SCEC: Scottish Computing Education Committee
Meeting 4th June 2020

Agenda:

1. Introductions - Fiona & Kate + roundtable
2. Summary of well sorted results - Fiona
3. Summary of teacher feedback - Kate
4. Brief overview of activities of the English committee - Fiona
5. Roundtable discussions

Attendees:
KF Kate Farrell, University of Edinburgh / CAS Scotland
FMc Fiona McNeill, Heriot Watt University, soon University of Edinburgh
IT Iain Thompson, BCS
MS Matthew Smith, Head of Faculty for Computing in Lanarkshire College
BC Brian Clark, Education Scotland
CA Chris Aitken, Wich High School CS teacher
AMc Alastair McGregor, SSERC CEO
GM Greg Michaelson, University of Edinburgh
MT Mark Tennant, CAS Scotland
CM Carol Marsh, Leonardo, IET
CG Claire Griffiths, Primary and Secondary teacher
RP Robbie Paterson, SQA qualification manager
JA Janice Andrew, SDS Digital Skills manager
WH William Hardie, RSE
GR Greg Reid, SQA, Computing subject implementation manager
QC Quintin Cutts, University of Glasgow, CCSE, CAS Scotland
TS Toni Scullion, St Kentigern's Academy
AI Alastair Irons, Sunderland Uni, BCS
BMc Brendan McCart, St Kentigern's Academy
JR Judy Robertson, University of Edinburgh
PD Peter Donaldson, University of Glasgow
PB Peter Buneman, BCS
RM Rachel Menzies, University of Dundee
LW Lowri Walton, IET on behalf of David Laken

Apologies:
Tommy Lawson, University of Edinburgh
Sally Smith, Edinburgh Napier University
Karen Petrie, University of Dundee
Tom Hall, Colleges Scotland
Thomas Presslie, Lloyds Bank/BCS Edinburgh
Marc Zarb, SICSA/RGU
David Lakin, IET
Claire Gillespie, SDS

Introductions - Fiona & Kate + roundtable

Summary of teacher feedback - Kate

Comments: JA added that SICSA and Digital Skills Partnership should be included in membership (FMc added that SICSA are members, but would look at inviting DSP **Note -** they were invited but could not attend).

PD visited remote places with WH. There were out of hours informal groups, not able to share resources. We should engage people in remote areas.

MS said there was progress in college sharing. He had established a community of practice.

CA - we should be working more together. Standard textbook provided LTS that was then adapted by teachers worked well.

PD pointed out the Runestone interactive book resources tool, moving beyond static documents to electronic interactive resources.

Summary of well sorted results - Fiona

FMc gave an overview of the different areas of the Well Sorted survey for the committee and the survey for COVID response.

BC commented that BGE computing will likely reduce with covid.

JA discussed the No one left behind initiative (ScotlandIS)

Brief overview of activities of the English committee - Fiona

Discussions

PB discussed funds raised in England by Google and other organisations. How do we 'get a piece of this pie'? Are there resources we are missing out on?

KF suggested that we might need to have a project to ask for support for.

CA suggested that CS is such a low priority for primary teachers, which has a huge knock on effect for Secondary schools. Needs to be a huge look at BGE. Also, Nationals are valued more than NPAs by universities, but the opposite for industry! Need to raise awareness of NPAs in schools

PD says at UoG they're lucky that they have a good amount of time in the PGDE curriculum, but they take a project based approach that links to other areas of the curriculum to give them confidence. Project based IDL approach works well in Primary.

WH said there are so many priorities, but no give, more and more priorities being added. Fundamental need to look at what is being expected of Primary teachers. Also a need to look at ITE. GTCS was looking at specialist teachers but he doesn't know what happened to this idea.

WH on role and remit, with this group being a single point of contact, of how this group is presented and shown online. It is essential to have a web presence.

KF explained that the GTCS teacher was probably MH's TLT Master's course but there haven't been any Computing students on this course.

CG added that if we want to get more learners enthusiastic about Computing in Secondary, we have to start in Primary.

QC - responding to WH, wondering what our relationship to ScotGov is, as the English equivalent has a good relationship with DofE. What's our ability to be heard, to be taken on board, in the same way as England.

QC on Primary BGE - balance between the subject being appealing and getting foundations in place. Happy to accept that the curriculum is too technical, it wasn't meant to be like that. There are things that kids 'get' at age 3-5 that help them later. Explaining it to teachers, its actually very easy what we were wanting, but interpreted as difficult. We've not had the funding to get the materials right.

IT commented that the BCS president was going to be in Edinburgh and he arranged a meeting with her and John Swinney. We will get that to happen, but not for a while.

MT - agree with what CA was saying, there's too much in the curriculum overall. CASS even in its best point wasn't really reaching Primary. Lets get exemplary front facing good quality resources online

GM - on lobbying - we represent a number of organisations, which should help our cause. On Barnett Formula, the equivalent money is not earmarked for the same topic. Scotland spent it on STEM generally rather than CS. Regarding CA's comments, We are here to lobby for CS though, we need *more* special pleading for CS's case.

FMc - what now? How do we turn this into tangible actions that we can have an effect on, and an impact.

CA suggested that if we have sub-groups, that we should have a teacher on each group.

MT - we need to get CASS up and running again, and visible.

RP - welcome the voices of teachers (TS, MT, CA, BMc) to be involved in the NQST groups. MT wondered if Peter Liddle was still representing CASS, but RP hasn't been able to get in touch with him. QC is surprised at this as PL had been in touch and enthusiastic.

Actions:

FMc says there's probably more potential working groups than members, so we need to prioritise. **KF and FMc** will look at these and maybe suggest topics to be voted on. We need to prioritise given the lack of resources.

KF and FMc will arrange a doodle poll with a small number of options for next meeting to discuss Covid response.

FMc will give an update on this group to the Learned Societies Group (LSG)