

**CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS
MEETING WITH MR FERGUS EWING, MSP, INVERNESS AND NAIRN.**

What	Meeting with Fergus Ewing MSP – Touch Typing skills
When/Where	Wednesday 6 July 2022 – 10:30 – 11:15 Click here to join the meeting
Who	Fergus Ewing, MSP for Inverness and Nairn
Why	<p>Mr Ewing wrote to you in April seeking a meeting to discuss how touch typing tuition can be made available to all young people across Scotland. He raised the issue in Parliament on 28 April when you agreed to meet him, along with experts in the field, to discuss the issue. He believes that typing at speed and with accuracy is essential for those who wish to pursue careers in IT or digital media</p> <p>The meeting is to discuss the issue of Touch Typing and possibly piloting to young people in schools</p> <p>Linked to MiCase reference number. 202200297972</p>
Key messages	To be agreed with Comms/Special Adviser if appropriate
Official support	<p>[redacted under s38(1)(b)] [redacted under s38(1)(b)] Directorate for Education Reform, Scottish Government</p> <p>[redacted under s38(1)(b)] , Scottish Government [redacted under s38(1)(b)] , Education Scotland [redacted under s38(1)(b)] Scottish Government</p>
Agenda	<p>Introductions – Mr Ewing Presentation from [redacted under s38(1)(b)] – presentation paper below Question and Answer</p>
Main objective	Set out succinctly what the Scottish Government can achieve through the meeting, and what would be a good outcome for the Minister.
Briefing Contents	<p>Annex A – Summary/Agenda Annex B – Background Annex C – STEM messages</p>

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ANNEX A

Summary

Mr Ewing had raised the point of touch typing skills at the [Education, Children and Young People Committee](#) last October 2021.

Mr Ewing corresponded with you January 2022, on behalf of constituent, to consider implementing Touch Typing Academy pilots across Scotland (Inverness, Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow or Edinburgh). We declined funding request to pilot the programme.

During General Question Time on Laptops and Internet Connection for Young People on the 28 April 2022, Mr Ewing raised the topic in relation to Touch Typing skills, and you agreed during the questions time to discuss the issue in more depth.

Sensitivities

Mr Ewing will request funding to pilot this project, however we are not in a position to financially support it.

Agenda

Introductions

Presentation from [redacted under s38(1)(b)]

Q and A



Why Should You
Learn To Touch Type.c

Lines to take

The curriculum is flexible enough to allow learners to use and explore a range of technologies to solve problems. The use of keyboards and keyboard shortcuts supports this.

It is a matter for schools and local authorities to exercise their professional judgement and skills in designing the most appropriate and relevant learning opportunities for their learners and educational resources to support young people's learning.

In March 2017 a refresh to the technologies curriculum guidance, with a particular focus on digital literacy, was published alongside the publication of benchmarks in the technologies and all other areas of the curriculum.

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Attendees

Mr Fergus Ewing. MSP, Inverness and Nairn
[redacted under s38(1)(b)]

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ANNEX B

Background

Touch by Typing Tuition is run by the owner [redacted under s38(1)(b)] who was taught touch typing on a manual typewriter prior to going to university. [redacted under s38(1)(b)] self-taught her children touch typing and on observing the benefits turned to wider touch typing tutor to support others.

[redacted under s38(1)(b)] started Type by Touch as a 'Hands On' Touch Typing Tutor, and they are keen to support people gain this skill to help achieve their full potential. The courses offered are available online and face to face support

STEM Core Brief

Top Lines

- Scotland is a science and research nation and we continue to punch above our weight and enjoy a global reputation for research and innovation.
- STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - is integral to our future economic and social development and we want everyone in Scotland to build a strong foundation of STEM skills and knowledge.
- Our fourth [STEM education and training strategy - refresh: annual report](#) of the STEM Education and Training Strategy published 26 May 2022 has demonstrated the challenges and opportunities facing STEM education and training, initially identified in the 2017 STEM Strategy, have remain broadly similar in 2022. While the pandemic has impacted on many aspects of project and programme delivery, our core goals remain unaltered and are supported by the available academic literature.
- We are working across all sectors of education to change perceptions about STEM and challenge assumptions about who does what job in relation to gender and wider inequalities.
- Data and digital skills are an increasingly prominent feature of the curriculum in schools in Scotland, underpinned by the focus on numeracy and mathematics.
- The [Logan Review](#) of Scotland's Tech Ecosystem includes a range of recommendations for school education. We are developing an action plan, building on what is already in place through the STEM Strategy and the Developing the Young Workforce programme.
- We have provided £3M to offer 150 STEM bursaries of £20,000 to encourage more people to train as secondary school teachers in physics, chemistry, maths, computing science, technical education and home economics. The scheme has been running for 4 years and has resulted in almost 450 teachers being recruited into ITE STEM courses.
- Local authorities are responsible for the recruitment and deployment of their staff. We continue to do everything we can to help them maximise the number of jobs available to teachers.
- The latest Education Scotland annual STEM [Practitioner Survey](#) notes that the number of hours of career long professional learning in STEM had increased in academic year 2018/19 from the previous year. The most recent survey is currently being analysed.
- Vocational qualifications are increasingly part of the make-up of the Senior Phase of schooling. Although attainment of skills based awards in 2021 is down when compared to last year, since 2014 there has been a sizeable increase in attainment in these, particularly those taken within schools.
- The STEM Nation Award programme has been developed to promote and celebrate whole-setting approaches to STEM. Education Scotland's STEM self-evaluation framework provides the foundations for the new award, helping to guide settings to highly effective practice, whatever their starting point.

2021 STEM QUALIFICATIONS

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- 2021 demonstrated a record number of **passes** at Higher and Advanced Higher since qualifications were revised in 2014. There are nearly 170,000 passes (A-C grades) at Higher, up 14.9% since 2014 and over 24,000 passes (A-C grades) at Advanced Higher - up 33% since 2014.
- **Entries** for Higher and Advanced Higher are up on 2020, and on each year in the period 2017 to 2019. **Entries** for National 5 are down on 2020, but up on each year in the period 2017 to 2019. Overall **entries** for National 2 to National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher and Skills for Work courses has increased by 8,201 to 660,661.
- The number of A-C grades attained at Higher and Advanced Higher (169,989 and 24,162 respectively) are up on 2020 and on each year in the period 2017 to 2019. The number of A-C grades attained at National 5, at 255,517, is down on 2020, but higher than the number of A-C grades in each year in the period 2017 to 2019.
- While pass rate for the **sciences** is down 2021 as compared to last year, for all the science subjects at all levels (National 5s, Highers and Advanced Highers), the pass rate is up (National 5s, Highers and Advanced Highers) compared to 2019.

TEACHERS

- We have more teachers now than at any time since 2008 and the ratio of pupils to teachers is at its lowest since 2009.
- Figures from December 2021 show that teacher numbers rose for the sixth year in a row, rising to 54,285 in 2021 – an increase of 885 on the previous year.
- An Education Scotland [survey](#) noted that 273 have a Computing Science teacher and 36 out of 309 schools do not have a Computing Science teacher.
- Our '**That's What Teaching Taught Me**' campaign focuses on STEM and other hard-to-fill subjects. It is based on research showing that people attracted to teaching are motivated by helping to develop others and making the most of their own knowledge.
- We are offering up to 150 STEM bursaries to **encourage** more people to train as secondary school teachers in physics, chemistry, maths, computing science, technical education and home economics. The [STEM Bursaries](#) programme is administered by Skills Development Scotland and to date 505 bursaries have been awarded. STEM Bursaries provide financial help, making it easier for enthusiastic career changers to pursue a career in teaching.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Since 2016, we have provided support to the Raising Aspirations in Science Education (RAiSE) programme, a partnership with the Wood Foundation, with a further £166K made available in financial year 2022/23. The programme is a partnership between the Wood Foundation, Scottish Government, Education Scotland and participating local authorities.
- This programme supports primary science development officers to lead STEM learning in primary schools and the early years across a local authority area.
- We support the Scottish Schools Education Research Centre (SSERC) primary science cluster programme. Between 2012 and March 2019 the programme engaged with 99 school clusters across all local authorities, involving more than 6,000 teachers. More recently, for financial year 21/22, the Early Years and Primary Team at SSERC has delivered over 2,000 training days.

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- Education Scotland has provided £430,000 in [STEM small grants](#) to benefit more than 700 schools and practitioners across Scotland. The aim is to develop education practitioner confidence in delivering STEM learning and we estimate we the scheme will positively impact around 11,000 teachers and education practitioners. Assessment is currently under of binds received for Round 4 of the programme.
- We continue to invest in developing the capacity of teachers and school leaders through the suite of professional learning and leadership programmes offered nationally by Education Scotland.

STEM STRATEGY

- To ensure improvement in STEM, we are taking concerted action through our STEM Education and Training Strategy.
- Education Scotland STEM and maths regional teams will ensure that those in receipt of STEM grants will promote sharing of effective practice across Scotland.
- We are supporting STEM learning in the primary sector through the SSERC Primary Cluster Programme in STEM, and the Raising Aspirations in Science Education (RAiSE) programme.
- The Young STEM Leader initiative will inspire and reward excellence of young people to create and lead inspirational STEM activities. Since the launch of the Young STEM Leader online programme over 700 trained Tutor Assessors, 380 delivery centres and an estimated 2,500 young STEM Leaders have engaged in the programme across all of Scottish local authority areas.
- College-led STEM partnerships have helped spread engagement throughout the country and build connections between colleges and schools.
- Our Science and Society budget supports delivery of science engagement experiences to around a million people.

COMPUTING

- Data and digital skills are an increasingly prominent feature of the curriculum in schools in Scotland, underpinned by the focus on numeracy and mathematics in education.
- We have updated the school curriculum to ensure that young people are learning up-to-date computing and digital skills.
- We expect digital skills, including coding, to be a part of the curriculum in schools in Scotland, with the foundations of coding being built up from the early years onwards through the development of computational thinking.
- We have reviewed and refreshed the curriculum guidance to introduce the fundamentals of coding, computing, cyber skills and digital literacy from the earliest years of education onwards. We expect these to be developed in a progressive way across the Broad General Education and on into the Senior Phase of learning.

GENDER AND STEM

- Equality for women and girls is at the heart of the Scottish Government's vision for an equal Scotland. Tackling gender inequality across different areas in the education and learning landscape is of fundamental importance.
- We aim to change perceptions about STEM and challenge assumptions about who does what job. Women remain under-represented across the majority of STEM sectors, such as manufacturing, energy and water and construction.

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- Last year we published guidance to support the implementation of Fair Work First - [Fair Work Employer Support Tool](#). The aim is to enable employers to gauge their progress on fair work.
- Education Scotland has developed an [Improving Gender Balance Self-evaluation Framework](#). It is designed to support long-term sustainable work in schools to address gender imbalance and promote equalities. To date, the IGBE team has undertaken 866 engagements reaching 9,422 attendees in 1,156 education establishments.
- The DYW Strategy includes specific actions around promoting career options to different protected groups, designing senior phase vocational pathways to improve gender balance, reducing occupational segregation in Modern Apprenticeships (MAs), and embedding equality across Curriculum for Excellence.
- In the year to December 2020, Education Scotland's Improving Gender Balance and Equality Officers have engaged with 512 distinct establishments and have had over 4,900 practitioner engagements. The programme officers aim to engage with all school clusters in Scotland by 2022.
- The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on women. Existing job market inequalities have been reinforced with women, disabled people and minority ethnic people facing persistent employment and pay gaps.
- Skills Development Scotland published their [Apprenticeship Equality Action Plan](#) in 2020.
- Each college has measures in place to help reduce gender disparities within STEM subject areas. The ambition is that by 2030 no college or university subject will have a gender imbalance greater than 75% of one gender.
- The [Workplace Equality Fund](#) supports labour market interventions for protected groups, including women, affected by the economic impact of COVID-19. 12 projects have been supported by the fund, amounting to more than £300,000.

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