

INTO THE 21st CENTURY: THE McCRONE AND McCONNELL REPORTS – OPENING THE POSSIBILITY FOR INTRODUCING FULL-TIME SCHOOL COUNSELLORS INTO SCOTTISH SCHOOLS

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SYNOPSIS

Unlike some other Western countries, most Scottish schools do not have full-time guidance teachers or school counsellors. In secondary schools, guidance teachers teach and provide educational, vocational and personal guidance, but are not trained as counsellors. Both the McCrone Report (Scottish Executive, 2001a) that focuses on teachers, workload and stress, and the McConnell Report (Scottish Executive, 2001b) that focuses on discipline and support for students, open up new possibilities for this wide-ranging role that has changed little since it was established in 1968. The article analyses these recent policies and some recent Scottish research to argue in favour of introducing full-time guidance teachers/school counsellors into Scottish schools to meet both student and teacher needs. A model of specialised and professionalised school counselling as exists in most New Zealand secondary schools is presented as a possible direction as Scotland reviews existing systems and addresses barriers to learning, social inclusion and student discipline.

INTRODUCTION

There have been a number of reports and policy statements on guidance in Scottish schools yet not much has changed since the SED outlined guidance as a part-time provision in 1968 and as a promoted post at principal or assistant principal level in 1971 (see: GTCS, 1998; Holm *et al*, 2001; Howieson & Semple, 1996a, 1996b, 2000; McLaren, 1996; SCCC, 1986, 1995, 1996; SED, 1968, 1971, 1976; SOEID, 1996). Guidance in Scotland involves three aspects: curricular, careers and personal guidance for a group of pupils by teachers who are time allocated for guidance, but who spend a substantial time in the classroom teaching subject(s) which may not necessarily be Personal and Social Education (PSE) (GTCS, 1998; SED, 1968; 1976; SCCC, 1986). The lack of change is all the more surprising when the last 35 years have witnessed considerable socio-economic and political change as well as changes in Scottish schools, the curriculum, students and their families and when workload has increased for many guidance teachers. To work more effectively and address overload a few schools have appointed full-time guidance teachers whose subject commitment (if any) is in PSE, but this is by no means the predominant model (Holm *et al*, 2001).

In order to keep the focus on future possibilities, this article does not undertake a detailed historical account of guidance in Scottish schools nor discuss earlier debates about the place of counselling in UK schools. Rather, it focuses on the two recent reports from the newly formed Scottish Executive: the McCrone Report, *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* (Scottish Executive, 2001a) and what I term the 'McConnell Report' (after the Minister who commissioned the Discipline Task Group (DTG) to formulate the report) *Better Behaviour - Better Learning* (Scottish Executive, 2001b). The article uses Scottish research from six secondary schools that were '*illustrative of different types of schools and guidance provisions*' (Howieson & Semple, 2000, p. 376) and from two Aberdeen schools (Holm *et al*, 2001). It adds the New Zealand system of school counselling as an exemplar to

endorse the introduction of full-time guidance teachers/school counsellorsⁱ into secondary schools.

The New Zealand system of school counselling is briefly outlined because it provides the example of a national system that historically was similar to the Scottish system when both were set up (in the 1960s in New Zealand and the 1970s in Scotland)ⁱⁱ. The New Zealand guidance and counselling literature has discussed many issues that are expressed in both Scottish Executive reports, especially concerns about role conflict, workload, training and credibility (see Manthei & Miller, 1991, 1992 for a bibliography). Unlike Scotland, the New Zealand system has changed over the years, becoming more specialised and professionalised in the 1990s, and can provide an indication of how Scotland might proceed. Furthermore, within education there has been a series of policy interchanges between the New Zealand and Scotland over a number of years. Other points of comparison of the social context between the two countries exist, but are not elaboratedⁱⁱⁱ. The article does not suggest that Scotland should import New Zealand's or any other country's system as a complete solution (discussion about other British systems are beyond the scope of this article). Scotland's choices depend largely on the socio-politico-educational agendas of the Scottish Executive and the social and educational aspirations of Scottish schools. The article suggests that although the current system may have served Scotland well for almost 35 years, taking student and not just teacher needs into account requires increased specialisation, appropriate post-initial teacher education and professionalisation as Scottish schools move towards in a socially-inclusive society in post-devolution Scotland.

POLICY RATIONALE FOR INTRODUCING FULL-TIME SCHOOL COUNSELLORS INTO SCOTTISH SCHOOLS

Both Scottish Executive reports provide a series of recommendations that open up the space for considering some alternative ways of dealing with students in Scottish schools. While the McCrone Report (Scottish Executive, 2001a) has its focus on the teaching profession, the McConnell Report (Scottish Executive, 2001b) focuses on student behaviour/discipline. There are overlaps in their concerns about 'indiscipline' and its effect not only on teacher workload and stress, but also on the actual learning opportunities of students with the Education Minister, Jack McConnell commenting:

Good discipline—good self discipline—is an essential part of the behaviour and skills that children need to succeed. ...Good school discipline is as essential as literacy and numeracy to maximising life opportunities (News Release, SE1471/2001b, 19 Jun 2001).

Furthermore, the McConnell Report notes:

Effective learning and teaching is much easier to achieve where a positive ethos and good discipline prevail. Discipline policy cannot, and should not, be separated from policy on learning and teaching - the two are inextricably linked (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 8).

Both reports take a very broad view about what constitutes and causes indiscipline and suggest that teachers need help in dealing with this (see McConnell Report, Chapters 1 and 2). Furthermore, both suggest that other personnel than teachers, i.e. professionals or para-professionals with more appropriate training could or should be used to assist teachers, thus freeing teachers to do what they are particularly trained for – to teach. Regardless, they note that in the interests of quality assurance that such personnel need to be trained and that resources (i.e. money) need to be provided for this. Both reports prefer localised schemes rather than universal solutions and

suggest using pilot programmes and tapping into existing research and case studies, particularly from educational psychology. Although no single solution is apparent, effective solutions are seen as involving whole schools as learning communities (teachers, students, parents, care-givers and other relevant professionals), notions of partnerships and multi-disciplinary professional approaches that develop and expound shared values and purposes in a spirit or ethos that is positive, supportive and inclusive. The paper next provides a detailed policy analysis of how the points and recommendations in each report indicate possible that support for the introduction of full-time guidance teachers/school counselling.

THE McCRONE REPORT: A TEACHING PROFESSION FOR THE 21st CENTURY

The McCrone report does not discuss guidance provision at all, nevertheless, Recommendations 3.40, 3.41, 3.45 that relate to social inclusion, discipline, classroom assistants and other para-professionals, provide reasons for considering introducing specialised counselling into Scottish schools without actually recommending this (Scottish Executive, 2001a). The Committee considered it important that increased demands to address social inclusion ‘should be adequately resourced’ despite ‘implications for staffing levels in schools’ and suggests using therapists:

Recommendation 3.40: ...where the tasks involved do not require teachers’ expertise and are more appropriate to other professionals, such as social and health workers and therapists, such professionals should be made available. Teachers will play their part: but it is not reasonable to add to the burdens of that profession by imposing tasks for which others are better fitted (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p.14).

This is highly significant to the possibility of introducing specialist school counsellors. The report argues that although resourcing such schemes would cost money, they should overall limit costs and even save money in the long run.

Many teachers in some areas, especially urban areas, have reported that indiscipline is a growing problem causing them stress and increased workload. So the Report recommends in 3.41: ‘that effective action to tackle the problem of pupil indiscipline is essential not only to reduce the stress on teachers, but also in the interests of the majority of pupils for whom behaviour is not a problem’ (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 14). The Report continues its theme of linking policy and resources as it recommends that the Scottish Executive carry out an appraisal of its policies, particularly the resources allocated to them.

Recommendation 3.45 follows the theme of Recommendation 3.40, and suggests that in secondary schools a ‘cadre of trained para-professionals should be provided, particularly in S1 and S2 and in appropriate subject areas, to help with the preparation of materials and any other tasks which will enable teachers to concentrate on their teaching’ (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 15). Using trained, non-teaching personnel to deal with ‘areas such as health and safety and action to prevent bullying’ would free up teachers to focus on their teaching (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 15). The recommendation suggests that a number of pilot schemes across the country should inform ‘their introduction and the definition of their roles’ — clearly an opening for school counselling (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 15). Recommendation 3.46 states that such personnel ‘should receive appropriate training ...in conjunction with the Scottish Qualifications Agency and the national training organisations’ (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 15). The Report concludes this section by first noting multiple advantages in its recommendations would:

Recommendation 3.47 ...do much to assist teachers to develop and maintain

their expertise, to give new entrants a good start in the profession, to avoid problems of burn-out for older teachers, and to bring more young people into the profession. The Committee attaches great importance to its recommendations on support staff; and believes that they can make a significant contribution to reducing the workload and stress currently experienced by many teachers (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 16).

Second, in Recommendation 3.48, it notes that despite implementation costs:

...they will deliver real gains for the education service as a whole. By freeing Headteachers, senior management teams and teachers to focus on tasks directly related to the process of teaching, there should also be real savings generated; while by improving initial training, arrangements for induction to the profession and access to high-quality CPD, and providing additional classroom support, there will be real benefits for teachers and a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in all of our schools (Scottish Executive, 2001a, p. 16).

To teach or not to teach - is not necessarily *the* question for guidance teachers, but has been an issue of some debate in Scotland since the system was established with a teaching component in 1968 (GTCS, 1998; SCCC, 1986; SES, 1968, 1976). It is alluded to, but not discussed in relation to guidance teachers in the above recommendations. Howieson and Semple (2000) noted that pupils valued being known to someone and treated as individuals rather than just class members, but expressed concern that teaching could compromise guidance time and vice versa – a no-win situation for pupils and teachers alike. Pupils unanimously supported having a guidance system even when their experience had not been entirely positive. Pupils supported a non-teaching guidance role whereas none of the guidance teachers or senior management supported this. Guidance staff pointed to three reasons to keep a subject involvement: ‘that their credibility with colleagues depended partly on their perceived ability as subject teachers, that they enjoyed teaching their subject’ and that it was important to have contact ‘with all types of pupils and not just those with difficulties or problems’ (Howieson & Semple, 2000, p. 385-6). Not surprisingly, considering that it is representing teachers and not pupils, the GTCS supported the wishes of teachers, despite recognising ‘that the creation of such a post [full-time guidance teacher] may help address the needs of pupils (GTCS, 1998, p.6). It seems an astounding example of self-interest that the desires of teachers should have priority over the needs of pupils.

That credibility should be an issue says a great deal about the attitudes of non-guidance school staff and the ethos within schools. Credibility should scarcely be a major issue if full-time guidance staff have already proven themselves as effective classroom teachers before embarking on further specialist education in counselling at post-graduate level; if they have clear lines of accountability as they fulfil their job-description at expected levels of professional practice; and are recognised as promoted staff with a legitimate specialist position within schools. After all if head teachers do not teach (as much or at all) surely they do not lose credibility once they undertake administrative and managerial responsibilities.

There is plenty of research to indicate the difficulties for pupils and guidance staff alike in switching hats from teacher mode to support/counsellor mode (Holm *et al*, 2001; Howieson & Semple, 2000; McDiarmid, 1981; Miller, Manthei and Gilmore, 1993; Small, 1981, 1982; Wadsworth, 1970, 1980). If full-time guidance teachers are required to teach a subject, it should only be PSE, which has clear connections with personal well-being, guidance and counselling. However, new specialist positions might be created with one or two full-time guidance teachers/counsellors in each

school being completely free of teaching so they more time for personal counselling, crisis management and a leadership/management role in a collaborative casework model, as outlined later. Where possible such staff would hopefully reflect the school's gender and ethnic mix and would most likely head a guidance department. They might initially be drawn from the ranks of guidance teachers who opt into this and who undertake appropriate post-graduate counselling training. This would leave other full-time guidance teachers to focus on curricular and vocational guidance and to teach PSE e.g. in a school with five full-time guidance staff, each taught around seven double periods of PSE per week. Three specially designated PSE classrooms were adjacent to the guidance suite which comprises a reception area and offices (with PC connected to pupil records and careers guidance databases) for each guidance teacher and also for the careers advisor (Holm, *et al*, 2001). A shift in the structure of guidance to full-time staff has had a positive response from teachers, parents and pupils in comparative case studies in Aberdeen (Holm, *et al*, 2001).

THE McCONNELL REPORT: BETTER BEHAVIOUR – BETTER LEARNING

The McConnell Report complements the McCrone Report but shifts to focus on students, yet does not discuss the earlier report apart from including it in the selected references. It makes 36 wide-ranging recommendations for schools, local authorities and government, some of which are discussed in this section. The Report clearly links itself to the broadly focussed aim of education in Section 2(1) of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 that requires education to be directed 'to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential' (cited in Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 8). The Report also lists the five National Priorities for improving the quality of education in Scotland's schools: achievement and attainment; framework for learning; inclusion and equality; values and citizenship and learning for life. It sees both learning ability and life skills as important and complementary, with education playing a role in supporting, nurturing and providing young people 'with the life skills to participate safely, purposefully and positively in an increasingly complex world' (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 8).

It is in the rationale, suggestions and recommendations of Chapter 5 of the McConnell Report, 'supporting pupils in schools', that openings for full-time guidance teachers/school counsellors appear. Despite most students negotiating school without major difficulties:

...with appropriate support it is possible to engage all but a tiny minority of pupils in learning and teaching which is appropriate to their needs at that time and also prepares them for later life (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 38).

Some of the different forms of support for learning include 'alternative ways of working within a mainstream class ...small group work ...one-to-one support ...alternative provision for children and young people who display particularly challenging behaviour' (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 38). Counselling would fit within these parameters. The Report strongly reinforces the linkage between social inclusion and education and stating:

It is important that schools and education authorities take all steps necessary to ensure that barriers to learning are removed where possible and that social disadvantage is not reinforced by educational disadvantage (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 38).

Ways of addressing barriers to learning are discussed in points 5.1, 5.2. The success of integrated in-school support services in addressing the needs of students lead to Recommendation 19:

Schools should give consideration to integrating the work of learning support, behaviour support and guidance into a single overall framework of pupil support in order to achieve a more holistic approach to supporting the needs of all children and young people' (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 39).

It is pertinent that New Zealand uses the same terminology, 'removing barriers to learning' in the second of its National Education Goals (Ministry of Education, 1993; see Besley, 2000) and that this type of integrated service exists in many New Zealand secondary schools where it is often headed by one of the school's counsellors.

While point 5.4 and Recommendation 20 focus on the overload on learning support staff, there is also acknowledgement of the difficulty of separating out social emotional and behavioural difficulties from learning problems as the social inclusion agenda is addressed. Despite the long-standing objective that each pupil knows and is known personally and in some depth by at least one member of staff (SCCC, 1986; SOEID, 1996; GTCS, 1998) research indicates that the reality is different. In Howieson and Semple's (2000) research both guidance teachers and pupils concur that there may be only minimal contact with 'good and 'ordinary' pupils because the focus is on those 'with obvious problems' and those 'in trouble' (p.380). Therefore a system that addresses workload and time allocation issues, the need for each pupil to be individually known and for problems and crises to be promptly and effectively addressed becomes imperative at this point in time.

But it is the next point, 5.5 and the associated Recommendation 21 about the change in the nature of pupil needs and the effect of increased caseload of pupils needing intensive support guidance staff that opens the possibility further:

5.5 Similarly, the demands on the nature of the work of guidance staff in supporting the pastoral needs of a wide range of pupils and families, particularly those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, has increased significantly. Guidance staff increasingly carry a much greater caseload of pupils requiring intensive support. This can often have a detrimental effect on their wider responsibilities for curricular and vocational guidance. There must be a review of the role and purpose of guidance in secondary schools. Also, given our findings relating to the importance of early intervention at nursery and primary schools, consideration should be given to a level of guidance provision in primary schools (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 40).

Therefore the committee puts forward 'Recommendation 21: There should be a comprehensive review of the nature and purpose of guidance, both at primary and secondary school levels, and of the training of guidance staff' (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 40).

The McConnell Report mentions the 3-part nature of guidance teacher role but does not discuss that guidance staff are expected to teach too, nor suggest that it might be too much or too varied for one person. Guidance teachers criticise the way workload and a limited guidance time allocation interferes with their effectiveness in guidance (Howieson & Semple, 2000). That 'most guidance staff used their breaks, lunch-times and subject non-contact time to see as many of their pupils as possible' may be laudable, but seems unreasonable (Howieson & Semple, 2000, p. 380). Surely guidance staff are as entitled as any other teachers to their breaks and to lunchtime! School management should not 'protect' time for subject choice interviews that happen to be 'critical for timetabling', but not other types of interview (Howieson & Semple, 2000, p.386). Except for emergencies, teachers are seldom prevented from undertaking their subject commitments, and if the well-being of pupils is taken seriously, guidance staff and their time allocation should be accorded a similar level of respect and recognition. In

the first instance time allocation time should allow for a reasonable workload and in the second, it should be formally designated.

Furthermore, to undertake what the McConnell report expects in terms of pastoral support implies being able to counsel people—students and families—an increased specialisation for guidance teachers who currently use counselling skills, but ‘do not undertake therapeutic counselling’ (Howieson & Semple, 2000, p.375). This counselling component is likely to deal with serious personal issues and must be conducted safely and ethically with effective professional practice, but how can this be assured when to date there is ‘no mandatory requirement for any formal training in guidance’ (GTCS, 1998, p.3) nor in counselling. Therefore, mandatory, professional counselling training that is much more extensive than the current optional post-graduate certificates and diplomas with a basic level of counselling skills should be required for guidance teachers. Not to do so is akin to having untrained teachers in the classroom. Surely Scotland’s young people deserve this sort of respect and consideration.

Points 5.10, 5.11 indicate that in Scotland, promoting a positive school climate, by developing programmes and school-wide structures that address all forms of abuse, bullying, harassment etc. is usually the domain of educational psychologists who work for a cluster of schools (Scottish Executive, 2001b). In New Zealand school counsellors are usually responsible for such work not only through relevant programmes but also through individual/group counselling (for a sample job description see Besley, 2000). Being located within schools gives school counsellors the advantage of knowing the social context when devising and implementing programmes. There is a certain amount of professional overlap although the orientation of each profession is somewhat different and, in New Zealand, school counsellors often work collaboratively with educational psychologists to work out problem-solving strategies to support students. Considering the apparent national shortage of educational psychologists that is noted in 5.14, and the adverse impact this has on the concerns expressed in the report, developing a full time guidance/school counsellor system may well provide a viable and appropriate solution.

In point 5.16, the Committee extends the notion of ‘special educational needs’ to include all ‘children and young people who have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties’ (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p.41). While such a definition may well be useful for accessing resources for these students, it is a concern because the negative, deficit-oriented labelling tends to pathologise students who may find it difficult to ever shake off, even if they change considerably. Point 5.16, describes the support strategies to deal with students at risk of exclusion: ‘in-class auxiliary support; the use of behaviour support teachers working with pupils and teachers; in-school pupil support bases; involving parents/carers in decision-making’ (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p.41). Despite limitations, time-out/withdrawal facilities and alternatives to mainstream education (points 5.18, 5.21, 5.22, 5.23) are important for some young people who risk being excluded from school and whose behaviour is detrimental to the learning chances of others. However, the Report (point 5.18) displays a narrow focus that locates the problem squarely within the student and does not seem to consider the possibilities of any structural elements of the education system, the nature of the relationship between teacher and student or the power relations involved as contributing factors. Even though it is concerned about institutionalisation and aims for a child-centred approach, the emphasis is on the child’s deficit in self-regulation and self-discipline. It shows clearly that all the power lies with the institution of the school that has no real need to consider its part in the constitution of indiscipline. While the notion of ‘behaviour support teachers’ may be appealing, it too is perhaps a little narrow in focus, since it reverts to a mechanistic, reductionist ‘behaviourist’ understanding that does not acknowledge the multiplicities that may

constitute behaviour – the combination of social, emotional, economic, political and structural factors that the Report talks about elsewhere.

The Report (points 5.28, 5.29) suggests two possibilities for dealing with ‘looked after children’ where parents are unable to fulfil this task (point 6.27). First ‘guidance teachers can act as an advocate for all children’ and second (point 6.28) a ‘Children’s Rights Officer’ could advocate for all children and not just those in care (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p.53). Although it is not spelt out, the idea of using someone who is not involved in managing their day-to-day situations – that is, not a teacher – is presumably a way of addressing potentially difficult power relations and role conflict. Because many looked after children will have experienced traumas, grief, family breakdowns, hardship, abuse, neglect, parental imprisonment, mental illness, or addiction they often need counselling. Therefore, in New Zealand, the school counsellor acts as both counsellor and advocate for ‘looked after children’ something that could be part of a full-time school counsellor’s job description in Scotland.

The notion of a co-ordinated multidisciplinary student support service is based on experiences in some Scottish schools and is located in several different parts of the report especially in Chapter 6 and Recommendation 26:

There should be joint multidisciplinary decision-making relating to the care and welfare of children and young people experiencing social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. Clear mechanisms for ensuring effective multidisciplinary working, adapted to meet local needs and circumstances, should be established for all nursery, primary and secondary school clusters to provide holistic and responsive support for children, young people and their families as required (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p.48).

Currently schools can formulate a service to suit their own needs, but point 6.11 endorses using a school liaison group (SLG) or joint assessment team (JAT) to co-ordinate the key agencies/professionals (e.g. teachers, social workers, educational psychologist, police, care-givers, community youth services) involved in assessing and planning around the needs of the young person. Partnerships and multidisciplinary groups should establish clear ‘roles, responsibilities, boundaries, duration and resource issues’ explicit lines of referral and communication and hold regular meetings to devise ‘individual plans and multidisciplinary support packages to address these needs’ (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 48). The Report (points 6.5; 6.18) suggests using a Key Worker – ‘an identified professional having lead responsibility, with clear protocols which identify the other professionals who can become involved in the processes of assessment, planning and intervention’ (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 48). This position is similar to the ‘lead agency’ in the New Zealand inter-agency collaborative casework model, ‘Strengthening Families’^{iv} where the school counsellor often fulfils this role.

In point 7.5, the notion of teachers having an ‘entitlement’ as ‘part of a wider school community team which supports children and young people experiencing difficulties’ is a rather strong statement about the place of teachers on such a team and seems to contradict the sort of flexibility expressed earlier (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 56). It may not always be desirable and highlights a perennial ethical issue about information versus privacy and confidentiality in point 7.4:

Whilst the rights of young people to confidentiality must be paramount, school policies should be reviewed to give classroom teachers greater access to information on personal circumstances which may have an impact on a young person’s personal and social development, and hence on their learning (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 55).

The ideal is that trust and responsibility will prevail with teachers treating things

sensitively. Unfortunately the reality is often very different, especially when teachers have no training in either ethics or confidentiality and if they do not have to adhere to a code of ethics^v. If ordinary teachers are to be provided with personal information many questions arise: what should be communicated, to whom, about whom, and what should remain confidential? Would the teacher be more sensitive or more judgmental if their prejudices are confirmed? Who will teachers tell — their partner, other students, will it be a topic of staff room conversation? Whose rights need to be respected or have priority? Having trained school counsellors would ‘avoid teachers becoming isolated in dealing with difficult and challenging situations’ (Scottish Executive, 2001b, p. 56) because it would no longer be the classroom teacher’s job. Point 7.5 endorses ‘first-line guidance’ indicating future CPD in basic-level listening and counselling skills for all teachers. After all teachers are often the first to notice difficulties a student is having and do have to continue dealing with them in class (Scottish Executive, 2001b). Just as counsellors are expected to practice ethically by consulting or referring on matters that are beyond their skill and training, teachers too should be expected to refer students on to a school counsellor. School policies should cover informed consent, indicate what is private and the limits to confidentiality in times of serious danger to people.

Although guidance teachers are expected to deal with confidentiality and ethics, there is a conflict between pupil and guidance teachers perceptions about trust, confidentiality and privacy:

Guidance teachers thought that pupils were satisfied that confidentiality would be maintained and understood that sometimes it might be necessary to pass on information to others. But this was not the case and pupils were not confident that guidance staff would maintain confidentiality (Howieson and Semple, 2000, p. 384).

Pupils were fearful that parents or other staff would be informed. There was scant regard for privacy, with frequent informal contact occurring in public spaces (e.g. corridors, dining halls, classrooms and playgrounds) and:

...although guidance teachers recognised that such contacts alone were not satisfactory, they simply did not appreciate the extent to which pupils wanted privacy and found it unacceptable to be expected to discuss their concerns in public areas (Howieson & Semple, 2000, p. 384).

It is alarming that professionals involved with the well-being of young people should be so unaware of student wants and needs. It points to the need for more training and reflection about professional practices and the advantage of constructing a guidance suite. But above all, school counsellors should be expected to join a professional counselling association, adhere to the code of ethics, uphold confidentiality and attend regular (usually fortnightly) supervision as part of practising ethically.

SCHOOL COUNSELLING IN NEW ZEALAND - SPECIALISED AND PROFESSIONALISED: A POSSIBLE MODEL FOR SCOTLAND

In New Zealand in the 1950s schools were seen as the most appropriate and accessible institution to address increasing concerns about social problems, juvenile delinquency, moral standards, truancy, increased school suspensions, expulsions and disciplinary problems, so pilot guidance counsellor schemes that provided educational, vocational and personal guidance began at the end of 1959 (Winterbourn 1974). In hindsight some of the issues came to be seen as the emergence of a post-war ‘youth culture’, but at the time much of the adult population was alarmed. In 1964 some experienced, trained teachers were permanently appointed as guidance counsellors with a position of responsibility in some secondary schools of over 500

students that were targeted and selected by the Department of Education (which became the Ministry of Education in 1989). These schools were generally located in the new suburbs of large cities where money and community resources were limited and/or there was a large proportion of Maori and where students were perceived to need further disciplinary control. In the 1960s, counsellors functioned mostly as a control agent, rescuer and trouble-shooter for students with social problems, encouraging difficult or underachieving students to change to fit societal expectations (Wadsworth, 1970; Winterbourn, 1974). Guidance counsellors were partially or completely free from teaching so they could meet students frequently and be readily accessible for dealing with student problems and provide some personal counselling (Winterbourn 1974).

But providing educational, vocational and personal guidance to all students and teaching 20-40 % of the time became almost impossible for one person (Miller *et al.*, 1993). So after a major review, guidance networks were established, headed by the counsellor and involving a wide range of staff (Department of Education, 1971; Renwick, 1973). University training became mandatory in 1974 and by the late 1980s most post-graduate diploma courses were upgraded to Masters level. The introduction of guidance counsellors to *all* secondary schools did not eventuate until 1988 (Department of Education, 1988). From an original remedial/adjustive and social control function, that reflected the current psychological deficit theories of functioning, school guidance counselling in the 1970s moved to focus on personal development and potential, reflecting Rogerian influences in counselling theories (Besley, 2000; Wadsworth, 1981). The 1990s saw further changes with some school counsellors adopting the Foucauldian, poststructuralist approach of narrative therapy that provides a critique of traditional psychological and humanist counselling discourses and regimes of power (see White and Epston, 1990; Winslade and Monk, 1999; Besley, 2000).

Since 1996, in a neoliberal climate, there has been considerable flexibility in how schools conduct their guidance function, yet almost all New Zealand secondary schools, state and private, have one or more school guidance counsellors, depending on the school roll. A guidance counsellor usually heads a guidance department or network comprising personnel, such as guidance teachers, careers advisors, transition teachers, youth workers and sometimes social workers. Some schools have guidance teachers whose role is half counselling, half teaching the health section of the health and physical education curriculum and who are often in training to become fully-fledged guidance counsellors. The traditional three-part role of educational, vocational and emotional guidance and has generally been split between other staff members: e.g. Deans undertake educational guidance (and administration and discipline for their year cohort) while form teachers and senior staff provide general pastoral care and discipline. Counsellors do not administer discipline but assist students who might be in trouble with the disciplinary system, advocating for them at disciplinary hearings and conducting mediation conflict-resolution procedures. They also assist in re-integrating students back into school after their exclusion ends or to enrol at another school or alternative education venue. Careers advisors and transition teachers specialise in careers guidance and job-work transitions and often teach health education (as do some physical education, guidance teachers and school counsellors) - a curriculum that is similar to PSE. Learning support or special needs departments and Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLBs) deal with learning difficulties and diagnostic testing. Therefore, nowadays, especially in large urban secondary schools, the focus for school counsellors is primarily on personal counselling for students as a means of removing barriers to learning and to help schools fulfil all the National Education Goals and National Administrative Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1993).

Over time there have been many changes. For instance, I.Q and psychological testing are no longer used and the term 'guidance' has been being largely (but unofficially) dropped because it has connotations of directiveness that no longer reflect current school counselling practices. School counselling has become professionalised and is strongly supported by its professional association, the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC) that was initially set-up in 1974 by and for guidance counsellors and has now become *the* national professional body representing counselling in New Zealand. NZAC's current membership is around 2500, about 400 of whom are school counsellors (Besley, 2000).

Since the mid-1980s neoliberal political and economic thought has predominated in much of the Western world (UK, USA, Australia, and New Zealand) (see Kelsey, 1993, 1995; Peters, 2001). The neoliberal managerialist ideology with a political agenda that supported notions of choice, deregulation, competition and devolution to self-managing schools was applied to school administration in 1988 and to school staffing in 1996 (Ministry of Education, 1988). It removed all of the previous staffing formula without any critique or consultation of guidance apart from a report on career guidance (Ministry of Education, 1995). Guidance networks and guidance counsellors became simply part of the global staffing entitlement rather than having prescribed positions. Counsellors no longer had to be trained teachers and the counsellor education that the Department of Education had required was no longer mandatory nor funded. Counsellors were not made redundant, but if they resigned, schools had the flexibility to not replace them or to replace them with counsellors or personnel from other helping professions, such as social workers, educational psychologists, psychotherapists etc who may not have been trained teachers.

In the neoliberal era, official policy about school counselling is ambivalent and inconsistent. Although there is no *formal* requirement for secondary schools to have school counsellors, the Education Act (1989) requires schools to offer guidance and counselling to students and families involved in disciplinary proceedings, but a school counsellor is not specified to provide this (see Ministry of Education, 1996). The Ministry of Education's *Young People At Risk of Suicide: A Guide for Schools* (Beautrais, Coggan, Fergusson, and Rivers, 1998) endorses the work of school counsellors, but does not say that schools must have a counsellor. Yet most New Zealand secondary schools have continued to have school counsellors who are trained teachers, promoted to a middle management position status. This indicates not simply inertia, but an awareness of the importance of counsellors remaining within the school structure, of the increased stress on adolescents following welfare cutbacks in the 1990s, and that 'trained school counsellors remain the cornerstone of provisions for adolescent mental health and development in secondary schools' (Webb, 1996, p.21). From the start it was considered important to appoint trained teachers to be further trained as specialist guidance counsellors. This was because, first, trained teachers have a clear knowledge and understanding of the structural components of the school system. Second, they have experience and expertise in dealing with adolescents. Third, being a teacher enables school counsellors to more effectively gain the trust and support of students, teachers and Principals. Fourth, guidance counsellors usually lead school guidance networks of other staff involved in pastoral care, so being a teacher enhances acceptance and credibility.

School counsellors not only deal with crisis management, but also function proactively to promote safe, healthy behaviour through individual, group and sometimes family counselling, and that deals with sexual harassment, sexual abuse, bullying, violence, physical abuse, suicidality, drugs, grief, family traumas etc. They organise itinerant services such as health clinics and co-ordinate programmes such as 'Peer Support', 'Peer mediation', 'Safe Schools' and 'Eliminating Violence'. They usually adopt a multi-disciplinary approach, working collaboratively or as

the 'lead agency' as part of a team with school health nurses, resource teachers, educational psychologists, paediatricians, truancy officers, police youth aid officers, social workers, other professionals from specialist agencies and of course, family. Although many school counsellors are trained to deal with sexual abuse and trauma, suicidality, drug and alcohol problems and family counselling, due to time and staffing limitations, they will sometimes refer students to specialist outside agencies. But there is a real advantage in having counsellors in schools. For one they are seen as part of the fabric of the school, not as an add-on. For another they are not seen as part of a medical/mental health centre so being stigmatised and pathologised by medical models are largely removed. Young people readily trust and confide in them if what they do and how they do it are publicised at school, if they behave ethically and if confidentiality is explained and always respected except in instances of serious harm as per the NZAC Code of Ethics.

Most school counsellors voluntarily belong to NZAC that now requires members to have tertiary-level counsellor education, follow the Code of Ethics, receive regular supervision and maintain certain professional standards. In lieu of official government policy, the Ministry of Education (1997, 1999a, 1999b) endorses NZAC professional standards and supervision reports as exemplars of appropriate performance management. In 1998 NZAC produced a policy that outlines the current role of school counsellors and added a four page appendix on how this fulfils or contributes to *all* the Ministry of Education's National Educational Goals and National Administration Guidelines (see Besley, 2000). School counsellors are fully accountable and are appraised according to their job description, and evidence of their effectiveness is provided from a range of performance evaluations, measurements, assessments, supervision reports, and feedback. It is this sort of model that could be adopted in Scotland – one that builds on the existing system but moves towards a more specialised professionalised school counselling service.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of both the McCrone and McConnell Reports, has provided the policy rationale to suggest introducing full-time guidance teachers and/or school counsellors into Scottish schools, similar to the model used in some New Zealand schools. School counsellors in Scotland could provide a full-time, in-school counselling service focusing on personal and possibly vocational counselling, but be largely non-teaching (apart from some PSE). There could still be guidance teachers who focussed more on educational and vocational advice and teaching PSE, but a more specialised counsellor position might provide an alternative career path for teachers. Counsellors would be part of, or may lead, a school's Student Support Services - a holistic, multi-disciplinary, collaborative team that may include professionals from outside agencies, school departments and parents. Trained and experienced teachers would be appointed to a promoted position after achieving a Master's degree in counselling, reflecting the level of responsibility and additional specialised training beyond initial teacher education. To allocate a reasonable workload and minimise role conflict, a clearly defined job description that selected from various functions would need to be established to suit the needs of individual schools. To ensure the best possible professional standards with safe, ethical practice school counsellors would be expected to join a relevant professional counselling association, to adhere to their code of ethics, attend regular counselling supervision, have regular on-going professional development in counselling. It is important that whatever modality of counselling is adopted that the deficit notions that have been prevalent in the medico-mental health model and some forms of therapy and counselling and which inadvertently pathologise pupils does not occur. One possibility would be narrative therapy. By establishing school counselling, some of the barriers to learning that

students face could be addressed and teachers could concentrate on their prime task, that of teaching.

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NOTES

1. I use the terms 'guidance teacher' and 'guidance or school counsellor' almost interchangeably, elaborating on these terms later. I suggest a system that might include a full-time school counsellor and guidance teachers who only teach PSE.
2. The author was a trained secondary school teacher then completed an MEd in counselling and was a school counsellor in three large urban secondary schools in New Zealand over a period of 12 years. During this time, she was in a middle management position as Head of the Guidance Department at one school for 6 years, prior to completing her PhD in Education.
3. Here are a few general points of comparison in terms of the social context between Scotland and New Zealand. Many New Zealanders have some Scots ancestry, which has undoubtedly had some influence on social values. New Zealand has around 4 million people, comparable with Scotland's 5 million, and is highly urbanised. The largest city, Auckland of over 1 million is a similar size to Glasgow; the capital Wellington, is a similar size to Edinburgh. A point of difference is the ethnic mix, where 20% of the population are Maori. They, along with people of Pacific Island descent, are the worst off in terms of socio-economic indicators (health, unemployment, imprisonment, social welfare beneficiaries, educational achievement etc) for the country. To a certain extent, although 'social exclusion' is not a term used in New Zealand, these people would be in a similar position to those deemed to be socially excluded in Scotland. In New Zealand the extremes of poverty are less severe and the use of heroin and cocaine is very limited whereas alcohol and cannabis are used extensively, especially among Maori, Pacific Islanders and youth from all socio-economic groups. Just as in the UK there is a current debate about decriminalisation/legalisation of cannabis.
4. From 1996-99 the author was involved on the committee that devised the pilot programme called 'Effective Practice' in Waitakere City, West Auckland, prior to it being adopted nationwide and re-named.
5. The GTCS is currently developing a Code of Professional Ethics for teachers.

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