

December 2023

Learning Reps News

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Edinburgh Local Association



The season of goodwill...

It is the season of goodwill and I hope I bring you good tidings from your Edinburgh Learning Reps. We have so much to share with you all...

As many in the world are on the countdown to Christmas day, I cannot help but get the feeling that many of the teachers in Edinburgh have a different day marked off in their diaries; Friday the 22nd of December when the bell rings to signal the end of term! With all trials and tribulations of everyday school life, it is important that we do prioritise ourselves, switch off, recharge and look after our own mental and physical well-being over the festive period.

Health and wellbeing- Looking after yourself.

“The best thing about being a teacher is that it matters. The hardest thing about being a teacher is that it matters every day.”

Todd Whitaker @weareteachers

Dominic and I, continue to work diligently behind the scenes with a specific focus on staff health and wellbeing. In the previous newsletter Dominic had shared a meeting that had taken place with Lorna French and other senior education officials from the City of Edinburgh Council. I am pleased to inform you all that myself, Tom Britton (Edinburgh LA, Assistant Secretary) and Claire Young (Drummond Community HS) are part of a staff wellbeing steering group. This group meets monthly, and everyone is looking to effect meaningful change in the long term for education staff.

We believe that there needs to be a recognition that teachers can at times be asked to do too much. The job of being a teacher has changed massively in recent times and this can take its toll on your mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing. There needs to be better systems in place to support teachers when faced with these challenging times. We want to move away from this idea that watching a twenty-minute video or simply opting in to one off health and wellbeing activity will suddenly solve all the issues that we find ourselves facing.

Last year Claire Young ran ‘**Knowing your No,**’ a health and wellbeing event based on professional boundaries in the workplace. Claire has kindly offered to run this event again in the new year, we will let you all know when we have a specific date in the diary.

In the meantime, please remember that EIS are running ‘*Our Wellbeing, It Matters*’ on Saturday the 13th of January at the Radisson Blu, Glasgow. Registration information can be found in the link here <https://www.eis.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing/oorwellbeing>

I have recently had some incredibly positive conversations with a local charity working in Edinburgh called Health in Mind. Amongst other things they offer a range of free online mental health and wellbeing support services. Please follow the link here <https://ithriveedinburgh.org.uk/>

PRD and Professional update

Last session Dominic and Jim Pringle ran a phenomenally successful session that focussed on supporting members in the PRD and Professional Update process (Link to the PowerPoint from this session is below). We would like to deliver this session again before the Easter break. We think that is particularly important that members take ownership over this process. Dominic has worked in collaboration with GTCS and officials from the CEC to ensure that members can become better informed.

https://www.eis.org.uk/Content/images/LAs/PL_GTCS_PRD_PU_2023.pdf

It is also worth noting that there is an expectation within our own ‘Standard for career long professional learning’ that we should seek to prioritise our own mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing.

Promoting health and wellbeing of self, colleagues and the children and young people in my care’ (Standard 1.1 Professional Values, The standard for Career-Long Professional Learning, 2021).

Do not be afraid to prioritise your own needs, priorities, and goals during your next PRD. Your own wellbeing, can **(should)** be a priority in the PRD process, do not be afraid to put yourself first.

As part of his work, when looking at the PRD and professional update process, Dominic has drawn up a ‘Making Geography a mystery’ PowerPoint. Please follow the link below, I personally feel that Dom has done an excellent job at bringing the entire process to life through this.

<https://www.eis.org.uk/Content/Edinburgh/images/MakingGeogMysteryMay23.pdf>

We are looking to run this event in person on a Friday afternoon at Moray Place, specific timings and dates will follow.

Financial Services

What will my pension look like when I retire? Where is the best place to keep my savings?

The EIS offers free financial services and advice for members. I have been looking to offer a drop-in session with one of the EIS financial advisers. Please let me know if this would be something that would interest you. mcheung@eis-learnrep.org.uk

What else can we do for you?

Finally, it occurred to me that you may be reading this latest bulletin and be none the wiser as to what a Learning Rep does. Well, 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.

We are always happy to support members and offer advice where we can. Please do not hesitate to get in touch we will always try to get back to you as soon as possible.

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