

Perspective paper

Schools and community regeneration

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A wide range of professions and organisations are working to help regenerate Scotland's most deprived communities. Individually, and working in partnership with others, their aim is to ensure that the people living in these communities are given opportunities to develop skills, confidence and resources to take advantage of the opportunities open to them – a process that the Scottish Executive calls “closing the opportunity gap.”

As well as bringing their own skills, knowledge and experience to the task, each organisation has its own perspectives about what's important, and the best ways to make things happen.

[The Scottish Centre for Regeneration](#) is publishing this series of Perspectives papers so that these views can be shared, as well as highlighting the contribution that different professions make to the community regeneration process. The papers

are also part of our aim to promote joint working between professionals involved in community regeneration.

More information about community regeneration can be found in our [FAQs: community regeneration](#).

This Perspective looks at the contribution of schools and teachers to community regeneration. Questions about what the profession can contribute to regeneration and how other professions might work in partnership with it need more debate. The paper concentrates on these issues.

Staff of the Scottish Executive Education Department, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, Learning and Teaching Scotland and others have been consulted in drawing up this paper. None of these organisations bear any responsibility for any errors of fact or for the opinions expressed here.

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Teaching in Scotland – a brief profile

All teachers in local authority schools in Scotland must be registered with the [General Teaching Council](#) for Scotland. To register you must either have completed a course of Initial Teacher Education at one of the Scottish Universities or an equivalent.

In September 2005 the total number of teachers (full and part time) in publicly funded schools in Scotland was 50,517:

- 45% in primary schools
- 51% in secondary schools
- 4% in special schools.

Scotland's relatively small independent sector employed 3,354 (full time equivalent) teachers.

Since '[A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century](#)' (2001) – the agreement following the much-discussed McCrone Report – the profession has been divided at both primary and secondary level into Classroom Teachers, Principal Teachers (with some managerial responsibilities), a new grade of Chartered Teachers (who earn an increased salary for demonstrating enhanced teaching skills in the classroom), Deputy Headteachers and Headteachers.

In that agreement, it was acknowledged for the first time that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a career-long process. All teachers now have a contractual commitment of 35 hours for CPD per year. CPD should consist of a balance of personal professional development, courses, school based activities and other activity designed to meet both personal needs and wider priorities. Working with colleagues from other agencies concerned with children and young people is encouraged.

[HMIE](#) (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education) carries out inspections of every school in Scotland, as well as pre-school and further education establishments, the education functions of local authorities, including psychological services, child protection and [community learning and development \(CLD\)](#).

Inspectors gather evidence using professional judgements based on wide experience of education. They use the indicators in the '[How good is our school?](#)' framework to inspect schools. However the framework is, first and foremost, a guide to self-evaluation, which schools are encouraged to use to promote improvement.

Other key organisations include the [Scottish Qualifications Authority](#). This is the national body responsible for qualifications other than degrees. It develops new ones, gives approval to each type of qualification ('accreditation'), organises marking and assessment and issues certificates. [Learning and Teaching Scotland](#) is the lead organisation for developing and supporting the Scottish curriculum and provides information and resources for schools and education authorities.

What is the policy framework for teaching and regeneration?

Legislation

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 requires education authorities to provide school education for children within their area. The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 requires local authorities and schools to plan, monitor and report on improvement in education. Each school must produce a School Development Plan, updated each year, setting its own objectives and showing how it will contribute to local authority wide ones.

That Act also clearly defined the purpose of school education for the first time: to encourage the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the young person to their fullest potential.

Policy

[National priorities](#) for education were approved by the Scottish Parliament in December 2000 and are, in summary:

- Achievement and Attainment: To raise standards of educational attainment for all, especially in

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literacy and numeracy and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement

- Framework for Learning: To ... develop the skills of teachers, the self discipline of pupils and... school environments.
- Inclusion and Equality: to promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education.
- Values and Citizenship: to work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with others and...the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society
- Learning for Life: To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition.

Many of the Scottish Executive's educational policies are summarised in '[Ambitious, Excellent Schools](#)' (2004). The philosophy which that sets out is: "The comprehensive schools we want to see are rich, colourful and diverse, offering choice for pupils and with ambition for themselves and for... every one of their pupils. No one in Scotland should be required to select a school to get the first rate education they deserve and are entitled to."

What is the contribution of schools and teaching to community regeneration?

Scottish schools have a central role in social inclusion, and therefore in regeneration. They contribute in a fundamental way through teaching and learning that raise standards of attainment and achievement. They also do so in many other ways, including:

- taking steps to include all young people in benefiting from education
- preparing young people to improve their own health, take an active part in their communities and be ready for lifelong learning

- working in partnership with agencies and communities.

Five of the Scottish Executive's ten '[Closing the Opportunity Gap](#)' targets, set in 2004, are directly relevant. The central one is:

'Increase the average tariff score of the lowest attaining 20% of Secondary 4 pupils by 5% by 2008'

This target compares the average score of all local authorities in 2004 and 2008 on an extended version of the tariff used for University and College admissions.

Three targets are also directly relevant to raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils:

'Reduce the proportion of 16-19 year olds who are not in education, training or employment by 2008' (from 13.2% in 2004).

'By 2007 ensure that at least 50% of all "looked after" young people leaving care have entered education, employment or training' (compared to 36% in 2004).

'To promote community regeneration of the most deprived neighbourhoods through improvements by 2008 in employability, education, health, access to local services, and quality of the local environment'

A further target has direct implications for partnership work with schools:

'By 2008, ensure that children and young people who need it have an integrated package of appropriate health, care and education support'.

Attainment and achievement: changing the curriculum

Raising attainment and achievement requires special attention to the needs of the lowest attaining and the socially excluded. But an appropriate curriculum for everyone is also vital.

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[‘A Curriculum for Excellence’](#), the report of a national review group, is currently being put into practice at all levels of school. It says that ‘attainment’ is not just about passing examinations. The overall aims are to enable all children to develop their capacities as:

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors to society.

A new curriculum for children and young people from ages 3-18 is being developed for implementation from 2008. Amongst its aims are:

- smoother transition between different stages of education
- new ways of recognising young people’s achievements
- opportunities for improving work on ‘cross-cutting’ topics, such as sustainable development, health citizenship and enterprise
- incorporation of [Skills-for-Work](#) courses, to develop general skills which enhance employability.

The North Lanarkshire Diploma is a record of the achievements of secondary pupils in areas including Values and Citizenship, Enterprise, Environment, Community, Skills for the Future, Health and Personal Interests. It takes account of the Confederation of British Industry’s (CBI) views on employability and is endorsed with their logo.

Low attainment and social inclusion

Pupils with low levels of attainment have their life chances considerably reduced. Many end up not in education, employment or training (the ‘NEET’ group). For some, their needs will be met as part of the normal work of a school through high quality learning experiences and personal

support. For others, additional support is required. The national strategy for the NEET group, [‘More Choices, More Chances’](#) has as one main focus achieving positive school leaver destinations for young people. Implementing this strategy is also seen as very much a challenge for community regeneration.

The HMIE publication [‘Missing Out’](#) (2006) summarises the factors that lead to children being at risk of missing out on educational opportunities:

- Learning environment – unsuitable learning and teaching, ethos or curriculum; poor relationships; low attainment, lack of incentive and stigma.
- Family circumstances – deprivation and poverty; parental health problems or drug/alcohol misuse; young carers; young parents; looked after children.
- Health or disability – sensory impairments; language difficulties; autistic spectrum disorders; learning difficulties; mental health problems; drug/alcohol/substance abuse.
- Social or emotional factors – bullying; discrimination; challenging behaviour; offending; truanting.

[‘Missing Out’](#) looks at approaches that have been shown to work in improving the attainment of the lowest-attaining pupils. High quality teaching is of course important. Successful approaches include:

- a flexible curriculum, including the involvement of colleges, CLD providers and others
- early action at primary school, including early literacy programmes
- approaches targeted on individuals such as revision classes and supported study.

The leadership and ethos of a school matter too, including:

- celebrating achievement at every opportunity
- a strong commitment to inclusion, equality and fairness

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- seeking and acting upon the views of pupils
- being clear which pupils need support and intervening as soon as things start to go wrong.

Several successful approaches require partnership working, for example:

- targeted support for families, for example home-link workers and family learning initiatives
- working closely with other schools, colleges and services for children
- home visits to the families of primary pupils to encourage parental involvement in, for example, literacy programmes
- schools being “involved in projects for community regeneration to develop skills of citizenship and responsibility”.

It is perhaps true to say that at one time schools tended to view outside agencies as places to which they referred problems that they felt they could not solve, rather than as partners in finding solutions. Nowadays agencies are more likely to work together to resolve the problems of individual children.

In one authority, local people were trained and employed as ‘parent enablers’ to work with parents to develop their literacy skills alongside their children.

In another, one primary school introduced initial careers education for P7 pupils. This included visits to local businesses and an FE college. College staff and students became involved with teachers and parents in improvements to the school grounds. The headteacher undertook a placement with a local business.

Several other aspects of school policy are crucial to improving attainment. Consistent and effective approaches to improving attendance, reducing exclusions and supporting pupils who have been excluded from school are necessary. Councils are required by law to ensure that a full education is provided to those excluded from school.

Much innovative work is done in partnership with the voluntary sector. The [Pupil Inclusion Network](#) brings together people in that sector who work in and out of school with pupils who are excluded, disaffected or disengaged. Approaches tend to be tailored to the individual, setting goals which may require support from people with teaching, social work and many other skills. Improving behaviour in schools, and dealing with challenging behaviour when it happens, is important. The Scottish Executive’s Action Plan ‘[Better Behaviour – Better Learning](#)’ promotes ‘whole school’ policies on managing behaviour, and supporting teachers to promote positive behaviour. Three local authorities are piloting schemes of ‘restorative practice’, using negotiation and adult or ‘peer’ mediators to help disruptive pupils take responsibility for their actions. Other advice and examples are available at the [Better Behaviour Scotland](#)’ website.

Alloa Academy won a national award for improving behaviour through a system in which pupils received positive recognition and rewards for complying with baseline norms of behaviour such as attending school, being on time and doing homework, rather than only being penalised for breaking them.

Personal support for learning has been [reviewed](#) recently. The main aims include:

- build on what used to be called ‘guidance’, integrating its work with Support for Learning and behaviour support into a single framework
- make it clear that personal support and advice to pupils is a responsibility of all teachers, though some still have a specialist role.

The Scottish Executive [believes that](#) “there is nothing inevitable about looked after children doing less well in education”. It is currently funding 18 pilot initiatives aimed at improving educational outcomes for them. Working in partnership with parents, social workers etc is a crucial factor.

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Supporting young people with additional needs

When people speak about ‘social inclusion’ in schools, they often mean the treatment of young people who have special educational needs. Social inclusion is actually a much broader objective. The definition of ‘special educational needs’ traditionally only applied to young people with very particular types of learning needs. The new concept of ‘additional support needs’ refers to any child or young person who, for whatever reason, requires additional support for learning. It was introduced by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and the associated [code of practice](#).

Additional support needs can arise from any factor which causes a barrier to learning. For instance, support may be required for a child or young person who is being bullied, has behavioural difficulties, has learning difficulties, is a parent or young carer, has a sensory or mobility impairment, is on the child protection register, is bereaved, does not have English or Gaelic as a first language, or indeed has exceptional abilities.

Schools cannot provide all the necessary support themselves. The Act places duties on other agencies to work in partnership with schools. According to HMIE ‘schools need to be more proactive in seeking and expecting such support’. The Act also requires education authorities to help young people with additional support needs to make the transition from school to post-school life successfully. It places a duty on authorities to request information from the agencies which are likely to be involved with the child or young person on leaving school.

Examples of additional support within schools:

- support in class by an English as Additional Language teacher for a child whose first language is not English
- use of voice recognition software by a child with dyslexia
- tutorial support from a Support for Learning teacher to help with reading.

Examples involving partnerships:

- social work support to help a young person remain drug free
- counselling provided by a voluntary agency for a child coping with bereavement
- specialist equipment from physiotherapy or occupational therapy
- special careers support to look at choices in preparation for leaving school.

A small number of children and young people have additional support needs arising from complex or multiple factors which require a high degree of co-ordination of support from schools and other agencies. For them the education authority must prepare Co-ordinated Support Plans.

Since 2003 there has been a [presumption](#) that children should be educated in mainstream rather than special schools. There are broadly worded exceptions, covering situations where this would not be best for the child or other pupils, or would be unreasonably expensive. But “it shall be presumed that those circumstances arise only exceptionally”.

Education authorities are under the same obligations as others to avoid discrimination. The Scottish Parliament has required them to produce accessibility strategies covering three main areas: how they will improve access to the curriculum, school information and the physical environment of the school for pupils with disabilities.

Preparation for life

Raising the achievement of young people is a fundamental contribution to the regeneration of any community. But schools can also do much more to prepare people for life, often in ways that require partnerships with other organisations.

Education/business partnership is an important part of many regeneration programmes. The Scottish Executive’s strategy for ‘enterprise education’,

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[‘Determined to Succeed’](#), is intended not just to foster an enterprising approach to business, but to ‘help Scotland’s young people develop self-confidence, self-reliance and ambition to achieve their goals – in work and in life’. Businesses, from small local firms to multinational companies, play a central role.

[Scottish Business in the Community](#) supports a ‘Closing the Gap’ initiative in Glasgow. A team of staff from 20+ companies work with five schools which seemed to be performing less well than others, offering help with improving employability skills, academic achievement and health.

In the Royal Bank of Scotland’s Face to Face with Finance (F2F) programme secondary school pupils learn not just about enterprise but also about personal finance and money management.

Scottish secondary pupils are legally entitled to [vocational experience](#) (not necessarily always ‘work experience’) as part of the strategy. It is increasingly seen not just as a preparation for work but as a contribution to developing skills for life.

Support in the transition from school to work or further education is provided by [Careers Scotland](#), which is currently part of the Scottish Enterprise network. Every secondary school has a careers adviser who is either based in the school or shared. Careers Scotland also works with a large number of organisations in all sectors who deliver services to young people and adults.

The [Activate](#) programme is for pupils about to leave school who need additional support to develop employability skills. After a programme of personal development and career planning activities they continue to receive support for a further year.

The partnership between schools and Further Education establishments is crucial to allowing greater choice and flexibility in the curriculum. The [Scottish Executive](#) sees it as ‘building the foundations of a lifelong learning society’. By 2007 all secondary and special schools in Scotland must have a partnership with at least one college.

The Dundee Building Crafts Apprentice Initiative is run in partnership with Dundee College, the council’s Contract Services, local employers and others. In S3 pupils get taster experience at the College in a variety of trades. In S4 they choose a trade and are linked to a future employer. On leaving school they attend College to get a vocational qualification in their trade. Finally they join their employers and can complete an apprenticeship. The initiative has been extended to include care, hairdressing, hospitality and motor vehicle maintenance.

All schools should take steps to become [Health Promoting Schools](#) by 2007. This involves:

- formal and informal learning about health
- a safe and healthy school environment
- health services for young people
- involvement of the family and wider community in promoting health.

Schools are encouraged to form partnerships with primary care health services (the school nursing service is one aspect); and with community groups and voluntary organisations such as healthy living centres, youth projects, drug agencies and environmental organisations.

[‘Hungry for Success’](#) set national nutritional standards for school meals and required all special and primary schools to meet them in 2004 and all secondary schools by December 2006. It emphasises that this must be a part of wider health promotion, with consistency between what is taught in the classroom and what is provided in dining rooms,

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vending machines and clubs. HMIE's [report on progress](#) quotes examples of schools working with food co-operatives, local businesses and health professionals.

Another [national objective](#) is that, by 2022, 80% of all children aged 16 and under should undertake at least one hour of moderate activity on most days of the week. Sportscotland takes the lead in promoting '[Active Schools](#)', and is developing a network of 630 Co-ordinators to plan and deliver activities in school and community settings.

Schools have the ability to make a positive impact on many other community regeneration issues. Many safety issues affect schools. The promotion of [Safe Routes to Schools](#) is one important initiative. Environmental education not only raises young people's awareness, but offers opportunities for direct involvement in local issues.

Nearly 2000 Scottish schools currently take part in the international Eco-Schools programme to encourage young people to become involved in the environment and sustainable development. The core topics are litter, waste minimisation, water, energy, school grounds, health and well-being, biodiversity and transport.

Key partnerships

We have already looked at many ways in which partnership working is vital to raising attainment, achieving social inclusion and preparing pupils for life. School liaison groups, also known by other names such as 'joint assessment teams', bring together all of the key professionals involved in assessment and planning for individual children. They are likely to comprise school staff, social workers, specialists such as an educational psychologist, and representatives from organisations such as the police, careers or CLD/ youth service.

Partnerships with a wider focus have also been created. One major factor has been the spread of what were initially known as 'New Community Schools' and then 'Integrated Community Schools' (ICS), or other local names, such as '[New Learning Communities](#)' in Glasgow. The original idea was to bring together teachers and childcare professionals, social workers, community learning workers and health personnel in a team under a single management. However HMIE [reported](#) that ICS often sat alongside other initiatives, rather than bringing them together and giving them greater coherence.

The [national target](#) is not now to make every school an ICS. Instead, 'by 2007 every school in Scotland will participate in delivering Integrated Children's Services' (also, confusingly, referred to as ICS). No two local authorities have the same system, but all are aiming to provide better access to services including:

- 'one door' entry to multidisciplinary or multi-agency services
- single assessments, support and information sharing between agencies
- ensuring that contact and support is not lost when for example there is a school exclusion, eviction or GP deregistration.

Angus Council has five levels of approach for education and social work services to meet children's needs jointly, from first level support e.g. by a teacher, through networking and case conference to a high level Resource Management Team and finally a Joint Directorate.

As part of the development of [Community Planning](#) agencies are now required to draw together their previous separate plans for school education, children's social work, child health and youth justice into integrated Children's Services Plans. New approaches to integrating the delivery of these services are developing. Some areas base these around Integrated Community Schools, others organise around services for specific client groups.

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A system of integrated inspection of children's services will be introduced by 2008.

Schools also have the opportunity to use the structures set up to consult on and deliver Community Planning to improve their links with other community services.

In Dundee, the Head Teacher of Menzieshill High School chairs the local Neighbourhood Partnership Network. This is one of the city's five forums for local Community Planning.

Community Engagement

Other key partnerships are with parents and pupils. Schools can be vital assets and organisations in a community. They offer one of the most important ways in which members of a community meet and get to know each other, stimulate voluntary effort, for example the running of After-school Clubs, and provide the venue for many community activities, including a great deal of CLD work. Schools can also contribute to CLD work directly.

Gullane Primary School invited all over-50s in the area to weekly computer learning sessions after school hours, mentored by P7 pupils

Schools also have a responsibility to [involve parents](#) and carers, both directly in the education of their own children and in the activities and policies of the school. Amongst the features of an inclusive school are:

- good arrangements to keep parents involved in supporting children's learning
- accessible communications, in relevant languages and plain English
- programmes for parents' own continued learning.

Parents can also get involved through Parent or Parent Teacher Associations. The system of School Boards is being replaced by [Parent Councils](#), which will be more varied in their approach but are intended to involve more people directly.

Other features of an inclusive school are:

- an appropriate degree of responsibility by pupils for their own learning and often for supporting others
- consultation with pupils on school life and whether the school is meeting its aims.

Wider community involvement by pupils, through volunteering, local investigations and global links, is also important.

Ten primary schools in Aberdeen worked with libraries and other agencies involved in literacy work to establish a Reading Bus that parks in playgrounds to attract parents who don't feel comfortable in the school and is used for things like reading clubs. The success of fundraising and marketing was largely credited to an Enterprise Committee, composed of one P6 pupil from each school. Children chaired the meetings, took the minutes and gave presentations to businesses and even the Scottish Parliament.

Pupil involvement can be part of [education for citizenship](#). The Scottish approach differs from other parts of the United Kingdom. In Scottish schools Education for Citizenship is not a separate subject. It permeates a number of areas of the curriculum. A Curriculum for Excellence aims to free up more time in the school day for pupils to experience activities which broaden their understanding of the world.

What are the challenges for teaching professionals?

We identified some possible future challenges after discussions with people working in education. Many more could no doubt be added.

Contributing effectively to community regeneration

- Finding better ways of recognising the other achievements of pupils whose examination 'tariff score' is low

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- Building and demonstrating the 'softer' skills that employers are looking for
- Ensuring that the lessons of Integrated Community Schools on how to work in partnership to improve behaviour are not lost in new structures
- Gaining the skills to work to a common vision and shared values for joint assessment and co-ordinated care of pupils requiring support

Developing a real role in Community Planning

- Keeping the system flexible enough to recognise that different agencies need to be involved with different children
- Making sure the schools contribution is more than just a head teachers sitting on a committee.
- Ensuring that initiatives such as Eco-Schools, promoting volunteering, citizenship and enterprise etc, are seen as real contributions to the Community Planning and regeneration processes, whatever the labels
- Understanding what the wide range of policy initiatives require of them and what their role is

Wider issues and trends affecting the profession

- Using the new flexibility in the curriculum effectively
- Making 'joined-up working' a universal reality before integrated inspections of all children's services begin
- Ensuring effective parental involvement in children's education. Only 27% of a child's week is spent in school
- Preparing young people to take part in life-long learning
- Renewing the profession: the average age of teachers is 44, with a major peak in the late forties/early fifties, who will begin to retire in the coming years

- Dealing with faster social change, family complexity, and in some cases children suffering new forms of social and psychological damage
- Economic change, creating uncertainty about what skills the labour market will need in future.

The Scottish Centre for Regeneration is part of Communities Scotland, the Scottish Executive's housing and regeneration agency.

Useful Contacts

Scottish Executive Education Department
Victoria Quay
EDINBURGH
EH6 6QQ
0131 556 8400 or 0845 774 1741
Email: ceu@scotland.gov.uk

Learning and Teaching Scotland
The Optima,
58 Robertson Street,
Glasgow G2 8DU
08700 100 297
Email: enquiries@LTScotland.org.uk
www.ltscotland.org.uk (this web site contains information on almost all the issues covered in this paper)

HMIE (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education)
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA.
01506 600200
www.hmie.gov.uk/

General Teaching Council for Scotland
Clerwood House
96 Clermiston Road
Edinburgh EH12 6UT
0131 314 6000
Email: gtcs@gtcs.org.uk
www.gtcs.org.uk