

**A Consultation on the  
Common Core of  
Skills, Knowledge &  
Understanding and  
Values for the  
Children's Workforce  
in Scotland**



**The Scottish Government  
March 2011**

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## Foreword from the Minister for Children and Early Years



Working with children, young people and families is one of the most rewarding careers I can think of. The people who work in these services, whether they are leaders, employees or volunteers, show dedication and commitment on a daily basis.

The nature of this work means there are continuous challenges. No two children, young people or families are the same and their needs are constantly changing. That is why we can never stand still when it comes to workforce development across health, education, social services, justice and community services.

However, until now we have never been able to consider the needs of this broad workforce together as a whole. It is through this Government's commitment to children, young people and families and the creation of our social policy frameworks that we are now in a position to reflect on the skills, knowledge & understanding and values needed by everyone who makes up the children's workforce.

I want to see a children's workforce that is rich in a variety of roles and functions at various levels, with career pathways for all.

I want to see a workforce with access to learning and development opportunities that are shared across professions, embedding a working together approach from the outset.

I want to strengthen our workforce and make them more able to intervene early, tackle inequalities and build the capacity within individuals, families and communities to better meet their needs.

The solutions to these issues don't lie within Government. They are with you all, and I hope that through your responses to this consultation you can identify some concrete and practical actions that will lead to real changes across the children's workforce, with benefits for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Adam Ingram". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Adam Ingram MSP**  
**Minister for Children and Early Years**  
**March 2011**

## AIMS & INTRODUCTION

1. This consultation welcomes comments from everyone with an interest in promoting the wellbeing and opportunities for Scotland's children, young people and families. This includes children, young people and parents themselves as well as workers in any role (paid or unpaid), carers and the general public.

### Aspirations for the Children's Workforce

2. The Scottish Government, and its partners, aims to ensure Scotland has a children's workforce that is competent, confident and valued by all. We want a workforce who can work together across organisational and professional boundaries to significantly improve the wellbeing and opportunities (often referred to as "outcomes") for Scotland's children, young people and families.

### Terminology

3. "**common core**" - the description of skills, knowledge & understanding and values every worker (paid or unpaid) should have as a minimum if they work with children, young people and families.

4. "**children's workforce**" – means anyone working with a child, young person or family. See page 8 for a more comprehensive description.

### Aims of the Consultation

5. This consultation paper has 2 main aims. We are asking for comments about:

- the **accuracy and appropriateness** of the skills, knowledge & understanding identified in the proposed common core; and
- how you would suggest **implementing** the skills, knowledge & understanding **and values** in the proposed common core.

6. To help you make informed comments about the common core, the following pages describe:

- the "Purpose" and objectives of the Scottish Government;
- the definition of the children's workforce and current issues;
- the potential benefits and uses of a common core;
- a snapshot of the social policy context around children's services (Annex A);

**The proposed common core is on pages 13 - 15 and the consultation questions are summarised on page 16. Annex B gives details of how you can respond.**

**Responses are invited by 15 June 2011.**

## **Common Skills Working Group**

7. The skills, knowledge & understanding contained in this consultation document have been identified by the Common Skills Working Group. This is chaired by Anne Houston of Children 1<sup>st</sup> and it started its work in 2010. Membership and remit of the Working Group can be found at Annex C.

8. The values contained within this document have been taken from the Getting it Right for Every Child (Getting it Right) programme.

## **Skills, Knowledge & Understanding**

9. The proposed common core describes the **areas** of skill, knowledge & understanding that the children's workforce should have. It does not prescribe the **level** of skills, knowledge & understanding needed by different workers undertaking a wide range of different activities. This remains the responsibility of the organisations or professional bodies who currently decide this.

10. Every worker will require additional skills, knowledge & understanding over and above the common core, depending on their role. This consultation proposes what, at the core of their role, should be common to all.

## **Values**

11. The Getting it Right programme has already identified a list of "Principles and Values" that everyone in the children's workforce should have. The Getting it Right team has consulted on these and they are now being widely used across Scotland. They are included here alongside skills, knowledge & understanding to help portray a more complete picture of the characteristics that everyone in the children's workforce should have. As is the case with skills, knowledge & understanding, every worker will have values in addition to those listed here, depending on their particular profession.

## **After the Consultation**

12. How the common core is implemented across the country is key to successfully supporting and developing the children's workforce. It is our intention to publish an Implementation Plan in Autumn 2011, setting out a range of actions that organisations in Scotland have signed up to.

13. The Implementation Plan will contain a series of practical actions that respondents have identified, spread over short, medium and long term timescales (depending on the complexity of the actions).

## **DELIVERING BETTER OUTCOMES**

14. The Scottish Government is committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for our children, young people and families. Our overall Purpose puts sustainable economic growth at the heart of what we do and the children's workforce has a crucial role in contributing to this by:

- Intervening early - to ensure all children get off to the best start in life, and to make sure there are remedies in place for those children that don't, so that any problems get resolved quickly;
- Tackling inequalities – to make sure those who need help the most get it; and
- Building capacity – within individual children, young people, families or communities, to contribute to their own solutions and to make sure we build on their strengths.

15. Five strategic objectives underpin the Scottish Government's Purpose – to make Scotland wealthier and fairer, smarter, healthier, safer and stronger, and greener. The children's workforce contributes to each one of these objectives. These strategic objectives are supported by 15 national outcomes and the children's workforce contributes to many of these, but especially:

National Outcome 4:

Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

National Outcome 5:

Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

National Outcome 6:

We live longer, healthier lives.

National Outcome 7:

We have tackled significant inequalities in Scottish Society.

National Outcome 8:

We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

National Outcome 11:

We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

National Outcome 15:

Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

16. These outcomes cannot be achieved by one organisation or one part of the “children’s sector” alone. In order to be successful the children’s workforce must put the child at the centre of what they do. They must have the skills, knowledge & understanding and values that mean they can work together, respecting the different strengths each service brings to meet the individual needs of children, young people and families.

## **DEFINITION OF THE WORKFORCE & CURRENT ISSUES**

### **Who is the “children’s workforce”?**

17. There are literally hundreds of job titles and roles all describing people who work with children, young people or families in Scotland and some estimate the size of the workforce to be as large as 250,000 people. So, rather than trying to list them, the workforce is described in more general terms.

18. The “children’s workforce” includes anyone working (paid or unpaid) with any child, young person or family across health, education, social services, justice and community services, in the public, private or voluntary sectors. The policy of early intervention (see Annex A) means that some of the relevant workforce may work with adults.

19. The children’s workforce provides different services with a range of jobs and functions. The people that work in children’s services range from those in strategic posts to those who make the equally important contribution on a day to day basis at operational level. As part of this workforce, no matter where you work or at what level you work at with children you need to be working towards the same goals and to take the responsibility for improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.

### **Adding value, not duplicating effort**

20. The Scottish Government recognises that workforce development is ongoing in every organisation across every part of the children’s workforce and there are many positive developments that have happened in recent years. The aim of the common core work is to add value to this continuing work, not duplicate effort. This work complements sector specific work (e.g. the Teacher Education Review) because it aims to achieve a goal that sector specific work cannot fully achieve, namely to facilitate better partnership and multi-agency working through the identification and implementation of the common core.

### **Services already changing – Getting it Right**

21. Across Scotland, wherever Getting it Right is being implemented, services are already changing and this is having an impact on the workforce.

22. The Highland Pathfinder, located in Inverness and its surrounding area, was launched in 2006 and an evaluation report by Edinburgh University was published in November 2009:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/20094407/0>



The evaluation identified a number of significant messages and achievements:

- A more holistic assessment of children.
- Reduced bureaucracy allowing staff more time for direct work with children and families.
- Fewer meetings and reports for all agencies; 75% saving in time required for meetings - 50% reduction in Social Work caseload, and administration reduced to 10% of activity.
- Reduction in unnecessary referrals to the Children's Reporter – down by 70%. Reporters and Panels have more time for more serious cases.
- Reductions of around 50% in the number of children regarded at risk of significant harm.
- Families like the single team approach.
- Improved outcomes for around two thirds of children.
- All workers having a better understanding and valuing each others' roles, and how they support each other
- Faster and better quality information sharing
- Children's needs identified at an earlier stage
- More effective interventions
- Less cumbersome processes for children and families
- Children and families know what any interventions hope to achieve and when the various actions will happen.

### **Financial Climate**

23. The difficult financial position affecting Scotland means that employers across the country will have to make hard decisions to ensure they can deliver the services they need to locally. The common core is an opportunity that, if implemented properly, has many potential benefits for the workforce, employers and service users.

## **ORIGINS AND POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE COMMON CORE**

### **Origins of the Common Core**

24. The idea of having a common core of skills and knowledge was most recently highlighted in the Early Years Framework (December 2008). However, the concept does not belong to Scotland alone and both England and Wales are implementing their own versions of a common core, which have a strong correlation to our proposals. Essentially Scotland's common core is designed to help achieve two main aims:

- Remove the unhelpful barriers that exist between different organisations, workers and sectors allowing them to work and communicate more effectively together; and
- Equip the workforce with the skills, knowledge & understanding and values to intervene early, tackle inequalities and build capacity within children, young people, families and communities to better help themselves.

### **Benefits of a Common Core**

25. A common core has many potential benefits, depending on how it is implemented. It can help to:

- Put the child or young person and their rights at the heart of all that they do;
- Ensure children, young people and families experience a consistent approach from any profession;
- Make clear the minimum level of service they can expect, helping to improve the wellbeing and opportunities for children, young people and families;
- Help reduce the unhelpful barriers that exist across different professions to help them work and communicate better together;
- Create opportunities for more flexible jobs, where appropriate, with workers able to work across different parts of the children's sector knowing they have a core of skills, knowledge & understanding that they can bring with them to a new profession;
- If this becomes a reality then it should make recruitment for certain roles easier for employers, creating a large pool of potential employees to choose from. Employees themselves would also have many more career opportunities than they currently have;
- Create opportunities for employers and education providers to rationalise and prioritise their education, training and development resources, e.g. focussing on filling any gaps in core skills/knowledge;
- Create opportunities for education providers to rationalise the content of qualifications, stimulating more opportunities for articulation between qualifications or shared modules for different professions;

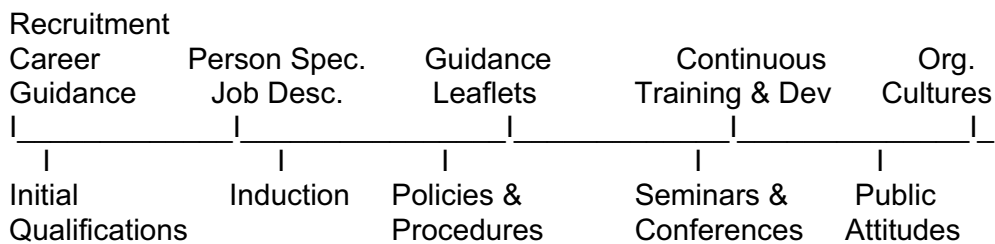
- Provide a common basis for organisations to re-assess their organisational procedures, practices and cultures; and
- Ensure the workforce is equipped to intervene early, tackle inequalities and build the capacity of individuals, families and communities.

**More than skills, knowledge & understanding and values**

26. In order to ensure the workforce is equipped to help improve the lives of children, young people and families three interlinked areas must be influenced:

- **Individual skills, knowledge & understanding and values**
  - what workers learn and develop.
- **Team structures, governance, accountability and resources**
  - how ability is utilised, team skills-mix, how teams are led and managed, the resources they have access to and clarity around what they are responsible for and who they are answerable to.
- **Cultural and attitudinal issues**
  - organisational cultures as a whole as well as individual attitudes, whether they are a worker, parent, child, young person or member of the public.

27. It is clear that there are opportunities to use the common core to influence more than individual skills, knowledge & understanding and values. The following diagram summarises where the common core could have an influence:



**Implementing the Common Core**

28. The strength of the proposed common core is that it has multiple possible uses alongside influencing standards, qualifications and training. This consultation offers the opportunity for respondents to be as innovative, imaginative and radical as they think necessary.

## Practical examples

29. When being used to convey a message in a leaflet or to influence procedures the common core could be seen as a statement of core responsibilities for workers **i.e. whatever else you need to do as part of your job, you must: observe, make judgements and decisions, communicate appropriately and work in partnership.** This could also help to ensure children, young people and families understand what they can expect from anyone working with them.

30. When used as part of the recruitment process or in career guidance the common core helps to set out our expectations of potential future employees from the beginning. Working with children, young people and families is rewarding but is not a job for everyone and we need to help people find a career that they will enjoy and be motivated by – which benefits service users.

31. Induction is a key time for new employees or volunteers and can often be the first exposure an individual has to organisational policies and cultures. The common core can be used within induction training or in an information pack to reinforce the positive messages and set out expectations from the beginning. It also allows a common induction to be delivered across different parts of the children's workforce.

32. Regulators, professional bodies and Sector Skills Councils may choose to reflect the common core in their Standards (when these Standards are next up for review). This could potentially lead to the creation of an integrated children's workforce for the future by influencing the development of generic college and/or university qualifications.

33. If appropriate, employers and regulators can work together to develop more generic "assistant" level posts. There are already examples of sectors breaking down the barriers (i.e. between health and social care). The common core could act as a catalyst for introducing greater flexibility between more sectors and offering the workforce many more career pathways than currently exist.

34. The common core could also be used as the basis for some light training, where a qualification or a lengthy course is not appropriate, for instance in the case of some volunteers or kin-ship carers,.

## Conclusion

35. **Perhaps the greatest impact of the proposed common core will come when different parts of the workforce choose to implement it together. There are many more potential benefits of a common core and as part of this consultation we want to hear your ideas on how it could be implemented.**

## PROPOSED COMMON CORE

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>Skill</b>
<b>Sound Observation, Judgement and Decision making</b>	<b>Appropriate and Effective Communication</b>	<b>Effective Partnership &amp; Multi-agency Working</b>
Context	Context	Context
Includes: noticing signs that initially concern you; judging if you need to intervene and how; and deciding when and how to take issues forward / or being satisfied appropriate action has been taken.	Includes: utilising the appropriate method of communicating depending on the situation and needs of the child, young person or family. Ensuring honesty and confidentiality at every stage and recognising diversity and equality.	Includes: ability to involve children, young people, parents, carers and communities in decision making where appropriate, building on their strengths. Working effectively with a range of different workers within own organisation and in others.
<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>
Context	Context	Context
Workers will need anything from an awareness of these areas to a deep understanding, depending on their role	Workers will need anything from an awareness of these areas to a deep understanding, depending on their role	Workers will need anything from an awareness of these areas to a deep understanding, depending on their role
Areas of Knowledge & Understanding:	Areas of Knowledge & Understanding:	Areas of Knowledge & Understanding:
<b>development of babies, children and young people</b>  <b>needs of children from their parents and those who care for them, and what behaviours may be harmful to them</b>  <b>parameters of your own role and who else can help, how to contact them and when you should</b>	<b>importance and impact of good written, verbal and non-verbal communication (e.g. body language)</b>  <b>importance of openness, honesty and confidentiality to children and young people</b>  <b>importance of checking that your communication has been understood and of explaining why decisions have been made</b>	<b>equality, diversity, cultural differences, disability - how they can impact on partnership working with families and communities</b>  <b>work with young people and families to make their own decisions and form their own solutions</b>  <b>particular needs of children, young people and families going through transitions and what you can do to help</b>

<p>advantages of early intervention in ensuring children have the best start in life and in the prevention of future problems</p> <p>responsibilities around information sharing and confidentiality and protecting children's rights</p> <p>risk assessment and management of identified need</p>	<p>importance of promoting children's rights at every opportunity</p> <p>importance of avoiding misunderstandings by recording concerns or assessments in plain English</p>	<p>awareness of different professional terminology and language and to actively seek clarification if needed</p> <p>parameters of your own role and who else can help</p> <p>responsibilities of information sharing and confidentiality</p> <p>advantages of utilising the latest tools from the national policy context to improve your practice</p> <p>know how to show leadership in any role in any organisation</p>
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**Values & Principles (from Getting it Right)**

Getting it Right has some underpinning principles within the approach that have broad application across relevant agencies. These principles are being described as values.

Values inform or influence choices and action across a wide range of role and context. Successful evolution in culture, systems and practices across diverse agencies may depend partly upon on a shared philosophy and value base.

**Promoting the well-being of individual children and young people:** this is based on understanding how children and young people develop in their families and communities and addressing their needs at the earliest possible time

**Keeping children and young people safe:** emotional and physical safety is fundamental and is wider than child protection

**Putting the child at the centre:** children and young people should have their views listened to and they should be involved in decisions that affect them

**Taking a whole child approach:** recognising that what is going on in one part of a child or young person's life can affect many other areas of his or her life

**Building on strengths and promoting resilience:** using a child or young person's existing networks and support where possible

**Promoting opportunities and valuing diversity:** children and young people should feel valued in all circumstances and practitioners should create opportunities to celebrate diversity

**Providing additional help that is appropriate, proportionate and timely:** providing help as early as possible and considering short and long-term needs

**Supporting informed choice:** supporting children, young people and families in understanding what help is possible and what their choices may be

**Working in partnership with families:** supporting, wherever possible, those who know the child or young person well, know what they need, what works well

for them and what may not be helpful

**Respecting confidentiality and sharing information:** seeking agreement to share information that is relevant and proportionate while safeguarding children and young people's right to confidentiality

**Promoting the same values across all working relationships:** recognising respect, patience, honesty, reliability, resilience and integrity are qualities valued by children, young people, their families and colleagues

**Making the most of bringing together each worker's expertise:** respecting the contribution of others and co-operating with them, recognising that sharing responsibility does not mean acting beyond a worker's competence or responsibilities

**Co-ordinating help:** recognising that children, young people and their families need practitioners to work together, when appropriate, to provide the best possible help

**Building a competent workforce to promote children and young people's well-being:** committed to continuing individual learning and development and improvement of inter-professional practice.

## **CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

36. We are asking you to make comments on each of the following questions. A separate response form, containing these questions, is available in the Consultation section of the Scottish Government website:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Consultations/Current>

### **Content of the proposed common core**

Q1. Workers need to intervene early, tackle inequalities and build the capacity of children, young people and families. To what extent do you agree that the proposed common core equips our workers to do this?

Q2. What specific comments do you have around the skills, knowledge & understanding associated with “sound observation, judgement and decision making”?

Q3. What specific comments do you have around the skills, knowledge & understanding associated with “appropriate and effective communication”?

Q4. What specific comments do you have around the skills, knowledge & understanding associated with “effective partnership and multi-agency working”?

Q5. What, if anything, is missing from the skills, knowledge & understanding or values?

### **Implementation of the proposed common core**

Q6. Describe briefly how you, your organisation, or your sector might implement the common core of skills, knowledge and values.

Q7. What opportunities are there in your organisation or service for the proposed common core to be implemented at the following 3 levels:

- Strategic management
- Operational management
- Day to day working with children, young people and families?

Q8. What opportunities do you see for working collaboratively with other organisations / sectors to implement the common core?

Q9. What challenges can you identify around implementing the common core, and how might these be overcome?



## **SOCIAL POLICY CONTEXT – EVERY CHILD, EVERY WORKER**

There are many Scottish Government policies relevant to every child and every worker. The list below describes Scotland’s ambitions for children and young people and then focuses on the three social policy frameworks and the Getting it Right programme, drawing out the similar themes that bind them all together.

### **Ambitions for Children & Young People**

In Scotland, we hope that all of our children and young people become:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Effective Contributors
- Responsible Citizens

To do this, our children and young people must be:

- Safe
- Healthy
- Active
- Nurtured
- Achieving
- Respected
- Responsible
- Included

The “SHANARRI” wellbeing indicators form a foundation of the Getting it Right programme. A diagram giving further explanation can be found at Annex D.

### **Children’s Pledge, June 2010**

The Children’s Pledge (attached at Annex E) is a statement of what we believe every child and young person in Scotland is entitled to, and how this will be provided. Key themes include leadership, involving children in decisions that affect them, working together and sharing expertise across health, education, social services, justice and community services, whether you work in the public, private or voluntary sector.

### **The Early Years Framework**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/01/13095148/0>

A large part of the pattern for our future lives is set before birth and during children’s earliest years so the early years help to shape a positive future for children.

The Early Years Framework maximises the opportunities for all children to get the best start in life, no matter what their background or circumstances.

The Early Years Framework is underpinned by an early intervention approach:

- prevention of problems before they become entrenched;
- early intervention if problems have started to manifest themselves, to prevent them getting worse;
- building capacity in communities, families, parents and children to help them to tackle their problems;
- a multi-faceted approach – no one policy or strand of policy will address all the issues; and
- a locally created, bottom-up approach. One size doesn't fit all; every area of Scotland is different and needs distinct ways of tackling the issues faced by the local population.

This framework sits alongside Equally Well and Achieving our Potential as a concerted attack on the inequalities that blight Scottish society.

### **Equally Well**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/25104032/0>

Health inequalities remain a significant challenge in Scotland, with the poorest in society dying earlier and experiencing higher rates of disease. The stark inequalities in health and other social outcomes across Scotland are not just unfair for people who are adversely affected, but also bad for the country as a whole. Inequalities are a very real barrier to achieving the Scottish Government's Purpose of sustainable economic growth.

Some of the most relevant principles set out in Equally Well are listed below, (and are shared across all three of the social policy frameworks):

- Recognising the particular importance of children's very early life experiences in shaping future health, social, learning and lifestyle outcomes;
- Engaging individuals, families and communities most at risk of poor health in services and decisions relevant to their health, and promoting clear ownership of the issues by all involved;
- Building the capacity of individuals, families and communities to manage better in the longer term, moving from welfare to wellbeing and from dependency to self-determination;
- Improving alignment of the relevant resources across public services managed by different agencies;
- Transforming and redesigning the spectrum of local public services, so that they respond well collectively to people who need multiple forms of support, and who may not currently be getting a productive response from these services, because of the complexity of their needs; and

- Ensuring we have a flexible workforce with the right skills, able to work effectively together across organisational boundaries and to adapt their approach depending on the individual needs of service users.

### **Achieving Our Potential**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/11/20103815/0>

*Achieving Our Potential* outlines the approach of Scottish Government and its partners for tackling poverty and income inequality. Broadly, this framework aims to:

- Tackle income inequality
- Take long term measures to tackle poverty and inequality
- Support those experiencing poverty

We have also signed up the UK Child Poverty Act 2010 and have committed to doing all we can to eradicate child poverty by 2020. Our new *Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland* sets out our approach to tackling child poverty. This builds on the strategic direction set out in *Achieving Our Potential*, *Equally Well* and the *Early Years Framework*. The two key aims of this strategy are to: **maximise household resources**, particularly for low income families, and to **improve children’s wellbeing and life chances**.

The three social policy frameworks promote an **assets based** approach to tackling poverty and inequality and ensuring that all of Scotland’s children get the best start in life.

Key principles of the assets based approach include:

- Working with people, rather than seeing them as passive recipients of services – “doing with”, rather than “doing to”;
- Helping people to identify and focus on the innate assets within themselves and communities and enhancing and supporting them;
- Supporting people to make changes for the better through enhancing skills for resilience, relationships, knowledge and self esteem; and
- Building networks and friendships so people can support each other, make sense of their environments and take control of their lives

Through building the skills and capacity of individuals, families and communities they will be able to make sustainable improvements to their lives. Although there is much activity of this kind taking place across Scotland, it is necessary to support, broaden and deepen this. The Chief Medical Officer hosted an event in December 2010 to do this - initiating an assets alliance. An alliance will assist those already using assets based approaches to share expertise and experience, and push for changes so that assets based approaches are embedded within mainstream practice. The report from this event can be accessed here:

<http://www.scdc.org.uk/news/article/Assets-alliance-scotland-report/>.

## **Implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/07/19145422/0>

There is no more important task than ensuring that we get it right for Scotland's children and young people. That is the simple objective of Getting it Right and applies across children's services, as well as adult services, which have an impact on children. Every child is an individual with individual needs and services should be designed in a way that keeps those individual needs at the centre of what they do.

Getting it Right provides a framework for all services and agencies working with children, young people and families to deliver a co-ordinated approach which is appropriate, proportionate and timely.

While the core components of Getting it Right reflect and build on existing good practice across Scotland, it is recognised that developments of this breadth and magnitude will mean there is a long-term commitment from all related agencies to change systems, culture and practice.

## HOW TO RESPOND

### **Responding to the consultation on the Common Core of Skills, Knowledge & Understanding and Values for the Children's Workforce in Scotland**

We are inviting responses to this consultation paper by Wednesday **15 June 2011**. Please send your response with the completed Respondent Information Form to:

By email:

[commoncoreofskills@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:commoncoreofskills@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

By Post:

Marilyn Tweedie  
Early Years & Social Services Workforce  
Children and Families Directorate  
Scottish Government  
Victoria Quay  
Area 2C North  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

If you have any queries please contact Marilyn Tweedie on 0131 244 7683.

This consultation, and all other Scottish Government consultation exercises, can be viewed online on the consultation web pages of the Scottish Government website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations>.

The Scottish Government has an email alert system for consultations, <http://register.scotland.gov.uk>. This system allows individuals and organisations to register and receive a weekly email containing details of all new consultations (including web links). It complements, but in no way replaces SG distribution lists, and is designed to allow stakeholders to keep up to date with all SG consultation activity, and therefore be alerted at the earliest opportunity to those of most interest. We would encourage you to register.

## **Handling your response**

We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. Please complete and return the **Respondent Information Form** as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly. All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

## **Next steps in the process**

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material, responses will be made available to the public in the Scottish Government Library, by 15 July. You can make arrangements to view responses by contacting the SG Library on 0131 244 4552. Responses can be copied and sent to you, but a charge may be made for this service.

## **What happens next?**

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered. We will aim to issue a report on this consultation process by the end of July 2011.

## **Comments and complaints**

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to Marilyn Tweedie at the address above.

# A Consultation on the Common Core of Skills, Knowledge & Understanding and Values for the Children's Workforce in Scotland



## RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please **Note** this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

### 1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr  Ms  Mrs  Miss  Dr  *Please tick as appropriate*

Surname

Forename

### 2. Postal Address

<b>Postcode</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>

### 3. Permissions - I am responding as...

**Individual**

**Group/Organisation**

*Please tick as appropriate*

**(a)** Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

*Please tick as appropriate*  Yes  No

**(b)** Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis  
*Please tick ONE of the following boxes*

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

**(c)** The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

*Please tick as appropriate*  Yes  No

**(d)** We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

*Please tick as appropriate*

 Yes

 No

**COMMON SKILLS WORKING GROUP****Membership:**

Anne Houston	Children 1 <sup>st</sup> (Chair)
Mary Boyle	NHS Education for Scotland
Frances Scott	Scottish Social Services Council
Tom Hamilton	General Teaching Council for Scotland
Rory Macleod	Community Learning & Development Standards Council
Debbie Willett	SkillsActive
Eric Knox	Skills for Justice
Marian Healy	Lifelong Learning UK
Anne Mearns	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Ann McSorley	Scottish Social Services Council
Jacqueline Conway	representing the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland

The group was also aided by:

Pauline Beirne	NHS Education for Scotland
Christine Fitton	Lifelong Learning UK
Lorna Hunter	Skills for Health (via email)

**Working Group Remit**

The primary focus of the working group is to progress two workforce actions, published as part of the Early Years Framework:

- Identify the core skills that the “children’s workforce” should have; and
- Analyse skills to identify skill gaps and fill those gaps

The task has been split into three interlinked phases:

**Phase 1 – Identification – November 2010 – end February 2011**

- To decide and agree on what, precisely, the Working Group will create and ultimately implement (along with other relevant orgs). In particular, consider the need to go beyond “skills” and incorporate “knowledge” in the same way England and Wales have already done. The shorthand for this final product will be the “common core”;
- To identify and agree a draft common core, for all of those working with children, young people and families; and
- To seek buy-in to the draft common core from Strategic Workforce Group.



## **Phase 2 – Consultation – March 2011 – June/July 2011**

- To plan (and take part in/carry out where appropriate) the consultation process around the draft common core;
- To consider views expressed in the consultation, and use to inform the common core before finalising; and
- To present the finalised common core to the Strategic Workforce Group and seek their ideas regarding implementation.

## **Phase 3 – Implementation – from Autumn 2011**

- To contribute to, and agree, an implementation plan around the common core. This plan should contain short, medium and long term actions and a method of reviewing progress. It is likely to involve many other organisations too (including employers) and we should consider how we get them on board at an early stage (during the consultation phase); and
- To achieve final “sign off” of common core and implementation plan from the Early Years Framework Programme Board, who oversee all of the actions contained within the Framework.

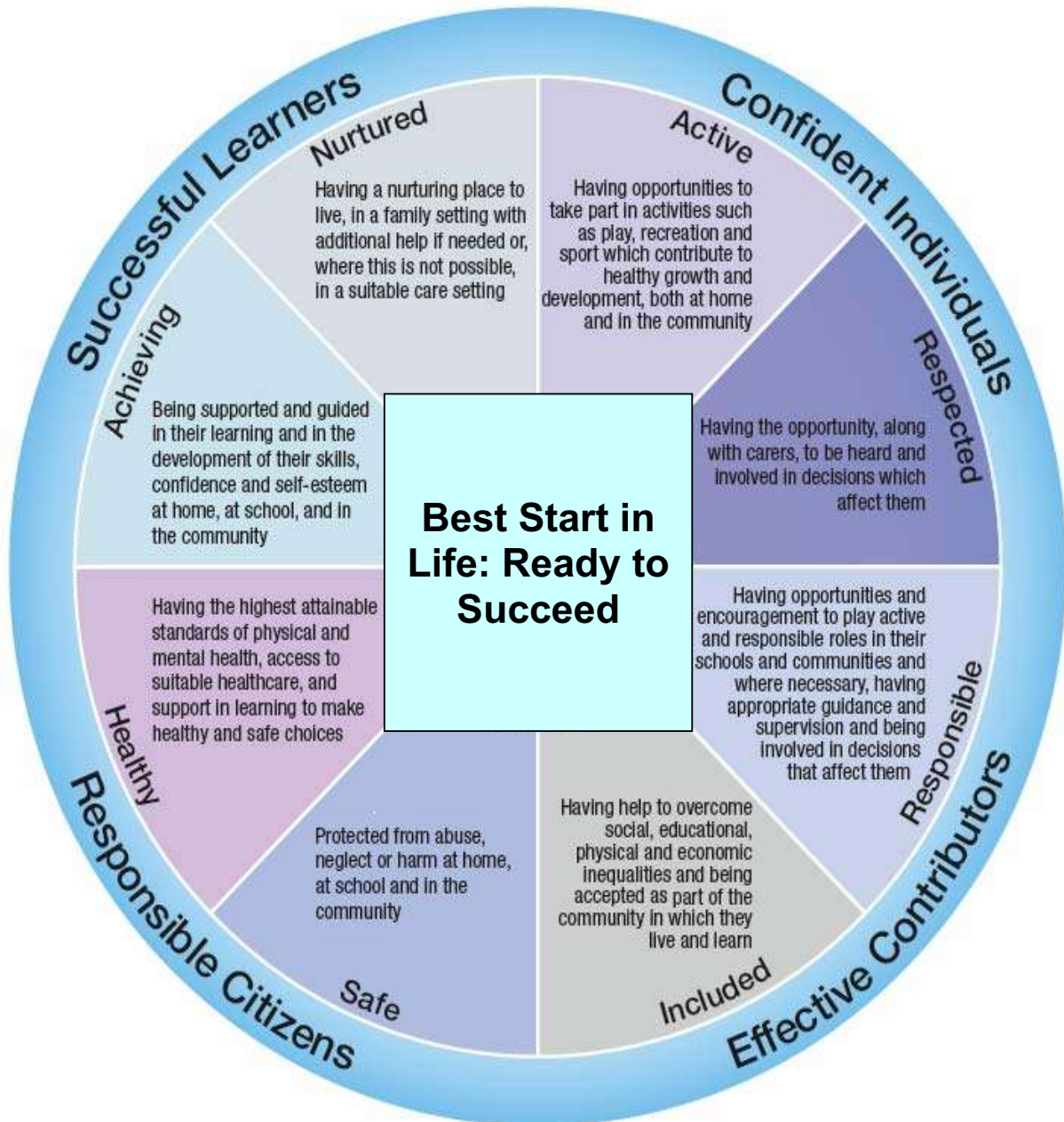
## **Role of Group Members**

Working Group members are invited to:

- Use their knowledge, sector experience and expertise to identify, draw up and agree the common core;
- Utilise any source of information or research to help identify the common core. This may include research commissioned by any group member or work already completed around skills/knowledge in one particular sector;
- Work together to draw up a consultation plan, setting out the roles and responsibilities of each member;
- Meet to consider consultation responses and debate the validity of points raised, altering the draft common core as necessary; and
- Agree to, and demonstrate ownership of, the finalised common core by contributing to an implementation plan, showing short, medium and long term actions for each member, where possible.

## ANNEX D

The wellbeing of Scotland's children is at the heart of Getting it Right for Every Child.



## The Children's Summit: The Pledge

### Pledge for Scotland's Children 2010

We, the undersigned, **believe**...

... that there is no higher priority than the safety and wellbeing of our children and young people

... that every child and young person should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, responsible, respected and included

... that Scotland's services can lead the way and be even better at meeting the needs of children and young people if we remain committed to working together

... that by investing in early years and early intervention services now, we can both build the assets that children and young people need to succeed in life and save for the future

... that improving outcomes for children and young people must remain a priority, especially in the face of financial and resource pressures

We, the undersigned, **pledge**, on behalf of our organisations ...

... to provide strong leadership on behalf of Scotland's children and young people

... to work together and share resources and expertise to improve the life chances for children, young people and families at risk

... to think radically about the services we provide and the way we provide them, in the context of financial constraints ahead

... to engage children, young people and their families in decisions that affect their lives

... to increase the focus on early intervention and early years in our service provision and take forward *Getting it right for every child* as the delivery mechanism for children's services

## **A CONSULTATION ON THE COMMON CORE OF SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING AND VALUES FOR THE CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE IN SCOTLAND**

### **INTRODUCTION**

**The Scottish Government is seeking views on the common core of skills, knowledge & understanding and values for all those working with children, young people and families. Once implemented the common core will support the development of more effective and integrated services which in turn will promote more flexible development and career progression for the workforce and will make communicating across organisational boundaries and cultures easier.**

# A Consultation on the Common Core of Skills, Knowledge & Understanding and Values for the Children's Workforce in Scotland



## RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

### 1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr  Ms  Mrs  Miss  Dr  Please tick as appropriate

Surname

Forename

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Individual

/ Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

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or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

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Please tick as appropriate

 Yes

 No

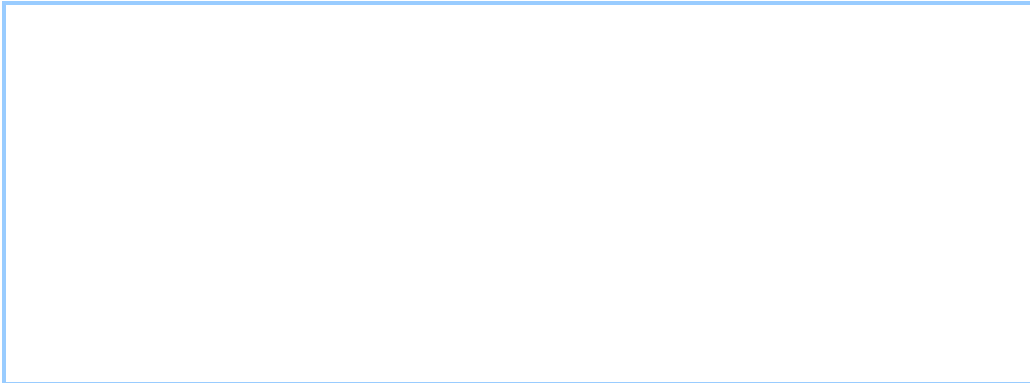
## **CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

**1. Workers need to intervene early, tackle inequalities and build the capacity of children, young people and families.  
To what extent do you agree that the proposed common core equips our workers to do this?**

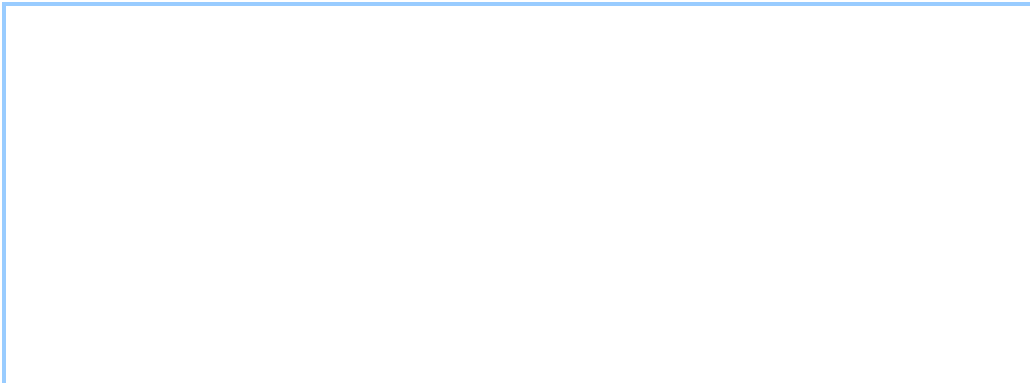
**2. What specific comments do you have around the skills, knowledge & understanding associated with “sound observation, judgement and decision making?”**

**3. What specific comments do you have around the skills and knowledge associated with “appropriate and effective communication”?**

**4. What specific comments do you have around the skills, knowledge & understanding associated with “effective partnership and multi-agency working?”**

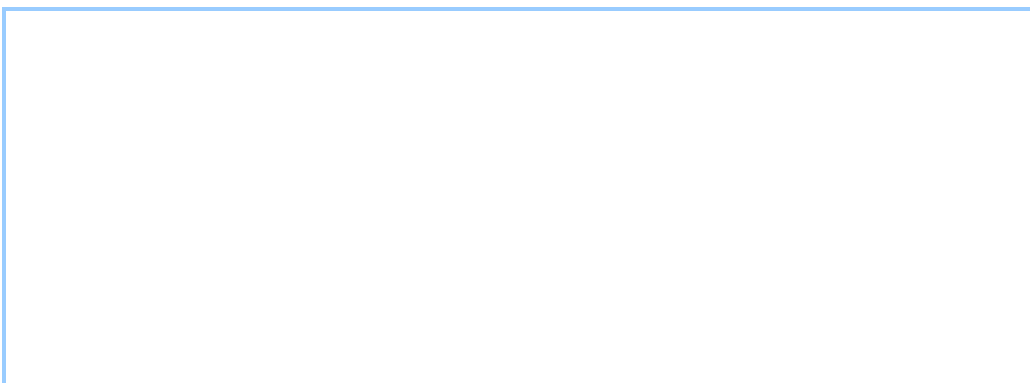


**5. What if anything is missing from the skills, knowledge & understanding or values?**



**Implementation of the proposed Common Core**

**6. Describe briefly how, your organisation, or your sector might implement the common core of skills, knowledge and values?**



## Implementation of the proposed Common Core

7. What opportunities are there in your organisation or service for the proposed common core to be implemented at the following 3 levels?

- Strategic management
- Operational Management
- Day to day working with children, young people and families

8. What opportunities do you see for working collaboratively with other organisations/sectors to implement the common core?

9. What challenges can you identify around implementing the common core, and how might these be overcome?





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