

Working it out

help shape the future of Scotland's children's sector workforce

Join us in debate

Over the next 12 months, Children in Scotland is inviting the children's sector workforce, with employers, planners, universities, colleges and other stakeholders to join us in debate about future workforce development.

A series of four newsletters, three seminars across Scotland and a major conference in Glasgow on 4 March, will explore people's views and ideas on the issue. The minister for children and the early years, Adam Ingram, hopes the discussion and debate will contribute to "transformational change" across the sector.



Significant progress has been made in recent years to create services that respond holistically to children's needs. There is a lot of good practice to share, but also many strong ideas about how culture, practice and systems need to change in order to achieve a truly unified system of children's services.

One of the key challenges, identified in this first

newsletter, is the need for an overarching framework to organise workforce development right across the children's sector – across education, childcare, health, social work and the many other groups who work with and for children.

Contributors to this newsletter have highlighted the need for core skills and competencies, and a shared conceptual thinking about children and childhood across the sector. They have explored suggestions that range from a shared module to the introduction of an entirely new qualification and profession based on the principles of pedagogy.

As Adam Ingram points out, the articles within this newsletter will both challenge and support readers' own views. We hope the newsletters and events over the next year will generate discussion and debate in every part of the sector, including the universities and colleges that provide initial and continuing professional development, the sector's many employers and policy makers.

To join in visit

Transformational change for Scotland's children

Adam Ingram, minister for children and early years

Welcome to this first edition of a series of newsletters designed to explore the issues around workforce development across the children's workforce. I am grateful to Children in Scotland for supporting us in stimulating thinking around this agenda.

The Scottish Government's purpose is to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. The Concordat between national and local government heralds an exciting and challenging time for Scotland's policy makers with a new focus on outcomes. The Early Years / Early Intervention Framework, being jointly developed by the Scottish Government and CoSLA, will transform outcomes for children and their families.

We cannot achieve our aspirations for children if we do not invest in the workforce delivering those services. The children's workforce has a vital contribution to make to our success. The workforce is skilled and committed and I want us to build on that, learning from practice elsewhere, to develop the workforce further to meet our aspirations for children.

These newsletters offer you the opportunity to think about the issues and contribute to the debate. The articles will challenge and support your own views about what is needed in Scotland. I would encourage you to discuss these issues within your organisations and to come up with some ideas of your own.

We are at the beginning of an exciting process and I can assure you that we will listen to your views and ideas so that together we can make the workforce decisions that will help achieve transformational change for Scotland's children.

To join in the debate visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk/workforce

Full details of the programme are on the back page

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Understanding Scotland's children's sector workforce

A clear understanding of who makes up Scotland's children's sector workforce and of its far-reaching responsibilities is an important starting point for any debate about its future.

The sheer size of the workforce, and its enormous diversity and complexity, have been revealed gradually over the past 15 years or so, as agencies and services have been encouraged to overcome historical barriers and work together more effectively in meeting the needs of children and families.

The progress made in delivering more child-centred services means that Scotland's children's sector workforce is viewed, now more than ever before, as a single unitary system. It is a system made up of complementary and interdependent parts, which all share the same overarching goal – to help children and young people be “confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens” (Scottish Government). However, visualising the workforce as a single system, and indeed operating as one, is more challenging than the description alludes. The variety of expertise is immense and the relationships between professions that are now required to enable the workforce to meet its responsibilities are intricate and ever-changing. The workforce is a complicated – yet impressive – web.

In 2008 Children in Scotland carried out statistical research in an attempt to provide a bird's-eye view of Scotland's entire children's sector workforce.

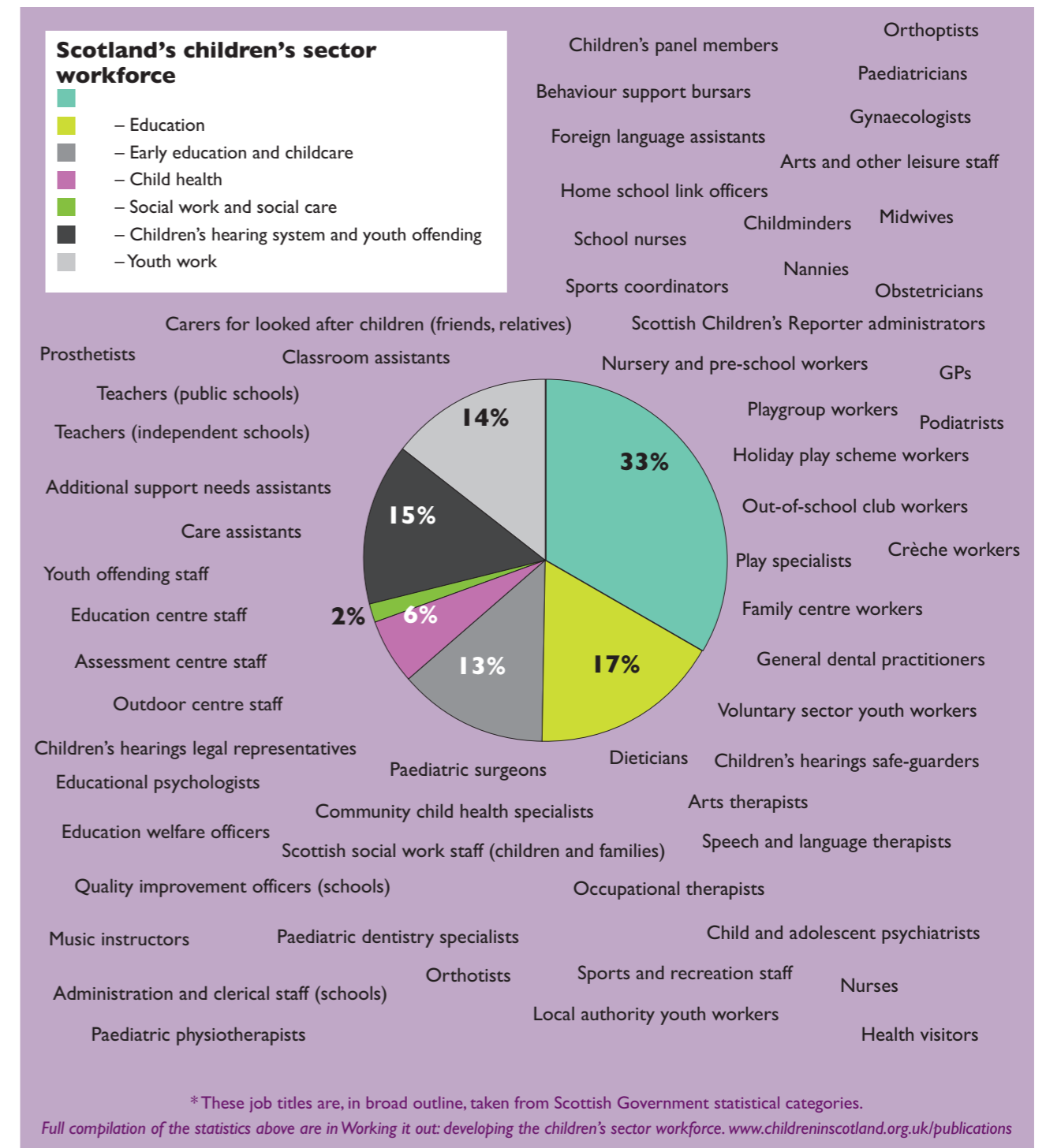
The statistical overview revealed an estimated workforce of just under a quarter of a million people – five per cent of Scotland's total population. It encompassed the traditional professions of teaching, social work, medicine and nursing, as well as the myriad of other groups working with children and families.

The statistics were gathered from a variety of sources and it was an effective exercise which helped to create a clearer picture of who the workforce is that makes up the sector. However, it also revealed that there are major gaps in available data, which prevent a totally accurate reflection of the workforce. There is, for example, no central source available for statistical information about youth workers in Scotland. There is no statistical information available for the number of nannies in Scotland. The youth justice workforce statistics do not include police officers whose work with children and young people is a regular and significant element of their duties and the relatively recent recognition of the importance that the arts play in children's overall

development mean there are no figures available on the many arts practitioners who work with children and young people. They are visible if they are linked to a particular profession, such as arts therapists working for the NHS, but those who work through a local authority or voluntary organisation, often on a freelance basis, are statistically invisible.

These gaps are important, because they demonstrate that while we refer readily to “the health sector”, “the education sector”, “the social care sector” and “the childcare sector”, the concept of the sector as one whole is still not being embraced and is therefore not clearly understood.

Lack of knowledge of who makes up the children's sector workforce is a serious obstacle to children's sector workforce planning and reform. Unless the workforce is clearly understood as a single unitary system we will be unable to plan in a joined up way to provide the skills that are required to ensure all children are “safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected, responsible and included”. ■



Making better use of Scotland's children's sector workforce

Children in Scotland pursues the debate about the future of the workforce. A selection of people reflect on how they would like to see the workforce develop so that it becomes truly child and family centred.

I would like people to say 'I am going into child and family services'

A significant amount of workforce development activity has taken place over the past 15 years to develop services that respond to children's needs in a holistic way.

Rather than different parts of the children's sector dealing with different parts of a child in isolation, everyone is now expected to understand that individuals are made up of interrelated dimensions, encompassing their mind,

body, spirit, creativity and relationships with others.

Equipping the children's sector workforce to deliver services in a holistic way has been challenging because of deep-set, historical boundaries between professions, and because important new groups such as those working in the arts have not been recognised in the way that they should.

All contributors asked to consider the future of the workforce acknowledged that significant progress has been made. This is evident in the innovative local projects across Scotland where professionals are working in multi-disciplinary teams and at a policy level in Getting it Right for

Every Child (GIRFEC), Curriculum for Excellence, the Additional Support for Learning Act and the Better Health, Better Care Action Plan (box 1).

However, contributors were also unanimous in their belief that a truly child-centred workforce has not yet been achieved.

Vision of a unified system

Maggie Simpson, director of childminding development at the Scottish Childminding Association, outlined her bold vision for a future workforce where "the persistent divisions between different parts of the children's sector workforce disappear". "I would like people to say 'I am going into child and family services', rather than 'into social work' or 'into health'. At the moment people specialise before they have even begun. "It's an ambitious vision I know, because to achieve it would essentially require the current system to be dismantled completely. People are quick to say that this is impossible but if we don't at

There is a need to identify what generic skills are common to, and required across, all professionals who work with children and families

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least acknowledge that it needs to happen we can't begin to take steps forward to get there."

Detective Chief Superintendent John Carnochan, head of Strathclyde's Violence Reduction Unit, also boldly ventured into a Utopian vision. If I was given a blank sheet of paper to design child and family services for the 21st Century I have no doubt that what I draw would look very different to the existing system. In my mind's eye is a service specifically for the care and development of children – all children. It seems to me that in attempting to meet the diverse needs of children and families, different parts of the workforce expend a lot of energy identifying partners and then trying to mesh together different aims, ethos, disciplines and purpose in order to deliver a single service. Unsurprisingly we all find this very, very difficult."

Shared skills and knowledge as foundation for a unified system

It was the need for core skills and competencies, and a shared conceptual thinking about children and childhood across the sector that dominated suggestions for future reform.

This was considered by many to be a realistic starting point which could change the mindset of professionals to think of themselves "first and foremost as people who work with children, young people and families...at the moment people train in particular disciplines which have no common core competencies despite the fact that their work will primarily be with children and young people" [Julia Swan, director of education, Falkirk Council].

Linda Kinney, head of learning and development at Stirling Council (see full article on page 15) suggests development of

We need a common framework – not just administratively but conceptually

a "core training/professional development framework for all professionals working with or engaged with children's care, learning and development [with tiers to enable specialisation]... to support a shared language and understanding in key areas". The key areas, she writes, are open to debate, as is the issue of who would be included in the framework. Should nurses, for example, who do not work exclusively with children be included? James

Law, director of the Centre for Integrated Healthcare Research at Queen Margaret University, wonders why a nurse who visits a child with complex needs in their home is not required to have paediatric training.

He believes there is a need to identify what generic skills are common to, and required across, all professionals who work with children and families. "An exercise like this, which encompasses all professions working with children, could help lay the basis for developing a common training module. It maintains the need for very specific technical expertise, but uncovers those core skills that are at the heart of all children's services." Some contributors believe

[People try to] mesh together different aims, ethos, disciplines and purpose in order to deliver a single service

Children's services: the agenda for change

Curriculum for Excellence

The Curriculum for Excellence is not just about subject areas and content. It focuses classroom practice on the whole school experience with a view to enabling every child to become a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and effective contributor. Writing in *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce* Graham Donaldson, senior chief inspector, HMIE, said all staff groups involved in its delivery "will need a set of common understandings and purpose".

The staff group responsible for delivering Curriculum for Excellence includes those working in early years settings, teachers, classroom assistants, instructors and others supporting learning in schools, teaching staff in colleges, staff

working in community learning and development, and broader children's services.

Getting it Right for Every Child

Getting it Right for Every Child is the foundation for work with all children, young people and families. It is an approach that draws on the values and principles and the best practice that underpin the work of all practitioners and professionals who work with children, young people and their families. *Getting it Right for Every Child* provides a model of practice, the tools and the principles and values needed to promote a positive shift in culture, systems and practice across children's services and to develop an inter-disciplinary approach to working in partnership with other professionals that can benefit children.

The Additional Support for Learning Act

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland Act 2004 aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their full potential. Under the Act, there is no limit to the range of factors which may lead to some children and young people having a need for additional support. It sets out how children with additional support needs should be provided for by local authorities, supported, where necessary, by appropriate agencies, namely, Health Boards, Careers Scotland, other local authorities, Further Education Colleges and Higher Education Institutions.

Better Health, Better Care: Action plan

Sets out an action plan for achieving the government's vision for a healthier Scotland. Planning for new and extended roles including assistant practitioners in child health and specialist nurses for looked after and accommodated children are one of its priorities. It also promises to develop early intervention programmes, which invest in the health of pregnant mothers, babies and young children, and pledges to help improve the way the curriculum addresses health and wellbeing and supports a whole-school approach. Crucially, it acknowledges that its main challenge is to "re-engineer services so that they work together more effectively, by assessing and making changes to the cultures, systems and practices in NHS Scotland and its partner organisations."

Making better use of Scotland's children's sector workforce

Comparisons have been drawn between pedagogues and existing roles in the workforce

the foundations for developing a common knowledge base are already with us. Margaret Brunton, senior development officer at the Scottish Pre-school Play Association, Maggie Simpson and John Davis, head of educational studies at the Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh, all cited the new Childhood Practice Standard (see box 2, page 6) as a possible spring board. Although it has been developed for early years and

child care practitioners working with children 0-16, it also specifies "workers from other workforces" as potential recruits. Its monitoring group may accept qualifications designed to pull in a much wider variety of people, catering for a wider age group.

However, Mark Smith, a lecturer in social work at the University of Edinburgh, believes the standard is not sufficient to achieve the seismic shift in people's mindsets and understanding of children that is required because its development was based principally on early childhood.

Mark Smith believes the absence of shared conceptual thinking about children and childhood jeopardises existing measures in place that are designed to encourage unity in the workforce. "We need a common framework – not just administratively but conceptually. How realistic is the assumption that injunctions invoking professionals to work together [as supported by GIRFEC] will bring about more effective services? While integration may be happening at a

policy level it is not having sufficient impact on the practice of the different professionals working with children and families. So long as changes take place only at policy and organisational levels they will fail to bring about the integrated service for children and families intended. To address the needs of the whole child requires a shift in the way that professionals think. There needs to be a conceptual shift so that services for children and families are thought of within an alternative paradigm."

Beyond core skills and introducing pedagogy

Mark Smith believes an appropriate "alternative paradigm" for children's services in Scotland is the concept of pedagogy, which if introduced in Scotland could provide the unifying body of principles underpinning all work with children and families – and therefore the "conceptual framework" – that is sought.

[We require] a conversation that engages all the stakeholders, learning providers as well as employers

Pedagogy is less a method of working than a way of thinking about children and childhood. The focus is on the whole child. Practicing pedagogues, who already work in a wide range of child and family services across Europe, have a very broad understanding of the child and their relationships to others which supports their role in the care, nurture and learning of children. They have a sophisticated understanding of

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how to engage with children and of the concept of children's rights, which go beyond those enshrined in policy and guidance.

Pedagogues work in early years settings, out of school child care, family support, schools, youth work, disability services and in some countries, support for older people. They tend to work alongside established professions such as teachers, social workers, doctors and nurses – to complement and enhance these established professions.

In the book *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce*, Willie Roe, chair of the 21st Century Social Work Review Group, pointed to the role that Danish pedagogues (box 4, page 8) play in creating and maintaining support networks, like peer networks, in local communities. The fact that they are equipped to work with children and their families across all disciplines is key, and he described them as "trusted intermediaries – the oil in the engine... a really good pedagogue helps all the different parts [of the workforce] to work together".

Julia Swan and Maggie Simpson have both drawn comparisons between pedagogues and existing roles in the workforce. "We need to ask whether the existing workforce has the right kind of skills to meet the new demands of GIRFEC and the Curriculum for Excellence, and develop new roles if necessary", said Julia Swan.

"To my mind the existing role of family support worker, in its broadest sense, is one that could be developed to provide a significant role in a variety of contexts. They work with families on health issues, on supporting children to access learning, and on social care issues. They cross professional boundaries. How the role might be developed would need to be discussed collectively at national level."

Maggie Simpson believes the pedagogue role fits well with childminding. "Childminding already crosses over the established sectors of education, health and social work because it is essentially a community service. As well as providing for the private sector, childminders often take referrals from local authorities to provide for children who require support for whatever reason. Childminders also have to work with a broad age range – from birth right through to the age of 16, as well as having to manage their own service. Their skill-range is very broad."

The benefits that pedagogy could bring to Scotland's children's sector workforce is an ongoing discussion. Bronwen Cohen put forward the case for introducing a "Scottish pedagogue" in the book *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce*. Her case included development of a new qualification, and a new profession to provide the main staffing group in a wide range of services (See box 3, page 7).

An appropriately skilled and valued workforce

Linda Kinney (full article on page 15) writes about how our increasingly sophisticated understanding of very young children is impacting on those who work with them. It has been the main driver of national strides to professionalise the early years workforce. The Scottish Social Services Council began to register staff working in day care of children services in 2006. To be on this register staff must hold or be working towards an appropriate qualification. From 2011 the requirement for managers will increase to SCQF Level 9 and awards in Childhood Practice commenced in the autumn 2008.

Developing qualifications for the early years workforce

In Autumn 2008, a number of education providers launched new degrees that have been developed in accordance with a new Standard for Childhood Practice.

The Standard is a benchmark against which degree level qualifications can be developed for the early years sector. It is part of a national drive to recognise the professional status of those providing early years and childcare services, to strengthen leadership in the sector and to create a single, integrated qualification and professional development framework for early years workers, out-of-school play workers and play workers. From 2011, registration with the Scottish Social Services Council as a manager or lead practitioner in early years and childcare will require a

qualification that meets the Standard and has an appropriate volume of credit.

The University of Strathclyde, in partnership with UHI Millennium Institute, is one institution offering its own Childhood Practice award. The BA in Childhood Practice takes a holistic view of children's development. Further details are on page 11.

The University of Edinburgh, University of Dundee, and the University of Glasgow all introduced Childhood Practice awards from Autumn 2008. The University of Aberdeen will introduce a Childhood Practice award from Autumn 2009.

A pedagogue model for Scotland

In the book *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce*, Bronwen Cohen, chief executive of Children in Scotland, explored the benefits of introducing a new qualification and profession – the Scottish pedagogue – to the children's sector workforce. Pedagogy focuses on the whole child. Initial education might focus on health, social studies, communication, organisation, management, sports and the arts as well as the principles of pedagogy. These very broad skills create a very flexible professional able to work with children and families across different settings and strengthen collaboration across the wide range of services. The following points outline a proposed Scottish pedagogue model for developing key areas of the children's sector workforce

- Adopt Scottish pedagogy model as a basis for workforce reform
- Develop a new group of pedagogues trained at graduate or equivalent level and assistants trained to Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework's level seven
- Pedagogues and assistants would work in all services for children and young people – from birth to 18 – including pre-school services, school-age childcare, play and youth services, residential, foster and family support services and alongside teachers in schools
- All those working with children, including teachers, health and social workers receive common grounding in Scottish pedagogical theory and practice.

Making better use of Scotland's children's sector workforce

Ongoing efforts to upskill key groups in the workforce who have been marginalised in the past is a concern for all of the contributors because of the crucial role they play in working alongside our most vulnerable children and families.

James Law said: "The skills of those in the assistant group are critical. Although therapists work in schools most of the day-to-day work is carried out by assistants who may be skilled but have little in the way of qualifications. 'Generic skills' should not equate with 'poorly qualified'. There must be a more consistent approach to ensuring that sufficient training of the most appropriate level is available."

And it seems that generic skills are increasingly required for the children's sector workforce to meet its responsibilities. James Law pointed to the growing need for managing children with complex needs in the community, rather than in a hospital setting. "This does not necessarily require high-level technical expertise, but an ability to engage with children and families, to know and understand their needs and have the knowledge to be able to ensure those needs are met. The same applies to the many support assistants currently working in schools. They are critical for the welfare of children because they know individual children and their family in a much broader context than any one professional who may be working with them on specific issues. They are very well placed to notice subtle signs of problems early on, in a way that a social worker, for example, who is used to dealing primarily with critical cases may not be."

In some other European countries these kind of roles would be carried out by pedagogues who are educated to degree level. Julia Swan feels strongly that the entry level of any new professional roles should not be set too high to avoid excluding potentially good workers.

The term "upskilling" is most often used in relation to groups within the workforce who traditionally have lower qualifications and pay. However, changing demands on the workforce, mean the long-established professionally qualified groups such as teachers, paediatricians and social workers are also having to review their skills. In some cases, as Linda Kinney points out, "teachers argue that they are expected not only to be teachers, but social workers and nurses, and some social care staff argue that they are expected to be social workers, carers, and the police rolled into one". The question to ask is: what kind of professionals do we need?

Embrace change

Julia Swan called for a "national discussion" on what core skills and knowledge might be required to help achieve a unified children's sector workforce, and Linda Kinney, wants to open the discussion to "children, families, communities and professionals".

First and foremost however, is the need for what James Law describes as "commitment and concerted effort in all areas – strong government direction and a willingness on the part of all agencies to embrace change".

In a world where collaboration to place children and families' needs at the centre of service delivery is expected, but different professional bodies, ethical codes, qualification frameworks and standards prevail, change will need to be bold.

Raymond Taylor, acting director of the Glasgow Centre for the Child and Society, invites the sector to "summon up the courage to grasp a few thistles". "Let us also invite professional and regulatory bodies to develop a shared vision

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of the central role which they have to play in the formation of a workforce capable of delivering more integrated services which will in turn contribute to flourishing childhoods. We should ask them to collectively review and amend existing qualifications and, in the process, consider the need for new, or revised qualifications. Above all we should build in opportunities for meaningful dialogue and robust debate informed by research evidence."

To take forward child-centred reform, Janet Lowe, chair of the Scottish Funding Council's Skill's Committee, says initial and continuing education for the workforce requires investment and change based on a more flexible system of qualifications. For this to happen, she too believes that "a conversation that engages all the stakeholders, learning providers as well as employers" is required. ■



The Danish pedagogue

Lars Paskjaer works as a pedagogue in a facility called a 'Fritidshjem', providing after school care and care during school holidays for pupils who attend the nearby primary school, 'Heibergskolen' in Østerbro, Copenhagen.

The facility provides for children up to year three – 205 of the school's 550 pupils. They arrive at 12:40pm when formal school finishes, and finish at 5pm. Parents pay a subsidised rate of approximately 1,200 kroner (approx. £ 120) per month. During school holidays the facility is open between 7am and 5pm.

The word 'Fritidshjem' can be directly translated as 'free time home', which reflects the pedagogue's more informal way of

working with the children. The role of the pedagogue is not to teach the children according to a curriculum, but to help develop their creativity, social skills, self-esteem and self-confidence. "Our role is to create opportunities for children to develop their interests in whatever area they choose and to guide them if required. The children decide what they want to do when they arrive – it might be something using the variety of arts materials we have, reading, sports or simply playing. Our communication and mediation skills are particularly important, as is our understanding of children."

Lars has studied to be a medical doctor but decided in his late thirties to leave medicine. "I knew I wanted to work with people, maybe children, but not as a teacher in a classroom.

A pedagogue was a good, flexible option."

Pedagogy in Denmark

Danish pedagogues are qualified to work with people from 0-100 years of age in settings across education, social services and health. Nearly two thirds of Denmark's pedagogues work with children under ten years of age. They are in kindergartens, age integrated centres for children from birth to five, primary classrooms for six-year-olds, and delivering school-based or independent leisure facilities. They also work in youth services, residential institutions for children and young people, residential and day care services and services for children, young people and adults who have

additional support needs. Qualified pedagogues have studied for three-and-a-half years, studying pedagogy and psychology, social studies and health, communication, organisation and management and the arts and creative subjects.

Changes at national level to the initial education of pedagogues means that the training of pedagogues in Denmark is now standardised, with centrally prescribed regulations, and colleges no longer left to define and refine course content for themselves. Specialisations are being introduced, allowing for separate education for different kinds of pedagogues, ie. working with children with physical and mental disabilities, children in kindergartens or children in a 'fritidshjem'.

A higher education perspective

Jill Bourne, dean of Strathclyde University's Faculty of Education, explores the role that higher education institutions can play in creating a unified children's workforce. Developing a "common core" for the sector is the first step towards a new understanding of learning and care across society that could result in new forms of integrated services.

Strathclyde University's Faculty of Education includes not only teacher education, but the training of social workers, residential care workers, speech and language therapists, sports, music and community arts workers, school counselors and community education professionals. It is well positioned therefore to respond innovatively and quickly to the challenge of providing training for a children's workforce as "a single unitary system" (Scottish Executive, 2001). So why is this so hard to do?

One Faculty, but more than three separate undergraduate degrees – and that doesn't include those training within the faculty in community arts and music, sports and leisure

School curriculum development does not stand in the way. The new Curriculum for Excellence is actually a driver for change towards a more unified children's workforce, setting out as its aim the development of successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. It is clear that these aims mean engaging with children, their families and communities beyond the school itself. Research suggests that the increasing achievement gap between

working class and middle class children is related as much or more to out of school experiences and activities than to what happens within the school walls. Although many schools try hard to connect with parents and communities, it has become more and more clear that schools cannot compensate for society on their own. A fully integrated children's workforce, placing children, their families and communities at the centre, with a shared vision and values, and a "set of common understandings and purpose" is what is needed.

This is not in itself a new understanding. As early as 1968, Lord Kilbrandon called for a new form of "social education", alongside the academic. The UN Rights of the Child Article 12 and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 have stressed the necessity of involving children, their families and communities in service planning, design and implementation too.

At the University of Strathclyde, we have recognised the need for a range of pathways for the development of a new, more qualified children's workforce that is able to respond to

the Government's aspiration for more integrated service delivery. Alongside courses for new teachers at undergraduate and post-graduate level, we now have two new undergraduate degrees. The new BA in Childhood Practice takes a holistic view of children's development, learning and well-being, and the BA in Education and Social Services develop the qualities and skills needed for leadership in integrated services delivery across social work, community education and primary teaching (see box 5, page 11). Both these degrees, like our teacher education courses, are prepared and delivered in close collaboration with practitioners in the field, including substantial periods of work placement.

One Faculty, but more than three separate undergraduate degrees – and that doesn't include those training within the faculty in community arts and music, sports and leisure as well. Although it is true that staff may overlap on these different courses, bringing students together still presents challenges.

At the University of Southampton, where I worked before 2007, new funding had been won from the Higher Education Funding Council for England to set up a Centre of Excellence in Interprofessional Working across the Public Sector, just in order to begin to experiment with linking course modules across different departments, and to set up certain shared workshops across the areas of health, education and social work.

At Strathclyde, we have also initiated shared workshop days where trainees in different professional areas across the children's workforce can meet and work together on problem-solving activities, recognising commonalities and identifying different but complementary roles. However, we recognise that despite all taking place within the one faculty, training remains too compartmentalised and thus unsatisfactory for developing a unitary service.

In this context, the idea of a 'common core' for the children's workforce, from which different specialisms could emerge, is a very attractive one. Drawing on the community arts and community education experience, this could extend to a wider, intergenerational workforce, embracing the elderly and others in the community, beyond childhood. Working towards this means engaging with the different bodies which set standards for the different professions, as well as with the institutions in which our students have their placements. Together, the development of a common, recognised module

A higher education perspective

Training remains too compartmentalised and thus unsatisfactory for developing a unitary service

would be a good step forward. The Scottish pedagogue model is attractive. The concept of pedagogy goes beyond placing the child at the centre of unified provision. It recognises that childhood is a socially constructed, not a natural phenomenon. The nature of childhood – what it is to be a child – differs across time. It was very different to be a child in the 18th and 19th centuries than it is now. Childhood also differs across place – with different

expectations in different parts of the world, and between different social groups within our own country. The concept of pedagogy requires us to challenge our assumptions about childhood and the way that we have a tendency to address different aspects of a child's life. It helps us focus on what sort of society we want. An emphasis on the individual and the competitive? or emphasis on community values and mutual support? Because these different approaches to life are taught to children as they grow up in society today. They

are taught and learnt. Pedagogy recognises this, and instead of leaving this to result in the continuing playing out of power and disadvantage, intervenes purposefully to promote equality, community and fairness. The results can be seen in the Scandinavian countries' shared academic success across social groupings as well as in the maintenance of social democratic institutions.

There is no doubt that I support the concept of the pedagogue. However, as the dean of a university faculty, I would need to ask; on what basis could we start offering courses in Scottish pedagogy?

We would obviously have to ensure jobs are available to graduates in pedagogy and to work with local authorities, employers, policy makers and professional bodies to see how this fits within the sector as a whole.

Perhaps the first step must be to work together to devise a 'common core', and in that process, by working together and with young people, parents, and communities, we may just find the will, the energy and the enthusiasm to turn some of our most established institutions on their heads. Schools, social services and health related services may then come to a new understanding of learning and care across society, and thus develop new forms of integrated services for a fair and democratic society. ■

BA in Childhood Practice

Taught in collaboration with the University of the Highlands and Islands and in collaboration with a number of FE colleges. Course content matches closely the Standard for Childhood Practice. □ The course takes a holistic view of children's development, learning and well-being and covers areas such as:

- Protecting and caring for children
- Working with parents and carers, families, communities and other agencies
- Developing practice in the leadership of others which is informed by an understanding of children and of childhood
- Developing knowledge and understanding of relevant organisational frameworks
- Developing a critical understanding of policies, practices and legal requirements relevant to the service
- Fostering understanding in how young children learn and develop
- Leading others in supporting play and learning and in how to encourage children to become healthy, active and achieving
- Supporting teamwork and collaboration
- Business management of the services provided.

BA in Education and Social Services

Developed in collaboration with James Watt, Langside and Motherwell Colleges, builds on the Diploma in Higher Education to prepare graduates for integrated service delivery. Developed in response to the Scottish Government's aspiration for different services to communicate more effectively and work in a more integrated way to meet service-user needs, whether that is a child, young person or adult. A major aim is to develop the leadership qualities and skills required for this challenge. The degree confers eligibility to apply for postgraduate study, for example in social work, community education and primary teaching.



Close, trusted professionals

Irene Audain, explores how a common understanding of pedagogical practice across the children's sector workforce could help stabilise out of school care by giving staff the recognition they deserve.

The skills associated with pedagogy are needed not only in out of school care, but right across the children's sector workforce

We know that children need trusted and secure relationships with others, adults and children. They need to be able to participate in society, to express their opinions and influence decisions, especially those concerning them. Their physical and emotional health and well-being depends on them having access to positive encouragement and provision of resources and role models to support their healthy development. This includes

learning and relaxing through play, recreational and creative pursuits.

Skilled out of school care workers are key players in providing these opportunities for children. They are, or could be, some of the close, trusted professionals who have good relationships with the children in their care and who support their development within an understanding of children's rights, stages of development, culture and society. Crucially they have practical skills as well as theoretical knowledge so they can help children with day-to-day activities, as well as supporting learning skills, by listening, responding to and understanding the child, or children, while they are all actively doing things together. They also work with their fellow team members to reflect on their practice, and form good links with their community, as well as the children's families and other professionals involved in their care. These are elements of best practice in out of school care in this country.

The past five years has seen a period of intensive and speedy developments in early education and childcare and the

achievements should be celebrated. A lot of hard work has led to the new childhood practice award, for managers and lead practitioners. A professional registration body for the social services workforce has also been established and staff have shown huge commitment working to gain new qualifications, often in their spare time.

However despite these developments, out of school care lags behind the rest of the early education and childcare workforce in terms of qualifications. 35% of staff are still unqualified, compared to 11% of those working in nurseries. Financial viability, premises and meeting legislative requirements are ongoing stresses for the sector. With low pay, part time hours, problems with recruitment and retention of staff there are real fears that there will be a staffing crisis in the future. We have come very far in a short time and we have a long way to go, but we also need to reflect on where we really want to be, and how to get there.

The snapshot survey (box 6 page 13) reinforces what we hear about the pay and conditions of staff in the out of school care field. Despite this, there is a lot of good practice out there, and the workers who are delivering this good practice deserve recognition of their skills. They get real satisfaction out of their work as they enjoy working with children and most also see their work as a career.

The key elements of best practice in out of school care in this country, described above, are also key elements of the European tradition of pedagogical practice (boxes 2 and 4, pages 6 and 8).

The skills associated with pedagogy are needed not only in out of school care, but right across the children's sector workforce. Training of the core elements of pedagogy should therefore be present in the training of professionals in related fields. This would help create the common understanding and collaboration across professional

What is out of school care?

"Out of school care" services usually cater for children aged between the ages of four and a half and 12, sometimes up to 16. They provide registered care at the end of the school day for two or three hours each evening (or afternoon) and all day care during school holidays and in service days. Parents pay for the service although some places are subsidised by local authorities in order to give a child or family extra support. Parents can access childcare tax credits to help cover the costs.

There are 1,105 providers of out of school care located in schools, community centres or halls and rarely in their own designated premises. They are managed by voluntary committees (nearly 50%), local authorities and independent and private providers. There are approx 4,000 staff working in out of school care services and holiday clubs.

Close, trusted professionals

boundaries that are required for a society where intrinsic value is placed on childhood, children's rights are recognised, their needs are understood and their personal and social development is supported. It would also help ensure that out of school care workers have due recognition of these skills that they already demonstrate, and that there is more mobility of the workforce and mutual respect between professions.

The Scottish Out of School Care Network provides annual placements for a few Danish pedagogy students at partner out of school care services. While they see differences between here and the well-funded and developed school age childcare in Denmark, they also see similar good practice. The services see benefits of having the well-trained student working with them for six months. The visitors form good relationships with children and adults, share insights and reflections with their colleagues and demonstrate practical skills. They also bring a fresh perspective to the service.

We could bring opportunities for staff and services to take (and provide) a fresh perspective by exploring ways to further share good practice with developed services in parts of Europe. For example, out of school care staff could have additional choices of modules, courses and activities, which place their work alongside, and within, the training tradition of fellow professionals (pedagogues) across Europe. This would be an opportunity to enrich their practice, status and workforce mobility. We could develop more student placements from Europe – ideally, staff in services here could also have the opportunity to have placements abroad. These developments should not be mandatory requirements but be included as part of a range of choices in potential professional development routes, which must also meet the Standard for Childhood Practice and complement the range of training and qualifications already available. ■

Irene Audain is chief executive of the Scottish Out of School Care Network

Out of school care worker survey

In spring of 2008, we asked 700 individual members of staff about their pay and conditions, qualifications and attitudes towards working within out of school care in Scotland. 354 completed surveys were returned.

Lead practitioner profile

The "average" lead practitioner working in out of school care is 46-years-old, employed for 26 hours per week (term-time) and 31 hours per week (holiday-time), earning £8.93 per hour and has been employed in out of school care for 8 years.

85% of lead practitioners see out of school care as a career, 95% are either very or fairly satisfied with their job and 25% have secondary jobs. 10% are qualified to SVQ 4 and 36% are working towards it. 43% have access to a pension scheme through work but only 23% are members.

Practitioner profile

The "average" practitioner working in out of school care is 32-years-old, employed for 18 hours per week (term-time) and 26 hours per week (holiday-time), earning £6.63 per hour and has been employed in out of school care for four years.

65% of practitioners see out of school care as a career, 95% are either very or fairly satisfied with their job and

37% have secondary jobs. 16% are qualified to SVQ 3 or higher and 33% are working towards it. 30% have access to a pension scheme through work but only 19% are members.

Support worker profile

The "average" support worker working in out of school care is 17-years-old, employed for 16 hours per week (term-time) and 20 hours per week (holiday-time), earning £5.77 per hour and has been employed in out of school care for four years.

59% of support workers see out of school care as a career, 97% are either very or fairly satisfied with their job and 19% have secondary jobs. 41% are qualified to SVQ 2 or higher and 59% are working towards it. 25% have access to a pension scheme through work but none are members.

Gender:

Overall 7% of staff are male and 93% female. This breaks down further to 5% of men are in a lead practitioner role (out of 104), 8% of those in a practitioner role (out of 197) and 10% of those in a support worker role (out of 29).

Scottish Out of School Care Network, 2008

This feature ties in to the first of three seminars run by Children in Scotland to explore workforce reform across the children's sector workforce. The seminar was held in association with the Scottish Out of School Care Network in Stirling on the 30th October 2008 to offer those working in the school age child care sector an opportunity to express their visions of what the future might and should hold and to discuss the implications of extending qualifications requirements and the possible merits of a new professional Scottish pedagogy role.

Seeds of reform: a focus on Stirling Council's early childhood services

Stirling Council's commitment to early years staff is an example of increasing recognition of the importance of the early years and the corresponding need for a highly skilled and highly qualified staff.



Stirling Council decided to take full control of training its early years workforce in September 2006 creating its own Playwork and Childcare training service. Not only does the council have the ability to deliver qualifications approved by the Scottish Qualifications Authority for early years staff, it has also developed its own modules tailored specifically to fit Stirling's vision for early childhood services and its principles.

[Stirling's view of children] requires staff to have a particularly profound understanding of how children learn

Lesley Gibb, Service Manager along with the Early Childhood Link Officer Team, has been involved in developing Stirling's tailor-made modules. "The motivation for taking complete control over training and developing our own modules is to ensure that our workforce is qualified and skilled to a level that will enable them to meet our high expectations and gain a level of skill and understanding that our

youngest children deserve. It is also a means of ensuring that early years staff receive high quality professional development and the professional recognition that they deserve."

Stirling has developed strong connections with Reggio Emilia, whose guiding values and principles are very similar including the image of young children as rich and resourceful individuals who are actively engaged in creation of their own learning experiences in collaboration with others. This view

of the child requires staff to have a particularly profound understanding of *how* children learn. To reflect this responsibility, all early years practitioners in Stirling have the title of 'educator'.

Stirling has a number of modules including *Let's talk about learning* which allows staff the opportunity to begin to explore research, thinking and practice underpinning Stirling's approach to supporting young children's learning, to explore in depth the local authority's vision for early childhood practice, develop their understanding of how children learn and explore the educator's role in supporting children's learning. Participants also have an opportunity to explore the pedagogy of listening, approaches to making learning visible and celebrating young children as learners.

Another module focuses on *Documentation as Stirling's Approach to Early Learning*, which all educators are expected to take part in. Lesley Gibb explained: "Documentation is central to our work with young children. It has helped us to reveal the capabilities of children and educators in a way that was previously unknown in such depth. The approach helps us to make the process of how children learn more visible and by documenting learning we can record what children are telling us using for example digital cameras, video, recordings of conversations.

The *Early Years/Working with Children Under Three* module enables educators to consider ways of supporting very young children to develop effective means of communication from birth onwards. Participants:

- Explore baby brain development
- Take a close look at individual learning styles
- Become 'schema' spotters
- Work in a highly interactive way with songs, stories and rhymes
- Undertake tasks arising from the course
- Share practical experiences
- Engage in professional discourse
- Develop an understanding of cultivating creativity with children under three

Individual courses are also offered to core staff, such as *Planning for Individual Children's Learning* and *The child at the Centre*.

None of Stirling's own modules are accredited with the SQA but this is being considered as a future development, particularly in light of the Scottish Social Services Council's Childhood Practice Standard (box 3, page 7). ■

Future workforce development

Linda Kinney, head of learning and development in Stirling Council's children's services, shares her perspective

Over the last 20 years, significant advances in knowledge about how the brain works have led to new understandings about how children learn, emotional intelligence, attachment and motivation. These new understandings provide us with greater insights into the way we should be working with children and families including the importance and benefits of understanding the 'whole child' rather than seeing the child in parts.

However, we continue to construct barriers that prevent us from changing the way that we engage with children. There is still a tendency, for example, to work from a "deficit model", focusing on what children can't do rather than what they can, and to fill in gaps to identify what is not working rather than stand back to look at wider causes. The division that continues to exist between care and education professionals is also a major hindrance. It is exacerbated by, but possibly the root cause of, their separate training and development, despite the fact that they are all engaged in the learning, teaching, care and support of children.

The move to construct more integrated children's services as a means of organising professionals has been, in part, a response to frustrations around lack of joint working and budgetary constraints. It has not been grounded strongly enough in a fervent belief that working together, and in a different way, will provide more effective interventions, support, learning and care for children.

As a result, traditional divisions between social work and education remain largely in place and rather than working across boundaries, they work in parallel. The greatest shift in thinking and practice appears to be taking place through local initiatives rather than mainstream, where new models of children's services professionals are created, or evolve, and are able to work across traditional professional and service boundaries. These are usually funded externally, for example from the Changing Children's Services Fund.

The challenge is how to mainstream or capture some of these more innovative and successful developments and at the same time meet the wider social and political expectations of what makes a good social worker, teacher, early educator, care worker or playworker. It seems it is at this point that confusion often arises. For example, some teachers argue that they are expected not only to be teachers, but to be social workers and nurses. Some social care staff argue that they are expected to be social workers, carers, and the police rolled into one. A question often asked is "what do we want teachers, social workers and child carers to be good at?" and the answer seems to be "everything". I suppose this is not surprising in our current models of

integrated children's services. Perhaps one of the most important questions we need to ask, is: "what kind of professionals do we need and want to work with our children now and in the future?"

If we start by talking to children, families, communities and professionals we will reach a conclusion. Many organisations have already started to do this, and work has taken place nationally as part of Getting it Right for Every Child and Curriculum for Excellence (box 1 page 4). A greater consensus and agreement on the core skills and dispositions that we expect of effective professionals is emerging from these discussions. These include being interested in children as individuals, listening to them and responding appropriately, taking action when they need help, being honest with them, being good at the job and being a learner.

What is becoming more evident is that we want professionals with a core set of skills that are transferable and can be utilised flexibly, and we still need professionals with an expertise. So, how do we go forward?

We continue with and build on the debate that has already started. We listen to the views of children, families and professionals and we look at our options and match them to our aspirations.

To help continue the dialogue, I would like to argue for one option that is worthy of further debate, and that is the development of a core training/professional development framework for all professionals working with or engaged with children's care, learning and development. It would be designed to support a core programme for all children's services professionals, including, teachers, social workers, early years professionals, carers, those working in health and play workers. The framework would consist of a foundation or core set of skills, knowledge and experiences that all individuals would require to achieve. This core element would support children's professionals to have a shared language and understanding in key areas. What the key areas should be is open to be debated. The framework would consist of tiers, which would then enable professionals to specialise in specific areas, with a range of levels that would support depth.

As long as we continue to artificially divide education and care and to differentiate in terms of status, salary and conditions of service between education and care professionals, we will continue to limit the possibilities and positive impact that an enlightened and more integrated workforce could contribute to the lives of children and families in Scotland. ■

Working it out

help shape the future of Scotland's children's sector workforce

Scotland's children's sector workforce has undergone considerable change in recent years to develop services that respond in a holistic way to the needs of children and families. Phrases such as 'collaborative working' and 'joined-up working' are embedded in daily professional life but how far have we come in achieving the long-term vision of children's services as a single unitary system, with the child firmly at its centre?

As part of a 12-month programme (to November 2009) Children in Scotland is inviting the children's sector workforce, with employers, planners, universities, colleges and other stakeholders to join us in debate about future workforce development.

The programme encompasses:

A series of four newsletters

Explore developments in the children's sector workforce, encourage debate and share good practice. Newsletters are available at: www.childreninscotland.org.uk/workforce or by request from hgoodrum@childreninscotland.org.uk. Tel: 0131 222 2431.

A major international conference

Working it out: help shape the future of Scotland's children's sector workforce explores development at national and international level. It will provide a forum to strengthen dialogue between those providing initial and continuing education, and employers and other stakeholders in the sector. Edinburgh Conference Centre, March 4, 2009. For further information visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk/workforce/conference or contact jmacintosh@childreninscotland.org.uk. Tel: 0131 222 2438.

Three seminars focusing on different aspects of workforce reform

Stirling: October 30, 2008, in association with the Scottish Out of School Care Network
Aberdeen: February 4, 2008, in association with University of Aberdeen
Date TBC, 2008, in association with Glasgow City Council

Articles exploring workforce development in the Children in Scotland monthly magazine

For further information visit: www.childreninscotland.org.uk/cis

This programme of work builds on ideas put forward in the book *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce*, Children in Scotland, 2008.

A rare and revealing bird's-eye view of Scotland's children's sector workforce, with analysis of its composition and how reform is required for it to operate as a single unitary system, with the child firmly at its centre. Experts from across education, the early years, health, social work and the creative industries explore possibilities for reform.

www.childreninscotland.org.uk/publications



To join in the debate visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk/workforce

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