



## A message from Bill Maxwell, HM Senior Chief Inspector, HMIE

I am very pleased to be introducing my first edition of *HMIE Briefing* since taking up post in February, and I look forward to introducing many more editions in the years ahead. I know the important role that the *Briefing* plays in allowing us to communicate directly to practitioners in education and children's services settings across the whole of Scotland. This issue of *Briefing* focuses on ways in which we can collectively improve learning and teaching for Scotland's young people and adult learners. With that in mind, we are keen to share some key messages from recent HMIE publications and good practice conferences and to give you an update on the impact of our new inspection models.

As a recent 'returner' to HMIE, it has been clear to me that, working with colleagues across education and the wider public services, our staff have achieved a great deal over the last couple of years. This is reflected not only in the introduction of new inspection approaches, but also in the considerable range of other work that inspectors have undertaken to help guide and support improvement across the education system.

I know the Autumn 2008 edition of *Briefing*, highlighted the principles underpinning our the new approaches to inspection and review, in particular the central principle of making inspection feel like a process which is done 'with you' rather than 'to you'. Since that time, we have received strong endorsement of the new, more streamlined inspection models and the shorter, more focused

reports. There seems to be increasing recognition that inspectors are learning together with staff through open and honest exchanges about strengths and areas for development. Feedback from staff confirms that they appreciate the opportunity to 'set out their stall' at the start of the inspection.

The new option of finishing the 'formal' part of an inspection early, when we find that self-evaluation is leading to improvements in learning is working well. As a result, inspection teams have been able to change their focus during the inspection in 47 primary schools, including 12 with a nursery class, nine special schools, 14 secondary schools and 12 learning communities.

At the other end of the spectrum, we have also encountered schools in which the inspection has revealed significant concerns and where follow-through activity has been necessary. It is vital that the inspection process continues to robustly identify areas where improvements are needed. We are committed to working constructively with providers in the best interest of learners, where this is required.

There have also been notable developments in the approaches to inspection and review across other sectors and services. We have introduced revised approaches to college reviews and new approaches to inspecting child protection, learning communities and educational psychology services as well as an innovative model of validated self-evaluation for local authorities. We are also entering a period of intense activity on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions to

evaluate the effectiveness of the work of work-based learning providers.

We certainly live in exciting times in Scottish education. The implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence* represents a step change in preparing our young people as learners in the rapidly changing world of the 21st century. The coming year will challenge everyone to think more creatively about how to take forward the necessary developments in ways that are sustainable and inclusive. Financial constraints will require all of us to think differently and harness resources more effectively.

I hope you find this *Briefing* useful and look forward to learning from many of you as I get the chance to engage with front-line practice across Scotland in the years and months ahead.



## Making best use of what HMI learn about good practice

Identifying successful and effective practice is a key aim of HMIE's work, especially in inspections. We want to be able to make use of this valuable knowledge in ways which will achieve the greatest impact, most widely. We have therefore been reviewing our approach to good practice as part of our own self-evaluation. As a result we have been making a number of changes from January 2010.

We are now inviting senior staff to identify examples of the most successful practice as part of the initial self-evaluation presentation to the inspection team in pre-school, school and learning community inspections. Inspectors want to be directed to good practice and to see the impact of this on the experiences and achievements of children and young people. Effective practice identified in this way will feature in the text of inspection reports rather than in separate good practice sections. This approach replaces the good practice proforma which we

formerly invited senior staff to complete before an inspection.

Where a team identifies exceptionally effective practice which is likely to be particularly interesting or helpful to others they will note the details and we will consider developing material about it for inclusion on the *Journey to Excellence* website

[www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk](http://www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk).

We are making access to highly effective practice simpler by placing all of this type of material available in one place - the *Journey to Excellence* website. We have closed the good practice part of the HMIE website and are reviewing the many examples of good practice in pre-school establishments, schools and community learning which were displayed there. We will include a selection of the most interesting and effective examples in the *Journey to Excellence* website. This will include practice which makes the greatest impact on learners or successfully addresses challenges.

For sector-leading practice in colleges, we are continuing to develop the 'Showcase for Excellence' area on our website. Good practice will continue to feature in child protection reports until the end of their inspection cycle. We will make these easily accessible via the website and in the future through *Journey to Excellence*.

We have held a full programme of good practice conferences over the last 18 months or so (18 in all since April 2008), in partnership with Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) and the many schools and centres who have contributed. We have included articles on the most recent conferences in this edition of *Briefing*. We want as many as possible to be able to learn from the very good practice which schools and other centres have been displaying at these conferences. We have therefore made videos, presentations and workshop materials from these conferences available on the LTS website.

# Curriculum for Excellence Good Practice Conferences

## Autism spectrum disorders

This conference held on 20 November 2009 explored the education of children and young people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The themes of the conference were inclusion, assessment/intervention and post school intervention, set in the context of *Curriculum for Excellence*. The keynote speaker, Rita Jordan, is nationally renowned for her work in ASD. She provided an overview of recent research on approaches known to impact positively on outcomes for children and young people with ASD.

Delegates were encouraged to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of the needs of young people with Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- Think imaginatively about the teaching and learning approaches they use with young people on the autism spectrum and how these approaches could also be effective with other learners.
- Consider how they could develop well-supported opportunities for inclusion in mainstream settings.
- Reflect on ways to address young people's communication needs, developing class and whole school 'total-communication' learning environments.
- Explore the importance of developing strong parental partnerships with support networks across authorities.
- Develop their thinking about transition arrangements to ensure positive entry to primary and secondary schools and to promote positive leavers' destinations.



## INSPIRING! success in the expressive arts



This conference aimed to highlight the different ways that practitioners across all education sectors use the arts to help young people develop their skills, improve their confidence and contribute positively within their communities. Eric Booth, one of America's leading arts and arts education experts, gave an inspiring keynote address. He emphasised the importance of creativity as a central tenet of new thinking around curriculum development. Joan Parr, Head of Education at the Scottish Arts Council called on conference delegates to work even better together to find ways of developing joint approaches to education with help from professional arts companies. Liz Lochhead, one of Scotland's leading poets and playwrights emphasised the importance of open-ended thinking amongst young people.

The keynote speakers addressed a range of themes aimed at stimulating thinking, discussion and action. In particular, conference delegates were asked to consider how best to:

- Give children and young people the confidence to take an open-ended approach to the expressive arts and to explore themes without answers or clear solutions.
- Think about the parallels between creativity and successful learning in general.
- Use this thinking to consider how learning in other subjects or in interdisciplinary learning can be enhanced.
- Make time to find out how technology can support creativity.

Delegates were treated to first-class performances by young people from the *Dance School of Scotland* based at Knightswood Secondary School, the *North Lanarkshire Jazz Band* and *Glasgow City Council String Quartet* - all showcasing the very best of Scotland's young talent.

## Putting the Vision into Action: The Early Years Framework

The Early Years Framework was the subject of a good practice conference held in Glasgow last year. The Framework is about giving young children the best start in life and sets out the steps the Scottish Government, local partners and practitioners in early years services need to take to start on their journey. At the conference, Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years, set out the Scottish Government's continuing commitment to support and develop early years provision in taking forward the Framework. The audience was captivated by the presentation from our keynote speaker, Detective Chief Superintendent John Carmochan. He outlined the work of the Strathclyde Police's Violence Reduction Unit in supporting vulnerable groups and highlighted the importance of the Framework.

Delegates heard from early years colleagues who have been successful in taking forward innovative practice. Barnardo's Paisley Threads delivered a powerful message from young parents who have been supported in taking control of their own lives. The HMIE website includes the publication, *Positive Start, Positive Outcomes* which exemplifies the positive work being done across Scotland in the ten elements of the Framework.

[www.hmie.gov.uk/publications.aspx](http://www.hmie.gov.uk/publications.aspx)

Key messages from the conference included:

- The Early Years Framework applies to everybody delivering services for children, young people and adults and is not just for those practitioners in the early years.
- It's about staff across services asking themselves, 'what are we doing to take forward the Early Years Framework?', 'how can we better support vulnerable children and young people, including young parents?'
- The Early Years Framework is about early intervention rather than crisis intervention.
- It encourages people across services to work together and pool resources to improve the life chances of children, young people and their adult parents or carers.



More examples of practice and online CPD resources from the HMIE/LTS conferences are available from:

[www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/sharingpractice/hmieltsgoodpractice](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/sharingpractice/hmieltsgoodpractice)

# Curriculum for Excellence Good Practice Conferences

## **The power of words: language, literacy and communication in religious and moral education**

This conference was held in Dundee on 12 November 2009 to support implementation of religious and moral education (RME). The overall aim of the conference was to explore the significant contribution which effective teaching and learning in RME can make to improving literacy. In the opening address, Frank Crawford HMCI challenged the audience to consider the fundamental values of *Curriculum for Excellence* and their direct link with the aims of religious and moral education. Wisdom, compassion, justice and integrity are at the heart of religious and moral issues whether these are explored from a religious or ethical standpoint. *Curriculum for Excellence* makes it clear that effective religious and moral education provides the environment and tools for learners to explore the rich variety of religious and secular viewpoints they encounter as they progress through life. Frank called this 'creating space for learning'. Anna Magnusson, former BBC Producer of Religion suggested that local, national and international news stories

provide a rich context for developing skills of analysis, interpretation and personal reflection.

Delegates were encouraged to:

- Consider how teaching and learning in RME can contribute to improving literacy.
- Develop approaches to classroom discussion and debate which encourage deep understanding of religious and moral issues.
- Explore opportunities for using Information Communications Technology (ICT) to promote discussion of religious and moral issues with a wider audience.
- Consider the importance of symbolic language and stories in developing knowledge and understanding of beliefs, practices and traditions.

Delegates who attended the conference and those who wish to know more, are encouraged to continue sharing good practice and discussion of ideas through the RME pages of *Glow*. So get glowing – the RME discussion forum needs you!

## Progress with Curriculum for Excellence

Since August, inspectors have seen the practical implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence* gather momentum. At the moment, considerable variation exists within and across establishments in both the pace and impact of the changes that have been introduced.

So how confident can we be about progress? And, 'cutting to the chase', what difference is it making to the learning and achievement of our young people? Management Board has asked all partners to provide it with regular reports about the success and progress of introducing *Curriculum for Excellence*.

In trying to answer these questions, HMIE's inspections and reviews are very important sources of evidence. Many of the 'indicators of progress' identified by the *Curriculum for Excellence* Management Board are aspects which already feature as part of the professional dialogue during inspection and review. Inspectors will have an increasing focus on these indicators in forthcoming

inspections as progress with *Curriculum for Excellence* accelerates this year. The aspects covered by the indicators are illustrated in the box below. The indicators will provide you with a useful set of headings for staff teams to use in evaluating your establishment's progress in addressing *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Inspectors see at first hand the impact of changes on learners. They will want to understand your thinking processes as you apply the ideas and principles of *Curriculum for Excellence*. They will discuss how you think the experiences and outcomes are best used to plan, assess and make changes to learning and teaching. And they will be interested in hearing about how you will be evaluating improvements. During inspection and review, inspectors will focus on the actions that you are using in your establishment to track progress with *Curriculum for Excellence*. Comments on these aspects will feature increasingly in our reports.

Actions to track *Curriculum for Excellence* progress.

- Using self-evaluation to ensure an appropriate emphasis on *Curriculum for Excellence* in improvement plan priorities.
- Reviewing the curriculum as a whole and identifying implications for improvements in practices.
- CPD supporting improvements in line with *Curriculum for Excellence*.
- Taking a coherent approach to improving the curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment.
- Beginning to review and develop arrangements for assessing progress and achievement.
- Developing a shared understanding of the standards and expectations within the experiences and outcomes.
- Partnerships supporting improvements through *Curriculum for Excellence*.
- Involving parents to help them to understand *Curriculum for Excellence*.

## **Response to learning in religious and moral education in Roman Catholic Schools (RERC)**

HMIE and LTS, with support from the Scottish Catholic Education Service, held the first good practice conference dedicated to supporting RERC. It provided a unique and valuable opportunity for those involved in delivering religious education in Roman Catholic schools to consider the guidance for RERC. Delegates considered the opportunities and challenges of creating appropriate contexts for reflection and faith development. Cardinal Keith O'Brien delivered an inspirational message about the enduring importance of high quality religious education in supporting the values of Catholic education.

Professor Jim Conroy, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Glasgow shared insights drawn from his research on developing religious literacy. A key message of the conference is the need for teachers to be open to sharing their own personal faith stories with youngsters as an important aspect of effective religious education. In a joint presentation, Frank Crawford HMCI and Michael McGrath, Director of the Scottish Catholic Education Service highlighted how tools such as *How good is our school?* and the recently launched *Shining the Light of Christ in the Catholic School* ([www.sces.com](http://www.sces.com)) can support effective self-evaluation for improvement.

Throughout the day, delegates were encouraged to:

- Explore the challenges of supporting children and young people in developing their own personal response to learning.
- Consider the importance of effective self-evaluation for improving religious and moral education in Roman Catholic Schools.
- Develop teaching and learning approaches which ensure deep understanding of the strands of faith.
- Evaluate approaches to the partnership between school, home and church in their community.

Practitioners are encouraged to continue conversations started at the conference and build a strong, supportive on-line community through the RERC pages of *Glow*.



# Curriculum for Excellence Good Practice Conferences

## We asked senior staff in different sectors to share their personal reactions to the new inspection models. Here is what they told us.

### **Jacqueline Burnett – Headteacher, St Andrew’s School and Nursery Class**

***St Andrew’s School and Nursery Class is a special school in Inverurie. It was inspected in September 2009.***

I thought that the process was rigorous and helped us to build on what we were already doing. The self-evaluation briefing is crucial and helped us to set the agenda to work with the inspection team. Our HMIE inspection administrator was also superb and supported the school very well. I also felt that there was a reduction in the level of documentation asked for by HMIE. For me, much of it is routine material that a school would need for a visit by a Quality Improvement Officer. Our parents in particular, really liked the new reports and I feel that the record of inspection findings (RIF) is the key document for schools. It clearly shows the audit trails and demonstrates how the inspection is tied to the self-evaluation briefing. We are going to use it to continue to make improvements in the school. Overall, the staff did not feel the inspection was too intrusive and, in the long run, it’s been of considerable benefit to us as a school as we move forward.

### **Geraldine Currie – Headteacher Dalreoch Primary School, West Dunbartonshire**

***Geraldine led her school through a successful follow-through inspection, following a disappointing initial inspection in 2007. While no one wants a poor inspection report, it can often become a major catalyst for change.***

We were all really pleased with our follow-through report that was published in March this year. This marked the end of a challenging time for the school that went back to a disappointing inspection in 2007. The authority put in a temporary senior team and eventually, I was appointed as an Acting Headteacher. I had to balance the need for change with the pace of change and taking staff with me. I quickly realised that providing leadership was one of my major challenges. There had been no consistency in leadership of the school and no shared sense of direction. However, credit to the staff – they were, and are, outstanding. They are all professionals and actually felt relieved that something was being done. Our follow-through inspection took place early in 2009 and we were among the first to experience the new model. I felt that we were well prepared and it was an important chance for us to mark the changes following the 2007 report. I was struck by the focus in discussions about wanting to find out what we were doing well and the improvements we’d made. We also had more time for professional discussion. The new follow-through report doesn’t include evaluations about our level of progress and that was a bit disappointing. However, the text does still refer to the improvements we’ve made and we had a very informative discussion during the verbal feedback. This provides me with information that I can share with staff as we continue making improvements and moving the school forward.



### **Ann Grant – Headteacher, Shawlands Academy Glasgow**

***Ann has recently led her school through an inspection in the new model. This follows several experiences of being involved in previous inspections which places Ann in a strong position to compare and contrast.***

The new model was a more positive experience and more collegiate. The inspection was still rigorous and thorough – HMIE were still trying to find the truth about the school – but the approach was different. It felt as if we were more engaged in a joint effort. There was more of a relationship and more of a feel of working together positively from the very start. My first point of contact was a phone call from the lead inspector. I felt able to talk about some of the issues that we were facing and about our self-evaluation. Once the inspection started, there were times when we were challenged and asked hard questions. But we also had the opportunity to discuss and debate. It’s not cosy, but you’ve got to be prepared to argue for your school. We have a number of chartered teachers on the staff, and I believe that they bring a unique contribution to the work of the school. We’ve had great success in international education, including a British Council award for excellent practice. That’s coordinated by a teacher who is on the Chartered Teacher programme and the dimension that she brings is a huge advantage. Since the inspection, I’ve become involved in mentoring colleagues who are preparing for inspection under the new model. My advice is straightforward. I say that it’s not something to be afraid of and it’s a useful experience for the school and for your own self-evaluation to be validated by an external agency. It’s important to develop a good working relationship early on with the lead inspector. I also highlight the importance of not being afraid to become involved in strong professional dialogue. Given our multi-ethnic background, an issue for us was that the questionnaires were only available in English and Polish. I hope that over time more and more translations into other languages will be made available.

### **Dr Charles Hunter – Headteacher, Kemnay Academy**

***Kemnay Academy is a secondary school in the North East town of Kemnay. It was inspected in March 2009.***

For me, the inspection was the most challenging I have been through but overall the best. Our senior management team and I found it demanding to prepare for the self-evaluation briefing but it helped me to focus on what really matters to young people. I also think that the briefing meeting helped the school to feel in control. The report is appropriate for parents but perhaps a bit bland for schools. I’ve heard that you now share the records of inspection findings (RIF) and it’s unfortunate that we were inspected before HMIE started to share it. This would have given a greater level of detail that would be helpful to schools. Young people in the school were very happy with the process. They felt that they were listened to by the inspection team and thought their views were taken seriously. The discussion of findings with departments and at a whole school level was where in-depth engagement took place. These discussions were very valuable indeed, especially for principal teachers. Overall, I feel that the inspection has left the school in a better position. HMIE has endorsed what staff thought was good practice and enabled us to build on what we were already doing.

**Calum Maxwell – Headteacher, Dunrobin Primary School, Airdrie**

***The CLD inspectors who recently visited Dunrobin Primary School in Airdrie as part of the inspection of the learning community, identified a thriving Food Co-operative as an example of good practice. This has helped to increase parental involvement at the school and has impacted positively on outcomes for learners.***

We identified our food co-operative as an example of good practice during our initial discussion with the CLD inspectors who were attached to the secondary school inspection team. We enjoyed the opportunity to talk with inspectors about this aspect of our work and would not have been able to do so under the previous model. I like the way that inspectors now include the wider learning community when they inspect a secondary school. We didn't have parents coming into the school and we wanted to break down barriers, so we included this as a priority in our school improvement plan. When we launched our Food Co-op, every parent was asked about what fruit and vegetables they would use. Children in P6 helped and we got a 100% return from every household. The Co-op is run on a not-for-profit basis. Produce comes fresh from the fruit market and is sold at cost price. We have a rota system where parents volunteer to work in the Food Co-op. As a result of this work, we now have increased parental and community involvement and have a better diet for everyone. The Food Co-op runs on parents' nights and it also links with other agencies such as the National Health Service (NHS) so there is a lot of inter-agency work. We're also linking with sheltered housing and delivering fruit and vegetables to the elderly in the community. It's helping the school to connect with the community. We felt that the CLD inspectors were very interested in learning about children's responsibilities around the school and their wider achievements. This seemed to be a more prominent feature of the new model which we liked.

**Don Ledingham – Executive Director for Education and Children's Services, East Lothian Council**

***East Lothian Council has recently worked in partnership with HMIE as part of a first validated self-evaluation of the authority's education services.***

Three years ago, we moved to a model of validated self-evaluation for our schools and the change in energy has been incredible. Response from schools has been really positive and the outcomes have improved dramatically. It was a natural move to extend that approach onto authority level. HMIE were keen to move to a model which involved better engagement at a local authority level. We met with them because we were keen to be involved and make it happen. The impact of the process has been remarkable. The approach is even more rigorous than the previous one. Identifying all of the areas for development across our service has been really powerful. We were being encouraged to be honest and open. We now have an incredible platform to move forward, because everyone owns the change agenda and that puts us in a strong position. We have to remember that responsibility for the improvement agenda has to remain with those in the school or the authority. The new model recognises this and builds it in from the start. The whole process is about outcomes in terms of how we are impacting on young people which links very well with *Curriculum for Excellence*. The new process leaves a positive legacy and helps to build momentum – I think that's the big shift.



**Michael Spens and Adam Edwards – Headmasters, Fettes College and Fettes Preparatory School**

***Fettes College in Edinburgh was one of the first independent schools to go through the new model of all-through inspection.***

We were among the first independent schools to go through this model and were very unsure about what it would be like. We were very sceptical when we heard it was to be based on self-evaluation. We've had a lot of experience of this approach with other bodies where we did all the work and they then came in and simply audited what we'd done. This experience wasn't like that at all - it was very much more positive and thorough. We were impressed from the word go and we were given the chance to set the agenda in the first meeting. We described our school, highlighted our strengths and acknowledged areas that needed further development. The inspectors heard what we said and then used this as an agenda for action. We had feedback all the way which meant that we had no unpleasant surprises. By the end of the fourth day, the inspectors had 'got it' in a big way. What impressed us most of all was the discussion of findings - it was clear that the team knew us extremely well. They had most certainly tested everything we said and had found one or two things more. It was an impressively thorough process and one that was based on the team being very open to the unique features of Fettes. We wondered whether the prep school would just be an add-on, but there was a real desire to understand it too. In our experience, the model works well when you've got inspectors who can get alongside people to help them perform at their best.



**Ian Graham, Principal, John Wheatley College**

***John Wheatley College describes itself as 'Glasgow's Friendliest College'. It can also lay claim to being Scotland's 'greenest' college, thanks to the ecologically friendly aspects built into its new East End Campus building.***

We alerted inspectors early in the review to the high priority we give to sustainability. We also identified important 'green developments' as examples of 'sector leading practice' for inclusion in our report. In the last few years, we decided to invest heavily in new estate, and we determined right from the start that we would have sustainable buildings. Inspectors were very interested in learning about innovative practice and the impact of this on our work and on learners. We were able to demonstrate impact in a number of ways. For example, our energy savings have already paid back the extra building cost in two years. We were able to show that we'll make at least a 40% saving in this building over our other building in Easterhouse, which is about eight years old. We have sensitive systems that turn lights on and off, we have air-quality systems that automatically open windows when they're needed, or closes them if appropriate. We have bio-mass boilers and solar water-heating panels. These all contribute to huge savings and also mean that students have access to high quality environments that are conducive to learning. The clear message is that it is possible to make changes to existing buildings to make them more effective. We appreciated the opportunity to talk with inspectors about these innovations and to have the time to engage in professional dialogue.

## Lessons about school improvement

'Lessons about School Improvement' is based on over 300 follow-through inspections between 2005 and 2008 in schools which had previously been identified in inspections as having important or major weaknesses in key aspects.

We found much evidence of improvement: 86% of primary schools, 73% of secondary schools and 71% of special schools had improved and further follow-through inspection was not necessary. The report identifies critical factors which led to these improvements. Some of these are:

- creating an inclusive culture of self-evaluation and improvement;
- raising expectations of what the school and its children and young people can achieve;
- rigorous identification, through self-evaluation activities which involve all staff, of strengths and areas for development;
- improved leadership at all levels, with a focus on improving the quality of learning and achievement for all learners; and
- enabling staff to work in partnership amongst themselves and with others, including parents and learners, to improve the school.

The report includes case studies which describe the steps which individual schools have taken to bring about improvement for their children and young people.

### Learning Together publication series:

Learning Together: Opening up learning  
 Learning Together: Lessons about school improvement  
 Learning Together: Improving teaching, improving learning  
 Learning Together: Mathematics  
 Learning Together: International Education: Responsible, global citizens

Access these online:  
[www.hmie.gov.uk/publications.aspx](http://www.hmie.gov.uk/publications.aspx)

## Improving teaching, improving learning

We published this report on our website on 18 November 2009. It explores the role of continuing professional development (CPD), collegiality and chartered teachers in implementing *Curriculum for Excellence*. While Scottish teachers have highly-developed professional skills, the success of *Curriculum for Excellence* will depend upon teachers developing new knowledge, understanding and practice. This publication looks at some of the most important factors which will be needed for these profound changes. It reaffirms the importance of teachers learning together, recognising that the insights and expertise which lead to improvements for learners are often to be found amongst colleagues. It contains examples of promising and effective practice and points for further engagement and discussion. Whilst we have found a great deal of encouraging practice, not all parts of the agenda are yet being systematically addressed. Areas for development include:

- ensuring that approaches to CPD achieve the greatest impact on outcomes for children and young people and the most effective use of time, expertise and resources;
- basing CPD on the most up-to-date knowledge about how teachers learn and how their learning can be sustained and further developed in learning communities;

- evaluating more consistently the medium- and longer-term impact of professional development activities in terms of children's progress and achievement;
- clarifying and maximising the contributions of chartered teachers to professional development and children's learning; and
- progressively developing high quality educational leadership from the start of a teacher's career.

We hope that our report helps to improve the collective understanding of what works well in professional learning and signposts the kind of developments that will ensure successful implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence*.



## Learning Together International education: responsible, global citizens

*'The world is not big. We went round the world in the nursery. We learned about Italy and what children do in their nursery. We learned songs and stories. We say words they know. We like Glasgow but we like Milan too!'* (pre-school child)

*'I am proud of what Scotland has achieved to help the world to be a better place. But we can still learn lots of new things from other countries.'* (P7 child)

*'These projects have really helped us to get to grips with the challenges the world will face in the future, for example, saving the environment, human rights and equalities and economic growth.'* (S5 student)

These quotations represent just a few of the many exciting examples of good practice in international learning highlighted in *Learning Together International education: responsible, global citizens*. This new good practice guide was published on 4 February 2010.

International education includes learning new languages, global citizenship, sustainable development, issues of equality, diversity and human rights, and international partnerships which enrich learning experiences for children and young people.

*Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching* states that: *'All children and young people in Scotland have an entitlement to a curriculum which ... will develop knowledge and understanding of society, the world and Scotland's place in it ... so that they can develop well-informed views and act responsibly.'*

This new guide aims to help teachers reflect on how they can help children and young people meet the challenges of the 21st century by becoming responsible, global citizens like the three young people quoted above.

## Learning Together: Mathematics

We published *Learning Together: Mathematics* in January 2010 as part of the new *Learning Together* series. Scotland's future economic prosperity requires an education system within which the population as a whole develops the kind of knowledge, skills and attributes which will equip them personally, socially and economically to thrive in the 21st century. High-quality learning experiences in mathematics, such as those outlined in this guide, will help us to turn this aspiration into reality for all young people in Scotland.

In a section entitled *'Good practice in learning, teaching and promoting achievement'* the guide explores three questions:

- What are the strong characteristics of effective learning?
- What are the strong characteristics of effective teaching?
- What are the strong characteristics of achievement?

It then goes on to discuss *'What are the features of effective practice in improving mathematics?'* under three different headings:

- Using people's views.
- Using learning visits to share good practice.
- Using information about achievement.

Throughout the document, there are many examples of good practice and reflective questions, made available to help the reflective process. We hope that practitioners will find this guide to be an important addition that will help to ensure successful implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

## Learning Together in all-through schools

All-through schools provide nursery, primary and secondary education for children and young people in around a quarter of Scotland's mainland and island education authorities. Often, their size and location mean that staff have to find creative solutions to challenges such as deploying visiting teachers across more than one school, or providing vocational education. The sector is growing, as some education authorities are creating new all-through schools which span the 3–18 spectrum of *Curriculum for Excellence*. HMIE's cross-sectoral inspection teams work across all stages of the all-through school, from nursery (where applicable) onwards.

At a recent development seminar for all-through schools, HM Assistant Chief Inspector Elisabeth Ritchie described existing strengths, and challenged delegates to build on these strengths through further collaborative use of self-evaluation across all stages of the school. Presenters from all-through schools described their practice in opening up learning in various ways, including flexible curriculum planning of inter-disciplinary learning, effective community partnerships that contribute to sustainable communities, and the use of ICT to enable young people to learn together even though remote from one another. Following the seminar a further report in the *Opening Up Learning* series will be published online, and further networking for all-through schools will be facilitated through *Glow*.

## Count Us In: A sense of belonging What is it like to be a 'New Scot'?

Imagine what it is like to be a new arrival, with the dust of Congo, Poland or Romania still on your feet. Many thousands of children and young people are entering the UK as the result of international migration. Does anybody know if they are particularly good at maths or science? Does anybody know where they were last week, last month or last year? Who knows the terror, desperation and confusion they may have experienced, or still be experiencing? And if they do, what is done about it? When a young person walks through the door of a new school, does his or her past become a blank? Are their talents, knowledge, hopes and fears brushed aside, wiped out or acknowledged, built upon and developed further?

*Count Us In: A Sense of Belonging*, the latest report in the *Count Us In* series looks at the challenges facing new arrivals in Scottish schools. It describes good practice from across the country in supporting newly-arrived families. Many schools are committed to

ensuring that all children and young people are supported in overcoming barriers to learning. English as an additional language (EAL) services are at the front line in helping new arrivals to settle and to become successful learners. The report acknowledges that there are extensive demands on specialist staff such as those from EAL services. It also notes that many class teachers do not feel confident in knowing how best to respond to the diverse learning needs of newly-arrived children. Few authorities have formal approaches or guidance for schools on how best to welcome new arrivals. The messages in the report show that the same weaknesses in supporting the achievements of new arrivals with English as an additional language have been present for at least the past ten years. This report gives examples of how staff can overcome these difficulties. It aims to help teachers and authorities reflect on what they need to do to improve the experiences of newly-arrived young people.

### Count Us In publication series:

- Count Us In: A Sense of Belonging
- Count Us In: Improving the education of our looked after children
- Count Us In: We're still here: Successful Transitions from Secondary School
- Count Us In: Achieving Success for Deaf Pupils
- Count Us In: Promoting Understanding and Combating Sectarianism
- Count Us In: Achieving inclusion in Scottish Schools

Access these online:

[www.hmie.gov.uk/publications.aspx](http://www.hmie.gov.uk/publications.aspx)

## HMIE report on adult literacy

We published the report, *Improving Adult Literacy in Scotland*, on 27 January 2010. It provides an evaluation of adult literacy provision delivered by colleges, local authority community learning and development services and prisons in Scotland.

In 2001, it was estimated that 800,000 (23%) of adult Scots have low levels of literacy and numeracy. Since then, over 180,000 adult literacy and numeracy learners have received support. This report evaluates the quality and impact of that support.

In reviewing the three different sectors involved, the report finds that:

- Almost all colleges take very good account of national learning strategies and priorities when planning their approaches to improve the literacy skills of learners.
- There are very effective arrangements across all learning community and development services to promote and encourage participation.
- While learning centre managers and delivery staff in prisons have established very positive relationships with their learners, other prison priorities have a negative effect on planning and learning.

The report finds that most providers are taking good account of individual and community needs in planning provision and that they reach out well to encourage learners to get the support that they need. These are important strengths, but provision must aim to be of the highest quality. Areas for development include:

- better planning and partnership working;
- improved assessment of individual needs and subsequent progress;
- more effective use of ICT; and
- better recognition of achievement and progression pathways to new learning.

We all know that literacy is increasingly important to success in learning, life and work in modern Scotland and that's why it is so vital that we make further improvements in this area of work. Copies of the full report are available on the HMIE website <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/Publications.aspx>



## How well do we protect Scotland's children?

In November 2009, HMIE published a report on the findings of the first round of joint inspections of child protection services. The findings of the report were disseminated at a conference on 26 November 2009 which coincided with the publication of the report. Delegates included senior officers from the range of services providing child protection. Graham Donaldson, the previous Senior Chief Inspector, highlighted important strengths in how services are working together across Scotland to protect children and meet their needs. He welcomed the effectiveness of staff communication with children and families which promote trusting relationships; public awareness of child protection and young people's awareness of keeping themselves safe; and clear policies, procedures and guidance which support staff in their work. He emphasised that the protection of vulnerable children is a shared responsibility requiring effective partnership working and leadership. Recognising increasing pressures on services and financial constraints, he encouraged chief officers to continue to demonstrate their personal commitment to deliver effective services which meet the needs of the most vulnerable children.

While recognising the considerable strengths in child protection services across Scotland, the report also highlights areas of significant weakness. These include weaknesses in the quality and rigour of assessments; in planning to meet the needs of individual children and in the availability of performance and management information on child protection. The report emphasises the critical importance of information-sharing within and across services. While positive features of information-sharing are identified, more needs to be done to ensure that all staff who have contact with children and their families share information quickly when there are concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

## Building on self-evaluation – How well are we doing?

The new inspection models provide a greater role for self-evaluation, a stronger focus on 'working with' establishments to support improvement and capacity building and greater engagement and involvement of staff and learners. They are more proportionate and offer schools and inspection teams the possibility of 'disengaging from inspection activity' at the end of day three. One year on, and the increased level of professional dialogue has been very well received and is helping to develop thinking around *Curriculum for Excellence*. The new-style reports are proving to be very popular with parents and learners. Feedback on the report from the profession has not been quite as positive with some staff reporting that they have not found the slimmed-down version as useful. However, from September last year we started to share our *Record of Inspection Findings* with senior staff in establishments and a representative from the education authority. HMIE is the first inspectorate in the UK to share its evidence base in this way and initial

feedback suggests that this professional record of findings is very helpful to leaders in supporting their journey to excellence. Inspection teams have also disengaged from inspection activity in establishments across all the sectors, including learning communities. The decision to disengage arises in establishments where staff have demonstrated that they know their practice well and have the capacity to continue to improve. Inspection teams will then support the establishment to improve further. The range of work has involved members of inspection teams working alongside staff to engage in professional dialogue on areas that have been proposed by the establishment or service. Both staff and inspectors have benefited from the engagement and feedback has been resoundingly positive. The model continues to be refined and we are currently seeking more ways to increase the levels of professional engagement with staff and learners.

## The learning community inspection model – where are we now?

The introduction of the learning community inspection model was a significant change for HMIE and for learning providers. The shift in methodology aimed to deliver 100% geographic coverage of Scotland for the first time, within the same timescale as secondary schools. It promotes greater integration of learning experiences within school and beyond, and supports the development and delivery of *Curriculum for Excellence*. In line with other models it places a greater emphasis on self-evaluation to allow professional dialogue during inspections. A year on, and the model has been well received. It has helped to raise the profile of learning beyond school, and the importance of strong and skilled communities to

support learning and development. Some excellent work has been identified during inspection and this good practice is shared nationally. In particular, the contribution of national and local voluntary organisations has been profiled, as has the contribution of a wide range of public bodies to community learning and development. Systematic and robust self-evaluation has been developing across authority areas. Measuring and demonstrating impact still remains a challenge in many authority areas. Work between schools and other learning providers is improving but is still an area requiring much development.

## Working with the Department for Work and Pensions

The UK Government has a major focus on supporting programmes which help to enhance employability and help people to move from 'benefits' to 'work'. In July 2009, HMIE and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) signed a partnership agreement under which HMIE will undertake external quality assurance of DWP provision. Development work by HMIE is well underway to ensure that we are ready to undertake this important inspection programme. The HMIE development team is working

with colleagues in England and Wales to ensure a general consistency in terminology and approach across the UK. A framework for the inspection of employability programmes has been developed through working with relevant DWP colleagues and with the assistance of a reference group of DWP Contract Managers. The developing inspection framework and methodology have a lot in common with the review model for the college sector. Common themes include a focus on quality, management and employability for adults. A series of awareness-raising events for providers has already taken place. The first inspection (related to the Provider Led Pathways programme) took place early this year. Further information on the outcomes of inspections will follow in due course.

## The revamped Journey to Excellence website



[www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk](http://www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk). We have made major changes to our *Journey to Excellence* website which we manage alongside LTS. Together, we have been asking site users about the site, and have listened to what they said. Users appreciated the growing range of resources – the films, the guides on moving 'from good to great' and the professional development packs. But they also said they were a bit overwhelmed by the range of resources. Sometimes they were not sure where to start or how to make links between the resources they found. Visitors to the site will now find a cleaner and simpler interface that is more user-friendly and accessible.

Resources are grouped under the following areas:

- learning and teaching
- vision and leadership
- partnerships
- people
- ethos.

Feedback to date has shown that these five areas can be searched much more easily. We have improved how things work so that now you can not only find a film with one click, you can also find other films on similar topics. The site provides much better search facilities. This online CPD resource is free and available 24/7. It presents an even wider range of professional development packs supported by video footage. These help users reflect on key educational topics and prepare for *Curriculum for Excellence*. The guides are constantly being developed, with an interactive literacy and numeracy guide currently in production, and more to follow. The website provides links to a huge store of resources on the LTS website and access through key tools such as *CPDFind* and *CPDReflect*. It is also just as easy to travel in the opposite direction – from LTS resources to *Journey to Excellence*. All of the *Journey to Excellence* films have also been selected by Apple from examples across the world to be part of its *iTunesU* section of the iTunes store. All new films that appear on *Journey to Excellence* will automatically appear on iTunes.