



SWEIC Newsletter June 2022



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Introduction

Thank you for checking in to this end of year SWEIC newsletter - we know how busy you are, as schools across the four Councils are reaching towards the end of session. There will be many celebrations over the coming week – after 2 years of being unable to gather and mark key transitions in the school year, pupils and staff will be pleased to be able to meet and recognise success with families and partners. With end of term festivities, parties, proms, sports events, prize-giving's and excursions, the end of term always feels like a crescendo and a bang, rather than a gentle fade and close. Given that calendars are so full, a particular thank you for continuing to attend our regional improvement events and participate in our growing conversations.

Teachers and school leaders at all levels are choosing to join in with the discussions and this signals that the inputs and insights are relevant and helpful. It is through your help in planning and running these conversations that they stay practical and applicable.

We have achieved a lot together over the past year. Our SWEIC Blog and Twitter accounts continue to be used in tandem to share information across the four Councils and we have a growing audience. Following the consultation with you and young people across the schools in the South West we have agreed our plan for next year. While we know there are many planning and reporting requirements on us nationally and locally, the SWEIC plan is focussed and practical. It is based on themes we have been working on already and is a development aligned with your own authority Education Plans, as well as Community Learning and Development plans and Child Poverty Plans from the four Councils.

I know it has been a hard year for all of us and next year will bring its own difficulties. As a Regional Improvement Collaborative in considering the challenges that lie ahead, we are well placed across the South West to work together to support our agenda of 'coming back together stronger'. Our young people gave us a strong message on the importance of well-being and in having their say on education matters. Our plan sets out how we are going to do that with common threads for our planned inclusive approach with a particular focus on wellbeing, recovery and equity and equality for all. Please get involved. There is information in this newsletter that interests and informs, and I hope, instigates some further conversations around learning for next year.

As the holiday approaches I want to thank you for the work you do to support your colleagues across East, North and South Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway; our communities are special, and our schools play a critical role within them.

I hope you have a restful and enjoyable holiday and I look forward to working with you again as part of the South West Education Improvement Collaborative throughout 2022/23.

Gillian



SWEIC Outdoor Learning

The SWEIC Outdoor Learning Group continues to meet on a regular basis. Over the course of session 2021/22 three outdoor learning professional learning (PL) sessions have been planned and facilitated by the group.

In November 2021 the SWEIC Outdoor Learning Group welcomed two nationally renowned speakers to a PL session. Sally York, a qualified teacher & Chartered Forester with decades of experience as Land and Forestry Scotland's Education Policy Advisor, and Education Consultant David Cameron who was Director of Children's Services for Stirling Council, Head of Education in East Lothian, and an Area Manager for Fife schools. David chaired the Scottish Government's Outdoor Connections group which embedded outdoor learning in Scotland's education policy.



Both speakers shared their thoughts from their broad expertise of outdoor learning in the Scottish Education system. They informed and challenged practitioners on outdoor learning's place "within a holistic, coherent, and future-oriented approach to learning 3-18."

In March 2022 the SWEIC Outdoor Learning Group were pleased to welcome back David Cameron who continued to share his thoughts from his broad expertise of outdoor learning in the Scottish Education system. We also welcomed Amy Johnson

and South Ayrshire's Dolphin House Outdoor Learning Team who shared with us their thoughts on equity and equality in outdoor learning. Amy Johnson is a member of Education Scotland's Improving Gender Balance & Equalities Team. During her input Amy explored the impact of gender inequality, gender stereotypes and unconscious bias on children and young people's experience of and access to outdoor learning. Amy highlighted strategies and practical approaches that help to address this including examples of good practice. South Ayrshire's Dolphin House Outdoor Learning Team deliver a wide range of outdoor learning activities which give schools the opportunity to explore areas of the curriculum for excellence in an outdoor setting through both residential visits and outreach programmes. Over the past year the team have adapted practices to meet the needs of young people focusing on nurture, inclusion and equity.

The third PL session took place in May and provided an opportunity for practitioners to consider the key findings from the recently published National Thematic Review: Successful Approaches to Learning Outdoors: A report by HM Inspectors. The session looked at the key messages from the report, case studies and provided the opportunity for practitioners to reflect on what these messages might mean in their setting. The session was delivered by Lorraine Ross, Education Officer STEM, Education Scotland.

Alongside these sessions the SWEIC Outdoor Learning Group facilitated three 'Blethers' focusing on early, first and second levels. These sessions took place in January and February 2022. The SWEIC Outdoor Learning Blethers provided an opportunity to explore Outdoor Learning resources, activities and good practice. Support was available from East Ayrshire Council's Learning Outdoors Support

Team (LOST) and Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET). Practitioners from across the SWEIC also shared how they are using Outdoor Learning as a pedagogical tool for curriculum delivery.

Plans to continue this work next session are developing well. Over the course of session 2022/23 the SWEIC Outdoor Learning Group are planning a series of six twilight sessions. These sessions will take it in turn to explore the six themes from National Thematic Review: Successful Approaches to Learning Outdoors: A report by HM Inspectors.

Themes covered will be Partnerships, Leadership, Curriculum, Experiences, Wellbeing and Professional Learning. Each session will begin with a short keynote and will be followed by setting & schools from each local authority sharing practice linked to the appropriate theme.

Dates for SWEIC PL Twilight sessions:

- 🌈 Thursday 08 September 3.30-5pm
- 🌈 Thursday 13 October 3.30-5pm
- 🌈 Thursday 17 November 3.30-5pm
- 🌈 Thursday 26 January 3.30-5pm
- 🌈 Thursday 16 March 3.30-5pm
- 🌈 Thursday 04 May 3.30-5pm

A SWEIC Outdoor Learning Microsoft Team has been established on GLOW as a place to find key documents and materials associated with learning outdoors. The Team also provides a space to share resources, lesson ideas and good practice.

These materials will support all practitioners, regardless of their starting point or confidence level. The resource is a collection of national guidance documents,

learning activities and progressive experiences utilising outdoor learning as a pedagogy across the full Curriculum for Excellence.

The SWEIC Outdoor Learning Group continue to promote the work of SAPOE - Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education, and in particular two online modules which introduce learning outdoors:



Teaching Learning Outdoors

On this course teaching staff will:

- 🌈 Develop an understanding of the context for Outdoor Learning
- 🌈 Consider how to take an Outdoor Learning approach in your professional practice
- 🌈 Reflect upon the impact of Outdoor Learning on your learners and your own leadership skills
- 🌈 This course will give you both an understanding about teaching outdoors and also practical tips and support for delivering outdoor learning.

Supporting Learning Outdoors

This course will help non-teaching staff with established outdoor expertise to:

- 🌈 Gain understanding of Curriculum for Excellence and the framework for delivering this to pupils; and
- 🌈 Understand key messages on embedding and enhancing taught curriculum content into the real-world context.

Join the SWEIC Outdoor Learning Team using code: gxyg9xu

Education Recovery Teacher Network

The Education Recovery Teacher (ERT) Network has successfully run for the past two sessions. Due to the changing deployment needs of ERTs across all four local authorities; the network met only once in session 2021-2022. The session was held in September and was entitled 'Education Recovery Teacher Collaborative Practice Event'. It explored the following themes:

- Recovery and renewal journey
- Impact on children and young people
- Lessons learned
- Future actions

Education Recovery Teachers from South Ayrshire and East Ayrshire shared their experiences and reflections of the previous session. All delegates present were subsequently provided with opportunities to discuss and compare their own experiences and goals for the coming session in breakout groups; before coming back together and sharing key messages with the whole group.

The outcome of the event was positive, with all present seemingly working towards a very similar set of future goals, which included:

- Wellbeing and positive renewal
- Improvements in attainment
- Re-engagement in learning
- Support groups / Boost groups
- Focus on those most disadvantaged by Covid-19



Planning for Learning, Teaching and Assessment Workstream

The Planning for Learning, Teaching and Assessment workstream, along with its sub-groups has made good progress with its planned work this session as well as being responsive to the challenges which were faced within our schools.

Two SWEIC Moderation events were held to support practitioners through the process. This allowed for the opportunity to share planning, engage in a rich professional dialogue and establish networks. These recognised the differing needs of practitioners across all sectors particularly as moderation had perhaps not been a priority focus over the past two years.

SWEIC QAMSOs participated in 4 practice sharing sessions which were delivered by each authority. These were cross-sector and cross-curricular indicating a clear appetite to extend the moderation focus from literacy and numeracy. All were well attended and as such will be carried on next session. Supported by the RIT QAMSO officer, a training programme to support new QAMSOs was delivered. Alongside this, refresher and catch-up sessions were offered for the existing SWEIC QAMSO cohort. In all, more than 200 practitioners signed up and had access to the Teams page and its accompanying resources.

The SWEIC language group became well established with a high level of collaborative working underpinning its work. The literacy programme 'The Building Blocks of Literacy' ran again on a virtual platform for the second year with 155 teachers and staff signing up. While originally an early years offer, this year we opened up the opportunity to any teachers who were working with children at the Early and First Levels of literacy learning. This was in response to a need highlighted as gaps were identified in aspects of literacy skills across

these levels became more apparent as a result of school closures.

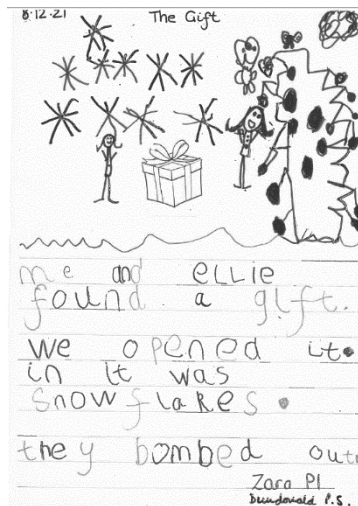
The programme's content: an in-depth focus on literacy learning and teaching at this stage provides teachers with the knowledge of what underpins literacy learning and the tools to build a reader and writer. The delivery team included experienced teachers and Speech and Language Therapists.

Moving forward, all the presentations will be available on a new MS TEAM and each of the SWEIC authorities will be provided with information on what is available and how to access the presentations and resources.



Strong links have been made with The Scottish Book Trust in preparation for the 'Reading Schools' accreditation. This will be rolled out SWEIC wide in session 22/23 for interested schools and is an integral part of the group's plan. A range of support will be offered to SWEIC practitioners/schools undertaking the accreditation process although this will also be accessible for schools who are not undertaking the award but remain focused on developing reading for pleasure within their settings.

A very successful Christmas writing competition was facilitated by the group. This saw links established with Glasgow Caledonian University as Elaine Burke, a member of the English faculty judged the entries.

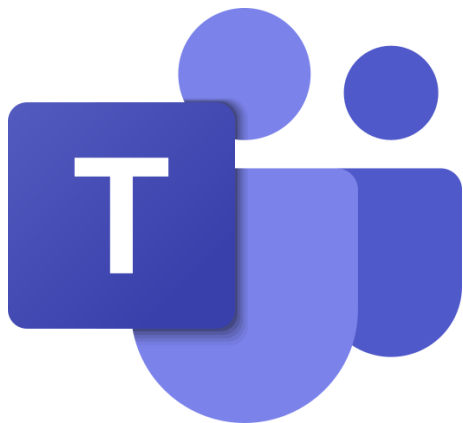


These amounted to more than 300 from all SWEIC authorities and included sector wide representation. This clearly had impact on practitioners and their learners.

The SWEIC 1 + 2 network became well established and facilitated a very successful Languages Week which aligned with the national event. 12 inputs were offered to practitioners with a wide range of themes including Gaelic in the early years to promoting uptake of modern languages. These were delivered by practitioners but also involved collaboration with colleagues from Education Scotland and SCILT.

The Teams page currently has 85 members and provides an ongoing forum for sharing good practice and collaboration across the SWEIC. This model of delivery was replicated during the SWEIC Languages Fortnight. This provided an opportunity to celebrate the outstanding creativity and innovation in literacy learning and teaching across our region. Some 31 inputs, including 3 keynote addresses, were on offer for practitioners ensuring there was something for everyone. Collaboration with Education Scotland, partner agencies and wider stakeholders meant this was truly a SWEIC wide event. All inputs and any accompanying resources remain on the Teams page and continue to be available for access meaning a genuine legacy of this piece of work continues.

Several subject networks have become established this year. All have shared practice across the SWEIC to establish a baseline for their work and are now self-sustaining in their makeup.



Practitioners can join both Teams mentioned above using the join codes below:

 **SWEIC 1+2 network**
1dxv571

 **SWEIC Literacy Fortnight**
xzq4j55

Numeracy and Maths

The SWEIC Maths and Numeracy Group have met all outcomes set within the planned numeracy and maths related professional learning (PL) programme this session. Significant progress has been made against the outcomes set with a range of synchronous and asynchronous PL designed and delivered to the SWEIC Numeracy Leader network for practitioners throughout session 2021-22.

Strategic leads from the four local authorities met in June 2021 to redesign and develop the PL numeracy and maths offer for practitioners in response to ongoing COVID regulations. The focus of the PL offer was on re-establishing the SWEIC Numeracy Leader network. The strategic leads highlighted the importance of re-engaging with this network of lead practitioners across the four local authorities to take forward professional learning and key messages in relation to numeracy and maths pedagogies locally and regionally.

This programme has achieved the aims of providing a dedicated digital space to re-engage with the SWEIC numeracy leader network. The SWEIC Numeracy and Maths Professional Learning Team has continued to host synchronous and asynchronous professional learning throughout 2021-22. This MS Team currently has 529 members and hosts a dedicated channel for the SWEIC Numeracy Leads Network.

SWEIC and STEM funding has supported the release of strategic leads and practitioners across the four local authorities within the SWEIC to develop and design this ongoing PL offer for session 2021-22 and to progress SWEIC PL plans across the four SWEIC local authorities. The MS Team continues to provide a source of PL

learning and collaboration space for all members of the Team.

From this redesign of the PL offer, a series of six synchronous PL sessions, hosted on MS Teams, were planned for and delivered throughout session 2021-22. These included:

1. Numeracy Leader Network Re-engagement

This session provided the opportunity to reflect on the delivery of 'train the trainer' inputs to date with Numeracy Leaders, the highlights and challenges in the delivery of PL and the numeracy lead role, the emerging impact of PL, the impact of COVID and moving forward and themes for future PL inputs. This session provided valuable information to form plans for PL inputs for the session.

2. Bar Modelling PL MS SWAY

This SWAY was created to provide a refresh on Bar Modelling PL training in response to requests from Numeracy Leads. The asynchronous Bar Modelling SWAY professional learning offer has had 179 views.

3. Bar Modelling Discussion Forum

This session provided an opportunity to discuss the development of Bar Modelling training across the four SWEIC local authorities.

4. Use of Manipulatives to Develop Mathematical Reasoning PL

SWEIC Numeracy Leaders participated in the session focussed on the use of manipulatives as a resource to support mathematical reasoning throughout the BGE.

5. Developing Mathematical Thinking PL

This session focussed on developing reasoning and algebraic thinking in learning from Early to Fourth Level in the BGE.

6. Embedding Assessment in Numeracy and Mathematics

This session focussed on embedding diagnostic, formative and summative assessment in numeracy and maths.

All of these synchronous twilight PL sessions have received very positive feedback and the evaluations are being used to inform next steps for the SWEIC Maths Group and professional learning being offered across the four SWEIC local authorities into session 2022-23.

The partnerships between the SWEIC Maths Group and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers at University of Glasgow, Dumfries Campus (UoG) and University of the West of Scotland, Ayr Campus (UWS) have progressed throughout the session. Access to the SWEIC Numeracy and Maths PL MS Team and the asynchronous PL on offer has been provided to UoG and UWS course leaders and students and, as a result, have been incorporated into ITE programmes. A second cohort of students have successfully completed the Enhanced Practice module at UoG supported by SWEIC PL inputs. Work is progressing to provide this module as a PL offer for SWEIC practitioners during session 2022-23.

The Critical Friends Programme, developed in partnership with UWS, has progressed this session with the first cohort of 16 SWEIC Numeracy Leaders now registered to engage in this programme commencing September 2022. This

Critical Friends programme has been designed to support numeracy leaders with improvement planning and self-evaluation within numeracy and maths focussed developments.

Collaboration within the SWEIC Maths Group involving strategic leads, Education Scotland Officers and Initial Teacher Education partners has been pivotal to the successful developments across this workstream. The strategic leads continue to support each other across a wide range of developments within and out with SWEIC Maths Group plans. The SWEIC Maths Group have also been active participants in national numeracy and maths working groups and developments. Strategic leads within the group have supported the development of a national Effective Questioning in Numeracy and Mathematics resource through collaboration and participation in the National Assessment Working Group.

SWEIC strategic maths and numeracy leads have also chaired and participated in the National Response to Improving Mathematics (NRIM) short life working groups. These working groups have recently provided recommendations to the Scottish Government through the NRIM Partnership Board for consideration in relation to the future of numeracy and mathematics education in Scotland. Engagement in national working groups has opened up opportunities for the strategic leads within the Maths Group to collaborate with colleagues from RICs and Local Authorities across Scotland. Such collaborations will continue to support and inform the on-going work of the SWEIC Maths Group.

Early Years

SWEIC Early Years work this session has involved a wide range of inputs and offers to support all practitioners across the sector.

A cohort of 26 practitioners participated in the renowned Froebel in childhood practice course facilitated by the University of Edinburgh and delivered online. A virtual graduation ceremony took place in March followed by a SWEIC celebration of success event which was open to all practitioners with an interest in the Froebel approach, play pedagogy in general or innovative early years practice.

Feedback collected from the cohort demonstrated 75% of participants found the programme very beneficial with 25% finding it beneficial. 100% of the cohort would recommend the programme to colleagues.

The SWEIC play pedagogy programme has been a very successful offer. With around 185 sign ups including a number outwith the SWEIC, it ran on a monthly basis with a high level of engagement and attendance throughout. Virtual networks of participants have been set up and these are being used effectively as a forum to share practice, collaborate, signpost resources and improve outcomes for learners. Due to the demand for this programme, it will run again next session with a second programme running alongside it which will target the more experienced practitioner. This will involve colleagues from the Northern Alliance who we have established collaborative links with over the year.

A Pre and Post programme survey found that:

↑ Practitioner's confidence in implementing a play pedagogy approach had had increased by 62%

↑ Practitioners' confidence in understanding the principles of play pedagogy had increased by 40%

Visit the **Play Pedagogy** page on the SWEIC Blog to find out more about our **Play Pedagogy** programme and sign up for the next session:

[PLAY PEDAGOGY PAGE LINK](#)



The early years literacy programme 'The Building Blocks of Literacy' ran again on a virtual platform for the second year with 155 teachers and staff signing up. This year we opened up the opportunity to any teachers who are working with children at the Early stage of literacy learning. The programme's content: an in-depth focus on literacy learning and teaching at this stage provides teachers with the knowledge of what underpins literacy learning and the tools to build a reader and writer. The delivery team included experienced teachers and Speech and Language Therapists.



A Pre and Post-Survey for 2021/22 found that:

- ↑ Teacher's confidence in supporting children's development in reading increased by 47%
- ↑ Teacher's confidence in supporting children's development in handwriting increased by 42%
- ↑ Teacher's confidence in supporting children's development in phonics increased by 42%

Moving forward, all the presentations will be available on a new MS TEAM and each of the SWEIC authorities will be provided with information on what is available and how to access the presentations and resources.

After an initial early years professional learning offer on assessment and moderation last session, there was universal agreement that a bespoke programme for practitioners which would sit alongside the QAMSO input, was needed. This was put together with EY teams from across the SWEIC and will be shared next session. This can be used on a self-serve basis by centres.

Early years practitioners were also involved in the gathering of evidence for the 4 Stages of Progress resource, and this includes Early level progress within it.

Additional PL offers which colleagues in EY could access included outdoor learning and digital learning.

A regional network was recently set up to support our Excellence and Equity Leads. This was aligned with the national model and will continue to develop next session.

A consultation with EY leaders took place which indicated an appetite to work collaboratively moving forward given the common challenges being faced in the sector. An initial input which stemmed from this was a bletcher which focused on the wellbeing of our leaders in the sector This was delivered by EY staff from University of Strathclyde and had representation from all 4 SWEIC authorities.












Strong links have been established this session with the CLD family link teams to share practice around parental engagement and family learning in the EY sector. An initial audit took place of LA approaches, strengths and priorities for improvement. All have found this beneficial and further PL offers for all practitioners to support this work are planned.



e-Learning Implementation Workstream

Advanced Higher Hub

Year 1 of this pilot initiative has now been delivered – SQA results in August will deliver the final piece of the jigsaw in terms of impact on attainment for our young people. In a nutshell we delivered 9 Advanced Higher subjects through @South-West Connects and an additional 2 subjects through our partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University. Subjects included:

 Biology	 History
 Chemistry	 Mathematics
 English	 Modern Studies
 French	 PE
 Graphic Communication	 Physics
	 Spanish

Nine teachers from our SWEIC schools delivered live teaching throughout the year. Of the forty secondary schools across the SWEIC around half were engaged in the programme. In total 114 pupils were presented in the 2022 exam diet – for many, this was their first experience of sitting formal examinations after years of disruption due to the pandemic. Estimates based on demonstrated attainment suggest an A-C pass rate of 86% overall.

Evaluation of the pilot was ongoing with relevant data being tracked and all key stakeholders involved via surveys and focus groups. Overall, the feedback was very positive – with teachers and young people endorsing this approach in terms of the key skills developed as well as engagement with a subject they would not otherwise have been able to take. 19 schools were able to increase the breadth of their AH offer compared with 2020 offers. 57 pupils were able to

access an AH not run in their school before. Key areas to work on that emerged from the evaluation included improving engagement with parents, clarification roles and responsibilities with the base schools and improved timetabling alignment.

As we head into year 2 of the pilot phase, we have significantly extended the offer to include 14 subjects with 17 sections – new subjects on offer this session include AH Business Management and AH Computing Science and 2 Higher subjects – Accounting and Politics. From around 400 initial expressions of interest, we are ready to start courses on Tuesday 6th June with over 250 pupils who have confirmed their places and are signed up in their Teams site. Of the 40 SWEIC secondary schools 33 are actively involved in @South-West Connects.



Enhancing Opportunities

Following discussions with Inclusion Leads from the four local authorities a pilot programme targeting ten interrupted learners in the S1-S3 stage of the BGE is underway. A teacher has been seconded 0.5fte to reach out to the pupils and build their confidence and skills to help them re-engage with their learning. The teacher provides live online sessions for pupils, often individually to meet specific needs but also with some group sessions to build community. In the first weeks of the programme emphasis has been on resilience and the emotional wellbeing of the pupils involved. The pilot will run up to the summer holidays - an initial evaluation of impact will help shape any follow up work with this group.

Developing the Young Workforce

The SWEIC focus has been to facilitate collaboration through regular meetings between DYW Leads - colleges, education, CLD, SDS, SG/Regional Employer Groups and Education Scotland. The aim is to add value to the work being done in all four local authorities to ensure children and young people have positive and sustained destinations. There has also been a need to react to the impact of the pandemic in shaping how young people can engage with the workplace and with employers.

DYW Live has provided an online solution where young people can engage with the workplace. All four local authorities now have dedicated DYW coordinators in every school and through the SWEIC umbrella several meetings have brought coordinators together to provide coordinated support and share practice both from within the SWEIC as well as also from across Scotland through spotlights on emerging approaches elsewhere.

Leadership

Leaders of Pedagogues Programme

Following the highly successful launch of the Leaders of Pedagogues Programme we are delighted to be able to offer this professional learning opportunity again in session 2022-23. This programme is underpinned by the GTCS Standard for Middle Leadership and has recently been awarded professional recognition by the GTCS in 'Leading Others (Secondary Middle Leaders)'. During the coming session there are plans to develop and expand this offer to Primary Middle Leaders.

Learn more about the programme on the Leadership page on our Blog:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/dg/sweic/workstreams/leadership/>

Education Scotland

The South West Regional Improvement Team (SWRIT) have continued to collaborate with colleagues within the South West Educational Improvement Collaborative (SWEIC) to support the delivery of the outcomes within the SWEIC plan. Members of the SWRIT are involved in the various workstreams, contributing to discussions, sharing key messages and delivering professional learning, where appropriate.



Examples of work the SWRIT has contributed to includes: the formation of the Literacy subgroup of the Getting It Right For All Learners (GIRFAL) workstream, delivery of the Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officers (QAMSO) programme, supporting children and young people consultation on the new SWEIC plan, supporting secondary families of schools event, sharing effective practice on a range of topics including cost of the school day, facilitated professional dialogue and delivered professional learning with the SWEIC Community Learning and Development (CLD) managers network to support development of CLD Plans, and developed and delivered a series of blethers on Equity and Equality. The SWRIT provide a monthly update to SWEIC Strategic Officers to inform the work taking place and key national priorities.

The SWRIT look forward to continuing to strengthen relationships and collaboration with the SWEIC over the coming session.

2022- 23 Calendar

Our calendar provides a full year plan of all upcoming workstream and network meetings, events and professional learning.



You can access the Calendar from our Blog:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/dg/sweic/2022-23-year-planner/>

SWEIC Blog

Our SWEIC Blog is your one-stop shop for all things SWEIC. You will find news and updates from across all our workstreams and networks, as well as from our partners.

In our events zone, practitioners will find details of professional learning and events facilitated by our workstreams and external partners including Education Scotland.

Visit the Blog at: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/dg/sweic/>

*Whatever your plans, have
a relaxing summer break.*

