

From the Editor

Ian Smith (Editor)

University of the West of Scotland

This is my first edition as Editor. The new editorial team, comprising myself and Chris Holligan as Deputy Editor, is based at the School of Education, the University of the West of Scotland. I wish to begin by offering the strongest thanks to Mark Priestley, my predecessor as Editor. In his three years as Editor, Mark made an enormous contribution to sustaining and developing the *Scottish Educational Review*, including the establishment of the website and the creation of a new format for the paper-based journal. I am particularly grateful that Mark has agreed to become Business Editor. He will continue to make an invaluable contribution in this role. I am also grateful that David Miller will continue as Reviews Editor. In another change, Gari Donn will be replacing Angela Roger as Chair of the Editorial Board, although Angela will remain as a Board member. I would like to thank Angela for her contribution as Chair over several years. Thanks are also due to Greg Mannion and Morag Redford for their work as Deputy Editors with Mark, and we should also note the role of John Dakers, whom Mark has succeeded as Business Editor.

The first two papers in this edition are based on recent keynote addresses at annual conferences of the Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA). Their inclusion illustrates the importance of sustaining the link between the *Scottish Educational Review* and SERA.

Pasi Sahlberg's paper is based on his 2009 keynote address. In the context of the global attention which Finland's education system has attracted in recent years, Sahlberg provides an invaluable analysis of the main developments in Finnish education since 1945, with particular emphasis on three phases of educational change from the 1970s. He then presents Finland's contemporary educational position in terms of four paradoxes, which he characterises as 'Less is more', 'Better learning with less testing', 'More equity through diversity' and 'The better secondary-school graduates are, the more likely they will become teachers'. Although Sahlberg rightly cautions against facile assumptions that Finnish models of education can be easily transferred to other nations, his analysis of the contemporary Finnish system contains much that will stimulate thinking elsewhere, not least his suggestion that Finland may face the risk of a new complacency and a tightening of central control, with the need for a new 'Big Dream'.

Brian Hudson's paper is based on his 2010 keynote address. Hudson provides a wide-ranging and multi-layered critique of aspects of recent developments in higher education, arguing that academic work, including educational research and the professional education of teachers, has been threatened by 'fragmentation, division and reductionism'. He presents a powerful and positive case for developing cultures of inquiry

in higher education as a way of integrating research, teaching and learning, and that this is ultimately part of a struggle over values. The professional education of teachers should be progressed within this culture of inquiry, with teaching seen as a 'design profession', involving higher order thinking, and a 'holistic' not 'reductionist' view of competences. These arguments are informed by stimulating international perspectives, but also make challenging references to specific Scottish and UK contexts.

Moira Hulme's paper provides an extremely helpful basis for further developing research perspectives on the history of teacher education, and for re-invigorating the study of the history of Scottish teacher education specifically. Hulme sets a strong framework for such historical work in terms of more recent 'revisionist' approaches which develop significantly from 'traditional' approaches to educational history. These include approaches to cultural and social contexts based on interdisciplinary links between sociology and history, and the use of 'policy genealogy'. She then provides a comprehensive and detailed review of the potential sources for the history of Scottish teacher education, including visual, spatial and aural sources. This review will be invaluable for future research in the field.

The paper by Walter Humes demonstrates the potential for historical sources to stimulate continuing critical debate about Scottish education. Humes re-visits the ideas of R.F. Mackenzie, particularly through an analysis of Mackenzie's less well known 'Manifesto for the Educational Revolution', unpublished in his lifetime but available more recently on the internet. Through use of the 'Manifesto', Humes provides some new perspectives on Mackenzie's thinking, particularly on the political purposes of schooling. Moving beyond some earlier accounts of Mackenzie's ideas, Humes also highlights certain tensions and limitations in Mackenzie's views. However, he concludes that Mackenzie's thinking remains a valuable stimulus to those seeking to maintain a 'radical tradition' which presents an 'alternative narrative' to the 'dominant narratives' of officialdom in Scottish education.

Issues of power, control and influence within the development of educational policy in Scotland are addressed in the paper by Malcolm Thorburn and Andrew Horrell. Thorburn and Horrell consider specifically the development of national policy for physical education in Scottish schools since the 1970s. They present a complex situation. Physical education has established a place for itself within a series of general curriculum and assessment developments. However, progress for the subject has been variable, and partly reliant on positive connections with wider health and sport related initiatives. A lack of clarity and consensus on the conceptualisation of the subject leaves it vulnerable. This lack of fundamental clarity may be linked to the reduction in influence of teacher educators on physical education policy making, compared to other official power holders such as HMIE and SQA, as pluralist approaches to policy making are replaced by new corporatist approaches, including controlled use of teachers' voluntary contributions within SQA-led working groups.

As continuing features, the edition contains Morag Redford's useful and thorough review of the activities of the Scottish Parliament's Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee, as well as a number of book reviews on : Community Education, Learning and Development; Philosophy of Education; Education in Russia; Educational Transitions; Children and Citizenship.

Ian Smith, May 2011