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Enclosure 01 – Letter to East Ayrshire

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
East Ayrshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For East Ayrshire Council this was 1,243. The 2023 census shows a drop to 1,206, therefore a reduction of 37.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in East Ayrshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. The Cabinet Secretary may wish to meet with you to discuss further and we will be in touch in due course.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 02 – Letter to Fife Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Fife Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Fife Council this was 3,724. The 2023 census shows a drop to 3,686, therefore a reduction of 39.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Fife Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. The Cabinet Secretary may wish to meet with you to discuss further and we will be in touch in due course.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 03 – Letter to Glasgow City Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Glasgow City Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Glasgow City Council this was 5,779. The 2023 census shows a drop to 5,654, therefore a reduction of 125.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Glasgow City Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. The Cabinet Secretary may wish to meet with you to discuss further and we will be in touch in due course.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 04 – Letter to North Lanarkshire Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
North Lanarkshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For North Lanarkshire Council this was 3,726. The 2023 census shows a drop to 3,685, therefore a reduction of 40.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in North Lanarkshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. The Cabinet Secretary may wish to meet with you to discuss further and we will be in touch in due course.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 05 – Letter to Renfrewshire Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Renfrewshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Renfrewshire Council this was 1,780. The 2023 census shows a drop to 1,753, therefore a reduction of 26.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Renfrewshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. The Cabinet Secretary may wish to meet with you to discuss further and we will be in touch in due course.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 06 – Letter to Moray Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Morayshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Morayshire Council this was 977. The 2023 census shows a drop to 957, therefore a reduction of 20.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Morayshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 07 – Letter to Aberdeenshire Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Aberdeenshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Aberdeenshire Council this was 2,747. The 2023 census shows a drop to 2,734, therefore a reduction of 13.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Aberdeenshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 08 – Letter to Clackmannanshire Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Clackmannanshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Clackmannanshire Council this was 556. The 2023 census shows a drop to 555, therefore a reduction of 1.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Clackmannanshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 09 – Letter to Highland Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Highland Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Highland Council this was 2,356. The 2023 census shows a drop to 2,339, therefore a reduction of 17.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Highland Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 10 – Letter to Inverclyde Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Inverclyde Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Inverclyde Council this was 781. The 2023 census shows a drop to 772, therefore a reduction of 9.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Inverclyde Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 11 – Letter to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Na h-Eileanan Siar Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Na h-Eileanan Siar Council this was 320. The 2023 census shows a drop to 314, therefore a reduction of 6.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Na h-Eileanan Siar Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 12 – Letter to North Ayrshire Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
North Ayrshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For North Ayrshire Council this was 1,434. The 2023 census shows a drop to 1,422, therefore a reduction of 12.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in North Ayrshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 13 – Letter to Perth and Kinross Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Perth and Kinross Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Perth and Kinross Council this was 1,419 . The 2023 census shows a drop to 1,413, therefore a reduction of 6.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Perth and Kinross Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 14 – Letter to Shetland Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
Shetland Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For Shetland Council this was 339. The 2023 census shows a drop to 337, therefore a reduction of 2.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in Shetland Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 15 – Letter to West Dunbartonshire Council

Local Authority Chief Executive
Director of Education
Director of Finance
West Dunbartonshire Council

12 December 2023

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

You will no doubt be aware that the Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 were published earlier today and show that teacher numbers, nationally, have fallen for the second consecutive year.

My letter of 9 February 2023 set out the conditions attached to the £145.5m funding that is allocated to local authorities to protect teacher numbers, with the key measure being maintaining teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022. The 2023 census shows a decrease in teacher numbers nationally of 160, down from 54,193 in 2022 to 54,033 in 2023.

As set out in my letter of 9 February, in the event of the conditions not being met on teacher numbers, the Scottish Government has reserved the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. As you are aware, £45.5m of this funding has been retained by the Scottish Government subject to councils maintaining the national teacher number figure. I am now writing to you as one of the councils that has not met your target for maintaining teacher numbers.

My letter of 9 February also set out the number of teachers we expected each local authority to maintain. For West Dunbartonshire Council this was 950. The 2023 census shows a drop to 938, therefore a reduction of 13.

I also indicated in my letter that we would intend to be fair and balanced in these decisions and, in assessing whether our conditions have been met, we would consider any mitigating circumstances that individual councils may wish to put forward. I am therefore writing to ask, in view of the decrease in teacher numbers in West Dunbartonshire Council, if you wish to provide further information on the circumstances behind this reduction. Each case will be considered on its individual merits and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Given the requirement to meet budgetary deadlines I would request a response by 19 December.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

Enclosure 16 – Response to letter of 12 December from West Dunbartonshire Council

Dear Sam

RE: Submission of Mitigation – Reduction in Teacher number Census 2023

Thank you for your letter to advise the position in relation to West Dunbartonshire's Teacher Census for 2023 which reports a drop in teacher numbers of 13.

In May we gave an early indication that we were not going to be able to maintain our 2022/23 teacher census number of 950 in session 23/24 and detailed the anticipated mitigating circumstances which were out with control of the authority. Our census return confirmed a drop of 13.

Please accept the following mitigating factors that led to the reduction.

1. Reduction in pupil roll and resulting changes to class configurations though years 1 to 7 in the primary sector has impacted on staffing entitlement whereby those who have had a drop in pupil roll have less classes which equates to less class teachers. This is a continuing trend.
2. Reduction in pupil roll in the primary sector has resulted (in line with our promoted management structure model) in a number of schools falling into a lower band resulting in a reduction in management posts which will impact the overall teacher number this year. This is likely to be a continuing trend.
3. A discretionary additional staffing entitlement issued to primary and secondary schools was reviewed by WDC in the last 12 months resulting in every school from August 23 having a reduced pointage in their entitlement, whilst a nominal amount for all, accumulatively this has impacted the overall FTE. This was offset within our plans to ensure our commitment to the raising attainment agenda.
4. Our SAC funding has reduced by 350K in 2023/24. The implications of this reduction is less SAC funded teacher posts.
5. On the date of Census absence data confirmed that a small number of teachers were not in school who would ordinarily be counted.
6. On the date of Census a small number of teaching posts were vacant.

I trust that the information provided is sufficient mitigation and will assist your considerations regarding funding and provides you with reassurance of our commitment to protecting teacher numbers in West Dunbartonshire. We remain committed to the agenda to raise attainment and achievement as our efforts to close the poverty related gap testify

Laura Mason
Chief Education Officer
West Dunbartonshire Council

Enclosure 17 – Response to letter of 12 December from Aberdeenshire Council

18 December 2023

Dear Sam

Summary School Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023: Teacher Numbers

I refer to your letter dated 12 December 2023 regarding the decrease in teacher numbers in Aberdeenshire from 2,747 to 2,734, a reduction of 13 FTE. In Aberdeenshire we are fully committed to ensuring we have the requisite number of teachers available to provide the highest quality of educational provision to our children and young people. You and I have already discussed the Aberdeenshire teacher staffing context on more than one occasion, but once again, I would emphasise the points below;

- We are in the midst of a significant recruitment crisis within our secondary sector. There are no secondary schools in Aberdeenshire which have been unaffected by this. Whilst, ironically, we did see an increase of 2.93% of teachers working in secondary schools on census day, this can, in part, be attributed to the fact that our schools are now increasingly recruiting primary specialists to teach in the Board General Education in S1 – S3. This year has also seen an increase in 0.85% in the secondary pupil population (which equates to 134 additional young people), requiring additional FTE of teachers.
- We requested 66 secondary probationer teachers for school session 2023/24 and were allocated 18. This is the lowest percentage allocation compared to the request made of any mainland local authority. 12 probationer secondary teachers started with us in August.
- Head Teachers are advertising vacancies on multiple occasions, yet recruitment to key posts remains unsuccessful. As supply cover is also a challenge for many of our schools, Head Teachers have been faced with making some unpalatable decisions around the curriculum. For example, some schools have had to cease offering specific subjects to certain year groups. I have data available for each individual school and the challenging decisions they have had to take due to a lack of availability of secondary teachers in the north east, hugely exacerbated by us not receiving anywhere near our requested number of secondary probationer teachers. I am happy to share this with you as required, it makes for very stark reading.
- Throughout the past year we placed 459 separate adverts for secondary teachers, 258 of which were re-adverts.
- Along with myself, Cllr Gillian Owen, the Leader of Aberdeenshire Council and Cllr David Keating, the Chair of the Education and Children's Services Committee met with Ms Gilruth, the Cabinet Secretary, on 6th December 2023 to raise our concerns around secondary teacher recruitment. This was a positive and constructive meeting and the Cabinet Secretary was genuinely concerned with the data we shared with her in this regard. A number of important actions were agreed at that meeting and I look forward to welcoming Ms Gilruth back to Aberdeenshire in the new year to discuss further. I am also aware that Aberdeenshire's 17 secondary school Parent Council Chairs have also written a joint letter to Ms Gilruth outlining their own concerns.

- Within the primary sector, the 3.56% reduction in teacher numbers is attributable to the fall in roll within the primary sector. Within Aberdeenshire this year, we have 314 fewer children and young people (a 1.5% reduction on last year's numbers) resulting in fewer timetabled classes being allocated through our formula, albeit still remaining comfortably within national guidelines.

- Another area where we have seen a decrease is within the special school sector where we have seen a decrease of 6.7% (3.3 FTE) and again this can be attributed not only to a drop in the pupil population of 1.31% but is also due to recruitment challenges which also affect our special schools and enhanced provision across Aberdeenshire, with posts often requiring multiple re-adverts and Head Teachers then having to use creative approaches to supporting young people in the greatest need, for example through using their devolved budgets to employ additional support staff to work with young people with complex need.

Despite all these challenges, I am delighted that we have maintained our pupil to teacher ratio which to my mind is a more appropriate measure rather than crude teacher numbers. I am aware that the Scottish Government has provided funding for us to maintain our teacher numbers and I can confirm that there were no "cuts" to teacher numbers in Aberdeenshire. The staffing situation remains challenging and we aim at all times to ensure we have adequate supply cover for vacant posts, although this too can be challenging.

To conclude, I am sure you will agree that the challenges outlined above provide sufficient evidence to the current position in Aberdeenshire and I would be happy to elaborate on any points should you wish to do so.

Yours sincerely

Laurence Findlay
Director of Education & Children's Services

Enclosure 18 – Response to letter of 12 December from Fife Council

18 December 2023

Dear Sam Anson,

RE: Summary School Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023: Fife Teacher Numbers

Further to your letter of 12 December 2023, I wanted to take the opportunity to provide relevant information in relation to the overall reduction in the number of teachers employed by Fife Council **at the point of the 2023 census**.

While I appreciate your statement that each case will be considered on its individual merits, and the final decision as to whether any funding will be withheld will be made by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, I trust that the information being provided by Fife Council will be set within the context of the local and the national position. As set out in your 9 February letter, the overall funding package to support the recruitment of additional teachers and support staff, of £233.5 million in 2023-24, was to be maintained in full, but from 1 April 2023 has been conditional on the successful delivery of the following expectations:

- Maintain teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022.
- Maintain pupil support staff numbers at 2022 census levels, which were published on 21 March 2023.
- Ensure that places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme.

These expectations are national targets which **Fife Council has worked to deliver**. The Fife approach has included the allocation of the full additional funding associated with maintaining teacher numbers in 2023/24 across the Devolved School Management (DSM) Scheme, as it would not have been possible for any Local Authority to maintain teacher numbers without allocating the full resource at the start of the academic session. However, any approach where funding can be withheld puts officers in a position where they are, effectively, overspending without the financial authority to do so.

Additionally, Fife Council has committed to providing equity of learning hours within the secondary sector, moving to 27.5 learning hours per week, which requires the recruitment of additional subject specialist teachers in a focussed and planned way, over the next 3 years.

Teacher Numbers

Following the allocation of the additional Scottish Government funding in 2022/23 (confirmed in summer 2022), Fife used the full year funding over the August to March period i.e. the full allocation was spent in Fife within that year, to support recovery. This allowed Fife to allocate an additional 68.7 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers in the primary sector for 2022/23. However, this then meant that Fife had the same level of funding for 2023/24 for a longer period (April to March), therefore the funding does not provide for as many posts i.e. only allows the allocation of 35 FTE for the full year in

2023/24. This effectively reduced our teacher number by 33.2 FTE from the 2022/23 allocation. This was not factored into the Fife target for 2023/24 issued by Scottish Government.

Across Scotland, the number of pupils, in 2023, has reduced by 346 since the 2022 census and the number of teachers has reduced by 160. Within Fife, the number of pupils, in 2023, has reduced by 304 since the 2022 census and the number of teachers has reduced by 38. The reduction of 579 pupils in the primary sector is by far the largest reduction in Scotland, with Highland Council next at 385. Overall, only Highland and North Lanarkshire had pupil roll decreases greater than Fife, with both Local Authorities also unable to meet their absolute target teacher number but maintaining their PTR (Pupil Teacher Ratio).

This is the first year since the introduction of additional Scottish Government funding associated with the pandemic that Fife has shown a decrease in the overall number of teachers employed, despite the reduction in pupil numbers year on year since 2020 (an overall reduction of 970). **However, this is a timing issue, in terms of recruitment.** Since the introduction of additional funding during 2020/21, the pupil roll in Fife has decreased each year, while Fife has continued to maintain the increase in the number of teachers overall, and by 85 FTE in 2023. If Fife were to allocate funding for teachers based on the core allocation alone, the number employed in 2023 would have been closer to the figure in 2017 i.e. 3,556. This would have meant a reduction of 130 FTE teachers from the 2022 figure, effectively meaning that, for 2023, Fife is operating with an allocated additional 130 teachers (i.e. at a cost of 130 x £64,200 = £8,346,000). This demonstrates Fife's full use of the additional funding for teachers provided by the Scottish Government.

Fife	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Teachers (FTE)	3,556	3,571	3,601	3,693	3,708	3,724	3,686
Pupils	49,412	49,660	50,014	50,287	50,245	49,621	49,317
PTR	14.1	14.2	14.2	13.9	13.8	13.6	13.6

The Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) demonstrates that Fife has maintained the number of teachers in line with our pupil numbers, inclusive of those allocated through the additional funding, otherwise the PTR would have increased closer to the 2017 to 2019 figures.

As indicated above, Fife did commit to working to maintain the absolute teacher number target, as well as the number of Pupil Support Assistants, in support of the Scottish position, however, because of, in a significant regard, the allocation of probationers for 2023/24, Fife started the 2023/24 session with 54 teacher vacancies.

Vacancies

The number of teaching posts advertised over the period 1 July 2023 to 16 September 2023 (census) was 54, broken down as follows:

- 31 secondary class teacher posts
- an additional 18 secondary promoted teacher posts
- 8 of secondary teacher posts having to be re-advertised and 7 not filled

- 9 of these secondary class teacher posts being in subject shortage areas and 12 being Learning/Behaviour support posts.

This demonstrates the number of posts, and how many times our secondary schools attempted to recruit to vacancies but were unable to do so for the subject shortage areas, such as Maths/CDT/Business Education/English etc.

Probationary Teachers

Fife is very supportive of the probationer scheme (Teacher Induction Scheme) and always offers posts, usually **in excess of our target allocation, to support the provision of sufficient placements across Scotland**. This is incorporated within our workforce planning strategy and creates a potential pool of staff for recruitment once they obtain full GTCS registration.

As you will be aware, each probationer can teach a maximum of 0.82fte and schools are required to offer vacancies to receive a probationer. As our primary roll continues to decrease, we have, as an authority, less demand for primary teachers, and this includes probationer teachers. If Fife had only offered primary probationer places based on the budget available, linked to vacancies, we would have significantly decreased our probationer 'bid' and would not have been able to offer places in the way that we have done, to support the national scheme.

We have continued to support the probationer scheme, while ensuring that we support our existing permanent staff members, where schools having reducing rolls, ensuring there are posts for them to transfer into. To support the commitment to ensuring that places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme, we maintained our primary probationer bid (which was only 4 lower than last year). Increasing our primary bid would have ensured, in all likelihood, the allocation of more primary probationers, which may have reduced or offset the shortfall in secondary probationers which led to the level of vacancies. However, this would have created:

- significant additional pressure on our primary schools in continuing to manage such large numbers of probationers;
- ongoing challenges when it comes to recruitment of teachers as there will not be vacancies;
- negative media, elected member and Scottish Government perception and contact when we are unable to offer employment opportunities to the large numbers of probationers allocated.

Our secondary 'bid' for probationers needs to differ from the primary 'bid.' Our 'bid' is very much determined by our school requirements, and which subjects they wish to offer a probationer placement in (as well as the probationers' choice of preferences). Fife traditionally 'bids' for a significant number of probationers, and this includes this year.

However, **within Secondary we requested 133 probationers and received only 69**, this being 51.88%, which the lowest percentage in the last 10 years.

Importantly, overall, Fife's support for the probationer scheme for 2023/24 means that the primary probationer allocation is costing Fife £0.410m and the secondary allocation is costing Fife £0.311m (total cost of £0.721m), as the value of budget from schools for

vacancies and the funding from Scottish Government is not sufficient to fund the number of probationers we have taken.

Devolved School Management (DSM)

Finally, I would also refer to the Headteacher Charter, School Empowerment and the DSM Scheme. Fife is one of the first Local Authorities to fully devolve staffing within the secondary sector, in accordance with the updated Scottish Government DSM recommendations. The management and teaching staff structures are a locally determined matter. We are, therefore, unable to proscribe a specific minimum teacher staffing number for our Secondary schools, which is the approach that would be required in order for the Local Authority to fully manage the overall teacher numbers.

Any move to set teacher numbers would require a fundamental review and rewrite of the DSM Scheme for Fife and would significantly reduce the ability of our Headteachers to ensure they are able to create a staffing model appropriate for their school's context. Each school would need to be given a fixed staffing allocation, based on the 2022 census, and this would contradict both the empowerment agenda and the principles of the DSM scheme, which include:

- Local Authorities should empower headteachers to design a staffing structure to suit the school's context within their delegated budget and in accordance with SNCT and LNCT agreements and guidelines.

Additionally, the Headteacher Charter for School Empowerment states that Headteachers should be empowered to design a staffing structure which best supports the school's curriculum and leadership requirements, working within their delegated staffing budget and supported by their Local Authority and Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) / Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) agreements and guidance.

I trust that you will consider this information and I look forward to a positive response with regards to our commitment to the Scottish Government targets and the current position in Fife.

However, I and representatives from Fife Council, would be happy to discuss this information further, with you and the Cabinet Secretary, should that be required.

Yours sincerely,

Shelagh McLean
Head of Education & Children's Services

Enclosure 19 – Response to letter of 12 December from Perth and Kinross Council

18 December 2023

Dear Sam

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

In your letter dated 12 December 2023, you highlighted that the census data in Perth and Kinross Council showed there had been a 6FTE reduction of teachers in 2023 when compared to the figures for 2022; and an explanation for this slight dip in numbers has been requested.

By way of context setting, I think it's important to explain that the staffing standard in Perth and Kinross, which was approved by our Learning and Families Committee, was used to plan the allocation of staff across all sectors for session 2023/24 in the same way as in the preceding year. Similarly, there is clear criteria that guides our allocation of additional staff – both teaching and support – which also has Committee approval; and this too was followed assiduously. As part of our staffing exercise we also seek to maximise the number of probationer places across all schools which are large enough (by pupil roll) to accommodate them, ensuring that these important staff team members have the best experience in their NQT year as possible. In other words, our approach to our staffing exercise is robust, thorough, transparent and based on carefully considered criteria. This criteria includes factors such as additional weighting for deprivation and additional support needs etc.

Our staffing exercise planning did not seek to diminish the number of teachers employed across all of our schools, rather it was undertaken with the express aim of at least maintaining the same number.

Having discussed matters with colleagues in Finance, HR and Performance & Reporting, we consider that this slight variation of 6FTE can be attributed to the following factors:

- Within the primary sector, the reduction in teacher numbers was attributable to the fall in roll within that sector. The drop in the primary pupil roll resulted from than anticipated; and two schools closed with one new school opening to replace them, the new school required less staff than the previous 2 did. With fewer children and young people, we required fewer classes being allocated through our staffing standard. The reduction in Primary FTE was redistributed to secondaries due to an increase in roll and also to increase staffing for our ASN provision e.g. 4FTE to Outreach and 3.8FTE to Intensive Support Provisions.
- We requested 29 Secondary Probationers for Session 2023-2024 and were allocated 13. We sought to mitigate the problems this reduction in numbers caused by making a number of changes to the deployment of existing staff; and this included the need to undertake a reallocation of FTE in specific subject areas too. The well-known general recruitment challenges experienced across the country and those same challenges in some particular subject areas added to the complexity of this work.

- It is not always possible to ensure there will be supply teachers available for any absences. Rather classes would require to be covered by staff already working in those schools on census day such as non-teaching deputies, teachers with non-class contact etc.. Where this was the case, we would see a corresponding reduction in the FTE that we would report via the census.
- There was a 1FTE reduction of an ELC teacher in a Partner Provider setting.

I feel strongly that our collective time and efforts would be well served in seeking to find solutions for the acute recruitment challenges we experience across Scotland at present. Additionally, we should be looking at ways to ensure the process by which probationers are allocated across the country can be improved to reflect current times and recruitment challenges. We should be driven in our endeavours to find solutions to the recruitment challenges I have mentioned by using evidence and research around what has been effective in other education systems, and then taking a systematic, coherent approach to bringing about the necessary changes here in Scotland.

I trust this is sufficient information for you to consider in relation to this matter and I look forward to hearing from you in relation to the outcome of your considerations very soon.

Yours sincerely

Sheena Devlin
Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

Enclosure 20 – Response to letter of 12 December from Glasgow City Council

19 December 2023

Dear Sam

Glasgow City Council Teacher Census figures 2023

Thank you for your letter of 12th December seeking an explanation for the reduction in teacher numbers in Glasgow between the census in 2022 and the 2023 census. In the first instance it is important to stress that Glasgow City Council did not reduce teacher numbers as part of the budget setting exercise for 2023-24. The savings from education for 2023-24 amounted to £4 million, none of which was identified as teachers or support for learning workers. The link to the full budget proposals agreed by Council can be found here:

<https://glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=60037&p=0>

From the link you can see that education represents around 38% of the Council's revenue budget but only 8% of the overall saving of £49,300,000 for 2023-24. You may also recognise the challenges of protecting education to this extent and the consequential impact on the rest of education and the wider Council services.

Reasons for reduction

Specifically in relation to the reduction in teachers between 2022-23, the main reason for the difference relates to over-projection of school rolls at the end of 2022 by the schools and over-recruitment of teachers in 2022 which resulted in a number of teachers being temporarily super-numerary.

Schools project their school roll for the year ahead so that we can staff schools according to the formulae set out in the scheme of devolved management agreed at LNCT. There was over estimation by a number of schools which meant a roll adjustment exercise had to take place and which had not taken place at the time of the census. At the time of the census in September 2022, 85.5 fte teachers were still allocated to schools due to the school roll projections being above the census figures. An additional 22.29 teachers were allocated due to an unexpected increase in roll with a further 17.16fte allocated due to specific business cases being made around individual circumstances in schools. This resulted in a net reduction of 46.05fte.

Another significant group included super-numerary staff due to over recruitment at the summer recruitment exercise. Recruitment takes place each year between Easter and summer to have sufficient teachers to cover retirements, leavers and long-term absences – this is an estimate and based on trends from previous years. The recruitment normally includes taking on a number of teachers completing their probation year. Most of those recruited are allocated to permanent vacancies or long-term supply posts, however there were 34 fte who remained as additionality from the recruitment exercise at the point of the census. These were almost all allocated to vacancies by the October break and all by the Christmas break. The 34 fte were temporarily allocated to

schools as additionality at a cost to the Council until they could be allocated to positions funded through the long-term absence budget.

To reduce pressure on the budget over-spend, recruitment was more limited in 2023 so that there was a more precise match between demand at the start of term and recruitment. As a result, there were far fewer teachers super-numerary.

The other main areas where there has been a drop relate to:

- Fewer probationer teachers allocated to Glasgow, with a significant drop out rate.
- Fewer teachers being paid for from Pupil Equity Fund and Strategic Equity Fund since these budgets were allocated as flat cash while teacher salaries increased meaning fewer can be paid for with a fixed grant.
- Enhanced Vocational Programme (EVIP) – the model was changed so that pupils remain in their own school for Maths and English and attend college with support removing the need for 4fte teachers. The 4 fte were reallocated to schools as part of the annual staffing exercise.
- Closure of pre-school assessment centres Linn and Duntarvie to move to a peripatetic model.

Conclusion

Glasgow City Council has not reduced teacher numbers by taking savings from the overall budget. The change relates to better management of supply and demand. Education had an overspend last year, largely related to an increase in the pupil roll and significant increases in transport costs. At present the projections are for a £13.9 million overspend for 2023-24. In this context we need to take all steps to manage costs and cannot have a significant number of teachers above the staffing entitlement with no budget allocated. In addition, we need to live within available budget in relation to strategic equity funding and pupil equity funding.

In summary the reduction is as follows:

Super-numerary posts from 2022 staffing exercise:	-34
Net posts over due to over projection of pupil roll	-46.05
Reduction in probationers allocated to Glasgow	-16
Difference in Strategic Equity posts due to flat cash	-23.21
Service reform – EVIP teachers	-4
Service reform – Linn & Duntarvie pre-school assessment	-1

Yours sincerely

DOUGLAS HUTCHISON
Executive Director of Education

Enclosure 21 – Response to letter of 12 December from Renfrewshire Council

19 December 2023

Dear Mr Anson

Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023 – Teacher Numbers Renfrewshire Council rationale and response – December 2023

Thank you for your letter of 12 December 2023 asking for any mitigating circumstances to explain the reduction in teacher numbers at Census 2023 compared to Census 2022 for Renfrewshire Council.

I have outlined our mitigations below and must stress to you that this reduction has not been the result of any budget setting exercise. It is the case that Renfrewshire Council has not taken any financial saving from teacher funding in several years. In summary, our reduction is due to:

- a reduction in the funding for the Scottish Attainment Challenge,
- changes in how headteachers have allocated Pupil Equity Funding to meet the needs of the children and young people,
- a reduction in teaching staff required to support the Ukraine resettlement programme and
- a reduction in the number of fully funded newly qualified teachers being assigned to Renfrewshire.

Explanation for Reduction

Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF)

Background

As a previous Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) authority, Renfrewshire is now managing a decrease in the overall funding from the Scottish Government in the SAC funding stream.

Scottish Attainment Challenge Funding			
22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
£3,749,496	£2,940,992	£2,132,488	£1,323,984

As you know Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is a source of funding that is downloaded directly to schools based on the number of young people receiving Free School Meals (FSM). Although there is no reduction in this funding, these budgets were allocated as a fixed grant, and this has not increased to take account of recent pay awards to both teaching and non-teaching staff. This would mean fewer staff can be paid for with this fixed grant.

Attainment Scotland Fund (SAC/PEF)		
Census 2022	Census 2023	Difference
62.48 (62) FTE	41.95 (42) FTE	-20.0 FTE

This clearly shows the reduction in teacher numbers in 2023 compared to 2022 emanates from a decrease in Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF); that is, a combination of less teachers funded through Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) in consequence of our attainment challenge funding being reduced. Headteachers through self-evaluation and collaboration with stakeholders allocate their PEF to provide effective interventions to support children affected by poverty with a direct requirement to focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap. Depending on the needs of the children and young people this plan can and does change annually. For this session the headteachers in some schools have directed PEF to other interventions other than additional teachers in order to meet the needs of the children and young people. By doing this there has been a reduction in the number of teachers funded through this fund. The planning for the deployment of PEF is in line with the national operational guidance. For most schools the decision not to bring in additional teachers was due to the differences within cohorts of children and for a minority it was because the cost of the teacher and associated pay increases meaning this resource, for them was no longer a viable option.

Support for Ukraine

Ukraine Refugee Support		
Census 2022	Census 2023	Difference
12.0 FTE	5.0 FTE	-7.0 FTE

From June 2022 Renfrewshire's responded to supporting resettlement of children and young people displaced due to the war in Ukraine. Renfrewshire was a "welcome hub" and from June to Early 2023 the number of children and young people arriving through Glasgow Airport increased and the numbers changed on a daily basis.

It is important that the children's right to education is upheld and as a result, we concentrated on enrolling children and young people from the hotels to two secondary school and three primary schools which were close to the airport. This was a temporary solution to ensure that the children and young people received their entitlement to education. To support this a number of additional teachers were placed in the schools. This was to provide intensive support to ease their transition and to support children who for some had experienced significant trauma. While this additional resource has remained in part, as evidenced above, it has gradually reduced (a reduction of 7FTE) as Ukrainian families were accommodated in local housing areas and children and young people therefore transferred from the receiving schools to catchment schools or indeed out with Renfrewshire altogether.

Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT)

Secondary Newly Qualified Teacher (Fully Funded)		
Census 2022	Census 2023	Difference
13.0 FTE	6.0 FTE	-7.0 FTE

The allocation of newly qualified teachers to the authority in 2023 compared to 2022 also impacted the overall teaching staff figures for the respective years. There has also been a significant drop out rate compared to previous years. This trend is continuing.

In the secondary sector particularly for 2023 our allocation was 18 less than our secondary bid; in 2022 we were allocated 15 more than our original secondary bid.

In addition, in 2022 we were allocated 13 fully funded newly qualified teachers – in 2023 we were allocated 6, a reduction of 7.

Conclusion

Renfrewshire Council has not reduced teacher number by taking savings from the overall budget. Education had an overspend last year, largely related to a significant increase in transport costs. I would also like to reiterate that Renfrewshire Council has not taken any financial saving from teacher funding in several years as a deliberate policy of protecting education resource.

Yours sincerely

Janie O'Neill
Director of Children's Services

Enclosure 22 – Response to letter of 12 December from North Ayrshire Council

19 December 2023

Dear Sam,

RE: TEACHER NUMBERS NORTH AYRSHIRE

Thank you for your letter dated 12 December which confirms that the teacher numbers in North Ayrshire at the 2023 staff census were recorded as 1,422, a reduction of 12 since the 2022 census, where the total number of teachers in North Ayrshire was 1,434.

I welcome the opportunity to provide further information about the circumstances behind this reduction. As you know, until session 22/23 North Ayrshire Council was in receipt of £5.8 million per annum from the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) as one of the original Challenge Authorities. The Scottish Government's decision to discontinue that approach in favour of a redistribution of the funding across all 32 local authorities means that our share of the funding reduces annually in North Ayrshire by £1.1 million until 2025-26, taking our allocation of what is now under the Strategic Equity Funding umbrella from £5.8 million to £1.4 million. The majority of our Attainment Challenge funding was allocated to teachers or support staff. Since the SAC announcement last year, my officers have been focused on workforce planning to ensure the change demanded by the funding reduction is managed gradually over the period 2022-26.

Our phased workforce plans in relation to Attainment Scotland Funded posts required us to reduce some teaching posts in 2023-24. This was always the intention, as the funding reduces gradually from £5.8 million to £1.4 million ultimately.

The table below summarises the movement in teacher numbers from 2022 to 2023. This data demonstrates that the principal factor in reducing teacher numbers in 2023 has been the Attainment Scotland Fund. The removal of £1.1 million of Strategic Equity Funding, considered alongside the flat rate of the Pupil Equity Fund in the context of a 14% increase in teachers' salaries since the census was calculated in 2022, are the circumstances which led to the necessity of this reduction overall. The data below also serves to highlight North Ayrshire Council's efforts to maintain teacher numbers even within these challenging financial conditions. The value of the reduction in teacher numbers by 12 FTE overall is approximately £780,000, which is £320,000 less than the amount of budget removed by Scottish Government from Strategic Equity Funding in North Ayrshire.

	2022	2023	Change
NAC total school roll	17,691	17,408	-283
NAC total teachers FTE (DSM allocation)	1,290	1,308	18
NAC total ELC teachers FTE	12	12	0
NAC total teacher induction scheme FTE	57	51	-6
NAC total ASF teachers FTE	75	51	-24
NAC total teachers FTE (overall census)	1,434	1,422	-12

Despite the reduction of teachers by 12 FTE overall in 2023, the pupil teacher ratio in North Ayrshire has gone down since last year and remains well below the national figure

at 12.3. This demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensure our learners are supported by an appropriately resourced teaching workforce.

North Ayrshire Council's share of the £45.5 million currently being withheld subject to the condition to maintain teacher numbers at 1,434 is £1.184 million. Given that the reduction of 12 FTE this year is explained as being aligned to the removal of £1.1 million of Scottish Government Strategic Equity Funding from this Council, it would seem unfair to withhold a further £1.184 million, which would have the effect of penalising the Council twice, when 23 local authorities (all except for the nine original Attainment Challenge Authorities) saw their Strategic Equity Funding increase by almost £5 million in 2023-24, while Challenge Authorities saw their budgets reduced by £6.3 million in the same time frame.

Due to previous confirmation of the reduction of Strategic Equity Funding over the next two years in North Ayrshire and the workforce planning already underway locally, it will be necessary to reduce the overall number of teachers employed in the next two years as this funding continues to reduce.

I would like to conclude by appealing for a different approach in future years, which focuses less on teacher numbers, but rather finds another way of giving the Cabinet Secretary assurance that education authorities are deploying resources effectively to achieve the twin aims of the National Improvement Framework of excellence and equity. I note from the census figures that the school roll fell across Scotland in 2023 by almost 350 pupils. The school roll is also declining in North Ayrshire (the roll has reduced by 653 between the 2020 census and the 2023 census, with local data indicating that this trend will continue). I would strongly argue that in order for us to ensure best value, local authorities are given the flexibility to align the staffing levels to the changing picture in terms of school roll. This is why I believe that if teacher numbers need to be scrutinised in future, the pupil teacher ratio would be a fairer basis for doing this.

I hope I have conveyed North Ayrshire Council's ongoing commitment to implementing Scottish Government policy while improving outcomes for our learners and provided you with sufficient information around the individual mitigating circumstances behind our teacher numbers in 2023 to enable a recommendation to be made to the Cabinet Secretary not to withhold any additional funding as a result of this situation.

Yours sincerely

Craig Hatton
Chief Executive
North Ayrshire Council

Enclosure 23 – Response to letter of 12 December from North Lanarkshire Council

15 December 2023

Dear Mr Anson

I note with a measure of surprise and frustration your recent letter which highlights the Scottish Government may recover or withhold funding from North Lanarkshire Council in response to a reduction in teacher numbers as outlined in the 2023 census data.

By way of background I would refer you to my previous letter of 25 May (copy attached). This clearly stated our ambition to work in partnership with the Scottish Government to develop deliverable strategies which would maximise educational outcomes for children, while recognising North Lanarkshire Council is facing year on year cuts in funding streams which directly impact on our ability to maintain staff numbers at levels evident during the COVID recovery period.

During the past year, North Lanarkshire officers have also advised the Scottish Government as part of two survey returns that teacher numbers would reduce during 2023. These surveys estimated the number of teachers would fall by 87 and thereafter 115. The actual position is a smaller reduction of 40. However, providing authorities with a one week dialogue period in which to avoid financial penalties, given the political sensitivity events such as these raise is in itself unfair given the Scottish Government has known for months this would be the case in North Lanarkshire.

Building upon my previous letter I would again draw to your attention to the circa £1m annual cuts to North Lanarkshire's strategic equity funding which began in 2022/23 and are scheduled to be applied through to 2025/26. By 2025/26 North Lanarkshire will lose in excess of £4m of annual funding which is predominantly used to support teacher and school support staff posts.

In addition, North Lanarkshire is receiving a reduced share of national funding due to falling pupil rolls. As previously advised this reduction equates to £0.8m in 2023/24 following on from a previous £1.0m reduction in 2022/23. This trend seems set to continue with the September 2023 census data containing a further year on year fall of 417 in pupils (0.86%) compared to 2022. The table below demonstrates the trajectory of our pupil roll which in aggregate equates to a decrease of 907 in pupils (1.85%) during the previous three-year period, with the largest year on year reduction being reported in the recent 2023 data:

Table 1 Year	Primary School	Secondary School	Special School	Total	Year on Year Comparison
2021	26,262	21,671	1,068	49,001	-231
2022	26,074	21,547	1,121	48,742	-259
2023	25,788	21,405	1,132	48,325	-417

In practice, falling pupil rolls result in fewer teacher posts, as pupil rolls are the main criteria in calculating core teacher allocations to schools per Devolved School Management schemes.

My previous letter also requested clarity from the Scottish Government in respect of how authorities like North Lanarkshire, who are facing annual cuts in funding streams which support teaching posts, would be assessed against the new target of maintaining the gross number of teachers at 2022 levels. It is especially disappointing that the authority is yet to receive this clarity, and yet remains threatened with further financial penalties in addition to the original funding cuts.

It is also worth noting that North Lanarkshire has met the previous measure of assessing teacher numbers (maintaining the PTR year to year) during 2023. The PTR measure more sensibly takes account of the link between falling pupil numbers, grant levels and teacher numbers, as detailed below:

Table 2

Table 2 Year	Pupil Number	Teacher Number Inc. ELC	*Teacher Number (PTR)	Published PTR	Scotland (Ave)
2022	48,742	3,726	3,705	13.2	13.2
2023	48,325	3,685	3,664	13.2	13.2

Table 2: Teacher Numbers and Pupil Teacher Ratio
(*excludes Scottish Government adjustment for Early Years)

Furthermore, within North Lanarkshire, officers have continued to track and monitor the creation of additional teaching posts and resultant budget allocations to individual schools which are linked to national funding awards. This approach extends to our £10.1m share of the £145.5m allocated by the Scottish Government. In this regard North Lanarkshire can provide an auditable trail which clearly demonstrates these funding awards have been fully utilised for their intended purpose.

My final point on teacher funding refers to the significant one-off investments made by North Lanarkshire during COVID, and the COVID educational recovery period through to 2022, which supplemented Scottish Government resources. As explained in my earlier letter, the number of teaching posts were temporarily inflated during this period, and a more equitable benchmark year if you wished to assess or compare the gross number of teachers would be 2019. From this benchmark, it is clear that North Lanarkshire has more teachers employed than previously against a smaller pupil roll.

I would also question whether the approach outlined in your letter is in line with and reflects the ethos behind the Verity House Agreement. Paragraph 5 of the agreement states that *'From this point onwards, the default position will be no ring-fencing or direction of funding'*. As you will be aware, there have been recent concerns raised at COSLA regarding the Scottish Government's commitment to the principles of the agreement and it would appear this approach further erodes any confidence that the principles of the agreement are being upheld. It is the intention of North Lanarkshire Council to raise this matter further with COSLA.

The stated position of the Scottish Government in reiterating, through the media, a threat to withhold funding on this matter prior to dialogue with local authorities is also regrettable, and the council will have no hesitation in publicly defending its position robustly.

I trust the information above provides sufficient evidence to remove the possibility of financial penalties being applied to North Lanarkshire. If this is not the case it is critical you contact me prior to a final decision being made. You also advise there may be further correspondence on this matter through the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills and I would welcome the opportunity to discuss directly with the Cabinet Secretary alongside the Leader of the Council.

Yours sincerely

Des Murray
Chief Executive

25 May 2023

Dear Mr Anson

North Lanarkshire Case Illustration: Assimilating the Elements of National Policy in a Local Government Empowerment Model

I am writing to you to offer a positive vision of how local and national government can work together to realise mutual ambitions relating to educational attainment for all and particularly for those in the areas of our country which experience the greatest levels of deprivation. This follows careful consideration of your communication of the 9 February 2023 with regards **Protecting Teacher Numbers, Pupil Support Staff and Learning Hours** and all related developments since.

In what follows, I seek to provide a positive illustration of how our local authority, North Lanarkshire Council has sought to find a way to secure vital improvements, whilst navigating significant budget challenges and reductions in core funding. It documents how we have managed the teacher workforce through and beyond COVID, plan to manage resource in the present and future years and how we have performed in relation to the twin challenges of raising attainment for all and closing the poverty related attainment gap.

I offer this case illustration as a means to challenge, inform and trigger further positive discussion around current policy direction and how collectively we can best respond in what is a shared ambition around our children and young people's future.

Funding for Maintaining teacher Numbers and Increasing Learning Hours

In your letter of 9 February, you requested feedback from authorities to help inform future teacher staffing regulations, the potential structure of which was enforced in subsequent communications. Accordingly, I wish to outline North Lanarkshire's funding position in respect of the General Revenue Grant and SAC allocations. I would hope that once you have had the opportunity to digest the contents of this letter, you would welcome further engagement on the issues highlighted including the proposed future monitoring and reporting regime for teacher numbers and school support staff, reconsideration of the potential financial penalties threatened to be applied, and the teacher recruitment process for the academic term beginning August 2023.

It would firstly be only fair to acknowledge the additional investment that North Lanarkshire Council has received from Scottish Government for additional teachers and support staff as part of the Programme for Government. Per the two national grants to local authorities of £65.5 million and £80 million, North Lanarkshire received £10.1m in total of which £9.5m is earmarked for Teachers and £0.6m allocated expected 4,900 additional teachers that the Scottish Government intended to recruit nationally.

However, due to a number of budget pressures which are openly outlined below, there is a net reduction in the core funding available to North Lanarkshire to employ teachers during academic year 2023/24 in comparison to the previous year. This may be a minority position in Scotland, but intelligence derived from engagement with other authorities, suggests that the authority is not alone in experiencing such issues.

Trends in Teacher Workforce in North Lanarkshire Council

North Lanarkshire prioritised and invested significant resources to support educational recovery during the pandemic, including the recruitment of additional teachers as highlighted in the table below:

Year	Pupil Number	Teacher Number *	PTR
2018	48,948	3,544	13.81
2019	48,999	3,590	13.65
2020	49,232	3,742	13.16
2021	49,001	3,778	12.97
2022	48,742	3,705	13.16

*Table 1: Teacher Numbers and Pupil Teacher Ratio
(*excludes Scottish Government adjustment for Early Years)*

The First Minister praised North Lanarkshire at the time for its policy of universal probationer recruitment in May 2020, as the first lockdown due to the Covid pandemic was unfolding and local authorities were attempting to ascertain how they could maximise teacher capacity.

North Lanarkshire utilised Covid emergency funding throughout the pandemic to ensure that there was sufficient teacher resource to both maintain and enhance the continuity of education provision both in school and digitally. These grants reduced towards the end of the pandemic, and the movement in teacher numbers between 2021 and 2022 reflects the fact that schools were gradually returning to more conventional operating models.

Looking to financial year 2023/24 North Lanarkshire will receive reduced funding in the following areas:-

Pupil Roll Adjustment: Reduction in Grant Funding of £1.793m Since 2021/22

North Lanarkshire's share of the relevant element of General Revenue Grant for 2023/24 has been reduced by £0.8m in comparison to 2022/23 to reflect falling pupil rolls. This follows a similar reduction of £1m during the previous financial year. In aggregate, £1.8m of funding has been removed from our budget that would have been available to schools to fund teaching staff.

As you are aware, prior to the issue of recent correspondence from the Scottish Government, authorities were set a target to (at least) maintain the PTR from one financial year to the next. Historically, through the application of DSM rules which are predominantly pupil based there would have been a linked reduction in the number of budgeted teachers required for session 2023/24, however this would have had a limited impact on the PTR as pupil numbers, funding and teacher numbers would have fallen in unison.

Given the Scottish Government has changed focus and now wishes to target the ongoing maintenance of the absolute number of teachers per the 2022 census North Lanarkshire Council requires clarity on what plans you have for authorities who are experiencing falling pupil numbers. For example, does the Scottish Government intend to reinstate core grant levels to the 2022 equivalent, or would authorities be given credit or an exemption for falling pupil numbers in respect of the potential recovery or withholding of funding which you have referenced in paragraph 7 of your original letter.

As table 1 shows, at census time North Lanarkshire had over 100 more teachers in 2022 than in 2019. Given the impact of Covid and linked temporary funding, 2019 seems a fairer baseline to judge local authorities in terms of teacher numbers. In addition, the snapshot census does not fully highlight the local authority's budgeted investment in teaching staff, as

patterns of absence and recruitment lags means that there is always a difference between funded posts and what staff are present on a given day. This issue is one of the key problems of using a snapshot measure to determine if local authorities are funding sufficient teacher posts.

Strategic Equity Fund: Confirmed Reduction in Grant £4.100m

Due to the change of approach to Strategic Equity Funding by the Scottish Government, North Lanarkshire's awards (previously referred to as SAC) are scheduled to fall in approximate £1m annual intervals from a ceiling level of £7.5m in 2021/22 to £3.4m by 2025/26. The majority of this funding has been used by the authority to recruit additional teachers to help schools address the poverty related attainment gap.

As indicated previously, to help support education recovery the authority mitigated the 2022/23 SEF reduction through use of reserves on a one-off basis.

In comparison to 2021/22 the Education Service is therefore facing an equivalent reduction of £2m for financial year 2023/24 with further £1m annual cuts to follow for the next two financial years.

If previous Challenge Authorities, like North Lanarkshire, had known maintenance of the PTR was to be dropped and replaced by an absolute teacher number target with potential funding clawback, representations would have been made at the time to civil servants, COSLA and political leaders as regards the potential risks that North Lanarkshire and others would have. As it stands, we find that we are potentially going to be financially penalised due to the implementation of various strands of government policy which are increasingly difficult to reconcile at local level.

As per the aforementioned falling pupil rolls, the Council is similarly seeking clarity on what plans Scottish Government has for authorities who are experiencing reduced SEF allocations.

Early Years Expansion Grant: Reduction in Funding £1.2m

In comparison to the Scottish Government's original funding model North Lanarkshire has also received a £1.2m cut to its Early Years ringfenced grant for 2023/24, which reduces the overall level of funding the Service had previously planned to deliver services. North Lanarkshire has experienced a 29% increase in deferred entry applications for 2023/24 in comparison to the previous year, which not only increases costs within the Early Years settings, but also reduces the primary 1 pupil cohort.

COVID Support: Loss of Short Term Funding

As indicated the authority utilised a combination of national and internal resources to enhance teacher numbers to underpin educational recovery during the pandemic. Most of these teachers were recruited on a temporary basis to help mitigate the extremely challenging learning environment for pupils and staff. For example, during academic session 2021/22 there were circa 20,000 occasions a pupil had to self-isolate and over 3,000 occasions when a member of school staff had to self-isolate within North Lanarkshire alone. Within the authority it was recognised there would be a reduction in teacher numbers as this funding support tapered and eventually ceased at the end of the 2022/23 academic term. During academic session 2023/24 there is no specific Covid financial support available to the Service.

Teacher Workforce (2023 Onwards)

In planning school staffing models for the new academic term the Service will incorporate both the authority's £10.1m share of the £145.5m national funding and the reductions in resources described previously.

As in previous years, the Service will fully commit all of the £10.1m funding earmarked by the Scottish Government to enhance teacher and support staff numbers. For clarity, within North Lanarkshire the £10.1m of national funding will be allocated as a supplement to school core budgets and will therefore be traceable for budget and audit purposes.

It should be noted that the national funding will potentially pay for fewer teachers than originally estimated, due to the lack of clarity about the long term funding of pay deals. It should also be understood that current and future increases in teacher salaries may affect staffing numbers in general across education and other Council services.

Managing the Measures

To ensure that North Lanarkshire meets its obligations to pupils, staff, stakeholders and national government, it is vital the Education Service has a clear understanding of the Scottish Government's plans in respect of the issues highlighted above.

It is also equally important the Scottish Government provides a transparent explanation of the mechanism and value of financial recovery or penalty which will be applied if teacher numbers fall below the 2022 census value.

It is clearly inherently unfair to local authorities, such as North Lanarkshire, who are trying to do everything they can to honour the Scottish Government policy intention to be penalised due to a process of snapshot monitoring which will not give a full picture of our efforts or the actuality of staffing.

Moreover, there are technical challenges to be surmounted if additional monitoring pressures are placed on local government. With so many additional asks of local government to 'provide assurance' having come on board in the past few years, especially through Covid, there are real risks that the capacity may not be in the system to deliver quality data with the frequency that would be considered desirable by the Scottish Government.

Indeed, the authority is so concerned about the approach that the Scottish Government might take to penalising those authorities which do not meet the staffing targets that this year additional resources will be allocated from Council reserves to top up the funding for teaching posts, resulting in the creation of budgeted posts significantly in excess of the 2023 census number. Even after taking this action, which in reality simply deepens the future deficit, it is impossible for the Service to state with full confidence that the target position of 3726 teachers will be met in the 2023 census due to the "snapshot" nature of this method of measurement.

Implementing 21 Hours of Teacher Contact

Following on from the OECD report of June 2021 there was a commitment in the Programme for Government to increase teacher numbers by 4,900. This was associated in budget setting processes with a further commitment to raise education investment by £280m over the lifetime of the parliament. The cost of this number of additional teachers at the time would have broadly correlated with the additional investment. However, this was prior to any uplift in teacher salaries. Clearly the figure of £280m would need to be proportionately

uplifted by the percentage rise in teacher salaries to support the previously planned increase in the teaching workforce and continually aligned thereafter.

The authority requires clarity about the status of the national policy relating to the raising of teacher numbers and the expectation about how quickly and how much local authorities would have to on-board additional teaching staff as part of a coherent and funded national plan. In the absence of this clarity authorities are unable to progress the implementation of sustainable school staffing models

For instance, North Lanarkshire would potentially require to develop specific approaches to managing the primary school week to enable the four hours that pupils would not have direct access to their core teacher to be as meaningful as possible. In the secondary sector, the Service is likely to review the school week structure, to ensure it deploys staff as efficiently as possible.

Lastly, notwithstanding the broad OECD recommendation that teachers would benefit from more time to plan and assess children's learning, it must be understood that there is little correlation internationally between the hours of teacher contact experienced by pupils and educational outcomes. The authority's view would be that introducing reduced teacher class contact would not in and of itself improve outcomes in a cause and effect manner but would have to be managed effectively in terms of wider national policy making around the curriculum, as well as cultural expectations locally and in schools.

Minimum Learning Hours

North Lanarkshire will respond fully to the on-going consultation on the proposition to set minimum learning hours for all schools in Scotland. The response will stress the importance of local flexibility around decision making. The Service moved two years ago to a 32 period week (1600 minutes) for the senior phase with schools having discretion to augment this with fifty minutes of registration. There is therefore a notional core 27.5 hours per week of pupil class contact, subject to the empowerment of schools to make a policy decision around registration.

In fact, the Service expanded the school week on an opt-in basis for secondary pupils on a Friday afternoon through provision of innovative cultural, sporting, personal achievement, literacy and numeracy recovery, and employability programmes, many of which have in-built accreditation. There has been a gradual growth in the number of pupils attending these activities, with around 30% of the S1 – S6 cohort participating weekly – a figure which is continually rising. In a number of recent inspection processes, there has been positive comment on the offerings of schools. Pupils who opt in benefit from a 29 hour school week, with many of the activities targeted towards those who most need additional support post-Covid.

There has been great buy in from pupils and parents for this programme and commendation from members of the Scottish Parliament. This is an example of the kind of innovative practice that could be jeopardised by a national approach that rendered such initiatives operationally unworkable. It is hoped that you agree that this should not be the intention, nor should it be the outcome, of any such national planning.

It should be noted that a number of these activities are not delivered exclusively by teachers, which is an important consideration. By broadening out beyond the core school week, we are able to deploy a wider range of staff and partners. If minimum learning hours are set across Scotland and only GTC registered staff can deliver them, this would directly weaken the broader offering required to enable a diverse set of experiences we have worked so hard

to implement with partners and which has led to a range of measurable successes for our children and young people (see our next section).

Again, internationally, there is no correlation between the minimum learning hours experienced by pupils in other nations of the world and the outcomes achieved by those countries' systems. For that and other reasons highlighted above, we would urge caution against focusing on input measures for pupils in this manner.

Ensuring Positive Outcomes for Young People

North Lanarkshire Council can document significant improvements in attainment in the past few years and also reductions in the poverty related attainment gap. Whilst having the second highest percentage (11%) of SIMD 1 – 2 datazones in Scotland our improvements in attainment have been demonstrated across our whole system, from early level through to the senior phase.

In the Broad General Education, North Lanarkshire now regularly matches or outperforms Scotland across all indicators – especially at second level. In the senior phase, North Lanarkshire is generally above, around or close towards national average positions for key indicators and is in the top echelon of local authorities for attainment for those in the SIMD 1 – 2 groups. The empirical data demonstrates the authority is raising attainment generally and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Going forward the authority wishes to build upon and further increase this evidence of improvements.

None of the above has been due to a rise in teacher numbers per se, nor has it been due to stipulating an amount of learning hours. Improvement is driven through outstanding leadership and management, creating cultures that promote success, developing systems which embrace inclusion, and ensuring our staff have a burning focus to continually deliver high quality outputs. Across a broad spectrum of inputs from committed stakeholders, from within Education but also across place e.g. employers, public partners etc..

The improvements have been underpinned by an increasingly integrated and holistic support model, incorporating colleagues from social work, CLD and housing into our overarching GIRFEC model. In terms of physical assets, the future model of education provision is aligned to the Council's capital development strategy '*town and community hub programme*' – a prime example of which is our recent innovations in the Newmains and St Brigid's community campus in Wishaw. Most importantly, the authority has empowered people to innovate and has worked in partnership with key stakeholders to develop our model. This is clearly demonstrated in the recent evidence from external inspections of North Lanarkshire schools which are typifying our cultural and systems approaches.

You may be aware that, along with key members of our team, the Council was able to make these points to colleagues from Education Scotland and the Welsh Government at a recent showcase event that was held recently in St Andrew's High School in Coatbridge – an event scheduled by Scottish Government and Education Scotland colleagues. During this event the strengths of effective local and national partnership working (typified by North Lanarkshire) to deliver Curriculum for Excellence was celebrated, which as the OECD report of 2021 stated, 'has worked itself into the hearts and minds of stakeholders and practitioners.'

Conclusion

In outlining these issues, I am conscious of the need to work together in partnership to achieve the bigger of objectives of raising attainment and closing the poverty related attainment gap.

In summary, North Lanarkshire's case illustration shows:

1. The financial pressures that are created in managing the teaching workforce when additional grants for the purpose of driving up teacher numbers are weighed against reductions in other funding streams.
2. The additional pressure on staff created by additional bureaucracy that will come to manage and monitor specific teacher numbers measures.
3. The power of local freedom to innovate and make local decisions, as shown by the North Lanarkshire model.
4. The importance of local accountability for said decisions, as shown in our journey of improvement.
5. The ways in which Scottish Government strategy can be delivered by empowered local government.
6. The broader concern that input measures can be deceiving; output gains are a result of holistic, human system improvement.
7. The need for clarity of Scottish Government intentions as regards future policy direction and funding mechanisms is critical to our local, future success.

Lastly, I would wish to highlight that this picture of local authority funding is broadly supported by the recent accounts commission report on *Local Government in Scotland* which noted that, 'Budget constraints and increasing cost pressures are putting councils' finances under severe strain. An increasing proportion of funding is ringfenced or directed for national policy initiatives. While this is important to help deliver national priorities, it prevents councils from making decisions about how funds can be used at a local level, to meet local need.'

I look forward to further discussion and securing an agreement on the way forward in relation to how we work together to secure the improvements that we need for the children of North Lanarkshire and Scotland as a whole.

Yours sincerely

Des Murray
Chief Executive

cc:

Jenny Gilruth, Cabinet Secretary (Education and Skills);
Joe Griffin, General for Education and Justice

Enclosure 24 – Response to letter of 12 December from East Ayrshire Council

19 December 2023

Dear Mr Anson

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

I refer to your letter of 12 December 2023 regarding Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2023: Teacher Numbers and welcome the opportunity to present details of the mitigating circumstances which have led to the small reduction in teacher numbers recorded in East Ayrshire between the 2022 and 2023 census dates.

Firstly, I have to say that I was disappointed to receive your letter and particularly concerned that it contained such a blunt threat to remove critical funding which currently supports children and young people across East Ayrshire. If such a threat were to be enacted, it would have a significant detrimental impact on some of the most disadvantaged children in Scotland.

Whilst noting your intention to be fair and balanced and to consider each case on its individual merits, it was also disappointing that the terms of the letter failed to recognise the national circumstances, pressures and policy decisions, which are not in the control of the Council. In particular, there is no differentiation between councils, especially those which made up the original nine attainment challenge authorities and which have been most affected by changes in funding.

In responding, it is therefore important that I put matters into context and provide both background and detail to the position which I believe you will find helpful. I trust that the following information will allow you to recommend that funding should not be withheld from East Ayrshire Council.

Our Commitment to Supporting Children and Young People

The East Ayrshire Council Strategic Plan was approved by all Members in June 2022 and sets out our priorities for the years ahead. Supporting our Children and Young People is one of the priorities that the Council will support and deliver against and agreeing this priority has been more than simply setting a series of words to paper. It means that our finite budget is aligned to this priority and that **our Education budget receives the greatest level of protection from budget cuts than any of our other services.**

Moreover, and despite the exceptionally challenging financial position that we all face, our Members have agreed that the total teacher staffing and classroom assistant budgets are fully protected from budget cuts. In 2022/23 when we had a budget gap of £6m, our Education Service received a 0.5% share of the cut whereas all other services received a 4.2% cut and, in the year ahead, has been allocated just over 1% of the cut whereas the general cuts to all other services is nearly 4%. In protecting teacher numbers and ensuring that the service receives the lowest level of cuts, then I would note that **our teacher staffing formula that supports our head teachers and children has also not been cut nor have there been any changes to it.**

In providing this protection and in directing all available resources to advance the skills, learning and teaching of our children, I would highlight that we are in a position where our Insight results for the 2022/23 academic year are the best ever. Our young people have achieved at a scale and rate never seen before and we see results at various ages and stages that show increased improvement year on year and against our virtual comparator. I firmly believe that our deliberate focus to protect our teacher and classroom assistant budgets means that we are able to deliver these exceptional results and I am confident in our children and young people and their outcomes and results in the years ahead.

East Ayrshire Council is never one to rest on its laurels and we note and accept the challenges that we face, challenges in our youth unemployment rate and in the unacceptable number of children and young people in the towns and villages across the Council who live in abject poverty. It is the reason why our Members allocated £6m of Covid Recovery funding to create 200 two-year apprenticeships for our young people and why we have provided half price school meals this academic year to all of our P6 to S6 pupils. We create fiscal protection to the budget, maintain teacher staffing formulae, seek to provide the necessary skills for learning, remove barriers and inequality and create employability options to prepare them for the world of work.

Our Children and Young People priority is important to us. Against all of this incredible work and, in line with the request you make in your letter, I will set out the reasons why the teacher census figure has fallen by 37 and again I stress that **none of this is due to the actions of my officers or policy decisions by the Council.**

Scottish Attainment Challenge

It was right that East Ayrshire Council was classed as an Attainment Authority given that we have the fourth highest level of child poverty in Scotland. Much was done with this funding and it is clear that it has contributed to the successful outcomes and results highlighted above. However the Scottish Government policy decision to reallocate this funding across all 32 council areas has led to **£0.635m being removed from our funding this year** with further reductions in the years to come. **This decision has had a direct impact on the budget resources available** and one targeted area of spend had been on additional teachers dedicated to raising attainment and closing the gap strategies in Literacy and Numeracy.

Unfortunately, the ongoing significant reduction in funding means that the **former SAC funded teachers have had to be redeployed into vacancies across the Council** in order to provide job security to this important group of teachers and I have to say that this has not been an easy process, especially when our core finances are so limited.

By working to ensure application of this funding cut without a compulsory or voluntary redundancy programme, this cohort of teachers continue to use their skills within their individual establishments and across the authority in groups such as our Literacy and Numeracy Leader forums.

The total reduction in teachers funded by SAC resulted in a variance of 12.5 FTE from 2022 to 2023. There will be other local authorities who have benefited from a new SEF allocation for the first time and who will have therefore been able to utilise this funding to improve or maintain teacher numbers.

I note from the list of councils that have had decreases in teacher numbers that eight of the nine SAC authorities are included in the list and while this does not surprise me, I also note authorities that have also seen numbers decline even though they have had an significant additional financial allocation provided from the previous targeted SAC authority funding.

Teacher Induction Scheme

In each of the annual Finance Circulars that accompanies the financial settlement there are specific paragraphs that relate to probationer teachers and the need for councils to offer employment and training as part of the Scheme. This is described as a joint priority between the Government and councils and it is one that East Ayrshire Council delivers against. Since 2015, we have provided probationer placements for 597 teachers demonstrating again our commitment to this joint policy.

For the 2022/23 session the Council was allocated 77 probationers despite having offered in excess of 100 places across primary and secondary. In East Ayrshire it is our practice to support schools through the allocation of probationers and demonstrating our effective support to the national induction scheme, while at the same time supplementing school staffing budgets to defray the associated salary costs. Even allowing for this, Head Teachers budgeting for a probationer salary cannot easily convert this for a salary of that of a main grade teacher.

For the current session 2023/24 we were allocated 17 fewer probationer than last year (60 across primary and secondary) and 33 less than we had offered places. This has had a direct impact, not only on the curriculum offering in a number of our secondary schools, but has contributed directly in the overall reduction in our teacher numbers for the session.

Pupil Equity Funding

As you are aware, Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), is allocated annually by the Government on a school by school basis with the allocations detailing the amount awarded to each school budget via the ring-fenced grant received by the Council and forwarded to schools. It is important to note that the conditions of PEF funding are such that the Council essentially acts as a clearing house for PEF and it is for each Head Teacher, supported by their management team and Parent Council to utilise their allocation to support the most disadvantaged pupils in our schools.

Head Teachers use a large part of this grant to employ additional teaching staff and, in the year in question, **schools have chosen to vary their PEF spend towards resources in order to support our pupils and deliver the outcomes of their School Improvement Plans.** I am simply not in a position to direct PEF spend nor indeed is my Chief Education Officer and while she can advise and suggest areas for spend, it is ultimately for each school to decide how best to spend their PEF award. **The total reduction in teaching staff funded by PEF has been 3.7 FTE from 2022 to 2023.**

At this point I would wish to highlight that I had previously asked my Chief Financial Officer to support the Government in its efforts to achieve the resolution of the local government pay award this year and in doing so to make arrangements to receive capital funds and to convert these to revenue. We are one of the few councils that have been able to offer this support to Government and I welcome being able to provide this support. More importantly and, in order to allow the £30m of 2023/24 PEF to be retained by Government to offset the costs of the pay award, I have directed that East Ayrshire Council can allow Government to retain £0.750m of in year PEF to support this course of action. As you would expect, we have discussed what this could mean for schools and our children and young people who are most in need. Accordingly, I have also directed the use of the Council's limited balances to provide temporary replacement of the £0.750m of PEF so that Head Teachers can maintain their PEF staffing contracts beyond 31 March 2024 and that pupils can have their PEF teacher retained and supporting them until the end of the academic year.

It is not yet clear what the £30m in year adjustment may mean for 2023/24 teacher numbers nationally given the artificial funding cut-off date of 31 March 2024. However, I do know that East Ayrshire Council has again supported our strategic priority and provided our own resources so that the £30m PEF adjustment will not have a detrimental impact on our schools, Head Teachers or our children and young people.

Early Years

East Ayrshire, like many other local authorities, is facing significant challenges in meeting all of the commitments of the early years' expansion policies and is having to make changes to delivery to address fiscal pressures. Head Teachers of former nursery schools have all been replaced by Heads of Centre since 2012 as and when the Head Teacher leaves their post which aligned with the repeal of the 1956 code.

Our Teacher Access Programme (TAP), team provides access to teachers across our early years establishments and, at the time of census, had a total of **1.3 FTE vacancies which we were unable to fill and one teacher in the TAP Team was on maternity leave** and, as such, was not counted in the census figure for 2023. **The total reduction of teaching staff in early years was 4 FTE.**

Conclusion

In summary, the variation between 2022 and 2023 is accounted for in the following ways and it is important to stress again that all of these were beyond the control of the Council.

	2022	2023	Variance
Probationers	77	60	17
Scottish Attainment Challenge Funded Teachers	18.8	6.3	12.5
PEF funded Teachers	30.4	26.8	3.6
Early Years Teaching Staff	11.7	7.7	4
	137.9	100.8	37.1

It is important to note that the contents of this letter are neither opinion nor excuse, they are fact. The facts are clear and show how East Ayrshire Council's teacher census

details have been impacted by national policy decisions that run counter to our own priority to support our children and young people.

In your letter you note that the Cabinet Secretary may wish to meet with officers. We would of course be happy to discuss this matter further with the Cabinet Secretary and would ensure that the Leader of the Council, who has seen this response, can be in attendance. However, I trust that this letter is sufficient and provides assurance of the mitigating circumstances around our teacher numbers and how the reduction occurred, removing the need for any meeting or any reduction in funding.

I would confirm that in the meantime I will be undertaking a review of all possible options available to the Council should a financial penalty be forthcoming given the importance that we place on protecting our Education Service, its budget and our children and young people.

Yours sincerely

Eddie Fraser
Chief Executive

Enclosure 25 – Response to letter of 12 December from Highland Council

19 December 2023

Dear Sam,

Thank you for your letter of 12 December asking for further information on the circumstances behind the decrease of 17 FTE in teachers numbers employed within Highland Council.

Firstly, you will be aware that despite the fall in teacher numbers, that Highland Council has maintained our Pupil Teacher Ratio at 13.2. In terms of mitigating circumstances, I would bring your attention the following:

- As a result of parental choice and following consultation, we were required to mothball one primary school to ensure that the pupils received the full range of educational benefits to which they are entitled which contributed to the reduction in primary teacher numbers.
- The overall school roll across our 166 primary schools fell by 385 from 2022 to 2023 with only a small increase across the secondary and special school sectors resulting in net fall in pupil numbers of 296.
- As a result, the number of primary teachers reduced by 19, however our average class size across p1-p3 remained relatively unchanged at 21.67 as opposed to 21.56 the previous year and there were no P1 classed with 26 pupils or more.
- Based on these figures, I would suggest that it would have been unnecessary and inequitable to retain these teachers over and above the DSM Primary Staffing Formula.
- It is worthy of note that despite submitting substantial bids for probationer teachers to fill real vacancies, Highland Council was again disappointed at the allocation date in May as detailed in the table below. This allocation of secondary probationer teachers was less than 50% of the number that was submitted in the bid. This had a direct impact on our ability to recruit to posts at such a late stage in the session when recruitment is already a challenge for highland schools, at census week there were 9 teaching posts due to be advertised. I note that the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills had made specific reference to the probationer allocation issues and impact on another rural LA, this was indeed an issue that we discussed with her on her visit in September.

Probationer Details below for 23/24

Primary

PROBATIONERS BID FOR	44
ALLOCATED	48
WITHDRAWN BEFORE	5
COMMENCEMENT	
WITHDRAWN – AFTER	2
COMMENCEMENT	
REMAINING	41

Secondary

PROBATIONERS BID FOR	64
ALLOCATED	32
WITHDRAWN BEFORE	3
COMMENCEMENT	
WITHDRAWN – AFTER	0
COMMENCEMENT	
REMAINING	29

- There has also been impact on Highland Council in terms of the move from PEF and SAC funding to PEF and SEF funding as shown below:

Year 1 £0.8m reduction

Year 2 £0.78 reduction

Year 3 £0.4m reduction

Year 4 no reduction

- Finally, it should be noted that the Gaelic Grant received remains at 900k despite the increased cost associated with the delivery of Gaelic education across Highland schools which was 6.2m in 22/23.

I trust the above information provides mitigation which would explain the very small reduction in teacher numbers across Highland Council, I would be happy to discuss any aspect of this with you further if you find that of use to you.

Yours sincerely

Derek Brown
Chief Executive

Enclosure 26 – Response to letter of 12 December from Shetland Council

19 December 2023

Dear Mr Anson

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND 2023: TEACHER NUMBERS

I write following your letter dated 12 December 2023 regarding the summary statistics for schools in Scotland 2023 which shows that teacher numbers for Shetland has fallen to 337. The number of teachers Shetland Islands Council is expected to maintain is 339. I am aware that this drop of 2 teachers below our allocation resulted in the letter of 12 December 2023.

The mitigating circumstances for this drop of teacher numbers in Shetland are due to teacher recruitment difficulties in our remote, rural, island location. On census day we had 4 teaching posts which we were having to cover with instructors as we could not fill these posts with teachers, as you will be aware those instructors did not count towards our teacher numbers. In addition to this we had a number of vacancies which were going through the recruitment process and in some instances we were unable to cover with supply on census day. I am sure that the difficulty of recruitment and retention is magnified in remote, rural, island locations and we are certainly experiencing difficulties in many areas of recruitment, particularly for our teacher posts. During September 2023 there were 19 of the 55 posts which required to be re-advertised for Shetland Islands Council. The enclosed graph shows teaching adverts between January 2022 and September 2023, split by post titles, with re-advertisements shown in orange.

We have seen a reduction in the number of staff who are absent from work due to ill health although this is still significant enough to also affect some of our teaching positions. I do hope that we will see absences continue to reduce and by next year we move back to a more normal absence rate.

We are actively engaged in the Initial Teacher Education programme with the General Teaching Council for Scotland, yet we are not allocated the number of probationers for which we would have posts. We are actively pursuing a 'grow your own' scheme which should support people in Shetland either train or re-train.

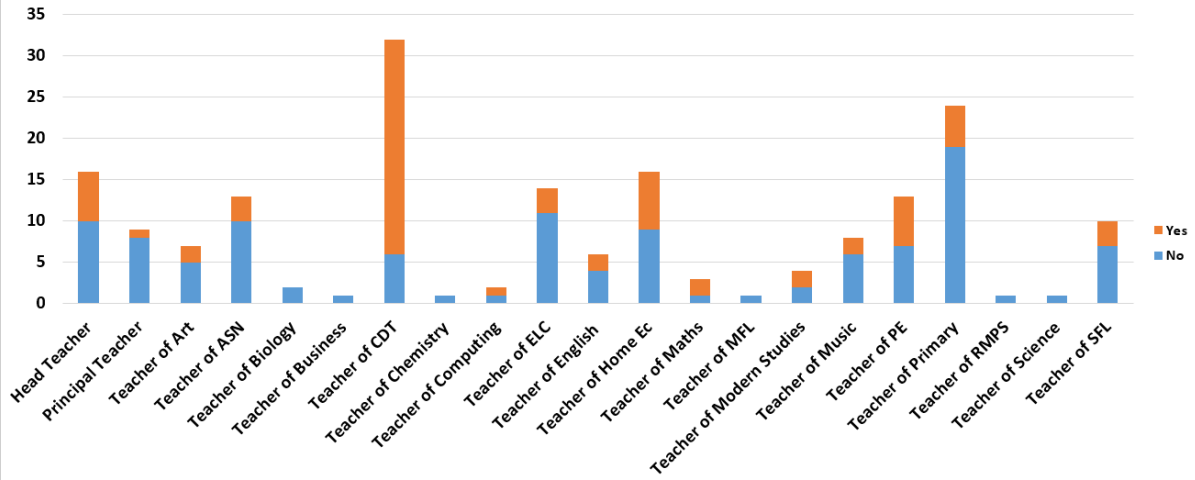
If you would like to discuss this further or have any ideas of how we can encourage teachers to come and work in Shetland, I would be delighted to hear from you.

Yours sincerely

Helen Budge
Director of Children's Services

Recruitment – Teaching Advertisements

Re-advertisements of Teacher Posts Jan 22 - Sept 23



Enclosure 27 – Response to letter of 12 December from Inverclyde Council

18 December 2023

Dear Sam

I write in reference to your letter dated 12 of December 2023, regarding teacher numbers.

You will recall that I met with you, alongside Michael Roach, Head of Education, earlier this year to flag this issue to you from Inverclyde's perspective.

In response to your request to share mitigating circumstances that have affected our ability to maintain the number of 781 that you shared with us in February 2023, seeing our teachers drop by 9, I outline the key reasons behind this below, as I did when we met above.

I am sure you are aware that there are a number of funding streams in addition to core local authority grant funding that generates the teacher numbers at the point of the annual census each year. Some of these funding sources, including PEF, are beyond our control, however we accept that as an authority working with and supporting our schools to evolve their PEF plans, we have a good indication of these figures each year. Equally, as I am sure you are aware, the pay award for teachers will have affected the amount of teachers that schools could afford to employ.

As mitigation for the drop in teacher numbers I wish to draw your attention to two funding streams affecting the overall teacher numbers in Inverclyde. In the 2022 census we had a number of teachers linked to Year 1 of the Scottish attainment Challenge (SAC) refresh, as well as teachers linked to an Ear Marked Reserve (EMR) created from an underspend in our 1140 funding.

In relation to the SAC funding you will be aware that as one of the original 9 SAC authorities, Inverclyde has seen its overall budget allocation diminish. The total budget for 2022/23 was £2,748,713 and reduced to £2,030,319 in 2023/24. This meant that we were removing a number of teachers from our SAC / SEF plan and as a result our overall FTE as the census in 2023 reduced. We feel most strongly that it is unfair to ask us to maintain these numbers when we are having this funding reduced by the Scottish Government as outlined.

As well as this we had an earmarked reserve of £1.922M established due to an underspend of our 1140 grant. Michael as head of Education and our then Early Years Manager, met with Scottish Government officials in 2020/21 to outline this underspend, the reasons for this and a proposal to retain this money and spend it strategically. This was approved and agreed, with part of the plan we shared for its spend including ongoing recovery support for pupils across the early level post pandemic. This resulted in 9.8FTE teachers being employed in 2022/23 and as such these staff were in the 2022 census. Again, this money was not available to us for 2023/24 and so our overall teacher numbers reduced.

We endeavoured to maintain our teacher numbers as best we could for the census in 2023 and indeed a difference of 9 was less than we had predicted which reflects the fact that every effort was made by us to do as was asked. However, given the reduction in funding as outlined above, which is beyond our direct control, we were clear with you early this year that this was likely to happen.

We hope that you will consider our representations and be fair and balanced in your consideration that it was very difficult, if not impossible for us to meet the conditions set relating to maintaining teacher numbers.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

Enclosure 28 – Response to letter of 12 December from Clackmannanshire Council

13th December 2023

Dear Sam,

Thank you for your letter of 12 December.

As you would expect, we are aware that our overall teacher numbers have fallen by 1 since last year however, we do have mitigating circumstances and would be grateful if these could be considered.

In Clackmannanshire, the 2023 census shows a reduction of 48 pupils (0.7%) since 2022 and our pupil teacher ratio figure has reduce from 12.1 to 12.0 which is the lowest of any mainland authority with the exception of Argyll and Bute.

In addition, in financial year 2023/24, the funding we receive for the Scottish Attainment Challenge Strategic Equity Fund has reduced by £268,000 which represents a 20% reduction. This was a significant drop for an authority as small as Clackmannanshire and as a direct consequence of this reduction, we had to reduce by 4 teachers who were funded directly through SAC/SEF.

Despite these, we have tried to keep the decrease to an absolute minimum, and we remain committed to maintaining teacher numbers.

I would be grateful if these individual circumstances can be considered and a recommendation can be made to the Cabinet Secretary to release the funding as expected.

Yours sincerely

Lorraine Sanda
Strategic Director (People)

Enclosure 29 – Response to letter of 12 December from Moray Council

20 December 2023

Dear Colleague

Further to Sam Anson's letter of 12 December 2023 regarding the above, please find below information on the situation in Moray. I apologise that due to pressures of dealing with our budget preparations locally and the lead in to the holiday period it was not possible to meet your deadline of 19 December and hope this information is still useful.

In Moray we are committed to raising attainment and improving outcomes for all Moray's children and young people. We are working with our Head Teachers and school staff to focus on learning and teaching and drive forward attainment and have been pleased to see improvements in our most recent results. However, we are ambitious to continue our improvement journey and are considering carefully how best to resource this to support all learners using a range of staff, including but not limited to teachers and it is important that we have this flexibility in future to meet the breadth of need.

In relation to teacher numbers, last year Moray supported the Teacher Induction Scheme by accepting additional NQTs to help ensure that every NQT in Scotland was allocated to an authority. As a result Moray received 79 NQTs in 2022, which dropped to 56 this year, accounting for a reduction in 23 teachers. In addition, every supernumerary NQT comes with an additional teacher requirement of at least 0.28 FTE for non-contact cover, etc which has also reduced our teacher FTE. This situation in relation to NQTs inflated our census numbers for 2022 and has reduced them for 2023 and is the main cause of our variance.

However, difficulties in recruitment have also contributed. Recruitment challenges that, particularly for secondary subjects, are exacerbated by the timing of the NQT process which means that recruitment to posts where NQTs do not take up placements is delayed, making the prospect of appointment even more difficult. For subjects like technical and home economics this year we have advertised posts, including financial incentives, more than 12 times each without success. This has meant no appointment and there are also no supply teachers available in these areas.

Our teacher numbers are also impacted by recruitment challenges for Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher vacancies, with reduced applications and reduced quality of applicants. The Into Headship requirement for HT applicants has impacted on our recruitment with even acting posts being repeatedly advertised with no suitable applicants to interview. As a result on occasion we have had to temporarily place central officers in vacant posts to ensure cover for schools and have HTs covering more than one school. We already have successful joint headship posts and will be considering expanding this approach to accommodate recruitment issues and ensure sustainable leadership across our schools. This will inevitably impact on teacher numbers but we consider it to be a vital tool in securing a quality, stable education offer for all pupils and leadership for our staff teams moving forward.

It is also of note that we are also seeing our pupil numbers drop in Moray, with the primary school roll reducing, although there is a partially offsetting increase in secondary.

I hope this gives some insight to the issues faced in Moray and in particular the impact on our teacher numbers of the reduction in the supernumerary NQTs that are no longer available.

Regards

Denise

Denise Whitworth | Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities & Organisational Development)

Enclosure 30 – Response to letter of 12 December from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

21st December 2023

Dear Mr Anson

SUMMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS: TEACHER NUMBERS

I write in response to your letter of 12th December 2023 regarding a variation in the number of teachers employed by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar between the 2022 and 2023 census figures, with apologies for the late reply.

The additional funding provided by Scottish Government has been welcomed and has supported teacher recruitment and the Comhairle has made efforts to retain our number of teachers in the face of very significant pressures within local government finance. Managing teacher numbers across a rural authority with schools across seven different islands, dealing with fluctuating rolls and availability of resident staff, presents us with significant challenges and requires degrees of flexibility over time to ensure all our schools are appropriately staffed.

In relation to the reasons for the change from 320 to 314, a reduction of six FTE posts, I request that you take into account the following mitigating factors, which are enhanced by our island status and do not show any policy choice to reduce teacher numbers; they are operational and practical in nature.

- Reduction and issues in allocation of probationers and a failure to secure requested probationers from the GTCS allocation, particularly in secondary education. This resulted in additional vacancies at the time of the census that then had to be filled by subsequent recruitment, where possible.
- Recruitment difficulties resulting in a number of vacancies at the time of the census. This includes challenges in recruitment to secondary subjects across different island schools.
- Reduction of an acting promoted post within secondary ASN that was temporarily deployed in 2022 and appeared in that census.
- Several flexible working requests from teachers seeking to reduce to part-time hours where back-fill was not required to retain staffing formulae and ratios.
- Fluctuations in school rolls resulting in a reduction in teacher deployment and equivalent RCCT.
- Recruitment of a teacher to a funded Early Years role that did not require back-fill of previous post.

I hope that the information in this letter demonstrates that the minimal reduction in teacher numbers in the Western Isles is on account of genuine operational factors. In these circumstances, I submit that it would not be reasonable that funding be withdrawn, where every possible effort had been made to retain our teacher numbers.

Yours sincerely

Donald Macleod
Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services

INDEX OF ENCLOSURES

Description	Date	Explanation of redactions	Clause
Enclosure 01 – Letter to local authorities about Protecting teacher numbers, pupil support staff and learning hours	9 February 2023	-	-

Enclosure 01 – Letter to local authorities about Protecting teacher numbers, pupil support staff and learning hours

**Local Authority Chief Executive
Directors of Education
Directors of Finance**

9 February 2023

Protecting teacher numbers, pupil support staff and learning hours

Teacher numbers

1. Following the Cabinet Secretary's statement to Parliament on 7 February, you will now be aware that we have taken steps to ensure that the current level of teachers and support staff are maintained. In addition, we also indicated our intention to introduce legislation to standardise learning hours for pupils. The purpose of this letter is to confirm the position for your local authority and to set out the implications for local government finance settlement for 2023-24.

2. As you will be aware, in 2022/23 we provided additional funding of £145.5 million to local authorities to support the recruitment of additional teachers and support staff.

3. Following a drop in teacher numbers as published in the Summary Statistics for Schools in December 2022, the Cabinet Secretary set out in her statement to Parliament the actions we have taken to:

- maintain teacher numbers and the number of pupil support assistants at their current levels in the year ahead, as we continue to work towards our aim to increase teacher numbers by 3,500 and support staff by 500 by the end of this Parliament.
- Ensure places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme.
- Ensure there is no reduction in the number of pupil learning hours delivered by teachers in the school week.

4. You will be aware that local authorities already receive £88 million per year to (i) maintain teacher numbers and (ii) provide places on the Teacher Induction Scheme for all probationers who need one (£37 million of the £88 million is held back by as undistributed funding in the annual local government finance settlement for this specific purpose). In addition, we are providing a further £145.5 million each year from 2022/23 explicitly to fund teacher numbers and pupil support staff.

5. This funding will be maintained in full, but from 1 April 2023 both components (giving a total allocation in 2023-24 of £233.5 million) will now be conditional upon the successful delivery of the following expectations:

- Maintain teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022 (details provided at Annex A).

- Maintain pupil support staff numbers at 2022 census levels, which we will publish on 21 March 2023 based on the data collected from local authorities in September 2022.
- Ensure that places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme

6. Of this total of £233.5 million, £151 million will be distributed as normal and included in the Local Government Finance (Scotland) Order 2022/23 for delivering the first two of these expectations. A further £45.5 million will also be distributed as a redetermination of General Revenue Grant in the last two weeks of March 2024 subject to confirmation that those conditions above have been met in full by each local authority. The remaining £37 million will continue to be distributed depending on the number of teachers that receive a place on the Teacher Induction Scheme in August 2023 as has been the case in previous years.

7. A full breakdown of the teacher numbers we expect to be maintained, both nationally and locally, is attached at Annex A, with the relevant financial allocations set out in Annex B. Details of the figures for Pupil Support Staff will be provided in March when the 2022 statistics are published. In the event of these requirements not being met, the Scottish Government will recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes.

8. The number of teachers we expect [name of local authority] local authority to maintain is [number drawn from Annex A]

Financial allocations are as follows:

Local Authority	£51m	£100m	£45.5m*
[name of local authority]	(figure drawn from Annex B)	(figure drawn from Annex B)	(figure drawn from Annex B)

9. We are working with COSLA to reach agreement on what monitoring arrangements will be put in place, but it is likely to be quarterly in line with previous monitoring and include, but not be limited to, the data collection for the 2023 school census.

10. For completeness, all grant funding streams to local authorities and schools through the Scottish Attainment Challenge programme remain bound by their existing grant conditions and should be targeted towards supporting children and young people impacted by poverty. This includes Pupil Equity Funding, where headteachers should continue to be empowered to invest their PEF to support the children and young people impacted by poverty.

Learning Hours

11. Similarly, we have made clear our serious concern that any reduction in learning hours for pupils, reportedly considered by some local authorities due to pressure on

budgets, would have a significant negative impact on children and young people, and on their families.

12. We propose to commence section 21 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, which confers powers on the Scottish Ministers to specify by regulations the minimum number of learning hours which must be made available to pupils in a school year. We intend to consult shortly on proposals to make regulations under that power which would ensure that there is no reduction in the number of learning hours made available to pupils.

13. Decisions over the delivery of the school week are primarily for local authorities and we are aware that many authorities have already used a degree of flexibility in order to adapt provision, for example, to implement an asymmetric week. We would not intend to restrict that flexibility, but to ensure that the current levels of provision, which are so important to pupils and parents, are protected.

14. It will be important to gather accurate information on current provision in order to inform our consultation and ensure that new regulations would have their intended effect. Officials have prepared short surveys that local authorities are asked to complete via SmartSurvey to provide information on the number of learning hours per week currently taught in schools. The surveys can be accessed here:

Primary schools - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/4M7LJ6/>

Secondary schools - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/53W3L7/>

Special schools - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/60KAF4/> .

We would be grateful if these are completed by **Wednesday, 22 February**.

Sam Anson
Deputy Director: Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital

ANNEX A

Teacher FTE from the 2022 census (as published in December 2022) including ELC.	
Local Authority	FTE
Aberdeen City	1,836
Aberdeenshire	2,747
Angus	1,156
Argyll and Bute	835
City of Edinburgh	3,725
Clackmannanshire	556
Dumfries and Galloway	1,389
Dundee City	1,395
East Ayrshire	1,243
East Dunbartonshire	1,393
East Lothian	1,031
East Renfrewshire	1,393
Falkirk	1,651
Fife	3,724
Glasgow City	5,779
Highland	2,356
Inverclyde	781
Midlothian	1,081
Moray	977
Na h-Eileanan Siar	320
North Ayrshire	1,434
North Lanarkshire	3,726
Orkney Islands	257
Perth and Kinross	1,419
Renfrewshire	1,780
Scottish Borders	1,067
Shetland Islands	339
South Ayrshire	1,164
South Lanarkshire	3,516
Stirling	974
West Dunbartonshire	950
West Lothian	2,075
All local authorities	*54,071

* This total does not include teachers in grant -aided schools.

ANNEX B

Local Authority	£51m	£100m	£45.5m*
Aberdeen City	1.732	3.446	1.568
Aberdeenshire	2.591	5.065	2.305
Angus	1.091	2.094	0.953
Argyll and Bute	0.787	1.482	0.674
Clackmannanshire	0.525	0.938	0.427
Dumfries and Galloway	1.310	2.743	1.248
Dundee City	1.316	2.754	1.253
East Ayrshire	1.172	2.278	1.036
East Dunbartonshire	1.314	2.267	1.031
East Lothian	0.972	2.027	0.922
East Renfrewshire	1.314	2.306	1.049
City of Edinburgh	3.514	7.256	3.302
Na h-Eileanan Siar	0.302	0.494	0.225
Falkirk	1.557	3.052	1.389
Fife	3.512	7.076	3.219
Glasgow City	5.451	11.314	5.148
Highland	2.223	4.413	2.008
Inverclyde	0.736	1.439	0.655
Midlothian	1.019	1.869	0.850
Moray	0.921	1.689	0.769
North Ayrshire	1.353	2.602	1.184
North Lanarkshire	3.514	6.868	3.125
Orkney Islands	0.243	0.440	0.200
Perth and Kinross	1.338	2.478	1.128
Renfrewshire	1.679	3.282	1.493
Scottish Borders	1.007	2.018	0.918
Shetland Islands	0.319	0.518	0.236
South Ayrshire	1.098	2.016	0.917
South Lanarkshire	3.317	6.449	2.934
Stirling	0.919	1.779	0.810
West Dunbartonshire	0.896	1.740	0.792
West Lothian	1.957	3.808	1.733
All local authorities	51.000	100.000	*45.50

*To be withheld subject to conditions being met