

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 23 FEBRUARY 2011

**TEACHING SCOTLAND'S FUTURE –
REPORT OF A REVIEW OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND
GRAHAM DONALDSON**

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the recommendation of the recently published report on the Donaldson Review of Teacher Education titled: 'Teaching: Scotland's Future' and approve the involvement of the Department of Educational and Social Services (ESS) in any further deliberation at national level arising as a result of the report.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In November 2009, Graham Donaldson, former HMle senior chief inspector, was commissioned by Scottish Government to conduct a fundamental review of teacher education in Scotland. He began his review in February 2010 with a remit which covered teacher education for primary and secondary schooling.
- 2.2 The recommendations, once completed, were to be based on Curriculum for Excellence and on the concept of teachers as "co-creators" of the curriculum, which the review acknowledges places demands on the quality of teaching and leadership at all stages.
- 2.3 The report makes 50 recommendations, relating to the quality, skills and leadership required of teachers in the 21st century. These range from the selection process for entry to Initial Teacher Education [ITE] to the content and quality of programmes and mentoring for ITE and the Probation Induction year, as well as an emphasis on career-long learning for teachers and for leadership. The full report has been posted on the members' portal for information.
- 2.4 It is anticipated that the outcome of the recommendations in the Donaldson report will be influenced by the McCormack Review recently announced by Scottish Government. This review led by Professor Gerry McCormac, Principal of Stirling University will consider between February and June 2011 progress made in Scottish education as a result of investment in the McCrone Agreement: 'A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century'. A series of recommendations to update the McCrone Agreement are expected before the end of the academic session. Graham Donaldson, the author of the Donaldson report, is a member of the McCormac Committee.

3. KEY THEMES

At the launch of the report in Edinburgh on 18 January 2011, Donaldson highlighted the key themes in the report. These were:

- 3.1 School education is one of the most important policy areas for governments across the world.
- 3.2 Human capital in the form of a highly educated population is now accepted as a key determinant of economic success.
- 3.3 Evidence of relative performance internationally has become a key driver of policy.
- 3.4 Research evidence suggests that the foundations of successful education lie in the quality of teachers and their leadership.
- 3.5 The imperatives which gave rise to Curriculum for Excellence still remain powerful and the future well being of Scotland is dependent in large measure on its potential being realised. That has profound and, as yet, not fully addressed implications for the teaching profession and its leadership.
- 3.6 Career-long teacher education, which is currently too fragmented and often haphazard, should be at the heart of this process, with implications for its philosophy, quality, coherence, efficiency and impact.

4. INTENDED OUTCOMES

Donaldson intimated the intended outcomes of the report's recommendations:

- 4.1 Reinvigoration of 'professionalism' and a rethinking of teacher education to reflect this.
- 4.2 More rigorous selection of students applying to enter teacher education along with more relevant courses; more efficient use of time and more consistent assessment of students' progress.
- 4.3 A coherent approach to teacher education, which is underpinned by a framework of standards that signpost the ways in which professional capacity should grow progressively across a career.
- 4.4 Development of leadership qualities from the start of a career.
- 4.5 A new concept of partnership among universities, local authorities, schools, national agencies and other services which embraces selection, course content and assessment, and which sets practical experience in a more reflective and inquiring culture making optimum use of ICT for professional learning.
- 4.6 More efficient use of existing contracts and structures.

- 4.7 An education learning culture within which policy, practice, theory and accountability are better aligned to serve the needs of learners.
- 4.8 A national and local infrastructure which sets, promotes and evaluates teacher education in ways that relate both current practice and innovation to their beneficial impact on learning.

5 THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REPORT

- 5.1 There are fifty recommendations in the report and the full narrative is available on the member's portal. Below is a summary of the main recommendations which will have most impact on the quality of teacher training and, as a result, pupil attainment and achievement.
- 5.2 Teacher education should address the need to build the capacity of teachers, irrespective of career stage, to have high levels of pedagogical expertise, including deep knowledge of what they are teaching; to be self-evaluative; to be able to work in partnership with other professionals; and to engage directly with well-researched innovation.
- 5.3 Teacher education should be seen as a continuum, spanning a career and requiring much better alignment and closer working amongst schools, authorities, universities and national organisations.
- 5.4 Selection for entry to initial teacher education programmes should be made more rigorous, drawing on existing best practice and using a wider set of selection criteria. The possible establishment of a national assessment centre should be explored. The role of future employers should be significantly strengthened within any revised process.
- 5.5 Candidates for teaching should undertake diagnostic assessments of their competence in both literacy and numeracy. The threshold established for entry should allow for weaknesses to be addressed by the student during the course. A more demanding level should be set as a prerequisite for competence to teach.
- 5.6 Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and probationer induction should be planned as one overall experience. This will require strengthened partnership to underpin joint delivery. It should include the possibility of Masters credits, where appropriate.
- 5.7 The traditional BEd degree should be phased out and replaced with degrees which combine in-depth academic study in areas beyond education with professional studies and development. These new degrees should involve staff and departments beyond those in schools of education.
- 5.8 Increased emphasis should be given to ensuring that primary students have sufficient understanding of the areas they are expected to teach. Supporting

online resources should be developed which address the fundamentals of each area to be taught together with implications for pedagogy.

- 5.9 Clear expectations about necessary prior learning for teacher education courses should be developed together with diagnostic assessments and online resources to allow students to reach that baseline in advance of formally embarking on a course.
- 5.10 The professional component in programmes of initial teacher education should address more directly areas where teachers experience greatest difficulty.
- 5.11 School-based placements should be in schools which meet quality standards. They should provide an effective professional learning environment and the capacity to mentor and assess student teachers.
- 5.12 School inspections should include, where relevant, evaluations of the quality of the mentoring and assessment arrangements for students and newly-qualified teachers as well as of continuing professional development.
- 5.13 Suitably trained school staff should have the prime role in the assessment of students whilst on placement. New models of joint staffing should be developed to enhance the quality and impact of the placement experience.
- 5.14 University-based teacher educators should have a responsibility to undertake an agreed programme of Continuing Professional Development [CPD] each year.
- 5.15 Flexible staffing models for initial teacher education, induction and CPD should be developed by local authorities and the universities to allow movement of staff and dual appointments.
- 5.16 Mentors should be selected carefully and undertake training based on a recognition of the skills and capacities required for this role.
- 5.17 Given the potential tension in the assessment and support functions of mentors, all new teachers in Scotland should have access to a mentor and a supporter.
- 5.18 Early career teachers should continue to benefit from mentoring beyond induction. Additional support should be provided by senior managers within schools and local authorities to ensure appropriate progression as part of the CPD and PRD process.
- 5.19 The flexible route to achieving the standard for full registration should include access to CPD and structured support.
- 5.20 The balance of CPD activities should continue to shift from set-piece events to more local, team-based approaches which centre around self evaluation and

professional collaboration, and achieve an appropriate blend of tailored individual development and school improvement.

- 5.21 A new 'Standard for active registration' should be developed to clarify expectations of how fully registered teachers are expected to continue to develop their skills and competences.
- 5.22 At the outset of any CPD activity, the intended impact on young people, and the aspects of the relevant professional standard the teacher will improve as a result of the activity, should be clear. Subsequent Professional Review and Development [PRD] discussions should review progress with previous intentions. This process should be captured in a continuing online profile of professional development.
- 5.23 Building on the positive start made by the national CPD team a national 'one stop shop' should be developed for teachers to access online CPD opportunities.
- 5.24 The award of Chartered Teacher status should be based on a range of evidence, including improved teaching skills and significant impact on improving the learning of the young people and colleagues with whom they work. The award should be reviewed as part of PRD and professional re-accreditation. Local authorities should have greater control over the number of teachers who apply for the award.
- 5.25 A clear, progressive educational leadership pathway should be developed and a greater range of CPD opportunities should be provided for experienced headteachers, from the middle years of headship onwards. The new national leadership pathway should not stop at headship, but should include ways in which experienced headteachers can continue to develop and refresh their skills and competences.

6. POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST AYRSHIRE.

- 6.1 As 5.11 indicates, the Department may need to identify education establishments ('training hubs') which meet set quality standards in relation to a teacher training professional environment. Most of our schools presently have the capacity to accept students, but depending upon the detail of the Quality Standard, there may be a necessity for the identification of specialised schools which are resourced to train students in the new Standard. This may result in a capacity, resource and continuing professional development (CPD) implication for the Department.
- 6.2 The impact of 5.13, although laudable in principle, may require a staffing resource allocation and time made available to support the transition model proposed.
- 6.3 To achieve the aim of 5.15 may require increased cross service CPD and additional staffing resource to make such a joint approach effective.

- 6.4 The demands of 5.17 may require the Teacher Collegial Agreement to be formally adapted if significant numbers of teachers are to have such a responsibility as a core part of their remit. This may also generate significant CPD pressures.
- 6.5 To achieve the outcomes of 5.24 may require a review of the present role and responsibilities of Chartered Teachers across the authority, although such a review may be welcomed.
- 6.6 The aspirations of 5.25 are welcomed and build on the leadership work for Head Teachers already taking place in the Department.

7. NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 Scottish Government is presently reviewing the recommendations of the Report and will seek the views of all interested parties between now and the end of April.
- 7.2 Scottish Government has indicated their review of the recommendations will consider whether some, none, or all of the recommendations are to be formally adopted. It is anticipated decisions will be made within the context of recognising the constraints created by the present financial environment.
- 7.3 The Department will make a formal response to the recommendations and present this to Cabinet for approval, prior to submission to Scottish Government.

8. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The outcomes of these recommendations will impact on the Community Plan: Promoting Lifelong Learning.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There may be financial implications for the authority if the Department of Educational and Social Services plays a larger part in Initial Teacher Education. This remains to be quantified.

10. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

11. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 An increased role of the local authority in Initial Teacher Education may have potential policy implications which are yet to be quantified. The aspirations of the Report however fit well with the aims and values of Initial Teacher Education in the Department of Educational and Social Services.

12. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no risk implications arising as a result of this report.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are no equality impact issues arising from this report.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- i) consider the recommendations of the report;
- ii) approve the involvement of the Department of Educational and Social Services in any further review arising as a result of the recommendations; and
- iii) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

PD/AS
25.1.11

List of Background Reports

Members wishing further information should contact Andrew Sutherland, Head of Service: Schools on Tel: (01563) 576126

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