



General Teaching Council
for Northern Ireland

General Teaching Council for NI

termtalk

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termtalk



Welcome to the June edition of **termtalk**, I am conscious that as we publish this edition there remains within the profession considerable

uncertainty about the future.

One of our aims for **termtalk** is that it should offer insights into the changes impacting on teachers and schools, and allow policy makers an opportunity to communicate directly to the profession. So it is particularly pleasing that our new Minister, Catriona Ruane, has chosen **termtalk** as the vehicle to set out her initial thoughts on the challenges facing us in future years. As Registrar it is gratifying, but not surprising, to note the Minister's warm endorsement of the profession and her acknowledgement of the vital role played by teachers.

The Council has always sought to celebrate the dedication and professional integrity clearly evident in our teachers and will launch, on the 15th of June, a major publication, *Teaching: the Reflective Profession*, which confirms the important and complex nature of teachers' work.

It only remains for me to thank you again for your commitment and professionalism and wish to you a restful and restorative summer break.

Eddie McArdle

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Registrar, GTCNI

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Certainty in a time of change



Teaching: the Reflective Profession

At times of great change and challenge there is a very reasonable and understandable human tendency to seek a measure of certainty and stability. This holds true for teachers as much as for any other group in society. The teaching profession, indeed the wider education service, is experiencing an unparalleled volume of change, with significant elements driven by global forces such as the emergence of the knowledge economy.

The impact of the knowledge economy allied to the knowledge/information explosion, increasingly facilitated by enhanced

connectivity, has created new realities for us as teachers. The pace of change requires that we adjust our understanding of what it means to be educated. More importantly we must never fail to remember that education, whilst seeking to meet these emerging economic needs must always, in the first instance, be about empowering young people and enabling them to play an active and constructive role in all aspects of the world of tomorrow. As professionals we must constantly assert our understanding as to the purposes and nature of the noble work we undertake. Equally, we must

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GTCNI - a new voice for teachers

Certainty in a time of change



engage actively with professional colleagues in a meaningful discussion, not just on the purposes of education, but on the nature of pedagogy itself.

We as teachers have not been as accomplished as other professionals in articulating the complex and expert nature of our work to lay audiences, and have therefore missed an opportunity to enhance our professional standing in the eyes of society at large. It is interesting to note that, in the recent survey of teachers undertaken by the Council, some 49% of respondents believed that the teaching profession is not particularly valued by society. Undoubtedly, part of the reason for this is the fact that many of the general public have a somewhat limited understanding of the complex skills and attributes that teachers bring to processes of education.

In responding to these issues the General Teaching Council, working in partnership with classroom practitioners and all of the diverse interests within the broader education service, has sought to articulate:

- the core values of the profession and the unique and privileged relationship that exists between teachers and their pupils;



- the core purposes of education itself and that education should be viewed as a liberating enterprise in which government and society must actively support teachers; and
- the sophisticated nature of teaching and the complex interaction of competences and attributes required of the modern teaching profession.

All of the above issues are addressed in a new publication from the Council entitled ***Teaching: the Reflective Profession***, which incorporates revised statements of competence for the profession, along with the Council's Code of Values and the Charter for Education.



In bringing these documents together the Council, as the independent professional body for teachers, has provided a measure of clarity and coherence as to our responsibilities as teachers and, at the same time, has made explicit the sense of moral purpose that should guide us in our work.

This publication will create opportunities for teachers to engage in further discussions as to how they, as professionals, should respond to challenge and change. In addition, it will provide a powerful tool to help teachers, both individually and collectively, to reflect on their professional development needs; this latter point is important at a time when the profession is being asked to engage in lifelong learning. It will issue to all teachers over the ensuing months and the Council intends to hold a series of meetings and seminars to introduce the publication to teachers.

In the midst of change the most valuable certainty we can have is our sense of professional purpose and mission, and ***Teaching: the Reflective Profession*** effectively offers us that certainty.

A Message from Caitríona Ruane:

THE MINISTER LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

It is an exciting time to be Minister for Education; with the restoration of the Assembly, the North South Ministerial Council and the British Irish Council, there is every reason to be confident about the future for all our young people. I am very aware that teachers, and those who support them, have played a vital role in shaping the future for young people over the years and will continue to do so.

Teachers have consistently demonstrated their commitment to learners, their families and their communities and, as Education Minister, I want to place on record my appreciation for all that they have done. In recent weeks I have had the privilege of meeting many of those involved in the education of young people and I have been impressed by their sense of purpose, their range of expertise and their obvious pride in all that they do. At this time of considerable change in education, parents can be confident that those who work with young people are striving to ensure that all are given the opportunity to develop and to succeed.

The recently published Chief Inspector's report acknowledged the many strengths of the system and urged the community to recognise and acknowledge the achievements made. In doing so, we need to be aware that there were also areas identified for improvement. We have a proud education record with rising pass rates at A-Level and GCSE. However, there are too many children who leave the system with poor literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers face a number of challenges including having to deal with a broad range of barriers to learning faced by children.

As Minister, I want to ensure that there is less uncertainty for teachers, that teachers feel valued and that they are provided with the support they need to carry out their vital role.

I want to work with teachers to build a modern vision of education, a vision based on excellence and equality of opportunity, on high standards and meeting the individual needs of all children. And why stop here? We are living within a global community, through ICT in the classroom a child can learn about cultures in Africa, Asia and the Americas by talking directly with their counterparts; learning and developing with their global neighbours rather than observing them from afar. There should be lessons about climate change, equality and Fair Trade relationships in the education of our children which will build global respect and understanding.

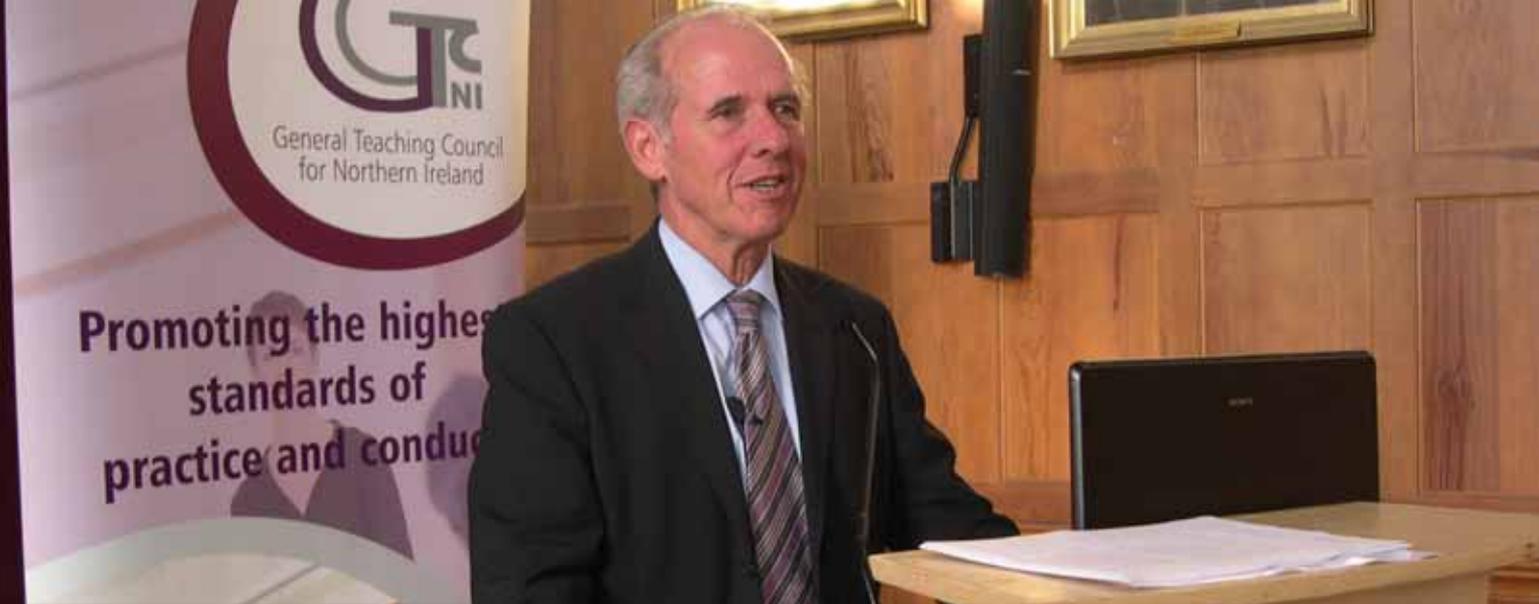
Teachers can also exchange ideas, theories, practices, thoughts and opinions with their colleagues. These interactions not only broaden the horizons of our young people but will lead to us celebrating our cultural diversity together as a society rather than as individuals. Teachers must be celebrated and commended for their obvious commitment, creating a home from home, making our children feel safe and secure in their learning environment. In the words of an Irish proverb, *Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí* (Praise youth and it will flourish).

We can all learn to improve the education system of our children. Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire



made an important observation: "There is in fact, no teaching, without learning." There will be people reluctant to learn and progress. However, we cannot let them confine us to a system that favours the best and rejects the rest. In looking forward to working on behalf of young people and their families I do so with a sense of pride and appreciation of what has gone before but also with a sense of anticipation of what more can be achieved when we work together.

For my part, I will do all that I can to serve the interests of young people, to improve further the quality of provision, to value, listen to and support teachers and to ensure that education has the resources necessary to meet the challenges which lie ahead. Together we can create the confident, creative and articulate children who will be able to avail fully of the opportunities today's global economy offers.



A Passion for Teaching Annual Lecture 2007

At the Council's second Annual Lecture, held in April, Professor Christopher Day emphasised that sustaining high quality teaching over the period of a teacher's career, requires much more than the crude performativity and managerialist agenda that has dominated policy making since the late 1980's. He highlighted the often neglected area of teachers' emotional identities, upon which a passion for teaching is nurtured and sustained. Developing the argument that teaching, at its best, depends on a synergy of intellectual and emotional commitment, he acknowledged that bringing a passionate 'self' to teaching everyday of every week, of every school term and year is a daunting prospect.

Professor Day left no one in the audience in any doubt that sustaining these levels of commitment is stressful not only to the body but also to the heart and soul. However, in his view, it was clear that schools, supported by the wider educational community, need to nurture and support both the cognitive and emotional facets of teacher professional identity. Moreover, this was seen as particularly important now in Northern Ireland as teachers try to manage the massive change agenda impacting on schools.



Professor Christopher Day, Sally McKee GTC Chair and Eddie McArdle GTC Registrar at the Annual Lecture 2007

In developing his argument Professor Day, drew upon evidence gathered during the recent DfES sponsored research, *Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effectiveness* (May 2006). Not surprisingly, this research identified a statistically significant association

between teacher commitment and pupil progress and attainment as measured by national test scores. Furthermore, teacher commitment is also a predictor of teachers' work performance, absenteeism, burnout and turnover, as well as having an important influence on students' achievement and attitudes towards school. In the light of this, it would appear self-evident that a modern understanding of teacher professionalism needs to move beyond the stultifying managerialist thinking of recent decades.

Professor Day concluded by emphasising that teacher commitment, resilience and effectiveness – a passion for teaching – cannot be taken for granted. Rather, it needs to be nurtured and sustained. He went on to state that teacher educators and those in positions of leadership within the profession, must be encouraged to build a understanding of the cognitive and emotional contexts in which teachers work. This is necessary in order to unlock professional creativity, enthusiasm and energy, all of which are required if passion and integrity are to be maintained.

The complete lecture *A Passion for Teaching* is available on the Council's education research repository (ARRTS), accessible via www.gtcni.org.uk



The Council Listens to the Profession

At the Council meeting in March, the results of GTCNI's first survey of teachers was published. The survey, which was carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers, sought to gather teachers' views on a wide range of professional issues.

Sally McKee, Chair of GTCNI, welcomed the report findings stating, "the voice of the profession has been heard at last and the report highlights key themes which will have an impact on future policy development."

Not surprisingly, it is clear from the survey results that the development of Northern Ireland's young people remains the top priority for teachers. Government policy initiatives and pay and working conditions were identified as the most frustrating aspects of teachers' work.

Pupil discipline problems are also a concern for the profession with just over one quarter of teachers (27 per cent) stating that discipline problems had increased significantly in the past five years. Encouragingly, however, a majority of teachers (76 per cent) believed that they received appropriate support to promote good behaviour, and 68 per cent felt that they received appropriate support in dealing with pupils who cause serious disruption in their classes. These survey findings reveal that there is widespread good practice in many schools for promoting good behaviour. However, it needs to be disseminated to all schools if teachers are to receive the necessary support to deal with poor behaviour and to maximise learning opportunities for all pupils.

The survey findings also show that the teaching profession has readily adopted and embraced advances in information and communications technology (ICT). Teachers report that they feel that ICT has a positive impact in the classroom, with 52 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that it enables better quality lessons to be delivered. However, 39 per cent of teachers felt that ICT had not reduced their administrative burden compared to 32 per cent who felt it had.

In terms of school improvement initiatives, 68 per cent either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the Government's strategy for the promotion of literacy and numeracy in primary and post-primary was likely to have an impact on the quality of education in Northern Ireland.

However, teachers remain sceptical that the introduction of the Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD) process will have an impact on the quality of education; only 25 per cent 'strongly agree' or 'agreed' that it would, while 43 per cent either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed'.

The Council would like to thank those teachers who took the time to complete the survey questionnaire, their help has been invaluable. The results of the survey have been widely disseminated and made available to all education policy makers in Northern Ireland. The Council, for its part, will continue to ensure that the voice of the profession is heard and taken seriously. The full survey can be downloaded from ARRTS on the Council's website www.gtcni.org.uk



Easter School Adds Up



Lynda Bryans (BBC NI) visits the pupils attending the 'Easter School'

Since its inception, the Council has been a strong advocate of the development of learning communities in which professional educators and young people come together to support and enhance learning and achievement. So, *termtalk* asked Brendan Muldoon (Education Officer) of the West Belfast Partnership Board, to outline how, in partnership with St Mary's University College, they have sought to support out of school hours learning.

The West Belfast Partnership Board has been engaged over a number of years in supporting local regeneration. It believes in putting education at the heart of a regeneration strategy and, through its education programme, aims to address underachievement and to raise educational attainment levels in the area.

The Easter Revision School is one of our most successful projects and this year was recognised for financial support from the DE. It aims to address specific learning needs of GCSE mathematics students by providing a focused out of school hours learning programme. It is designed to help 'borderline' students achieve a pass grade in GCSE mathematics, given the importance of this qualification for progressing to higher/further education, training and employment.

Some 2000 GCSE students have completed the programme since it was first piloted in 1998. That almost 70% of participants who attend each year achieve a pass at grade C or higher, reflects the success and impact of the programme.

The Easter School takes place each year at St Mary's University College, during four days of the school holidays. It is a voluntary programme attracting 175 students annually, representing eleven schools and colleges. Classes are delivered in small groups, providing students with more support and giving tutors opportunities to cover areas of particular difficulty, in more depth. Separate classes are provided to cover different GCSE mathematics syllabuses using past papers.

The student evaluations indicate that the Easter School has made a significant difference to their final grades, by providing crucial support with their GCSE revision. Many highlighted the benefit of experiencing different teaching styles at the classes and also the social dimension, where students had opportunities to meet and learn with students from many different schools and backgrounds. Many commented on their enjoyment of the experience of attending St Mary's University College, a learning environment that was very new to

them. Dr Aidan Hamill, Principal, La Salle Boy's School, commented:

"The Easter School is a key element of our educational strategy. It has played a major part in improving our examination results year on year, to the point where they are now significantly above the benchmark standards for schools such as ours."

In 2006 the 'Big Lottery' provided finance for a promotional DVD to be made of the Easter School as a *Model of Good Practice in Out of School Hours Learning*. Ann Comac, Principal Officer (Mathematics), CCEA, commented on this:

"I was very impressed by the course organisation, the commitment shown by the teachers and most of all by the enthusiasm of the participants."

Copies of the DVD can be obtained on request by email: brendan@wbpb.org

Are You Losing It?



Many of our young people could be experiencing problems hearing clearly what is said in the classroom environment: termtalk reports on a recent initiative from the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID).

It is likely that more than a million school children are missing out in the classroom, believes the RNID. The charity for deaf and hard of hearing people has discovered that those under 14 years of age can often find it difficult to distinguish speech in noisy environments, a skill which develops as they grow older.

The surprise findings were discovered when analysing the results drawn from RNID's *Breaking the Sound Barrier* telephone hearing check. This was designed to reach out to people who may be losing their hearing but doing nothing about it. So far, nearly 300,000 people have taken the hearing check and, although it was aimed at adults, around 2,500 callers were children. Dr Mark Downs, Executive Director of Technology, RNID, says:

"It is striking that over 20% of children calling RNID's hearing check receive a response of 'below normal' or 'well below normal' for their hearing check."

The results from the *Breaking the Sound Barrier* hearing check show that from a self-selecting sample of over 2,000 children aged ten to fourteen, one in five are unable to distinguish speech in noise at the normal level expected of adults. These children register as having hearing levels below normal, not because of problems with their ears, but due to a cognitive inability to distinguish sounds clearly in noisy environments.

These findings add weight to earlier academic research which demonstrates that some seven-year-old children cannot distinguish speech against background noise in instances where adults would not have a problem.

RNID is calling on all schools to ensure they have the best acoustic environment for children, so that they can derive the most benefit from their education. RNID's results suggest that a significant number of children in the classroom, aged between five and

fourteen years old, could be missing out on what their teacher says. Whilst the new regulations which the Government has introduced relating to acoustic environments in new schools will help, this does not address the issue in existing schools. The use of straightforward microphone and speaker systems or sound field systems could significantly address this problem in all schools and benefit teachers and pupils in all acoustic environments.

RNID's telephone hearing check operates on the basis of speech in noise, where the listener responds using their telephone keypad to digits which are spoken against varying levels of background noise. By analysing the responses to this speech in noise test, the system is able to provide feedback on the caller's level of hearing.

The specially developed hearing check can be taken over the telephone by calling 0845 600 555, it is part of *Breaking the Sound Barrier*, www.breakingthesoundbarrier.org.uk

RNID has compiled some tips for teachers on ways to communicate more clearly in the classroom. These are available on request.

A New Council in Place

A new Council has been in place since November 2006 and this second of three 'feature articles' introduces ten more Council members to termtalk readers



Audrey Stewart

Vice-Chair of the Policy Committee (Elected member: Primary School Principals)

Audrey is Principal of Olderfleet Primary School in Larne which has 198 pupils. The extensive experience Audrey has gained in the primary sector, both as a teaching and a non-teaching Principal, will enable her to make a positive contribution to the work of GTCNI. Audrey served as President of The Ulster Teachers' Union during 2005 - 2006, which has provided her with a broader perspective of education both at home and abroad. Audrey has a particular interest in raising the status and professionalism of teachers within society and feels the establishment of GTCNI has made a significant impact on this area.



Mr Dominic McElholm

Member of the Registration Committee (Appointed member: Association of Education and Library Boards)

Dominic was the first Principal of Christ the King Primary School in Omagh from 1983 until 1996. He has been a member of the Derry Diocesan Education Committee of CCMS since its inception until the present time. Dominic is a past Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Services Committee of the Western Education and Library Board and is a past Chairman of the Northern Committee, INTO. He was also President of the Association of Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards, 2002-2003. He is the current Vice-Chair of the Western Education and Library Board.



John McGrady

Member of General Purpose and Finance Committee (Elected member: Primary School Teachers)

John studied Psychology at Queen's and completed a P.G.C.E. at St. Andrew's Teacher Training College in Glasgow. He has taught in a primary school for travelling children and in a school for children with moderate learning difficulties. He is currently Vice-Principal in St. Mark's Primary School in Twinbrook and has been teaching there for the past eight years. While teaching in St. Mark's, he continued his studies and has a DASE in Special Needs and has achieved the PQH (NI) award. John is the coordinator of Assessment, Teaching and Learning and Personal Development in St. Mark's.



Gordon Topping OBE

Member of the Policy Committee (Appointed member: Association of Education and Library Boards)

Gordon is Chief Executive of the North Eastern Education and Library Board, a post he has held since December 1991. Prior to moving into education administration he taught in post primary schools (both secondary and grammar) and in the West Indies on Voluntary Service. He has served on many public bodies including the Council of the University of Ulster, the Governing Body of Stranmillis University, CCEA and has been a member of the General Teaching Council since its inception. In 2002 he was awarded the OBE for services to education.



Charles Glenn

Member of the Audit Committee (Elected member: Primary School Teachers)

Charles initially took up a post in Steelstown Primary School where he has remained apart from a three year secondment as full-time organiser of the Teachers' Centre on the Magee College campus. He became a member of the INTO while still a student and has remained active in union matters, most recently as the primary representative on the Northern Committee for the Western Education Area. Last year he was elected Chair of the Northern Committee. Charles has served on the Standing Conferences for Primary Education and most recently for Special Education. He also served on the CCEA working party which prepared the Literacy component of the revised curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2.



Daisy Mules

Member of the Policy Committee (Elected member: Primary School Teachers)

Daisy Mules is a dedicated teacher with over thirty years of experience and she continues to enjoy the varied challenges that teaching brings. She trained in Edinburgh's Moray House and taught there in a primary school for three years and then in the S.E.N. Department of a large comprehensive Community School, where she remained for 5 years. During this time she was the Assistant Secretary of Edinburgh Trades Council before returning to Derry in 1982. She is currently teaching P5 at Greenhaw Primary School, and has been the school's Music Coordinator for many years. In the early 90s she was seconded by WELB for 2 years to the Educational and Guidance Centre for post-primary pupils with EBD. Daisy represents INTO on Derry Trades Union Council (DTUC) and has been DTUC's Treasurer for many years.



John Pollock

Member of the Registration Committee (Appointed Member: NI Teachers' Council)

In a long career, John has been a Head of Department, Vice-Principal, Lecturer in Education (Secondment) and a Senior Teacher. John is currently Head of Faculty and Senior Teacher and Senior Management Team member at Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock. He is Chair of the ATL Education Group and a member of its Pay and Conditions Working Group. John believes that teachers' autonomy and professionalism is the cornerstone of our education system. He has a strong interest in Continuing Professional Development, and has made a valuable contribution to the work of the GTC Advisory, working on the GTC Working Group on CPD two years ago.



Keith Smith

Member of the General Purposes and Finance Committee (Elected Member: Secondary School Teachers)

Keith is the Design and Technology teacher at St Mary's College, Irvinestown and a member of the Senior Management Team with 28 years service behind him. He is a Teacher Librarian and also the C2K Co-ordinator with responsibility for examinations, assessment and timetabling modules. He is also a member of OCR's regional consultative committee. Keith is concerned about the issues of the proposed abolition of academic selection for our schools and the relatively small proportion of the education budget allocated directly to schools.



Tony Lappin

Chair of Policy Committee (Appointed Member: NI Teachers' Council)

Tony is a teaching Principal from a small rural school. He is a member of both the Central Executive Committee and Northern Committee of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), of which he was previously Northern Chairperson. This is his second term on GTCNI, having already served as Vice-Chair of the Policy Committee. Tony also represents NITC on the Education Technology Strategy Management Group (ETSMG) and the PQH Advisory Group, as well as currently being Secretary of the Primary Teachers' Council and joint-secretary of the Primary Standing Conference for Education.



Rosemary Barton

Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee (Elected Member: Secondary School Teachers)

Rosemary has spent her teaching career in the Duke of Westminster High School, which has now been amalgamated and renamed Devenish College. She is Head of the Mathematics Department and Numeracy Co-ordinator. As Past President of the UTU, a member of the NITC and the Secondary Standing Conference, Rosemary has amassed substantial experience which will benefit her work with the Council. Rosemary has contributed to the reviews undertaken by the Council in respect of competences and CPD.

Teaching and Learning Digital Citizenship

The Department of Education is shortly to release a new Circular on *Policy for the Safe and Effective Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies in Schools*, John Anderson looks at some issues behind the guidance.

It wasn't that long ago that the main fear of technology expressed by teachers was that young people's social development would suffer because, using computers, they would not learn to communicate. Little did they anticipate the enormously popular online growth of social environments and the very different challenges their use poses. Filtered and blocked as contentious websites already are on C2k networks, censorship is not the educator's answer.

Digital communication helps teachers and students learn from each other. Digital resources can foster creativity, support problem-solving, and stimulate knowledge of context to promote effective learning. Pupils with Internet access are more confident learners and have been shown to produce better researched, more effective and well presented work.

Young people use digital technologies more outside school than in – largely unsupervised; there are hundreds of ways to publish through blogs, podcasts, video streaming and social sites – banning them all is impossible. For better (and worse) young people are a digital generation, using the Internet to express their thoughts and opinions. The challenge for schools is to teach the rights and responsibilities, ethics and morality of digital citizenship.

Use ICT, don't abuse ICT

Used well, digital technologies are powerful, worthwhile educational tools. Technical safeguards can only partly protect users; so, education in safe, effective practices is a key goal for schools. Where deliberate misuse occurs, school rules and the law apply.

It's indicative of the massive implications of technology for schools that the Circular covers thirty health, safety and legal topics – from cyber-bullying, misuse of digital images and exploitation to software theft, wireless networks, codes of practice and Internet education – and will need such frequent updating that it will be published only on the Department's website (www.deni.gov.uk at Home > Schools > ICT in Schools)

Developed with the help of Becta, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, the PSNI, Childnet International and ICT Advisers, the Circular builds on four principles:



- i) digital tools powerfully enhance teaching and learning when used effectively and appropriately and should, as far as possible, be accessible and free from restriction;
- ii) technical safeguards are maintained to ensure that use in schools is safe and secure – but such measures cannot offer total security;
- iii) teaching and modelling safe, responsible, ethical, moral, legal, healthy, intelligent and effective working practices is an important goal for all school staff; and
- iv) deliberate abuses are subject to the rules and regulations of the school; where they impinge upon pupils and/or staff from outside school they should be dealt with through police and legal action.

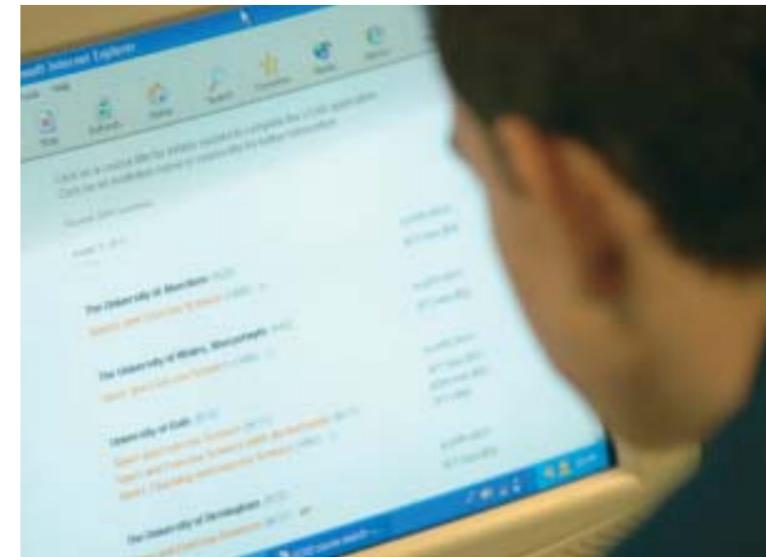
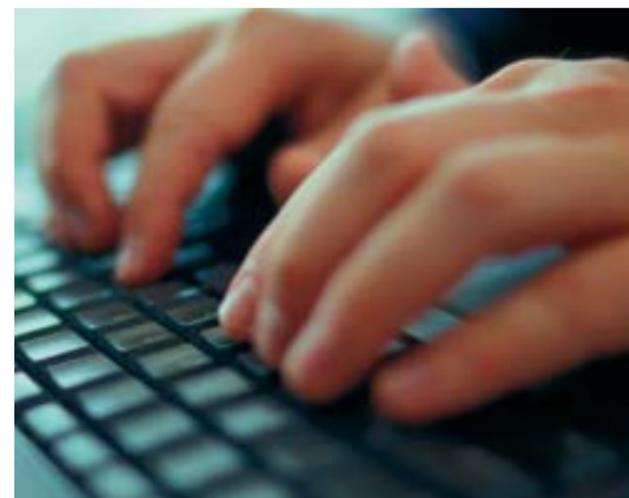
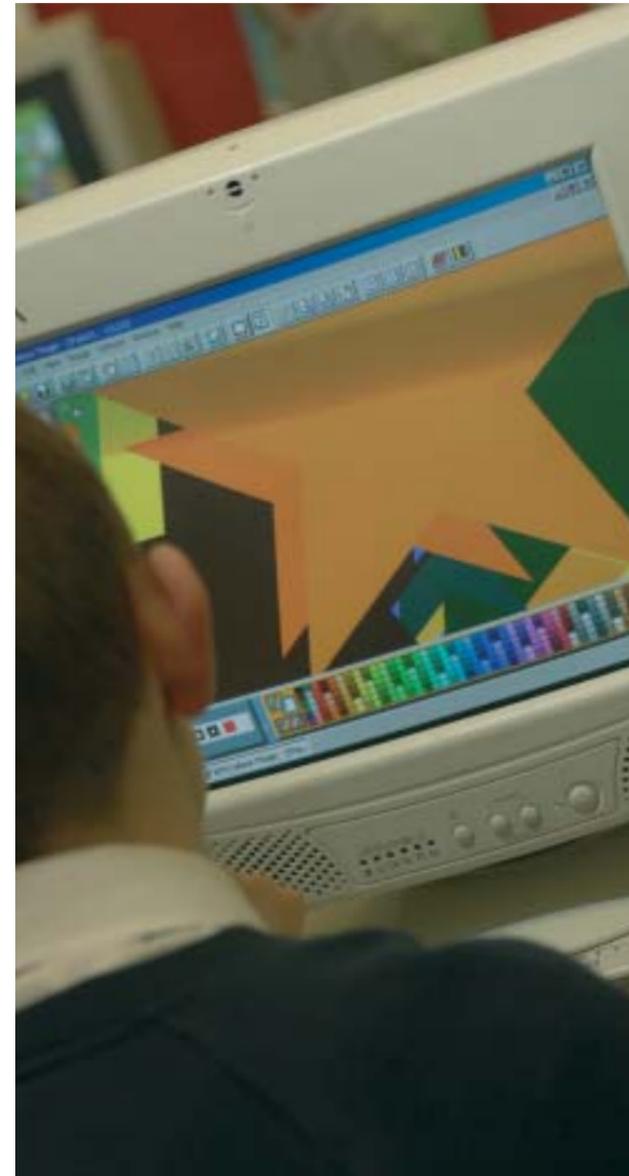
Schools are expected to have up-to-date 'Internet and Digital Technology' acceptable use policies and codes of practice, as part of their wider duty of care, linked to other mandatory school policies such as, child protection, health and safety, home-school agreements, and pupil discipline (including anti-bullying).

When the new Circular is published it will be a reliable source of guidance and advice for schools and the wider education service. In the meantime, here are details of some online sites which provide information about dealing with Internet abuse and on WiFi safety.

WiFi Safety

While WiFi computer networks are not in widespread use in schools, their use is likely to grow as ICT in teaching and learning expands. WiFi usually extends a school's cabled network, rather than replacing it. The welfare and safety of children and staff in school is paramount and the current Health Protection Agency guidance is that, "On the basis of current scientific information WiFi equipment satisfies international guidelines. There is no consistent evidence of health effects from RF exposures below guideline levels and, therefore, no reason why schools and others should not use WiFi equipment."

Further information: <http://tinyurl.com/2uqtbx>



Dealing with Internet incidents

Becta's advice on minor and major incidents and how to respond can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/z7mhv> also advice on securing evidence at: <http://tinyurl.com/ro7od>

Reporting abuse

Internet content considered potentially illegal, indecent (including images of child abuse), criminally obscene or an incitement to racial hatred should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk/

The IWF best practice guide on handling potentially illegal images of children: <http://tinyurl.com/2ocazq>

Any inappropriate or potentially illegal activity with or towards a child online should be reported to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre: <http://tinyurl.com/2pv2t3>

If a child is in immediate danger or an urgent response is required, contact the PSNI. Advice about online child abuse: www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com/faqs.html

Complaining about abuse of sites

Rate My Teachers: <http://tinyurl.com/3yjjfl>
Report concern about malicious comment on the link.

MySpace: www.myspace.com/Modules/Common/Pages/SafetyTips.aspx
Report abuse on: www.myspace.com/contact

Bebo: www.bebo.com/SafetyTips.jsp
To report abuse click the 'Report Abuse' link on the offender's profile.

MSN: Safe use advice: www.msn.co.uk/youngpeoplesafeonline/

Report breaches of C2k filtering immediately to the Helpline: 0870 6011 666 or email; filtering@C2kni.net

termtalk's feature 'Prof John's WebSights' on page 12 recommends Internet education and safety sites. RTU's August 2007 Summer School provides a one-day course on Internet Safety with free resources; contact RTU, places are limited.

Prof John's WebSights

A regular feature book-marking educational resource and information websites: this issue focuses on 'Internet education'



Childnet International's resources, including versions for parents.

<http://www.childnet-int.org/kia/>

Kidsmart

www.kidsmart.org.uk/yp/

An award winning online Internet safety programme website for schools, young people, parents, and agencies; resources suitable for primary and secondary pupils including lesson plans, leaflets, posters, activity days and interactive games.

Know IT All

www.childnet-int.org/kia/schools/

An interactive CD-ROM designed to help pupils (KS3/4) understand a broad range of issues when using the Internet or mobile phone. May also be used in a school assembly or as self-study.

Sorted

www.childnet-int.org/sorted/

A resource produced entirely by young people for young people and adults on the issues of Internet security. It gives important information and advice on how to protect computers from the dangers of viruses, phishing scams, spyware and Trojans.

Blogsafety

www.blogsafety.com

Information about safe blogging and social networking.

Becta's Internet Proficiency Scheme

<http://tinyurl.com/2w4qza>

Helps primary pupils develop safe and responsible behaviour using the Internet and digital technologies. Complements work in curriculum subjects; provides a free pack of CPD and teaching resources at <http://tinyurl.com/2tymfn>

Signposts to Safety

<http://tinyurl.com/3ckpfh>

Information, advice and guidance for Primary teachers. Becta signposts opportunities to embed e-safety in the curriculum and a range of free online teaching resources.

thinkuknow

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) agency's online resources for children between the ages of 11-16. The resources draw attention to risks and include films, leaflets, posters, games, information on emerging technology, chatting, gaming and blogging and a training pack for all child protection professionals in the UK. Also delivered to schools as Citizen and Safety Education (CASE) by PSNI.

Internet Safety Awareness for Staff

<http://tinyurl.com/s7tyu>

Becta's overview for educators which, while based on English policies, is, nevertheless a useful guide.

Kidscape anti-cyberbullying guidance for schools

Find more safety websites on www.deni.gov.uk (Schools > ICT in schools). If you'd like to share your favourite websites on this, or any, educational theme, please email your links and comments to profjohn@gtni.org.uk

CPD Opportunities for Teachers

Supporting CPD

Ever since the publication of the Council's reports on competence and CPD in 2005, it has been consistently advocating the concept of teachers being able to engage in CPD activities that have been determined by themselves, in response to the context of their professional practice.

Over the past two years the Council has piloted a limited professional development bursary programme to enable teachers to work on individual and group projects.

The Council hopes that, by engaging in this piloting activity, it will be able to demonstrate that access to significant funding for individualised CPD should be mainstreamed for all teachers in Northern Ireland. Evaluation of the pilot programme shows that there is a demand within the profession for such opportunities and the results of the Council's recent survey reveals that teachers would be willing to embark on professional development activities of this type.

The Council feels that this level of interest and commitment needs to be nurtured and supported given the



intrinsic link between teachers' professional development opportunities and the quality of education provided. In Wales this link has been recognised by the Welsh Assembly Government and, since 2001, teachers have had access to a substantial professional development funding programme. In the article that follows, Hayden Llewellyn, the Deputy Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council for Wales, describes how the Welsh programme operates and

provides examples of some CPD activities that have been supported.

This Welsh perspective is followed by two examples of CPD bursary reports from Northern Ireland; Mark McDonald from Bangor Grammar School and Sandra Douglas from Victoria Primary School, Newtownards, describe how they, and their schools, have benefited from the funding provided through the Council's pilot programme.

Committed to Professional Development - A Welsh Perspective

In Wales the Welsh Assembly Government has established an extensive individually focused Professional Development Funding programme, which has seen over 25,000 teacher projects funded since inception in 2001 and makes available up to £3 million annually.

So popular is the programme, administered by the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW) on behalf of the Assembly, that many teachers return year after year to seek further funding to enhance their knowledge and skills.

GTCW offers four project categories under which teachers may apply for funding:

- Professional Development Bursary – funding of up to £600 to be spent on a professional development activity of the teacher's choice;
- Teacher Research Scholarship – funding of up to £2,500 to undertake a classroom based action research project;
- Teacher Sabbatical – funding of up to £5,000 to enable a teacher to

undertake a sabbatical period to develop transferable skills that will support their work in the classroom; and

- Professional Network – funding of up to £8,000 to allow groups of teachers from different schools / LEAs to work together on a professional development project.

In addition, following considerable demand from teachers, the Council is currently piloting a new project type, the Group Bursary. This attracts

CPD Opportunities for Teachers

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funding of up to up £3,600 for groups of teachers in the same school to undertake a professional development activity together.

Examples of two successful bursary projects follow and provide a flavour of the programme in Wales:

Webster-Stratton Technique Improves Emotional Behavioural Difficulties

Claire Barrett, a peripatetic teacher with Denbighshire local education authority, supports children with behavioural problems. Claire applied for a bursary to attend the Webster-Stratton 'Incredible Years' programme at the University of Wales, Bangor. This is the only centre in Wales recognised by Professor Webster-Stratton, who developed the programmes in the USA over 25 years ago.

The course uses life sized puppets to teach skills designed to prevent anti-social behaviour and correct challenging behaviour. These skills address pupil behaviour at school and in the home and include problem solving skills, anger management, friendship and academic skills.

Claire commented: "The course was invaluable, over 50 people attended and a few had even travelled from Australia to be there. The focus of the programme is to help parents to help their children, and support the children themselves to gain simple skills."

Since attending the course Claire has set up her own programme using life size puppets of children and dinosaurs. One of her ongoing classes takes place at Ysgol Emmanuelle in Rhyl where Claire works with four boys aged five to six years. Throughout the sessions video clips, role-play, awards and consequences and practical tools are used to help the children develop new life skills and coping strategies.

Claire added: "The sessions at Ysgol Emmanuelle have been very successful. The course has been extremely beneficial, not only for me as a teacher but more importantly for the children I teach. The funding from the GTCW was a big help in achieving my goal."

Supporting Pupils Through Counselling

Daniel James Community School in Swansea caters for 960 pupils aged 11 to 16. Having had a keen interest in psychology for many years, teacher Belinda Gardiner recognised the need and importance of providing support to students during their teenage years and decided to apply to do a diploma in integrated counselling. Head teacher Peter Thomas encouraged Belinda to apply for a bursary to help fund a two-year part-time course accredited by the British Association of Counselling Practitioners.

challenging area where the children need a lot of support. I completed a certificate in counseling a couple of years ago and I was keen to be able to extend my knowledge as I am hoping to be able to introduce counselling sessions into the school system."

In Belinda's first year, she is studying topics such as cognitive therapy and psychodynamic theory.

Once the course is completed it is intended that the methods learnt will be implemented within the school. The aim is to offer pupils one-to-one counselling sessions and possibly group sessions. In the longer term it is hoped that the counselling sessions will be used to help younger pupils with the transition from primary to post-primary schools.



Belinda began the diploma in September 2006 having been awarded £600 from the GTCW to help with funding. In addition to attending the three and a half hour lecture sessions, Belinda was required to attend two residential courses as well as twenty counselling sessions.

Belinda commented: "The course is proving very useful. I work in a very

Belinda further concluded: "I was delighted to have received funding from the GTCW and I am hoping to apply for a further bursary to fund the second year of study."

Further Details

Further information on the programme in Wales, including details of previous projects may be found at www.gtcw.org.uk.

CPD Opportunities for Teachers

GTCNI Bursary Reports

Designing the Future

Mark McDonald outlines his bursary project and considers the lessons learned. In 2006 Bangor Grammar School was successfully included in a Capital Building announcement for the provision of a new school. My role at present is to co-ordinate and internally manage the project of designing and relocating the new school, a task both exciting and yet frightening, but one I was determined from the start to understand fully. I felt that to do the job successfully it was very important to be aware of the stages of the design process, the responsibilities and expectations of all involved and what is deemed to be current thinking or best practice.

The GTCNI bursary enabled me to talk to architects and designers and it quickly became clear that this project was not simply about building a new and better version of what already exists.

Building a new school is about building an environment in which learning will happen in the future. It is first and foremost about education, not architecture. So you need to consider not just what your school might look like but also the processes that will take place within it, and how best the building can be designed and managed to effectively support them.

What I learned from my discussions and meetings is that for schools to get the maximum from a new build, they should, through research and planning, become intelligent clients, working with and instructing architects, rather than solely relying upon them for all solutions and designs. The more a client understands what they want and can contribute, the easier the task of the architect and the more time available for innovation and creativity.

All of this requires communication and collaboration with staff, pupils, parents and ideally this process should start at least one year before the school even talks to an architect.



Assessment for Learning

Sandra Douglas, from Victoria Primary School, reflects on her bursary experiences. The introduction in September 2007 of the revised curriculum will, by implication, involve practitioners in the assessment and recording of new skills related to the new areas of learning. The GTCNI bursary gave me the opportunity to research how, as a primary four teacher, I could modify my own assessment and recording practices to positively influence the proposed pupil profile. I was also able to combine my two great interests in education: quality assessment and the action-research process of developing as a professional.

The focus for the bursary funded study was 'Assessment for Learning' (AfL) and its potential to enhance pupil achievement. I concluded that teachers will need to reflect at length as to how they can successfully integrate AfL into their own practices. This process should be welcomed and not feared by teachers but they must have quality support from school leaders and the various school support services including the Inspectorate. For quality assurance to succeed, everyone will have to understand and apply procedures and relevant assessment criteria consistently. School leaders will need to establish an assessment policy, a positive learning culture which is understood by all and provide time to quality assure teachers' judgements through school-based moderation.



GTCNI Bursaries Phase Three

Supporting CPD opportunities for teachers

If you wish to apply for a Bursary applications must be received by Monday 17th September, 2007



General Teaching Council
for Northern Ireland

Bursaries can be used to cover the cost of:

- Workshops or conferences
- Visiting another school to observe good practice
- Action research
- Peer mentoring
- Teacher cover
- Work shadowing someone in industry
- Consultation or training
- Travel and subsistence

Want to find out more?

Tel: 028 9033 3390

Fax: 028 9034 8787

Website: www.gtcni.org.uk

