



CONFERENCE REPORT 2013

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The Educational
Institute of Scotland

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the impact of **Poverty on Education**

I am very pleased to present to you the outcome and results of our 'The Impact of Poverty on Education' Conference held in Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow on Saturday 20 April 2013. It was a well received and well attended event, with over 130 delegates from all over Scotland and across all sectors.

In 2012, the Council of the Institute agreed, in common with many other affiliates of the TUC and the STUC, that it was entirely appropriate that we play our part to counter the austerity agenda of the coalition Government in Westminster.

Indeed, the actual terms of a resolution, agreed unanimously by Council, tasked the Equality and Education Committees of Council to;

(a) highlight to members the consequences of inequality in society on educational attainment and young people's health and well-being, and the causes of that inequality;

(b) campaign with the TUC and the STUC to highlight to the public and to government those causes and consequences."

I chaired a short-term working group, involving members from both committees, to organise the event. As detailed in the resolution, we realised that the main objectives of the Conference were to identify the causes and consequences of poverty, and to showcase educational practice and research which illustrated how the effects of poverty can be ameliorated. To that end, the Conference sessions were designed to provide participants with an understanding of the different aspects of poverty and to allow more investigation of related issues through wider discussion at the seminar activities.

The Conference also served as a forum for representatives from organisations dealing directly with those affected by poverty, as well as providing a political perspective from Scottish Government.

Those who participated, whether EIS delegates or those who contributed on behalf of the many partner organisations, agreed that a hallmark of the conference was the lively discussion and debate it generated – not only during the interactive sessions, but also during the coffee and lunch breaks.

As was made clear at the event, it was not in any way a stand-alone conference. Rather, it is part of the Institute's ongoing and wider contribution to the trade union movement's alternative vision of how austerity and poverty should be challenged.

This was further evidenced through the panel discussion at our Equality Fringe event which took place at the EIS AGM in June.

It will be for EIS members, in general, and Council, in particular, to decide how this report will inform us as we continue to play our part in promoting the view that there are better and more effective political, economic and, of course, educational strategies to tackle poverty and its effects.

Finally, I would like to thank wholeheartedly, on behalf of the EIS, all contributors and participants of this event for making it an informative as well as enjoyable day.



Bill Ramsay

Bill Ramsay
Convener, Equality Committee

Summary & Highlights

The conference was formally opened by Susan Quinn, EIS President. She spoke about the legacy of the Thatcher Years, the dangers of current welfare reforms and set the scene for the remainder of the day.



She concluded by quoting Nelson Mandela;

"Overcoming poverty is not a task of charity; it is an act of justice. Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom."

Ms. Quinn then introduced the first keynote speaker, Dr. John McKendrick, Senior Lecturer, Glasgow Caledonian University and co-author of 'Poverty in Scotland 2011'.

Dr. McKendrick addressed the main conference theme immediately by asking delegates to consider 'How can we overcome the problems of child poverty in a sector, full of skilled professionals, in an affluent nation?'

"We currently have, based on one measure, around 220,000 children living in relative poverty and around 130,000 living in absolute poverty in Scotland," said Dr. McKendrick.

He went on, "Poverty is a choice. As a nation, we are making the choice to accept these levels of poverty. Levels of poverty in Scotland are a disgrace in an affluent nation."

He then continued by reinforcing what we know about poverty in Scotland in terms of the evidence, the implications and the strategies that have been used to counteract its outcomes. He challenged those attending to 'rethink' what they know about poverty.

"Poverty isn't inevitable," he said. "We have poverty primarily because we as a civic society don't do enough to address it."



He concluded by reinforcing the need to engage with the wider anti-poverty community at a local level. He stated, "We need a 'poverty in education' agenda. The anti-poverty sector and educational professionals need to work together to address the problems created by poverty."

Kay Barnett, Convener, Education Committee, thanked Dr. McKendrick for his informative and entertaining address. She invited all delegates to attend one of ten different seminars to build on some of the concepts and theories outlined by Dr. McKendrick and to reflect further on the causes and consequences of poverty;

1. Child Poverty Action Group: 'Child Poverty And Its Impact On Education'
2. Reid Foundation: 'Poverty Is A Choice'
3. Dr. Stephen McKinney: 'Initial Positive School Leaver Destinations In Glasgow Secondary Schools In Areas Of Deprivation.'
4. Close the Gap: 'Growing Up Poorer: Why Women And Girls Are More Likely To Be Poor And Why This Matters'
5. The Scottish Refugee Council: 'Trapped – Destitution And Asylum In Scotland'
6. Scottish Poverty Information Unit: 'Welfare Reform: The Implications For Disabled People'
7. Citizen Advice Scotland: 'The Impact Of Welfare Changes On Scotland's Young People'
8. Children In Scotland: 'The Impact Of Poverty And Deprivation On Children's Learning - Can Schools Make A Difference?'
9. National Union of Students: 'Unlocking Scotland's Potential: The Role Of Higher Education In Supporting Social Mobility'
10. Poverty Alliance: 'Rural Poverty'

After lunch, Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Children and Young People, was introduced to delegates by Bill Ramsay, Convener, Equality Committee.

Ms. Campbell outlined the Scottish Government's perspective on issues surrounding poverty in Scotland and described some of the recent relevant legislative change that had occurred. She highlighted the Scottish Government's priorities for tackling child poverty – providing an effective welfare system, making work pay and giving proper support for families; exploring the criteria for free school meals; expanding nursery education with priority for disadvantaged areas; and

preserving support for children in law through the Children & Young People Bill.

After the Minister's contribution, delegates were entertained by a musical interlude provided by East Ayrshire Music Service.

Our final keynote speaker, Anne Marie Carrie, Chief Executive Barnardo's, described her own personal journey, beginning with her childhood in a tough housing estate in Easterhouse, Glasgow.



She described how her primary teacher, who regularly brought flowers into her classroom, introduced beauty into her life. She informed conference that this small kindness to children facing difficult circumstances boosted their self-esteem and gave them a sense of worth.

She continued by outlining her progression to youth worker, then a teacher, working in children's services for local and national government, and eventually rising to the top job in one of the country's biggest charities.

She also spoke of the work of Barnardo's in trying to break the cycle of poverty and the difficulties that they encounter. She stated "Only people with money can say that money doesn't matter."



She informed conference that "Charity shops have never been more needed. With 8000 volunteers giving their time and skill sets for free." She added "People don't leave money in their wills to kids' charities now because they think the state will look after the kids."

Delegates were visibly moved by a short, but hard hitting, video presentation entitled 'Seen and Heard' created by St. Kentigern's Academy with the help of UNICEF. This award-winning video raised awareness of the four million children in the UK affected by the issue - including one of their own.

This video presentation provided the opportunity to change the focus of the afternoon activities to examine how education can influence the disadvantage brought on by poverty. Delegates attended one of ten seminars;

1. James Watt College: 'Credit Unions'
2. East Ayrshire Council: 'The Greenmill String Orchestra Project'
3. Comenius Project: 'Supporting Newly Arrived Children Into Education'
4. St Kentigern's Academy: 'Rights, Respecting Schools'
5. Wester Hailes Education Centre: 'Global Citizenship'
6. Westquarter Primary School Falkirk: 'Nurture: Not A Notion But A Necessity'
7. Smithycroft Secondary School Young Parents' Support Base: 'Supporting Young Mums To Stay In Education'

8. Dunfermline High School: 'An Inclusive And Collaborative Approach For Young People - In Conjunction With APEX Scotland'
9. Falkirk Council Locality Model: 'Tackling Disadvantage And Inequality And, As A Consequence, Improving Education And Life Chances Of Children And Young People'
10. Castlemilk High School: 'School Leaver Destinations'

Once the seminars had concluded, the delegates returned to the main auditorium and posed questions to a panel comprising of Dr. John McKendrick, Larry Flanagan, EIS General Secretary, and Anne Marie Carrie.

A variety of challenging questions on a number of topics were posed and discussed. As an illustration, in response to questions relating to Getting It Right For Every Child legislation the following points were made;

- Even before GIRFEC, I had never met a teacher who didn't try to get it right for every child. GIRFEC legislation needs to be resourced.
- Regardless of statute we all have a responsibility to improve the situation. There is a need for a strong focus on asking the difficult questions on how best to use scarce resources.

Mr. Flanagan concluded a very successful event by offering some closing remarks and thanking all that had attended and organised the conference.

Morning Seminars

1. Child Poverty Action Group: 'Child Poverty And Its Impact On Education'

This seminar explored the relationship between child poverty in Scotland, children's health and wellbeing and the impact on education.

Discussion Points

- There are no clear data/targets from Scottish Government or local authorities to tackle achievement levels for the poorest children. Research shows that the perceived 'quality' of the school is only responsible for 14% of pupil achievement.
- The move to Universal Credit is creating problems associated with 'passporting' children/families from Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Free Meal Entitlement.
- School uniform policies can be a financial burden. There are differing levels of grants for school clothing across local authorities. These vary between £40 and £100. Claim forms are also difficult to understand.
- Paying for school trips can be problematic. There are differing approaches on methods of paying for school trips. 'First come, first served' can be difficult for some families to budget.
- Scandinavian countries have less pay inequality. In Scandinavia, high quality nursery education allows families to work. Fees are affordable and capped. They also have transparency in salaries.

2. Reid Foundation: 'Poverty Is A Choice'

The seminar considered how Scotland moves from debating poverty to defeating poverty.

Discussion Points

- We have what we need to fix poverty, the money and the knowledge and understanding, but honesty and political will are missing.
- Poverty is an economic problem, not a political one and it cannot be fixed socially – it can only be fixed through economic structures, and those structures we have been using up to now simply don't work. For example, the design of cities to become retail and leisure-service centres actually causes more poverty because wealth is transferred upwards to corporations.
- The answer is a radical overhaul of the tax system so that taxes can be used to tackle poverty. There is huge public support for the 'cradle to grave' philosophy of the welfare state.
- The strategy to create the correct economic structures should focus on tax reform, cracking down on evasion, simplifying the tax code and taxing wealth more and not just income.
- Other features of the required strategy range from banking reform to public ownership to stimulating domestic industry by suspending the national procurement policy to reinvigorating local democracy.
- There is a need to address poverty in the same way the EIS addresses the other Equality issues, with on-going campaigns, committee work, education packs (it was suggested we work with the Reid Foundation to produce such packs), etc.

3. Dr. Stephen McKinney: Initial Positive School Leaver Destinations In Glasgow Secondary Schools In Areas Of Deprivation.

This seminar discussed some recent research undertaken by researchers from the School of Education, University of Glasgow, in partnership with researchers from Glasgow City Council. The research was conducted to examine the relationship between poverty and (1) success in public examinations and (2) initial positive school leaver destinations in Glasgow City Council secondary schools and to find related explanations.

Discussion Points

- There is a need for more research, especially longitudinal research, in Scottish education.
- 26% of Scottish children live in poverty; Glasgow has 45% of the most deprived areas in Scotland and 11% of the nation's population.
- There was a high correlation between Free Meal Entitlement and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation – significant rises in Free Meal Entitlement were reported, perhaps due to austerity and welfare cuts.
- There was a clear relationship between socio-economic context and academic attainment, but not a necessary link in all cases.
- Models of distributed leadership, a vision of expectation and collaboration with external partners and agencies were most effective in providing continuity and stability.
- Instances of success were under threat by cuts in additional staffing and cuts in funding for external agencies. Furthermore, the situation was exacerbated by the cuts in FE provision and hidden costs in HE, including fee rises.

4. Close The Gap: 'Growing Up Poorer: Why Women And Girls Are More Likely To Be Poor, And Why This Matters'

Women in Scotland are more likely to be poor, and be poor throughout their lives, than men. This seminar examined women's poverty and explored connections between poverty and education.

Discussion Points

- Inequality manifests itself in the gender pay gap, influenced by discrimination, part-time working, occupational segregation, inflexible working, institutional factors, and a skills deficit.
- Gender assumptions still exist in terms of career, modern apprenticeships and school subject choices.
- For every £1 per hour a man working full time gets paid, women working full time receive 89p. For every £1 per hour a man working full time gets paid, women working part time receive 68p.
- Women's unequal responsibility for caring and a lack of flexible working clusters women into low-paid, undervalued jobs.
- Only a fifth (21 per cent) of Scottish local authorities report that they have enough childcare for working parents. Only one in ten local authorities have enough childcare for parents who work outside normal office hours. Access is worse for disabled children, older children, and in rural areas.
- For women who want to work in non-traditional careers, there is a need to promote mentoring services and self-organised professional groups.

5. The Scottish Refugee Council: 'Trapped – Destitution And Asylum In Scotland'

This seminar explored the poverty experienced by people throughout and at the end of the asylum system, the implications that this has for schools, colleges and communities in Scotland and solutions to end destitution.

Discussion Points

- The main reasons for applications for asylum are Human Rights abuses or conflict.
- People seeking asylum in the UK are at risk of destitution throughout the asylum process, particularly when their asylum claim is refused and their support is withdrawn.
- Recent research by Glasgow Caledonian University estimates that several hundred men and women who have sought asylum live in Scotland, sometimes for years, without income, failing to reach even the United Nations (UN) target on global poverty of \$1.25 a day.
- Refugees are not included or accepted as "normal" claimants within the UK welfare system
- People end up destitute because asylum applicants are not allowed to work. Some have arrived clandestinely. For those that rely on support from UK Government, the majority live on £5 per day.
- The decision making process on refugee applications is very poor.
- Research into the impact of asylum seeking children on schools and the benefits to asylum seeking children of education is required.

6. Scottish Poverty Information Unit: 'Welfare Reform: The Implications For Disabled People'

This seminar provided an overview of the key welfare reforms that affect disabled people and discussed the implications for disabled people, including the situation of disabled workers

Discussion Points

- The welfare legacy is one of piecemeal change over 4 decades. There has been an increased emphasis on means testing, diminishing contributory benefits and time restrictions. It is a system which is complex, poorly understood and under claimed. Public attitudes have hardened, resulting in a perception of deserving and undeserving groups.
- Disabled people are portrayed as fraudulent. However, rates of fraud are very low for Disability Living Allowance and Employment Support Allowance (both below 0.5%). Negative stories in the press, including incapacity benefits as 'lifestyle choice' have contributed to a rise in 'hate' crime against disabled people.
- Disabled adults are at a greater risk of poverty. Over 1/4 of families with disabled people live below 60% median income.
- The cuts agenda has resulted in a £18bn reduction in welfare benefits, with £9bn falling on households with disabled people.
- The move from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment has resulted in a 20% cut to budget (about £268m in Scotland).
- There needs to be media input from EIS and trade unions to challenge these assumptions.

7. Citizen Advice Scotland: 'The Impact Of Welfare Changes On Scotland's Young People'

This seminar provided an overview of the key welfare reforms that affect families and young people and discussed the implications for the services that support them.

Discussion Points

- A series of reforms will take an estimated £2bn out of the Scottish economy during the lifetime of this Parliament, with reforms including Child Benefit rates being frozen, tax credit eligibility being tightened, childcare support being reduced, and lone parents expected to return to work at an earlier stage. As a result, the Institute of Fiscal Studies predicts that 400,000 children in the UK will fall into relative poverty in the course of this parliament and by 2015 there will be over three million children in absolute poverty, meaning the Government will miss the legally binding targets of reducing child poverty by 2 million by 2020.
- There is a need to publicise the impact of changes to the welfare system through the SEJ using case studies and press releases. Scotland needs to know that teachers care and are deeply concerned about these reforms.
- There is a need to empower students through links to trade unions, taking them into schools and colleges, creating opportunities to discuss issues through seminars, conferences, meetings, etc.
- There is a need to analyse how Equality Outcomes can be used to positively influence poverty levels.

8. Children In Scotland: 'The Impact Of Poverty And Deprivation On Children's Learning. Can Schools Make A Difference?'

This seminar was an opportunity to discuss and share ideas for what needs to be done in the context of the financial cuts underway at a local level and the impact of welfare reform on low income families.

Discussion Points

- Teachers, staff and schools do so much more for children than helping them attain good assessment scores and exam results. Nevertheless, these measures demonstrate that Scotland is not doing a good enough job for its children and young people who live in our most disadvantaged areas or who are disadvantaged through other circumstances, such as being looked after.
- Is a focus on early years sufficient or must it be sustained throughout primary and secondary? How can parents be more effectively involved? Must we make sure that our schools are available throughout the holidays to give children more opportunities to learn? Do we need to target resources more to areas of greater need?
- There is a need to get pre-conditions for learning in place (nutrition, clothing etc); they are not 'add-ons' but essentials.
- The lack of aspiration among young people and families needs to change. Unemployment has a particular influence on this.
- There is not enough funding now (and in the future) for schools to do what they want to do to be inclusive.

9. National Union Of Students: 'Unlocking Scotland's Potential: The Role Of Higher Education In Supporting Social Mobility'

This seminar looked in more detail at the actions required to improve the record of our universities; how schools, colleges and universities can and should be working in partnership, supported by government, to improve social mobility; and the role of civic Scotland in all of this.

Discussion Points

- There continues to be a real social divide not just in who goes to university, but just as importantly, where they go. At too many of our universities, entrance depends on your background, not your potential.
- Universities have a clear role in improving social mobility and ending the country's perpetual and devastating cycle of poverty.
- Access work is vital. There is good work being done in colleges, however, there is some way to go in universities – especially the "ancient" institutions.
- As a consequence of the cuts agenda, those that suffer through lack of access include women (especially parents/ carers via loss of childcare funding), disabled students (life skills courses are under threat) and BME students. There is also an associated loss in support and counselling services.
- To improve matters, schools need to provide better information, advice and guidance; colleges need to protect local access, as travelling & nursery access can become a problem with the increased geographical spread of campuses; universities need to look beyond attainments levels & invest in success; trade unions need to consider partnership working with NUS & other institutions; NUS should be allowed into schools to discuss issues.
- Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS) should be promoted.

10. Poverty Alliance: 'Rural Poverty'

The seminar explored key issues of rural poverty in the current context and shared findings from recent research 'Surviving Poverty - The Impact of Lone Parenthood' highlighting barriers lone parent families face.

Discussion Points

- Rising costs, in particular the costs of food and fuel, have impacted heavily on lone parent families. This has resulted in many lone parents skipping meals to feed their children.
- Support for mental well-being is critical. Lone parents experience high levels of mental ill-health.
- Coordination of information and advice to lone parents; the need for a greater focus and approach on food poverty; more access to flexible and local childcare; and mechanisms and procedures to obtain the views and participation of lone parents, including service delivery, should be priorities.
- Schools need to understand that the person in need won't necessarily identify themselves. Schools need to be more openly supportive of parents i.e. be proactive rather than reactive.
- Issues include school uniform policy (i.e. sweatshirts/cardigans with or without a school badge can exclude children from social groups), homework policy (e.g. lack of access to the internet/libraries/transport when given research projects to undertake) and access to extra-curricular activities (schools need to recognise that some parents don't have the money to access extra activities and trips).
- The EIS should consider joining other organisations in an anti-poverty alliance. To challenge the stigma associated with poverty, a campaign by a large number of organisations working together will be more effective than individual organisations working alone.



Afternoon Seminars

1. James Watt College: Credit Unions

James Watt College delivered a presentation on their project, its origins and its operation. The Credit Union project is a partnership between James Watt College and 1st Alliance Credit Union, both based in Kilwinning, North Ayrshire.

Discussion Points

- The drivers for the project were to address the lack of financial literacy among 16-19 year olds and to address the issues surrounding financial literacy and wider social issues.
- Poverty shapes children's development. Before reaching his or her second birthday, a child from a poorer family is already more likely to show a lower level of attainment than a child from a better-off family. By the age of six, a less able child from a rich family is likely to have overtaken an able child born into a poor family.
- Children growing up in poverty are more likely to leave school at 16 with fewer qualifications.
- In North Ayrshire, two council wards have child poverty of over 30% – Irvine East was at 33% and Saltcoats and Stevenson had a child poverty rate of 35%.
- Pay day and doorstep lenders are a major issue! However, Credit Unions offer a realistic and responsible alternative.
- A group of students (JWCMoney1) researched and developed an enterprise activity specifically to engage with the student, and wider community, in order to address the links between financial capability and poverty.
- In partnership with First Alliance Credit Union, the group developed a strategy and delivered the project. It involved a close working relationship with Young Scot and was launched at an event with help from local politicians. Social media was also used for promotion (@JWCMoney1).

2. East Ayrshire Council: The Greenmill String Orchestra Project

The seminar was entirely 'hands on' with pupils teaching delegates how to play musical instruments.

Discussion Points

- The project is designed to engage large numbers of children in an orchestral experience that not only develops musicianship and technical ability but provides a broad range of transferable skills that enhances each student's ability to learn as individuals and within groups across all areas of the curriculum.
- The strength of the project lies in its integrated approach to learning. All students learn within each year group, where Orchestra is considered like any other subject, e.g. English, Maths, Science or PE. This ensures that any issues of bullying, non-participation and/or opt-out are eliminated in full. The string orchestra is also used as a means of enhancing other curriculum areas.
- The curriculum for the project is carefully designed to ensure that students are encouraged to not only accept the information that is given, but to analyse and understand it in a variety of ways, ultimately gaining a deeper and wider understanding of the subject.
- Peer learning is also strongly promoted, where students are encouraged to develop knowledge with others rather than only accepting that which is handed to them by the teacher. Every child is given the opportunity to engage in music and work towards fulfilling their individual potential as successful and confident musicians and learners.

3. Comenius Project: Supporting Newly Arrived Children Into Education

The seminar presented the research, impact and delivery of an EU collaboration between Glasgow City Council Education Services and the EU Lifelong Learning Comenius Regio programme to develop equality of opportunity for newly arrived young people across Europe.

Discussion Points

- The project aim was to develop a model of teacher education and pedagogical approaches to enhance primary/secondary transition for newly arrival bilingual young people. The partnership included the Universities of Glasgow and Aix en Provence, the National Inspectorates, plus multilingual primary and secondary schools in both Glasgow and Marseille.
- The evidence for the model has been informed by the professional learning of EAL and FAL teachers observing the identified needs of newly arrived pupils in pastoral care and second language provision. It also included the involvement of young leaders as mentors and collaboration with national inspectorate teams.
- A professional development opportunity 'An Introduction to Education for Diversity: Language across Learning for Children with EAL' has been developed. This course will examine four key factors that impact on New Arrival and EAL children's development: Language and Literacy; Culture; Pedagogy; and Health and Well-being. It will consider how current practice is informed by new research, using three guiding questions to facilitate the sharing of practice: 'Who are the learners?', 'What contexts do they learn in?' and 'How do we best support their attainment across the curriculum?'
- An enhanced Transition Model has been developed comprising of regular contact between primary and secondary EAL staff during P7; Secondary pupils visiting primary to share experiences e.g. fun days, sports days, visits to class to provide positive first language role models; increased engagement with parents, e.g. language classes are available to parents in schools, use of interpreters. Pupils are also given more opportunities to use their first language.

4. St Kentigern's Academy Rights, Respecting Schools

The seminar focused on St Kentigern's Academy cluster approach to the Rights Respecting Schools Award and their journey to achieving the award and the pupils experience of making the film and their successes so far i.e. a Rotary International Young Citizen Award 2012 and the launch of the Seen & Heard UNICEF teaching pack which explores rights and child poverty in the UK.

Discussion Points

- A rights-respecting school not only teaches about children's rights but also models rights and respect in all its relationships: between teachers/adults and pupils, between adults and between pupils. The initiative unifies a range of educational priorities in all UK jurisdictions - the global dimension, SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning), community cohesion and sustainable development.
- UNICEF aims to promote children's rights in schools in two ways: by supporting schools to ensure that rights are embedded in their ethos and policy-making; and by offering resources and activities to ensure that children and young people can learn about children's rights in the classroom and beyond.
- For a school to be accredited as rights-respecting it must show evidence that it has reached all four of the following standards; rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management; the whole school community learns about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); the school has a rights-respecting ethos; and children are empowered to become active citizens and learners.
- Impacts of the award include improved self-esteem and well-being; improved relationships and behaviour (reductions in bullying and exclusions and improved attendance); improved engagement in learning; positive attitudes towards diversity in society and the reduction of prejudice; children and young people's enhanced moral understanding; children and young people's support for global justice; and children and young people become more involved in decision-making in schools.

5. Wester Hailes Education Centre : Global Citizenship

This seminar detailed the 10 year school partnership with Barkly West High School, South Africa and how they have developed a number of joint curricular projects.

Discussion Points

- The current aim is to raise awareness of the negative impact of poverty in Scotland and in Africa.
- There are opportunities for inter-disciplinary learning through a variety of projects across the curriculum.
- Exchanging opinions and experiences helps support teaching and boost engagement and learning.
- There has been a rise in attainment through intervention and tracking.
- Developing partnerships and sustaining partnerships has been challenging. It needs commitment, support and resources. The British Council have been particularly good in providing support and guidance through their Connecting Classrooms programme. This has resulted in an International School Award.
- Finding funding has been difficult, but both 'big' businesses and local businesses have been supportive.

6. Westquarter Primary School Falkirk: 'Nurture: Not A Notion But A Necessity'

This seminar explored how to raise levels of ambition through nurture classes and the adoption of nurturing principles throughout the school and community.

Discussion Points

- Nurture class children all have social, emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties.
- Nurture class principles include; children's learning is understood developmentally; it is understood that all behaviour is communication; the classroom offers a safe space; nurture is important for the development of self-esteem; language is a vital means of communication; the importance of transition in children's life is understood.
- The key concepts of teaching nurture groups include:
 - Safety first: soothing hyper aroused children
 - Engaging: stimulating interest and teaching about trauma
 - Trusting and feeling : learning connectedness
 - Managing the self: regulating impulse and regulating the body
 - Managing feelings: choices and emotional processing
 - Taking responsibility: making sense of the world we share
 - Developing social awareness: learning self control
 - Developing reflectivity: promoting self esteem
 - Developing reciprocity: learning that life can be joyful
- There is a need to develop an understanding that staff need time to make meaning and sense of their role in society and the implications and responsibilities of GIRFEC.
- There is also a real need for funding. The input of the family support worker is vital and opens up links to the parents/carers.

7. Smithycroft Secondary School Young Parent's Support Base – 'Supporting Young Mums To Stay In Education'

The seminar was presented by the Headteacher of Smithycroft and by two S6 pupils who have been instrumental to the success of the project.

Discussion Points

- The YPSB was set up at Smithycroft in 2010. It supports young people across Glasgow pre and post birth to stay in their school and continue with their education. Smithycroft itself also has provision for up to 10 young girls to continue their education, pre and post birth, with an onsite nursery dedicated to the project.
- Research has shown that pregnancy can be a key motivating factor for many young women to re-engage with learning. There is also evidence that young women who are welcomed back into education begin to develop educational aspirations for their own children.
- The project has a coordinator, presently from an Early Years background, a Social Care worker from Social Work and three childcare development workers to support parents and children in the on-site nursery.
- The progress of the girls is followed closely by a designated 0.5 PT Pastoral Care on the Smithycroft staff and she liaises with teaching colleagues to support the girls, e.g. ensuring that there is enough evidence for absentee appeals for SQA exams, putting additional support in place if a learner is struggling with the course, attendance issues, etc.
- Post-birth, the babies and toddlers are in the nursery to allow the learner to attend classes. The girls must return to the nursery at interval and lunch time to look after their child and attend specific parenting and sexual health classes.
- The system has been extended to college students using the base with co-ordinated timetables between school and college in place.

8. An Inclusive And Collaborative Approach For Young People - In Conjunction With APEX Scotland

The seminar outlined the history of changing inclusive practice within Dunfermline High School and APEX Scotland colleagues shared their own perspective. APEX Scotland helps ex-offenders and young people at risk realise their potential through employment.

Discussion Points

- GIRFEC requires creative responses from schools to meet young people's needs beyond mere certification and attainment.
- The on-site partnership with APEX Scotland youth workers has created an area where vulnerable young people feel safe and happy to speak to people who are not teachers.
- The partnership approach has provided flexible packages which cover both curricular and non-curricular targets; provided support for young people who may not want direct input from school staff; and provided a specific knowledge base regarding drugs/alcohol/social issues.
- Time in APEX Scotland Inclusion Unit can cover the following activities; 1:1 discussions with an open door policy; links with parents/carers; visits/talks/work experience; catch up work from subjects; and social skills/leisure time.
- Evaluations have been positive. Exclusion was reduced by 52% between 2007-2008. This figure was reduced by a further 20% in 2008-2009. Complaints from the local community have also diminished while the number of local partnerships has increased. Pupils continue to remain engaged with school - and thus society - as may be seen by the 97% of our leavers recorded by Fife Council as entering a positive destination on leaving school.
- Benefits have been accrued by pupils who have been supported, engaged and afforded opportunities to develop skills and to achieve. Attendance at school by Inclusion Unit pupils has also increased as a consequence of engagement with the Inclusion Unit and this has had a direct beneficial effect on not only the pupils themselves, but also on families and the wider community. Social Workers and the carers of Looked After Children have expressed positive support for the Unit and its work.

9. Falkirk Council Locality Model: 'Tackling Disadvantage And Inequality And, As A Consequence, Improving Education And Life Chances Of Children And Young People'

This seminar considered how a multi-agency model of support for vulnerable children and families, which involves teachers working with other allied professionals, has led to improved educational and life outcomes for the children involved.

Discussion Points

- Children and families get help and support quickly, as early as they need it and close to where they live.
- Each locality has a fortnightly Multi Agency Group (MAG) meeting to consider requests for assistance and to support the role of the Named Person.
- Features of the approach include effective assessment procedures, early intervention strategies and effective sharing of communication, including consent mechanisms.
- It is everyone's role to carry out assessment. There is one suite of assessment documents which is used from pre-birth into adult services. These provide a focus for the MAG meetings.
- The MAG Meeting is a meeting of professionals. MAG decisions include:
 - No further action as needs have been met by information shared or an existing service.
 - Single service allocated to meet identified needs.
 - Bring back to future meeting as further information or assessment is needed before resources can be identified.

10. Castlemilk High School: School Leaver Destinations

The seminar outlined the key issues that require to be addressed to enable all pupils to gain a positive school leaver destination.

Discussion Points

- The key features are knowledge of all of children in the school; joint working with Skills Development Scotland (SDS); involvement of parents at Options Choices; early identification of pupils who would require support through More Chances More Choices; liaison with External Agencies (16+, Youth Complex, Glasgow Life, Ardenglen Housing Association, etc); bespoke programme for 'winter' leavers; and effective monitoring and tracking.
- High school leaver 'positive destinations' results, i.e. FE/HE/training employment/volunteering, have been achieved through regular opportunities for skills/careers advice, access to support & resources; personal knowledge of each pupil; high expectations; and a focus on employability.
- Important features of the approach include a strong pastoral care team; good relationships with families & external agencies; partnerships with local agencies for local solutions; the presence of resident SDS officer/careers adviser; and links with training providers/colleges.
- Foreseeable future problems include cuts in pastoral care staff and in SDS staff numbers; reliance on an internet website (My World of Work); loss of personal contact; and difficulties in managing 'follow up' activities after the pupil leaves school.



Next Steps

It was clear from the contributions made at the conference that there are many different aspects of poverty, inequality and disadvantage in Scotland that have an adverse impact on the education of children and young people. It was also clear that these relate to a large set of complex and multi-faceted issues surrounding the key theme of social justice.

All attending agreed that education and educators should play a part in challenging the factors that influence the marginalisation and discrimination of those affected by poverty.

Conference was also encouraged by the instances of successful practice which were highlighted through the seminar activities

and recognised that progress can be made to alleviate the difficulties experienced by those rooted in poverty.

Some days after the conference concluded, an electronic survey was sent to each of the delegates to elicit their views on the actions that the EIS could take to redress the equality imbalance and allow all children

and young people to engage more fully in their education.

From the 90 responses that were received, delegates identified a number of suggestions which were collated. The EIS Equality Committee will ensure that the following key proposals are acted upon;

1. Raising awareness of poverty issues

- Prioritise key issues surrounding poverty, e.g. pupil attainment, welfare reform, early intervention strategies, SEN, GIRFEC, effect on women and girls, etc.
- Work in partnership with other organisations to inform opinion and change public perceptions of poverty.
- Engage in partnership activity to develop and promote classroom resources focusing on poverty.

2. Action at local level

- Identify and publicise strategies that can be used at local authority level to counteract the disadvantaging effects of poverty, i.e. increased staffing levels for teaching and support staff, early intervention strategies, e.g. nurture groups.
- Identify and publicise strategies that can be used at school level to counteract the disadvantaging effects of poverty, i.e. affordability of school uniforms, access to school trips, encouraging partnership activities, e.g. guest speakers, involvement in social justice programmes.

3. Free school meals and nutrition

- Campaign for universal free school meal provision at a national level.
- Campaign at local level to support educational initiatives that focus on nutrition, e.g. breakfast clubs, healthy eating programmes, etc.



Reflections On The Day

Delegates were also asked to evaluate the conference contributors and conference activities on the day. Comments by delegates included;

Speakers

- "Dr. McKendrick was first class!"
- "Anne Marie Carrie was fantastic, really" motivational.
- "I thought the two speakers were very well chosen and both provided a passionate and thought provoking contribution."

Seminars

- "Plenty of opportunities for the group to discuss ideas and make contributions."
- "Would love to hear more from this speaker and more on this subject."
- "Great networking and professional dialogue took place."
- "Felt we could have benefited from a longer period of time to discuss the issues raised more fully."
- "I had not selected this seminar but I found it interesting and the speaker very enthusiastic."
- "This was a heartening session. It made me feel that we can make a difference."
- "Fantastic information I will be able to take further in my own school."

Additional comments

As a CPD event, over 96% of those attending indicated that it addressed their CPD needs. Sample additional comments included;

- "It was an excellent opportunity to network with fellow professionals and was directly relevant to my work."
- "Great to hear from colleagues working within similar areas of deprivation across Scotland, we could empathise, laugh about experiences and learn about emerging innovative practices."
- "Real issues that impact on our ability to do the job. Not just the tick box stuff we are always hearing about from our organisations."



The logo for the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) consists of the lowercase letters 'eis' in a white, serif font. The 'e' is lowercase and has a small dot above it. The 'i' is lowercase and has a small dot above it. The 's' is lowercase and has a small dot above it. The letters are set against a dark blue background.

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