and enthusiasm for research it engendered amongst teachers was impressive. Boyd's candid and engaging writing style made research work accessible to every Scottish teacher. The fact that the Committee used the SEJ both to 'recruit' teachers and to publish details of its work meant that, at the very least, Scottish teachers were aware of educational research and understood a little of what it involved. The great influx of teachers wishing to conduct independent classroom research that Boyd had hoped for never materialised. However, research articles appeared increasingly often in the pages of the SEJ, and various local authorities created their own research committees. Boyd and the Research Committee put educational research firmly on the map and at the forefront of Scottish education. This contributed to the foundation of the Scottish Council for Research in Education in 1928. The SCRE was a joint endeavour between the EIS, the universities, teacher training colleges, and Education Authorities. The SCRE's flagship projects, the Scottish Mental Surveys of 1932 and 1947, in which the intelligence of two entire year-of-birth cohorts was tested, meant that Scotland made significant contributions to international educational research. The Surveys, involving teachers across Scotland in both the administration and marking of a group intelligence test, would never have been possible without the work of William Boyd and the EIS's Research Committee in the 1920s. And, without Boyd, the research team within which I work would not have been following up people who took part in the Scottish Mental Surveys for the last 12 years (Deary et al, 2009). ●

References:

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Boyd, W. (1926). The longer standard spelling list: 3500 common words which every boy and girl should be able to write down correctly. London: George G Harrap & Company Ltd.

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Problems - that Teachers have to face
No 3

The CHILD who does not join in GAMES

THE timid child who stands aside when healthy fun is afoot—who shuns games... whose shyness and self-consciousness submerge all initiative in school-work... Every teacher will have met this type, and the difficult problem it presents.

Lack of energy, nerve, initiative and enthusiasm does not necessarily connote a faulty mental outlook. Indeed, it is much more often the case that the trouble is a physical one and almost entirely due to imperfect nutrition.

It should be remembered that ordinary everyday foods may satisfy a child's appetite, but they do not provide all the nutritive properties required for maintaining rapid and healthy growth, youthful energy and the development of brain and nerve.

Exhaustive tests recently conducted among hundreds of school-children have demonstrated the supreme value of 'Ovaltine' in such cases. When 'Ovaltine' supplemented the daily dietary, the improvement in energy, vitality and nervous poise was most marked.

Similar results have been noted in many schools where 'Ovaltine' is added to the morning milk. It is therefore in the child's best interests that the teacher should take the first opportunity to acquaint parents with the unique value of 'Ovaltine' as the child's regular daily beverage.

But, it must be 'Ovaltine'. There is nothing 'just as good.' 'Ovaltine' is a complete food containing every nutritive element needed for building up body, brain and nerves to the highest level of efficiency.

OVALTINE
Supreme for Brain, Nerves and Body

Teachers will be sent a sufficient quantity of 'Ovaltine' for trial, free of cost, if they mention 'Scottish Educational Journal' and the name of their school. Supply: A. Wender, Ltd., 118 Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7. P24

FIXING A STANDARD IN COMPOSITION AT THE QUALIFYING STAGE.
I.—What has been done.

E.K. SPELLING LISTS.

Words worth knowing which present difficulty to Qualifying Pupils.

LIST A: 120 Words.
(Words on which there was an average percentage of error of 20 and upwards)

calendar	deceivable	felicitous	methodical	provision	route	tedious
career	develop	garage	mischievous	proceed	tenacious	thorough
catalogue	diameter	grateful	missionary	prefer	anxiety	
cautious	discussion	musical	musical	pressure	admission	
chair	disease	heredity	principle	pride	neglect	vegetable
Christian	dissolve	heredity	rice	programme	session	villain
cigarette		independent	occupy	pronounce	stage	reclaim
collision	economical	ingenious	occurred	prophecy	similar	
committee	elaborate	innocent	omit	psalm	soothe	wreck
consciousness	emigrate	intelligent	operation	punctual	source	
conspicuous	emigrate	intelligent	operation	satirical	strawberry	yacht
consciousness	emigration	interruption	satirical	receipt	stomach	
decent	exhibition	judgment	perceivable	recognise	stubborn	
decent	existence	permeant	permeant	reconmend	suitable	
decent	extravagant	leisure	persevere	recruit	sufficient	
decision		lose	physical	religious	sumptuous	
deduce		fiction	pedlar	illusions	system	

LIST B: 200 Words.
(Words on which there was an average percentage of error of 10 to 20.)



The one condition of success is that it should be able to count on the co-operation of the whole profession. Realising this, the first question to which it has addressed itself has been:—what can be done to get teachers all over the country interested in educational experiment, and willing to give what help in it they can? Everything, the Committee is convinced, depends on the answer that is given to this question.



Out of Africa comes Inspiration

Mike Stevenson of communications agency Thinktastic joined a delegation from Forrester's High School in Edinburgh on a trip to township schools in South Africa's Durban area. A partnership between Forrester's and Amaoti School 3 was formed - the latest in a growing link between Scottish and South African schools. He believes Scottish education can draw inspiration from the way culture is taught to young blacks.

It sits at the heart of one of South Africa's poorest townships, the odds are firmly stacked against it, yet its students aged 5 - 18 turn up each morning at 6.30am, uniformed and with excited smiles on their faces. To these students education is all and the thirst for learning seemingly unquenchable. Here I witness levels of motivation and aspiration I have seen nowhere else. I wanted to learn why.

To get to Amaoti we drive off the main road through narrow parched roads, fringed by ramshackle homes and street sellers. This is Durban's largest township with a population of 80,000 people, an unemployment rate of 80% and an unimaginably high proportion of families ripped apart by the ravages of HIV Aids.



Against this backdrop, the teachers of Amaoti School 3, with precious few resources, ply their trade. The contrast between the partner schools is striking - Amaoti crams up to 80 pupils into small ill-equipped classrooms, some with broken windows - a small serving of rice is prepared each day in a tiny hut while children sit in narrow strips of uneven earth to eat their main meal of the day. Meanwhile, Forrester's is on the brink of a move to a brand new building, with space and facilities aplenty.

As a result of positive partnership teachers and students in both countries are gaining much from each other's experiences and perspectives. But any notion that we have more to give than take is wide of the mark. In the long term, we may have even more to gain. Education is the township's route out of poverty - a privilege to be grasped and enjoyed. If only we could bottle that motivation and uncork it in Scotland.

I know from talking with young people in Scotland's less prosperous communities there is, among too many,

" Education helps lift the ceiling on their expectations. Do we in Scotland tend to raise the floor? "

a palpable lack of confidence, aspiration and enthusiasm - this threatens to thwart our development as a nation. That's why I set up Thinktastic - to lift spirits, expand horizons and raise ambition. The chance to speak in two schools and at the University of South Africa was too good to miss. It has taught me some valuable lessons.

What I noticed most was a complete absence of cynicism. Yet, school leavers in Amaoti know there is only a one in four chance of a scholarship to continue their education or find a job. They also have a will to work hard and create their own destiny. Education helps lift the ceiling on their expectations. Do we in Scotland tend to raise the floor?

What can we take from the townships? Picture this. At each school we are treated to performances of song, dance, drama and poetry. Culture is a fierce driving force and performance central to life in the schools.

In Swelabanzi School, enjoying its tenth year of partnership with Gillespie's High School in Edinburgh, they sing for over an hour in the morning. Behind each performance lies a deep understanding of how they have reached where they are and a sense of aspiration. Heritage is expressed not just through song and dance but also in conversation and in writing. They don't stick to the tradition script - they create, they adapt and they reinvent.

Their sense of self is inextricably linked to black history - not to dwell on it or indulge in self-pity but to drive them forward. Do Scottish children have a real sense of their heritage? I mean the flowering of ideas, intellectual accomplishments, innovation and compassion. I am not sure.

We need to boost this kind of understanding and pride in Scotland. Perhaps celebrating the richness of our inheritance is seen as too insular. Yet, much of Scotland's history is around its international links. When Voltaire observed 'the world looks to Scotland for all its ideas on civilisation' we were Europe's poorest but through education enjoyed the highest literacy rate in the world. South Africa has taught me that perhaps we underestimate the power of that heritage in raising our confidence. ●



GAMES

Crossword 58

Answers to crossword no. 57

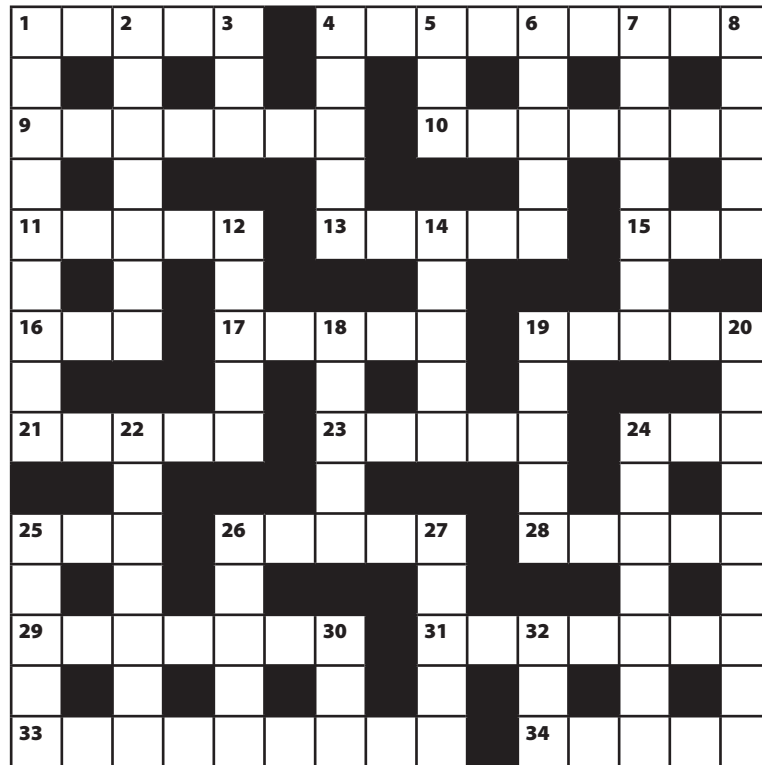
Across

- 1 West-northwest, 8 Alga,
- 9 Obsessions, 10 Bolero,
- 11 Looker-on, 12 Fee-paying,
- 14 Ross, 15 Prop, 16 Ill-health,
- 20 Starfish, 21 Mosque,
- 23 Thomas Mann, 24 ICBM,
- 25 Stephenpotter.

Down

- 1 Walpole, 2 Slate, 3 Neology,
- *4 Rosalindlehmann, 5 Hyssop,
- 6 Emile Zola, 7 Tenuous,
- 13 Programme, 15 Patches,
- 17 H H Munro, 18 Thurber,
- 19 Hirsch, 22 Swift.

*Also Rosamund



Work out and win

A £30 book token is the prize in the SEJ cryptic crossword. Send your completed entry to SEJ, 46 Moray Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6BH by Friday 15 January 2010. 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

Clues

Across

- 1 Entropy could have an organised start initially (5)
- 4 See scales move but more than before (9)
- 9 Prop up a pillow in France say! (7)
- 10 Plastic vector for aircraft perhaps (7)
- 11 Isolate on former island in France (5)
- 13 Mangled heaps produce new form (5)
- 15 Definite article in orbit heavily defined (3)
- 16 Swallowed an octet by the sound of it (3)
- 17 Reportedly look hard at sir moving upwards maybe (5)
- 19 Cuddle a lost green plant (5)
- 21 With mate drew match and went off (5)
- 23 Natasha kept the milky drink (5)
- 24 Infectious obsessive weeping, sounds of blubbing starts (3)
- 25 Refine its pose (3)
- 26 Cut off supplies ie gerrymander in part (5)
- 28 A beam of light speared the room (5)
- 29 Can he do it, Libya in chaos (7)
- 31 Obtains the wherewithal to protect one (7)
- 33 Magazine found at the football match (9)
- 34 Dispute, a right pain takes over (5)
- 5 Part of a circular coefficient (3)
- 6 Spooky eastern lake (5)
- 7 A long boring letter, sleep it off (7)
- 8 Remove small insect from NCO's fabric (5)
- 12 In part could threaten suet build up as a result (5)
- 14 Remove a bit from the abattoir to rupture blood vessel (5)
- 18 A separated piece of land in the church was found (5)
- 19 A game to play with a mate at the end (5)
- 20 Cubans set the essential matter (9)
- 22 The last ride on a bicycle could only be accomplished in this position (7)
- 24 Was in possession of vocal filling (7)
- 25 Bear witness to the entire lost but flexible cotton buds (5)
- 26 An expunged instant removed from duty (5)
- 27 Remember the internal residue of a fire (5)
- 30 Up to this point I was extricated from the abominable snowman (3)
- 32 In a small diverse area of ocean (3)

Down

- 1 Scale crab gets up the mountain (5-4)
- 2 Up to this point, the best (3-4)
- 3 Posed as the feline did on the rug (3)
- 4 Sounds like the heart of a sighted dead body (5)

Crossword winner

Congratulations to John Gifford, Cullen, who was the winner of SEJ cryptic crossword no 57.

John receives a £30 book token.

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Sudoku

supplied by: Lovatts Publications

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

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

SEJ Oct 09 Sudoku solution

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

GAMES & LETTERS

Letters to the editor

Dear Editor

The new look is great but I am concerned about one of the articles. In October 2009, Issue 05 you include an article by a GP, not a teacher, and state in the introduction that as well as "highlighting the plight of the Palestinian people" that the EIS offers support.

As a paid -up member of EIS I would like you to clarify the nature of this "support".

Thank you,

Mrs G.M Goodrich, Sanquhar Academy

*In recent years, several Resolutions from EIS AGMs have committed the EIS to supporting the cause of the Palestinian people. This support is mainly based on highlighting the issues and strengthening links between Scottish and Palestinian education. Further details can be found in past AGM editions of the SEJ. **Editor***

No room for children

Dear Editor

When I was a pupil (30-40 years ago), our classrooms contained desks in rows, a blackboard, a cupboard, a world map and a bin. Personal belongings, jotters and books were stored by opening your desk. The room was tidy and calm, too calm for some pupils who needed more stimulation for their learning, but just right for those who easily get over-stimulated.

Over the years, more and more items have arrived in the classroom: shelves full of books and other learning materials, tray units for personal belongings, jotters, folders and stationery, play corners, reading corners, various hands-on learning stations, then computers and printers and lately interactive whiteboards with accompanying gadgets. The walls are plastered with pictures and posters, words and numbers. Even the windows are used for displays and washing lines criss-cross the room with a multitude of art-work dangling from them. In amongst all this, we find huddles of group tables, cluttered with stationery, books and papers, water-bottles and toys — and finally the children. Yes, they are still there, still up to 33 of them in a classroom which, due to all the other items, has shrunk to half its size.

The close proximity to each other often leads to kicks and punches. Group discussions become impossible if you are too close to other groups. The noise rises, stress sets in and instead of learning skills for life, it becomes a matter of surviving the present.

Why is it that millions of pounds are spent on new technology, that our classrooms are overflowing with all sorts of materials, while the children are fighting for space and attention? Are our classrooms simply a mirror of our materialistic society where children are silenced with expensive games instead of receiving the personal interaction they are craving for? Perhaps instead of mirroring society, schools should take the initiative to put children first,

to question the need for expensive materials at the cost of children's personal space and time for interaction with the teacher. Let's make room for children!

Elkie Kammer, Inverness

Plea to Santa

O Santa dear, please hear my plea
Please bring to me, I pray
That thing all teachers seek to own –
The elasticated day.

The day that stretches longer than
It is supposed to do.
The one that lasts much longer than
The usual twelve times two.

A day like that could let me
Get all of my work done.
And instead of taking work home
I could have a little fun.

I could watch the telly
And have a little drink.
I could have my life back –
Not be too tired to think.

O, Santa could you do this?
O, please say that you could.
If you can do this for me
I promise I'll be good.

It isn't much to ask for.
I'll share it with the rest.
For Santa, dearest, as you know
I work here with the best.

They all deserve a day like that
They're a conscientious crew.
And Santa, if you manage this
They'll never forget you.

So bring them what they really want
(And Santa, don't delay) –
The thing that every teacher wants –
An elasticated day.

**Mary Hutchison
(address supplied)**



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