

Empowering schools: A consultation on the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Bill

PERSPECTIVE FOR CLD

The Scottish Government is seeking views on detailed policy proposals for the Education Bill that will be presented to the Scottish Parliament in 2018.

As the title of the consultation paper suggests, the policy proposals focus on schools. However, they also have major implications for CLD practitioners. They include the proposal to establish an Education Workforce Council that would take on the responsibilities of the CLD Standards Council together with those of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (and register other education professionals).

The CLD Standards Council is providing these notes to assist registered members, and others with an interest, to consider responses to the proposals from a CLD perspective. We also welcome your input to help inform the Standards Council's own response.

You can access the consultation here: <https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/education-scotland-bill>. A summary of questions can be found on page 31 of the consultation paper.

CLD Standards Council Position Statement

At the previous stage of consultation, the Standards Council produced a Position Statement (available at <http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/>). Among the key ingredients for success of the new arrangements that it identified were the following:

- The identity of CLD as a profession;
- Recognition of learning outside the classroom, of 3-18 education as an integral part of lifelong learning and that empowered communities have a key part to play in improving educational achievement;
- Maintaining and strengthening the links between the aspects of CLD practice, in particular, community development, adult learning and youth work;
- Continuing the common alignment of CLD practice across sectors and settings with the CLD Competence Framework and Code of Ethics;
- Maintaining the Standards Council's key functions of practitioner registration, approval of qualifications and courses, and support for professional learning.
- The role of CLD practitioners, as registered members of their professional body, in the development of the body and of their profession.
- The ability of the professional body for CLD practitioners to have ownership of its strategic areas of responsibility.
- Maintaining and strengthening the ethos and practice of a member-led organisation.

The Standards Council sees these ingredients for success as being equally important in the context of the detailed proposals for the Education Bill.

Consultation Themes

1. Headteachers Charter (Questions 1-7)

“We will include provisions in the Education Bill to establish a Headteachers’ Charter. This will clearly empower headteachers to make the key decisions about learning and teaching in their schools and clarify the responsibilities that local authorities have to enable headteachers to be the leaders of their schools.”

At first sight this might appear to have little direct relevance outside schools; but other parts of the document make clear that CLD practitioners and others are intended to have a role in bringing about improvement.

Potential areas for comment from a CLD perspective:

- What should be headteachers’ role and responsibilities in partnership work with CLD and others “beyond the school gate”?
- Should more attention be given to how schools relate to the wider community they are part of (as distinct from “the school community”)?
- How will greater autonomy for headteachers impact on inequality?
- Will funding for and planning of CLD provision be affected by the greater authority to be given to headteachers?

2. Parental and community engagement (Questions 8-10)

“We will include provisions in the Education Bill to make the existing legal duties in relation to parental involvement clearer and stronger, to reflect the transfer of responsibilities to headteachers through the Headteachers’ Charter and to encourage stronger collaboration between school leaders and parents. We will also clarify the relevant duties which apply to early learning and childcare which is funded but not “provided by the public sector.”

This section is more obviously relevant from a CLD perspective, although there are no references to roles expected of CLD practitioners.

Potential areas for comment from a CLD perspective:

- The consultation paper focuses on the role of Parent Councils; how effective is this approach likely to be in developing inclusive participation?
- When the consultation document refers to “community engagement”, is it clear what’s meant by this?

- Should more attention be given to the role of the wider community including those who are not (currently) pupils or parents?
- What role should CLD have in relation to "parental and community engagement"?
- "Home to school link workers": what should their role be and what are the skills required? Is deploying a worker to each school the best way of utilising resources?

3. Pupil Participation (Questions 11-12)

"We will include provisions in the Education Bill to ensure that the principles of pupil participation are pursued in every school."

As for Section 2, the relevance of CLD seems clear, but is not referred to in the consultation document.

Potential areas for comment from a CLD perspective:

- The proposals in the consultation paper relate only to learning in school; but children and young people learn both in and outside school. How could the proposals better support children and young people's participation in decision-making?
- The paper states that "Teachers and school leaders are distinctively positioned to enable..young people understand and exercise their rights.. and help them contribute in all kinds of decision-making". What roles in this do you think teachers, headteachers and CLD practitioners are best placed to take on?

4. Regional Improvement Collaboratives (Questions 13-16)

"We will include provisions in the Education Bill to provide appropriate legislative underpinning for national and local government participation in the new Regional Improvement Collaboratives."

Six geographically based Regional Improvement Collaboratives, each bringing together a group of local authorities, is being established. In several instances these do not match with the existing CLD professional learning alliances/consortia.

Potential areas for comment from a CLD perspective:

- Do you think the Regional Improvement Collaboratives could provide useful support for CLD?
- How do you think CLD should be represented in and engage with the Regional Improvement Collaboratives?

- Do you think the experience and achievements of the CLD professional learning alliances/consortia could inform the development of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives?

5. Education Workforce Council for Scotland (Questions 17-24)

“We will include provisions in the Education Bill to establish an Education Workforce Council which will take on the responsibilities of the GTCS, the Community Learning and Development Standards Council and register other education professionals.”

The consultation paper recognises the range of CLD practice across community development, adult learning and youth work. It doesn't refer to the development of the professionalism of CLD practitioners, for example through the use of the competences, Code of Ethics, and professional learning strategy.

Potential areas for comment from a CLD perspective:

- What are the risks and threats for CLD practitioners arising from the new workforce council proposals?
- What are the opportunities and challenges for CLD practitioners arising from the workforce council proposals?
- How could the new workforce council benefit from CLD perspectives and input?