# Professional Standards and Professional Code: Consultation with Children and Young People

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## **Executive summary**

Towards the end of 2019 the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) held a public consultation on its drafted refreshed Professional Standards for Teaching and the new Professional Code. As part of the process GTCS commissioned Children in Scotland to engage with children and young people across Scotland in November-December 2019. The aim of the consultation process was to gather the views of children and young people on the draft suite of documents.

Children in Scotland heard from children and young people in nine different settings across Scotland through five direct sessions and four partner schools that used a Children in Scotland resource pack. Both the direct sessions and resource pack focused on the consultation process and children's right to be heard, the role and demands of teaching and the suite of five draft documents, mirroring GTCS consultation questions where appropriate.

The key findings are divided into eight subheadings:

- Perceptions of teachers and teaching
- General comments regarding documents
- Introduction document
- Professional Code
- Standards for Registrations
- Standards for Career-long Learning
- Standards for Leadership and Management
- Role of children and young people.

The children and young people who participated were able to share their opinions and experiences of how teachers do and should put the Standards into practice daily, recognising what makes a good teacher and good leader in their experience. They also stated they learned a lot about the demands of teaching through this process.

Through activities looking at the content of the suite of draft documents the children and young people shared their opinions on the design of the documents and shared suggestions for change. These were around making the documents more accessible for all, such as use of images and symbols and colour-coding.

The children and young people also gave suggestions to the content of the documents, such as suggestions for key words/concepts to add in, based on what they believe to be important in a good teacher.

Children in Scotland was able to draw conclusions and make recommendations of next steps for GTCS, ensuring the final draft of the documents reflects the findings from this consultation and incorporates what the children and young people shared. This will make the documents easier to use for teachers and include content that children and young people have said is important to them in terms of what makes a good teacher.

The children and young people were pleased to be part of the consultation process and, through it, learned a lot about teaching. They would like children and young people to be involved in teachers' PRD and career-long learning and have made suggestions as to how this could work in practice, such as asking the pupils for feedback on the PRD process, working groups in schools and a national group.



### Children in Scotland

Giving all children in Scotland an equal chance to flourish is at the heart of everything we do.

By bringing together a network of people working with and for children, alongside children and young people themselves, we offer a broad, balanced and independent voice. We create solutions, provide support and develop positive change across all areas affecting children in Scotland.

We do this by engaging, listening, gathering evidence, applying and sharing, while always working to uphold children's rights. Our range of knowledge and expertise means we can provide trusted support on issues as diverse as the people we work with and the varied lives of children and families in Scotland.

## **Background to report**

Over the past three years the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) has been reviewing the Professional Standards for Teaching. These Standards are integral to, and demonstrated through, all professional relationships and practices of teachers across Scotland.

Towards the end of 2019 GTCS held a public consultation on the draft of its refreshed Professional Standards for Teaching and the new Professional Code. As part of the process GTCS commissioned Children in Scotland to engage with children and young people across Scotland during November-December 2019. The aim of the consultation process was to gather the views of children and young people on the draft suite of documents.

Children in Scotland shares GTCS' commitment to including children and young people in the decisions that affect them and listening to their voices in policy and practice development. We are very pleased to be able to support children and young people to be a central part of this important process for education in Scotland.

This report is the synthesis of the output from the work with children and young people, summarising key findings and making recommendations for GTCS.

## Methodology

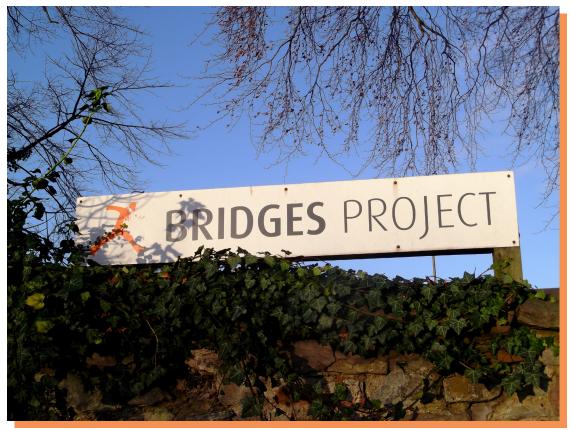
Children in Scotland believes it is essential to include a range of perspectives from children and young people living in Scotland in our work. Therefore for this consultation process we reached out as widely as possible and heard from a diverse range of children and young people in terms of age, gender, additional support needs, faith, ethnicity, geography (rural/urban), deprivation and experience of school.

Children in Scotland's aim was to work with 10 different settings during November-December 2019, either through direct sessions or through partnerships with schools and youth settings.

#### **Direct delivery**

Children in Scotland staff delivered five direct full-day workshops and worked with 50 children and young people at:

- Stobhill Primary School, Midlothian
- Milngavie Primary School, East Dunbartonshire
- Lesmahagow High School, South Lanarkshire
- Tynecastle High School, City of Edinburgh
- Bridges Project, East Lothian.



The Bridges Project, East Lothian

The direct workshops offered the children and young people an opportunity to:

- Experience positive relationships with Children in Scotland staff and more indirectly with GTCS Scotland
- Have a positive experience of consultation and be upskilled and gain confidence in sharing their feelings and opinions, based on their lived experience

Feedback gained from the participants was 100% positive regarding their enjoyment of the sessions, feeling included and feeling their voices were heard.

Each direct session was split into four sections:

- The first part of each session supported and developed the children and young people's understanding of the whole process and the purpose of their input (including their right to have their voices heard in matters that impact on their lives)
- The second section supported and developed their understanding of the teaching profession, what can be supports and challenges for teachers and the role of PRD, the Professional Standards etc.
- The third section supported them to consider the suite of documents (design, content, how they could be used)
- The fourth section was for them to evaluate the process and the specific session.

Through our extensive programme of participation work, Children in Scotland has developed innovative approaches to support the effective participation of children and young people. During our five direct delivery sessions a wide range of participative approaches were used to ensure all children and young people were able to engage, regardless of age, additional support needs etc. This included opportunities to work as a whole group, in smaller groups, in pairs and individual work. The activities offered opportunities for discussions, creating characters, drama, arts and crafts, physical games, and voting.

#### Resource pack

Children in Scotland staff also developed a resource pack to send out to other schools, mirroring the activities covered in the direct sessions. The packs included teacher guidance notes, activities and printable resources. Children in Scotland staff aimed to strike a balance between making it straightforward for teachers to pick up the pack and use it without too much planning and preparation and keeping it general enough for teachers to

develop to meet the needs and interests of their pupils.

Four schools were able to complete some/all of these activities and submitted the pupils' opinions to Children in Scotland either electronically or through hard copy. Some schools worked with a whole class, some with a smaller group of children and young people such as their Pupil Council:

- Muthill Primary School, Perth & Kinross
- Charleston Academy, Inverness
- Kelso High School, Scottish Borders
- St Peter the Apostle High School, West Dunbartonshire.

Children in Scotland reached out to two more schools but they were unable to complete the work before the December deadline.



## **Key findings**

Children in Scotland staff have synthesised the findings from the direct sessions and feedback gained from schools who used the resource pack. We have divided the findings into eight subheadings reflecting, where appropriate, the consultation questions used by GTCS on their website in late 2019.

#### Perceptions of teachers and teaching

Creating a character supports young people to talk about experiences and opinions in a general and safe way. Through creating a teacher character the participants considered their experience of teachers and aspects of teaching without it being personal and specific. We considered:

- Why do people want to become teachers?
- What is the main aim of teachers?
- What makes someone a good teacher? (attributes and actions).



Creating a teacher character

#### The findings are as follows:



### Why do people want to become teachers?

- To help people
- Passionate about their subject
- Pay
- Holidays
- Making up for their own bad experiences, giving pupils better than they got
- They like children
- Get to boss them about
- Certainty.

Interestingly, this generally reflects the feedback GTCS has received from teachers when asked the same question. We also found it interesting that one young person understood the current demands of the work place and believed teaching can offer 'certainty' more than other jobs/careers, including around working hours and holidays.



#### What is the main aim of teachers?

- To inspire and influence young people
- Give children a good education



### What makes someone a good teacher? (attributes and actions)

- Fun
- Kind
- Respectful
- Creative
- Passionate about their subject
- Нарру
- Lit
- Not cringe.





What makes a good teacher?

We were able to put this into the context of the overall GTCS process and link this back to the findings from 591 children and young people in phase 1 of this process (2018) and compare and contrast opinions. We found the responses to be very similar and in the direct sessions this helped lead the discussion.

In the direct sessions the participants created a teacher game – the teacher is a character in a computer 'platform game' and has to become the best teacher they can be, moving up levels etc. They considered:

- What can help teachers be the best they can be? ('boosts')
- What challenges do teachers face? ('bombs')







#### What can help teachers be the best they can be?

- Good feedback from class and parents
- Pay-rise/promotion
- Making a good lesson
- Kids not wanting to leave
- Children liking them
- Helping children
- Helping a child solve a problem
- Being approachable
- Learning
- Being recognised for work
- Learning from mistakes
- Admitting mistakes
- Pulls off a cringe joke.



#### What challenges do teachers face?

- Pupils' behaviour e.g. a fight
- Pupils not wanting to learn
- Personal issues e.g. family issues
- Being bullied by colleagues
- Headteacher not supporting them
- Bad Headteacher
- Pupils not choosing subject
- Decrease in morale
- The difference between uni and work.

We also asked if teachers are respected (to link in to the public confidence aspect of the GTCS consultation questions). The children and young people were less able to identify public opinion/confidence about the profession generally, but they could reflect on people's behaviour in their own experience – times when teachers had not been shown respect in their opinion, linked to pupil and parents' interactions with them.



### Are teachers respected?

Yes

- Teachers receive respect, but not as much as they should
- It is a very good job, gets you a lot of money
- Generally a good job
- Enough to pay their rent [pay]
- Most people think it is a good job
- They do a lot
- Teaching is a difficult job, but they chose it
- It is important to trust teachers
- If you [parents] don't trust teachers you might not want their child near them
- The parents will think good of the teacher if the child is learning.

#### No

- Sometimes they get shouted at by parents and pupils
- Some pupils just don't care
- Pupils can sometimes kick off
- Pupils' behaviour shows a lack of respect.

All of the above helped lead the discussion on to the role of the suite of documents in supporting teachers to be the best they can be.

#### General comments regarding the suite of five documents

### "It's hurting my head a little bit."

It was not appropriate for the children and young people who took part to sit and analyse the five draft documents in the suite. Instead, we examined one per direct session and made the document as accessible as possible through activities. However, towards the start of each session the five documents were laid out and general comments were asked for from the children and young people in order to gain initial thoughts/reactions.

There was a clear feeling that the documents are not aimed at children and young people and an understanding that, whilst based on feedback from a range of stakeholders including children, the intended audience is not children and young people, "it is from kids, not for kids."

Participants believed the documents were in fact quite inaccessible to them, regardless of age or ability, saying: "it is beyond our understanding", and asking "why have they put it in fancy words, those aren't words we would use?" They felt the documents looked, "very wordy", "really complicated" and "boring".

The children and young people also commented on the layout and design of the documents, stating they are: "not appealing at the first glance" and "you are not going to pick one of these up and look forward to reading it". Many of the children and young people commented that they thought teachers would feel the same, "Everyone is human after all."

They made suggestions that they believe would make the documents more accessible for all, including: more images/visuals/symbols because "visuals can help them connect the meaning" and make it "easy and eye-catching"; more colour; colour coding; better spacing; a different/bigger font; a (consistent) numbering system; making it obvious if a table is to be used left-right to top-bottom, and include some facts (and games) to make them more exciting.

We asked participants if they thought children and parents might be interested in these documents and they suggested a "different version for children" and recognised "some parents might understand it but it would need changed for them too."

When asked what else might be useful for teachers to help them use these

documents one young person commented: "some people are auditory learners and so there should be something they can listen to on the website... it'd be more inclusive."

Activities were then based around the five individual documents in both the direct work and the resource pack.

#### Introduction document

Feedback was received on the Introduction document from participants in both a direct session and also through the resource pack.

Fifty per cent of the participants thought having an introduction document will help teachers understand the suite of documents and how to use them.

As above, comments were made on the design and layout, suggesting it needs more photos and colours, fewer words generally and more 'understandable' words. Braille and audible versions were also suggested.

In the direct session the young people generally understood the meaning of the Values and Commitments, matching the words with the meanings and gave their 'thumbs up' to the key words.

However, they advised symbols could be used to help with understanding of the key words. For example, for trust they suggested hands shaking; for respect, two heads talking and listening; for social justice, scales; for professionalism, money or a mortar board or a suit.

They also believed there to be a key word missing: "relatable", meaning that teachers must be able to "talk to the pupils" and that it is essential that "pupils can talk to them about their feelings."

The young people also suggested that "being resourceful" should be in the Introduction, because in their experience they sometimes just sit and copy from a board and do not believe this is a good way to teach or learn.



Teachers must be resourceful

They also suggested "being honest", but "in a kind way, or pupils will be upset", is essential to support pupils but also to avoid upsetting them and knocking their confidence.

A further comment received was about recognising the needs of all learners. The young people believed this to be very important and thought that some teachers could be better at this because in their experience some pupils are too scared to ask for help from some teachers.

#### **Professional code**

### "It will tell you rules how to be a great teacher."

Through the activities it was clear the children and young people had a general understanding of what Values and Commitments teachers need and they agreed with the ones included in the document. They also agreed that it is clear how learners should be treated by teachers by giving this question a big 'thumbs up'.

Through discussion it was clear the key words in the document are broadly understood and the children and young people could give examples of how this could/should look in the classroom through the actions and attitudes of teachers.

Please see below for some detail of the discussion areas. We believe this may be useful to GTCS when considering redrafting the documents, giving an insight into what other stakeholders understand from the vocabulary. GTCS may wish to exemplify the Values, Commitments etc to support everyone's understanding, perhaps with direct quotes from children and young people.

Professional	More good at it, make money
Commitments	"Sticking in at it", dedicate my life to it
Respectfully	"Getting on with everyone the same", teachers can act differently to children than to adults; "respect is important both ways"
Sustainability	e.g. recycling
Social justice	It is about the world, giving people food, "everyone in the whole worldpeaceno hungereveryone has the right amount of money
Integrity	Inner beauty
Impact on future	Teachers have a huge impact e.g. pupil finds a cure

Open and honest	There is a balance to this, don't share some topics
Dignity	Making things impersonal "not shouting stuff across the classroom"
Social world issues	e.g. climate change and Brexit

The children and young people found 'Inclusive practices' difficult to understand without a lot of support.

When considering if anything is missing in the Professional Code the children and young people suggested that for Respecting Boundaries, the wording of professional relationship needs to be clearer and it needs to be decided between pupils and teachers so everyone understands. Also, with Behaviour the children and young people expressed how important it is to act this way towards everyone. As stated above, there was some feeling that teachers act differently with parents than they do with pupils.

The children and young people thought this document will be useful to teachers and "it will tell you rules how to be a great teacher", adding that they should show these words in their actions every day because "if you can't trust them how do you learn from them?"

They thought teachers would use this document during training times, time out of class and "In their own time... because they have a lot to deal with in six hours of teaching". One young person thought it may be useful to a teacher "when their self esteem drops" as they could look to see how well they are doing.

The children and young people could also see how teachers using this Professional Code would have an impact on children and young people's learning, behaviour and life in school generally. They stated it will "set a good example, pupils will see there's good behaviour and copy it." They believed it will help with teachers' planning as they will "take account of everyone's beliefs, fun, make sure everyone is able to do the work" so "there wouldn't be as many discipline issues, pupils would achieve more, the lesson could be moulded round each individual student" and it will help "make young people more positive."

#### Standards for registration

### These things are vital for a growing mind.

With varying degrees of support the children and young people could understand all the different concepts and could relate to their own positive and negative experiences of this.

Through discussion of the content of the document they stated they believed all aspects are important and commented on how they might be useful in upholding standards because "If teachers aren't tested they could just get worse" and "There has to be a standard so they can live up to that." Teachers will "spend time on it and being honest about themselves."

They could identify why the Standards are important and how they would impact on them and their learning and thus on their later lives, as with the Professional Code.

Please see below for some detail of the discussion areas, the children and young people's definitions and experience in the classroom. We believe this may be useful to GTCS when considering redrafting the documents, giving an insight into what other stakeholders understand by the vocabulary. GTCS may wish to exemplify the key words and concepts to support everyone's understanding, perhaps with direct quotes from children and young people.

Creative resources	It is important because:	
	<ul> <li>Used to motivate people</li> <li>Some people are more of a visual learner</li> <li>People learn better when they are having fun</li> <li>If it is just textbooks it is boring</li> </ul>	
	In practice:	
	<ul> <li>Don't just use jotters</li> <li>In Maths we used cubes</li> <li>Kahoot at the end of the lesson</li> <li>Art, art, art</li> </ul>	
Literacy	It is important because:	
	<ul> <li>Impacts on all subjects – even in Maths you have to use words and sentences</li> </ul>	
	In practice:	
	<ul><li>Word problems</li><li>Literacy and empathy in Drama</li></ul>	
Digital technology	It is important because:	
	<ul> <li>It is important to save the trees</li> <li>Help support pupils if they have dyslexia or anxiety</li> </ul>	
	In practice:	
	<ul> <li>Using computers, PowerPoint, smart boards, games</li> </ul>	

Engage learners	It is important because:	
	<ul> <li>Choice – pupils more interested if there's a choice</li> </ul>	
	In practice:	
	<ul> <li>Getting to know the pupils better, especially if they are struggling</li> <li>Take time to think up different tasks for all pupils</li> </ul>	
Self evaluation	It is important because:	
	<ul> <li>They know what to do better and how to improve</li> </ul>	
	In practice:	
	<ul> <li>Suggestion box – different ways for pupils to give their views to support</li> </ul>	
Build confidence	It is important because:	
	<ul> <li>If you don't do this you are not a good teacher</li> </ul>	
	In practice:	
	<ul> <li>Teachers have to be flexible</li> <li>Include people</li> <li>Use smaller groups</li> <li>Encourage people</li> <li>Make people feel confident and interested</li> </ul>	
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Numeracy	It is important because:	
	<ul> <li>Is in every subject</li> </ul>	
	In practice:	
	Being challenged to answer	

Pupil assessment	<ul> <li>It is important because:</li> <li>Know where pupils are and how they can move on</li> <li>In practice:</li> <li>Includes test, but they should be fun</li> <li>A variety of tests</li> <li>To work without knowing it's work is good, stops you getting anxious</li> </ul>
Pupil health and wellbeing	<ul> <li>It is important because:</li> <li>Pupils need to feel well not just their physical state</li> <li>School isn't always the safe place</li> <li>In practice:</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Keep pupils healthy and happy</li> <li>Notice everybody and their personal interests</li> </ul>
Interdisciplinary learning	<ul> <li>It is important because:</li> <li>Should be part of everyday learning so you know what is going on around you</li> <li>In practice:</li> <li>Talk to classes differently depending on ages</li> </ul>
ASN	It is important because:  Teachers have to know about all their pupils and that is difficult  But They can't remember every single thing  Suggested: Smaller classes or additional teacher Mixed ability classes can have positives and negatives
Equality and diversity	<ul> <li>In Practice:</li> <li>Including all pupils and support them</li> <li>Asking opinions of pupils and encouraging pupils, regardless of what labels are put on them</li> <li>Increase knowledge of other's beliefs</li> <li>Include ideas and opinions from different groups</li> <li>No discrimination against anyone</li> </ul>

#### Teaching and learning

It is important because:

- Teachers are learners too, from pupils and other teachers
- That is the justice of the job

#### Reports

It is important because:

Make sure pupils can understand them

The children and young people found 'Learning For Sustainability' difficult to understand without a lot of support. There was confusion about the meaning but with support they recognised it involves "Making a change in the environment" because "Climate change is going to effect you whether you like it or not" but they stated "Teachers don't give you a way to change it."



O Creating an image to symbolise diversity

When considering if anything is missing in the Standards for Registration document the children and young people suggested including more detail on building relationships, "saying hello is important", and body language because "facial expressions are important." They also thought "a sense of fun" is essential. One interesting comment was made on what teachers wear and a young person suggested the guidance should be "smart but fun, not all in

**black"** to help support children and young people to feel relaxed in school. There was discussion around the importance of teacher wellbeing and one young person suggested each teacher should receive free coffee vouchers!

#### Standards for career-long learning

Knowing something is not bad at all, it can improve your teaching.

As with the previous three documents, with support, the children and young people were able to reflect on how this document could help teachers and ultimately support pupils' learning.

They explained that it is important to be a career-long learner "So they don't forget what it is like to learn" and "They can then teach and include everybody" and support "different learners' needs". There was an understanding that teachers must find time to do this and this can be a

challenge, but they were able to suggest "No contact with pupils for a few hours a week" or "working on group tasks" or "having shorter periods then they'd want to learn" may be a help with this. They also thought teachers could ask pupils to help them with the process because "they learn from the students".

Please see below for some detail of the discussion areas, the children and young people's definitions and experience in the classroom. As previously, we believe this may be useful to GTCS when considering redrafting the documents, giving an insight into what other stakeholders understand from the vocabulary. GTCS may wish to exemplify the key words and concepts to support everyone's understanding, perhaps with direct quotes from children and young people.

Professional courage	Don't be scared to make decisions; inspire people
Educational assumptions	"we are an English speaking country, but if you don't speak it as your first language it is probably quite hard."
Address bias	People who are good at tests and people who get told off the most; "Teaching a certain way might not be good for everybody."
Subject	"Depth of knowledge"; in a review process and they (teachers) would "talk about what they are doing well and what they are struggling with."
Curriculum	Concept of how it all fits together, like a jigsaw
Assessment	Teachers use it to know what level pupils are at
Research	"Knowing something is not bad at all, it can improve your teaching"; "There should be a joy in it", because it is really useful to find out stuff, and "You'll be able to teach it better."
Knowledge about current policies	Help pupils if teachers learn different opinions and two sides of an argument
Research	That will impact on their teaching and contribute to both teachers' and pupils' learning; the learning has to be relevant and flexible; "It is a lot for teachers, but they should be responsible for themselves" and "they might be less grumpy more happy, calm and patient."

The children and young people demonstrated an understanding of how teachers' learning "transfers back to the classroom" and helps make sure

"the right people are teachers". Two groups of young people illustrated their understanding of how this document might support teachers' practice in the classroom through short drama sketches. One showed that teachers can learn from each other and ongoing learning is good. The other showed a confident teacher using their knowledge and skills well in the classroom.

However, the young people who looked at this document specifically felt it was confusing and would be to teachers. They understood the idea of skills, knowledge and practice but felt the document did not make this clear. For example:

- They stated "there's not enough of an introduction... no explanation of how to use them and who would use them."
- One of the tables was not clear if it was to be read left to right or up and down
- They suggested there should be an image of a young person to demonstrate a thread throughout it all
- They also suggested more symbols and images generally could be used to make the document more accessible and designed some symbols around the key words and designed some examples:





Suggested symbols

#### Standards for leadership and management

#### Leaders should be responsible for happiness in school.

Through the activities the children and young people were able to identify that it is not just Head Teachers with responsibility and were able to identify different leadership roles teachers can have, including: Headteacher, Guidance Teacher, Head of Department, sports leader, youth worker, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Head of S6. They acknowledged that they all have "big, big responsibility."

They were also able to identify good and bad styles of leadership and before looking at the content of the document the children and young people identified these words to describe good leaders: positive, amazing, courage, trusting, helpful, responsibility, good, a role model, should not lie to parents, make sure everyone is confident, listening to ideas, activist, 'unjudgmental', fun, cool, lead by being at the front of the school, can teach different classes (pupils see leaders coming in to cover classes), everyone listens to them. Ultimately it is a leader's role to be "Looking after children if they are in trouble or needing help". Some of these ideas and concepts are in the draft document (such as trusting), some are not (activist).

The children and young people believed a poor leader would be "mean with their power, being demanding".

Please see below for some detail of the discussion areas, the children and young people's definitions and experience in the classroom. Again, we believe this may be useful to GTCS when considering redrafting the documents, giving an insight into what other stakeholders understand by the vocabulary. GTCS may wish to exemplify the key words and concepts to support everyone's understanding, perhaps with direct quotes from children and young people.



O Drama activity

Supporting learning	This is really good because "If you don't do it it stops happening."
Communicate effectively	This will help leaders <b>"get what they want, when</b> they want, how they want it."
Empowerment	Idea of being given control and responsibility
Shared leadership	This is a good thing as it shows trusts and teachers will <b>"feel boosted."</b>
Partnership working	"Teaching together develops skills." It is good to involve parents because "Parents should be able to share their views."
Curriculum	Pupils should be involved in new things in the school because "the Headteacher doesn't know everything and they need support from those they lead."

The children and young people struggled with Vision but thought it might be something to "look up to."

There was an excellent in-depth discussion around empowerment and the children and young people recognised "if staff don't feel empowered they feel stressed."

They believed activism to be very important and we can see this through many children and young people's commitment to the Climate Strike movement.

There was also a focus on annual reviews and the children and young people demonstrated an understanding that they are a good idea to help gain information and an overall understanding of the whole school's needs for leaders and managers.

As with previous documents, when discussing how teachers would use this document the children and young people identified it would help teachers become leaders because "they could use the document to see what they have achieved" and it will support their development so they "will be better for the pupils."

#### Role of children and young people

#### They're teaching pupils...it is pupils that should be asked.

Children in Scotland staff (and their partners in schools) found all of the children and young people involved in the consultation process to be very interested in teachers' development and learning. They all stated they felt they had a better understanding of the demands of the role and one young person described it as "an eye-opener". They recognised "It is not as simple as you think to be a teacher" but also stated "it is what they signed up for". There was a feeling of increased respect, empathy and understanding. We believe this reflects the importance of the documents in supporting public confidence in the teaching profession.

They welcomed the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences and were "Pleased to be involved cos we know teachers best."

Almost all of the children and young people who took part would like to be further involved in supporting teachers with the redrafted documents and their professional development: "ask pupils what they can do better" and because of their daily interactions with teachers "Kids know best."





They made suggestions as to how this could work in practice:

- Asking the pupils for feedback in the PRD process
- Pupils completing tracking reports [on teachers] on Google classroom
- Use pupils in the class to help people understand
- A thought box/suggestion box (could be anonymous)
- An online survey
- Have a working group of pupils within the school, perhaps a 'Professional Code Group'
- Surveys on homework app
- Monthly meetings
- Workshops
- Agreed with a national panel of young people.

They also suggested other supports for teachers when the suite of documents is officially launched:

- Parents coming and sharing their learning
- More time to think and reflect
- Get advice
- A website where you can talk to other teachers
- Have fun.

### Conclusion and recommendations

Children in Scotland welcomes the opportunity to continue to have children and young people's voices and perspectives on teaching in Scotland and at the heart of the draft refreshed Professional Standards and the new Professional Code.

Children and young people have a clear vision of the Values and Commitments they want for and from teachers and how this can be put into teachers' daily practice. Through this consultation process they gained a better insight into the complexities and demands of the role and developed their empathy and understanding of the teaching profession.

With varying degrees of support the children and young people were well able to share their opinions on the design, content and use of the suite of documents as outlined in the findings. Their suggestions include:

 More colour; colour coding; better spacing; a different/bigger font; a (consistent) numbering system; making it obvious if a table is to be used left-right to top-bottom; could include some facts (and games) to make them more exciting; "visuals can help them connect the meaning" and make it "easy and eye catching".

- Other versions could include Braille and an audible version online
- They struggled with some of the vocabulary in all of the documents and GTCS should be mindful of this
- With support they understood most of the key words and gave some examples of how these concepts could work in practice. GTCS should consider exemplifying the Values, Commitments etc with direct quotes from children and young people to support everyone's understanding
- For the Introduction document they made suggestions around 'relatable', 'being resourceful' and 'being honest'.
- For the Standards for Registration document the children and young people suggested including more detail on building relationships such as "saying hello is important" and body language because "facial expressions are important". They also thought "a sense of fun" is essential and on what teachers wear suggesting the guidance should be "smart but fun, not all in black"
- For the Career-long Learning Standard they suggested more of an introduction, clearer tables, more images in general and specifically an image of a young person to demonstrate a thread throughout it all
- For the Standards for Leadership they believed activism to be very important to many children and young people (and is of course reflected in Moray House's ITE course 'Transformative Learning And Teaching').

The redrafted documents should reflect the findings from this consultation with children and young people, including the content they have suggested, thus reflecting what is important to them in terms of what makes a good teacher. Children in Scotland believes that implementing these suggested changes will have a positive impact on the Professional Standards and Professional Code not only for teachers but also for other key stakeholders such as children and parents.

Children and young people's ongoing participation in the process is essential. After learning more about teaching through this consultation process children and young people want to have the opportunity to be involved in the process of teachers' PRD. They can see the link between teachers' development and the short- and long-term impact it has on children and young people. Through schools' work on children's rights and the UNCRC, they also know they have a right to be involved in matters affecting them. They acknowledged their parents may want the opportunity to be involved also. Thus, making the documents accessible for everyone makes it easier for children and teachers to work on the documents together.

## Thank you

Children in Scotland would like to thank all of the schools and youth settings who took part in this consultation process:

- Bridges Project,
   East Lothian
- Stobhill Primary School, Midlothian
- Milngavie Primary School, East Dunbartonshire
- Muthill Primary School, Perth & Kinross
- Lesmahagow High School, South Lanarkshire
- Tynecastle High School, Edinburgh
- Charleston Academy, Inverness
- Kelso High School, Scottish Borders
- St Peter the Apostle High School, West Dunbartonshire.



We are very pleased some of the schools involved in the first phase of this consultation process in 2018 were able to work with us again. We also very much enjoyed developing new partnerships and hearing from children and young from across Scotland. November/December is a busy time in schools and we do appreciate the support and welcome we receive from staff and pupils.