

June 2025

Learning Reps News



Edinburgh Local Association

Summer is coming: Prepare to switch off and recharge.

As we approach the summer holidays, it is important what we prepare to switch off and relax during the summer holidays. As a union our 2023 members survey told in a typical week 52.8% of respondents felt 'frequently' stressed, only 2% said that they were rarely stressed. As teachers in Scotland, we are in school 39 weeks a year. That means that most of the teaching profession in Scotland are frequently stressed during the week for 75% of the year.

This means that it is essential that we use our time away from work wisely. It is important that you switch off from work to prevent burnout and you to recover physically and mentally. Remember our holidays aren't just a luxury but a necessity.

As recently reported by the BBC (24/03/25) there has been a sharp rise in stress related absence for Scottish teachers. If we look at Edinburgh in isolation, the total number days missed by teaching staff due to stress was 3,594 in 2017/18. By 2024 that figure had risen to 8,879 days. This brings me nicely into the next section on PRD and Professional Update. Please have these figures in mind as you look forward to next session, maybe it's time start prioritising your own health and wellbeing when you plan your professional learning for next session.

PRD and Professional Update

As teachers in Scotland if we look at our own Standards for Career Long Professional Learning, it explicitly states that our own wellbeing should be at the heart of our professional learning. It is often easy to neglect your own wellbeing, that simply needs to stop. Within Edinburgh the EIS is seeking to put staff wellbeing at the heart of professional learning, working time agreements and school improvement plans.

"Promoting health and wellbeing of self, colleagues and the children and young people in my care."

GTC Scotland: Standard for Full Registration.

1:1 Professional Values

It has long been our contention that one should be able to be able to prioritise your own wellbeing as part of your PRD. Our own professional standards explicitly state this. Dominic and I are always more than happy to lend a hand and supporting you when building your PRD framework. We can help support you in the process, but it is not something we can take responsibility for. A delegation from the Local LA recently

met with Jackie Reid and we shared our vision that professional learning is a key component in improving the wellbeing of the workforce.

The PRD process is led by '**you**', and '**you alone**' decide your own priorities. It is never too early or too late in your career to start prioritising your own wellbeing. No matter if you are a headteacher or newly qualified teacher there are different challenges that we all face. We can support you in identifying what you want from your PRD and support you through the process each year. Please remember prioritising your own mental health and wellbeing is not '*selfish*', it's essential

Dom ran a successful workshop on PRD and Professional Update. The link to that presentation can be found [here](#). It is also worth remembering that '*The Teachers Charter*' in Edinburgh is our employers offering in terms of professional learning, it is not something that you must include in your PRD.

Staff Health and Wellbeing

A year ago, today I shared an interview I conducted with the fabulous Faye McGuinness from Education Support, and I wanted to hard that interview with you again.

Within Edinburgh, we have been working in partnership with Education Support. Education Support are the only UK Chairty dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and school staff. Faye McGuinness is the Director of Programmes for Education Support (link below.)

<https://www.eis.org.uk/Content/Edinburgh/images/LRnewsletterJUNE24.pdf>

Faye gave some fantastic insights into the work of Education Support and how they could positively support us in the workplace. Education Support offer some fabulous free resources and a 24/7 helpline.

Helpline:

08000 562 561

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>

As we head into the summer break, it is important to remember that support is always available if you are struggling. This time of year, can bring a mix of emotions, and if you are finding things difficult please know you're not alone. Take the time to rest and recharge. You're wellbeing matters and remember that there is always someone there for you no matter what.

Locally we continue to sit of the staff wellbeing steering group alongside senior leaders from the City of Edinburgh Council. Next session we will be really pushing to promote the idea that staff wellbeing should go hand in hand with the school improvement plan and the teaching staff PRD. This is a conversation that the council are very open to listening too, so we hope to push that through and reach a positive conclusion.

Learning for Sustainability

Dominic is currently collaborating with Allan Crosbie on various learning for sustainability projects locally. Like a lot of the projects we are involved with, progress can at times feel slow. However, there are positive developments we hope that can be shared with you all in due course.

Financial Services

What will my pension look like when I retire? Where is the best place to keep my savings? When should I start planning for retirement?

The EIS offers free financial services and advice for members. Further information can be found [here](#).

What else can we do for you?

The key role of the learning rep is to support and advise our members in all aspects of their professional learning, including supporting members with advice on their PRD's and professional update. However, as you probably see from the updates there are many other areas that try to delve into.

As we wrap up another busy and productive term, we want to thank you for your continued engagement with learning opportunities and professional development. On behalf of myself and Dominic, we wish you a restful, enjoyable and well-deserved summer break. Take time to recharge, and we look forward to reconnecting in the new term with more chances to learn, grow and support one another.

Best wishes
Martyn

dshaikh@eis-learnerp.org.uk

mcheung@eis-learnrep.org.uk

[Learning for Sustainability - The General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://gtcs.org.uk)
[Professional Review and Development - The General Teaching Council for Scotland \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://gtcs.org.uk)
[Exploring Learning for Sustainability in the GTCS Standards – Scottish Educational Journal \(sej.org.uk\)](https://sej.org.uk)