

THE NATIONAL DISCUSSION ON EDUCATION  
CONTRIBUTING TO THE FUTURE OF SCOTTISH EDUCATION

gtc  
SCOTLAND  
GENERAL TEACHING  
COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND

Issue 95

January 2023

# Teaching Scotland

For the education profession

Airson luchd-dreuchd an fhoghlaim



INSIDE

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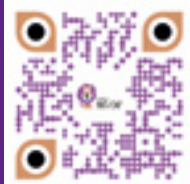
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“Getting to know learners across different classes, all of whom come from different backgrounds and have different life experiences, religions, disabilities, identities, values and beliefs, is no mean feat. But something that does help is clearly and vocally respecting and accepting them wholly for who they are, for every single one of their differences.”

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“LET’S GET MORE  
CLASSROOM  
TEACHERS  
INTO FORUMS  
WHERE THEY CAN  
SHARE THEIR  
ENTHUSIASM

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# News

## Applications open for final year of SCEL Legacy funding

Applications for phase one of the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) Legacy Fund Bursaries 2023/24 are now open.

This is the fifth and final year the fund will be running, with phase one welcoming applications from individuals or small groups of teachers or college lecturers looking to undertake school or college-based professional learning projects. Applications for this phase will close on 31 January 2023.

Phase two of the fund will focus on a commissioned research project looking at the effects of leadership change on learning and professionalism. Applications for this will open in March 2023.

You can find out more and how to apply for a bursary at [bit.ly/3iYVaW6](https://bit.ly/3iYVaW6)



## Trusted Teaching highlighted in education consultation response

GTC Scotland has responded to two external consultations - the physical intervention in schools guidance consultation and the National Discussion on the future of Scottish education - and closed two of our own consultations in recent months.

### Physical intervention in schools guidance consultation

In our schools guidance consultation response, we highlighted the need for more professional learning relevant to teachers' specific roles and responsibilities, as well as support to help them to undertake the duties expected of them.

Wider system regulation also featured in our response, something which we have emphasised before. While GTC Scotland is the registration and regulation body for the teaching profession, the same

regulation does not exist for employers of teachers. There is a need for regulation of the education system holistically.

### The National Discussion

GTC Scotland responded to the National Discussion, both on behalf of teachers following a virtual event and as an organisation. You can read more about what teachers had to say about the future of Scottish education on page 28.

The GTC Scotland response was organised into three themes:

- every learner and the whole education system
- system coherence, and
- trust teacher and trust teaching.

Before closing our response, we also reflected on the teaching profession's engagement with this work, as many teachers were not given the dedicated time and space to participate fully in making their voices heard.

### GTC Scotland's draft Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Our draft five-year Strategic Plan closed for consultation in November. It sets out our vision of Trusted Teaching.

Feedback from the consultation will be analysed and presented to GTC Scotland Council in February.

### Provisional Registration (Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges)

This consultation seeks to provide a route to registration for college lecturers in the existing workforce who do not yet hold a recognised teaching qualification.

Results of the consultation will be analysed by an independent consultant and presented to GTC Scotland Council in February.

You can find all of our consultation responses and reports at [gtcs.org.uk/about-us/consultations](https://gtcs.org.uk/about-us/consultations)





## Celebrating the high standards of the profession

We have refreshed our suite of awards and events to shine a spotlight on all the professional standards and to ensure that our awards and events are reflective of the teaching profession of Scotland. Find out more at [bit.ly/gtcscawards](https://bit.ly/gtcscawards)

## Update your details

It is a requirement of your GTC Scotland registration to keep your details up to date. If any of your details have changed recently, please log into your MyGTCS account at [mygtcs.gtcsc.org.uk/GTCSlogin.aspx](https://mygtcs.gtcsc.org.uk/GTCSlogin.aspx) and update them.

## Communicating about Fitness to Teach

It is important that our role as the teaching profession's independent registration and regulation body is well understood. Our Development Officer works with employers and other groups to help develop understanding of the Fitness to Teach process. We are also reviewing our communication and have started publishing a summary of Fitness to Teach decisions in *Teaching Scotland* magazine to raise awareness of the type of cases we are seeing and to promote learning. You can find the first summary on page 36. We are also in the process of analysing the

last five years of our casework to see what it is telling us about case trends, themes and performance of the process.

## Inspiring Lecturers

The latest issue of *Inspiring Lecturers* is available to read now. This joint publication from GTC Scotland, EIS FELA and Colleges Scotland is aimed at keeping colleges up to date on the progress of the college registration programme. In the November 2022 issue we asked for your views on a proposed Standard for Provisional Registration (Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges), and put a spotlight on professional learning undertaken by college lecturers in Scotland.

You can read all issues of *Inspiring Lecturers* at [bit.ly/3YsRVXa](https://bit.ly/3YsRVXa)

## Explore, share and celebrate Learning for Sustainability

The Professional Standards for Teachers are underpinned by Learning for Sustainability as a key cross-cutting theme; interdependent with the other key cross-cutting themes of values and leadership.

We have been working with Learning for Sustainability Scotland to talk about and share effective practice from across Scotland. An interactive map has been added to our website highlighting what teachers have been doing around

Learning for Sustainability in their schools.

The next monthly drop-in session to connect with other teachers and contributors to share, celebrate and discuss more about Learning for Sustainability and what it means for you, your practice, your setting and your wider learning community will take place on 26 January.

You can find more information at [bit.ly/3WfThm2](https://bit.ly/3WfThm2)

- Scotland's teaching profession has been recognised by the European Commission as a global leader, with its inclusion of Learning for Sustainability in the Professional Standards for Teachers. Turn to page 42 to find out more.



## Council meeting date

The next meeting of GTC Scotland's Council will be held by video conference on Wednesday, 8 February 2023.

Email [executiveoffice@gtcs.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@gtcs.org.uk) at least two working days in advance if you wish to attend.

## Freedom of Information requests

GTC Scotland continues to publish Freedom of Information request responses on our website. The log is updated frequently and can be accessed at [bit.ly/3W3iNLA](https://bit.ly/3W3iNLA)





# Social media

Something to share? Tweet us @gtcs



## @EastLintonPS

Our staff participating in voluntary professional dialogue and updating our @gtcs professional learning profile. Our plan is to have drop-in sessions regularly to help us reflect on and discuss the impact of our professional learning. #bettertogether @margocELC @EducationScot



## @DHM101

Great to see Moray House/Edin Uni PGDE Primary students focusing on LFS #TeachingForABetterWorld @LfSScotland @GTCSJac @gtcs @ScotdecLearning @EdScotLFS

## @Gcclnto

Thanks so much to @GovanHighSchool for hosting @minniemilto and me today. First day of @gtcs Coaching for Success training was brilliant; delighted to be offering this to colleagues across the authority and so happy to be working with former workmates @MsWaltersENG and @Smithyequality



## @FCProbSupport

Thank you @Yvonne\_McBlain for leading our first practitioner enquiry session. We looked at the what and why of enquiry and how this can support our own and ultimately pupil learning. The process was shared and we considered how we could take this forward within our own settings. @gtcs



## Digital Teaching Scotland

Read exclusive articles in the digital *Teaching Scotland* magazine at [readymag.com/gtcsotland/teachingScotlandIssue95](http://readymag.com/gtcsotland/teachingScotlandIssue95)



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"The offer from Stough Elementary in Raleigh, North Carolina, delighted me. The school is part of Participate Learning's global schools programme, where we worked collaboratively with others from all over the world. The school and authority offered many growth opportunities including SXSW in Austin, Texas, annual symposiums at the University of North Carolina, and more.

"Teaching in the US gave me a wider lens to understand the impact of education. I've had the opportunity to share some of my experiences with colleagues in Scotland and the pedagogical lessons of teaching in the US continue to impact my students today."

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Visit [www.participatelearning.com](http://www.participatelearning.com) for more information.





# Letters

## Democracy in Education

Wouldn't it be great if our education system was democratic? If the people who deliver education, who know the children and the classroom dynamics, who constantly evaluate their practice and develop expertise - if they were in charge instead of a hierarchy of people further and further removed from the lived reality of what they are inventing and prescribing?

Wouldn't it be great if teachers could lead their schools collectively or at least elect their headteacher (as it is indeed the case in Switzerland)?

Wouldn't it be great if teachers had a say in how the education budget was being spent, cutting out managers on inflated salaries, who are more concerned about their own status than the welfare of school staff and children?

Wouldn't it be so much more efficient and rewarding, if the experts from the chalk face were in charge of the policies, which they are to implement on a daily basis? Wouldn't it be great to live and work in a democratic society?

Well, one can dream...

**Elkie Kammer,**  
Inverness

## Digest



According to the Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels 2021/22, while there has been an increase in literacy and numeracy levels over the past

year, attainment levels remain below what they were pre-pandemic; with a 21.3 per cent gap in primary literacy between learners from the least and most deprived areas.

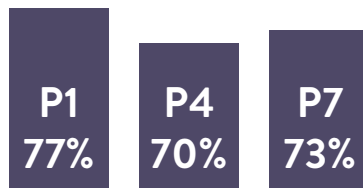


**78%** of primary learners achieved the expected CfE level for reading



**85%** of primary learners achieved the expected CfE level for listening and talking

For writing:

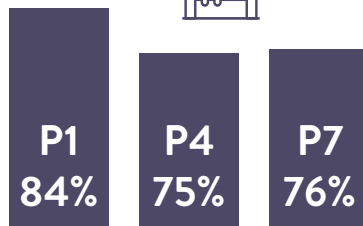


**77%** of P1 learners achieved the expected CfE level. **70%** of P4 learners achieved the expected CfE level. **73%** of P7 learners achieved the expected CfE level



**9 out of 10** S3 learners achieved Third Level or better for reading, listening and talking, writing and numeracy.

For numeracy:



**84%** of P1 learners achieved the expected CfE level. **75%** of P4 learners achieved the expected CfE level. **76%** of P7 learners achieved the expected CfE level.

You can read the full report at [bit.ly/3BK02Vx](https://bit.ly/3BK02Vx)

# Understanding Standards resources

SQA has a wide range of free online resources to help you strengthen your understanding of national assessment standards.

Download resources for your subject at

[understandingstandards.org.uk](https://understandingstandards.org.uk)

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# Trusted teaching

*As well as adaptation, our profession has been engaged in broad and deep system change work*



**W**e started 2022 with a provocation from Dr Shirley Van Nuland about ethics in education. Shirley's considered input at the GTC Scotland Annual Lecture kicked off a deep focused conversation about why what we value, think and do, really matters.

Throughout last year we gathered different views in the form of provocations from across the education system, in Scotland and beyond. We held roundtable events with the teaching profession to talk through the issues these inputs have raised for us in collaboration with the provocateurs themselves.

## Taking the temperature

As is the way with all best laid plans, we had to divert our planned

engagement with the profession on ethics to later in the year so we could respond and provide a mechanism for the teaching profession to come together to talk about the Scottish Government and COSLA's national discussion on the future of education. This was a theme for us last year (as it was during the height of Covid): reprioritising and replanning in response to what is going on around us.

There is no doubt that education is still responding to the impact of the pandemic, so too are organisations like GTC Scotland. There are lots of the same challenges and demands there always were, but there are new and emerging ones too, and we are all continuing to adjust to living, learning and working in community

with others again and in some cases managing the effects of our time isolated from others.

In addition to this ongoing adaptation, our profession has also been engaged in both broad and deep system change work. Informing work on education reform, a skills review, an assessment review, the National Discussion on education, a review of inspection in early learning and probably a few more that I have forgotten.

## Time, space, value and trust

Like a lot of people who spend much of their days in meetings and talking with other people, I reflect on the words that pop up across contexts time and time again. My engagement at the edges of some of this ongoing national work has caused me to notice a few key words.



## “This year, we need to take direct control of issues that are ours to lead and change”

A couple were not a surprise, and I doubt they will be for anyone reading this as I've written about them before. Time and space are two words I believe have been in the teaching language for a long time - how is the time and space created to think, develop, plan and reflect? These words are particularly pertinent in the context of informing change work; how is the time and space created (or given) to meaningfully inform, share and learn together?

A couple of other words have also struck a chord - value and trust. To be direct, how valued are teaching and teachers, what value is placed on the teaching profession's expertise and how well is our voice valued, heard and acted on? Value and trust are linked.

### Trust in teaching

As the teaching profession's independent registration and regulation body there can often be misunderstandings or misconceptions about what kind of body we are or what we do, even what powers we have or don't have. When you boil everything down to the essence of why GTC Scotland does something, it's this: trust in teaching.

Our ethics discussions last year took us back to a deepened focus on our core reason for being - maintaining and improving trust in teaching. This will be the essence of our plans and our work later this year, and over the next five years, as we start a new strategic planning period. It has already begun, with

trusted teaching playing a central role in our own organisational feedback to the National Discussion on the future of education, along with valuing the whole system and system coherence.

This year, we also need to take direct control of issues that are ours to lead and change. This will see us in conversation with the profession about the importance of registration as we work to inform changes to our registration rules. We also want to reflect on feedback from the profession, about Professional Update. The arrangements by which GTC Scotland meets our legal obligation to provide a re-accreditation scheme for registered teachers have been in existence for almost a decade now.

This all means that we are taking a different approach to the start of 2023. There is a lot going on, we don't want to further crowd the time and space for thinking with a GTC Scotland new year's lecture. There are, at the time of writing, planned strikes over pay and, while salary and working conditions are not within GTC Scotland's statutory remit, we are acutely aware of the broader context within which teachers work.

We need space as a profession to await, consider and respond to the outputs of 2022's range of consultations and reviews. When these are available, GTC Scotland will be considering them from the view that trusted teaching should influence the leadership of education.



**Dr Pauline Stephen is Chief Executive and Registrar of GTC Scotland**

### MORE ON TRUSTED TEACHING

Access ethics resources and sign up for February's roundtable [atgtcs.org.uk/ethics](https://atgtcs.org.uk/ethics)

Read our response to the National Discussion on Education at [gtcs.org.uk/about-us/consultations](https://gtcs.org.uk/about-us/consultations)

Read about the six key principles of registration on [page 18](#).

# Creating inclusive spaces

*Ensuring open and safe spaces is crucial to learner engagement*

**T**hree years into a teaching career is certainly not very far, but I realised very quickly when I started my probation year that it was not all lesson planning, tracking and marking.

Of course, relationship building with learners is part of the job description, but I perhaps put it on the backburner because I felt it was something that came naturally to me. Little did I know that it would soon become a priority and form the backbone of a safe and inclusive classroom.

Very early on in my career, I realised I was a bit of an anomaly: an English teacher who has always struggled a little to really connect with classic literature. Of course it has a place in history and in the departmental cupboard, and studying these works certainly has its merits, but I never found it very accessible or relatable, so it stands to reason that I didn't think teenagers would find it any different.

Very few high school learners can see themselves in the writing of long-dead, middle-aged white men or relate and connect with the characters and situations in these texts.

My journey in equality and diversity and curriculum renovation was kick-started after some CPD in Education Scotland's Gender Balance Awareness Leadership course and Time for Inclusive Education training. To engage and develop, learners should be able to see themselves

reflected in the curriculum and have the opportunity to learn about others who are different from them too.

## Becoming global citizens

In a context where the small and rural school roll isn't considered 'typically diverse', as we may have come to expect in 2022, I thought it was particularly important to demonstrate how truly diverse society out in the

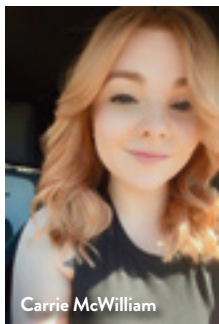
'big world' is, to ensure that as learners moved on from school, to work, to travel and for further education, they would not be shocked by anyone they see or experience that is different to them.

I approached this with a 'two birds, one stone' mentality. I began to search for new, more modern texts and approaches which included people with neuro-divergence, from different races and religions, with a disability, from the LGBTQ+ community and in different cultures. I began to meaningfully incorporate ideas - however big or small - to create a diverse, accessible curriculum.

With these new topics came a range of questions that, at times, felt like I might have to walk a tightrope of my own new teacher insecurities. How do I make room for productive discussion? How would I deal with questions I didn't know the answer to? How would I deal with difficult questions that may show racist, homophobic or ableist language?

I decided on an 'open to all questions'

policy so learners could ask questions without judgement, and the rest of the class and I would try and answer them to help increase knowledge



Carrie McWilliam



and understanding. Of course, there were some teething issues, but overall and over time, the response was incredible.

With no risk of harsh punishment for asking 'risky' questions, learner confidence, engagement and discussion rocketed, as did their confidence and trust in me to deal with questions openly, with no judgement or prejudicial comments.

### Supporting everyone

After seeing the benefit of this in my own classroom, I began initiating the process of school-wide curriculum development with a focus on equality and diversity - which is still very early stages - and S2 and S3 'Understanding Prejudice' workshops to underpin this work. The later addition of the Equality and Diversity Pupil Alliance has also ensured our learners are heard on these issues too.

As teachers, we have a responsibility to ensure the learners entering our classrooms feel safe, nurtured, and included because this is conducive to learning. This implies we need to know our learners - what makes them tick, what makes them stop functioning all together, what supports them best.

Getting to know 177 learners across my seven different classes, all of whom come from different backgrounds and have different life experiences, religions, disabilities, identities, values and beliefs, is no mean feat. Especially when all of this can influence their interests and affect their ability to engage and learn in their environment.

But for me, something which does help with this whole process (and it is a process every year) is clearly and vocally respecting and accepting them wholly for who they are, for every single one of their differences.

That is what drives me -  
knowing I have created an

**"That is what drives me – knowing I have created an environment in which learners do not have to change a single thing about themselves to be accepted"**

environment in which learners do not have to change a single thing about themselves to be accepted. Where, without fear of reprimand or judgement, they have a safe space to openly communicate about the difficult topics, ask for help or say they still don't understand. That is what truly makes the difference in their participation and hence, in their overall learning.

These are only the starting steps in the right direction but now the conversation is open and progressing. Those small wins, those small differences - that's why I do what I do.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carrie McWilliam is an English teacher at Speyside High School and is one of the recipients of the Saroj Lal Award for a Pioneering Spirit in Equality and Diversity 2022.





# How full is your cup?

*One teacher's journey towards self-care*

**T**he old saying “you can’t pour from an empty cup” is something that rings true for so many in our profession and it’s a sentiment that I’m personally trying to be more mindful of.

We spend a lot of time supporting our pupils to develop informed attitudes in relation to their mental health and wellbeing, but how much time and attention do we invest in our own?

Now in my 40s and my sixth year of teaching, I am thankfully more able to tune into the tell-tale signs that I’m debiting more from my emotional and mental bank account than I’m investing.

Clues that I am in a deficit include being a bit more reactive than usual, making poorer choices about what

I’m eating and withdrawing more into myself. These red flags signal that it’s time for a reset – scheduling plans to recharge, rethinking what I’m fuelling my body with, and reconnecting with loved ones in fun and playful ways, to help me back on track.

## **Life changes**

During the bleak winter lockdown of 2020-21, I made a decision that has created a seismic shift in how I deal with stress and life in general. And that was to stop drinking.

As someone who regularly partook in the wine o’clock routine, I had come to realise that, for me, the routine of Friday night wine had become a lazy and uninspiring way to unwind from the working week.

Over and above this, it paved the

way for ‘washed out Saturday’ and ‘sluggish Sunday’. Dispensing with this weekly weekend escapism has not only refunded me some time and headspace, but also credited me with more creativity in how I spend my time.

Since putting the cork back in the bottle, I have unleashed more adventure and exciting experiences that have allowed me to feel connected to nature, to others and myself.

Paying attention to our own subconscious patterns of behaviour and how they affect our actions and energy levels can be very useful for knowing how to get us out of a slump.

A useful post I found online consisted of two lists: one of ‘Energy Givers’ – things like





sunlight, laughter, hydration, breathing, nature, dance - and the other, 'Energy Takers' - fear, stress, resentment, overworking and excess screentime. It really captured my attention as such a useful tool for reflection at times of stress, and as a prompt to seek out those things that raise my vibrational energy and lift me out of a low space.

Now, when I'm on winter walks, I roll up my sleeves to expose my arms to the sunlight, I ask Alexa to play songs that I can dance to in the kitchen, and I try (really I do) to drink more water.

Recently I've also started to use the screen timer on my iPhone to set limits for my use of apps and have managed to more than half my time online. I've found that making these conscious choices can flick the switch between self-sabotage and self-care.

### **Making connections**

Oscar Wilde suggested that we become akin to those whose ideas we choose to connect with. So, in my quest to tune into ideas that positively influence my mindset, I have carefully curated the people and pages I follow online. Mel Robbins, Jay Shetty, Dr Wayne Dyer, Ryan Holiday, and more, immerse me in social media content that has purpose, builds esteem and encourages me to make choices that support my holistic wellbeing. These people share words of wisdom about the fundamentals and philosophies of life and share values that I hold, helping me to feel encouraged, inspired and, at the same time, grounded.

In connecting with nature, I've hiked along sandy dunes at daybreak chasing stunning sunrises, experienced the exhilaration of icy cold sea foam on my bare feet

on New Year's day, and taken up paddleboarding in the beautiful lochs and rivers of Scotland with my friends and family.

My journey inwards has helped me to explore the different ways humans ritualise their lives, trying out sound baths and Reiki meditation, visiting wellbeing festivals and dipping my toe into the healing power of crystals and burning sage and Palo Santo.

In my quest towards improved mental health and my self-development journey, I did hit upon an unexpected bump in the metaphorical road. Despite my efforts to avoid the overwhelm that often comes hand-in-hand with our demanding jobs, I recognised that I wasn't quite where I should be in terms of level of overwhelm I was feeling. After evaluation by a clinical psychologist, I was diagnosed with ADHD (inattentive type). And this has added another layer to what mental health and wellbeing might look like for me.

In the short time I've had to investigate the best way to approach my diagnosis, the main advice that I've found happens to be relevant for everyone's mental health and wellbeing and that is to be kind to yourself.

**"I've hiked along sandy dunes at daybreak chasing stunning sunrises, experienced the exhilaration of icy cold sea foam on my bare feet on New Year's day"**



# Supporting our agents of change

*How can teacher motivation be sustained when the reality of the classroom hits?*

**A** Holyrood Communications panel event last term, which focused on developing the teaching workforce, saw Dr Simon Houlst of Queen Margaret University, Mike Corbett of NASUWT and Emma Seith from TES field questions from the audience on how to attract and keep people in the profession.

“The primary and secondary students we have at Queen Margaret want to make a difference and that is something that’s inherently built into the role of a teacher,” said Simon. “We have a

big social justice agenda, and we look to recruit students based on broad, holistic qualities rather than solely on their academic outcomes.

“There’s a very strong swell of a need to change and social justice, sustainability and health and wellbeing is at the heart of what teachers are about. That includes our secondary students as well as our primary, who have a strong disciplinary route within which those agendas can be taught.

“It is then [the tension between] the lived experience of school and the tiredness and fatigue that comes with that teaching workload

and thinking about how those agendas can be worked through the nature of the subject.”

“We have not found a problem with recruitment so much as maintaining that motivation when students are on placement and thinking about the attempts they can take [to make a difference] despite the heavy nature of each day,” explained Simon.

## **The gap between policy and practice**

Workload was also highlighted as an area of concern when it came to retaining the current workforce.



## TEACHER WORKFORCE PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP

This national group considers teacher workforce planning requirements. It's composed of a cross-sector group of organisations:

- Scottish Government
- Scottish Council of Deans of Education
- Association of Headteacher and Deputies in Scotland
- Society of Personnel Directors in Scotland
- Scottish Funding Council
- GTC Scotland
- School Leaders Scotland
- SNCT Teachers Panel
- Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
- Universities Scotland
- COSLA

GTC Scotland's inclusion in this group stems from its role as the guardian of the Professional Standards for Teachers and in accrediting initial teacher education (ITE) programmes, alongside our responsibilities under our legislation, 'to consider and make recommendations to Scottish Ministers about matters relating to the supply of teachers'.

GTC Scotland gathers information on an ongoing basis about the supply of teachers and we recognise that some geographical areas continue to experience teacher shortage (in some cases of a fairly severe nature in specific subject areas) but overall there is evidence to suggest that teacher availability is outstripping available posts. There are limited recruitment options for some early career teachers. We believe greater analysis is required to assess the impact of the current situation on future teacher supply.

Maintaining high standards in the profession helps instil trust. Any changes to how teachers enter the profession, including to the entry criteria for ITE, would need to consider the impact on the maintenance of Professional Standards. The Professional Standards have a purpose in ensuring trusted teaching.

Mike said: "In our most recent survey of members, 67 per cent said they seriously considered quitting in the last 12 months. Some of this is on the back of people being absolutely exhausted after Covid and it may in part be addressed by increasing pay. In our other surveys, members have workload as their number one concern. Followed by a feeling that they are not trusted and often pushed into doing things they do not believe are enhancing teaching and learning.

"Among graduates, teaching is an attractive profession to come into in the first place because the education is good. Once you get in you normally have at least some freedom to collaborate and that's going to make it attractive in the medium to long term."

But with reports indicating

that 50 per cent of primary teachers are unable to find permanent employment after their probationary year, how attractive is the profession going to be for people looking to change career?

"If you are a career changer coming into teaching, you are not going to accept that you are not going to be able to find a job," said Emma. "The intake has been kept high due to the government's commitment to recruit an extra 3,500 teachers over the course of this Parliament and their commitment to reduce class contact time which will

require more teachers eventually but not right now."

For Mike, harnessing the enthusiasm of teachers was key to keeping teachers in their jobs. "I have been a full-time union official for just over a year and I really miss the kids. I miss teaching. It was the best job in the world, and I miss being in the classroom. That's the other thing - the enthusiasm of the teachers who are really enjoying the job day-to-day. How do we translate that? Let's get more classroom teachers into forums where they can share their enthusiasm."

**"Let's get more classroom teachers into forums where they can share their enthusiasm"**

# Key principles for registration

*GTC Scotland's registration rules set out the requirements for registration. There are six key principles that registration rules must adhere to*



## THE SIX KEY PRINCIPLES OF REGISTRATION ARE:



Teaching is a profession  
in Scotland



A teaching qualification is  
the foundation for registration  
with GTC Scotland



Standards in teaching  
must be maintained



Integrity of our  
register is critical



Our register needs to work for  
the whole education system



Registration informs  
employment



## Teaching: A trusted profession

Trust in the teaching profession is essential to an effective education system and to our profession's standing in society.

As the teaching profession's independent registration and regulation body, GTC Scotland works to maintain and enhance trust in teaching.

Our role is to register and regulate teachers and college lecturers. We do this by keeping a public register and setting and regulating the standards for entering and remaining in the teaching profession.

We ensure these standards are maintained by keeping ourselves informed about the standards of education and learning of registered teachers by asking their commitment to learning, and that standards are improved by encouraging ongoing learning. This contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning. We also investigate serious concerns about teachers and college lecturers.

It is a legal requirement for all teachers working in Scottish schools to be registered with us, while registration forms part of the agreed national terms and conditions of employment for all college lecturers in Scotland. Our role is set out in law.

## The standards for entry to the profession

Teaching in Scotland is, proudly, a qualifications-based profession. GTC Scotland was created in 1965 following concerns that unqualified teachers were working in Scottish schools. GTC Scotland upholds this founding principle of the teaching profession - a recognised teaching qualification is essential for entry to the profession.

As a self-regulating profession, it is teachers and college lecturers, led by GTC Scotland, who set their own entry standards, professional standards and standards of conduct.

In terms of academic qualifications to enter the profession, individuals require:

- a teaching qualification and
- a degree/equivalent qualification or, in the case of registration in further education, the level of

relevant subject or vocational qualifications expected as part of agreed teaching qualification entry requirements.

The Professional Standards provide a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of how to be, act and understand. It is through the Professional Standards, which include professional values, that a collective teacher professional identity is created.

## Keeping a public register

GTC Scotland keeps one register - the Register of Teachers. That is set out in law.

The Register of Teachers is a public record of teachers and college lecturers' standing in the profession.

To teach in a local authority or independent school in Scotland, individuals must be registered with GTC Scotland. This is also set out in law. For college lecturers, registration with GTC Scotland is a condition of employment. GTC Scotland does not compel any group of professionals to register; that comes from separate mandates.

There are four registration categories: Primary, Secondary (Subject), Further Education and Additional Support Needs.

GTC Scotland registers individuals in a registration category appropriate to their qualification. It is then for employers, as users of the register, to ensure that an individual's registration matches their employment and to determine the suitability of that individual to a role.

There are more than 80,000 individuals on the register, with more than 94,000 registrations. This means that some individuals are registered in more than one registration category. These individuals work in many different contexts and settings. The register reflects the size and complexity of the education system. Robust rules are needed to govern the register, to ensure it operates as intended. These rules are called the Registration and Standards Rules 2015.

GTC Scotland must ensure that the register works for the whole education system while also facilitating reasonable and predictable levels of flexibility required by parts of the system.

This means careful consideration of proposed changes are needed, as changes to one part of the register may impact on another part.

Integrity of the register is critical. To ensure a trusted teaching profession, the principles of registration need to be observed throughout the education system.

## Maintaining and improving standards in the profession

GTC Scotland ensures teachers and college lecturers maintain the standards expected of them by setting mandatory professional standards, requiring individuals to confirm their commitment to meeting standards and ongoing learning, and by investigating serious concerns about a teacher or college lecturer. This ensures that only individuals who are suitable to teach, remain registered. It also means that retaining registration is an active process.

We encourage teachers and college lecturers with their ongoing learning through aspirational professional standards and recognise their expertise in particular areas of teaching. By doing so, we contribute to improving the standards of teaching and advancing professionalism.

Ensuring trusted teaching by accrediting programmes of education to meet professional standards and ensuring standards are maintained are essential components of our work. So too is enhancing trusted teaching by educating the profession about what our professional standards mean.

## NEXT STEPS

Last year, we asked for feedback about proposed changes to our registration rules. In our next phase of consultation, we will discuss the competing priorities inherent in the system with partners to develop registration rules which will work for the whole education system and continue to support high standards in the profession.







# Unsung heroes

*Probationer and student supporters play a vital role in helping to maintain the high standards of the teaching profession*

**P**robationer and student teacher support can be given through regular mentor meetings and meaningful professional learning. For student teachers, classroom observations can help them to achieve the Standard for Provisional Registration and probationer teachers can be supported in their journey to the Standard for Full Registration by encouraging more whole-school and community involvement with them.

For Samia Carmichael, a Teacher of Modern Studies and RMPS at the Robert Burns Academy, providing this support is almost akin to a professional duty. Samia has been supporting probationers for the last five years both as a subject specialist, mentoring probationers within her department, and as a whole school mentor.

"We have a responsibility to our young people to ensure the very best teachers come into Scottish education and that can only happen if they are nurtured and well supported in their probation year," said Samia.

"It is a privilege to have the opportunity to use my experience to coach and mentor new teachers and bring together the expertise across my school to give them the best start and hopefully set them up for a long and successful career in teaching."

But it's not just a one-way street. In giving, many supporters find they get as much back.

## A virtuous cycle

"Working closely alongside probationer teachers, supporters, universities and the local authority, is not only a privilege but it is also one of the best professional learning possibilities I could have been afforded," said Valerie Blacklock Principal Teacher of Modern Languages, Student Regent at St Joseph's Academy in Kilmarnock.

Valerie has been supporting probationer teachers for six years. And in 2017 she decided she wanted to do more.

"I undertook the role of Student and Probationer Regent. Up until then, I had only supported probationer teachers in my department. The previous Regent was leaving and I was given this opportunity because I asked for it; I wanted to increase my involvement in the programme and felt I had much to share, to offer and to learn from others."

Valerie hasn't looked back. She has not only been a great support to student teachers and probationers, but she has also received a lot back.

"I can confidently say that I get as much out of this supporter role as do the student teachers and probationers who work with us here in St Joseph's Academy. Through regular observations in different curricular areas, I see many different teaching ideas and strategies that I can also use in my practice and share with my department. I also value observing the young

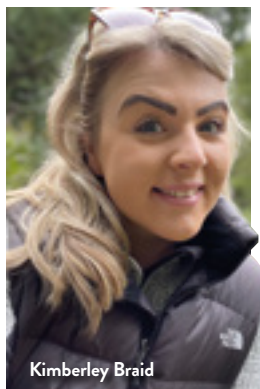
people succeeding in different settings to the Modern Languages classroom.”

It’s a feeling shared by Samia: “This role gives me the opportunity to support probationers across the school. I really love doing it because I feel I learn so much. I think as teachers it can be very easy to stick to what you know, play it safe and sometimes get stuck in a rut. Probationers are much more fearless; they try new techniques, bring new ideas from university and school placements and it inspires me to try new

things in my classroom and share good practice with my colleagues.

“As well as observing probationers I invite them to come and watch me which encourages me to constantly reflect on my own practice. Fundamentally, it makes me a better teacher as a result.”

Geography teacher and probationer supporter, Kimberley Braid at Waid Academy, agrees: “I love that social



Kimberley Braid

media allows us to collaborate with so many people around the world and I love passing that on to new teachers. I want to be a positive role model for them. Not only do I feel that I am helping them in their own teacher journey, but I am always learning from them too.”

### Learning more about ITE

Valerie has gained a greater understanding of initial teacher education (ITE) programmes through her role, which has in turn helped her to understand areas which student teachers may need more support.

“It is our responsibility to provide good quality support and having that additional understanding of the ITE programmes means I feel I am in a better position to help bridge that gap between theory and practice. I can better support professional learning needs to help maximise opportunities. I enjoy working collaboratively with my colleagues, identifying their strengths to help lead and deliver quality enhanced CLPL. We are all continually learning.

“I love working in St Joseph’s Academy, with my colleagues and the young people. Quite simply, I want all student teachers and probationers to experience the same satisfaction from working here as I do, integrating themselves into the school community, hopefully having a positive impact on the pupils in front of them.”

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## Enhance the learning experience of young people

Our MEd Inclusive Practice is designed for teachers or lecturers working in pre-school, primary, secondary and further education, including those with a particular interest in additional support needs.

You start with a PG Certificate and work up to a PG Diploma or a full Masters degree.

For more details visit  
[abdn.ac.uk/inclusive-practice-ts](http://abdn.ac.uk/inclusive-practice-ts)

# Enhancing inclusion

*Maths teacher Sofia Akbar has been working to boost the voices and support for those from minority backgrounds – both in and out of the classroom*

**S**ofia was born in Falkirk and decided to do her initial teacher education at the University of Oxford after her degree at Brunel University. She taught in west London for two years before moving back to Scotland when she had her third child. After a short career break, Sofia returned to teaching in 2015, and has been on the supply list in Falkirk ever since.

“I’m unique in the sense that I’m a Scottish Muslim, Brown teacher who wears a headscarf and who talks to the kids on their level,” explained Sofia. “Some of the kids I teach often have low self-esteem. I like to share my experiences with them to show it is possible to achieve great things.”



Sofia Akbar

## Dismantling barriers

The Scottish Government’s ambition is to ensure that the teaching profession reflects Scotland’s society, based on the latest census. By 2030, its aim is that at least four per cent of the teaching profession will be from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background. However, to achieve this goal, barriers in the system need to be dismantled.

“I have been struggling to get a permanent post for some time now. Once I joined a supply teacher group on Facebook, I started to notice some patterns,” explained Sofia. “I noticed that quite a lot of the people in the group had disabilities, were People of Colour or had qualified outside of Scotland. I fit all three of those categories myself.”

It was her experience, and the experiences of others, which influenced Sofia to actively work on eliminating barriers for people in minority groups.

“My experience teaching in west London was really interesting. The minority of people in that area were white. That was a culture shock for me because I had grown up in a predominantly white society and I had obviously been accustomed to the dynamics of that.

“I could relate and communicate on a certain level with most of my learners because we were quite similar in terms of our eastern culture, thanks to my Pakistani upbringing. I think it’s important to recognise and acknowledge those cultural dynamics and differences.”

## Supporting her peers

Sofia is open about being autistic and having ADHD. She didn’t receive a diagnosis until she was in her late 30s. According to Autism Understanding Scotland, “women and non-binary people present in a different way to autistic men and tend to mask their autistic traits more”. This can often lead to stereotypical judgements or misdiagnosis with other

conditions, due to most diagnosis criteria being based on research of young white boys.

Sofia said: “I think the biggest difficulty for me in terms of being diagnosed with autism and ADHD later in life is that I haven’t had the right support.

“I think my autistic identity is more pronounced now because of the burnout I have experienced and lowered threshold of sensory difficulties. Not only do I think having that support in place earlier would have helped my mental health, but it would have influenced my prosperity and career success too.”

As a result of her experiences and desire to help and support others, Sofia has co-founded two charities. Al Masaar (which is Arabic for ‘Path to Progression’) was set up during her career break, to support ethnic minority communities in Forth Valley, on a social and practical level. Scottish Ethnic Minority Autistics (SEMA), which is in the

progress of being set up, aims to advocate for and support autistic people from a minority ethnic background to fulfil their potential. Both focus on helping those facing isolation and vulnerability through outreach services, training and peer support.

### A role model

A professional development goal for Sofia next year is to complete her Master’s in Education. “It has taken me a long time to get through this Master’s. It took me a whole semester last year to re-register and organise my access requirements, which I could have had to begin with had I been diagnosed earlier.

“It was while I was at the University of Strathclyde that I was diagnosed with Irlen Syndrome and given extra support. Distance learning for the final module was really difficult as well and I had to take a long break due to severe burnout caused by repeated

Islamophobic incidents at various schools. I now have a

supportive supervisor who understands my difficulties and enthusiasm to make a difference.”

Sofia has also been asked to be one of the panellists for this year’s Building Racial Literacy cohort, which is run by Education Scotland. The Scottish Association of Minority Ethnic Educators recently honoured her for Supporting Inclusive Learning, reflecting on her pro-neurodiversity approach in teaching as well supporting parents through her tuition business, Limitless Learners.

A true role model for all her learners, Sofia said: “I’m from a single parent, working-class migrant family and have lived in poverty. I’ve faced prejudices, discrimination and barriers but managed to get myself into the University of Oxford.

“I still kept going even after becoming a single parent myself, freeing myself from a very long abusive relationship, all the while being an undiagnosed autistic and ADHD Asian woman. If I can do it, I believe that my learners can too. It’s that inspiration that they need to hear - that regardless of the huge number of barriers that I’ve had, I refused to give up and fight for change.”



# Teaching that matters for migrant students



Photo by Priscilla Du Preez on Unsplash

*Dr Nataša Pantić is leading a research project which aims to understand and help teachers meet the needs of migrant learners*

**T**he new wave of refugees from Ukraine has accelerated the rise in the number of migrants globally. Recent estimates from the United Nations suggest that more than 15 per cent of the world's 260 million migrants are children and young people.

The unprecedented number of migrant learners now enrolling in schools around the world, but particularly in Europe, highlights the importance of schools as an arena for migrant integration.

The University of Edinburgh is one of four partners in the Teaching that Matters for Migrant Students (TEAMS) project, supported by NordForsk, which aims to understand how school systems can accommodate the

increasing diversity of learner populations as a common feature of modern educational landscapes.

## **Teachers are key**

Within schools, teachers are key for supporting migrant learners' learning, creating opportunities for socialising, and developing a sense of belonging in their school communities.

Teachers are committed to supporting all their learners, but their capacity for supporting all learners largely depends on the support available to them, and critically on the pedagogical choices teachers make as they use these support systems.

Teachers hope the research will give them insight into



## “Emerging findings show how teachers’ efforts to include migrant learners are shaped by their school networks and different policies in the three countries”

how better to support learners. In the words of a teacher from a participating school: “It’s about wanting to move forward and wanting to do the best for every individual, migrant or not, in the building.”

Changing social and cultural makeup of school populations is creating challenges for schools and teachers. To avoid a view of supporting migrant learners as an additional demand on teachers, TEAMS focuses on their practices within the institutional contexts they work in.

### Investigating patterns of relationships

The TEAMS project uses social network analysis, which investigates patterns of relationships among people in groups, and fieldwork in seven schools in Scotland, Finland and Sweden to understand how teachers use the knowledge and resources in their networks. Relationships and collaboration are at the heart of responding to learner diversity.

Teaching practices are analysed with a lens of inclusive pedagogy which emphasises the importance of thinking about difference as an ordinary aspect of human diversity, while recognising individual differences. In this approach professional collaboration is critical for supporting migrant learners within regular teaching practices.

Emerging findings show how teachers’ efforts to include migrant learners are shaped by their school networks and different policies in the three countries. Finland and Sweden provide more targeted support such as preparatory language instruction in the early stages.

In Scotland, newly arrived migrant learners are immersed directly in mainstream provision, and both kinds of provision exist in Swedish schools that include migrant learners in the mainstream, as well as some separate classes, e.g., in the first language.

### Collaboration

Our preliminary findings highlight the need to focus on collaboration as key for devising policy solutions that support teachers in responding to the presence of migrant learners in their schools as a resource for learning rather than as a problem.

Collaboration networks vary across the seven schools, but commonly indicate a tendency of teachers to interact with support staff they perceive to have responsibility for migrant learners. In the Scottish schools the central actors that most teachers go to are English as an Additional Language and other specialists,

such as Support for Learning and guidance teachers. Finnish teachers work with specialists who offer support in their classrooms. In Sweden, collaboration seems to be a strong feature of teachers’ daily work, with institutional support for various forms of collaboration around learner support.

Fieldwork data helps us understand how staff work together to support migrant learners among others. Across all schools we found many instances of teachers finding authentic ways of supporting migrant learners regardless of whether this is part of their role within policy arrangements.

Teachers’ interactions with support specialists illustrates inclusive forms of collaboration to address barriers such as language, unfamiliar school norms, and sometimes racial prejudice.

These teachers sought specialist support as a resource for themselves to help them better understand learners’ experiences related to their cultural heritage so that they could incorporate such knowledge in their teaching.

In other forms of collaboration, teachers deferred to specialists who are seen as responsible for supporting migrant learners to “pass on” the challenges that they face, based on a view that they cannot support migrant learners due to language or other barriers, especially where support is predominantly focused on learning achievements.

### Opportunities for professional learning

TEAMS offers workshops about migrant integration aimed at supporting teachers, school leaders and support staff.

A headteacher from one of the participating schools said: “I like the idea of the collaboration from Finland and Sweden in terms of finding out what they do... what’s the nuts and bolts of that, you know, how do they bring them in? Do they give them a week of just trying to immerse them in their own language, in the home language first, so that they feel a bit better about English, or do they just go straight into the lessons?”

The project team runs practical sessions in schools to share insights from the project and examples of creative ways that teachers and other professionals work together to support migrant learners, enabling them to fully participate in school communities.

Find out more at [migrant-education.net](http://migrant-education.net) or get in touch with Project Coordinator Julia Eighteen on [migrant-education@ed.ac.uk](mailto:migrant-education@ed.ac.uk) to discuss how to get involved.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Nataša Pantić is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, School of Education. Her recent research has focused on teachers acting as agents of change in contexts of diversity, educational inequalities, citizenship and migration.



# gtc activity and impact

## 2021-22

The penultimate report from our Strategic Plan 2020-2023 has been submitted to the Scottish Charity Regulator and the Scottish Parliament.

In it we highlight the work we undertook in the year to April 2022, in pursuit of our four strategic outcomes,



together with a detailed account of our financials for that year.

Below is a snapshot of our activity.

You can access our Annual Review at [readymag.com/gtcscotland/annualreview2022](https://readymag.com/gtcscotland/annualreview2022) and the full report at [gtcs.org.uk](https://gtcs.org.uk)

## The Register of Teachers

At the heart of our work as the teaching profession's independent registration and regulation body is keeping the Register of Teachers. Belonging to the teaching profession in Scotland means being registered with GTC Scotland.



# 77

teachers awarded  
GTC Scotland registration in  
additional support needs

# 137

teachers awarded  
GTC Scotland's Standard  
for Headship

# 247

registrants awarded  
Professional Registration

# 263

probationer teachers  
completed probation  
on the Flexible Route

# 1,321

people who qualified  
outside Scotland registered  
with GTC Scotland

# 2,340

college lecturers registered with  
GTC Scotland via the College  
Lecturer Registration programme

# 3,096

probationer teachers awarded  
Full Registration via the Teacher  
Induction Scheme



# 80,695

teachers recorded on  
the Register of Teachers





## Upholding public trust and confidence in teaching professionals

### Ensuring effective regulation

Trust in the teaching profession is essential to an effective education system. GTC Scotland's role is to help maintain that trust.

During 2021-22, we received 230 Fitness to Teach cases: 206 related to conduct; 17 to competence; four were registration reviews and three were subsequent registration applications.

Fifty-four cases were referred by the public, 51 by

employers and 125 from other sources. We closed 174 cases.

### Advising the education system

In our response to the consultation on the replacement of the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the reform of Education Scotland, we stressed the need to ensure that system regulation is clearly understood, and functions across agencies are aligned.



## Inspiring and influencing the ongoing transformation in the leadership and professional learning of teaching professionals

GTC Scotland knows that a diverse teaching profession is essential to building an inclusive environment for teachers and learners. To this end, we continue to support teachers' professional learning on equality and diversity through the promotion of the Equality and Diversity Hub and by publishing features in *Teaching Scotland* magazine.

Theo Ogbhemhe, Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies teacher at Kirkwall Grammar School, became the

first recipient of the Saroj Lal Award in September 2021.

Theo works tirelessly to make society a better place for everyone, challenging discrimination and promoting equality. The award was set up to commemorate the legacy of Saroj Lal, a trailblazing teacher working at the forefront of multicultural and anti-racist education in its early years and laying the foundations for many others to build on. Read more about Theo on page 32.



## Delivering innovative, data-informed and high-quality accessible services to registrants and other stakeholders

Work undertaken this year focused on the structure and integrity of the data on our management information system and internal data analysis and reporting. While data

improvements have facilitated the ease in which we are able to respond to some freedom of information requests, this remains a very resource-intensive process.



## Ensure sustainable, healthy and future proof working arrangements

In the summer of 2021, we conducted an internal flexible working listening exercise with the support of external experts. The aim was to establish how we work at GTC Scotland and how we want to work together in the future.

The key insights from this listening exercise have driven and informed our practice and we moved from a traditional office-based working model to a hybrid and 'flexible first' model.

### DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028

At the end of last year, we asked for your views on our draft Strategic Plan 2023-2028. This consultation has now closed and feedback will be discussed at the Council meeting on 8 February. Find out how to attend the meeting at [gtes.org.uk/about-us/council-meetings-and-minutes](https://gtes.org.uk/about-us/council-meetings-and-minutes)

# Up for discussion

In November, GTC Scotland hosted a virtual event as part of the National Discussion on the Future of Scottish Education, with independent co-facilitators Professors Alma Harris and Carol Campbell.

The event provided a platform for Scotland's teaching profession to contribute their views on the Scottish Government and COSLA consultation. The report on the outcome of the National Discussion is due to be published this spring.

Prior to the event, Alma said: "Without teachers' expertise, without their knowledge of what the system is like right now, how can we begin to think about an education system in the future?"

Below are some of the themes raised during the stimulating discussion, and what teachers had to say about what they think Scottish education needs to ensure an excellent education system in 20 years' time.

## VISION

Many participants highlighted that achievement goes beyond academic success. Learners are, and will continue to be, global citizens. It is important that learners have the opportunity to grow in school and enter society for the better.

"We need a curriculum for citizens rather than a curriculum for consumers."

Others wanted to see more emphasis on creative ways of learning and participation. Learners should be encouraged to become confident and enthusiastic life-long learners.

"Schools cannot solve societal problems – we need partnerships with health and social work."

"A world is not arranged by subject area. This will require learning environments and curricular structures which allow for real-life learning experiences and enough staff to enable these real-life learning experiences."

"The pandemic clearly showed us that some pupils, within their family context, are well-able to learn autonomously, whereas others, at an earlier stage in developing these skills, really floundered."

Alma Harris



Carol Campbell



## FEEDING BACK

This discussion highlighted that teachers want the best outcomes for their learners to prepare them for life after mainstream education. Giving teachers the support and trust to do this is critical.

GTC Scotland collated the feedback gathered from the event and submitted these views to Scottish Government and COSLA on behalf of Scotland's teachers.

GTC Scotland also submitted its own response as the teaching profession's independent registration and regulation body. You can find this at [bit.ly/3uunNN8](https://bit.ly/3uunNN8)



## CURRICULUM

Literacy and numeracy continue to be key skills at the forefront of education, but a diverse range of subjects is needed to help learners thrive.

Teachers also spoke about the importance of supporting wellbeing and empowering parents and carers to take an active role in their children's learning.

"The focus on core skills – whatever we decide upon the balance of learning time – should be provided to those core skills. For instance, literacy for me is key and that does not mean English/Scots, but language skills in general."

"We need an education system which is relational. One which places more emphasis on our natural world and its ever-depleting resources. Our introduction to sustainability in the Professional Standards can only be the beginning. Our young people need to be learners who can think critically about the current impact of our everyday practices, for example, fast food and fast fashion production and consumption for starters. Education has to be about creating a more sustainable way of being and new 'economic' system(s) in the future."

## TEACHER AGENCY AND PROFESSIONALISM

Many participants highlighted that teachers need to be listened to and trusted.

"An education system that is led by teachers, subject and pedagogy experts, who can support pupils learning through the subjects."

"Courage to step away from what hinders (including system performativity)."

"Don't leave experience, wisdom and expertise in our colleagues to chance – invest in deep pedagogical understanding so that the future of leadership is secure too. The cohort of pupils and colleagues 2019-2022 had a very interrupted experience and may need special consideration for years to come."

## PROCESS

Participants highlighted the importance of keeping the lines of discussion open and allowing learner and teacher voices to be heard across the education system.

"The danger with any consultation is that once it is closed, no further input is taken. There needs to be effective ongoing feedback loops built in and the 'system' needs to continue to be able to 'listen' to its parts on an ongoing basis – most importantly pupils, teachers and children."

"Keep the discussion focused on learning and metacognition so that learners have the agency to discuss and identify what helps and hinders their learning."

## RESOURCES

Funding and resources continue to be key issues. This includes not only resources for teaching, but workforce support to allow for subject experts and non-contact time.

Others focused on creating time and space to participate in discussions such as this, as well as to undertake professional learning and development.

"We need adequate funding to enable teachers to deliver a good education to our children and young people. I realise the current financial situation may make this difficult, but if we do not fund things adequately, we will be on a downwards spiral and our success as a country will be compromised."

"We used to have LA advisors, but they were mostly phased out. Every teacher should be a part of a community of practice that extends beyond their school; this will allow for networks of support to improve standards."



# Discussing

# dyslexia

*Victoria Armet has been helping parents of learners with dyslexia*

**A**s a Support for Learning teacher at Carolside Primary in East Renfrewshire, Victoria Armet regularly assists class teachers with targeted maths and literacy support, sharing techniques, activities and strategies. But her focus in recent years has been on increasing parental engagement and understanding of how to support children with dyslexia.

According to Dyslexia Scotland, an estimated one in 10 people has dyslexia, while around five per cent of learners at Carolside Primary have a dyslexic learning profile. Victoria recently conducted a professional enquiry in increasing parental understanding of dyslexia, having achieved Professional Recognition for completion of Dyslexia Scotland's Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice programme modules.

Victoria has been working at Carolside since 2008. She said: "In the early stages of my career, I found that it was the small things that made the biggest difference to the learners. I later had a personal interest when my son presented with a dyslexic learner profile and I saw his confidence affected. I wanted to make sure that other primary learners were not negatively affected.

"Last year, I started to look at what we were doing as a school and found that we are good at identifying and supporting our learners. But parents had misconceptions about the role of Support for Learning in schools and, with so much information about dyslexia available to them, they didn't know where to start looking for information about how dyslexia impacts on their child's learning. My professional enquiry stemmed from there. I wanted to ensure that my work was of benefit to the school, parents and the learners."

## An enquiring stance

Victoria's enquiry aimed to support parents prior to, during and after the dyslexia assessment process. She

started with reading and research to establish how the school fit into the national priorities for dyslexia.

Among other studies, she referred to Angela Morgan's *Support for Learning* report, which identifies relationships between schools, learners and parents as an important partnership and which found that parents are frequently frustrated by lack of communication and accessible information from their children's schools.

Victoria sent out a questionnaire to parents of learners at Carolside Primary who had been through the assessment process, asking them for feedback on what they knew about dyslexia and what they needed to know more about.

Victoria explained: "What I found is that many parents do not know much about what dyslexia is. It is so much more than not finding reading and writing easy. In many cases it does present itself like that, but there are also impacts on organisational ability and memory, for example.

"Parents wanted to know how they can support their children at home. They also wanted more information about the dyslexia assessment process and for their child's strengths to be the focus for their learning, rather than any perceived weaknesses."

## Implementing change

Having adapted the dyslexia assessments she was completing with learners and their families,



## STRENGTHS ASSOCIATED WITH DYSPLEXIA

- Can be very creative and good at practical tasks.
- Strong visual thinking skills, such as being able to visualise a structure from plans.
- Good verbal skills and social interaction.
- Good at problem solving, thinking outside the box, seeing 'the whole picture'.

## DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH DYSPLEXIA

- Problems with reading, taking notes, remembering numbers, names and details.
- Difficulty with time keeping, organising work or managing projects.
- Difficulties with spelling and writing.
- Short-term memory problems and sequencing difficulties such as following instructions or directions.

Source: *Dyslexia Scotland*

Victoria felt she could gauge what parents wanted to understand better and decided that, based on the parents' feedback, she could create a website with useful information for parents, with a particular focus on what is done at Carolside Primary.

The website was launched during Dyslexia Awareness Week in November, following which the school conducted support workshops with parents, including explaining how to support literacy skills at home.



"I wanted to create a user-friendly place with clear information for parents of learners who had been through the dyslexia assessment process. It is a huge area, so if they were looking online to find information, they could be overwhelmed. If their child is identified as having support needs, they want much more specific information."

The new website explains what dyslexia is, the assessment process, how to support learners with colour coding, a multi-sensory approach and ICT, how parents can discuss dyslexia with their child, and some further resources.

Victoria explains that Carolside's continual identification of children's needs through the GIRFEC Framework means that parents should not be getting "a sudden shock" that their child has dyslexia. "We have a needs-led education system which means that there should be no massive changes required, it is purely about helping parents understand how to support their children with dyslexia better."

## Findings

One key finding of her enquiry was that there are gaps between what a school thinks it is doing and what the parents see, making it vital to improve communications around the dyslexia assessment process.

"During my enquiry I found that some parents felt there was a perceived stigma about their child receiving support for learning. At school, we speak about children as having a 'learning difference'. We work with the children through Dyslexia Awareness Week and beyond and they are very used to us telling them that people learn in different ways.

"Parents can be concerned about the long-term impact being dyslexic can have on their child and many refer to when they were at school. I feel it is important to highlight that there is a much better understanding of dyslexia now and a lot of support available in schools, including from the children's class teachers."

Victoria believes that her professional enquiry has enhanced her engagement with the Professional Standards in practice, specifically by fostering positive relationships with parents and recognising their role as the first educators in a child's life, as well as sustaining ongoing positive relationships with parents for the benefit of learners.

"When parents are effectively involved in their child's education, the outcome is better for children. Furthermore, the better the information the school can provide to parents, the more they can support their child's learning and the school."

## FIND OUT MORE

Meeting the needs of dyslexic learners – a professional guide for teachers: [bit.ly/3Upbb4u](https://bit.ly/3Upbb4u)

Additional Support Needs resource hub: [bit.ly/3OluaEI](https://bit.ly/3OluaEI)

Dyslexia definition: [youtu.be/CHMljSBpH24](https://youtu.be/CHMljSBpH24)

# Teaching as a way of life

*Theo Ogbhemhe, first recipient of the Saroj Lal award, gave a moving address as he was officially presented the award in December*

**G**reetings in the name of his Imperial Majesty Jah Rastafari. I'm Theophilus Ogbhemhe, a teacher of RMPS at Kirkwall Grammar School in Orkney. I was born and raised in post-colonial Nigeria growing up in a space of rich tradition, culture and values. That taught me the ethos of making myself a better person and society a better place.

My hobbies and professional choices were greatly influenced by the experiences I lived during this time. Music, cooking and carrying out actions that make life easier for others have become my area of interest as a result.

I remember my father's view that education is a collective responsibility that was part of our individual identity as humans. What he meant by this was that the job of educating others was a responsibility of everyone, which I guess attracted me to teaching and why I have always seen teaching, not as a profession but a way of life. One that allows me to partake in the universal push to make the world a better place for everyone.

I started teaching in Orkney as a professional teacher some 10 or 11 years ago. During this time, I have been fortunate enough to do work that has helped shed some light on the destructive impact of discrimination and the emotional and mental harm and risk it causes.



These actions have not only accentuated the importance of protecting people from, and acting against harassment, discrimination, victimisation and the impact of bias, they have also ensured that everyone feels valued and respected which in turn allows for a deeper understanding of the positive impact of inclusive living.

The proactive approach I have taken to promote equality and diversity at Kirkwall Grammar School and the wider community of Orkney brought me to the attention of GTC Scotland, which decided I was worthy enough to be awarded the inaugural Saroj Lal Award.

**"I do not think it is asking for much if one wants to see a world where the majority see promoting equality and diversity and actively challenging discrimination as their individual duty"**

I must thank my colleague Lynn Wilson for putting me forward for this award. The award recognises and celebrates the work of teachers who challenge discrimination to promote a culture of equality and diversity.

The award surely acts as a reminder that we have got a lot more to do to continue to promote equality and challenge discrimination. It is a heart-warming validation of one's impact and it does legitimise the hard work put in by students, colleagues and members of the wider community to make Orkney a safe welcoming community for everyone.

I do not think it is asking for much if one wants to see a world where the majority see promoting equality and diversity and actively challenging discrimination as their individual duty. A world where social justice drives our actions.

For me the award has introduced me to continue using the formal curriculum and extracurricular activities to open up the minds of young learners to diversity and difference. Educating them to challenge all forms of discrimination while developing skills that would make them responsible Global Citizens: Global Citizens who see global problems as their personal problems.



Some of the work I have done includes setting up an after-school club, aptly named Consciousness After School Club. It is a club that helps young people develop skills for life through the work they do towards promoting equality and diversity and helping them challenge discrimination.

The club, which is pupil-driven, has been responsible for organising the Making Noise music festivals and shows, which have provided a platform for members of the local Orkney community to come together to lend their support to challenging discrimination and racism, and raising awareness to the ills of poverty and other wicked problems plaguing society.

Over the years, these events have been successful, and they have helped to not only raise awareness of the plight of the ethnic minority people living in Orkney, they have also provided an avenue for attendees to build relationships and meet others in free and relaxed spaces.

I dedicate this award to my late father who set the building blocks for who and what I am today. I also dedicate the award to the students and staff of Kirkwall Grammar School and the beautiful and dope people of Orkney for providing me this support to be able to achieve what I have achieved so far. I would love to end my speech by saying a big congratulations to the winners of this year's Saroj Lal Award."

## SAROJ LAL AWARD 2022

The Saroj Lal Award for a Pioneering Spirit in Equality and Diversity celebrates the work of teachers who actively challenge discrimination, demonstrating a pioneering spirit and determination, in a bid to promote and facilitate a culture and ethos of equality and diversity.

The 2022 award was shared by Catherine (Katie) D'Souza and Carrie McWilliam. You can read more about Carrie's work on page 12.

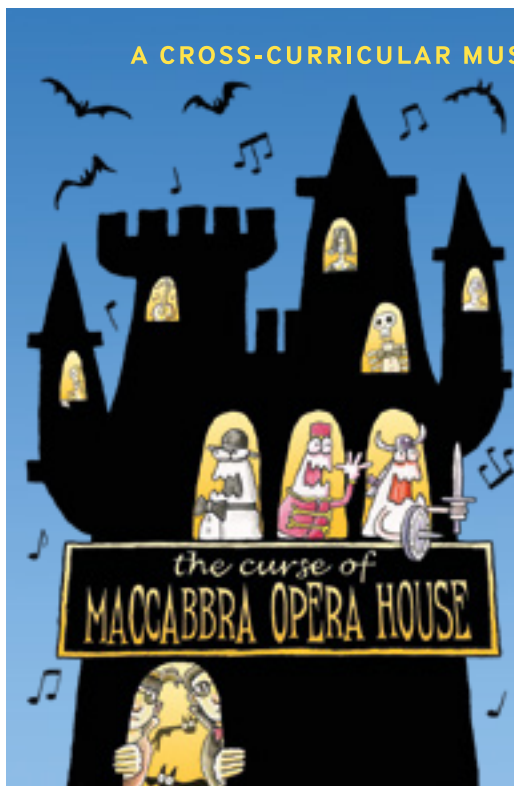
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# Community-wide wellbeing



*Practising good mental health is vital for school communities*

**A**n EIS survey from December 2021 reported that out of 16,000 teachers, half described their level of wellbeing at work as “very poor” or “poor”, while over the past 25 years there has been a 70 per cent increase in the rate of depression among young people, with 15 per cent of children and adolescents reporting anxiety which affects them for the rest of their lives.

Niddrie Mill Primary School in Edinburgh takes a whole-school approach to wellbeing, where everyone is committed to supporting a child’s emotional development, as well as their curricular progress - something which is woven throughout the Professional Standards for Teachers.

To ensure that the community is supported, the school has partnered with UK children’s mental health charity, Place2Be, for more than 20 years. Through the partnership, Place2Be School Project Manager, Karin Anderson works closely onsite with learners, parents and carers, and staff.

“With this embedded service, it’s possible to form and nurture trusting, ongoing relationships with children, staff, and families which would be very difficult to achieve with other models of support.

“With extensive waiting lists for CAMHS, the children benefit from having such services because they can be seen on the same day, as well as receive ongoing support”, says Karin.

The school has a designated therapy room, where Karin can provide support using a therapeutic approach. This approach enables the children to express themselves through talking, arts and crafts, and play.

This results in a distinction between the service and the rest of the school, where the children feel like they have a safe space to talk. The service reduces the stigma of talking openly about mental health in school, with many children sharing their concerns at an early stage, before escalating into later life.

“One of our most popular services is Place2Talk, where children can refer themselves for a 15-minute space to talk. A lot of school-based staff also identify pupils who might benefit from this service.”

Having implemented a good mental health service within the school community for more than 20 years, the wellbeing team and Place2Be School Project Manager are now seeing a second generation of children. Current parents and carers who once attended the school, have fond memories of the mental health

support they received.

“Parents and carers feel like they can access mental health support in a non-judgemental way, which is important - especially within a community that has a lot of social issues,” Karin says.

Similarly, the mental health and wellbeing of staff members is at the heart of the school. The resilience of the community was seen in action when a long-serving and well-loved staff member passed away from Covid. The school’s wellbeing team and Karin came together to support staff who were struggling and offered additional support to those who needed it.

## CHILDREN’S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 2023

Taking place during 6-12 February 2023, Place2Be is encouraging people to connect with others in healthy, rewarding, and meaningful ways.

Free resources for schools, colleges, and parents and carers are available to help explore this years’ theme of Let’s Connect.

[www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/schools/#resources](http://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/schools/#resources)



# Free visits to heritage sites & online resources



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ENVIRONMENT  
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EACHDRAIDHEIL  
ALBA

## Get inspired by the past

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Teacher-led learning groups are welcome to visit a wide range of Historic Environment Scotland sites for FREE including:

🏰 Edinburgh Castle    🏰 Urquhart Castle  
🏰 Fort George        🏰 Skara Brae

- Choose your site at [hes.scot/history-awaits](https://hes.scot/history-awaits)
- Check terms & conditions: [hes.scot/learning-visits](https://hes.scot/learning-visits)
- Make a booking request online for Stirling and Edinburgh Castles; for all others phone the site
- Apply for a Scottish schools travel subsidy to get 75% of travel costs refunded (max £300)
- Download our supporting resources to help plan your visit
- Enjoy a memorable learning visit with your pupils!



### FREE learning resources

Use our cross-curricular resources to explore:

🏰 story-making & storytelling    🏰 careers  
🏰 expressive arts    🏰 STEM    🏰 social studies

🏰 [hes.scot/learn](https://hes.scot/learn) (resources)

🏰 [scran.ac.uk](https://scran.ac.uk) (Scottish imagery & information)



videos

3D models



images

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# Spotlight on Fitness to Teach casework

*To raise awareness of the type of cases we are seeing and to promote learning, we have started to publish summaries of Fitness to Teach decisions. In this case summary, while a teacher's actions suggested a lack of integrity and dishonesty, remediation of their behaviour led the Panel to the conclusion that the risk of similar conduct being repeated was low*



## The circumstances

The teacher provided excessive assistance to pupils studying for their SQA exams and made excessive amendments to the pupils' work. This resulted in them submitting folios that were not the pupils' own work. A number of pupils were upset about their experience, and some did not obtain their expected exam results.

## Consideration of Professional Standards

In assessing fitness to teach, Panels must take a holistic approach - assessment is based on the teacher's current circumstances, looking forward.

The Panel concluded that the teacher's conduct fell short of the expected Professional Standards, amounting to misconduct and that the teacher's actions heavily undermined the assessment process.

The Panel considered whether the teacher's conduct is remediable, whether it has been remedied and the likelihood of repetition.

In their response, the teacher provided several mitigating circumstances, including that their poor decisions were made in the closing moments of the pressured completion of folios and that they found it difficult to balance various education roles, to the extent that they experienced stress, low mood and disturbed sleep.

The Panel noted that as well as admitting the allegations in full and expressing genuine remorse in their response, the teacher had also taken significant steps to remediate their behaviour including taking part in the piloting of a new system created for use in relation to SQA folio work and that their work was being monitored by colleagues.

In addition, a colleague indicated in their statement that they had no concerns about the teacher's current conduct.

The Panel was satisfied that the teacher had remediated their behaviour with assistance from colleagues and that the risk of similar conduct being repeated was low.

## Consideration of the public interest

While the teacher had made significant progress since the date of the allegations, the Panel was of the view that the teacher's case involves wider public interest considerations.

In assessing the public interest, the Panel considered:

- the protection of members of the public (in particular children and young people, both in terms of the teaching setting and beyond)
- the maintenance in the public's confidence in teachers and in the integrity of the teaching profession

- the maintenance of the public's confidence in GTC Scotland as a professional regulator
- the need to declare and uphold proper teaching standards
- the deterrent effect that the determination may have upon other teachers.

Given the serious nature of the allegations, the Panel considered that public confidence in GTC Scotland as a professional regulator and in the integrity of the teaching profession generally, would be diminished if a finding of current impairment were not made.

In reaching that decision, the Panel considered the need to declare and uphold proper teaching standards.

As a consequence, while the Panel was satisfied that the teacher was no longer falling significantly short of the standards expected of them to the extent that they were unfit to teach, the Panel concluded that a finding of current impairment of fitness to teach was appropriate on public interest grounds.

## The outcome

The Panel was satisfied that the matter represents an isolated incident in a long teaching career and that there had been no repetition of similar conduct.

Moreover, there was evidence attesting to the good character of the teacher.

The Panel concluded that a reprimand for a period of 12 months was in the public interest. This indicates to the profession, and the public, the seriousness of the matter and maintains public confidence in the teaching profession.

## BREACHES OF COPAC:

1.4 – A teacher must uphold standards of personal and professional conduct, honesty and integrity so that the public have confidence in the teacher and teaching as a profession

1.5 – be professional, honest and act with integrity in dealings with GTC Scotland and other regulatory (or similar) bodies

1.6 – a teacher should maintain awareness that he/she is a role model to pupils

2.2 – a teacher must be truthful, honest and fair in relation to information provided about pupils

2.3 – a teacher should aim to be a positive role model to pupils.

# LGBT inclusion in the classroom

*Bishopbriggs Academy has taken an active approach to LGBT inclusion*



Last year, East Dunbartonshire saw six secondary schools achieve the LGBT Charter award from LGBT Youth Scotland. Bishopbriggs Academy was among them, achieving Silver Level in June 2022 after raising awareness and funds for LGBT causes, as well as embedding LGBT-conscious elements within the curriculum.

The school's Charter journey began in October 2021 and, since then, teachers and learners have worked hard to ensure the success of the Silver Level award and to embed LGBT learning and support within the school community.

The work has been a collaborative effort between school staff and learners, with 56 staff and 416 pupils completing a survey to review current inclusion of LGBT elements as a school. An LGBT Champions Group was established to drive improvement on inclusion across all aspects of the school.

Seventeen staff met monthly and 16 pupils met weekly to progress ideas and initiatives and to plan school events. One of these events was the Interhouse Pride Bake Off in June, which raised almost £300 for charity.



## Taking action

The school has taken steps to ensure action and impact. Almost half of all school staff took part in a voluntary training session on LGBT terminologies, identities and orientations, as well as how to make the school as inclusive as possible. LGBT identities and orientations have also been embedded into East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying policy and Bishopbriggs' Uniform and Learning & Teaching policies.

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY HUB

GTC Scotland's Equality and Diversity Hub has a range of resources and two modules, related to the protected characteristics included in the Equality Act 2010. You can find it at [bit.ly/3byVVRH](https://bit.ly/3byVVRH)



## BISHOPBRIGGS ACADEMY'S LGBT READING LIST

Here are some of the books featured on Bishopbriggs Academy's LGBT reading list

*Gender roles* by Cara Acred

*From prejudice to pride: a history of LGBTQ+ movement* by Amy Lamé

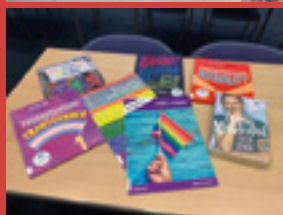
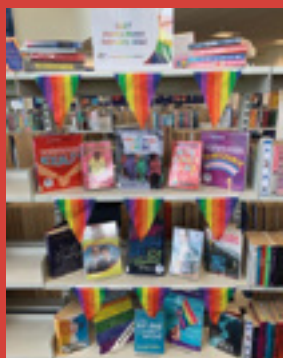
*Boys Don't Cry* by Malorie Blackman

*More Than This* by Patrick Ness

*The Love and Lies of Ruksana Ali* by Sabina Khan

*Hearstopper* by Alice Oseman

*Alex in Wonderland* by Simon James Green



"We've gone for whole school approaches to bring LGBT inclusion a bit further forwards and make it more high profile rather than just marking it on Pride Month or awareness days," explained Ian Donaghey, Headteacher at Bishopbriggs Academy.

"The Learning & Teaching policy is a 'live' document and is updated annually with examples of best



practice for commonplace inclusion of LGBT within the curriculum. For example, gender fields in databases in Computing or set texts with LGBT characters in English."

Bishopbriggs also has a 'Strategies for LGBT Inclusive Practice' document which breaks down each curricular area and subject with examples of how this can be embedded in practice.

LGBT inclusion within the curriculum and wider school is hugely visible through posters, the learner-run school newsletter, Bishy Bulletin, an LGBT noticeboard, the school website, social media and an extensive LGBT reading list in the school library.

Staff and learners also try to keep their language gender neutral. In letters to parents, the headteacher and depute headteachers use 'your child' rather than your 'son/daughter'. A lot of teachers also include their pronouns in their email signatures and classroom activities.

Furthermore, the school was named flagship school for Purple Friday 2022's Pass the Torch Relay. Those taking part aimed to collectively walk the equivalent of the outline of Scotland in one day. The entire school took part, walking a total of 2,959km and raising £836 for LGBT Youth Scotland.

In recognition of this success, a motion was lodged at the Scottish Parliament in August by local MSP Rona Mackay. In it she "applauds

the ways in which the school community has embraced training and reviews of policies, practices and resources to enable Bishopbriggs Academy to become an even more welcoming and inclusive place for LGBTQI+ learners".

### Next Steps

Bishopbriggs Academy will now work towards the Gold Level of the LGBT Charter award by continuing to mark key dates throughout the year through Registration presentations, assemblies and whole-school events.

Anonymous surveys will be introduced to gather information on LGBT-based bullying, to help identify and tackle any issues. There are also plans to update the PSE programme, particularly the content on relationships, sexual health and parenting.





# Immersed in Gaelic

*Following a year-long Gaelic immersion course, Dr Sarah MacKinnon, Principal Teacher at Castlebay Community School on the Isle of Barra, now teaches in the language*

**O**riginally from Northern Ireland, Geography teacher Sarah found that she learned much more than just a language during her life-changing immersion course at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.

"Although I wasn't born in Scotland, this was never an issue as there were people there from all over the world. The experience has helped me develop a stronger connection to the island where I live and the school community where I work," said Sarah.

## An interest in learning

When GTC Scotland surveyed all registrants in 2020 to gauge interest in teaching in Gaelic Medium Education (GME), 685 respondents indicated that they had an interest in teaching in

GME, with many, like Sarah, likely needing to learn the language to fluency before utilising it as the language of their classroom.

Survey responses also highlighted barriers to learning Gaelic and moving to GME, and in order to guide teachers through the different routes into Gaelic teaching and the courses available, Bòrd na Gàidhlig created a Padlet, which complemented GTC Scotland's booklet *So you want to teach in Gaelic?*

Funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig's Gaelic Immersion Courses for Education Practitioners Grants scheme to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, meant Sarah was able to undertake the immersion course.

The self-assessment tool for Comasan Labhairt ann an Gàidhlig (CLAG) - or Gaelic Speaking Abilities scale - linked in the Padlet supports the assessment of the spoken level of Gaelic. Candidates applying for immersion course funding would be required to be at level B1 on the CLAG scale to make the transition to GME on completion of their course.

The Gaelic Immersion Courses for Education Practitioners Grants

scheme 2023/24 is currently open for applications from local authorities who wish to nominate teachers who would be willing to undertake a year-long Gaelic immersion course to enable them to transfer to GME in August 2024. Courses eligible for funding are An Cùrsa Comais at either Sabhal Mòr Ostaig or UHI Outer Hebrides and Gaelic with Immersion at the University of Glasgow.

Teachers with an interest in transferring to GME are invited to register for a public information session on immersion courses and funding hosted by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 30 January 2023. Please register at [bit.ly/Teagasg](https://bit.ly/Teagasg)



Scan the QR code to access the Padlet



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# International recognition for learning for sustainability

*Scotland's teaching profession is contributing to European Commission frameworks on sustainability*



**“One of the things that Learning for Sustainability really does is get you to think very clearly about the values that you hold. It’s a strong part of the Professional Standards”**

Scotland is the only nation to include learning for sustainability (LfS) as a cross-cutting theme in its teacher professional standards. LfS is a national priority in education and the responsibility of all teachers, and a whole learning community commitment in Scotland.

This has been recognised on the international stage, with GTC Scotland being invited by the University of Girona to take part in a literature review of documented research and good practice on effective teacher education for sustainability. The resulting report will inform the European Commission’s decision-making and policy frameworks in this area.

This study identified the opportunities and challenges and catalytic entry points that support the embedding of sustainability into teacher education.

GTC Scotland Senior Education Officer Jacqueline Morley was invited to participate in the Key Informant Group for the report. She said: “The Professional Standards for Teachers are also unique in mapping out a journey for teacher professional development in this area, from the Standard for Provisional Registration through to the Standard for Headship.

“The Professional Standards ask all teachers to take on the responsibility of creating learning opportunities in sustainability, regardless of specialist areas or age groups.”

The report *Teacher Education for the Green Transition and Sustainable Development* has been commissioned by the European Commission’s European Expert Network on Economics of Education and will be published in January.

The study was led by Dr Ingrid Mula and Professor Daniella Tilbury,



whose work will support the implementation of the Green Deal and the Council's recommendation to Member States on learning for sustainability.

The authors of the report agreed that the Scottish case study was of significant interest to policy-makers in Europe who are looking to embed sustainability into teacher education frameworks and provision. They drew attention to the expectations for headteachers and the support mechanisms that have been developed to assist with the advancement of teaching standards in Scotland.

### What does Learning for Sustainability mean for me?

Dr Fiona Savage, Lecturer in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) at Edinburgh Napier University, said: "I think there's still quite a lot of confusion around what LfS actually means and I think it means lots of different things to different people. I think for me it's very much about thinking about the world as a whole but then, you know, you can start to focus in on your country and then your local community and there are so many facets to that which we can think about in the context of LfS.

"It's a kind of two-tiered thing for us within ITE because not only are we working with our students on Learning for Sustainability, but also on how that then becomes embedded into their practice as they go into the classroom.

"One of the things that Learning for Sustainability really does is get you to think very clearly about the values that you hold. It's a strong part of the Professional Standards.

"I was quite delighted when LfS became more prominent within the Professional Standards because I think one of the things that LfS really does is get you to think very, very clearly about the values that you hold. And that's something that's always been a really strong part of the Professional Standards anyway. So, I feel those two things are very complimentary with one another.

"I think it's also a really nice way to be able to teach values in the classroom."



## JOIN THE LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY CONVERSATION

Share your experience of exploring Learning for Sustainability on our interactive map and sign-up for our next Connect session on 26 January 2023: [bit.ly/3VzwXUN](https://bit.ly/3VzwXUN)

### Professional Learning Modules – Leading on Learning for Sustainability

The third in our series of professional learning modules, designed in collaboration with Learning for Sustainability Scotland, is now available.

Leading on Learning for Sustainability invites you to:

- Critically examine the nature of a whole-setting approach to LfS and the relevant international and national policy contexts.
- Consider your role and that of others in bringing about change.
- Reflect on your setting's position in its journey towards a whole-setting approach.
- Critically examine the benefits and challenges of a learning community approach to LfS.
- Develop an action plan for change.

Explore the modules: [bit.ly/3FgAul7](https://bit.ly/3FgAul7)

# Reflecting on a learning legacy

*As the SCEL Legacy Fund bursaries enter their fifth and final year, we look back at what they have achieved and outline the steps to apply for the last round of funding*

**R**esponsibilities of the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) were transferred to Education Scotland in 2018. At the time of this transfer, a sum of money was identified by SCEL, to help support teacher professional learning and the development of leadership skills. GTC Scotland became the custodians of this money, which became known as the SCEL Legacy Fund. It has helped to fund a range of different professional learning activities for teachers.

## Reflections from the Selection Committee

To properly judge applications and allocate funding, a SCEL Legacy Fund Selection Committee was established. This comprises of a member of the former SCEL Board, a member of GTC Scotland and a representative each from AHDS, EIS, NASUWT, SLS and SSTA.

Anthony Finn was Chair of SCEL when its functions were transferred to Education Scotland and was chosen as a member of the Selection Committee. He reflected on the impact the fund has had over the last four years: "Sometimes projects were completely innovative: applicants wanted to try out in practice ideas that they had been unable to implement without support.

"Some projects extended ideas which had been tried successfully in other parts of the curriculum; and funding for other projects allowed teachers to update their own knowledge and/or to bring together and refine materials which could benefit a school, a department, a subject or a group of teachers.

"In all cases, a clear focus on improving learning and where possible, spreading knowledge about the success of the project were central tenets of applications which gained support."

Sonia Kordiak is the EIS representative on the Selection Committee. She reflects that this role has provided her with her own professional learning: "The applications which stand out for me are ones that make me ask myself 'why have I never thought of doing that?' Or 'why have I never spotted that issue?'

"Sometimes the desire applicants have to improve the outcomes for the children or young people they teach shines through; it is clear these applicants care about their pupils. Reading such applications can be uplifting and humbling.

"There are also some applications which refer to research which is new to me and looking at that research to take an informed decision on such applications can be interesting."

## SCEL LEGACY FUND 2023/24

This year will be the last year the fund operates. Two types of allocation will be available:

- **Phase 1:** This will aim to support individuals or small groups of teachers or college lecturers with school or college-based projects. The deadline for applications for this phase is 31 January 2023.

- **Phase 2:** This will focus on a commissioned research project on the impact of leadership change on learning and professionalism. Applications for this phase are likely to come from academic institutions or educational agencies and will launch in March 2023.

### Application advice from the Selection Committee

A good SCEL Legacy application will focus on the impact a supported project will have on teaching and learning. In good practice, professional learning gained should also be capable of being shared with other teachers for the benefit of their own learners.

Anthony Finn says: "The key is to submit a project which promotes good teaching and learning. Applicants should always explain why an award is needed and how support, if granted, would be used."

You can find out more about the SCEL Legacy Fund and how to apply at [bit.ly/3iYVaW6](https://bit.ly/3iYVaW6)



## A look back at SCEL projects

### Becoming a dyscalculia expert

Vicki Ward wanted to develop a specialism and expertise in dyscalculia. As an accredited specialist teacher and assessor of dyslexia, she wanted to expand her knowledge to support learners. “It had been quite a while since I had completed any in-depth maths CPD, and I had no idea that I had so much to learn! It was a real eye opener for me.”

Vicki was able to share her learning with her colleagues to help review maths assessments in her school. “We felt that our current assessment of maths needs could be improved and that it would be helpful to focus on the language development of maths alongside the number sense development.

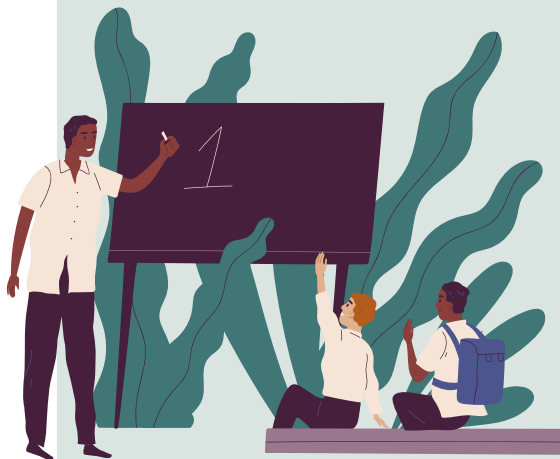
“When the project ended, we had unpicked need for all learners with maths difficulties and begun to adapt our interventions accordingly to meet need.”



### Outdoor learning

James Helbert focused on a project to increase his knowledge and practice around learning for sustainability and outdoor learning. His project has influenced and informed Argyll and Bute policy around outdoor learning. Nurseries in the local authority now aim to deliver 50 per cent outdoor learning, all primary schools have access to an outdoor learning progression strategy and all secondary schools now offer the Duke of Edinburgh Award as part of the curriculum - which is a 50 per cent increase.

“Not all pupils need every aspect of outdoor learning, they ‘take what they need’. Hence, if a pupil struggles with self-regulation, they will benefit from the biophilic effect. If a pupil needs additional challenge in numeracy, they will benefit from the opportunity to apply numeracy skills in context.”



### Improving mental health

Fong Lui undertook a Mental Health and Education course to achieve a Postgraduate Certificate in Mental Health and Education.

“I am now equipped with more knowledge to deal with pupils’ mental health issues. I will use the professional knowledge that I have gained from this course to share with other teachers and to work as a team to tackle the mental health problems, not only in my school, but in other schools in the local authority and in Scotland.”





# Learning in mini bites

*CDN is enhancing professional learning in response to the needs of college lecturers*



**“N**ow, more than ever, it is essential that individuals are at the centre of professional learning planning and this needs to be owned by the practitioner,” says Jonny Rees, Head of Professional Development at College Development Network (CDN).

Between now and February 2023, CDN is running an action research project focused on professional learning, designed to help colleges learn lessons from one another and to help support further collaboration across the sector. CDN recently expanded its Learning and Teaching team with the appointment

of Jo Turbitt from Edinburgh College as Lead for Learning and Teaching.

Jonny believes the pandemic has provided an opportunity for colleges to move forward with what they have learned in terms of curriculum design and delivery via mixed-mode professional learning and the importance of taking a holistic approach towards establishing how it can become more effective across the sector.

“The key is that the college lecturer is at the heart of it and that it delivers impact - ensuring that the student’s learning experience is the best it can be. CDN is the professional development agency for the college workforce and

we are here to identify the gaps, provide the tools to the colleges as well as bespoke training where they need it, while remaining mindful of the complexities of time, cost and the many challenges curriculum colleagues face.”

## Identifying learning

Last year, in response to feedback from colleges, CDN developed Professional Learning Communities, which are now running in 13 different subjects. Still in their infancy, the communities are designed to allow lecturers and other colleagues to share good practice within their subject specialism.

In a workforce survey led by CDN, curriculum colleagues outlined that they spent around 25 hours per year on professional learning. “However, we are very mindful of the fact that people do not describe professional learning in the same ways,” says Jonny. “Some will say it involves taking part in a face-to-face training workshop, while for others it is listening to a podcast (both are correct) and there is further work to unpick this and develop a common understanding across the sector.”

More than 1,800 members of the college workforce completed the survey, with nearly half of respondents employed in curriculum delivery roles. “Now that people have experienced different ways of teaching and learning, we wanted to know what they needed to learn more about as well as how they wanted to learn, to enable us to support the workforce and to inform our own sector-wide activity.”

More than 20 per cent of respondents felt that they were not getting all the training they needed, with time and cost being significant barriers, and they identified many areas in which they wanted further support. College lecturers outlined that they want more subject-specific CPD opportunities, as well as pedagogy-based professional learning such as behaviour management and project-based assessment, in addition to support to improve their digital capabilities.

“While people feel quite confident in using their digital tools, the very large majority want further training to enhance them.”

In addition, respondents wanted further support in areas of equality, diversity and mental health and wellbeing. “While most college staff understand these complex areas, they identified a need for support to further develop their knowledge, especially in more diverse topics,” says Jonny. “There is a feeling across the sector that an added layer of complexity has been added to the lecturer’s role. They are no longer just teaching their subject in a classroom. They also have to be able to support students across a variety of pastoral areas and signpost them for support across a whole host of different topics.”

Half of college staff responding to the survey felt comfortable with their understanding of Learning for Sustainability, despite being a relatively new area of focus, though there is room for improvement. “There has been a constant evolution of teaching practice in this area, with some lecturers finding closer links with their topic than others.”

## Building support

Working closely with individuals from the sector, CDN is producing 20 videos to tackle the topics identified by the workforce survey as areas in which the workforce identified they needed more support. The first three of the ‘mini bite’ videos included ‘Education for sustainable development: delivering a green curriculum’, ‘Principles and strategies for behaviour management’, and ‘Supporting neurodiverse learners’.

Jonny says: “Millions of people watch YouTube videos to learn new skills, from programming their central heating to playing an acoustic guitar - and we want college skills training to become just as accessible.”

The videos are designed to fit into each college’s wider professional development programme, with some likely to send links to lecturers and support staff to watch individually, while others may incorporate them into training sessions. They are supported with factsheets and a series of podcasts with lecturers, which will also help college staff to hear discussions about research-informed practice.

**“Producing these mini bites will allow CDN and our college partners to reach far larger numbers of staff than we could by delivering face-to-face training”**

“I often use the term of ‘looking over the fence’. To me, this means encouraging people to collaborate to see what is outside of their own classrooms, whether that is learning new skills or getting reassurance that what they are doing is right. Teaching at times can be very lonely, so I feel it is important to help foster a community where lecturers can engage and share practice with other lecturers, both in their own college and further beyond.

“Producing these mini bites will allow CDN and our college partners to reach far larger numbers of staff than we could by delivering face-to-face training, whether that’s in person or online, and will ultimately benefit students,” says Jonny. “They are conversation starters, helping people to own their practice and encouraging them to dig deeper into the topics.”

## FIND OUT MORE

Watch the videos and download the factsheets at:  
[www.cdn.ac.uk/mini-bites](http://www.cdn.ac.uk/mini-bites)

Examples of college professional learning:  
[bit.ly/3NF5dRv](https://bit.ly/3NF5dRv)

# Walking the talk

*Reflection, sharing learning and autonomy were key themes in a recent discussion about the Professional Standards and Professional Values*



**W**hat does it mean to live the Professional Standards and Professional Values? This was the focus of a discussion between recipients of the Excellence in Professional Learning Awards 2020 at the end of last year.

A productive and engaging discussion with colleagues took place, focusing on practice and collaboration.

## Building communities of collegiality and trust

The first topic discussed was how school leaders can use the Professional Standards and Professional Values to build communities of collegiality and trust which empower both teachers and young people in their learning and practice.

A key theme highlighted by the group was to be reflective. This can be done on a personal and collegiate level.

Others highlighted that fostering strong relationships is important to building communities of collegiality. Knowing your staff, colleagues and learners can help you to focus on the right areas of

professional development and work towards getting the right outcomes for learners.

Leaders should also filter for their team, to ensure focus - whether this is in the classroom or during professional learning.

Some felt that if empowerment is the goal, then teachers need to feel like professionals and school-wide goals should be created with them rather than done to them. For example, using terminology such as “visits” instead of “observations”.

It was also noted that on a system level, there is often focus on accountability and measurement which can also inhibit people from feeling like they have agency.

## Professional learning and practice

Next, colleagues considered how teachers can effectively and consistently use the Professional Standards and Professional Values to frame their professional learning and inform their practice.

The group felt that it is important that the Professional Standards are embedded and deeply understood to ensure that they are used effectively. Suggestions were to highlight

elements through professional learning activities, make use of the tools and resources available such as coaching and self-evaluation wheels in planning and reflection.

Sharing of learning was a key theme here. Teachers felt that using a combination of online and in-person learning opportunities allowed for collaboration and the ability to discuss and share good practice. Making better use of digital technology can also help to widen accessibility. Some suggested recording snippets of lessons to create a library which can be accessed at colleagues' convenience.

Many highlighted that they and their colleagues were more likely to engage in professional learning activities if they have a choice in what they do. Sometimes professional learning needs are chosen at a whole school level, meaning less opportunity for teachers to undertake more personal professional learning endeavours. At an employer level, there is also a desire for more support and access to quality professional learning to be provided.



## Collaborative professionalism and wellbeing

Participants then considered how they ensure that schools become learning communities founded on collaborative professionalism (and leadership) and wellbeing for all.

Creating a culture of collaboration and learning was discussed.

Teachers want to see shared vision and values which are developed by staff, pupils, parents and carers, to ensure everyone's voice is heard and the vision and values reflect those involved in the school community.

Teachers were also keen to see more defined leadership pathways and have opportunities for challenge. Learning should be at the heart of everything within a school, and this includes staff professional learning as well.

Again, it was highlighted here that teachers should be able to self-identify their areas for development and have a say when it comes to enquiry. Any learning can then be shared, which fosters a collaborative culture between staff.

Finally, it was highlighted that grounding learning in the Professional Standards is vital to ensuring effective Professional Review and Development (PRD) meetings when planning and evaluating professional learning.

## RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

GTC Scotland has created a wealth of resources to help teachers engage with the Professional Standards and plan professional learning.

The Professional Standards for Teachers: [bit.ly/3HkwxNF](https://bit.ly/3HkwxNF)

The Professional Values: [bit.ly/3xYCol2](https://bit.ly/3xYCol2)

Exploring Our Professional Values (auto-download links) Workbook: [bit.ly/3HmZtEv](https://bit.ly/3HmZtEv) Slides: [bit.ly/3h8PvMD](https://bit.ly/3h8PvMD)

Professional Standards and Professional Learning: [bit.ly/3HnYKDK](https://bit.ly/3HnYKDK)

Embedding the Professional Standards in practice: [bit.ly/3FFW1ch](https://bit.ly/3FFW1ch)

Self-evaluation tools: [bit.ly/3FDgSaN](https://bit.ly/3FDgSaN)

Reflective questions: [bit.ly/3VMRQvC](https://bit.ly/3VMRQvC)

PRD resources: [bit.ly/PRD-GTCS](https://bit.ly/PRD-GTCS)





# Exciting decodable books that older, struggling readers want to read



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- Develop phonic skills
- Build confidence
- Improve reading fluency



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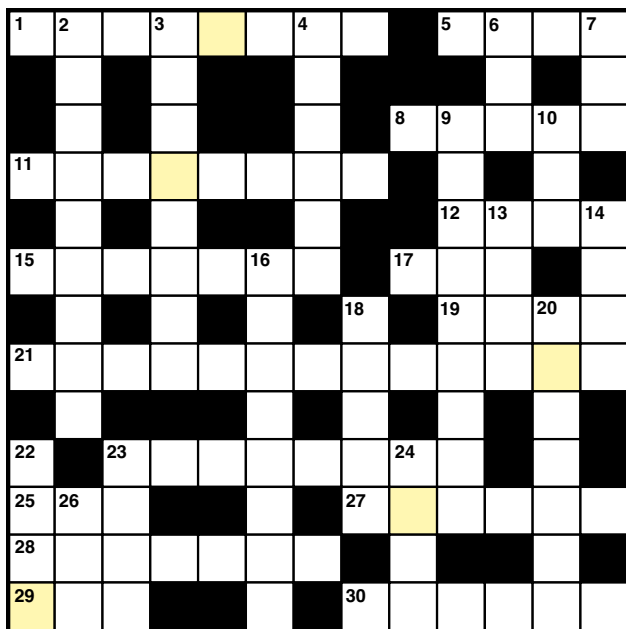
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**LapSafe®**

# Crossword



**COMPLETE OUR  
CROSSWORD AND  
ANSWER THE SIMPLE  
QUESTION BELOW TO  
BE ENTERED INTO OUR  
PRIZE DRAW, AND YOU  
COULD WIN A STAY IN  
DUMFRIESSHIRE**



**FINISHED?**  
Use the coloured squares  
to tell us the missing word:

GTC Scotland believes that value and \_\_\_\_ in the  
profession are linked

Send your answer and a scanned copy of the completed  
crossword, including your name and contact details,  
marked 'Teaching Scotland Crossword' by email to  
teachingscotland@gtcsc.org.uk by Friday, 17 February 2023.

Congratulations to Annemarie Rutherford, who was the lucky winner  
of the crossword competition in issue 93.

## Across

1. And 11 Across, 2 Down. Our National Discussion (4,4,8,9)
5. Large-headed piece of metal that projects from a surface (4)
8. Heavy, black timber from a tropical tree (5)
11. See 1 Across
12. Area of grass in the garden of a house (4)
15. Substitute (5-2)
17. '\_\_\_\_ Quiet On The Western Front', a classic World War I novel (3)
19. Noisy cries (4)
21. And 7 Down. 5th October, 2023 (5,8,3)
23. Material used to heat a barbecue (8)
25. See 18 Down
27. Oldest boy in Enid Blyton's 'Famous Five' books (6)
28. And 30 Across. Scottish pupil who can work things out (7-6)
29. The atmosphere and outer space as seen from earth (3)
30. See 28 Across

## Down

2. See 1 Across
3. Guard whose job is to keep watch (8)
4. Period of teaching or learning (6)
6. Number of singers performing a duet (3)
7. See 21 Across
9. Nobel Prize-winning chemist Sir David MacMillan attended this Academy (9)
10. Modern (3)
13. Succulent plant with a rosette of thick, tapering leaves (4)
14. Scottish loch, famed for its monster (4)
16. Pupils often use this for carrying out research (8)
18. And 25 Across. Our Award for a Pioneering Spirit in Equality and Diversity is named after this trailblazing teacher (5,3)
20. 'The Charge Of The Light \_\_\_\_', a famous poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson (7)
22. Mont Blanc is in this mountain system (4)
23. Sicken someone with an excess of sweetness (4)
24. Abbreviation of automobile (4)
26. Noah's boat in the Bible (3)

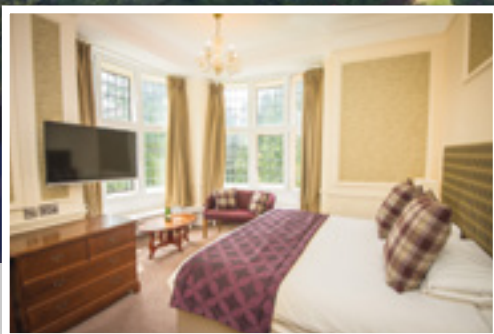
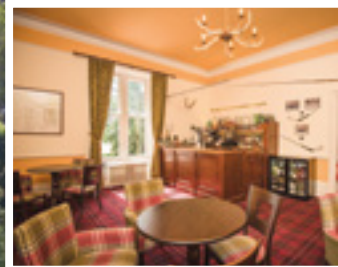
**TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY**

See [gtcs.org.uk/crossword-ts-and-cs](https://gtcs.org.uk/crossword-ts-and-cs)





FRIARS CARSE  
Dumfries & Galloway



## A country house estate in Dumfriesshire

**O**ur lucky competition winner will win an overnight stay for two people with a three-course dinner in a country house hotel in Dumfriesshire.

Friars Carse is set in a 45-acre woodland and lawned estate extending down to the banks of the River Nith.

The original 'Friarikerse' was established as a friary

back in the 13th century, close to today's Friars Carse. The property became home to the Riddell family and was named Glenriddell, with Robert Burns a regular houseguest. Remodelled in 1873, the house was renamed Friars Carse in 1895 and established as a hotel in 1938.

Featuring a magnificent, panelled entrance hall and elegant staircase, a well-furnished spacious lounge with views over

the garden and river, as well as a comfortable bar and snooker room, the hotel promises a memorable stay.

Find out more at  
**[www.friarscarse.co.uk](http://www.friarscarse.co.uk)**

### PRIZE:

An overnight stay for two people in a deluxe room, including a three-course dinner and full Scottish breakfast.



### Road Safety learning within Curriculum for Excellence

Road safety learning at every level within Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) offers opportunities for active and interdisciplinary learning. Road Safety Scotland's free resources have been developed for specific age groups from 3-18, with a view to developing responsible road use among young people. Our booklet 'Road Safety within Curriculum for Excellence' provides teachers with a quick and easy reference to our resources, and how these link with CfE experiences and outcomes.

For further information please go to  
**[www.roadsafety.scot/research-and-report/curriculum-for-excellence-2022-23/](http://www.roadsafety.scot/research-and-report/curriculum-for-excellence-2022-23/)**

Road Safety within Curriculum  
for Excellence 2022-23



## EVENTS

**ITAKOM CONFERENCE –  
13-14 MARCH 2023**

An international conference from Salvesen Mindroom Centre focused on the far-reaching concept of neurodiversity.

**More information**  
[itakom.org](http://itakom.org)

## COURSES

**ENGAGING FAMILIES  
FOUNDATION MODULE  
(ENDORSED BY EDUCATION  
SCOTLAND) – OPEN FROM  
23 JANUARY 2023**

Self-directed online module from Connect exploring evidence and practice around engaging families in children's learning, including audit and action planning resources. Collaborative online learning, with a live coaching session and interactive webinars.

**More information**

Register at [familyengagementacademy.connect.scot](http://familyengagementacademy.connect.scot) to access details or email [info@connect.scot](mailto:info@connect.scot)

**GETTING STUFF DONE: AN  
INTRODUCTION TO EXECUTIVE  
FUNCTION – 31 JANUARY AND  
2 FEBRUARY 2023**

This Scottish Sensory Centre webinar offers an understanding of what executive functioning is and why we need to know more to support children with hearing loss. It will be run over two half days.

**More information**

[www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk](http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk)

**SMILE THERAPY TRAINING –  
8-9 FEBRUARY AND  
6-7 SEPTEMBER 2023**

This training is for those who have completed Day 1 smiLE Therapy training. Each part is delivered over two consecutive half days, looking in greater depth at how to implement smiLE Therapy to best fit student needs. Includes one-to-one mentoring.

**More information**

[www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk](http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk)

**LISTENING TO UNDERSTAND:  
INTRODUCTION TO NON-  
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING  
AND COACHING – 2 MARCH 2023  
(10AM-3PM)**

This webinar looks at the principles of coaching and non-professional counselling, with opportunities to share practice and problem-solve case studies together.

**More information**

[www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk](http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk)

**CREATING INCLUSIVE SETTINGS:  
ENGAGING NEURODIVERSE  
CHILDREN – 24 JANUARY 2023  
(10:30AM- 12PM)**

This Children in Scotland session will explore neurodiversity and its effect on an individual's experience of the world, including in your setting. Learn more about the different types of neurodivergent children and young people may experience barriers to learning, participating, and communicating with practitioners and peers.

**More information**

[childreninscotland.org.uk/events](http://childreninscotland.org.uk/events)

**BOOK DISCOVERY: USING  
TEXTS TO EXPLORE THE 'FOUR  
CAPACITIES' – 18 JANUARY 2023  
(16:30PM-17:30PM)**

This Scottish Book Trust session will introduce texts you can use to support Curriculum for Excellence's four capacities: successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

**More information**

[bit.ly/3Pm0grf](http://bit.ly/3Pm0grf)

## REPORTS

**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT  
SCOTLAND'S REGIONAL AND  
SECTORAL SKILLS ASSESSMENTS**

The RSA reports provide a robust evidence base to inform future investment in skills, and the SSAs look at current and future skills demand in the key sectors across Scotland.

**More information**

[bit.ly/3YblStA](http://bit.ly/3YblStA)

## GREEN JOBS IN SCOTLAND

This report from the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan steering group recommends a definition of a green job along with demographic insight. It shows green jobs are on average higher paid and demand for them is growing. Teachers are an example of a role needing enhanced skills under the new definition.

**More information**

[sds.co.uk/GreenJobsInScotland](http://sds.co.uk/GreenJobsInScotland)

## RESOURCES

**RIGHTS RESPECTING  
SCHOOLS AWARD**

The Rights Respecting Schools Award programme by UNICEF UK is now free to all state primary and secondary schools in Scotland until May 2025.

**More information**

[bit.ly/RRSAScot](http://bit.ly/RRSAScot)

**10 THINGS TO DO WITH  
ANY BOOK OUTDOORS**

This free, adaptable resource from Scottish Book Trust provides ten ideas you can use to support outdoor learning with any fiction text.

**More information**

[bit.ly/3VlvMCI](http://bit.ly/3VlvMCI)

**GETTING STARTED  
WITH SENSORY STORIES**

Top tips, ideas and activities for getting started with sensory storytelling for children with additional support needs.

**More information**

[bit.ly/3UJKCHu](http://bit.ly/3UJKCHu)

**#READSCOTTISHTHENBOOKS**

This book list of contemporary Scottish books contains supporting discussion questions for teachers or librarians interested in running a book group with teenagers.

**More information**

[bit.ly/3Bv5Z8B](http://bit.ly/3Bv5Z8B)





Scottish  
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**Reading  
Schools**

## Begin your Reading Schools journey

Bring the magic of books and reading to your school and become a Reading School this year!

Reading Schools has practical resources, friendly support and a variety of accreditation levels designed to help you succeed and celebrate reading for pleasure in your school.

Join the nationwide Reading Schools community and apply now at [readingschools.scot](http://readingschools.scot)



Scottish  
Book Trust



## There's still time to celebrate with the First Minister's Reading Challenge!

Kickstart the reading journeys of individual classes, groups and pupils with the First Minister's Reading Challenge.

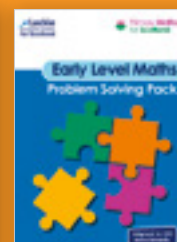
Spark a love of reading with fun learning activities, reading passports, author events and the chance to win a national award.

Register your class and get involved at [readingchallenge.scot](http://readingchallenge.scot)



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**NEW Problem  
Solving Packs  
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Christine (West Scotland schools):  
07825 116 401 or [christine.stein@harpercollins.co.uk](mailto:christine.stein@harpercollins.co.uk)