



Children in Scotland
every child - every childhood

Key points: Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) 2009 Annual Conference

Working Together: the importance of positive relationships between schools & out of school care, 12 June 2009, Glasgow

The purpose of the SOSCN conference was to explore the relationship between school and out of school care, and this discussion also contributed to Children in Scotland's Working it Out and Working for Inclusion programmes:

- As the demand for full-day care beyond school hours grows, more children are spending more time in out of school care, with nearly half of school-age childcare services now provided in schools. Children, and their families, consider it very much part of the school day and research shows that a sense of continuity is important for children's wellbeing.
- Many countries are seeing changes and developments in the relationship between schools and out of school services. In some cases, services are being integrated into the school through a "whole day" approach and out of school workers also contribute during the school day. This approach is helping to overcome complexities, such as sharing buildings and resources and helping to foster much closer relationships between all staff working in and out of school.
- There is increasing overlap in Scotland in the roles of out of school workers, classroom assistants and many early years practitioners. Not only is there overlap in the type of work they do, a SOSCN survey reveals that around 10 percent of out of school care workers have second jobs working as classroom assistants. Despite this overlap, the terms and conditions of their employment are very different. Compared with teachers and classrooms assistants, who have access to pensions, the SOSCN survey revealed that less than 40% of out of school workers have this.
- The overlap between roles such as classroom assistants and out of school care workers suggests the wider workforce could benefit from a simplified qualifications and professional development framework. The conference discussed how all parts of the workforce, particularly those trying to improve their professional status, could benefit from core skills, knowledge and values which enable them to work flexibly across the

workforce and a framework which supports career progression. There was interest from delegates in the possibility of developing a new generic qualification and role similar to the pedagogues who work across Europe. A professional Scottish pedagogue could significantly increase workforce capacity by being qualified to work in a range of settings.

- The conference considered the separate registration (and non-registration) of the different groups such as teachers, classroom assistants and out of school care workers working in schools and out of school services. It was noted that the current General Teaching Council for Scotland consultation provides an opportunity to consider whether the Council should register other groups who are working in schools or involved in the wider school-based workforce. The former Equal Opportunities Commission's formal investigation of the role of classroom assistants highlights this issue for the group and SOSCN's evidence of the overlap with out of school workers suggests this should also be taken into account.
- Concern was expressed that the new school building programme, rather than enabling further development of relationships between school and out of school care may further marginalise and lead to the loss of some out of school services.
- Out of school services will become more not less important over the coming decades. Establishing the nature of their relationship to schools is a key issue in the delivery of quality childcare for parents and in contributing to the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and social identity of children encompassed by government strategies such as Curriculum for Excellence, the Early Years Framework, Getting it Right for Every Child and Additional Support for Learning legislation.

Children in Scotland / Scottish Out of School Care Network

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