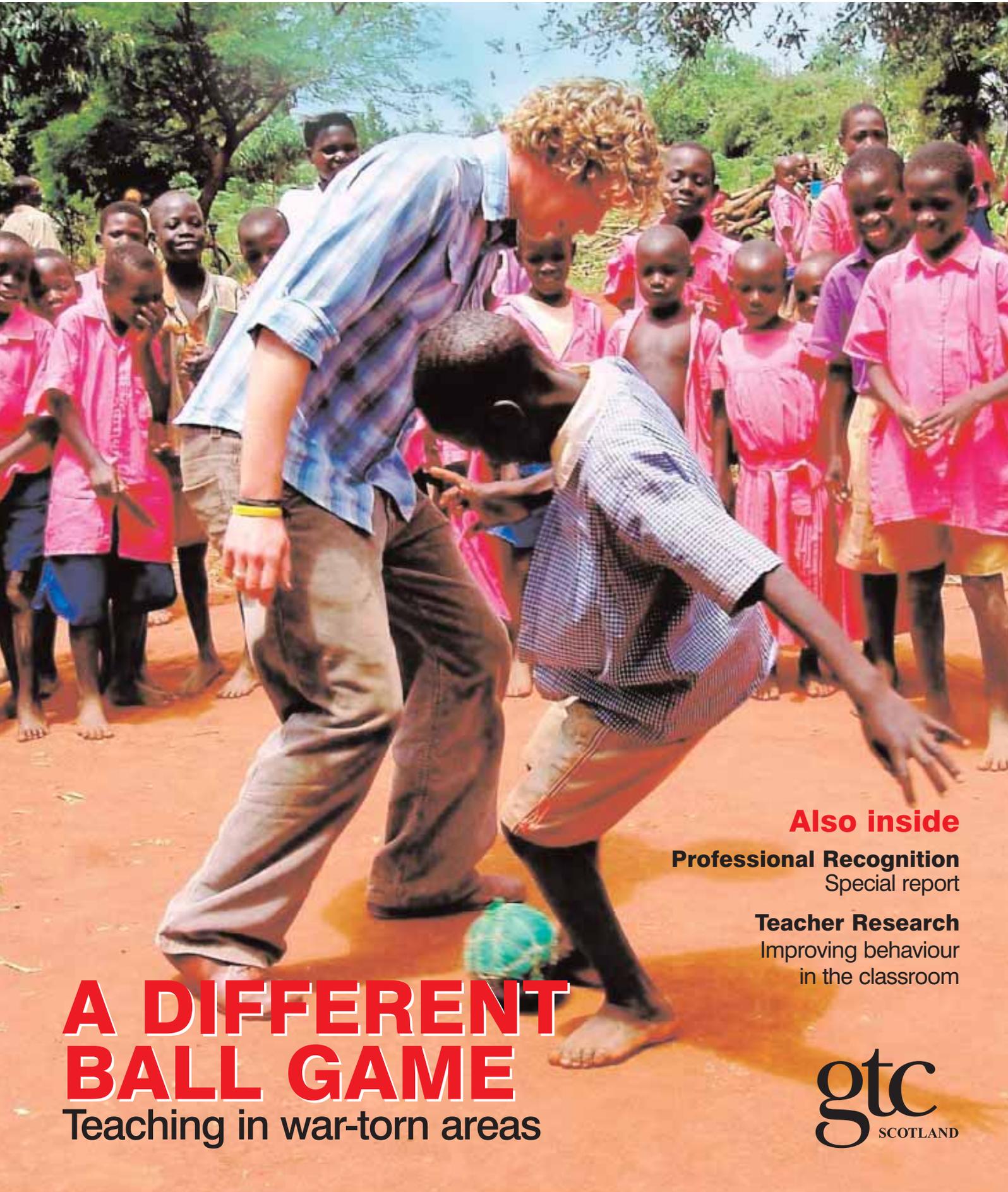


teaching **scotland**

ISSUE 24 AUTUMN 2007

THE VOICE OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION



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Professional Recognition
Special report

Teacher Research
Improving behaviour
in the classroom

A DIFFERENT BALL GAME

Teaching in war-torn areas

gtc
SCOTLAND



Acknowledging the efforts that teachers make over and above their required duties is key to ensuring that education in Scotland continues to excel.

The framework for Professional Recognition

Much of this edition of *Teaching Scotland* is devoted to the concept of Professional Recognition.

This concept has been introduced by the Council to acknowledge the vast amount of expertise that teachers throughout Scotland have and display in their professional practice in schools.

The framework for Professional Recognition offers teachers an opportunity to have their particular area of expertise recognised formally.

In our schools we have vast numbers of teachers who have for many years gathered and demonstrated areas of expertise both within the curriculum, eg assessment, drama, enterprise and in broader areas of education, eg citizenship, health education and mentoring.

YOUR EXPERTISE IS SO IMPORTANT THAT NOT ONLY WILL WE RECOGNISE IT, BUT WE WILL ALSO USE IT

Up until the present, this work has gone largely unrecognised apart from within the teacher's own school. Now, through the Professional Recognition Framework, this expertise can be recognised by the General Teaching Council for Scotland and that teacher identified as a leader in the particular area demonstrated.

This expertise can then be drawn upon by the school and other schools within the particular local authority to share with other colleagues and enhance their professional practice.

To date, we have awarded Professional Recognition in more than 25 areas of expertise to

teachers throughout Scotland.

They range from post-induction year teachers to head teachers and all are agreed that it is good for their particular area of expertise to be acknowledged and valued.

I believe this is a huge step forward for the profession.

Professional Recognition relies on effective partnerships. It involves all of us – the local authorities, schools, teachers, Learning and Teaching Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, HMIE and the General Teaching Council for Scotland – working together to say to an individual teacher: "Your expertise is so important that not only will we recognise it, but we will also use it."

Was it not high time that such a situation existed? That we recognised teachers for what they are – skilled professionals who have much to offer not only in curricular areas, but in non-curricular areas as well?

Teachers in Scotland have always been admired for setting high professional standards. These standards are being effectively maintained by teachers who are continuously developing their own professional expertise.

The Council wants to acknowledge that expertise formally. That is what Professional Recognition is about.

Matthew M MacIver
Chief Executive/Registrar
General Teaching Council for Scotland



Teachers have long travelled the extra mile and made the extra effort in terms of their own professional development. Taking on extra modules, studying into the night and at weekends as well as reading up on new strategies and venturing abroad to take their own experiences to others – a humbling experience when they see other teachers manage with few resources and poor conditions.

It was not always about money, but about gaining some sort of recognition from colleagues about the extra effort and passion for the job.

Professional Recognition is now gaining ground in Scotland and teachers from every sector, every subject and at all levels are taking the framework on board and gaining the certificate in Professional Recognition from GTC Scotland. This magazine will introduce you to the award if you don't yet know about it and showcase who is coming on board and how it has impacted on their professionalism.

The Council recently published its book of Teachers' Tips, previously published in back copies of this magazine. All proceeds will go to Education Action International, which promotes education in difficult areas of the world. Buying a copy will help the charity send teachers out to help colleagues in refugee camps through the very successful insight programme. To win a copy, turn to the back page.

Teaching Scotland is always happy to receive articles and ideas for the magazine, so please keep sending these in to glenise.borthwick@gtcsc.org.uk

Glenise Borthwick
glenise.borthwick@gtcsc.org.uk

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AFRICA REMINDS YOU JUST HOW LUCKY WE ARE AND HOW VALUABLE EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND IS

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T: 0131 314 6000
F: 0131 314 6001
gtcsc@gtcsc.org.uk
www.gtcsc.org.uk
Editor: Glenise Borthwick

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GTC Scotland aims to promote equality and diversity in all its activities.

Cover: Teacher Ian Stewart in Uganda.

ARE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS UP TO DATE?

Under Registration rules, the General Teaching Council for Scotland is to remove teachers from the Register whose address details are out of date.

Teachers will be given three months to contact GTCS to update their personal information. Failure to do so by the end of this period will result in the teacher being removed from the Register. Make sure you contact GTCS when you move address or change contact information.

You can do this by:

- e-mailing registration@gtcs.org.uk
- logging on to MYGTCS at www.gtcs.org.uk/mygtcs
- calling 0131 314 6000.

APPLICATIONS FOR ACCREDITATION ROUTE SET TO CLOSE

In line with the original Chartered Teacher Programme arrangements, the current Accreditation Route will close to new applications from 31 August 2008.

Any teacher intending to follow the current Accreditation Route must therefore embark on it by that date.

KOLA FLIES IN TO VISIT AT CLERWOOD HOUSE



Kola the macaw escaped from Edinburgh Zoo to make a surprise visit to GTCS offices. Eventually tempted out of the trees around Clerwood House by animal presenter Sarah Wright, Kola responding to some gentle persuasion and some peanuts. She eventually gave up her new-found freedom and was happy to be taken home.

Offering support to teachers

The summer months saw a particularly busy time for professional services at GTCS as it strives to provide the best level of support to the teaching profession.

- In excess of 3,400 new qualified teachers registered with the Council, many taking up placements on the Teacher Induction Scheme.

- A process of Mutual Recognition for UK qualifications (BED and PGDE) has been created and is currently undergoing testing with the membership database.

- With effect from 19 October, GTCS

welcomed applications from overseas teachers under the EU Directive for Temporary Service Provision.

- GTCS and the Scottish Government held a joint venture in October to bring together stakeholders from the HEIs and local authorities to further streamline the Teacher Induction Administration process.



Best of Scottish education goes on show

This year's Scottish Learning Festival was the biggest and best to date, with more than 7,000 people turning up to sample the best of what's going on in Scottish schools.

The two-day event, held at Glasgow's SECC, saw educators from every local authority taking part in more than 150 seminars and hear world-class keynote speakers.

More than 200 pupils took part in this year's festival, showcasing some of the most innovative projects in the newly expanded Local Authority Village.

Fiona Hyslop, cabinet secretary for education and lifelong learning, pictured second left, addressed delegates to outline the Government's key education priorities for the next year.

She also congratulated Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) for organising the most successful festival to date. She told delegates: "This is a truly important occasion – one of the



key events of the year – bringing together education professionals at all levels to share their expertise, skills and knowledge.

"I've been struck by the real buzz around the venue. There is a sense of energy and excitement which reflects the interest in the event."

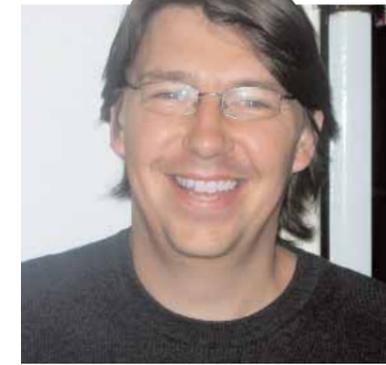
Maureen Watt, minister for schools and skills, and Adam Ingram, minister for children and early years, also toured the event, speaking to education professionals, pupils and

Probationers' achievement is marked at national reception

A representation of the newest group of teachers to join the profession in Scotland was welcomed at a recent national event.

Fiona Hyslop, cabinet secretary for education and lifelong learning, and GTCS chief executive and registrar, Matthew Maclver, hosted the GTCS national event to celebrate teachers achieving the Standard for Full Registration in 2007.

At the reception, Fiona Hyslop said: "The role of teachers is crucial in this Government's plans to create a smarter Scotland by helping our young people build self-confidence,



Matthew Fitt

self-belief and self-esteem."

Matthew Maclver added: "Education has the power to transform life chances and I know that all of those taking up teaching posts are committed to helping our young people achieve their best."

The reception, hosted by the General Teaching Council for Scotland in Edinburgh, included the reading of a specially commissioned poem, below, from Scots language writer and teacher Matthew Fitt.

For Oor New Dominies – Some Daes and Dinnas

Dominies – ken thysels,
doot wise;
Redd up yir een, lugs,
heid and hert;
Gang oot tae yir schules;
realise Yir weans' haill potential.
Be smert,
Be strang, evite aw compromise:
Sae, dicht yir mou,
it's time tae stert.
And dominies, gie dominion,
Dinna dominate, dinna bleat.
Praise independence and union.
Dinna get scunnered,
never retreat.
Be coonted, hae an opinion –
Nae fear, nae boakin, dinna greet.
Dae no whit ye're telt,
but whit ye feel
Learn oor bairns guid,
teach Scotland weel.

GTCS supports the SQA Art Exhibition 2007 National Gallery of Scotland Edinburgh Open until 4 January 2008

delegates taking part.

The event gives the Scottish education community the opportunity to share best practice and inspire each other with new teaching and learning. There was also an international flavour this year, with more than 100 guests from as far as Egypt, New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago and Nigeria attending over the two days.

Bernard McLeary, chief executive of LTS, said: "The Scottish Learning Festival has grown from strength to strength, with this year being our biggest and most successful event so far.

"We work closely with local authorities and schools throughout the year to showcase best practice, but seeing it brought together in one place is very impressive and inspiring. We're looking forward to another wonderful event next year."

GTC Scotland had its biggest presence at the festival in 2007 with delivery of five workshops and an increase in visitors to the stand.

MINISTER LAUNCHES REVISED STANDARD FOR FULL REGISTRATION

Minister for schools and skills, Maureen Watt, launched the revised Standard for Full Registration at the General Teaching Council for Scotland on 24 September.

The Standard for Full Registration serves three main purposes for Scottish teachers. It provides:

- a clear and concise description of professional qualities and capabilities teachers are expected to develop in the course of induction
- a professional standard against which reliable and consistent decisions can be made on the fitness of new teachers for full registration with the GTCS
- a baseline professional standard which will apply to all teachers throughout their careers.

While the first two purposes relate to new teachers, it is the third one – a baseline professional standard which will apply to all teachers throughout their careers – which makes the SFR significant to all Scottish teachers.

Launching the standard, Maureen Watt said: "Scottish teachers have an excellent reputation at home and abroad for their high level of skill and professionalism.

"This standard sets out the levels that teachers need to reach and maintain throughout their career, ensuring that teachers fulfil their professional potential and make the biggest difference to pupils."

GTCS chief executive, Matthew Maclver said: "We are pleased to welcome the minister to the GTCS to launch this keystone of teacher registration.

"The revised Standard for Full Registration was consulted on across Scotland with a range of education stakeholders contributing.

"This revision shows that we are continually striving to improve upon the already high standards of teachers and teaching and we pledge to continue to do so in the months and years ahead."

Focus on accentuating the positive

To prosper as a nation, we will have to discard our unfortunate habit of representing even the sunniest of days as a prelude to darkness. "Aye, it'll rain tomorrow."

Language should be used to make ourselves feel better and others feel better about themselves. Why? Because we know affirmation is better than criticism. We also know we can talk ourselves into success or failure.

I applaud recognition for teachers and when they work beyond the call of duty, it should be shouted from the rooftops. Praise is like self-raising flour – it continues to work its own magic.

For young people, words of encouragement are vital. What they hear today shapes their mindsets in the future. When the repeated use of "can't" and "don't" echoes in a child's ears, is it any wonder these become



embedded in their adult vernacular?

As an employer, I seek above all else in my staff enthusiasm, a can-do attitude, the ability to look someone in the eye and converse and, yes, the willingness to take risks. These are the essentials for a thriving workplace, but they also enable people to grow, to socialise, to travel, to care, to lead, to teach and to continue on the learning journey.

Positive communication moves

mountains, so let's be shrewd in how we use words. Let's create a more affirming environment at home, at school and at work. Schools can take a lead and use all the resources and goodwill they can muster from inside and outside their building to expose youngsters to a better surround sound.

A "thank you", a "well done" or a "you can do better" say I notice, I respect and I value you. What do the posters and notice boards in your corridors say? Do they remind pupils they are important and do they reinforce positives?

Words are powerful – they can stigmatise and damage self-esteem, but they can also make people believe they can take on the world. Let's do the latter.

Mike Stevenson (pictured) is managing director of Design Links, a design and communications agency

GTC Scotland council vacancies

The Council will have two member vacancies in the following categories and invites those registered in the relevant categories to stand for co-option to serve on the Council.

- One vacancy in the further education category with effect from 1 November 2007
- One vacancy in the secondary head teacher category with effect from 1 January 2008.

The successful candidate will be entitled to serve until the end of the term of office of the current Council on 31 October 2009.

Further information on the vacancies, the role of a member of the Council, and the co-option process can be obtained via the GTC Scotland website at www.gtcs.org.uk

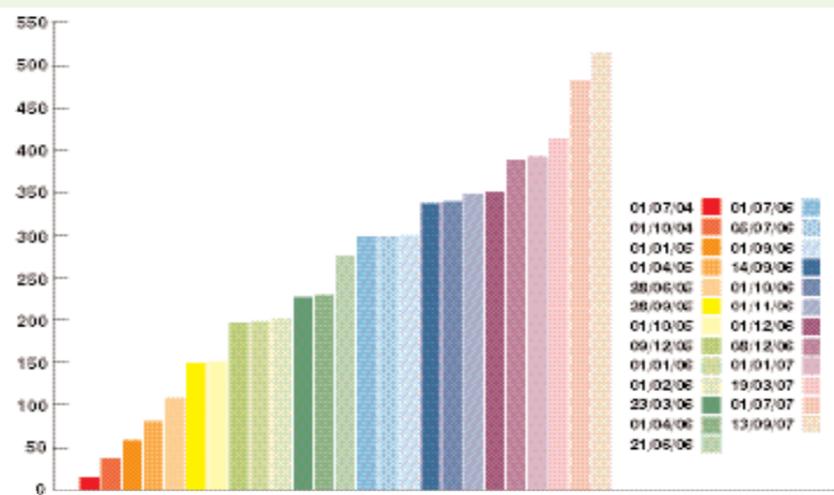
The application form (pdf) is also available online. Alternatively, please contact the chief executive/registrars on 0131 314 6027 or e-mail: fiona.hands@gtcs.org.uk

The closing date for applications is noon on 16 November. Completed applications should be sent to:

Irene Hunter

Returning officer
GTC Scotland
Clerwood House
96 Clermiston Road
Edinburgh EH12 6UT

Chartered teachers – latest statistics



GTCS website is a hit with probationers

Tips on behaviour and classroom management remain the most searched for information on the GTCS probationer website, according to latest statistics.

Analysis also reveals that:

- an average of 32,000 pages are viewed on the site every month
- downloads of the interim profile and report are on the rise as submission deadlines approach

- real-life experiences of teachers around the country continue to be popular.

The launch of a new blog – a running commentary on the year from teachers, supporters and others involved in the probation period – is the next stage in the site's development.

Visit: www.gtcs.org.uk/probationweb today to see the latest information for probationers

Liberty director Shami Chakrabarti to deliver national lecture in 2008



GTC Scotland is delighted to announce that Shami Chakrabarti CBE will deliver the Council's national lecture in 2008.

Shami, director of Liberty, worked as a barrister for the Home Office before joining Liberty in 2001 and has campaigned widely to show that respect for human rights is core to democracy.

Her commitment to freedom and equality has made her a political icon, particularly in gaining the respect and admiration of young people.

She has been listed by the Radio 4 Today Programme listeners as one of the 10 people who may run Britain and was shortlisted in the Channel Four Political Awards in 2006 as one of the most inspiring political figures.

Since becoming Liberty's director, she has written, spoken and broadcast widely on the essential components of a democratic society.

The date of the lecture, which will be held in Glasgow, will be published in the next issue of *Teaching Scotland*. Tickets will not be available until after the publication date.



GTCS goes to Holyrood

The General Teaching Council for Scotland is an organisation committed to the advocacy of the teaching profession and meets with groups and educational partners who have as their priority standards in Scottish education.

In autumn, the GTCS convener and chief executive/registrars, along with key staff from the Council, met with the new parliamentary education committee in Holyrood.

Opening up an early dialogue with the committee is important for the Council to explain its remit and priorities, making sure it can support and discuss future issues that may impact on the profession.

This was the first meeting which introduced the Council and the first of a number of meetings that will discuss individual topics that GTCS has responsibility for.

Conduct matters

The Council is required to investigate and, where appropriate, take further action in relation to complaints that are received about registered teachers or applicants to the register.

In recent months, the Council has had cause to consider complaints in the following areas:

Honesty and integrity:

A teacher is a role model to the pupils and students in their charge and parents and the public at large have a reasonable expectation that a teacher should be worthy of trust.

Instances ranging from applications for posts of employment to claiming expenses all require honesty and truthfulness at all times.

Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

While accepting that every professional is entitled to a private life, a careful balance must be struck between this and conviction for use, possession and, especially, dealing in illegal drugs.

The Council takes a serious view of these matters, which could potentially call into question an individual's suitability to be a teacher working with children and young people.

Crimes of violence:

Clearly violence against children and young people is unacceptable and in such instances the Council has used the most severe sanction of removal from the register.

The Council also has concerns in regard to convictions involving violence such as assault. While not directly involving a child, such conduct might lead on to a loss of control within the classroom. Accordingly, GTC Scotland considers such cases with great care and concern.



Code of Professionalism and Conduct – consultation

In the period from now to the end of the year, the Council will be consulting widely on the new Code of Professionalism and Conduct.

The purpose of the Code is to set out the principles which underlie professionalism in action, to give guidance to the profession and also to inform the public and wider educational community what they can expect of a registered teacher.

Members of the profession are strongly urged to participate in the consultation as contributions from across the board are essential in shaping the Code and ensuring that it is fit for purpose.

Please visit our home page at www.gtcs.org.uk

New GTCS convener brings a wealth of experience to the post

The new convener of the General Teaching Council for Scotland is May Ferries. An experienced member of the Council, May has served on a wide range of committees, including accreditation and review, probation, professional conduct, policy and strategy and the appeals board.

May comes to the post of convener at a time of increased powers and responsibility for the Council and has a passion for Scottish education and a drive that will see the Council move forward and support the profession in an era of change and challenges.

Serving as an elected member of GTCS on the Sixth Council from February 1987 to January 1991 in the primary category, she rejoined the Ninth Council in February 1999 and has served continuously since then in the primary/nursery category.

A former pupil of Kilbowie Primary School and Clydebank High School, she studied at the University of Glasgow and completed her teacher education at

Jordanhill College of Education before beginning her teaching career at Yoker Primary in Glasgow in 1975.

During her time there, she completed the Upper Primary Associateship at Jordanhill College of Education and in 1986, she became depute head of Victoria Primary School. She was acting head teacher on three separate occasions but didn't seek a permanent appointment.

May paid tribute to outgoing convener Norma Anne Watson, adding that she sees her own role as building on the considerable work completed under Norma Anne's leadership.

May said: "I understand the importance of the induction process, of how developing and supporting probationers can rejuvenate the mentor's own practice and professionalism.

"I understand too, and have seen the impact of, colleagues achieving Chartered Teacher status who have brought innovation and evaluation of classroom practice based on research and academic



May Ferries, new convener of GTCS

thinking. I look to a future where GTCS will increase its CPD role as an effective way of raising the Council's profile with teachers and educational partners."

May brings to the role of convener an insight and experience of Scottish education that will take the Council forward, reaching out to work in partnership with everyone involved in the national debates on the future of standards in the profession for teachers.

A long-standing champion of teachers, from conditions of service to professional standards, May looks forward to leading the Council with confidence and integrity.

A distinguished service



Norma Anne Watson

Norma Anne Watson retired as convener of GTCS on 5 June after a long and distinguished 16 years' service to the Council and Scottish teachers.

A member of the Council since 1991, she served for eight years as convener. She has been a tireless and committed servant not only to the Council, but to Scottish education as a whole. She brought drive and passion to the role while always seeking to find the right policy solution to benefit the profession.

Norma Anne served on a range of committee and working groups, including the accreditation, education, further education, probation and finance and general purpose committees, as well as convener on the disciplinary sub-committee, policy and strategy committee, professional conduct committee and the probation appeals board.

IT HAS BEEN MY PRIVILEGE TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL

A head teacher at Kirkhill Nursery School in Broxburn, West Lothian, Norma Anne has also chaired and served on committees and working groups on a local and national basis.

She said: "It has been my privilege to serve on the Council and play a part in a number of significant events, not only for the Council but for the teaching profession.

"These have included the duty of GTCS to act in the public interest, the move to the new offices at Clerwood House in 1998, convening the very first International Teaching Councils' conference in 2005 and the development of the Standards governing entry to the profession."

Norma Anne took to heart every issue that came to the Council with a commitment that saw her time at Clerwood as having an impact that will reach far into the future.

Making the most of your abilities

Special five-page feature focusing on the achievements of teachers throughout Scotland.

Dramatic change of career for Heriot's Lis

I left school after S4 for full-time dance training and through a series of professional dance engagements gained my Equity card. I then combined stage and screen work with choreography and dance teaching, running my own dance school and freelancing for 20 years.

Freelance work included choreography and movement workshops for actors and youth theatre participants and this naturally led me into drama teaching.



In 1991/2, after completing practical and written dance teaching exams, I was awarded the RAD Teaching Diploma. This developed my taste for study, so in 1993 I sat three Highers and then went full-time to Edinburgh University and Moray House, graduating MA Honours French with Spanish as a secondary subject and gaining my PGCE French and Spanish in 1998.

My classroom teaching since then has been varied, but I now have the best of all worlds at George Heriot's School, where I teach French, Spanish and Junior School Drama, run the choreography Group and enjoy extra-curricular Drama.

It would never have occurred to me to apply retrospectively for Professional Recognition, but I was encouraged to do so by our school's forward-thinking depute with responsibility for CPD, and my GTCS certificate arrived by return of post.

I am delighted my previous experiences have been validated by this recognition and would urge others to have a go!

Lis Mackie

Roseburn Primary case studies

SUSAN'S STORY

In December 2006, I achieved Professional Recognition for ICT. This was specifically for implementing interactive whiteboards into Roseburn Primary. I undertook this project in my role as the school's ICT co-ordinator and it was only after completing it that I applied for Professional Recognition.

Implementing boards into Roseburn Primary was something I had a special interest in. I had read about their benefits and was excited about the prospect of implementing something into our school that would enhance pupil motivation as well as develop our learning and teaching.

I secured funding from the school PTA to purchase the boards, which were installed on a rolling programme. Once I became confident using the board, I shared this expertise with an identified group of staff who had the boards first. We then developed a rolling programme of training with the rest of the staff and during the course of the first year, all teachers and pupils had an opportunity to use the board in their classroom.

We now have an interactive whiteboard in every classroom.

Since the start of this project, not only has my own teaching been enhanced, but

learning and teaching across the school has now taken a different approach. There are more interactive lessons where the whole class has the opportunity to take part and we really do have the world at our fingertips through the use of the internet with the whole class.

Having the full support of my head teacher was most valuable when undertaking Professional Recognition. I feel valued at Roseburn, but it is heartening to have recognition.

HEATHER'S STORY

I have received accreditation in supporting pupil learning and also in leadership. I was advised by my CEC tutors that the work carried out during two courses was enough evidence to apply for GTCS recognition.

Initial thoughts on applying for accreditation was "Why bother?" I had spent time and effort on my courses and the thought of more form filling was not appealing. Advice from GTC Scotland made the application process straightforward – just a case of transferring the main facts of my studies on to a downloadable application. My course tutor and head teacher were very supportive.

The added GTC Recognition gave more



Susan, left, and Heather have gained Professional Recognition

value to the courses I had completed, essentially giving evidence that they had had an impact on my teaching and professionalism rather than adding another course to a lengthy list. Recognition can be held for five years before further evidence of development is required, strongly highlighting the relevance and current nature of CPD undertaken.

I am at a professional crossroads deciding between the Management or Chartered Teacher route. Accreditation can help facilitate either choice, developing my CV for applications or providing evidence for the Accreditation route of Chartered Teacher. GTC recognition is evidence that CPD is more than just attending courses and has a real impact on teaching and professional development.

Susan Imrie and Heather Inglis are teachers at Roseburn Primary, Edinburgh

Building for the future...

The Framework for Professional Recognition offers teachers the opportunity to take further responsibility for their development and is designed to create new exciting possibilities for registered teachers in Scotland.

What is Professional Recognition?

It is a framework which provides teachers with the opportunity to gain recognition for a particular expertise they may have and display in their professional practice.

What can I get recognition in?

Various areas of recognition are possible. Recognition has already been granted in, for example: assessment, citizenship, creative arts, guidance, leadership, ICT, mentoring, coaching, global citizenship, supporting pupil learning, literacy and project leadership. Curricular and cross-curricular options are possible.

How do I get recognition?

The process involves: self-evaluation, professional discussion, professional action (CPD) enhanced practice, reflection, sharing insight with colleagues, further self evaluation and professional discussions before you make a claim to GTCS.

How long does it last?

Recognition will result in achieving a certificate that will be valid for five years. If you wish to maintain it, you would be required to show how you were still pursuing interest in the area, keeping up to date with developments, enhancing practice and sharing insights with colleagues.

For further information, visit the Council's website at www.gtcs.org.uk. Read about Professional Registration in the winter edition of *Teaching Scotland*



Kate with the entire school at Uyeasound, the "Rainbow School" on Shetland

Northern network brings recognition for staff

A commitment to working in partnership to tackle the often unique challenges facing teachers in the remote communities of Orkney and Shetland is proving highly successful.

Over the past year, Orkney and Shetland have made a strong commitment to working together to meet the challenges of many new initiatives in education.

An important part of these developments is to identify appropriate CPD for their staff, a staff that can serve in a number of different environments, from small isolated outer island schools to the large learning communities in Kirkwall and Lerwick.

The SEED-funded coaching project was an ideal opportunity to support staff in both authorities and encourage a closer working relationship between staff at all levels.

Each participating authority was encouraged to link with learning partners from the Scottish Leadership Foundation, bringing business expertise into education. Orkney and Shetland identified Lesley Wilson, Steve Quinn and Jackie Cameron to aid them in their initial

training. The project was led at a national level by Graeme Finnie, and supported by network meetings and an online community provided by LTS.

The training was offered to all staff, including probationers. Emphasis was placed on probationer mentors, leaders at all levels and pupil support staff.

The initial training took place as a two-day residential followed by network days. In order to provide ongoing support, participants were encouraged to form partnerships to discuss and develop their learning.

Orkney provided the technical expertise to establish a community blog. This is very important for our colleagues from the more remote areas of our authority.

The training itself focused on the GROW model for coaching, personal awareness, feedback, listening and questioning skills. Support materials included academic background and activities for use in school.

Case study – Kate Coutts

Two years ago, my colleague Barbara Priest and I embarked on the Harvard/Tapestry Course. We were delighted we could access high-quality CPD from our own small school in Uyeasound, Shetland.

On completing the course, we were offered the opportunity to apply for Professional Recognition. The forms were completed successfully, resulting in an invitation to an award ceremony in Glasgow.

Thankfully, the Council recognised the difficulty of attending in terms of cost, time and supply cover, but we did attend "virtually" by video conferencing and our eight pupils witnessed their teachers being recognised as learners.

When I became involved in the SEED coaching projects in Orkney and Shetland, I immediately saw how many of the participants could gain professional recognition in mentoring. Many at last had recognition for the

years they had served as probationer mentors.

The new teachers who had grasped the whole idea of professional pathways took little convincing. I really wanted this group's commitment to their own professional development recognised and celebrated.

The GTCS enabled us to do that by processing all the applications in a block and attending the presentation ceremony, this time in Shetland. It is the first ceremony I have attended where everyone turned up from across the authority, including the outer isles. That was enough to convince me that our teachers value recognition of their work.

I would encourage my colleagues at all levels to stand up and be counted. Professional Recognition is there for you to claim.

Kate Coutts is head teacher of Uyeasound School, Shetland, the most northerly primary school in the British Isles

IT IS THE FIRST CEREMONY I HAVE ATTENDED WHERE EVERYONE TURNED UP FROM ACROSS THE AUTHORITY. THAT WAS ENOUGH TO CONVINCE ME THAT TEACHERS VALUE RECOGNITION OF THEIR WORK

Participants are encouraged to record their experiences in professional journals. Stringent evaluation was incorporated into the project, which was collated and shared with participants.

During network days, colleagues shared their experiences of using their new skills in their classrooms and schools. Some of the Orkney colleagues agreed to do this in a more formal way through case studies that are available on the blog. Participants appreciated having time to discuss their issues and have someone listen and offer real care and

support. Many commented on the impact on their personal as well as professional life. Our teachers are people and their learning should impact on the whole person. Many felt valued.

Orkney and Shetland have developed close relations with the GTCS through the induction scheme and other professional pathways. Both authorities believed staff should gain some sort of accreditation for their commitment to their own professional development and their impact in their own learning communities.

Professional Recognition was

appropriate, valued and credible accreditation for participants. The teachers also placed a great deal of emphasis on some form of recognition.

Orkney now recognises coaching as an integral part of its leadership development programme. Shetland is also committing to further cohorts. Both authorities have identified authority staff, ASN staff, emergent leaders and interagency teams as groups that could benefit from this training.

To support collaborative leadership and collegiality, both Orkney and Shetland would like to see a coaching culture embedded in their education service.

Kate Coutts and Marilyn Richards, Assistant Director QA Orkney Islands Council

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION WAS APPROPRIATE, VALUED AND CREDIBLE ACCREDITATION FOR PARTICIPANTS



Teachers in Shetland, above, and Orkney are working together to meet the challenges of new initiatives

Additional support needs

In the spring 2006 edition of our newsletter, we announced the launch of our Framework for Professional Recognition and explained that one of the purposes of the framework was to give the necessary assurance that the CPD undertaken by teachers is sufficient to meet the challenges they face.

We described the process by which teachers could apply to GTC Scotland to have their Professional Recognition registered formally. An important feature of Professional Recognition is that it is valid for a period of five years only.

After that period, teachers will be required to demonstrate that they have maintained their knowledge and expertise if they wish to retain their Professional Recognition.

We have recently added five new cross-curricular areas to the framework and these cover the following five specific areas of additional support needs (ASN):

- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Hearing and visual impairment
- Autism
- Dyslexia.

The Requirements for Teachers (Scotland) Regulations 2005 require education authorities, in employing teachers wholly or mainly to teach pupils who are hearing impaired, visually impaired or both hearing and visually impaired, to ensure that these teachers possess an appropriate qualification to teach such pupils.

The qualification is defined in terms of specific competences, as detailed in guidance available on the Scottish Government website (www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2007/01/29163203/0).

This guidance does not define the structure of specific courses or pathways which will result in an appropriate qualification, but acknowledges that there is a range of pathways to gaining such a qualification, for example, through taking a post-graduate diploma at a higher education institution, through accredited experiential learning and/or through local authority-based, or other, training.

The Framework for Professional Recognition and the guidance, taken together, provide a means by which a teacher of pupils who are hearing impaired, visually impaired or both hearing and visually impaired can have his/her knowledge and expertise recognised.

So, for example, a teacher of hearing impaired pupils would be able to apply for Professional Recognition as such by following through the process described by GTCS (ie consider eligibility, personal self-evaluation, professional discussion, professional action etc) to demonstrate that he/she possessed the competences outlined in the guidance.

A similar process could be followed by a teacher wishing to achieve Professional Recognition for teaching pupils who are visually impaired or both hearing and visually impaired.

At present, there is no set of competences for teachers to use if they are considering applying for Professional Recognition as a teacher of pupils with autism or dyslexia, but we are working with the Scottish Government to consider what the core competences are for teachers working in these areas.

Mike Gibson, Support for Learning Division, Scottish Government

Glow and Professional Recognition



Glow is the national schools intranet which digitally links Scotland's 800,000 teachers, pupils and other stakeholders. Glow is funded by the Scottish Government and managed by Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) in partnership with software company RM.

It is, however, far more than a safe and secure digital link to all schools across Scotland. Within Glow sits an array of powerful collaboration and communication tools that aim to inspire and engage all learners by bringing the technology they currently use outside of school firmly into the classroom.

Glow hopes to create an appetite for learning while facilitating collaboration with teachers and pupils across the country that will develop new skills and methods of learning for all. Not only will the tools inherent in Glow engage and encourage learners to achieve their potential in a fun and inspiring way and build an outstanding pool of resources, skills and knowledge, but it will help break down geographical, social and disciplinary barriers to learning. Glow will support a Curriculum for Excellence.

The potential possibilities for Glow are limitless, however, such a groundbreaking project will only realise that potential if the benefits are clearly demonstrated and understood by teachers and pupils alike.

This is where the role of a Glow mentor becomes key. As part of the roll-out of Glow, LTS, in collaboration with RM, is training 600 teacher mentors from all 32 local authorities to cascade the skills

WITHIN GLOW SITS AN ARRAY OF POWERFUL COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS

and knowledge needed to fully utilise Glow. Glow mentors will undertake training in how to promote Glow for effective learning and teaching and then begin the task of upskilling their

colleagues and pupils in their own authorities. This large undertaking involves many different models of dissemination in each authority, from running CPD sessions, INSET days, Glow seminars, training Glow champions and the like.

The expertise that Glow mentors will acquire during this process of training and dissemination provides an excellent opportunity to gain Professional Recognition from GTCS. Their extended personal CPD and the skills and qualities they will gather sit squarely within the professional framework.

Bruce Murray, educational consultant, Glow Team, RM Education

Going global

What can international professional development mean for your career path?

Since 2003, 68 Scottish teachers and head teachers have been involved in the Global Teachers Programme, taking them on working placements to Malawi, Ghana, Uganda and South Africa.

Many describe the experience as life-changing, but can it progress your career and enhance your professionalism?

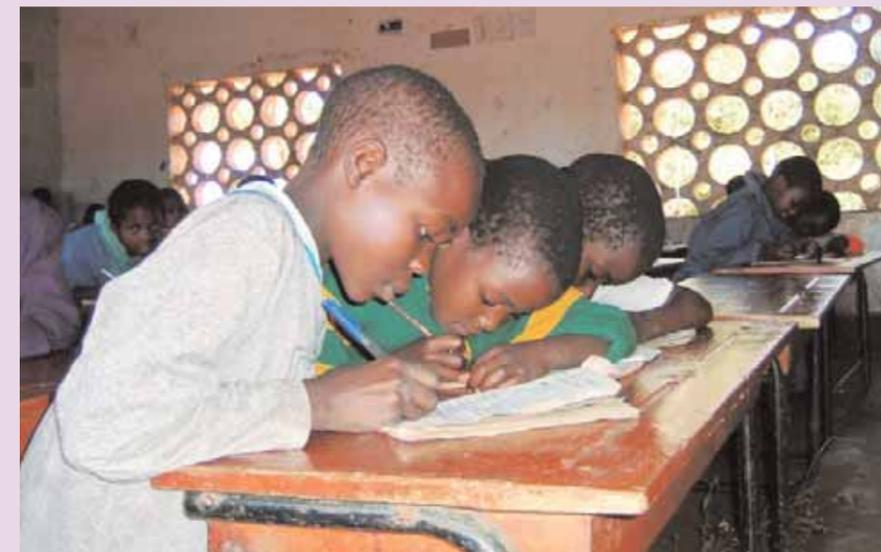
Mary Thomson, East Dunbartonshire Network Support for Learning and global teacher in 2006, writes about her experience...

Following my placement in Malawi, I came to be regarded as someone who had valuable knowledge and experience to share. This was as a result of the new skills and abilities I had acquired while on placement, combined, I believe with an increased confidence in my own ability.

As a global teacher in Malawi, working with the head teacher and staff of Mpalale Full Primary School for five weeks, I became involved areas of work usually outside my remit as a teacher.

I supported the head teacher in writing a school development plan, spoke at a head teachers' meeting, and delivered training to all staff in the school about the use of reading books.

The Global Teachers Programme requires you to use your new skills and knowledge back in Scotland. With my experience of living and working in the country, I was able to prepare an



Working abroad opens up new opportunities for both teachers and pupils

environmental studies, people and place unit, level C, on Malawi. To do this, I had to network with the teacher of the P5 class who would be using it, and in groups the children learned about the landscape, climate, major towns and cities, land use, art, music and culture of Malawi.

In addition, I was invited into primaries and secondaries to give talks about my experience in Malawi – my enthusiasm, increased confidence and PowerPoint skills allowed me to enjoy the experience of presenting to groups where I would previously have been very nervous.

Over the course of the 15 months of the Global Teachers Programme, I was involved in well over the contractual 35 hours of CPD, and it was important to me to have my efforts officially recognised.

Link Community Development organised a briefing from GTCS about Professional

THE GLOBAL TEACHERS PROGRAMME REQUIRES YOU TO USE YOUR NEW SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE BACK IN SCOTLAND

Recognition – leading to me gaining recognition for my enhanced knowledge and experience in global citizenship.

I now intend to use my experience as a global teacher to achieve full Chartered Teacher status, as that will be the ultimate recognition of all the work I have done.

Before going to Malawi I had got to point two on the Chartered Teacher scale. The work I have been involved with since my return has covered all four key components of the Standard.

I have gained a greater understanding of the principles and practices of social justice and equality and have encouraged pupils to explore this through global citizenship. My enthusiasm has motivated pupils and colleagues to want to know and find out more about Malawi, effecting progress in pupils' learning and development. I now feel it is appropriate for me to apply for full accreditation.

To find out more and to apply to become a Global Teacher in 2008, see www.lcd.org.uk, e-mail scotland@lcd.org.uk or call 0131 243 2685. Read the complete article on the online version of Teaching Scotland: www.gtcs.org.uk/teachingscotland

Recognising the efforts of Scottish Qualifications Authority teachers

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is delighted that 70 teachers who worked with us as field officers for the Scottish Survey of Achievement have gained Professional Recognition. This is one of the first of what we hope will be many links

between SQA Academy training for appointees and the Council. More than 15,000 teachers and lecturers work part-time with SQA each year to help run the examination and awarding system. Their work covers every stage of education from five to 14 and Higher to HND and each task within it is critical. Now, after discussions between SQA, through the SQA Academy and GTCS, the benefits that their work brings to their pupils and education as a whole gains due recognition. We are looking at

how we can encourage and assist other groups to use their experiences in working with us to get the credit they deserve. Already planned is SQA Academy training which relates experiences with SQA to the Chartered Teacher standards. We see the identification of links to the profession's standards as a significant part of the training we provide for those who come out of the classroom to work with us. *Dr Brendan Tierney, project manager, SQA*

Giving probationers the best possible start to their career

New guidance document focuses on the key role mentors play in encouraging and supporting newcomers to the profession.

A new guidance document focused on the provision of mentor support for probationer teachers has been launched by the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

Providing guidance on everything from selection and training to support, the document aims to help key stakeholders in the provision of the mentor/supporter allocated to probationer teachers on the Teacher Induction Scheme.

GTCS professional officer for probation, Ron Clarke, said: "The role of the supporter is a key one in the successful running of the Teacher Induction Scheme and many teachers have done a wonderful job of providing probationers with a good quality and level of support.

"Our aim for developing the new Probation Supporter Guidance is to further enhance this element of the scheme by developing a consistency in the areas of supporter selection, training and support and in turn develop consistency in the way that probationer teachers are supported.

"GTCS has had a key role in the implementation of the Teacher Induction Scheme in Scotland.

"Also, through our close working relationship with local authorities and from carrying out our own monitoring and evaluation of the scheme, we have ensured that it has been developed and enhanced since its inception in 2002.

"Our attention has most recently been focused on the provision of a supporter or mentor to every probationer teacher."

Mairi Cunningham and Alison Young, two probation managers from North Ayrshire who mentor probationer teachers, said the guidance has proved useful: "In North Ayrshire, we very much welcome the development of this GTCS guidance.

"This has been used to reaffirm the procedures we advise and the support programme we provide. It is a useful and reassuring development and has proved invaluable when reviewing the CPD input available to probation



supporters in North Ayrshire.

"For many supporters, it will provide them with greater clarity about their role and provide a clear insight into the personal and professional attributes they have and which have been identified by others in their school.

"We would also hope that this would provide many teachers with the incentive to seek professional recognition from GTCS for the work they undertake in this very valuable area."

A copy of the complete guidance document is available at: www.gtcs.org.uk/supportguidance

GTCS pilots new online profile for probationers

GTCS has developed a new online profile which, in time, all probationers will use to chart their progress through their probationary service.

The profile, which is accessed through our website, is being piloted during the 2007/08 school session with probationers on the Teacher Induction Scheme in nine local authorities (Western Isles, Dumfries & Galloway, Dundee City, Aberdeenshire, West Lothian, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Orkney Islands and Highland). For these probationers, the profile replaces the existing version that is completed by hand or in word processed format.

As these are key documents used by the probationer to record their professional development activities and by staff in

their school to report on progress towards achieving the Standard for Full Registration, GTCS is keen to ensure that they are fit for purpose and also easy to use.

Quite apart from the need to keep abreast of new technologies, GTCS sees this new initiative as necessary in order that we play our part in attempting to make seamless links between Initial Teacher Education programmes and teacher's CPD beyond probation. We shall share with you in future issues how this pilot progresses.



Making a positive impact

Thursday 20 September was a big day for two participants in the GTCS Scotland teacher researcher programme. Karen Jones of Aberhill Primary School in Fife and Mary Murray of Leith Walk Primary School in Edinburgh shared the outcomes of their research projects with an audience at the Scottish Learning Festival in Glasgow.

While their projects were limited in scale, what they discovered proved to be fascinating and potentially very important for other teachers.

Karen examined the impact of giving children in her primary 7 class responsibility for their own behaviour.

"Many pupils in the school come from disadvantaged backgrounds, which can lead to some having behavioural difficulties," she explained. Karen used questionnaires with the pupils and other teachers to identify what they thought were the key issues in classroom behaviour.

"There were no real surprises, but some children said they were frustrated when others misbehaved," she said.

Karen worked with the class to devise a system building on the school behaviour management strategy but operating on a whole-class basis, with interesting rewards for good behaviour such as a class talent contest.

Though it took some time for the class to get used to the system, it was not long before they were exercising peer pressure when they thought someone

Research by two teachers into behaviour in the classroom and the use of positive language could prove useful for the whole profession.

was about to misbehave.

The end-of-project evaluation showed that the reward system motivated the children, who felt there was a calmer and more positive attitude in the class.

Mary chose to investigate the impact of using positive language on the learning environment, not in terms of giving praise, but in actually describing the tasks children are asked to carry out.

Working with classes in two schools and using a third class as a control group, Mary looked at the effects that simple changes in language would have on how the children approached tasks.

It was proposed that describing a task as "not easy" instead of "difficult", or asking pupils to "do their best" instead of to "try hard" would reduce stress and enable them to think more clearly.

Before and after the intervention, Mary asked the classes to complete two questionnaires measuring their self-esteem and attitude to themselves as learners.

During the intervention, she found that, when positive substitutes were used consistently, those participating noticed a marked improvement in the positive ethos of the classroom.

The post-intervention results were impressive. Though the self-evaluations of the control group had changed only



Mary, left, and Karen with Ian Matheson, GTCS

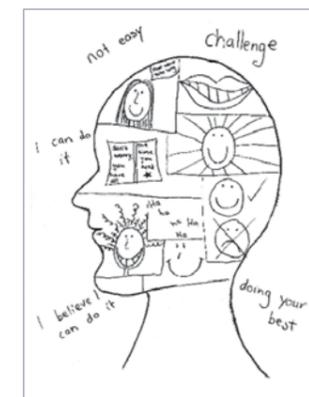
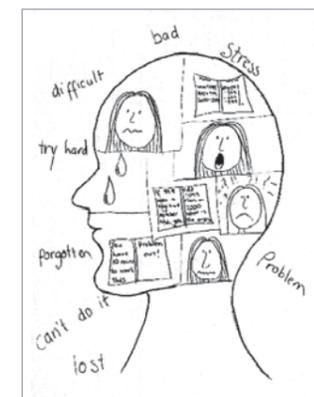
marginally, those of the other classes had improved significantly.

Mary observed: "In one of the classes, you could almost touch the change in the atmosphere. This goes a long way towards encouraging successful learners and confident individuals."

Asked to record their feelings pictorially, the contrast between a negative and positive approach could hardly have been greater as these "before" and "after" illustrations show (below left).

Both Karen and Mary have found that colleagues have taken a keen interest in the outcomes of their research and have begun to use these techniques in their own classrooms.

For more details of the research reports, please contact ian.matheson@gtcs.org.uk



GTCS TEACHER RESEARCHER PROGRAMME

Would you like to carry out a piece of action research?

GTCS offers teachers the opportunity to carry out research aiming to improve teaching and learning and to support teacher professionalism.

To check eligibility and details of the programme, contact ian.matheson@gtcs.org.uk or check the Council's website www.gtcs.org.uk

From sinking ship to lighthouse...



Hans Leganger, the international co-ordinator at Stovner Upper Secondary in Oslo, explains how an innovative teaching method is reaping great rewards.

In 2004, teaching at Stovner Upper Secondary School in Oslo changed. Half of the 700 students, between 15 and 19 years of age, attend academic education leading to university or high school level, the rest take vocational courses.

Stovner has a below-average income and this suburb has, unjustly, suffered from a bad reputation. The percentage of immigrants is higher than average and half of the student body has a minority language background.

REASONS FOR CHANGE

There was a high drop-out rate, absenteeism, poor academic achievement, some poor discipline and a high percentage of failure in final exams. Some felt teaching became harder. When the city politicians came up with a plan that would punish schools financially who had high drop-out rates, it was obvious something had to be done.

THE SUGGESTIONS

Integrate the use of the school's computers in the teaching of all subjects. Each student would be provided with his/her own desk and computer with internet access.

ABSENTEEISM DECREASED CONSIDERABLY AND THE DROP-OUT RATE WAS ALMOST HALVED, WITH STUDENTS LEAVING WITH BETTER GRADES. WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BECOMING THE PREFERRED UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL IN OUR AREA

A learning management system (Classfronter) was chosen for the whole school, offering individual tutoring.

Subjects were to be taught once a week. All classes on the same level were to be taught the same subject at the same time. Teachers teaching the same subject on the same level taught in teams.

On the timetable, the lessons were to be set up without breaks. We called the new system New Pedagogical Approach (NPA).

I shall spare you the fascinating story of the three-year transition, the hopes and fears (and resistance) of teachers, the knocking down of walls, the squeezing out of money from the authorities.

TODAY

We have three computer halls with 120 desks with computers, one hall for each class level. In addition, there are classrooms or smaller group rooms available for all students, offering a choice between the computer halls, a classroom or group room for teaching.

THE TEACHERS

A teacher will see a class in a specific subject once a week – too little?



Pupils at Stovner School work in individual computing units – and as a result have seen their performance dramatically improve

Consequently, each week came to seem more important and this led to the working out of the year plans when it came to the subject matter, variations, differentiation, homework and breaks.

Discussing plans and how they work is a common topic in the staff room. The whole atmosphere among teachers now centres more on education than before. Before we complained (sometimes for good reasons); now we focus on teaching.

Teachers in the same subject on the same level will work as a team and divide the days among them, making one person responsible for the plan for each day, followed by a meeting to discuss, plan and agree upon the plan for the

upcoming day. Next it is put on Classfronter for the students.

The teams also became groups where teachers learned a lot from each other, especially since the knowledge about the use of computers and Classfronter varied a lot when we started NPA.

For the first time in my teaching career, I felt that my fellow teachers were working for me in my daily teaching and hopefully I was of some use to them. This way of working has proved a great help and inspiration to new teachers (as well as giving us old ones new inspiration).

Teachers also find it much easier to divide students into different groups (abilities, interests, special project, etc.) for certain periods of time.



A student may then work in a classroom together with the whole class (approximately 30 pupils), then in a special group, and at the end of the day get individual help in the computer hall. Today this doesn't need a lot of organisation, but can be decided on from week to week according to the plan the team agree on.

Evenly spread lessons are now highly concentrated. A day without appearing in class is quite common, some have two. There have been no complaints.

HOW HAVE THE STUDENTS REACTED?

Students find the long units stimulating and get satisfaction from completing the tasks in one go. The fears that weak students would just have their boredom increased was simply proved wrong.

Students liked working on computers and getting more individual help. Some 50 per cent of the first year is spent with computers, the time decreasing in the higher classes. We found that some students could work for hours with little distraction. Others were different. As a consequence, when in the computer halls, if pupils ask for short breaks, they normally get them. This has caused no problems. We are simply different.

The computer halls are for individual work, but pupils may consult with other students. Group work, lectures, oral presentations and discussions are done in classrooms. The amount of written work by the students has increased. The teachers cannot correct it all. Some work is filed, or to be put on discussion files for peers to read or be marked by a teacher.

CONCERNS

The students may be in the computer halls between 8am and 4pm, and that will give

them the access they need. We have had no vandalism of equipment, which is too good to be true. The reason is probably that it takes a special person to destroy their "own" or their friend's computer.

The surprise about dropping intervals was that a serene calm seemed to descend on the whole school. We were all used to having 700 students rushing out every 45 minutes and dragging themselves back to class after another 10.

CONCLUSION

Absenteeism decreased considerably and the drop-out rate was almost halved, with students leaving with better grades than their predecessors. This spring, 190 students applied to our school, a 300 per cent increase since we started. Drop-out is down to a few. We have so far succeeded in becoming the preferred upper secondary school in our area.

Are there any general conclusions that can be drawn from this? For me, it now seems obvious that:

The 45-minute lesson slot is simply too short if the goal is to implement/integrate the use of computers/digital equipment in the learning process.

Students need breaks and variety, but this may be obtained while basically sticking to the same task or subject. The longer periods lead to greater concentration and to a greater feeling of accomplishment by the student.

Putting classes' timetables in parallel made it possible for the teachers to share the burden – the burden of creating pedagogy for these long periods, for implementing the use of computers, and to work the necessary differentiation into these daily plans to meet the needs of all students. Left alone with this task, the individual teacher would have given up (at least I would) and gone back to the old system of teaching.

The ordinary daily menu of different subjects may seem to guarantee quite a lot of variety, but a lot of students find this moving in and out of subjects monotonous, making each day seem like the day before. The result might be boredom or lack of interest.

Success is hard to copy. My hope is that by sharing these experiences from our school, others may be inspired and have new food for thought.

Read the full article on the online edition at www.gtcs.org

Celebrating eight decades of educational research

Research is a familiar activity – most of us, at some time, will look for information we need, look for confirmation of this information, seek to make sense of it and choose a path to follow based on the knowledge we have gained. Research is now such a familiar idea for students and teachers alike that we need to remember...

Back in the early years of the last century, the study of psychology had become more rigorous and educationalists in the western world were beginning to think it worth examining the claims of educationalists in a similarly thorough manner.

In the 1920s, the EIS, the Association of Education Authorities and the Colleges of Education in Scotland made something happen that would have a major impact on the way educational research would be organised and carried out around the world: in 1928, the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE) was founded.

According to Professor Martin Lawn of Edinburgh University, during the 1930s, SCRE was the “leading edge of the developing expertise on testing”.

The Scottish Mental Survey of 1932 became a landmark event, with repercussions to this day. Professor Ian Deary at the University of Edinburgh is using the data from this research to explore how ageing affects memory, among many other aspects of cognition. He is also making great use of the data from the similar survey carried out by SCRE in 1947.

SCRE also formed the pattern for other organisations – notably, the Australian Research Council for Educational Research and the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. It took nearly 20 years for the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales to be set up along very similar lines. These

Founded in 1928, SCRE has been the role model for research bodies across the world.

bodies are all active to this day.

During the 1990s, SCRE lost its special relationship with the (then) Scottish Office, eventually merging with the University of Glasgow in 2002 to become the SCRE Centre, part of the Faculty of Education.

The SCRE Centre continues to use its expertise to work closely with classroom teachers, policy makers and others near the “educational coalface”.

In recent years, educational researchers and policy makers have sought to empower teachers, learners and schools to achieve great things (Schools of Ambition), be excellent (the Curriculum for Excellence) and inclusive (the presumption of mainstreaming).

These and other initiatives pose great

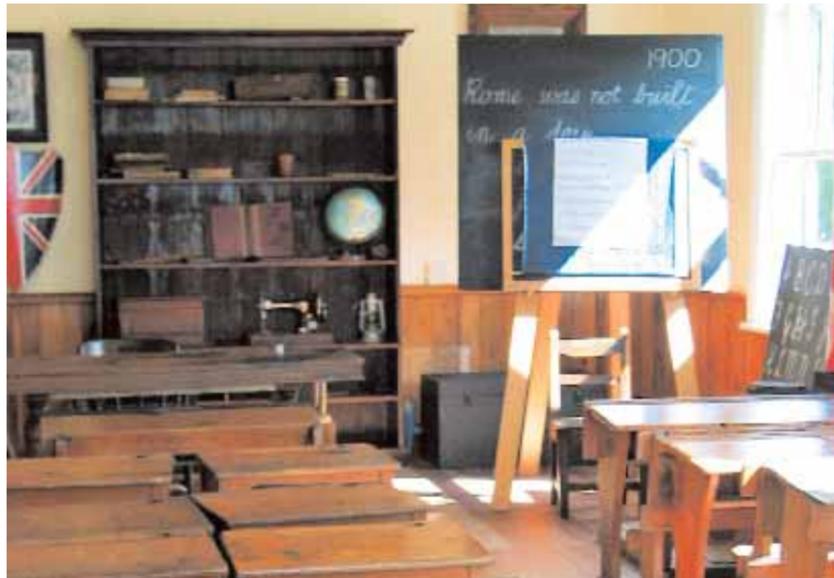
challenges – and research centres such as SCRE can help provide the methods and the knowledge to help make sense of education as it is practised.

A special invitation

Next May, the SCRE Centre and the EIS will spend a day examining past achievements and ongoing research in Scotland, identifying challenges that face all those concerned with education and considering the way in which Scotland can be better served by educational research.

Please join with the SCRE Centre and the EIS to celebrate SCRE’s 80 years. If you wish to be invited, please e-mail Professor Paul Brna, the director, paul.brna@scrc.ac.uk and visit www.scrc.ac.uk for further details.

The General Teaching Council for Scotland has long held a close association with SCRE and takes this opportunity to wish the organisation well in its anniversary year.



The Scottish Council for Research in Education has seen great changes in education over the last 80 years

An African adventure

Grant Gillies, depute head teacher at Lasswade Primary School in Midlothian, is taking a year out to travel before using his SQH to forward his career. Here, he reports on the first stage of his trip...



Just why does someone give up the job they love and leave for a round-the-world trip? Mid-life crisis? I hasten to add that I am merely 34 years old.

Disenchantment? I have just completed my Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) and still love my profession as much as I did when I graduated 13 years ago. No, a sense of adventure and thirst for seeing new things, discovering new places and meeting people along the way.

Having applied and been granted a sabbatical by a very forward-thinking Midlothian Council, I began my round-the-world trip in South Africa. I needed to be in Malawi by the start of August and seized the opportunity to travel through Botswana, up into Namibia (where I did some sky diving!) and onwards into Zambia (where I white water rafted on the Zambezi) before arriving in Malawi.

I had been in contact with the Scottish Government, who in turn put me in touch with LINK Community Development. They are an organisation that has very strong links with Scotland and schools in Malawi, although they have a much wider remit in the continent, developing quality assurance measures and promoting HIV education, among other things.

They have an excellent reputation

LIVINGSTONE DESCRIBED MALAWI AS ‘NEW SCOTLAND’ AND LOOKING AT THE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS, IT IS EASY TO SEE WHY

for integrated support in Africa and through the Global Teachers Programme (GTP) sent 17 Scottish teachers to Malawi this summer.

I tagged along with four teachers on the Adviser Global Teacher Programme who were visiting again this year to support teachers in the areas of numeracy and literacy.

I was teamed with a fantastically enthusiastic teacher from Inverness and together we delivered six one-day workshops on how to teach phonics.

They went well and the Malawian teachers really warmed to the idea – most had no formal training in teaching reading. It was important that the methodology, incorporating visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning, could be adapted to teach in Chichewa by developing actions to match sounds.

It was a very humbling experience as the majority of teachers had walked on average for two hours to get to the workshops. Everything we covered had to be transferable to the Malawian context, with class sizes of up to 200 and little or no resources. This meant encouraging lessons outside with letters formed in the sand and paired work or teams writing on each others backs – all of which caused great hilarity.

Teachers in Malawi are paid £5 a month and there are a number of volunteer teachers in schools to supplement staff shortages.

Livingstone described Malawi as “New Scotland” and looking at the mountainous regions in the country, it is easy to see why.

The people are fantastic and I have had



so many experiences. I travel by bus where possible as it is cheap and the best way to see the country. Buses wait until they are full before setting off and this takes a bit of getting used to as long waits at the bus stop can be anything up to three hours. It is, however, very sunny and a good book helps.

Africa makes you think a lot about things and why we do things the way we do. It also reminds you just how lucky we are and how valuable education in Scotland is – everywhere I have visited has held up Scottish education as a model example.

Follow Grant’s travels in the next two issues of *Teaching Scotland*

“I FEEL PASSIONATE ABOUT PASSING ON TO MY PUPILS AND OTHERS AROUND ME WHAT I HAVE WITNESSED THROUGH THE INSIGHT PROGRAMME”

Hilary Ballantine, Scottish ambassador for Education Action

Top Tips for Teachers

NOW ON SALE AT ALL GOOD BOOKSHOPS OR ORDER FROM www.luath.co.uk

The General Teaching Council for Scotland joins forces with Bob Dewar, one of the top UK cartoonists, and the charity Education Action International to help support teachers in countries affected by conflict.



A different kind of education in Uganda!

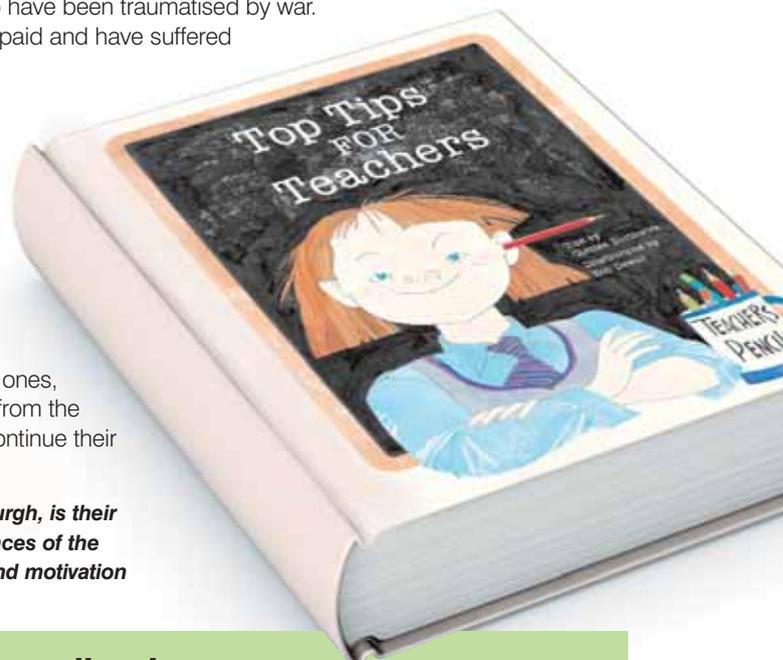
The charity's Insight Programme gives teachers a chance to share ideas and experiences with those teaching in war-torn countries. Visit their website, www.education-action.org.uk, to see how you can get involved.

In conflict countries, teachers battle against impossible conditions to give the next generation a better future. In South Sudan, only seven per cent of the teachers are properly trained. They find it hard to cope with the large class sizes and to nurture children who have been traumatised by war. Many are unpaid and have suffered themselves.

For almost a century, Education Action has been working tirelessly with these teachers and GTC Scotland would now like to help them deliver an education that is the most important way for communities and countries to tackle the root cause of poverty and change the situations affecting them.

The Council has taken its popular and humorous tips for teachers and published these, along with dozens of new ones, in its first ever book, now available for sale. All proceeds from the book will be donated to Education Action to help them continue their important work.

Hilary Ballantine, PT Maths at St Margaret's School, Edinburgh, is their Scottish ambassador and you can read about her experiences of the Insight Programme in a moving account of commitment and motivation on the GTCS website, www.gtcs.org.uk/teachingscotland



You can win one of these books by sending in your own humorous tips to the author. There are ten to give away and your chance to win stays open until 15 December 2007. You can send in more than one entry to: glenise.borthwick@gtcs.org.uk