

MEDIA RELEASE 11/06/09

Children in Scotland calls on teacher regulatory body to register wider workforce

The General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) should extend its scope and require registration by additional groups including classroom assistants, out of school care workers and arts workers, according to Children in Scotland.

Currently, only teachers are required to register with the GTCS, a regulatory body for the teaching profession, which does not reflect today's much broader approach to education. Children's educational success is dependent on life circumstances and experiences beyond the four walls of a school and while teachers are central, a very diverse staff group now contribute to pupils' overall wellbeing and achievement.

Children in Scotland has called for these changes in its response, published today (Thursday), to the *Consultation on the Future Status of the General Teaching Council for Scotland*. The consultation proposes to strengthen the Council's independence.

Bronwen Cohen, Chief Executive of Children in Scotland, said: "This review provides a not-to-be-missed opportunity to review the role and composition of the GTCS so that it reflects the more integrated and holistic approaches to children's learning and well-being that are so strong in the new Curriculum for Excellence.

"Bringing important groups such as classroom assistants, out of school care workers and arts workers under the same regulatory body as teachers could help foster closer relationships between them, and so offer children better continuity over the day.

"It is particularly important in relation to school age childcare or extra-curricular activities, where a more integrated approach with schools can enhance children's current experience and future outcomes."

Children in Scotland is also calling for the new GTCS to take a much more proactive role in encouraging the involvement of children and young people. "Children and young people's involvement, as well as parents, is paramount because they are major stakeholders and users of school and colleges. Mechanisms must exist which allow them to influence the Council's direction. We are disappointed there is no mention of this in the consultation. We also believe a bolder approach could be taken to lay representation. For example, the General Medical Council will have an equal number of lay and medical members and the trend in all professional associations is for more extensive lay and wider stakeholder involvement."

View Children in Scotland's full consultation at

<http://www.childreninScotland.org.uk/docs/policy/GTCSCONSULTATIONfinal.pdf>

The relationship between out of school care staff and those working in schools will be discussed at a conference tomorrow, Friday 12 June, in Glasgow. *Working Together – The importance of positive relationships between out of school care services and schools* is organised by the Scottish Out of School Care Network but contributes to two programmes being led by Children in Scotland – the *Working it Out* Scotland-wide programme (www.childreninscotland.org.uk/workforce), looking at the future of the children's sector workforce, and the *Working for Inclusion* EC programme (www.childreninscotland.org.uk/wfi) examining the role of the early years workforce in addressing poverty and promoting social inclusion.

Notes for Editors

Children in Scotland is the national 'umbrella' agency for the whole of the children's sector, reaching over 250,000 individuals through our extensive membership of more than 450 statutory agencies, voluntary sector organisations, professional associations and community groups.

Our policy team, in close cooperation with our members, works on a very broad range of proposed laws, public policies and regulations to improve the wellbeing and life chances of all children and young people. For further information visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk

Working it out is a 12-month programme (to November 2009) inviting the children's sector workforce, employers, planners, universities, colleges and other stakeholders to join Children in Scotland in debate about future workforce development. The programme is funded by the Scottish Government. For further information visit: www.childreninscotland.org.uk/workforce

Working for Inclusion is a cross-European programme, from February 2009 to January 2011, to examine how improving the qualifications and skills of those working with our youngest children can help reduce poverty and improve social inclusion. It is funded by the European Commission and supported by the Scottish Government. For further information visit: www.childreninscotland.org.uk/wfi