

**ANGUS COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

3 MARCH 2011

'TEACHING SCOTLAND'S FUTURE: REPORT OF A REVIEW OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND'

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to bring to the attention of the Education Committee the publication of the Donaldson review of teacher education in Scotland.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee:
- (i) note the background to this major review of teacher education in Scotland
 - (ii) note the key ideas explored in the review report
 - (iii) note that the main recommendations are likely to have far reaching implications for the teaching profession in Scotland and
 - (iv) note the initial officer response to the review recommendations set out in Section 5 of this report.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In November 2009 the Government invited Graham Donaldson, former Senior Chief Inspector, HM Inspectorate of Education, to review teacher education in Scotland.
- 2.2 The review exercise commenced in February 2010, concluded on schedule and the review report, available electronically at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/337626/0110852.pdf>, was published in December 2010.
- 2.3 It is quite clearly the case that the Government commissioned this review, in part, with a view to receiving recommendations about changes to teacher education which would support the teaching profession in Scotland in delivering the ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence.

3 OVERVIEW OF KEY IDEAS EXPLORED BY THE REVIEW

- 3.1 The Donaldson Review received 100 responses to its call for evidence across the Scottish educational community. It received in all 2500 responses to questionnaires issued to serving teachers. The evidence on which the review team have based their report draws in part on those responses, in part on detailed feedback from discussion forums which took place across Scotland, and in part from documentary evidence which HM Inspectorate of Education gathered from local authorities.
- 3.2 The analysis and the recommendations of the review report are predicated on what the authors of the report describe as five major ideas. These are that:
- The two most important and achievable ways in which school education can realise the high aspirations Scotland has for its young people are through supporting and strengthening, firstly, the quality of teaching, and secondly, the quality of leadership
 - Teaching should be recognised as both complex and challenging, requiring the highest standards of professional competence and commitment

- Leadership is based on fundamental values and habits of mind which must be acquired and fostered from entry into the teaching profession
- 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
- 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.

3.3 A simple scrutiny of these major ideas underscores the importance which the Scottish Government is likely to attach to the potential of the report's recommendations for facilitating changes in the professional environment of Scottish teachers which the successful implementation of the new curriculum almost certainly requires. The key recommendations of the review report are set out in the following section.

4 MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DONALDSON REVIEW

4.1 The review report provides fifty recommendations. These will require careful consideration by the Scottish Government in dialogue with local authorities, universities and teacher organisations. Many of the fifty recommendations have far reaching implications and may require to be considerably modified in view of the challenges of the current economic climate. The report's main recommendations can be summarised as follows:

- more rigorous selection of students for initial teacher education
- initial teacher education and induction to be planned in a single experience, offering Masters credits, and delivered through university/local authority partnerships
- phasing out of the traditional BEd degree to be replaced by concurrent degrees which provide aspiring teachers with degree-level knowledge as well as a teaching qualification
- stronger models of partnership among universities, local authorities, schools and individual teachers, such partnerships to be accredited by GTCS
- teachers to be assessed by trained school staff while on placement
- university-based educators to be reaccredited by GTCS and undertake an agreed programme of professional development each year
- university-based teacher educators to have a role in the development and delivery of the teacher induction scheme
- better selection and training of school-based teacher mentors
- roles of mentors and supporters of new teachers to be separated in order to remove perceived current tensions when both these roles are combined
- a new Standard for Active Registration (as part of a new suite of professional standards) for serving teachers to ensure that experienced teachers continue to refresh their knowledge and skills
- Chartered Teacher status to be awarded on evidence of improved teaching skills and significant impact on the learning of pupils and colleagues [local authorities to have greater control on the number of teachers seeking Chartered Teacher status]
- an established scheme for 'national leaders of education' so that 'high performing Head Teachers' can contribute to 'system-level leadership' of education.

5 INITIAL OBSERVATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

5.1 This review is both welcome and timely. Its impressively comprehensive coverage of the main challenges facing teacher education now and in the future provides a sound basis for designing a high quality framework for the professional development of teachers which will be fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the 21st century school curriculum.

- 5.2 Fittingly, the report envisages teacher education operating as a continuum spanning a career and requiring much better alignment and partnership working amongst schools, authorities, universities and national organisations. The need for a new framework encompassing initial education, induction of teachers and career-long professional learning is unarguable.
- 5.3 Similarly, the report's strong emphasis on the need to create a reinvigorated approach to 21st century teacher professionalism is most welcome. The clear view offered in the report about the importance of building the capacity of teachers to be open to learning and to attain high levels of pedagogical expertise, including deep knowledge of what they are teaching, wholly accords with the philosophy and practice in relation to the professional learning of teachers which have been in place in this authority over the past decade. The commendable emphasis on teachers becoming pedagogically more confident and competent sits well with this Council's longstanding commitment to enhance the pedagogical skills of teachers, in significant measure, through the delivery of a comprehensive programme of Co-operative Learning training in which all teachers are expected to participate. That commitment is the subject of a separate report being considered by the Education Committee at this cycle.
- 5.4 The review's call for new and strengthened models of partnership among local authorities, schools and individual teachers is supported in principle. Major changes to partnership arrangements are likely to have significant financial implications and will need to be the subject of careful and well considered dialogue between the key partners. On a related note, it should be noted that colleagues in universities are already seeking early discussion with Directors of Education about the implications of this review.
- 5.5 In considering possible ways of developing new improved teacher education partnerships, the report enthusiastically promotes the establishment of 'hub teaching schools' 'as a focal point for research, learning and teaching. While the term 'hub teaching schools' is novel, the concept is not entirely new. Over the past three decades individual schools whose success in supporting student teachers was well known were, in essence, targeted by teacher education institutions. The more systematic approach to establishing 'hub teaching schools' (now recommended similar to the 'teaching hospitals' model for the education of doctors) merits careful consideration. While the priority involvement of schools which, by virtue of their expertise and resources, are well equipped to teach student teachers is understandable, there are potential disadvantages in concentrating the education and training of student teachers in too few schools. That approach might diminish the capacity of the majority of schools to strengthen the role of **all** qualified teachers as peer educators – a role which the review report is keen to promote.
- 5.6 The report highlights the importance of a career-long education pathway for teachers which would include opportunities for all teachers to demonstrate leadership skills and indeed to develop particular leadership skills, including the skills required by aspiring school leaders.
- 5.7 Given the importance of schools being led by able, confident and well trained Head Teachers it is a major ambition of this review to make more systematic provision for the professional development of Head Teachers than is the case at present. The report explores an emerging interest in providing experienced and able Head Teachers with more direct opportunities to engage with the education system at national level.
- 5.8 One of its specific recommendations relates to the establishment of a scheme for 'national leaders' of education which would enable 'experienced high performing' Head Teachers to contribute to 'system-level leadership' for education in Scotland. The precise meanings of 'national leaders' and system-level leadership are none too clear. This emerging nomenclature needs to be elucidated in discussion with national agencies. While the need to ensure high quality career-long professional development opportunities for Head Teachers is unarguable, the review report appears to underestimate the lack of current opportunities for Head Teachers to contribute to system-level leadership, both local and national.
- 5.9 As indicated in paragraph 5.4 above, arrangements have already been put in place for teacher education partners to engage with the recommendations of this review. These arrangements include opportunities for education authorities and Scottish Government officials to begin to explore new approaches to developing school leaders. Such early reactions to the review reflect its undoubted success in launching a debate which is much needed.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the terms of this report.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from the consideration of this report.

8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The issues dealt with in this Report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required.

9 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

9.1 This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Single Outcome Agreement:

- Young people and adults in Angus maximise their potential through learning opportunities (National Outcome 3)
- Children and young people in Angus will have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem to the fullest potential (National Outcome 4)
- Children and young people in Angus will be involved in decisions that affect them, have their voices heard and be encouraged to play an active and responsible role in their communities (National Outcome 11)

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law & Administration.

NEIL LOGUE
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.