



EDITORIAL

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DOI Number: <https://doi.org/10.26203/hp9m-4w74>

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To cite this editorial: Fraser C. and Watson, C., (2007). Editorial. *Education in the North*, 15 p.3.



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Issue 15 (Session 2007-2008)

EDUCATION IN THE NORTH

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A SCOTTISH JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

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ISSN 0424 5512

EDUCATION IN THE NORTH

Number 15
2007– 2008

Editorial

Once again school education in Scotland stands at the crossroads of reform as *A Curriculum for Excellence* develops momentum. With an agenda that seeks to encourage a broader vision of learning and of school development 'from the inside out', rather than by imposition, there are implications for all associated with education. Within its overall theme of Innovation and Research in all aspects of education, *Education in the North* provides a forum for debate on policy and practice.

In his last speech as Minister of Education, on 20 September 2006, Peter Peacock asserted 'We will need our children to develop capacities as well as skills, to value creativity and passion as well as knowledge.' To achieve this, he went on to say, '... we need more than a curriculum'. In short, we need to pay more attention to aspects of children's experience that currently lie outside a formal and school-based curriculum. These issues are multi-disciplinary and inter-agency, which means they must be addressed in ways that challenge traditional conceptions. Journal articles in this issue cross boundaries to offer insights into the client's experience of counselling and into rural communities through the views of minority ethnic young people. New ways of mentoring our beginning teachers and raising educational achievement through family support also contribute to the debate.

A Curriculum for Excellence calls for 'teachers for excellence' to shape the future. However, there is a growing acknowledgement that a wide range of adults influence children's development, formation and learning both directly and indirectly. Teacher educators, colleagues in higher and further education institutions and local authorities will be called upon to play a part in the development of 'excellence'. This raises questions about the nature of excellence, how it is conceptualised and by whom it is defined. Certainly, it is required, but that vision of excellence should be generated from within the profession as part of the reform process. Educators in all sectors will need to re-establish professional identities within the changing landscape. Reflection on practices formalised through action research, comparison across time and between sectors and professions are means of redefining how we see ourselves as teachers in 21st century Scotland. The variety of feature articles included in this issue communicates the breadth and diversity of reflection undertaken.

While our title may locate us firmly in the North (of Scotland), this issue looks beyond traditional horizons to a comprehensive and proactive approach to educational excellence based on strong professional identities and inter-professional collaboration. We hope you enjoy reading the thought provoking articles in this issue and, in time, add your thoughts to our pages.
