

# **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Wednesday 23 February 2005

Session 2

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# CONTENTS

Wednesday 23 February 2005

**Col.**

<b>GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND .....</b>	<b>2183</b>
<b>PUPIL MOTIVATION INQUIRY .....</b>	<b>2205</b>

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## **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

### **5<sup>th</sup> Meeting 2005, Session 2**

#### **CONVENER**

\*Robert Brown (Glasgow) (LD)

#### **DEPUTY CONVENER**

\*Lord James Douglas-Hamilton (Lothians) (Con)

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

\*Ms Wendy Alexander (Paisley North) (Lab)

\*Ms Rosemary Byrne (South of Scotland) (SSP)

\*Fiona Hyslop (Lothians) (SNP)

\*Mr Adam Ingram (South of Scotland) (SNP)

\*Mr Frank McAveety (Glasgow Shettleston) (Lab)

\*Mr Kenneth Macintosh (Eastwood) (Lab)

\*Dr Elaine Murray (Dumfries) (Lab)

#### **COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTES**

Bill Aitken (Glasgow) (Con)

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Lab)

Rosie Kane (Glasgow) (SSP)

Michael Matheson (Central Scotland) (SNP)

Mr Jamie Stone (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)

\*attended

#### **THE FOLLOWING GAVE EVIDENCE:**

Ruth Campbell (Scottish Executive Education Department)

Lynn Hendry (Scottish Executive Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department)

Matthew MacIver (General Teaching Council for Scotland)

#### **CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

Martin Verity

#### **SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERK**

Mark Roberts

#### **ASSISTANT CLERK**

Ian Cowan

#### **LOCATION**

Committee Room 5



## Scottish Parliament

### Education Committee

*Wednesday 23 February 2005*

[THE CONVENER *opened the meeting at 10:03*]

### General Teaching Council for Scotland

**The Convener (Robert Brown):** Good morning and welcome to the meeting. I remind everyone to switch off their mobile phones and pagers. The first item on the agenda is on the General Teaching Council for Scotland. We will hear an update on the work of the council in the light of its annual report. We have with us Matthew MacIver, who is the chief executive registrar of the GTCS. I understand that his colleague Norma Anne Watson, who is the convener of the council and was due to be with us, is stuck in snow somewhere in the vicinity of Broxburn, so we do not have the pleasure of her company this morning. I hand over to Matthew MacIver to tell us a bit about the GTCS.

**Matthew MacIver (General Teaching Council for Scotland):** Thank you for inviting me; it is good to be here to represent the General Teaching Council for Scotland. The GTCS is the regulatory body for the teaching profession in Scotland. It was set up by an act of the Westminster Parliament in 1965, so we are celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and—almost 40 years to the day when the GTCS was set up—we are holding a conference in June, of which the Minister for Education and Young People and the First Minister are aware, involving teaching councils from all over the world. That will be this year's big commemorative event. At 40 years old we are arguably the oldest teaching council or regulatory body for teachers in the world. A lot of councils throughout the world examined closely what we do before they set up their constitutions.

In statutory terms, we are responsible for entry requirements for the profession and overseeing the courses that students follow before they become teachers. We are responsible for the new induction system, the one-year probationary period that every teacher has to undergo, and for disciplinary measures for teachers who are found guilty of professional misconduct. Recently, our duties and powers were extended by the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 to include teachers' professional development. In that area we are doing more professional work on the chartered teacher programme and are

considering the standards for headship. In effect we are considering the standards that a profession needs and that teachers need at certain times in their career. We are responsible for the standards for full registration and chartered teachers and I hope that, ultimately, we are responsible for the standard for leadership or headship in Scotland.

In many ways, our job is to be meticulous about who we accept into the profession in Scotland. That is an important point to make. Sometimes we are criticised because, for example, we take quite a long time to turn round applications from people in other countries to teach in Scotland. The reason for that is that we take seriously not only references for but disclosure checks on teachers from other countries. They are important to us and sometimes they can be difficult to acquire. Imagine the problems that we have in trying to get disclosure checks done on asylum seekers or teachers living in Iraq. Nevertheless, that is part of our job and we do it thoroughly.

For the past few years, the exciting part of our job has been developing work on teachers' professional lives. I think that that gives you a flavour of the kind of work we do.

**The Convener:** Thank you. Members will have questions of various sorts. We wanted to discuss the annual reports of the various bodies that lay their reports before Parliament and, where appropriate, have representatives give evidence. Recently, in the context of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill, the committee has been interested in the specialist issue of Gaelic-medium teaching. We came across a number of issues, one of which is the number and supply of Gaelic-medium teachers. Linked to that is the issue of perceived difficulties in promotion prospects, which would inhibit teachers who might otherwise be interested in being Gaelic-medium teachers from entering that branch of the profession. What is your role in relation to the supply of Gaelic-medium teachers and do you have observations about inhibiting factors in that supply?

**Matthew MacIver:** Given my background, I am interested in Gaelic-medium education.

**The Convener:** I thought that you might be.

**Matthew MacIver:** I was delighted to accept the minister's offer to chair an action group on how to address shortages in Gaelic-medium teachers. I am in a difficult position in that I do not want to pre-empt anything that my group might come up with. Nevertheless, it is right and proper that I express ideas that might be of interest to you.

There are short-term measures that we could introduce almost immediately. For example, with the University of Aberdeen, we have set up a new part-time postgraduate course to train teachers at a distance over two years. However, at the

moment, that is a partnership between the university and only Highland Council and I would like to extend it to the obvious authorities. Orkney Islands Council and Shetland Islands Council are interested in the partnership for other reasons but, from a Gaelic point of view, I would be interested in Western Isles Council, Argyll and Bute Council and, of course, Glasgow City Council becoming involved. However, one of the big issues has been the lack of teachers in the secondary system, so I hope that a new, similar course for secondary teachers will come to us from the University of Aberdeen for accreditation in June.

This is a public meeting, is it not?

**The Convener:** Yes.

**Matthew MacIver:** I hope that that secondary course will involve the local authorities that need Gaelic teachers, but we have to do far more than that. I am also interested in the teachers whom we have in the system at the moment. There are teachers who, like me, are qualified in one subject and are native Gaelic speakers but do not teach their subject through their own language. At the moment, I am devising a course with the University of Aberdeen to give such teachers professional recognition that allows them to teach through the medium of Gaelic without leaving their jobs. That is important, because we do not want teachers to have to leave their jobs to become qualified or recognised in Gaelic.

There is another group: really good teachers who have been learning the language and are not quite proficient in it but could be proficient enough in it. We are trying to tailor the course for them as well, and it could be running very soon indeed. I am excited by that, because it dovetails with the council's efforts to move away from the idea that qualifications have to be black and white towards a world in which teachers have a portfolio of qualifications or professional recognition in their teaching career.

I am hopeful that we can get teachers into Gaelic-medium education. I want to get into the system people who live in Barra, Benbecula, Glasgow or Aberdeen, are interested in teaching Gaelic, cannot give up a year of their lives—for whatever reason—and cannot give up their jobs. That is why we produced the part-time course with the University of Aberdeen. The issue is that a distance-learning course should not be only for those in rural areas. That is an important point, because there are as many people in urban areas who cannot give up their jobs for a year, so I want to develop such courses for them as well. There is a lot that we can do on that.

I will push the argument a bit further. I suspect that, in many areas in Scotland, there are people with professional skills and qualifications who are

not working but who might want to work and want to be teachers, so I want to consider the transferability of those skills. That would take the teaching profession into a new world, but we have to do that. We have to examine the professional skills that we have in Scotland and consider how transferable they are. I am interested in other things, but my professional interest is in teachers and I would like to consider that approach.

Taking all that together, we could do quite a lot in the short term for the supply of Gaelic-medium teachers. I hope that you understand that I am also talking about other shortage subjects. There are things that we can do.

However, we have a problem with teachers' perception of career development in Gaelic. Why should they teach in Gaelic if that means that they will not end up as depute heads, head teachers or inspectors? We have to face up to that quite honestly. At the moment, we do not have an infrastructure that will fulfil such teachers' ambitions. That is why we have to look carefully at the development of our chartered teacher programme. The chartered teacher programme is a hugely exciting programme that has been devised to acknowledge classroom excellence. When we evaluate it after two years, we might have to look at it in other ways. For example, there is no reason why we should not deliver some of the modules in Gaelic. We should be looking seriously at delivering the compulsory module 1 in the chartered teacher programme in Gaelic.

10:15

I will not even pretend that I have an answer to that deep-seated question—we have to look at it seriously. The Gaelic school in Glasgow will provide opportunities. How we deliver teaching to and from the Gaelic school and to secondary schools throughout Scotland might give us an indication. We will not have enough teachers in the short term to teach in Gaelic-medium education, so we will have to use technology to do it. I am not quite sure how that will come about, but we will have to do it.

**The Convener:** Thank you. There are probably many other issues to consider too.

**Mr Kenneth Macintosh (Eastwood) (Lab):** I thank Matthew MacIver for his comments. The situation is slightly tricky because the action group has not yet been set up so you are still accountable to the minister. However, within that constraint, roughly what can we expect from the action group? There have been teacher shortages in other subjects before. A relatively common procedure is employed when there are teacher shortages in, say, physics or maths. Is that the kind of package that we can expect the action

group to propose? If you cannot talk about such matters, that is fine.

It is clear that the action group will look at the whole area and you mentioned the secondary-primary divide. Other points that came up included the retention issue—the number of Gaelic-medium teachers who found that, despite all their training, it was easier to teach in English because it was less hassle. Whether or not it is true, it was implied that we were losing some teachers back to English-medium education because there was no extra reward or incentive for them to keep teaching in Gaelic.

There was a general concern that although parents are keen to have more Gaelic-medium teachers, the most important priority is that standards are as high as ever in the teaching profession and you mentioned the meticulous approach that you take to that in general. I do not think that there is any concern about the standard of Gaelic-medium teachers, but will you examine that issue and either seek reassurance or put in place particular quality checks? Alternatively, do you expect Gaelic-medium teachers to be covered by the same system that governs the standards of all teachers?

**Matthew MacIver:** I will deal with that last point first. There is no question of any subject having lower entry requirements or standards than any other subject. That would be invidious for us as a profession and for the particular subject involved. Part of the GTCS's *raison d'être* is to ensure that that does not happen.

I hope that the action group will consider short-term strategies to increase the supply of teachers in Gaelic-medium education. I would like the action group to look at the opportunities for existing teachers. I would like us to look at the professional preparation of, and then the support for, Gaelic-medium teachers. Overall, we want to have a cohesive package to try to address some of the short-term problems but also to look ahead to the longer-term issues that affect Gaelic-medium education and all shortage subjects.

I am not sure of my position here—should I speak in a personal capacity? As Mr Macintosh rightly said, I have no idea what package the action group will come up with. I am giving the committee my personal reflections on the shortages in Gaelic-medium education. It is important that I share those reflections with you and that I get some feedback from you as the Parliament's Education Committee.

**Mr Macintosh:** We all recognise that it is tricky for people in an official capacity to give evidence and an idea of what they think, but we appreciate it.

I have one final question. As well as looking at Gaelic-medium education, are you going to examine Gaelic language teaching and its availability?

**Matthew MacIver:** Yes. That is a good point. The General Teaching Council piloted a project that was called Gaelic learners in the primary school—GLPS—in Argyll and Bute, which has now spread to other authorities. We are trying to translate that into a course that will be acceptable to us, which will involve teachers who are not native Gaelic speakers but who are learners and want to become proficient in the language. They will not teach through the medium of Gaelic, but they will teach the Gaelic language in primary schools and, it is hoped, at the bottom end of secondary schools. We are well on the way with our look at that.

**Fiona Hyslop (Lothians) (SNP):** Thank you for sharing your views. We realise that the working party has only just been established. There are great opportunities, and we picked up a lot of what you have just talked about when we visited Skye, where we heard about the opportunities for Gaelic speakers to take part-time teacher training courses, and so on. What challenges do you think will need to be met if we are to make the most of the opportunities?

**Matthew MacIver:** There are challenges at certain levels. For example, how can we attract young people to become teachers of Gaelic in the secondary school sector? Around 50 per cent of the students who are entering the system at the moment are aged over 30, and they have made a deliberate career choice to become a teacher. However, there is still a flow of young people entering universities and then the faculties of education or the BEd courses. The challenge is to encourage fifth-year and sixth-year pupils to become Gaelic teachers. There is an enormous challenge to encourage career development in Gaelic.

There is also a challenge in attracting mature people who have a Gaelic background into teaching. We do not have the same percentage of mature people coming into Gaelic teaching as come into teaching as a whole. That is another challenge for us. Above all, there is the challenge—not just for Gaelic teaching, although the situation of Gaelic teaching accentuates it—of creating a system for training teachers for the whole of Scotland that does not depend on a location in the central belt. That is a great challenge for all of us who are involved in the training of teachers.

**The Convener:** Some of that clearly leads us into wider issues.

**Dr Elaine Murray (Dumfries) (Lab):** You have touched on the problem of the shortage of teachers in other subjects and the issue of transferable skills. I would like to hear a little bit more of your thinking on that. You will be aware that the age profile for science, maths and geography teachers is becoming older. I fear that if young people are less likely to study such subjects at university, they will not have the academic qualifications to teach them in schools. How can that be tackled? What background should someone have in a science subject before they can teach it in a school?

**Matthew MacIver:** We are quite clear in our minds about the entry qualifications for teaching as a whole; in fact, the GTCS is sometimes criticised for being inflexible on the entry qualifications for teaching. However, that is the standard that makes us different from other countries and it is why other countries look up to us. I do not apologise for that at all, as there are certain things to which we have to adhere and, to be frank, we have no great difficulty in finding applicants who achieve that standard.

However, I will tell you what I think has changed and where we must look at things sensibly. In the university world that I entered, things were quite clear cut. I did my university degree in history and then went straight on to Moray House to do my history qualification there, along with a new subject called modern studies. Then, I started teaching history and modern studies. The degree backgrounds of some of the people going into universities now do not quite fit the cosy little black-and-white world that we all used to inhabit.

There are young people going into universities now who are doing degrees in other areas, such as marketing, tourism management or hospitality management. We should consider the number of graduates in those areas and compare that with the shortages in home economics in secondary schools. That challenge is what excites me and that is where we have to focus now. I hope that the minister's announcement about having two qualifying subjects rather than three reflects the council's drive to accept that the world of universities is changing. However, that has never compromised the standard of an all-graduate profession.

**Dr Murray:** It was raised with me in the past that people once had to have three years of maths at university in order to become a maths teacher, but it would be possible to teach maths very well without having done three years.

**Matthew MacIver:** Yes—that is exactly what I was referring to.

**Dr Murray:** A constituent raised with me the situation of people who are qualified to teach in

further education and who might wish to teach in schools. This touches on one of your earlier points about people who are already working. The individual concerned is an FE-qualified maths teacher who would like to teach in school. She has done the conversion course but, because she is working in an FE college, she cannot complete the practical part of the course by teaching in school. Is there a way round that and is there a way to facilitate the transition between FE and schools?

**Matthew MacIver:** I would not think that that is a problem for us. We have now accepted that that is an issue, and we have to be sensible in considering it. If someone is qualified to teach maths to 17 and 18-year-olds in a college, they are qualified to teach maths to 17 and 18-year-olds in schools. That is not a problem for us any more. That world has gone, I hope, but we still have to be careful in managing the situation, as there are still important issues for us and the teaching profession in Scotland. FE is one of the areas where the world is changing dramatically and we need to take account of that.

**Dr Murray:** On professional development, what facilities exist to help teachers who wish to change subjects, for example a teacher who is qualified in one subject and has a skill in a science or whatever but who wishes to move sideways into another subject?

**Matthew MacIver:** I am pleased that you have raised that important issue. We have now acknowledged that the world is changing significantly and that we can no longer divide it into primary teachers and secondary teachers and a few further education teachers, and never shall they all meet. I asked a short-life working group to draw up a report for us on the matter, which will go to council on 9 March. We are moving towards a system of professional recognition in other subjects and that is quite important.

Let us consider the case of an experienced principal teacher of biology with a huge musical background but no degree in music, although he has picked up some diplomas and has been actively involved in music. We have registered that teacher. That has been a big breakthrough, and that is the kind of thing that I want to encourage. Once someone meets the standard for full registration, they are a fully registered teacher.

We will look carefully at teachers' backgrounds and we will assess any shortfalls that must be made up, but I do not want to pull a teacher out of a classroom and make them go into a faculty of education for six or 12 months to get another qualification. That world has gone and I am now looking to a world of professional recognition where teachers will be able to pick up on the sort of opportunity that I have just described. A primary



teacher might be interested in science, for example. Is that the kind of thing that you meant?

**Dr Murray:** Yes, very much so.

**The Convener:** On a linked subject, a lot of controversy has arisen over the moves by some local authorities to put principal teachers in charge of faculties rather than subject areas. Does the General Teaching Council have any views on the desirability of such developments and whether limitations to such changes are required?

10:30

**Matthew MacIver:** No, we have no statutory authority to take a view on what the curricular areas should be. However, as I have tried to explain in the past few minutes, our thinking on qualifications is informed by an awareness that the world is changing. For example, we do not have qualifications for some popular subjects, such as philosophy, to which pupils respond well. We are aware that we need to change that. However, we do not take a view on structures and so on.

**Ms Rosemary Byrne (South of Scotland) (SSP):** On the ability of FE lecturers to transfer into secondary schools, will you clarify the current arrangements for professional recognition? I had always understood that FE lecturers needed a teaching qualification before they could teach in mainstream schools.

**Matthew MacIver:** That is a fair question. I did not make the issue clear in my response to the earlier question on further education.

At the moment, the professional qualification in further education is called the teaching qualification (further education), or TQ(FE). Similarly, my teaching qualification has "(Secondary History)" after it and other people might have "(Primary)" after theirs. When people who have the TQ(FE) apply to teach in the secondary system, their application is now taken seriously. We do not receive many such applications, but the few that we have received most recently were registered without any problem.

**Ms Byrne:** Do such qualifications transfer automatically or must FE lecturers apply to the GTC for that to happen?

**Matthew MacIver:** They have to apply to us.

**Fiona Hyslop:** I have a short question on further education. There is a view that it should be possible to teach 14-year-olds in colleges, but we might be in danger of restricting their opportunities if we were to require that they were taught only by GTC-registered teachers. An example that has been given to me locally is that of a plumber who earns a fortune outside college and who teaches

in college only once a week. It might be a tremendous personal experience for the pupils to be taught by such an individual, but the plumber might not be GTC registered or have the possibility of becoming so.

**Matthew MacIver:** We are currently working closely with people in the Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department and colleagues in the Education Department on resolving that issue. We are well aware that we need to do something to meet the curricular needs of the thousands of 14 to 16-year-old children whose needs are currently not being met. However, the General Teaching Council is clear that, in statutory terms, under-16s should either be taught by GTC-registered teachers or be in a classroom that is managed by GTC-registered teachers. That is the council's view at the moment, but there is a new world coming and we are working very closely with colleagues on that.

I suspect that members know as much as I do about the progress of the working parties that are currently considering the issues connected with school-college partnerships. Consideration is being given to whether there should be a professional body for further education lecturers, whether all FE lecturers should be registered and whether there should be a correlation between the TQ(FE) that I mentioned to Ms Byrne and the qualifications that are awarded by the Scottish Qualification Authority. Consideration is being given to all those issues, which are critical to the future of our education system.

**Ms Wendy Alexander (Paisley North) (Lab):** I have two questions. The first arises from the GTC's submission to our pupil motivation inquiry. Matthew MacIver's letter highlights how teachers have sometimes felt peripheral to the policy decisions that were made about education. He suggests:

"It would actually be quite easy to involve teachers in the decision-making process, given the opportunity."

Will you expand a little bit on how teachers could become involved in the decision-making process?

**Matthew MacIver:** I feel quite strongly about the issue. I got a shock when I realised that I was one of the usual suspects who sat on official bodies. Thousands of teachers never get a chance even to think of being able to inform policy. In an open society, it is important that we involve people. We should consider the effects of Nolan on all people in public life. People can no longer take it for granted that they will sit on a public body or that someone will simply write a letter to invite them to do so; quite rightly, people now have to go through a public process. I have often wondered why, if we are creating an action group on whatever subject, we do not simply advertise in the national press

and ask some teachers whether they are interested in becoming members of the group. Let us test that and see, because there are teachers in classrooms who sometimes shake their heads and think, "Oh gosh, it's them again—the same people on the same working groups."

I would like to re-empower the teaching profession and give teachers back some of the power that they used to have in influencing policy—I would like to do that at the beginning of a whole new political era in Scotland. Here we are in a wonderful new building, with a brand-new, wonderful Parliament, so why do we not consider having the type of open society that would involve professional people in our decision-making process? That is the philosophy that underlies what I was trying to say in my letter. I feel quite strongly about it.

**Ms Alexander:** My second question is perhaps not unrelated. I think that everyone shares the ambition of creating a culture of lifelong learning from the earliest years. That has led all the professions to think once again about continuous professional development—especially the professions that people regard as lifelong professions when they make their career choices. That is not the way things were 20 or 30 years ago.

How can we get ahead of the curve in CPD? Later in the year, we will consider some of the mechanics of McCrone, but do you feel that we are making progress in CPD? Is it meeting our objectives in allowing teachers to refresh their skills? Are we thinking expansively about the role of education?

**Matthew MacIver:** Those are interesting questions, but they are not easy to answer. I was intrigued that, when we had the applications for chartered teachers, the people who came into the system were the very teachers about whom some people would say, "Ach, they're over 50. They've switched off and they don't care any more. Forget it." I would reply, "Not at all." Those teachers were people who had come from an academic background, who had taught, and who were still interested in the things that affect their professional lives.

You, as a politician, have a wide perspective on Scotland. There is not a lot of time for a teacher to take an interest in what children are doing and why, or in why some things work and some do not. However, the chartered teacher idea showed me that there is still a core of professional people out there who really are interested in their professional development. That gives the lie to the simplistic view of CPD, about which people say, "Oh, let's forget about the 62 per cent of teachers who are over 47 and concentrate on all the young people coming through the induction system. Let's do well

for them and give them good professional development. Let's have professional development from the faculties of education throughout the induction process. Let's have a look at what they are doing in their second and third years, and, after five years, let's let them qualify to apply to become chartered teachers." That would be really silly, because the 47-year-old is not going to retire tomorrow. That they are is a myth that the press has perpetuated.

I hear your suggestion and we are working very hard on it. I was delighted that the Scottish Executive appointed a national co-ordinator for CPD. She now has her team in place. However, I feel strongly that that partnership must not involve only the CPD co-ordinators and us. It has to involve Learning and Teaching Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department. There has to be a much more coherent view of that in our education system than there has been until now. We must not divide things into little compartments by saying that five to 16 is statutory, post-16 is non-statutory and then there are the colleges and universities. What about all the others who do not go into further education but who are very good people? Forget that—we have to have a coherent view.

**The Convener:** I want to pursue the issue of those who teach in later life. Anecdotally, people sometimes say that teachers get burned out at a certain age and just coast until retirement. The other day, someone said to me that young teachers can relate to their job because they are young, like their pupils, that slightly older teachers have a relationship with pupils that is based on the fact that they are of parental age but that there is a different scenario with older teachers. Are there particular issues that we have to consider in that regard, such as the fact that packages for early retirement are not as readily available as they used to be? That might keep people sharp at the later stages of the profession. That might be an offensive and wrong position, but I am just stating that such a perception exists.

**Matthew MacIver:** In my letter, I alluded to the situation that you are talking about. I am particularly interested in looking at the issue in a positive way and I have some interest in how other countries approach the matter. In some countries, money is taken from teachers' salaries and then, after a number of years, that money is used to pay for a sabbatical period for them. I am quite interested in that concept and in the concept of having refresher courses for teachers.

A few years ago, I set up teaching scholarships in the GTC, which we have developed into the teacher research programme. We have allocated £60,000 a year to the programme because I want

to encourage a new culture in teaching that says that some sort of evidence base is needed before we make decisions. I am not going to pretend that the process is easy but, my goodness, some teachers have responded well. Of course, the big issue for teachers is finding time. However, I prefer to look at the matter positively.

I suspect that we have a bit of public discussion to do on the subject yet but I am attracted by the idea that, at certain times in their career, teachers will need to do refresher courses. Actually, I do not mean courses; I am not sure what the right term is—perhaps it is “refreshment”—but you know what I am driving at.

We need to discuss these issues because, as the convener said, there are teachers who find themselves tired, fatigued and burned out. Such teachers end up saying, “Just tell me what to do and I’ll do it.” I want to change that culture.

**The Convener:** One of the perceptions that I have come across, again anecdotally, is that some older teachers have the freshness of vision that teaching requires but are not up to the physical effort of controlling classes and dealing with various disciplinary issues, which means that the whole job becomes very wearing. Can we use the expertise of experienced teachers at that level in some other way without exposing them to the same intensity of classroom experience?

**Matthew MacIver:** Such teachers would be precisely those who would apply to be on national working groups in which they could use their expertise and knowledge. That is a flippant remark, in a way.

**The Convener:** No, it is not—it is a serious remark.

**Matthew MacIver:** I suppose that it is.

I am convinced that the majority of the roughly 50,000 classroom teachers in Scotland are still as enthusiastic as they were when they started and still care as much about their children as they ever did. It does not matter what age they are, those teachers are still as professional as ever. We must talk up our education system and our teachers. We are doing a good job in Scotland. We have a good system. It is not perfect but a lot of us are working hard to ensure that it is the best system anywhere.

I feel strongly about the matter. I remember addressing a meeting of teachers at which I said the kind of things that you alluded to. I was taken to task by a teacher who stood up and told me in no uncertain terms that although she was 57 she was still working as hard as ever and was still as enthusiastic as ever. She said that someone like me should never dare to question her commitment or her professionalism. I accept that most teachers

are like that and we have to support them. That is why I am interested in refreshment.

Teaching is an odd profession, in that the job can be quite isolated, lonely and constrained. One cannot go out for a cup of coffee or take or make a phone call—it is not that kind of job. We must think seriously about the matter because, given the age profile of the profession, we have a lot of planning to do. We have a great opportunity to make decisions that will be good for the next 20 years.

10:45

**Mr Adam Ingram (South of Scotland) (SNP):** I am very interested in what you say. As you probably know, the committee is conducting an inquiry into pupil motivation. I have mentioned that to one or two teachers of my acquaintance and I suggest that we should perhaps consider teacher motivation at the same time.

On your point about the age profile of the teaching profession being skewed towards the over-40s, in other areas of life, we would normally value and draw on the experience of the workforce. I get the impression that there is a top-down approach in the teaching profession—it is a hierarchical profession—and that we do not engage with the workforce. As you mentioned, the pace of change has been great during the past couple of decades, with the inclusion agenda coming in and changing attitudes to discipline and the like. Teachers who trained perhaps 30 or 40 years ago barely touched on those subjects in their initial training, so it is not surprising that teachers suspect that they have been left to handle things on their own—that relates to the isolation that you talked about. Should we not have programmes in place to reach out to teachers, rather than dismissing teachers of a certain age and beyond?

**Matthew MacIver:** Absolutely. That is what I was trying to say in response to Ms Alexander’s question. You are right to say that teaching is a hierarchical profession, which is true of many professions; nevertheless we have to reach out to teachers, as you say. In many ways the teaching profession has been disempowered over a long period of time. My theme this morning is that we are at the beginning of something new in Scotland and one of our tasks is to empower this great profession again. That is what I am trying to say, and I suspect that it is the point of your question as well.

**Mr Ingram:** One of your functions is to promote the status of teachers and the teaching profession. What initiatives are you taking in that direction?

**Matthew MacIver:** Before the McCrone committee, we took the view that we wanted to change the way in which we take people into the

profession. We are a small organisation so we have to be sensible about our strategy and about how we operate at a national level. We took the view that if we could change the system of probation in Scotland we could start to work on that area—that was a conscious strategic decision. Our induction system in Scotland is now second to none. It is a good system and we should celebrate it.

We have targeted new teachers—who are not all young—not only with regard to their professional development; we have also sent information to them, set up focus groups, spoken to them and got people to bring them together. I have to say that our partnership with the local authorities has been terrific. They have really responded well.

As a result, we have taken a strategic decision that we have to do something about the people who are coming into the profession. As members know, certain political decisions will mean that a huge number of new teachers will come into the system over the next two years, and we are concentrating our activity in that area.

**Mr Frank McAveety (Glasgow Shettleston (Lab)):** In that respect, what Tim Brighouse did in Birmingham and latterly in London has provided one of the best examples of the past decade. His starting point was the principle that, irrespective of their background, pupils could achieve things and that people needed to find ways of inspiring them. One of the key transmitters was the use of confident teachers who believed that they were valued, and he concentrated many of his efforts on creating such an environment.

However, should we not ask ourselves about what we do with the very small section of the teaching profession who are unable to cope with the changing nature of society or, as some of the evidence that we have received for our pupil motivation inquiry shows, are unable to change their attitude towards young people? What is the GTC's role in addressing negative experiences and situations that you—and anyone who works in schools—know exist with colleagues who, sometimes through no fault of their own, are not cutting it any more and are causing real damage to youngsters? How do we intervene much earlier to tackle such matters? After all, that is an important element of boosting confidence.

**Matthew MacIver:** Interestingly, we do not have a role in that respect. Although the Government has agreed in principle that the GTC should have a role in competence, no such measure has been laid before Parliament. We play a more disciplinary role and deal with issues such as professional misconduct, convictions and so on. On the other hand, our colleagues in the General Teaching Council for England, which was set up

only four years ago, have powers over competence but do not have any power in relation to professional misconduct. I am not sure where that leaves us.

**Mr McAveety:** I have spoken to colleagues who had been tremendous teachers but who, through emotional or personal circumstances in their lives, had become less effective. If there had been flexibility in the school or in the education authority, they might have had a chance to break from some of the classroom experiences that they felt negative about. For example, they would have been very good at developing course work. However, there was no such flexibility. I wonder whether such an approach might help.

**Matthew MacIver:** I see now where you are coming from. I suppose that we are trying to take such an approach by moving towards a system of professional recognition in which a teacher can build up a portfolio of interests and qualifications throughout his or her career. That would allow us to move away from a situation in which a teacher has to teach one subject for 43 years.

As I said earlier, there must be co-operation and partnership among many of us involved in directing Scottish education and we must examine how we can use the talents and skills of those people in a way that we are not doing at the moment. Perhaps I was driving at that in response to one of Ms Alexander's questions. I do not think that we are using the skills that people have at the end of their careers. I take your point that the issue is quite difficult, but everyone involved in Scottish education has to address it pretty honestly.

**Mr McAveety:** I agree, but how do we enter that territory without reinforcing teachers' negative attitudes that, for example, we are simply having another kick at the teaching profession? After speaking to colleagues, I think that that is the real dilemma.

**Matthew MacIver:** I hope that that is not the case. Indeed, I hope that many teachers will see a new opportunity and challenge in certain areas instead of seeing such an approach in a negative light. I suspect that they would welcome it with open arms.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton (Lothians (Con)):** Your wise counsel, when you were rector of the Royal High School, is still warmly remembered in Edinburgh; I believe that you followed in the wake of Dr Farquhar Macintosh, who is also well known to us.

**Matthew MacIver:** That is correct.

**Mr McAveety:** Never heard of him.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton:** I have three questions to ask you, the first of which concerns

stress. I am told, anecdotally, that teachers are feeling under a lot of pressure because they do not have enough time to carry out all their duties. I understand that the so-called McCrone time is often allocated after school hours, so that teachers still do not get respite during the school day to plan, mark and assess their teaching practice. Might you feel able to address that area, with a view to alleviating teacher stress?

**Matthew MacIver:** The McCrone agreement on the provision of 35 hours of CPD is not part of my remit; I have responsibility only for the probation of teachers in their first year of teaching. Nevertheless, I take your point—I know what you are saying—although I have no knowledge of the stress, the McCrone time and so on.

Following the McCrone settlement, we are at the beginning of a process of taking the profession into a new world, with professional development and so on, and we will have to consider seriously how we use that time. There are many demands on teachers. For example, there are the demands of the schools in which they teach; the demands of their employers, the local authorities, which have their own plans; and the professional needs of the teachers themselves. Somewhere along the line, we must get the balance right. The tenor of your question suggests that we have not yet got the balance right. I suspect that you may be right; however, I do not have enough knowledge to comment.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton:** My second question concerns teacher retention. Does the GTC hold information on teacher retention and on those who leave the profession? We are now recruiting more teachers, but are any measures being taken to retain them?

**Matthew MacIver:** I am always interested to read in the press that we have another teacher shortage crisis, as we have more teachers—we have more than 80,000—on the register than we have had since 1982. I do not know where they go, but they all pay their fees. We have a database—a register—that tells us the number of teachers that there are in each subject, their age and their gender, and we share that information with our colleagues in the Scottish Executive. They have access to that information and know the numbers. Although they have their own figures and census returns, we have the most comprehensive register of teachers in Scotland—in fact, we have a record of every teacher in Scotland. Some supply teachers will go only to certain schools and will not go to other authorities. There are many factors. All that I can tell you is that we have more than 80,000 teachers on the register.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton:** Thank you. I have one more question. Could the GTC consider

making the process of registration less onerous for those who have qualified outside Scotland?

11:00

**Matthew MacIver:** Thank you for asking about that. It is a really important question. We are often criticised for the amount of time that we take to turn round an application from someone outside Scotland. Sometimes the criticism is fair, and I accept that, but sometimes it is not. I will tell you why. It is important that we ensure that every teacher who applies to teach in this country undergoes the processes that we set down. For example, we insist on references and a disclosure check for teachers, which can be difficult and time consuming. I will not apologise for the time that it sometimes takes to do a disclosure check on a teacher. All of us who are involved in child protection cringe at what has happened in the United Kingdom in the past two years. It has changed our lives forever. The Bichard inquiry report is essential reading for people such as me, because if my organisation makes one mistake, somebody's life might be lost.

The issue is important. I receive many letters from members whose constituents have written to them saying that they had to do X, Y and Z. For example, one person complained that we took three months to process her application, even though she was adequately qualified and had been teaching for many years. Despite our pushing, the disclosure check had taken two months, because the person was from another country. I alluded earlier to the substantial difficulties that we have in getting checks from some countries, but I am not prepared to compromise on the issue. Letters from me and my officers to people such as you always say that. Some members of the Parliament have had many letters from constituents about the issue and of course I will re-examine and re-evaluate matters, especially given that we have just appointed a new head of department. However, we will not compromise on some matters and we will insist on procedures being carried out properly. Mostly, it is disclosure checks that take a long time.

**Ms Byrne:** The first tranche of chartered teachers has now come through successfully. It is great that the scheme has been taken up so enthusiastically, but are there any aspects that stop teachers being whole-heartedly in favour of going down that route?

**Matthew MacIver:** That is a good question. We must talk up Scottish education and we should be proud of what we are doing—the chartered teacher programme in Scotland is causing huge international interest. However, as one would expect, there are teething problems. One issue that I highlighted in my letter to the clerk, Mr

Verity, is the feeling abroad that the system is unfair, because teachers have to pay a lot of money to become chartered. It is not my job to comment on that, but my letter suggests a couple of issues on which the committee should at least reflect.

Paying for teachers to take module 1 of the chartered teacher process would certainly do a lot for teacher morale at little cost, given the amount of money that is put into continuing professional development for teachers. To explain, module 1 of the 12 chartered teacher modules is a compulsory part of the process, whether somebody is an experienced teacher who wants to be accredited as a chartered teacher overnight or a less experienced teacher who wants to go to the University of Edinburgh or the University of Strathclyde and not only become a chartered teacher but get another degree. In my letter, I provided my calculation of how much it would cost to pay for teachers to take module 1. It is not exactly big-time stuff, but it would do an enormous amount for teacher morale.

The committee might like to consider the second suggestion in my letter, which might also answer the question about stress. After five years of teaching, all teachers are entitled to apply for chartered teacher status. My suggestion is to pay for every eligible teacher to take module 1 at the end of their fifth year or the beginning of their sixth year of teaching, as their continuing professional development for that year. They could then decide whether to continue with the rest of the programme.

We are considering other things and members might be pleased to know that I have a meeting tomorrow when we will be finalising a questionnaire to be sent to every one of the 6,500 teachers who expressed an interest in the programme, asking why some of them did not continue with the process.

**Fiona Hyslop:** You make an important point about the need to celebrate the quality of Scottish education, with which I firmly agree. However, in your letter, you make a fundamental and fairly grim statement. You say:

"For the last 20 years we have not been trusted as a profession."

That is teachers talking, not politicians. You go on:

"We have moved from being a 'high trust, low accountability' profession to the very opposite, ie a 'low trust, high accountability' profession."

In a way, I dispute that. Children and parents trust teachers, so I assume that it is the politicians and policy makers—the Executive and local authorities—who do not, which is a serious statement to make.

**Matthew MacIver:** That is a fair point, but I feel that what I said is true. You are right about children and parents, and I accept that. However, there is another serious and fundamental point. We have to re-empower the teaching profession in Scotland. From what I have been saying this morning, you will gather that I feel passionately about re-empowering the teacher in the classroom, about bringing them into the system and about giving them power to influence policy however we can do that.

I have said this publicly and I have written it, so there is no point in not saying it now. I feel strongly that, in the past few years in education, the language of the accountant has overtaken that of the educationist. We have become obsessed with words that should have little to do with the education of minds and the intellectualisation of people. We should be moving away from words such as "targets", "performance indicators", "downsizing", "job sizing" and "bottom lines" and using words such as "creative writing", "literature", "reading" and so on. I feel deeply that the classroom should be moving into a new world. All who are involved in Scottish education have an opportunity to contribute to that. The tenor of some of the questions this morning suggests that those of you who listen to teachers will have some sympathy with what I am saying, which is the way forward for Scotland.

I emphasise that I still think that the teaching profession is doing a wonderful job, but we have to start talking the whole thing up. We are doing a good job in Scotland—sometimes one might not believe that, but we are doing a good job. Lots of young people are getting wonderful opportunities in our schools and are going on to become good citizens of the world. We want that to continue.

**Mr Macintosh:** We are encouraged by what you are saying this morning. I have a question about teacher motivation, or morale as it is often called. Does the GTCS collect any information about teacher morale? Morale surveys are always a bit dubious and the results can be used for various purposes, but do you have a measure of the impact on teachers' lives of the McCrone agreement, for example, or of the different demands placed on teachers either by their head or by the Executive's actions? Do you assess that in an individual way, in a qualitative way or through a national survey?

**Matthew MacIver:** I am quite intrigued by that question. The answer is no, we do not and we have not. However we have appointed a research fellow to do research purely into issues in Scottish education. As you can imagine, so far we have concentrated on our statutory duties. We have done a questionnaire and we are considering the impact of the new induction system with groups

throughout Scotland. As I said, we also have a questionnaire on chartered teachers.

You may be interested to know that my colleague on the General Teaching Council for England, Carol Adams, took a different view and went for a joint assessment of the status and morale of the profession in England with *The Guardian* newspaper. It took a huge amount of money—the kind of money that we, as a small organisation, cannot afford. That had a profound effect on the thinking in England about two years ago. I take your point. It is a good suggestion, and I might come back to you on it.

**Dr Murray:** You said that not every new teacher is necessarily a young teacher. You also alluded to bringing in people with other transferable skills. We are living in a time when the average person has seven jobs in their lifetime. They do not go into one job at the age of 15 or 21 and work in it for the rest of their lives. How old can a new teacher be? Is there a role for bringing in people who did their degrees decades ago and who have been in industry or other professions, but who would like to spend the last 10 years of their working lives giving something back to the community by being a teacher?

**Matthew MacIver:** We are all young. There is no age barrier. It has been interesting for us to see how the trend has changed, and how people are making a conscious decision to come into teaching. Fifty per cent of probationers are over 30. Of course I want to attract the ubiquitous bank manager in Wick to become a maths teacher. Of course I want to attract the lawyer who has gone off to live in Benbecula who might be doing something else at the moment. There is no age barrier. In fact, all committee members would probably meet the entry requirements. You can get in touch with me, because we need lots of new teachers in Scotland.

**The Convener:** It is nice that politicians are wanted by somebody.

We have had quite a good run round the subject. There have been quite a number of interesting insights that we might want to reflect on and follow through. I thank Matthew MacIver for his attendance this morning. Given the absence of his colleague, he has had to hold up that rather distant end of the table by himself, but it has been an interesting session.

I am not sure whether colleagues want to do anything specific with the information that we have received this morning. If members want to reflect on particular matters, we can come back to them. Otherwise, this has been an information session that will feed into some of our other work, such as our work on Gaelic and the pupil motivation

inquiry. Are there any particular issues that members want to take forward?

**Mr Macintosh:** Matthew MacIver made a couple of good suggestions about chartered teacher status and other issues, which at the very least we should address and send to the Executive.

**The Convener:** I had that thought myself. I will write a letter with the assistance of the clerks and we will come back to the committee on that. Are there any other issues?

**Fiona Hyslop:** It would be helpful if we were kept up to date with progress on the Gaelic teacher working party.

**Matthew MacIver:** Absolutely.

**The Convener:** Thank you.

**Matthew MacIver:** Thank you for inviting me. It has been very refreshing. I would like to engage with you all in looking ahead for the good of Scottish education.

**The Convener:** We will take a quick two-minute break.

11:13

*Meeting suspended.*

11:18

*On resuming—*

## Pupil Motivation Inquiry

**The Convener:** Item 2 is consideration of our pupil motivation inquiry. There are one or two aspects to this—we have a summary of evidence and an approach paper on visits and we will take oral evidence. I welcome Scottish Executive officials Ruth Campbell, policy manager of the pupil support and inclusion division—that is a bit of a mouthful—of the Scottish Executive Education Department, and Lynn Hendry, the project director of determined to succeed, of the Scottish Executive Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department. We are being holistic and straddling departments. I welcome you both. Lynn Hendry will kick off by giving us an introduction.

**Lynn Hendry (Scottish Executive Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department):** I am project director for determined to succeed, which is the Executive's strategy for enterprise in education. I am on secondment to the Executive from Young Enterprise Scotland, where I was chief executive. I was a member of the original review group that made the 20 recommendations that were presented to ministers, and I lead a team of secondees from a variety of backgrounds in the private and public sectors, which is responsible to the Executive for supporting the implementation of the determined to succeed programme. It might be helpful if I give a quick overview of how we are implementing the programme locally.

Local authorities have been very much empowered in the process. All local authorities are required to submit a plan stating how they will implement the recommendations that are laid out in the strategy paper and they have been resourced financially to undertake delivery. Within the local executive, we have a monitoring team of staff who work hand in hand with the local authorities to ensure that delivery is to time, on budget and in line with the objectives of the determined to succeed programme. That delivery is supported by a national strategy in five key areas, which is led by the Executive. We seek to add value to local delivery, and the impact of our strategy is measured through a national evaluation framework that we are commissioning at the moment.

**Ruth Campbell (Scottish Executive Education Department):** I work in the pupil support and inclusion division and I have specific responsibility for a number of areas, including how pupils and parents are supported by schools—especially pupils in circumstances that challenge their ability to engage fully with education. I am

responsible for addressing behaviour and attendance in schools—which some might consider to be features of disaffection—and for promoting and increasing the level and quality of pupils' participation in schools. A large part of our work focuses on the promotion of a positive school ethos and the creation of a positive learning and teaching environment that motivates pupils. Our work also focuses on relationships between pupils, between staff and pupils and between schools and parents.

**The Convener:** Thank you. I am conscious of the fact that although the school is a major influence, it is not the only influence on young people's character development, educational development and the like. The informal sector—including the uniformed organisations and youth clubs—exists in a parallel universe to some extent. Its big advantage is that it is not compulsory for children to attend such organisations, whereas it is compulsory for them to go to school. Therefore, I presume that there are lessons to be learned from their success in attracting children. To what extent is the experience of the youth organisations brought into the work that you do?

**Ruth Campbell:** Good practice is emerging in relation to integrated community schools and authorities have encouraged youth workers and schools to work closely together. An example of that is the active breaks project in South Lanarkshire, in which youth workers reach out to young people who would not ordinarily be involved in youth work activities outside school. The skills and experience that the youth workers bring to the school setting mean that young people can be involved in alternative curriculum opportunities. On Monday, we will visit a school where active breaks workers have involved young people who are disaffected with school in setting up a school radio and DJ-ing project. There are some good examples of crossovers between youth workers' style and approach and the school setting. It would be good to share that good practice more effectively.

**The Convener:** The problem is that such worthwhile examples still tend to be the exception rather than the rule.

**Ruth Campbell:** Yes. The challenge is to find good practice and to ensure that it is shared and that other practitioners follow it. Another issue is the ability of young people to access youth work provision. Especially in rural areas, transport is an issue. If more such activities were centred on schools, to which transport is available, that might be a good thing for young people in those areas.

**The Convener:** I also wanted to ask about the evaluation of projects. You touch on that in your research evidence, in which you mention the Prince's Trust. It seems to be a tricky area,



because there are, arguably, no set guidelines. It is not quite like what is done by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, with its long-standing expertise in certain areas. How do you approach evaluation to ensure that it is not just box ticking but genuinely identifies good practice that works and is reasonably rigorously assessed?

**Lynn Hendry:** We have just commissioned the beginning of our evaluation framework, which we are addressing in two main ways. First, we are examining processes in local authorities to try to understand those that add value to local delivery. We are also examining in a more qualitative sense local authorities' relationships with schools, parents and the wider community.

Specifically, we are examining how the Executive strategy for enterprise in education can be more closely aligned with its strategy for young people who are not in education, employment or training—NEET. Part of the evaluation framework involves consideration not only of output measures but of characteristics of good practice. That follows on from Ruth Campbell's comment about how we share best practice in such a way that it effects change within schools. Although we are interested in short-term and long-term impacts, we are also interested in what makes practice good practice and in finding ways of disseminating that through our school network.

**Mr Macintosh:** The briefing paper has been well received; it is good to be informed about what is going on. I am aware that many of the immediate questions that it poses are questions for the minister. I will try to avoid asking such questions, but the officials should tell me if they cannot answer.

There is an idea that our obsession with exams and the emphasis on achievement and attainment can be damaging for many pupils' motivation, because they are working towards an exam rather than motivating themselves to learn. By themselves, exams and attainment are not a bad thing, and accreditation is important, but does the Executive commission research on or examine those issues? What information do you have at your disposal to assess the impact of Executive policies on pupil motivation? When the Executive has set a target and put in place indicators, do you assess the effect, which can sometimes be perverse?

**Ruth Campbell:** When one commissions an evaluation, it is sometimes difficult to ask it to consider both the impact and the perverse effects. That is an issue that we need to examine. We are very focused on attainment in Scotland and that is what hits the headlines, but we are starting to learn more and more about how we can take a broader view of achievement in schools and about

the impact of the overall school environment on pupils.

We have talked quite a bit about considering accreditation more broadly, for example through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. However, getting wider recognition—among employers, for example—of accreditation for other activities in schools that show that pupils are motivated and involved in school life is difficult. It is also difficult to support schools so that they consider that broader range of achievement and do not focus only on attainment at standard grade and higher level. We need to examine the issue. Currently, we do not have any evidence in relation to such matters, but in most of our evaluations we try to consider the broad impact, not only hard outcomes.

**Dr Murray:** Some of the written submissions that we have received on the existing networks and structures for communicating examples of best practice were a bit critical of the Executive for having a large number of different but related projects. For example, Skill Force Scotland welcomed the pupil inclusion network but thought that the sheer number of initiatives that had emerged from the Executive in recent years had provided local authorities with both opportunities and challenges. The Church of Scotland also thought that the way in which the myriad different but related projects that are undertaken by Learning and Teaching Scotland, at the request of the Executive, are funded and organised made it difficult to co-ordinate them. Are we doing too many small projects without people understanding their cross-cutting nature and the overall strategy that underpins them? How do you respond to various organisations' criticism that the Executive is doing too many small things and not enough big things?

11:30

**Ruth Campbell:** There are two issues there. The document "ambitious, excellent schools: our agenda for action" is about streamlining a direction and framework for education and schools while allowing local innovation and development to suit local need. As you will see from our paper, which outlines some of the things that we support at a local level through the future learning and teaching programme—the FLAT programme—we are supporting local creativity, through which schools and education authorities can develop some really good ideas. Rather than trying to drive a top-down approach, we are taking a bottom-up approach. As Lynn Hendry has said, we are trying to find out what the themes are in making that approach work and to help others to learn from that, rather than

taking something and making everybody do the same thing. By increasing flexibility, we can have a wider range of things going on in Scotland. If we learn lessons by drawing out the themes of what works, people can take that on board and bring it into their own practices effectively.

**Dr Murray:** How best can such good practice be disseminated to other people?

**Ruth Campbell:** That is a real challenge. Matthew MacIver was talking about the difficulty of communicating directly with teachers at the grass roots, rather than through education authorities. In policy terms, many of us do work through education authorities. I have developed a number of different approaches, including round-table seminars involving small groups, and have asked head teachers to share practices with other head teachers. We have produced a magazine, which is sent directly to teachers, so that every teacher in Scotland can get one. Those things are working.

It is a question of doing what we can when we can. The big Scottish education, teaching and technology conference—the SETT conference—takes place in September every year. The conference is huge, and it profiles much best practice, but it is possible that it does not reach the teacher at the grass roots very effectively. We need to work on a number of levels and try different things all the time.

**Lynn Hendry:** In determined to succeed, the Executive strategy for enterprise in education, we have, like Ruth Campbell, developed newsletters and direct correspondence with teachers. We have used Sky television and we have done some work on the community information channel for teachers. One of the most effective ways of sharing good practice among educational practitioners is through peer-to-peer endorsement. We are currently seeking to develop the concept of subject champions for enterprise and education, through which there will be leaders across the various subject areas in secondary education. They will be people who have shown tremendous good practice in bringing together subject specialists in the enterprise and education agenda. That peer-to-peer influence is a tremendously powerful way of bringing about change and sharing good practice in education.

**Ms Byrne:** I note that the determined to succeed strategy is about providing “pupil-centred, active approaches”, among other things. The evidence that we have heard suggests that learning and teaching styles are crucial in motivating young people. When we approach teaching from that angle, however, there is a need for smaller settings. There are some wonderful projects going on. I speak to teachers often; they tell me that they have some very imaginative projects, ranging from digital photography projects

to outdoor education, which can lead to the superb ASDAN award or to other awards.

The biggest problem that schools face is staffing. The outdoor education tutor will not be GTC registered, so there needs to be a qualified teacher with that person. The young person support team worker will not be GTC registered, so the project that they cover also needs to have a GTC-registered teacher on it. I could go on to mention other similar situations in which the teacher is taken away from the classroom. Smaller settings are required for such projects, which puts pressure on the schools to supply staff. Has that been highlighted to you, and is anything being done about it? Are you considering the issue in detail, and has there been feedback from teachers and others about how to deal with it?

**Lynn Hendry:** We commissioned research on the schools enterprise programme, with which you may be familiar. That programme was funded by the Executive and private sector partners and concerned enterprise in primary education. The evaluation highlighted the critical role of classroom assistants and their support in schools to enable teachers to undertake the initiatives that you described.

In the determined to succeed programme, we strongly advocate such project-based activities, underpinned by enterprising teaching and learning in the classroom. A strong focus is placed on the pedagogical approaches that teachers take in the classroom to make the learning experience enriching in every interaction with every child. The intention is to support delivery in the classroom of enterprising approaches that add value to the projects that you described. I am not in a position to comment on structural barriers to that, but Ruth Campbell might be able to do so.

**Ruth Campbell:** Matthew MacIver talked about some of the challenges of enabling the profession to meet the demands of a wide range of learning needs and styles in huge institutions. Some schools have 1,000-plus pupils; management of such schools needs considerable organisation. As Matthew said, we must think about the issue. Some schools are developing flexible programmes in partnership with youth workers, further education colleges and practitioners from other services in their local authority. By and large, they are managing to use flexible and creative approaches without compromising the quality of pupils' experience. We encourage such practices. We recently provided an additional £35 million over the next three years for support staff in schools to help provide the flexibility that Lynn Hendry talked about. As time passes, the question will arise whether a registration system that restricts people to a specific subject is flexible

enough for the education that we want for our children.

**Ms Byrne:** The issue is not just GTC-registered teachers, but staffing when schools try to furnish a more flexible curriculum and to take on projects that will motivate young people more. That is a major issue. Teachers' feedback to me suggests that if a pupil support teacher is taken out of the pupil support base to support an outdoor education activity or whatever, a teacher in a classroom will not have the expected pupil support teacher to support her in teaching her class. My impression and my experience are that we are robbing Peter to pay Paul.

The projects are fantastic and we all want to undertake them, but not enough is provided to support them in schools, so we need a complete review. Perhaps some of the research that we talked about with the GTC needs to be conducted to find out what standard is needed to move forward with the processes. Perhaps the people who need to do that research are the teachers who are involved in the projects. Often, projects die because of staffing shortages.

**The Convener:** Please ask your question.

**Ms Byrne:** Can we do research? Is research being done? How much are you doing to evaluate projects on which much money is being spent, and how much are you doing to feed back problems as well as successes?

**Ruth Campbell:** We have a range of evidence and sources to pull together to make sense of the situation that Ms Byrne describes. We will certainly consider that.

**Ms Byrne:** We would be happy to receive any research that you have done.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton:** In some circumstances, might giving teachers a slightly lighter timetable allow them more time to implement a variety of more stimulating approaches in their teaching practice?

**Ruth Campbell:** Yes. The programmes need to be developed in the long term. When schools do their timetabling each year they consider a range of factors such as space, the number of pupils and the variety of learning that they want to take place. Effective leaders and head teachers provide a range of stimulation for their pupils through staffing and partnership working.

**Ms Alexander:** We are exploring pupil motivation. We are talking not about cognitive skills per se or about IQ, but about non-cognitive skills—the "I can" skills. It surprises me slightly that in the entire submission on motivation and the growth of non-cognitive skills there is no mention of early years education or home-school links and workers. Non-cognitive learning is done mainly in

the early years and at home. Of the plethora of projects—I counted 17—none that you highlighted relates to either early years education or home-school links and the role of home-school support. Does that fall within the remit of your work on pupil motivation?

**Ruth Campbell:** I did not include early years education—that was a lack of information gathering on my part—but I can provide more information on it. Home-school networking is an interesting area and we are trying to boost the profile of the achievement of home-school link workers this year. We are planning a national conference for those staff later in the year. I hope that, through that, we will hear about good practice from practitioners and that we will be able to make more of their achievements.

Parental contribution to children's learning and motivation is a challenging area. We set up a working group on how schools can best reach out to what we might describe as hard-to-reach parents, or parents in difficult circumstances. There is good practice, but much of it is aimed at supporting families through chaotic circumstances—it is really firefighting. We could do something now on examining positive parenting skills in order to invest more effectively in young people, who will be the parents of the future.

**Ms Alexander:** It would be helpful if you could reflect on and write to us about the evaluation evidence on home-school links and the scale of home-school working in Scotland. The Scottish Executive is probably the only body that, at the centre, is in a position to assess the scale of availability of home-school working. I say that because we know from work in our social work remit that one in 20 children in Scotland is growing up in a home with a drug-abusing parent. We know from separate evidence—it is not all from the same cohort—that one in 20 children is referred to the children's panel.

It is no wonder that teachers feel overloaded. I accept that most programmes are specific to geographical areas, but there are 17 of them. The Executive briefing states:

"The XL programme has been shown to improve attendance and increase pupil's motivation in other aspects of school life, as well as providing pupils with accreditation of their achievement".

Have we struck the right balance in proliferating more and more projects under the future learning and teaching programme and other schemes, given that we know that the XL programme works?

The paper states that good practice is

"disseminated through a range of websites and publications targeted at the education community".

The Executive is exploring holding conferences and seminars. To maximise the impact of such work, instead of proliferating more and more projects, would it be better to have a sense of which two or three projects we want to be replicated in other parts of Scotland? What discussions take place with local authorities on that? I presume that, ultimately, decisions on whether to implement a project fall within their jurisdiction.

I also want to know about the role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education. If there are 17, 25 or however many projects going on and one is pretty convinced that three of those work, what discussion—beyond the websites and the publications—is there with HMIE about its role in disseminating knowledge and good practice? Such information would enable education authorities to choose whether to opt into or out of projects. Is there a system of scaling rather than just a proliferation of new initiatives that leaves us—perhaps wrongly—with the impression that if we wanted to know which of the 17 schemes worked, we would need to go to 17 different websites in our spare time to find that out, which might be a bit hard? How do we know which of the 17 projects works? How are they being scaled? Is HMIE involved in that process? Do directors of education have a handle on which three or four of the menu of 17 projects they might want to opt into?

**The Convener:** I think that we had better let the witnesses reply before you elaborate too much.

**Ms Alexander:** Of course. Basically, my question is about dissemination of information and the scalability of projects vis-à-vis the proliferation of experimentation.

11:45

**Ruth Campbell:** That is difficult to answer. Some of the best ideas start on a small scale in local schools. Some of the mental health work that is going on in primary schools started from a particular professional's keenness to develop such work. Projects grow and we can support that growth.

Education professionals do not want to be stifled—they do not want to be told which initiative they should follow. They want us to be able to tell them about the range of activities that are going on, to explain how they work and to invite them to do what best suits their school. We must give them some credit for making their own choices; we do not want to nanny them into doing things.

**Ms Alexander:** Is there a single source that allows any head teacher, teacher or director of education to study the menu that exists? Is there a single entry point?

**Ruth Campbell:** Yes—the national grid for learning gives access to all that stuff. People in education receive communication in very different ways. Although they all work in the same profession, they have different approaches to how they pick up on and screen information, so we have a responsibility to try to disseminate information through television or direct magazines, for example.

**Ms Alexander:** How do we avoid there being a split between the work of policy makers in the Education Department in sponsoring an interesting plethora of activity and taking a view—presumably through policy evaluation—on what works and what does not work, and the separate stream of measuring activity by inspectors? What linkage is there between those two realms? Do inspectors play a part in evaluation? Would they have a handle on which programmes have the greatest potential?

**Ruth Campbell:** We have on-going dialogue with inspectors, but when inspectors go into schools and authorities, they consider a broad range of learning outcomes. People can achieve those outcomes in a range of ways. We are finding out what different ways there might be to help them to achieve the outcomes on which the inspectorate examines them. It is important that the system works on a number of levels.

**The Convener:** It is tricky to get a handle on what is happening throughout the country and on the extent to which there are drivers of public policy to take forward themes rather than projects that have been shown to be successful. In the past, there has been no hesitation in imposing schemes—for example, primary schools were encouraged to adopt phonetic spelling. Such projects have been rolled out across the country. On such important issues, is there a need to ensure that—through the work of HMIE, for example—at least some of the themes are embedded in schools' practice throughout the country? There are no two ways about it: the overall picture looks very bitty.

**Lynn Hendry:** I will respond on behalf of the determined to succeed programme. We commissioned the production of a series of quality indicators specifically on enterprise and education, which schools would be able to use to assess their performance against a range of standards that were set by HMIE. We launched the series last November.

In 2006, HMIE will undertake a thematic inspection in local authority areas; it will specifically examine enterprise in education. As Ms Alexander said, the inspectors will consider much more holistically how enterprise in education is delivered not just in terms of the projects and initiatives that happen in the classroom but in

terms of the ethos and leadership that has been established in schools to empower teachers to be more enterprising in the approaches that they take in the classroom. We do not know what that inspection will tell us, but it is an attempt to take a more thematic approach.

**The Convener:** That shows that such an approach can be taken. The Executive has a drive to get enterprise education into all schools. I am not saying that enterprise is less important than pupil motivation, but pupil motivation needs to be tackled effectively throughout Scotland, so is there potential to do more thematic work on that, too?

**Ruth Campbell:** I take the point that it is important to ensure coherency. For a head teacher who was charged with development of an organisation, the first point in trying to decide where to go next would be to examine the characteristics of the pupil population, the teaching staff and the school's community. The head teacher would then need to work out what was particularly required in the school.

A head teacher working in an area where there is third-generation unemployment, a spate of recent deaths or whatever would start by considering aspects such as mental and emotional health. Those are key areas in which head teachers would want to ensure that their staff felt that they were supported, and that staff welfare was in the necessary condition. They would then move on to consideration of the kind of programmes that needed to be implemented to address the needs of pupils and parents. Communities have different histories and recent experiences, and schools have different staff teams and so on, so experiences differ greatly. In giving head teachers the tools to do the job, we need to give them the full toolkit, not just two spanners.

**The Convener:** That is a valid point.

**Mr McAveety:** We want to get to the heart of how to have well-motivated young people in early years education and right through the school system. The conundrum for the committee is that all of us know of different schools in our constituencies or regions that have virtually identical social and economic characteristics, but some are brilliant and some are not so brilliant, which is the best euphemism I can find. What should we do to encourage more schools to be brilliant at what they do?

I experienced at least two secondary schools in the 1980s—a time that was, by any definition, meant to be the non-golden age of Scottish education. I might ask you about that in a moment. Those schools have now been turned around. First, what is it about current practice that has made a difference? Although I have a perspective

on the subject, I am interested in your views about how we can make such improved experience more widespread and how we can encourage that to happen. Secondly, did we do anything right in the 1980s?

**Ruth Campbell:** I am not going to answer the second question. On the first question, both of us have identified that the quality of leadership in schools is crucial.

**Mr McAveety:** Everywhere?

**Lynn Hendry:** Yes—absolutely.

**Ruth Campbell:** Obviously, the Executive takes the issue seriously. If one had to identify one thing that makes a difference, one would start with the quality of leadership. If they are good leaders, instead of being confused by the range of initiatives, head teachers can be selective; they can work out what they need for their schools and get on with it. Many head teachers do just that.

**Mr McAveety:** My worry when I was teaching in the 1980s and 1990s—this is a slight reference to yesterday's comments—and what dispirited me most was that, if the school was in an area that by any definition was significantly disadvantaged, the mindset among some people led them to say, "What do you expect? This is the reality of the economics and social characteristics of the neighbourhood." As a secondary school teacher, I was frustrated by that because I believed that there was genuine potential to turn round schools and the life experiences of the youngsters in them.

How do we create the space for that in Scotland? If we read through the GTCS submission and the magazines that it provided, we can see the terrible counsel of despair in the letters pages. People feel that they are under pressure because of restructuring and indiscipline and the pressures that inclusion creates. Whether they are right or wrong, all we can see is that that is their perception and experience. How do we change that? I know that more resources than ever are going into education, and that Scotland has a more stable economic framework in terms of its employment base. Although the wage base is much better for teachers than it was in the 1980s and the 1990s, we still have some persistent problems. For example, we have the problem of motivating teachers and the problem of how to shift the aspirations of youngsters on to more positive things. That is particularly true in areas of significant disadvantage.

**Lynn Hendry:** I will respond to that with reference to a specific case study. Last year, 90 inspiring head teachers went through a leadership programme at the Columba 1400 initiative, one of whom was Ian White from Govan High School. Two other members of his senior management team also went. They are now taking a systemic

approach towards developing leadership capacity in the whole school. That will be an interesting case study as the school progresses its leadership development, because that school faces the challenges that Mr McAveety outlined—social disadvantage, high levels of disengaged parents and disaffected young people. It is a fantastic example of how a school can, when there is a strong focus on leadership within the school, re-energise the staff, re-energise the pupils and re-engage the parents.

**The Convener:** Leadership is clearly important. However, like Frank McAveety, when we saw the recent report about the performance of Glasgow schools, I was struck by the differences between schools. The differences were not only one or two percentage points, but were substantial across the indicators, not least in respect of the number of young people who are unemployed after a certain period. In some schools, the figure was as low as 2 per cent, but for other catchment areas that are—as far as one can judge—similar, the figure was more like 20 per cent.

There are major lessons to be learned about differences in performance. Ken Macintosh might refer to East Renfrewshire Council, which has been in the papers recently. It has a different catchment, which we all recognise, but it seems to have come out well in its coterie. There are problems with such comparisons, so I wonder what research or studies have been done into the factors beyond leadership that influence performance.

**Lynn Hendry:** I will speak on behalf of a colleague of mine who is responsible for Beattie implementation. A literature review on the characteristics of good practice on student destination in the United Kingdom is being concluded. Student destination is an incredibly complex matter, and many factors influence the outcome; leadership is certainly not the only one. I am not in a position to comment on that, but I would be happy to provide the committee with a more supported evidential base on student destination.

**The Convener:** It is the sort of matter that is worth examining systemically. I appreciate the multiplexity of factors, which obviously makes research much more difficult, but it might be worth while sponsoring research into it.

**Mr McAveety:** Is there any hidden research about the role that janitors play in schools' quality?

**Ruth Campbell:** There is lots of anecdotal evidence on that.

**Mr McAveety:** We will leave it at that.

**The Convener:** I thank the witnesses. That was an interesting evidence-taking session. We are

grateful for your input and I hope that the meeting was not too arduous for you.

Apart from the evidence that we have heard this morning, we have a couple of additional papers: the summary of written evidence on which Elaine Murray touched earlier, and the paper on the direction of our inquiry, which is perhaps more relevant to decision making. We do not want to have a detailed discussion on the summary of written evidence, but I ask committee members to home in on any points from it that they think are worthy of illustration at the moment.

**Mr Ingram:** On reading the summary, I was somewhat dissatisfied with the written evidence that we are getting. It seems to be a bit thin and anecdotal compared to the paper that we got from the Scottish Parliament information centre, which was excellent. Perhaps we need to target better our requests for evidence. For example, I do not see any submissions from educational psychologists, who I would have thought would be among the principal sources of information on pupil motivation.

**The Convener:** If committee members have particular ideas such as that, which is a good one, there is nothing to stop us from formally seeking evidence from relevant organisations.

**Dr Murray:** I agree that the SPICe paper was more useful than the summary of written evidence, but that is because we have to deal with the evidence that we receive rather than going out to seek it. I particularly liked the reference in the SPICe briefing to RHINOs—pupils who are “really here in name only”. Although it is bitty, the written evidence is about the importance of teacher motivation; we cannot discuss pupil motivation without looking at that. It will be a crucial part of the inquiry.

12:00

**The Convener:** It is clear that the subject area is wide. It is a difficult area to get to grips with, so I think that the inquiry will be more substantial than we first thought. We will talk about that when we consider the inquiry approach paper.

**Ms Alexander:** Many of the submissions try constantly to draw the agenda back to cognitive rather than non-cognitive skills. Motivation is non-cognitive; it is not about what people achieve at the end of the day. We need to find a way to build that into the inquiry.

We are among the only people who can take an overall view. Lots of good things are going on, but that is not the issue. The challenge for us is how we ensure that the maximum number of children in Scotland are exposed to the best pedagogical practice and classroom experience.

We have already said that there are lots of good wee examples, but the peculiarities of the structure of delivery of education in Scotland and our ways of interacting with the teaching profession and carrying out continuous professional development for teachers are huge impediments to assessing what we know. I am less interested in spending time on examining the very best practice because I am convinced that it exists. I am more interested in what we say to the Executive about how we can help to give more pupils access to good classroom experience without tearing up our education delivery mechanism, and about how we work within the realities of the teacher contract as McCrone designed it.

We will never better what Alan McLean did in his project, but he is incapable of ensuring that his recommendations are taken up in all Glasgow schools and he has not a snowball's chance of spreading them to other education authorities.

As regards structuring our time during the inquiry, the problem that confronts us is not how we reinvent the wheel, but how we disseminate the best of what we know given the respective roles of the Executive, HMIE and local education authorities, and given the pressures on individual classroom teachers and the structuring of their time.

**The Convener:** That is right. That approach would emphasise process. I am more interested in what happens mainstreamly—if there is such a word—in schools, than I am in odds and ends and little projects outwith the mainstream. Before we start excluding children by placing them in special projects or sending them on courses, our first port of call is to decide what we do with the other 90 per cent of schoolchildren with whom we deal. The better we can handle the majority, the better will be the situation for all. On the other hand, there are restrictions to consider, given the extent to which young people who have problems can disrupt other children. There are a number of themes to consider.

I will qualify what Wendy Alexander said. We are lay people, so it is important for us to make one or two visits to schools to get a flavour of what is going on, even if we then go on to look at the processes and public policy drivers that will make the changes that we want to achieve across the board.

**Ms Byrne:** To come back to the practical aspects, I am interested in what is happening at Springburn Academy. It would be worth while, even if we do not visit the school, at least to get someone in from the pastoral care department to give us an overview of what is happening there.

Linked to the project at Springburn Academy, I would like to look at guidance in particular and at

how “Better Behaviour—Better Learning” is developing in schools. I do not think that we have had a recent report back on that. We should probe what impact the McCrone agreement has had on moving forward with “Better Behaviour—Better Learning”, in particular given that there are principal teachers of guidance but no assistant principal teachers of guidance. Those are key pastoral areas for the well-being of young people, which is a factor in whether they will be motivated. We should also consider socioeconomic aspects because social factors are an issue in areas in which there are huge problems and we should not omit consideration of those factors. The SPICe briefing is excellent—there is much in it that we can consider and expand on. It could move us forward well if we select the areas that we want to probe.

We are at only the start of the exercise, which will be huge and more complex than any of us thought to begin with. I would certainly like to see evidence, so it would be good if we could decide on the key areas that we want to consider.

**The Convener:** The person from SPICe, who is sitting in the corner, will pat herself on her back.

**Fiona Hyslop:** I was off when the committee decided that it wanted a pupil motivation inquiry and I am still a bit confused about what members want to achieve from it. I was under the impression that we wanted to consider motivation for all pupils and what the core issues are around motivation across the mainstream curriculum in particular. This might be the outside perception of what we want to consider, but the summary seems to show that the inquiry has been distilled—either by those who have contributed to it or by other means—into being about those who are disaffected and are coping with disaffection. Perhaps that is a misunderstanding as a result of my not being party to early discussions, but—

**The Convener:** I do not think that that is right. As I have tried to say, I—and I think other committee members—want to consider the mainstream experience. Obviously, light is cast on that by projects through which people have succeeded in motivating kids who have been turned off by the mainstream experience, so things are a bit chicken and eggish.

**Fiona Hyslop:** We spoke to Matthew MacIver about teacher empowerment and involvement. We must work out how to maximise teachers' involvement in the classroom, how they tap into resources and so on. We should also bear it in mind that there is constant assessment, an overcrowded curriculum and so on. How do all those issues sit? How will we find time for them? Are such issues seen as peripheral or integral? I know that we are reluctant to consider the processes, but we should address some key

processes that involve time and resources because, at the end of the day, the issue is about how time and resources are allocated, what makes the maximum impact on pupils and at what stage that happens. Much of what we are discussing relates to secondary level and very little to primary level. Unless we tackle issues relating to pupil motivation at primary level, we could miss a whole range of things.

**The Convener:** In thinking about school visits and so on, it might be helpful to think about a structured way in which to ask questions. Some themes that have been mentioned are important. They may not all be central to what we are seeking, but we cannot understand the issue without trying to address and get views on some of those themes.

**Fiona Hyslop:** If we get the impression that teacher motivation is as important as pupil motivation and—although I do not want to prejudge it—the reaction is, “Oh yes, there’s another Scottish Executive initiative. There were 17 of them in three pages in its submission”, there will be an obvious point there. However, I suppose that we will not know about that until we find out.

**The Convener:** There is an almost off-putting, bureaucratic feel about the summary of things that happen. One says to oneself, “Oh dear, I must make a real effort to read through this stuff and get something out of it.”

**Mr McAveety:** We must be careful how we proceed on the basis of the evidence that we have received so far. We need to try not to reinforce the sense that we are doing what we are doing in the absence of considering the role of teachers. We must get the balance right.

My second point is of particular interest to me because of the profile of my constituency. I am amazed at the marked differences in primary schools and in some secondary schools. There are two secondary schools in the north and east of the city that would have been considered impossible to deal with 10 or 15 years ago but, as a result of a combination of leadership, engagement and a sense of community involvement over the past seven or eight years, an amazing number of parents now say that they are really good schools. That would not have happened 10 years ago, and it is happening because children are going home and telling their parents that they feel good at the school, that they are doing better there, or that they feel that the school really cares about them. If that can happen in those schools, it can happen anywhere in Scotland. We need to get to the heart of that, to give that faith back and to motivate both staff and pupils.

**The Convener:** That connects with the Springburn Academy visit that Rosemary Byrne suggested.

**Mr Macintosh:** I agree with many of the previous comments. I am not against any of the Executive projects. In fact, I was quite encouraged by Ruth Campbell saying that there is no point in rolling out a project across Scotland, because that implies that that is the one system that will work for everybody. She said that we must allow people to choose what works for them and then support that choice. What is difficult—and I think that this is what Wendy Alexander was saying—is that there are no tools for evaluating what does and does not work. It is unclear whether motivation—of either teachers or pupils—is measured or evaluated in any way. The GTC says that it does not measure teacher morale. Teacher morale is a difficult issue anyway, and it is used in different circumstances for different reasons. However, I cannot help feeling that there should be some sort of measurement, even if only small scale, local surveys, in order to find out what works. Ultimately, we want to put in place a system that rewards good practice and effective teaching and—as Fiona Hyslop was saying—that tells head teachers and teachers how they should balance their time. In theory, McCrone is all about giving teachers more time, but if it does not give them enough time to do the things that motivate pupils, it is slightly pointless.

The Executive is doing great things that are exactly what we should be hearing about, for example in its support for music, art, drama and recreation-based activities. It is also linking schools and colleges to support vocational education and pupils who do better in a college than in a school environment. The Executive is considering all the right things, but it does not seem to focus on motivation. That is a sort of tangential effect. I wonder whether the committee can work out how to measure motivation. I do not want to introduce another target; in fact, I would like to assess the current targets to ascertain what effect they have on motivation. Exams are one example. The point is raised constantly that exams are a disincentive rather than an incentive, yet accreditation is important. We have to work out why one thing works and another does not. Perhaps we can work in that direction. That is process, and we will get there through our visits.

**The Convener:** That focuses the evidence to some extent.

**Mr Macintosh:** Ultimately, we cannot make teachers good teachers, but we can guide the policy that incentivises them in the right way. If we are providing the wrong incentives we can change them. We need to reward good practice. At the moment, we are working in the dark.



**Ms Alexander:** I want to suggest one possible way to drill down into this. It is probably something that the clerks or the convener would want to consider. The danger in this is that we hear what people want to tell us. We are left slightly frustrated about the extent to which a classroom teacher can acknowledge that motivating young people has in some respects changed because the expectations of young people have changed.

Glasgow, which is the largest education authority in Scotland, was inspected by HMIE in September 2002. There were seven issues that HMIE wanted to go back to the education authority on, a fair number of which impinge on this agenda. After a follow-up inspection last September, HMIE still felt that not all the issues that had been identified in 2002 had been addressed. It is now going back for a third time, which is almost unprecedented—indeed, I think that that has happened only once before in Scotland—and will report again by June.

I simply leave that for members to reflect on, especially if some of our evidence-taking sessions will take place after the summer. If we are trying to get a handle on the matter, here are two—indeed, almost three—examples of HMIE inspecting an authority and finding a number of areas where it wants changes to be made. My question is how we can reconcile such comments by HMIE on what it wants to be changed with what we have been hearing and what we apparently already know.

12:15

**The Convener:** I want to look at where we are going on this matter, but I believe that Elaine Murray has a comment.

**Dr Murray:** I thought that Alan McLean's presentation and workshop were interesting. Obviously, his work with teachers on pupil motivation is important. However, although teacher motivation also seems to be important, I have no handle on it. I do not know whether we can hear from HMIE, individual inspirational teachers or whoever else with such expertise.

**The Convener:** Let me make one general observation. This inquiry does not have a particular time constraint per se; after all, we do not have to hit any legislative targets. As a result, we can be flexible if we need to be. Indeed, given the paper's suggestions, I think that we are heading in that direction. However, there are some imposed flexibilities. For example, our scheduling will have to take some account of the likelihood of a general election on 5 May or thereabouts, even though it is not a Scottish Parliament election.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton:** The avoidance of stress is desirable if teachers are to

encourage maximum pupil motivation. A teacher under stress is like a piece of elastic which, if pulled too far for too long, loses its elasticity. That has a negative impact on pupils. As a general principle of good practice, teachers should not be put under excessive pressure.

**The Convener:** Several suggestions have been made about how we move forward on this matter. I certainly do not think that we should be constrained to produce a report before the summer recess, which was the original plan. I think that that will prove impossible. Equally, I think that, at this stage, having meetings and visits in the one week would prove too much of a commitment. We need to spread things a little bit.

Under the current plans, we could conceivably hear all the evidence and carry out all the visits before the summer recess and then, after the recess, come back to the report at our leisure or indeed go further if we want to.

**Mr Ingram:** The early years inquiry is linked to this subject. Indeed, one inquiry will inform the other and as a result we should try to dovetail our work on both.

**The Convener:** That approach would certainly be relevant when we carry out our visits. Perhaps we should keep an eye over our shoulder in that respect.

**Martin Verity (Clerk):** Convener, the committee will receive written evidence on the early years inquiry before it finishes taking oral evidence on the pupil motivation inquiry. As a result, there will be an opportunity for a read-across.

**The Convener:** As far as the timetable is concerned, three sessions have been scheduled for stage 2 consideration of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill. It is reasonably clear that we will need only one session—or perhaps one and a bit. There is therefore a bit of room for manoeuvre in that third session, which is scheduled for 16 March, because we will clearly not need to consider any amendments. We could perhaps schedule a visit or something else on that date.

I think that we should have another discussion about who we want to visit. Although we can come back to this matter to a certain extent, we need to get some early arrangements in place for those two dates, which precede the Easter recess. One suggestion that has been made is a visit to a project in Perth. Are members happy with that? Details of the project are given in annex 1 to the proposal paper.

**Dr Murray:** Not everybody needs to go on all the visits. In the past, we have divided visits up. A number of visits, each by one or two people, rather than everybody going on one visit, might be a way to get a wider spectrum of views. Although I agree

that it is desirable to make visits on a Wednesday morning, that limits us to the central belt. If we were to go to Perth, it would not be terribly sensible to go on a Wednesday morning.

**The Convener:** Perth might be all right, but if we were to go any further than that we would have problems.

**Mr Macintosh:** I would like to meet not the teaching unions, or people who speak on behalf of teachers, but teachers themselves. I am quite happy to go into a school, but if we go on a school day it is difficult to get teachers together and have enough time to think about the matter in a rational way. It would be good to have a formal or informal meeting with a group of teachers to discuss the matter at length, rather than taking up their lunch hour. I do not know how easy it would be to arrange that.

**The Convener:** Presumably such a meeting would take place after 4 o'clock.

**Mr Macintosh:** Yes, perhaps. I do not know how it would be arranged, to be honest.

**The Convener:** Our experience from the school visits that we have made is that we can usually get a certain number of teachers—perhaps the head teacher and one or two others—despite the constraints.

**Mr Macintosh:** Yes, but I have been to a number of such meetings and what happens is that some people are clued up on what the visit is about while others are not. They might or might not be knowledgeable about the issue. I do not mind going to a school, but if the teachers can be invited to a meeting away from the school to unburden themselves and talk about what motivates them and their pupils, that would be better. I am quite happy with a staffroom-type meeting, but I would like it to be informal and non-hierarchical. It should not be done through the teaching unions.

**The Convener:** I accept that.

**Mr McAveety:** Another possibility is to visit one of Glasgow's learning communities, each of which comprises primary schools, pre-five establishments and a secondary school. In planning such a visit, it might be worth while to identify that we would like to meet a cross-section of staff on the front line. We all know of learning communities, but perhaps we should pick one in an area that faces massive challenges. Obviously, I am familiar with the one in the east end of Glasgow, which would be convenient for me but is within a reasonable travelling distance for most of us. We might learn a lot from such a visit.

**The Convener:** That is what we are heading towards in paragraph 11 of the paper.

**Martin Verity:** Paragraphs 11 and 12 contain a number of suggestions about the type of visit that the committee could make and the type of witnesses it could invite. We suggest that if the committee is broadly happy with the thrust of the paper the clerks will come back with specific proposals for approval. If the committee wants to adopt a different angle from that which is suggested in paragraphs 11 and 12, we can arrange that too.

**Mr McAveety:** It is a particular hobby horse of mine, but a really great example is the secondary school in Carntyne. If anyone had said 15 years ago that merging the three denominational secondary schools in the east end of Glasgow would result in the ethos that has developed in that school under a variety of staff—not just the head teacher, who is very good, but a number of other key staff—we might not have believed them. It is a good example; it works in an area where there are massive social challenges and it has had to cope with a new-build development. It has been able to cope with those factors and sustain progress and improvement.

**The Convener:** I think that we need to have specific school visits as well as the specific cross-cutting approach.

**Mr McAveety:** Bruce Malone from St Andrew's new learning community and Jim Dalziel from Eastbank new learning community could organise what I am suggesting. I can support that if you want me to.

**The Convener:** Obviously, we cannot finalise all this today. There is probably a degree of urgency in relation to fixing something in the slots for 16 and 23 March, which are the most obvious ones. I take it that people do not want to use Mondays during that early stage, because of diary commitments and so on, but we might be able to use a Monday instead of a Wednesday later on. We can clear up such issues by e-mail.

We will ask the clerks to work up a detailed programme of visits and evidence-taking sessions based on the comments that we have heard today. Members might want to give me authority to clear the early ones but we will clear the others by e-mail.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton:** It has been quite long since the teaching unions have been invited to give oral evidence to the committee.

**The Convener:** There would be one area in relation to which it would be appropriate to talk to them. Let us think about your suggestion further because we do not want to speak only to the usual suspects—that is a derogatory phrase that we use for organisations that we see a reasonable amount of. There might be scope for talking to the teaching unions, but I am not sure that we want

them to become the main part of this piece of work.

**Ms Byrne:** The unions will have an overview. There is a lack of research evidence about the morale of teachers and so on and I imagine that the unions would be the people with the best handle on that aspect of pupil motivation and so on. I would not dismiss the idea of bringing the teachers unions back in.

**The Convener:** I am not dismissing the idea, but I do not want the inquiry to be dominated by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, the Headteachers Association of Scotland and so on, as that will constrain our time. We might want to hear from some of those organisations, but I do not think that we should spend all or most of our time listening to them. We have limited time and we need to use it well.

**Lord James Douglas-Hamilton:** One solution might be to ask all the organisations for written evidence first and make decisions based on that.

**The Convener:** We should check to see what evidence we have already received from the professional organisations and see who we are missing.

I would like to get semi-agreement on the second-last bullet point on page 3, which suggests that we have a final workshop involving the Scottish Youth Parliament. That would be a reasonable and participative way to wrap things up. Would people be happy with that?

**Mr Macintosh:** I agree with the idea of having a workshop. I am relaxed about the membership of it at this stage.

**The Convener:** It would be a useful way of winding things up. We will have picked up on a number of themes by that point and we might want to explore them in more depth with a reasonably knowledgeable group.

**Mr Macintosh:** I was involved in a similar workshop with the Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee in the previous session of Parliament. It was very successful.

**The Convener:** We had some workshops during the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill as well.

**Mr Macintosh:** Yes. They are a good idea.

**The Convener:** We will leave it to the clerks to make progress and will let people have details of the suggested programme as soon as possible.

*Meeting closed at 12:28.*



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