

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION (SSTA)

Date and Time of Engagement	Tuesday 12 June 2018 15:00-15:45
Where	Room T4.23, Parliament
Key Message	Partnership working with stakeholders for the benefit of Scottish Education.
Who	The SSTA delegation representing teacher members in secondary schools will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [redacted]. • [redacted]. • [redacted]. • [redacted].
Why	The Scottish Government recognises that the SSTA representing approximately 8,000 members in the secondary sector, is a key stakeholder in the Scottish education system. The meeting has been arranged as part of your regular bi annual engagement with all the teacher organisations.
Official Support Required	,[redacted]. Education Workforce Unit, Learning Directorate. Ext:, [redacted]. Mob: [redacted].
Media Handling	N/A Private Meeting

Briefing Contents

Annex A	Agenda
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AGENDA

SSTA have suggested the following items for the Agenda

1. Pay and Career Structure
2. Pupil Behaviour and ASN
3. Education Bill

KEY ISSUES/LINES TO TAKE

1. PAY AND CAREER STRUCTURE

PAY

- Teachers' pay is a matter for the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers and negotiations for 2018-19 are underway
- The negotiations are on-going and the negotiating committee have held positive discussions over recent weeks.
- We are committed to taking an active role in these negotiations and we urge everyone around the table to take a constructive approach.
- We were the first government in the UK to commit to lift the 1% public sector pay cap.

CAREER STRUCTURE

Career Pathways

SNCT joint chairs have agreed that work to design and develop Career Pathways for teachers will be undertaken by an independently chaired Panel which will report to the SNCT in the autumn. The chair of this group is [redacted].

All of the teacher organisations to be represented on that panel [redacted] is the SSTA representative.) The Panel will:

- Consider different options for pathways. This will include considering international evidence and previous Scottish policy interventions. New pathways would include subject specialism, curricular leadership, pedagogical leadership and support for learning.
- Develop a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and engage with the teaching profession and wider education sector through a variety of mechanisms, such as focus groups.
- Explore the link between career pathways and qualifications (e.g. Masters level learning or new forms of Initial Teacher Education).
- Make recommendations as to how teachers undertaking these new roles might be remunerated.

2. PUPIL BEHAVIOUR AND ASN

PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

BEHAVIOUR IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS RESEARCH:

A school's culture, ethos and values are fundamental to promoting positive relationships and behaviour. The latest report on Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (BiSSR) 2016 was published on 12 December.

Positive findings: the vast majority of staff in schools report pupils as being generally well behaved; serious violent incidents remain rare; staff ratings of school ethos were positive and use of restorative and solution orientated approaches increased from last report in 2012.

Negative findings: low level disruptive behaviour in primary schools has slightly higher levels of general abuse, physical aggression increased; primary support staff reported that they experienced violence; widely held view that lack of internal and external resources having a negative impact on the management of behaviour.

Across Scotland, the overwhelming majority of school staff report pupils are well behaved. There are, of course, exceptions to this, and the Scottish Government is committed to working with Education Scotland, local authorities and teaching unions to discourage unacceptable behaviour of any kind in schools.

SCOTTISH ADVISORY GROUP ON RELATIONSHIPS AND BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS (SAGRABIS):

The Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS) provides advice to local and national government on behaviour and relationships in schools. The group is chaired jointly by the Deputy First Minister and Councillor McCabe from COSLA. All of the major teaching unions in Scotland are represented on SAGRABIS.

SAGRABIS are currently considering the findings from BiSSR, and will shortly publish an agreed plan of action, to ensure continued improvements in behaviour can be realised.

EXCLUSIONS:

The Scottish Government published its refreshed guidance on exclusions in June 2017 - Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions.

This document aims to support local authorities, schools and other learning establishments to keep all children and young people fully included, engaged and involved in their education wherever this takes place; and to improve outcomes for those most at risk of exclusion.

Ultimately, it is down to local authorities to put this into practice, and we expect that local authorities will refresh their own policies relating to exclusions now this guidance has been released.

ATTENDANCE:

The Scottish Government aims to promote good attendance at school. Absence from school, whatever the cause, disrupts learning.

It is important that schools and parents continue to do all they can to ensure good attendance. We have published guidance for local authorities and schools – Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1: attendance in Scottish schools as well as guidance for parents which reinforces the message that they should not ignore, agree with or condone truancy.

It is up to education authorities to decide what sanctions, if any, they will use if there is an unauthorised absence.

WEAPONS IN SCHOOLS:

Tackling violent crime remains a key priority. Since 2007, we have invested over £14 million in violence reduction programmes for young people. Our No Knives, Better Lives youth engagement programme has received over £3.4 million funding since 2009. We have also invested over £8.7 million since 2008 in the National Violence Reduction Unit. The Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme also aims to empower young people to challenge and speak out against violent and abusive behaviour.

Following the publication of Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2, we wrote to all 32 local authorities. All of them confirmed that their policies on offensive weapons either have been, or are in the process of being updated having consulted local stakeholders.

ASN

TOP LINES

- We want all children and young people to get the support that they need to reach their full learning potential.
- Children and young people should learn in the environment which best suits their needs, whether that is in a mainstream or special school setting.
- The Additional Support for Learning Act places duties on education authorities to identify, provide for and review the additional support needs of their pupils.
- These can arise in the short or long term from the learning environment, family circumstances, health needs or a disability, and social and emotional factors.
- 95% of children with additional support needs are educated in mainstream schools, all teachers provide support to pupils not just ‘support for learning’ teachers. To single out support for learning teachers is inaccurate.
- We remain committed to maintaining teacher numbers nationally. We are committed to ensuring we have the right number of teachers, with the right skills, in the right places to educate our young people.
- Published data on teacher numbers (teacher census 2017) shows that numbers have increased since last year to 51,513 (from 50,970 in 2016).

We want all children and young people to receive the support that they need to reach their full potential

Children and young people should learn in the environment which best suits their needs, whether that is mainstream or special school. There is a range of provision in place in Scotland to meet children's needs.

Consultation on draft guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming ended on 9 Feb 2018. We are currently analysing the 360 responses that were received as part of the consultation.

SG has committed to independent research on experiences of ASL in mainstream and special schools. Children, parents and those providing support included. Mainstreaming guidance will take account of research findings.

SG will also report on implementation of ASL, including financial reporting. Report will be provided to Committee and Parliament. (April 2018).

Education and Skills Committee Report – key findings

1) Perceived increase in number of pupils with ASN

In 2010, to improve accuracy, the Scottish Government changed the way in which Additional Support Needs statistics were recorded.

Instead of collecting information on formal plans and settings [special schools, individualised educational programmes and co-ordinated support plans] it was extended to record any additional support provided to pupils.

Consequently the numbers of pupils with recorded additional support needs did increase significantly in 2011.

In recent years this increase has evened out. Importantly, these pupils have always been in the system receiving support – stats simply now recognise this.

In response, SG has committed to independent research on experiences of ASL in mainstream and special schools. Mainstreaming guidance will take account of findings.

SG will also report annually on implementation of ASL, including financial reporting.

2) Reduction in ASL teachers and support staff

Now that 95% of children with additional support needs are educated in mainstream schools, all teachers provide support to pupils not just 'support for learning' teachers. To single out support for learning teachers is inaccurate.

Since 2015, we have recorded a further 2.7% increase in the number of support staff employed in schools and centrally employed staff assisting additional support for learning.

In 2016, there were 12,883 support staff (12,552 in 2015). The number of classroom assistants increased by 381 in the last year.

Information on the number of ASL support staff for 2017 will be published as part of the release of supplementary statistics once these statistics have been compiled, and quality assurance is completed.

Overall picture of ASN, 2010 – 2016

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Pupils with ASN	69,587 (10.3% pupils)	98,523 (14.6% pupils)	118,034 (17.5% pupils)	131,621 (19.5% pupils)	140,542 (20.7% pupils)	153,192 (22.5% pupils)	170,329 (24.9% pupils)	183,491 (26.6% pupils)
Teachers (all)	52,022	51,368	51,253	51,078	50,720	50,717	50,970	51,513
ASL Teachers	3,518	3,379	3,384	3,286	3,014	3,038	2,990	2,838
All Staff supporting pupils with ASN	15,807	15,723	16,377	16,051	15,871	15,590	15,880	Not yet Known

3) Lack of focus on ASL in initial teacher education and teacher training

During initial teacher education, student teachers will gain sufficient knowledge of the most common needs for them to be able to support the child themselves, or to seek specialised information and specialised support if necessary.

Teachers career-long contractual requirement to undertake continuing professional development provides further opportunities for them to augment what they have learnt during initial teacher education.

It is therefore not necessary, nor appropriate, for mandatory training in additional support needs to be put in place in Scotland.

The decisions on staffing and promotion of staff rest with education authorities, it is not appropriate for the Scottish Government to make decisions on employment of staff.

Education authorities have increased funding on additional support needs

Local Government Financial Statistics for 2016-17 showed that local authorities spent £5.07 billion on education in Scotland. This has gone up from £4.95 billion in 2015-16 - a 0.3% increase in real terms (2.5% in cash terms).

Of that, £610 million was on additional support for learning – this has gone up from £584 million in 2015-16 a 2.3% increase in real terms (4.5% in cash terms).

Audit Scotland, on behalf of the Accounts Commission, published their report into local authority spending last November (2017). Reductions in real-terms funding of councils since 2010/11 are the same as the reduction in the Scottish Government's total budget over the same period.

Achievement for pupils with additional support needs continues to rise

(Attainment and Leaver Destinations Supplementary Data 15/16)

Despite challenging circumstances, children and young people continue to achieve.

87.1% of pupils with additional support needs have a positive destination. A 4.8% point increase since 2001/12.

60.7% of 2014/15 school leavers with ASN left school with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 or better. An increase of 8 % points since 2011/12.

85.6% of 2014/15 school leavers with ASN left school with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 or better. An increase of 6.5 % points since 2011/12.

3. EDUCATION BILL

ISSUE: 27 May – Report in the Sunday Herald suggests DFM has watered down plans to empower headteachers.

18 May – Scottish Secondary Teachers Association (SSTA) General Secretary Seamus Searson's speech to the union's Annual Conference claims:

- The Government's Education reforms are not welcomed by the majority of the public and in some instances (e.g. Regional Improvement Collaboratives) are already happening.
- Parental engagement and pupil participation are hampered by lack of funding or staff time.
- The Headteachers' Charter is unwanted by many headteachers as they are already struggling to cope with all the demands placed upon them.
- The Education Workforce Council is not needed by teachers or desired by other practitioners.
- The Government's priority must be to make changes that are going to help the teacher in the classroom today.
- The issues that are important to teachers today are pay, workload and pupil behaviour.

1 May – reports in various newspapers, in response to publication of the Education Bill consultation analysis report (30 April) highlight the lack of support for legislative despite general support for the aims of the education reform agenda.

- The Conservative response criticises the establishment of Regional Improvement Collaboratives as a centralisation of education decision making.
- The Labour response claims that insufficient staff and financial resources are the main barriers to improvement.

Top Lines

- Our reforms will put teachers and parents at the heart of decision making in the life of a school.
- Our recent consultation confirmed strong support for an empowered school system.
- We continue to work with all of our partners to ensure headteachers can make the decisions which most affect educational outcomes for children and young people.
- We will consider the responses to the consultations carefully before presenting our final proposals.

Responses to our consultation show widespread support for an education system which empowers schools and school leaders

- Responses to our consultation show broad support for the principles of local empowerment and improved collaboration.
- Those principles are at the heart of our reforms which are based on strong, international evidence of how a high-performing education system works.

We want to free headteachers across the country to improve attainment and close the attainment gap

- Headteachers should be focused on delivering excellence and equity for all pupils.
- Our Headteachers' Charter will set out their rights and responsibilities and empower them to be leaders of learning and teaching in their schools.
- Headteachers are best placed to make decisions about how learning happens in their schools.
- They should be able to work with their school community to lead curricular design that meets the needs of their pupils
- Headteachers should also be able to plan and implement school improvement; and to choose who is in their team.
- Schools will not become employers.

- Local authorities will continue to employ all staff in the school, and headteachers will be expected to co-operate with the local authority in its role as employer.
- Headteachers will be supported by Regional Improvement Collaboratives to deliver high quality curricular and improvement support.
- We are clear that closing the poverty-related attainment gap will require the collaboration of a wide range of public services – not just schools.

We will not establish any system that opens headteachers to personal litigation – but we will ensure they have the powers they need

- There is no proposal to make headteachers personally liable and we will not create any system that opens them to personal litigation.
- We have made it clear in our consultation that headteachers need to be able to select their own team.
- They must be able to choose the staff that are the best fit for their school and pupils.
- That move is supported by the professional associations representing headteachers and deputies.
- We have also made it clear that local authorities will remain the employers of school staff.
- This will ensure that recruitment decisions are consistent with employment law and with national agreements on pay and conditions.

Our reforms will bring a wider group of education staff into a system of professional standards and registration

- Currently, all teachers in publicly funded schools must be registered with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) in order to teach in Scotland.
- From 1 October 2020, existing teachers in independent schools must be registered.
- Registration obliges them to meet the professional standards set by the GTCS.
- The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) performs a similar role for social services staff, including early years workers.
- At present, other professionals in the education workforce, such as college lecturers and instrumental music instructors, are not required to register with a standard setting body.
- Expansion of professional registration to a wider range of staff will encourage all staff groups to engage in professional learning, collaborative working and the sharing of best practice.

We will reform the system to support a culture of collaboration between teachers, schools and regions

- We will establish Regional Improvement Collaboratives to ensure consistent, high quality support and improvement services to our schools, headteachers and teachers.
- Regional Improvement Leads have been appointed by all 6 Collaboratives.
- Local Authorities will continue to be responsible for providing high quality education support services to schools.
- They will still support headteachers to make decisions that most affect learning and teaching in their schools.

We are taking this work forward in partnership with local government

- We established a joint Scottish Government/Local Government Steering Group last year to develop the proposals for the further development of Regional Improvement Collaboratives.
- That work formed the basis of our agreement with local government for the early establishment of Regional Improvement Collaboratives and for delivery of their first Regional Improvement Plans by January 2018.
- Our agreement with local government places our schools and young people at the centre of these arrangements.

- We continue to work closely with local government to develop an agreed approach which will ensure our children and young people benefit from our reforms without delay.

We recognise that participation of parents and children in schools, and the wider education system, is key to driving improvement

- We will expand and improve parental involvement in schools.
- This is in response to the National Parent Forum of Scotland's review of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.
- We will strengthen the voice of children and young people in our schools.
- This will be done by requiring all schools to promote and support pupil participation.
- We have sought views through the consultation on how best to achieve this.

Supportive Quotes

Joint statement of the International Council of Education Advisers (27 April 2018):

- "We continue to be impressed by the direction of travel within Scottish education."
- "In particular the implementation of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives is a very welcome development since our last visit."
- "There are already some interesting examples where collaboration is working well but we are clear that collaboration in itself is not enough to bring about the changes that are needed. Education professionals in Scotland need to not only share best practice but ensure they continue to develop new practice which is underpinned by the best evidence to ensure excellence and equity for all."

The OECD identifies a clear relationship between school autonomy and performance (*PISA in Focus (2011/9) School autonomy and accountability: Are they related to student performance?*).

- "...the greater the number of schools that have the responsibility to define and elaborate their curricula and assessments, the better the performance of the entire school system..."

Background

News Release from Conservative education spokesperson Liz Smith MSP (1 May 2018):

- "The Scottish Conservatives are the biggest champions of school reform but we believe the new bill to be published in the autumn will need to have different priorities from those so far set out by the SNP."
- "Specifically, there needs to be a wholesale move away from central control of education towards schools themselves."
- "The SNP claims this is what it wants too but the imposition of large, top heavy regional collaboratives will do the opposite, leaving many local authorities unsure of the role they will have."
- "Clear lines of responsibility and accountability do not, as yet, exist in the proposals which is why this consultation is producing some very uncomfortable results for the SNP."

News Release from Labour Education spokesperson Iain Gray MSP (1 May 2018):

- "This analysis of this consultation shows that the Scottish government has failed to create a consensus for school reforms."
- "Support is at best lukewarm and divided, and there is much scepticism of the need for legislation."
- "The truth is everyone in the education sector knows that what our schools need is more teachers and more resources, not an Education Bill largely designed to make it look as if the SNP government is doing something."

Extract from SSTA General Secretary's Annual Conference speech (18 May 2018):

- Take it as a given that SSTA members care about education and getting the best for their pupils. The main areas of concern for SSTA members are very straightforward pay, workload and pupil behaviour.
- The Education Bill is intended to create a school and teacher-led education system. But when governments legislate it must be built on public consensus.
- In this case the changes intended are not welcomed by the majority of the public and in some instances are already happening.
- The creation of Regional Improvement Collaboratives is already happening without legislation.
- Improving parental and community engagement and strengthen the voice of children and young people is a place schools would like to be but a lack of funding to provide staff and time has not helped.
- Provide the resource and it will happen again no need for legislation.
- The creation of a Headteachers' Charter is unwanted by many Head teachers as they are already struggling to cope with all the demands placed upon them. There is no public consensus for this so Minister don't proceed.
- The last plank of the legislation is Education Workforce Council teachers don't need it and other education workers are not demanding it. To introduce it would be an imposition and not what the public wants.
- The priority must be to make changes that are going to help the teacher in the classroom today. If the proposed Education Bill is not going to help teachers in the classroom today then don't do it.
- It does not address the issues that are important to teachers today Pay, workload and pupil behaviour.