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Enclosure 01 – Email from Daniel Johnson MSP

From: Daniel Johnson MSP <daniel.johnson.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 11:24 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills <cabseces@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: DJ17260)

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

RE: Scottish primary education provision

One of my constituents has contacted me in relation to her concerns with the lack of jobs for primary school teachers:

As a primary teacher who has been on a temporary contract since completing my probation year, I am deeply concerned about the lack of teaching opportunities in Edinburgh and across Scotland. Having dedicated my time and passion to teaching, it is disheartening to see the challenges faced by educators like myself in securing permanent positions in our communities. This email addresses 2 points for your consideration and action on.

Why is there no permanent primary teacher contracts in Edinburgh for the next academic year? Why do universities across Scotland continue to recruit hundreds of primary teachers when there are no (or very, very little in some local authorities) jobs following the probation year?

The situation is particularly dire as I have learned that Edinburgh has no permanent contracts available for the upcoming academic year. This news not only adds to the uncertainty of my own employment prospects but also highlights a systemic issue within the education system that needs urgent attention.

Furthermore, recent reports indicate that Glasgow is planning to cut 450 teaching positions, further exacerbating the already limited opportunities for qualified educators. As someone who is committed to providing quality education to students, these developments are deeply troubling and raise questions about the future of our profession in these cities.

I understand that one of the contributing factors to this problem is the high number of students being admitted to teacher training courses, leading to an oversupply of qualified teachers in the job market. While it is essential to encourage individuals to pursue careers in education, there must be a concerted effort to align the number of trainees with the demand for educators in our communities. Why do universities continually take on more and more student teachers each year? Should a pause or lower number of student places be considered? I am unable to get an answer as to who is responsible for this decision.

In light of these challenges, I urge you to take immediate action to address the shortage of teaching jobs in Edinburgh. Specifically, I implore you to consider initiatives aimed at retaining existing teachers, creating more permanent positions, and providing support for educators who are currently on temporary contracts.

Investing in our educators is crucial for the well-being and future success of our students. By prioritising the retention and permanent recruitment of already qualified teachers, we can ensure that every child in Edinburgh and across Scotland receives the quality education they deserve.

I would be very grateful if you could respond to the issue[s] raised and provide me with any other

relevant information regarding this case.

Many thanks in advance for your help in this matter.

Kind Regards,
Daniel

Daniel Johnson MSP

Member of Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Southern
Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Business and Fair Work

Enclosure 02 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 01

Our Reference: 202400408937

Your Reference: Case Ref: DJ17260

13 May 2024

Dear Daniel,

Thank you for your email of 11 April on behalf of your constituent about employment opportunities for primary teachers.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities. The Scottish Government's ambition to substantially eliminate the poverty related attainment gap is clear, and this will not be achieved by having fewer teachers in our schools.

Your constituent will be aware that the recruitment and employment of teachers and all other support staff, are matters for individual councils, as they have the statutory duty for the delivery of education. This includes providing a complement of teachers and headteachers which meet the needs of each of their schools and its pupils in light of their local needs and circumstances.

While our teachers are employed by local authorities and not the Scottish Government, we are taking strong action to protect increased teacher numbers. We are supporting councils with an additional £145.5m in this year's budget to protect teacher numbers, which provides assurance of funding and removes this as a barrier to employing staff on permanent contracts.

I am, however, aware of concerns surrounding the increased use of temporary contracts in the education sector and the uncertainty this can cause – both to teachers and to teaching and learning. As such, I have asked the Strategic Board for Teacher Education to look in detail at issues around the recruitment and retention of teachers in Scotland. This includes geographical and subject-specific issues, as well as how we can increase diversity within the profession and improve support for early career teachers. I have also discussed the national picture on recruitment with COSLA and will continue to work with our Councils on the issue of teacher recruitment and retention.

With regards to intake figures to universities, intakes to initial teacher education (ITE) programmes are set following extensive consultation with various parties including the Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group. This Group contains representatives from local authority employers and university providers of ITE. These deliberations are informed by the Scottish Government's statistical model on future number of teachers needed. The annual statistical model estimates the number of ITE students required to maintain pupil teacher ratios. The model is based on a number of inputs including projections about the number of pupils in the education

system at primary and secondary ages, churn in teacher numbers (recruitment, maternity, returners, etc) and the retention rates of ITE students.

The Scottish Funding Council are ultimately responsible for setting intakes to ITE and write to universities setting targets for each academic year. It was agreed for 2023/24 to reduce primary PGDE by 200 and maintain all other targets at 2022/23 level.

Enclosure 03 – Email from Siobhian Brown MSP

From: Siobhian Brown MSP <Siobhian.Brown.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 11:51 AM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>
Subject: (Case Ref: SB4359)

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Siobhian's office has recently been contacted by the constituent named above in regard to the state of the education system in Scotland. I have attached their concerns below:

I am writing to you because I am extremely concerned about the state of education in Scotland. In particular, the issue of recruitment and the lack of teaching jobs throughout Scotland. This is having a direct impact on teachers' wellbeing and on the quality of teaching provision in Scotland.

I understand that last week, in Parliament, John Swinney advised that his government intend to train more teachers. We have a huge surplus of new/recently qualified teachers in Scotland (myself included) and an extreme shortage of teaching posts.

In my opinion, there should be an immediate freeze on teacher training and a push to create more posts for the already flooded market.

I would very much like this issue raised or debated in Parliament. I am very concerned for the future of the profession and the impact this situation is having on our learners.

In regard to the concerns raised above. Could I please ask if the Cabinet Secretary would provide a response I could pass onto the constituent?

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]
Casework and Admin Assistant
Tel: 01292 [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Siobhian Brown MSP
Ayr Constituency

Enclosure 04 – Email from Kirsten Oswald MP

From: Kirsten Oswald MP <kirsten.oswald.mp@parliament.uk>

Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 4:46 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: KO24844) Availability of NQT jobs

Good afternoon

Kirsten has been contacted by a constituent in relation to the availability of NQT jobs.

The constituent is concerned regarding the job prospects of those studying primary teaching after their PDGE year.

The constituent would be grateful to know the number of predicted training places available compared to the number of those on PDGE courses.

The constituent would also be grateful to know what else is being suggested to NQT and PDGE students to help them secure local employment.

The constituent is also concerned regarding the number of ASN pupils in mainstream school. The constituent would like to know how staff and fellow pupils are supported with more ASN pupils in mainstream classrooms.

I would be grateful for any assistance with the above enquiries.

With all best wishes

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Caseworker

Office of Kirsten Oswald

Member of Parliament for East Renfrewshire

Enclosure 05 – Email from Daniel Johnson MSP

From: Daniel Johnson MSP <daniel.johnson.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 10:59 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: DJ17591)

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

RE: Teacher Recruitment

One of my constituents has contacted me in relation to teacher recruitment:

As a teacher of **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**, Edinburgh schools seem to be a closed shop. I have had around 30 interviews and there is pretty much always an internal candidate - normally a probationer teacher, who is half the cost of me. Why are so many teachers being trained, when they are cutting experienced teachers?

I would be very grateful if you could respond to the issues raised and provide me with any other relevant information regarding this case.

Many thanks in advance for your help in this matter.

Kind Regards,
Daniel

Enclosure 06 – Email from Neil Bibby MSP

From: Neil Bibby MSP <neil.bibby.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 9:38 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills <CabSecforES@gov.scot>

Subject: Re: Availability of Permanent Teaching Posts for Early Career Teachers in the West of Scotland

Our Ref: NB4241RBR

Your ref: 202300387915

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Many thanks for your detailed response, which I had shared with **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**. She has come back with some further queries – which I have included below, and I hope you are able to address:

'It has become increasingly apparent that the Scottish Government has overestimated the number of teachers needed for the future, evidenced by the unfortunate reality that a significant number of newly qualified teachers are either unemployed or forced to seek employment elsewhere. This discrepancy between supply and demand not only creates unnecessary hardship for these talented individuals but also raises questions about the accuracy of the government's projections and planning.

Furthermore, there is a pressing need for accountability and transparency in the allocation and utilization of public funds, particularly the recent additional £145.5 million given to local councils. It is imperative that this funding is utilized correctly within the councils, specifically directed towards addressing the identified needs, such as supporting education and ensuring adequate staffing levels in schools.

As a concerned citizen, I urge you to take proactive steps to address these issues. It is essential that the Scottish Government conducts a thorough review of its teacher workforce projections and collaborates closely with relevant stakeholders to ensure that future estimations are accurate and reflective of actual demand. Additionally, measures must be implemented to ensure that allocated funds are utilized responsibly and effectively, with stringent oversight mechanisms in place to prevent misuse or diversion.

I kindly request that my concerns be forwarded to the cabinet secretary for consideration and action. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I trust that prompt and decisive action will be taken to address these critical issues.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Kind regards,

Neil Bibby MSP

Enclosure 07 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 03

Our Reference: 202400415136
Your Reference: Case Ref: SB4359

20 June 2024

Dear Siobhian,

Thank you for your email of 20 May, on behalf of your constituent **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**, about employment opportunities for teachers.

At the outset, I would assure you that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities. The Scottish Government's ambition to substantially eliminate the poverty related attainment gap is clear, and this will not be achieved by having fewer teachers in our schools.

I must, however, make clear that statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities. It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available. I have discussed the national picture on recruitment with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), and will continue to work with our councils on the issue of teacher recruitment and retention.

With regard to recruitment and retention, I would add that the Scottish Government is committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers, and we are providing local authorities with £145.5 million in next year's budget to protect teacher numbers.

Despite continued austerity from the UK Government and a real terms cut in the Scottish Budget, I would note that the Scottish Government has provided record funding of over £14 billion to Local Authorities, and increased Local Government's share of the discretionary budget. In 2024-25, South Ayrshire Council will receive £274.3 million to fund local services, which equates to an extra £17.2 million to support vital day to day services or an additional 6.7% compared to the 2023-24 budget.

For **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**'s information, the annual local government settlement is distributed in full using the needs-based formula, which is discussed and agreed each year with COSLA on behalf of all their local authority members. The formula takes into account factors such as population, deprivation and rurality.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] may be aware that the Scottish Government's policy towards local authorities' spending is to allow local authorities the financial freedom to operate independently. As such, the vast majority of funding is provided by means of a block grant. It is then the responsibility of individual local authorities to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total financial resources available to them, on

the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled their statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

With specific regard to intakes to Initial Teacher Education (ITE), **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** may wish to note that programmes are set following extensive consultation with various parties including the Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group. This Group includes representatives from local authority employers and university providers of ITE.

The Group's recommendations to me are based upon Scottish Government statistical model on future number of teachers needed. The annual statistical model estimates the number of ITE students required to maintain pupil teacher ratios. The model is based on a number of inputs including projections about the number of pupils in the education system at primary and secondary ages, churn in teacher numbers (recruitment, maternity, returners, etc) and the retention rates of ITE students.

The Scottish Funding Council are ultimately responsible for setting intakes to ITE for each academic year. **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** may wish to note that it was agreed for 2023-24 to reduce primary PGDE by 200 and maintain all other targets at 2022-23 level.

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] may be interested to note that I commissioned an external project which considered possible future scenarios for the education workforce in Scotland to help inform effective and evidence-informed workforce planning.

The report was published in May and can be found on the Scottish Government website at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-projections-implications-teacher-resourcing-needs-scotland-education-workforce-modelling-research/>. The report considers a range of factors, including population projections over the next decade and the potential implications for education workforce resources.

Outcomes from the report will help to inform discussions with partners, including teaching unions, COSLA, and local authorities, to ensure we have a teaching workforce in place, now and in the future, that enables us to progress our key commitments, ensure an education system that delivers excellence and equity for all, and represents maximum value for money.

I trust **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** will find my reply helpful.

Enclosure 08 – Email from Shona Robison MSP

From: Shona Robison MSP <dundee@shona.robison.scot>

Sent: Thursday, June 20, 2024 9:32 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: SR2264)

Good morning,

I am writing on the behalf of a constituent who has contacted my office with some concerns regarding job prospects for teachers in Dundee.

More specifically, she has stated:

I'm sure you have had many emails like this recently however it is a pressing issue for thousands of people currently. I am a recently qualified teacher and I am looking at the prospect of no jobs in the near future, most of my peers are unfortunately in the same boat. Dundee city council have given out no new permanent contracts this year.

What is going to be done about retention of teachers and teacher job security as surely we can keep having teachers qualify each year with no jobs to go into after their probation year? The system seems completely broken.

I would be very grateful if you could respond to these concerns and clarify the Scottish Government's position on this matter.

For awareness, I have also written to Dundee City Council to ask that they provide my constituent with a response regarding her more specific concerns about jobs for teachers in Dundee.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Kind regards,

Shona

Shona Robison MSP

Dundee City East Constituency

Enclosure 09 – Email from Máiri McAllan MSP

From: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot>
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2024 5:37 PM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>
Subject: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Dear Cab Sec,

Please find attached a letter from our constituent [Redacted s38(1)(b)], who is a teacher, and who has written to Máiri McAllan MSP in her capacity as her local MSP.

Grateful for your response from the Scottish Government.

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Senior Caseworker
Máiri McAllan MSP | Clydesdale
Máiri McAllan BPA | Dhail Chluaidh

Enclosure 09.1 – Word attachment

Dear Mairi McAllan,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the current situation facing teachers in Scotland, particularly the alarming shortage of teaching positions available to newly qualified educators (like myself). This issue is not only affecting individuals who have dedicated years of study and training to the profession but is also posing a significant threat to the quality of education our children receive.

Over the past few years, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of newly qualified teachers struggling to secure permanent or even temporary positions within the education system. Many are left in a state of uncertainty, with some having to take up non-teaching roles or leave the profession altogether. This situation is unsustainable and is likely to have long-term repercussions on the educational landscape of Scotland. I have just completed my probationary year and am yet to find work for after the summer holidays. I am a passionate teacher that loves my job but the uncertainty of work means I am considering leaving the profession after just one year.

The shortage of teaching jobs is compounded by factors such as budget constraints, outdated recruitment processes, and the lack of support for newly qualified teachers transitioning from education to the workforce. Furthermore, the competitive nature of the few available positions means that talented individuals are often left disheartened and demotivated, which is detrimental to the morale and sustainability of the teaching profession.

I urge the Scottish Government to take immediate and decisive action to address this crisis.

Possible measures could include:

1. **Increased Investment in Education:** Allocating additional funding to create more teaching positions and ensure competitive salaries to attract and retain skilled educators.

2. **Review of Recruitment Policies:** Streamlining recruitment processes to make them more efficient and accessible, ensuring that talented individuals are not left without a job.
3. **Promotion of Teaching as a Viable Career:** Launching campaigns to highlight the rewards and impact of a teaching career, encouraging more individuals to consider and remain in the profession.
4. **Limiting University places:** Each year, universities are taking on students, not relaying the job difficulties to students and leading them into a false sense of security.

The teaching profession is the backbone of our society, and it is crucial that we provide adequate support and opportunities for those who choose to dedicate their lives to educating our future generations. I believe that with the right interventions, we can turn this situation around and ensure that Scotland continues to have a vibrant, dynamic, and effective education system.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I look forward to your response and to seeing positive changes that will support our teachers and enhance the educational outcomes for all students in Scotland.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Enclosure 10 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 04

Our Reference: 202400415867

Your Reference: KO24844

3 July 2024

Dear Kirsten,

Thank you for your email on behalf of your constituent, about employment opportunities for primary teachers.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities. The Scottish Government's ambition to substantially eliminate the poverty related attainment gap is clear, and this will not be achieved by having fewer teachers in our schools.

I must, however, make clear that statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities. It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available. I have discussed the national picture on recruitment with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), and will continue to work with our councils on the issue of teacher recruitment and retention.

With regard to recruitment and retention, I would add that the Scottish Government is committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers, and we are providing local authorities with £145.5 million in next year's budget to protect teacher numbers.

With specific regard to intakes to Initial Teacher Education (ITE), your constituent may wish to note that programmes are set following extensive consultation with various parties including the Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group. This Group includes representatives from local authority employers and university providers of ITE.

The Group's recommendations to me are based upon Scottish Government statistical model on future number of teachers needed. The annual statistical model estimates the number of ITE students required to maintain pupil teacher ratios. The model is based on a number of inputs including projections about the number of pupils in the education system at primary and secondary ages, churn in teacher numbers (recruitment, maternity, returners, etc) and the retention rates of ITE students.

The Scottish Funding Council are ultimately responsible for setting intakes to ITE for each academic year. Your constituent may wish to note that it was agreed for 2023-24 to reduce primary PGDE by 200 and maintain all other targets at 2022-23 level.

Your constituent may wish to note that the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) has now been in operation for more than 20 years. While many aspects of the scheme work well, I am aware of the challenges around probationer allocations in certain geographical areas and in certain subjects. We are therefore currently considering how the Teacher Induction Scheme can better address these challenges.

I would also emphasise that the TIS provides a one year placement for every eligible student graduating with a teaching qualification from one of Scotland's universities. This placement is to allow probationer teachers to meet the Standard for Full Registration. It is not designed to fill vacancies, and it does not provide a guarantee of future employment with a particular local authority.

Your constituent may be interested to note that I commissioned an external project which considered possible future scenarios for the education workforce in Scotland to help inform effective and evidence-informed workforce planning.

The report was published on 7 May and can be found on the Scottish Government website at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-projections-implications-teacher-resourcing-needs-scotland-education-workforce-modelling-research/>. The report considers a range of factors, including population projections over the next decade and the potential implications for education workforce resources.

Outcomes from the report will help to inform discussions with partners, including teaching unions, COSLA, and local authorities, to ensure we have a teaching workforce in place, now and in the future, that enables us to progress our key commitments, ensure an education system that delivers excellence and equity for all, and represents maximum value for money.

With regard to learners in mainstream schools who may have an additional support need, it is the responsibility of schools and local authorities to provide the appropriate space for teachers to access professional development opportunities.

Your constituent may wish to note that all ITE programmes in Scotland are accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) based on the Standard for Provisional Registration. The Professional Standards that both student teachers and registered teachers are expected to meet now specifically recognise Additional Support Needs.

Ensuring educators have equitable access to free, high quality relevant professional learning set within the inclusive Scottish context is a key component in understanding and supporting the needs of all children and young people. There is a wide range of free professional learning opportunities set with the Scottish context which individual educators, establishments, local authorities and Unions can use and adapt to suit their context. These are provided by a range of organisations, including Education Scotland, professional organisations, Unions, health and the third sector.

We work with third sector organisations, like the National Autism Implementation Team, to produce materials to support professional learning and development for those working with autistic learners. And, we are working with partners, including the

wider autistic community to continue and develop this work to further improve the support available to autistic learners.

I would add that Education Scotland has developed online inclusion resources for practitioners, as well as a suite of curricular and professional development resources to build teacher confidence and support the emotional and mental wellbeing of children providing free professional learning resources on Inclusion.

I trust your constituent will find my reply helpful.

Enclosure 11 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 05

Our Reference: 202400416728
Your Reference: (Case Ref: DJ17591)

3 July 2024

Dear Daniel,

Thank you for your email, on behalf of your constituent, regarding teacher recruitment in Edinburgh.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities. The Scottish Government's ambition to substantially eliminate the poverty related attainment gap is clear, and this will not be achieved by having fewer teachers in our schools.

I must, however, make clear that statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities. It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available. I have discussed the national picture on recruitment with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), and will continue to work with our councils on the issue of teacher recruitment and retention.

With regard to recruitment and retention, I would add that the Scottish Government is committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers, and we are offering local authorities £145.5 million in this year's budget for that purpose.

With specific regard to intakes to Initial Teacher Education (ITE), your constituent may wish to note that programmes are set following extensive consultation with various parties including the Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group. This Group includes representatives from local authority employers and university providers of ITE.

The Group's recommendations to me are based upon Scottish Government statistical model on future number of teachers needed. The annual statistical model estimates the number of ITE students required to maintain pupil teacher ratios. The model is based on a number of inputs including projections about the number of pupils in the education system at primary and secondary ages, churn in teacher numbers (recruitment, maternity, returners, etc) and the retention rates of ITE students.

Your constituent may be interested to note that I commissioned an external project which considered possible future scenarios for the education workforce in Scotland to help inform effective and evidence-informed workforce planning.

The report was published on 7 May and can be found on the Scottish Government website at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-projections-implications-teacher-resourcing-needs-scotland-education-workforce-modelling-research/>. The report considers a range of factors, including population projections over the next decade and the potential implications for education workforce resources.

Outcomes from the report will help to inform discussions with partners, including teaching unions, COSLA, and local authorities, to ensure we have a teaching workforce in place, now and in the future, that enables us to progress our key commitments, ensure an education system that delivers excellence and equity for all, and represents maximum value for money.

I trust your constituent will find my reply helpful.

Enclosure 12 – Email from Fiona Hyslop MSP

From: Fiona Hyslop MSP <fiona.hyslop.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 12:06 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: FH10688)

Dear Ms Gilruth,

Please find attached a letter from Fiona Hyslop MSP for your attention and consideration.

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | Assistant to
Fiona Hyslop, Member of Scottish Parliament for the Linlithgow Constituency

Enclosure 12.1 – PDF attachment

Our Ref: FH10688

3 July 2024

Dear Jenny,

I recently had the chance to briefly relay to you concerns, outlined to me by a constituent, which may be a systemic issue. These concerns relate to experienced teachers being unable to secure permanent contracts, posing the risk that many could now be lost to the profession.

I appreciate all the work and indeed additional funding being provided to Local Authorities to employ teachers, but I thought it would be helpful to share a bit more detail from a constituent I recently spoke with about her experience and observation.

Although it is important to employ probationers and post probationers to help grow the profession, I am particularly concerned that the embedding of fixed term contracts is affecting more experienced women teachers returning from maternity leave and this may itself be discriminatory .

I would appreciate if you could take the time to review my Constituent's email, which I have attached, and to identify if there is any work with COSLA and Councils to address what seems to be establishing itself as a systemic issue, particularly as the recent welcome pay increases for teachers makes it more attractive to employ cheaper and less experienced teachers. I don't think this just relates solely to West Lothian Council's practice.

I have previously contacted on behalf of my constituent **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**, and received a general response citing the overall teacher recruitment and funding issue nationally, however **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**'s most recent correspondence highlights a systemic issue. I would appreciate your views as to how this might best be addressed.

Enclosure 12.2 – Word attachment

Hello Fiona,

Further to our conversation today I wanted to put my concerns around education in Scotland in writing to yourself so you have more information when talking with council officials etc.

1. We are being told in West Lothian that the school role is falling. Anecdotally I have heard of many more compulsory transfers across the authority for 24/25 than previously.

“ Additionality” seems to be WL new buzzword for PEF which is being used to plug gaps in schools

2. Probationers are being taken on in schools and then given the fixed term contracts this year over more experienced staff with no reason given. I’m assuming it’s because they are cheaper and save the school/ council money. That’s not about quality education or staff retention that is blatant cost cutting. I know of staff who are now forced to go on the supply list after 2+ years in a school where they have built up good relationships with pupils and families. This is definitely not in anyone’s interests.

3. Year after year fixed term teachers are having to apply for jobs and be put on a “list” of preference for posts. Probationers, again, get first choice of jobs (albeit there are very few this year). This recruitment is far from transparent and often headteachers hold on to posts to the last minute so they don’t have to take from the list and can staff internally or with day to day supply. Staff are having to wait for an email or phone call to know if they have work and have been told if they don’t hear by 13/8 they have no job. I cannot imagine how distressing this is for people worrying about mortgages and bills (I’m very fortunate that we can just about manage on my husbands salary).

4. Teachers are now moving abroad or changing career because they can’t get secure work if any at all come August September when jobs go within minutes for supply. We are now in a crisis point where we will lose a lot of experience staff and the ones left will be burnt out with what is expected of them which is a very dangerous position. I’m sure your daughter will be able to tell you how difficult a job teaching is since Covid and with less and less support from external agencies such as Camhs and ASN it’s getting worse and worse.

Many staff across Scotland are saying stop training teachers and let the trained teachers get jobs. Put in more PSW and ASN not less as is the case. Make local authorities accountable as we all know that they use the money given to them to fund gaps elsewhere in their services.

I cannot tell you how dire the situation is and, as a parent and teacher, I am really concerned for the countries future.

Yours,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Enclosure 13 – PDF – text of Reply to Enclosure 06

Our Reference: 202400418409

Your Reference: NB4241RBR

5 July 2024

Dear Neil,

Thank you for your email of 11 June on behalf of your constituent **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**, further to previous correspondence (Our Ref. 202300387915).

Since my response of 8 January to your previous enquiry, **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** may wish to note the publication of the report on an external project commissioned to consider possible future scenarios for the education workforce in Scotland to help inform effective and evidence-informed workforce planning.

The report was published on 7 May and can be found on the Scottish Government website at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-projections-implications-teacher-resourcing-needs-scotland-education-workforce-modelling-research/>. The report considers a range of factors, including population projections over the next decade and the potential implications for education workforce resources.

Outcomes from the report will help to inform discussions with partners, including teaching unions, COSLA, and local authorities, to ensure we have a teaching workforce in place, now and in the future, that enables us to progress our key commitments and ensures an education system that delivers excellence and equity for all.

I know that **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** will appreciate that the recruitment and employment of teachers sits within the statutory responsibility for the delivery of education. I would make clear that I am committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers. I have been clear in my discussions with COSLA that we are not going to be able to make the progress needed in relation to closing the poverty related attainment gap, in relation to improving behaviour or attendance in our schools – or indeed, in responding to the challenges presented by the most recent round of PISA results by having fewer teachers in our school.

I am committed to protecting teacher numbers, and we are offering local authorities £145.5 million in this year's budget for that purpose. And it is also why, for the first time, the additional funding provided will be administered in a grant-basis formula.

With regard to local authority funding, I recognise that there are considerable financial challenges across the public sector in Scotland. Despite continued austerity from the UK Government and a real terms cut in the Scottish Budget, I would note that the Scottish Government has provided record funding of over £14 billion to Local Authorities, and increased Local Government's share of the discretionary budget.

For **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**'s information, the annual local government settlement is distributed in full using the needsbased formula, which is discussed and agreed each year with COSLA on behalf of all their local authority members. The formula takes into account factors such as population, deprivation and rurality.

I would add that the Scottish Government's policy towards local authorities' spending is to allow local authorities the financial freedom to operate independently. As such, the vast majority of funding is provided by means of a block grant. It is then the responsibility of individual local authorities to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total financial resources available to them, on the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled their statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

I trust that **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** will find my reply helpful.

Enclosure 14 – Email from Shona Robison MSP

From: Shona Robison MSP <dundee@shona.robison.scot>
Sent: Monday, July 8, 2024 1:20 PM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>
Subject: (Case Ref: SR2275)

Dear Jenny,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

I am writing on behalf of my above mentioned constituent regarding her strong concerns about her teaching position.

Please find **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**'s correspondence below, which details in full the issues at hand.

I would be grateful if you would investigate and address her specific concerns and outline any assistance available to her and other teachers that find themselves in these circumstances.

I look forward to your response, the contents of which I will share with my constituent.

Kind regards

Shona

~

From: **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**
Sent: 1 July 2024 14:21
To: Shona Robison MSP
Subject: Re: (Case Ref: SR2275)

Dear Shona,

Thank you so much for getting in touch and apologies for my delayed response. Thursday evening and Friday were spent emptying my classroom and the physical and emotional exhaustion of my situation caught up with me at the weekend. I'm back on track today though! Unfortunately my position is not unique and there are many of us, not just in Dundee but, across Scotland now unemployed and each year the numbers just increase. I appreciate you taking an interest in my particular story though. Here is a run-down of events so far;

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

I'm unsure of your knowledge on the recruitment process so forgive me if you already know but each year, around March, DCC advertise for Primary School Teachers. I have interviewed twice (2022 and 2023) and had expected to interview around March 2024 however, all temporary and supply staff received an email on 26th Feb from our Head Teachers with an update (see below) from

[Redacted s38(1)(b)].

As the primary staffing meetings are being collated, with current projections, we are not currently anticipating advertising for any permanent or temporary posts for next session within the primary sector. With this in mind, we will advertise for casual supply as an internal ringfenced advert to all of our current NQTs. There will be no advert just now for internal permanent or temporary staff as all other current temporary teachers are already recruited to DCC and registered to our Teacher Booker supply booking system.

The link for the advert to supply will be issued later today and should be circulated to all current NQTs only.

As you can imagine this was a huge blow though as my last two offers came quite late in the day, I had hoped something would come up. However, in June at a staff meeting it was mentioned that, although schools didn't know their staffing allocation yet, many schools had 'surplus' staff though **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** was not one of them. We were also told **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** would be taking 2 NQT's. It was some time after that I heard through the grapevine that surplus staff would likely fill any posts available at other schools.

On the 12th June, we received an email from our Head Teacher to update us on our staff meeting the following day. It stated that they should have NQT names by Friday 14th and that 'it may be into the last week of term before we know who any new teachers will be.'

On the 13th June, the permanent staff at **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** were told their class for next year and a member of management visited myself, another temporary member of staff and the NQT's to offer us the chance of not attending the staff meeting scheduled for that night as it would be all about next year. They assured me they weren't keeping anything from us and we all appreciated and took up the offer, I suppose that's when it really sunk in that there wouldn't be a position for me at **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** despite there being no teacher allocated for one of the P1 classes. The class list then came out with 'New Member' beside the P1 teacher.

On the 16th June, I emailed Philip Smith at DCC as I'd been told by my Head Teacher that I'd be added to the supply list via Teacher Booker but had no way of accessing this. He forwarded me a link so I was able to register.

On Thursday 20th June, after our final staff meeting (where again, nothing was mentioned about any potential jobs), I bumped into one of the EIS reps who, on hearing my situation, urged me to look at clause 5.2 on the DNCT/10 (Code of Practice on the use of Temporary Contracts) and email **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** to request permanent employment. I emailed **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** who said she would check and if eligible, she would add me to the list of people to be considered for a permanent vacancy should one arise. She also added that "we have no permanent vacancies in Dundee so this clause does not apply at present". She also added that "If a permanent post became available, after any permanent redeployment, the post would be advertised as ring-fenced to those on the '5.2' list." I might add here that the EIS Rep was unaware of this list until she was informed the day after my email.

On Sunday 23rd June, I applied for a Support for Learning permanent post (open for primary teachers) which I'd noticed on the job vacancies link on the DCC weekly bulletin. I've not had a response yet though it appears my DCC email account has now been frozen without me being notified so I'll need to contact them on my private address to notify them.

On Wednesday 26th there was a staff get together after school to present myself, another temporary member of staff and the 3 NQTs with leaving gifts. The following morning (Thursday 27th) we received an email announcing the name of the new member of staff who had been allocated the P1 class. This was a teacher who had been made permanent last year and was now surplus at her school so was being transferred to **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**. It was pretty uncomfortable for all concerned on Thursday evening as she moved her resources in as 5 of us moved our resources out. The following day, school finished at 12pm. Myself and the 3 NQT's are now unemployed though the other temporary member of staff secured a 23 month contract in an ESA base in **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**.

With the Election approaching we are all at a loss as to who to vote for as we cannot understand how this can be happening in Education and why it doesn't appear to be being addressed. From a teaching point of view, I cannot fathom why no one seems to be making the links between the lack of teachers being employed and the deterioration of a quality education and experience for all children across Scotland. From what I can see class sizes are increasing and permanent teaching positions are decreasing. Employed teachers are doing their best but are stretched and stressed beyond belief. Spare spaces in schools are also being filled with NQT's who are being churned out every year to be told after 1 year that there are no jobs. Many of these are changing professions (I've heard of one working at Domino's) or moving abroad to teach. A change needs to happen but I don't know if that needs to be at council level or government level?

From a personal point of view, I now have to make the decision to stay on as a teacher or change profession again. If I stay in teaching, I will have to wait until a position comes up on Teacher Booker and take my chances along with goodness knows how many others as there's no priority for teachers who have been in the profession longer. If I do this, it would be unfair to take on another job as I may have to let them down at short notice if a teaching position comes up. There's also the problem of how to pay our mortgage and bills in the meantime. We have two teenage children, one of whom is hoping to apply to University next year so I won't be able to go without a regular wage for long. I certainly

don't want to claim benefits but I know of many in my situation who have no choice and are also at the point of putting their house on the market.

I hope this gives you a small insight into what is going on in terms of Teacher Employment at the moment but if there is anything else you would like to know, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am happy for you to contact Dundee City Council as this is not just about me, this will be impacting countless people.

Thanks for your time,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Enclosure 15 – Email from Siobhian Brown MSP

From: Siobhian Brown MSP <Siobhian.Brown.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: Friday, August 9, 2024 2:51 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: SB4578)

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Siobhian has asked me to pass on the attached letter on behalf of one of our constituents.

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]
Caseworker Assistant

Enclosure 15.1 – Word attachment

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Shortage of teaching posts for primary teachers in South Ayrshire

I have been contacted by a constituent who has raised concerns about a shortage of teaching posts for primary teachers and the prevalence of temporary contracts in the teaching sector in South Ayrshire. My constituent is a newly qualified teacher and has just completed his probation year but has not been able to secure a job for the coming year. His understanding is that South Ayrshire Council do not have the money to fund the positions.

He has questioned why new people are being admitted into teacher training courses if there is a lack of permanent positions in the sector. My constituent believes that this is leading to worry about job security and creates challenges in terms of securing mortgages.

I would be obliged if you could please address his concerns about the lack of permanent positions and the prevalence of temporary contracts within teaching? Also, if you could advise what steps the Scottish Government are doing to ensure that newly qualified teachers can find secure employment?

Enclosure 16 – Email from Fiona Hyslop MSP

From: Fiona Hyslop MSP <fiona.hyslop.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:40 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Your Recent Enquiry with Scottish Government and partner agencies (Case Ref: FH10688)

Good afternoon,

A constituent, **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**, has shared with me the response issued to her by the Directorate for Learning, regarding several concerns raised by **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**. Please find this attached.

I would be grateful if an update could be provided in relation to the letter sent by Ms Hyslop on this matter, your reference 202400421618.

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] | Assistant to
Fiona Hyslop, Member of Scottish Parliament for the Linlithgow Constituency

Enclosure 16.1 – PDF attachment – text of letter

Our Reference: 202400421113

29 July 2024

Dear **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**

Thank you for your letter of 28 June about employment opportunities for teachers in West Lothian council. As an official in the Learning Directorate, I have been asked to reply.

At the outset, I would assure you that Ministers recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position and are determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities. I must, however, also make clear that statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities. This includes the recruitment and employment of teachers and all other support staff in local authority schools including recruitment processes. It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available.

While our teachers are employed by local authorities and not the Scottish Government, we are committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers. We are once again offering local authorities £145.5 million in this year's budget to protect teacher numbers, which provides assurance of funding and removes this as a barrier to employing staff on permanent contracts. We want to ensure that councils can continue to benefit from this significant additional funding in order to protect teacher numbers and support our children's education and we would hope this is a goal that our local government partners would share.

I note your comments with regards to probationer teachers, you may wish to be aware that as part of the local government finance settlement local authorities are committed to providing places on the scheme each year for every probationer teacher who requires one a placement to allow them to meet the Standard for Full Registration. However, this does not provide a guarantee of future employment with a particular local authority. Teaching posts should be advertised and filled in a fair and transparent manner.

Whilst we cannot direct teachers where to work, we will continue to do everything we can to maximise the number of jobs available for teachers, including permanent posts.

You may wish to be aware that the Scottish Attainment Challenge programme makes up the majority of the Government's commitment to invest £1 billion during this parliamentary term to close the poverty-related attainment gap. It is targeted according to the number of children registered for free school meals, the number of children in low-income families and the number of care experienced children and young people. Every Local Authority and 97% of schools benefit through this programme. West Lothian Council and its schools have received over £43million

since the Scottish Attainment Challenge programme began. This has enabled West Lothian Council and its schools to provide additional support, including additional staffing, to best support the attainment and wellbeing of children and young people in West Lothian schools.

In addition, the Scottish Government has provided record funding of over £14 billion to local authorities, and increased Local Government's share of the discretionary budget. The Scottish Government's policy is to allow local authorities the financial freedom to operate independently. As such, the vast majority of funding is provided by means of a block grant. It is then the responsibility of individual local authorities to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total financial resources available to them, on the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled their statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

WID : Education Workforce Unit

Enclosure 17 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 08

Our Reference: 202400420233

Your Reference: SR2264

16 August 2024

Dear Shona,

Thank you for your email of 20 June, on behalf of your constituent, about employment opportunities for recently qualified teachers.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. The Scottish Government is determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities.

I would, however, also make clear that statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities. This includes the recruitment and employment of teachers and all other support staff in local authority schools. It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available.

I have discussed the national picture on recruitment with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), and will continue to work with our councils on the issue of teacher recruitment and retention. I am committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers and has been clear in discussions with COSLA that we are not going to be able to make the progress needed in relation to closing the poverty related attainment gap, in relation to improving behaviour or attendance in our schools – or indeed, in responding to the challenges presented by the most recent round of PISA results by having fewer teachers in our school.

With regard to recruitment and retention, the Scottish Government is committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers, and we are offering local authorities £145.5 million in this year's budget for that purpose.

I recognise that there are considerable financial challenges across the public sector in Scotland. Despite continued austerity from the UK Government and a real terms cut in the Scottish Budget, the Scottish Government has provided record funding of over £14 billion to Local Authorities, and increased Local Government's share of the discretionary budget. In 2024-25, Dundee City Council will receive £383.2 million to fund local services, which equates to an extra £18.6 million to support vital day to day services or an additional 5.1% compared to the 2023-24 budget.

The Scottish Government's policy towards local authorities' spending is to allow local authorities the financial freedom to operate independently. As such, the vast majority of funding is provided by means of a block grant. It is then the responsibility of individual local authorities to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total

financial resources available to them, on the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled their statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

However, I am concerned by the approach of some local authorities to post-probationary employment – particularly given the probationary year is funded by the Scottish Government. To that end, I have asked my officials to engage directly with Dundee City Council on this matter. More broadly, I am considering options around reviewing the probationary year approach to better support more sustainable employment options post-probation. The Scottish Government directly invests in our teachers through free tuition, funded probation and teaching salaries higher than anywhere else in the U.K. It is within that context, however, that we require our local authorities to work with Scottish Government to ensure we retain those talented professionals who train to become teachers in Scotland. That is my focus as Cabinet Secretary, through ongoing engagement with Councils like Dundee City Council – recognising, of course, that it is they who employ our teachers and not Scottish Government.

Enclosure 18 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 14

Our Reference: 202400421914

Your Reference: (Case Ref: SR2275)

16 August 2024

Dear Shona,

Thank you for your email of 8 July on behalf of your constituent **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** about employment opportunities for teachers in Dundee City Council.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities.

I must, however, make clear that statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities. This includes the recruitment and employment of teachers and all other support staff in local authority schools including recruitment processes. It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available.

While our teachers are employed by local authorities and not the Scottish Government, I am committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers and have been clear in discussions with COSLA that we are not going to be able to make the progress needed in relation to closing the poverty related attainment gap, in relation to improving behaviour or attendance in our schools. We are once again offering local authorities £145.5 million in this year's budget to protect teacher numbers, which provides assurance of funding and removes this as a barrier to employing staff on permanent contracts. We want to ensure that councils can continue to benefit from this significant additional funding in order to protect teacher numbers and support our children's education and we would hope this is a goal that our local government partners would share.

I note **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** comments with regards to probationer teachers, **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** may wish to be aware that as part of the local government finance settlement local authorities are committed to providing places on the Teacher Induction Scheme each year for every probationer teacher who requires one to allow them to meet the Standard for Full Registration. However, this does not provide a guarantee of future employment with a particular local authority. Teaching posts should be advertised and filled in a fair and transparent manner.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** that I will continue to work with our Councils on the issue of teacher recruitment and retention. In addition, the Strategic Board for Teacher Education, which is made up of a range of key education stakeholders, is looking at issues around the recruitment and retention of teachers in Scotland in detail.

Enclosure 19 – Email from Máiri McAllan MSP

From: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@Parliament.scot>

Sent: Friday, August 16, 2024 3:51 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: Primary Teacher Posts (Case Ref: MM1249)

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Máiri McAllan MSP has been contacted by the above named constituent in relation to her search for a primary teacher post. [Redacted s38(1)(b)] is a primary teacher, and has recently completed her NQT year 23/24. After interviews she has been left unable to find a role.

We are currently in liason wit South Lanarkshire Council but [Redacted s38(1)(b)] has raised general concerns about the ability of qualified teachers to find posts due to the availability of such jobs.

Can I have a response to these concerns that I can pass onto our constituent please?

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Constituency Assistant

Máiri McAllan MSP | Clydesdale

Máiri McAllan BPA | Dhail Chluaidh

Enclosure 19.1 – Word attachment

Out of scope

Enclosure 20 – Email from Willie Rennie MSP

From: Willie Rennie MSP <Willie.Rennie2@parliament.scot>

Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2024 10:20 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: WR6963)

Jenny Gilruth MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Education and Skills
Scottish Government, St Andrew`s House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

27 August 2024 Our Ref: WR6963

Dear Jenny

I have been contacted by one of my constituents highlighting their concerns regarding fair access of fully qualified teachers to employment in the state sector in Scotland.

My constituent has explained that they are the Principal Teacher of Biology and Joint Head of Science at a private school and have been in post since 2015. My constituent has a large amount of experience teaching different curriculums and has various qualifications acquired from over 15 years of tertiary education and teaching experience.

However, my constituent recently applied for a job in the state sector but was told that they did not meet the eligibility criteria, as they do not have experience of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.

My constituent was advised that the only way to get prior experience would be as a supply teacher. This is an unrealistic expectation for a very experienced teacher who has financial responsibilities and would also represent an ineffective use of their skills.

My constituent has a number of colleagues who qualified to teach in England and have also had the same experience upon applying for state sector jobs in Scotland. Therefore, there is currently an abundance of fully qualified, experienced, and GTCS-registered teachers living in Scotland, who should be able to gain employment in the state sector and contribute towards the education of our children and young people. However, the current system makes this impossible. Instead, these teachers are often employed in Scottish private schools, all whilst the state education system in Scotland suffers from severe teacher shortages.

I would be very grateful if you could investigate the concerns highlighted and provide a response that I can share with my constituent.

Yours sincerely
Willie

Willie Rennie
Liberal Democrat Member of the Scottish Parliament for North East Fife

Enclosure 21 – Email from Tom Arthur MSP

From: Tom Arthur MSP <tom.arthur.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: Friday, September 6, 2024 11:55 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: TA7710)

Good afternoon,

Re: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Tom has been contacted by the above-named constituent who would like to share her concerns with you with regards to her employment situation. For your information, I have shared **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**'s correspondence with you below:

"I am currently a supply teacher within East Renfrewshire Council and wanted to raise the following with you in regards to my employment situation.

I am writing to you as a member of Scottish Teachers for Permanence, a group representing over 3,700 qualified and experienced teachers who are deeply concerned about the unacceptable situation regarding teacher employment in Scotland.

The number of qualified teachers without permanent posts has reached a critical level. Despite *the SNP's manifesto* commitment to increase teacher numbers, we have witnessed a concerning decline in teacher employment throughout 2022 and 2023. Many of us are struggling to secure even temporary contracts, with a growing number being forced into precarious zero-hour supply positions.

Disturbingly, many teachers are starting the academic year on fixed-term contracts, some lasting only a few months, while permanent positions remain scarce. Even more alarming is the fact that a significant number of us are facing the next few weeks with no work at all. As a result, many teachers are now forced to claim Universal Credit due to the lack of employment opportunities, which is a situation that should be entirely unacceptable in our profession.

Furthermore, we are witnessing concerning trends in council policies. Certain councils are now restricting supply work in the first few months of the term to probationers who have just completed their training, effectively shutting out experienced teachers from even these short-term opportunities. Additionally, councils are actively implementing measures to prevent teachers from reaching the length of service required for fixed-term or full-time positions. This lack of consistent work breaks our service time, trapping us in a cycle where we are unable to secure the job security we deserve.

To illustrate the severity of the situation:

In Glasgow City, only 10% of primary teachers moved directly from probation to a permanent contract in 2023, a stark decline from 73% in 2017.

In South Lanarkshire, this figure dropped from 80% in 2017 to just 22% last year.

This trend is unsustainable and follows most of the Local Authorities in Scotland. It not only undermines the professional and financial stability of dedicated teachers but also *compromises the quality of education that Scotland's children and young people receive. Our schools are under-resourced, and without proper funding and support, we cannot provide the high standard of education that our students deserve.*

Whenever we reach out to local authorities regarding the lack of teacher jobs, we are consistently referred back to the Scottish Government, which in turn redirects the

responsibility to local authorities. This vicious cycle of buck-passing leaves us trapped, with no resolution in sight.

I need you to take immediate action to address this crisis. Teachers deserve job security, and our students deserve the expertise and support that only well-resourced schools with stable, permanent staff can provide.

I urge that you raise this issue within the Scottish Parliament and work to ensure that both local authorities and the Scottish Government collaborate effectively to resolve this pressing issue. We need real, tangible solutions, not more deflection.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. We look forward to your response and hope to see meaningful action taken to secure the future of Scotland's teachers and students *alike*.”

I would be grateful if **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**'s concerns could be addressed and we look forward to receiving an update.

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Senior Caseworker to Tom Arthur MSP
Renfrewshire South

Enclosure 22 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 15

Our Reference: 202400426507

Your Reference: Case Ref: SB4578

11 September 2024

Dear Siobhian,

Thank you for your letter on Wednesday 9th August, on behalf of your constituent about employment opportunities for teachers.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities.

Whilst I note the issues that you have raised, statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities – as set out under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. This includes the recruitment and employment of teachers and all other support staff in local authority schools, therefore the Scottish Government has no locus to intervene on employment matters.

It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available.

While our teachers are employed by local authorities and not the Scottish Government, I am committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers and have been clear in discussions with COSLA that we are not going to be able to make the progress needed in relation to closing the poverty related attainment gap with less teachers.

We are once again offering local authorities £145.5 million in this year's budget to protect teacher numbers, which provides assurance of funding and removes this as a barrier to employing staff on permanent contracts. We want to ensure that councils can continue to benefit from this significant additional funding in order to protect teacher numbers and support our children's education and we would hope this is a goal that our local government partners would share.

In addition, the Strategic Board for Teacher Education, which is made up of a range of key education stakeholders, is looking at issues around the recruitment and retention of teachers in Scotland in detail.

You may wish to note that the Teacher Induction Scheme provides a one year probationary placement to allow teachers to meet the Standard for Full Registration. This does not provide a guarantee of future employment with a particular local authority. Teaching posts should be advertised and filled in a fair and transparent manner. Whilst we cannot direct teachers where to work, we will continue to do

everything we can to maximise the number of jobs available for teachers, including permanent posts.

Intake targets to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes are set following extensive consultation with various parties including the Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group. This Group contains representatives from local authority employers and university providers of ITE.

The Group's recommendations are based upon Scottish Government statistical model on future number of teachers needed. The Scottish Funding Council are ultimately responsible for setting intakes to ITE and write to universities setting targets for each academic year. The intake targets for primary PGDE were reduced by 200 in 2023/24 in recognition of the challenges primary teachers are having in securing permanent contracts.

I would like to assure your constituent that we will work closely with COSLA regarding the employment of teachers and will continue to do everything we can to maximise the number of jobs available for teachers, including permanent posts.

Enclosure 23 – Email from Ivan McKee MSP

From: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot>

Sent: 11 September 2024 13:31

To: Central Correspondence Unit <scottish.ministers@gov.scot>

Subject: Letter to Cab Sec Education and Skills from Ivan McKee MSP

Dear Cabinet Secretary's Office

Please find attached a letter from Ivan McKee MSP.

Many thanks

Best wishes

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Senior Parliamentary Officer, Office of Ivan McKee MSP

Àrd-Oifigear Pàrlamaide, Oifis Ivan McKee BPA

Enclosure 23.1 – PDF attachment – text from letter

Teacher employment

Constituents and an organisation called Scottish Teachers for Permanence, have written to me about teacher employment in Scotland. Summarising the communications I have had, they believe that:

- the number of qualified teachers without permanent posts has reached a critical level.
- there has been a concerning decline in teacher employment throughout 2022 and 2023.
- many are struggling to secure even temporary contracts, with a growing number being forced into precarious zero-hour supply positions.
- many are starting the academic year on fixed-term contracts, some lasting only a few months, while permanent positions remain scarce.
- a significant number of qualified teachers are facing the next few weeks with no work at all and, as a result, many are now forced to claim Universal Credit due to the lack of employment opportunities.
- there are concerning trends in council policies. Certain councils are now restricting supply work in the first few months of the term to probationers who have just completed their training, effectively shutting out experienced teachers from even these short-term opportunities.
- councils are actively implementing measures to prevent teachers from reaching the length of service required for fixed-term or full-time positions.
- in Glasgow City, only 10% of primary teachers moved directly from probation to a permanent contract in 2023, a stark decline from 73% in 2017 and in South Lanarkshire, this figure dropped from 80% in 2017 to just 22% last year.

They say that “Whenever we reach out to local authorities regarding the lack of teacher jobs, we are consistently referred back to the Scottish Government, which in turn redirects the responsibility to local authorities. This vicious cycle of buck-passing leaves us trapped, with no resolution in sight”.

Can you advise on the relevant Scottish Government’s policies and roles in addressing the points raised with me so that I can respond to my constituents?

Enclosure 24 – Email from Michael Shanks MP

From: Michael Shanks <Michael.Shanks.mp@parliament.uk>

Sent: Friday, September 13, 2024 10:17 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: MS4268)

Good morning,

Please find attached a letter from Michael Shanks MP for your attention.

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

**Senior Caseworker, Office of Michael Shanks MP
Member of Parliament for Rutherglen**

Enclosure 24.1 – PDF attachment – text from letter

Teachers struggling to find secure and long-term employment after qualifying

I have been contacted by a constituent who qualified as a teacher in June 2022. After finishing her first year of teaching she has now been placed on the supply list, unable to find a permanent contract anywhere in Scotland.

This is not due to lack of trying. She has applied for a number of jobs and sadly has been unsuccessful due to the volume of applications each school has received. My constituent is not alone in this experience, she is one of many who are struggling to find a long term and secure teaching role.

As a former teacher myself, in the same subject as yourself, I know you will understand the rationale in some local authorities for taking on NQTs to fill departmental vacancies on a rolling basis, meaning a permanent contract for the post never arises.

There seems to be an excess of PGDE students training in some subjects - whilst other subjects lack students. Often universities move their overall cap of PGDE students from hard to fill subjects like maths, sciences into other subjects, leaving these teaching posts oversubscribed when they qualify.

I would appreciate if you could let me know the government's position on the points below which my constituent has raised with me:

- What is the Government going to do to help qualified teachers gain secure employment?
- Is the Government doing anything to encourage councils to hire teachers on secure and long term contracts?
- Is the Government investigating the number of probationary positions in each council?
- Is the Government working with universities to recruit teaching students in the correct fields and not over saturating certain roles?

I know we both share the view that teaching is a wonderful profession and the impact you can have on young people's lives but the current situation facing newly qualified teachers is troubling and risks putting passionate and skilled professionals off staying in the profession.

I'd be grateful for your response on these matters.

Enclosure 25 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 12

Our Reference: 202400421618

Your Reference: (Case Ref: FH10688)

18 September 2024

Dear Fiona,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of your constituent **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** about employment opportunities for teachers. I understand that **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** wrote to the Scottish Government separately on this matter.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers, who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities. To that end I requested that the Strategic Board for Teacher Education (SBTE) look at this matter to provide me with advice and options – I look forward to meeting them later this month to hear directly from the SBTE.

As you know, the statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities – as set out under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. This includes the recruitment and employment of teachers and all other support staff in local authority schools, therefore the Scottish Government has no locus to intervene on employment matters.

While our teachers are employed by local authorities and not the Scottish Government, I am committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers and have been clear in discussions with COSLA that we are not going to be able to make the progress needed in relation to closing the poverty related attainment gap, and improving behaviour or attendance in our schools with fewer teachers in our schools.

Since 2022/23 £145.5m has been provided to local authorities via the General Revenue Grant and is contingent upon local authorities maintaining teacher numbers, therefore I see no barrier to local authorities offering permanent contracts, but as I have highlighted above, the Scottish Government has no locus to intervene in employment matters which remain statutory obligation of local authorities. It is worthwhile pointing out that the percentage of teachers in a permanent post at the current time remains at 80% - which is broadly comparable to where it was in 2014; though I do accept there are variations within this, for example in relation to Primary teacher vacancies. On this point specifically, I have reduced the number of primary teachers in training this year to facilitate greater opportunities for this year's cohort.

I note **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**'s comments with regards to probationer teachers, **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]** may wish to be aware that as part of the local government finance settlement local authorities are committed to providing places on the Teacher Induction Scheme each year for every probationer teacher who requires one to allow them to meet the Standard for Full Registration. However, this does not provide a guarantee of future employment with a particular local authority. Teaching posts

should be advertised and filled in a fair and transparent manner. I am currently considering the operation of the Teacher Induction Scheme which will include the issues [Redacted s38(1)(b)] has raised – I am particularly cognisant of the support Scottish Government provides by funded tuition and directly through funding the probationer year. Clearly the issues around probation are historic in nature, but as you know, probation was not intended to ‘replace’ FTE staff – rather, probationer teachers are meant to be supported throughout the academic year and should compliment a fully staffed school.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure [Redacted s38(1)(b)] that I will continue to work with our Councils on the issue of teacher recruitment and retention. In addition, as mentioned, the Strategic Board for Teacher Education, which is made up of a range of key education stakeholders, is considering the various issues around the recruitment and retention of teachers in Scotland in detail. I will receive further information on this matter later this month and would be happy to have my officials furnish your office with the detail.

Enclosure 26 – PDF – text of reply to Enclosure 16

Our Reference: 202400426817

Your Reference: Your Recent Enquiry with Scottish Government and partner agencies (Case Ref: FH10688)

18 September 2024

Dear **[Redacted s38(1)(b)]**,

A reply to this MiCase has been answered under 202400421618.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Private Secretary

Enclosure 27 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 19

Our Reference: 202400427244

Your Reference: (Case Ref: MM1249)

19 September 2024

Dear Máiri,

Thank you for your email on Friday 16th August, on behalf of your constituent about employment opportunities for teachers.

At the outset, I would assure your constituent that I recognise the frustration of any teacher unable to secure a teaching position. I am determined that teachers who have trained and made a commitment to educate our young people, have strong job opportunities.

I note that your constituent is in contact with South Lanarkshire Council. As you may be aware the statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities – as set out under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. This includes the recruitment and employment of teachers and all other support staff in local authority schools, therefore the Scottish Government has no locus to intervene on employment matters. It follows that each local authority is responsible for providing a complement of teachers and all other necessary support staff that best meets the needs of each school and its pupils within the resources available.

While our teachers are employed by local authorities and not the Scottish Government, I am committed to supporting the recruitment of teachers and have been clear in discussions with COSLA that we are not going to be able to make the progress needed in relation to closing the poverty related attainment gap with less teachers.

We are once again offering local authorities £145.5 million in this year's budget to protect teacher numbers, which provides assurance of funding and removes this as a barrier to employing staff on permanent contracts. We want to ensure that councils can continue to benefit from this significant additional funding in order to protect teacher numbers and support our children's education and we would hope this is a goal that our local government partners would share.

In addition, I have asked the Strategic Board for Teacher Education, which is made up of a range of key education stakeholders, to consider the recruitment and retention of teachers in Scotland in detail, to provide me with options on how we can improve the current availability of posts.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Enclosure 28 – Email from Alison Johnstone MSP

From: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot>
Sent: Thursday, September 19, 2024 4:24 PM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Urgent Action Needed to Address Teacher Employment Crisis

Dear Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills,

A constituent of Alison Johnstone MSP has asked that we forward the correspondence below, to highlight their concerns to you and to ask for a response to the points raised.

Many thanks in advance for any assistance you are able to provide.

Kind regards,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] Parliamentary Officer for Alison Johnstone MSP

Email: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@parliament.scot

From: [Redacted s38(1)(b)]@ea.edin.sch.uk>
Sent: Saturday, September 14, 2024 1:23 PM
To: Daniel.Johnson.msp@parliament.scot <IMCEAUNDEFINED-Daniel+2EJohnson+2Emsp+40parliament+2Escot@eurprd04.prod.outlook.com>
Cc: Jeremy.Balfour.msp@parliament.scot <IMCEAUNDEFINED-Jeremy+2EBalfour+2Emsp+40parliament+2Escot@eurprd04.prod.outlook.com>; Boyack S (Sarah), MSP <Sarah.Boyack.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Briggs M (Miles), MSP <Miles.Briggs.msp@parliament.scot>; Choudhury F (Foyso), MSP <Foyso.Choudhury.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Johnstone A (Alison), MSP <Alison.Johnstone.msp@parliament.scot>; Slater L (Lorna), MSP <Lorna.Slater.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Webber S (Sue), MSP <Sue.Webber.MSP@Parliament.scot>
Subject: Urgent Action Needed to Address Teacher Employment Crisis

CAUTION: This e-mail originated from outside of The Scottish Parliament. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear MPS Johnson,

I am writing to you as a concerned constituent regarding the critical issue of teacher employment in Scotland. The situation has reached an alarming level, with a growing number of qualified teachers unable to secure permanent positions, forcing many into precarious temporary or zero-hour supply work.

Despite previous commitments to increase teacher numbers, there has been a noticeable decline in teacher employment over the last two years. Many teachers are now struggling to secure even temporary contracts, with some facing the beginning of the academic year with no work at all. It is deeply troubling that many dedicated educators are now having to rely on Universal Credit due to the lack of employment opportunities.

Today, for the first time since I arrived in Scotland, I went myself to get information about allowances at the jobseeker. I'm scared. I'm afraid that things won't improve. After having built a home in Scotland, after 20 years in this country, I'm afraid I may have to leave and be supported by my family in [Redacted s38(1)(b)].

Education is not a priority anymore in Scotland and teaching positions are not offered to secure a life. Promises broken. Precarious presents and decadent futures.

For how long can I survive in this situation? For how long would my savings pay my rent, bills, food?

How long did it take me to make my home here and how long is left until all will be gone?

Additionally, certain councils have implemented policies that further exacerbate this crisis. In some cases, supply work in the early months of

the school term is being restricted to newly trained probationers, effectively blocking more experienced teachers from even these short-term opportunities. This is compounded by measures preventing teachers from reaching the service length required to secure full-time or fixed-term positions, trapping them in a cycle of job insecurity.

The following statistics highlight the severity of the problem:

- In Glasgow, only 10% of primary teachers moved from probation to a permanent contract in 2023, a dramatic drop from 73% in 2017.
- In South Lanarkshire, the figure has fallen from 80% in 2017 to just 22% last year.

This situation is unsustainable. It not only undermines the financial and professional stability of Scotland's teachers but also threatens the quality of education provided to our children. Schools are increasingly under-resourced, and without stable, well-supported staff, our young people cannot receive the high-quality education they deserve.

When teachers seek answers, local authorities point to the Scottish Government, and the Government, in turn, shifts responsibility back to local councils. This endless cycle of blame-shifting leaves the issue unresolved, with teachers and students suffering as a result.

I urge you to take immediate action to address this crisis. Teachers deserve secure employment, and Scotland's children deserve an education system that is properly funded and staffed by permanent, experienced teachers. I ask that you raise this issue in Parliament and work towards meaningful collaboration between local authorities and the Scottish Government to develop tangible solutions.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to hearing how you plan to address this pressing issue.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)] - Primary teacher

Enclosure 29 – Email from Karen Adam MSP

From: Karen Adam MSP <Karen.Adam.MSP@Parliament.scot>

Sent: Monday, September 23, 2024 2:06 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2024 <CabSecES2024@gov.scot>

Subject: (Case Ref: KA4946)

Hello,

Please see attached letter from Karen Adam MSP.

Can you please advise upon receipt, the expected timescale for response.

I can confirm that I have obtained consent from my constituent for your office to share their personal information with me, relating to their enquiry, and I will manage this information in compliance with Data Protection principles.

Many thanks,

[Redacted s38(1)(b)]

Caseworker for Karen Adam MSP

Banffshire & Buchan Coast

Enclosure 29.1 – PDF attachment, text from letter

Dear Jenny Gilruth,

Re: Teacher Permanence in Scotland

I am writing on behalf of my constituent, who has contacted me regarding teacher employment in Scotland.

By way of background, my constituent advises me that the number of qualified teachers without permanent posts has reached a critical level and have witnessed a concerning decline in teacher employment throughout 2022 and 2023. My constituent has advised that many are struggling to secure even temporary contracts, with a growing number being forced into precarious zero-hour supply positions.

I have been advised by my constituent that many teachers are starting the academic year on fixed-term contracts, some lasting only a few months, while permanent positions remain scarce. My constituent has advised that a significant number of teachers are facing the next few weeks with no work at all resulting in many teachers now being forced to claim Universal Credit due to the lack of employment opportunities, which my constituent feels is a situation that should be entirely unacceptable in their profession.

My constituent has advised that they have just completed their probationer year in North Aberdeenshire, where the school they worked at would have loved to keep them on however, the school dropped a class and instead have much bigger classes of pupils. I have been informed by my constituent that since bring fully qualified, they have only managed to secure supply work across two different councils but have still had some days with no work at all which is far from ideal, especially when they only find out on the morning of some days if they are working.

Further, my constituent has advised of concerning trends in council policies where certain councils are now restricting supply work in the first few months of the term to probationers who have just completed their training, effectively shutting out experienced teachers from even these short-term opportunities.

My constituent has informed me that additionally councils are actively implementing measures to prevent teachers from reaching the length of service required for fixed-term or full-time positions and has advised that the lack of consistent work breaks their service time, trapping them in a cycle where they are unable to secure job security.

My constituent has advised that they feel this trend is unsustainable as not only does it undermine the professional and financial stability of dedicated teachers but also compromises the quality of education that Scotland's children and young people receive. I have been advised by my constituent that whenever they reach out to local authorities regarding the lack of teacher jobs, they are consistently referred back to the Scottish Government, which in turn redirects the responsibility to local authorities.

I would appreciate if you could investigate my constituents concerns, and take steps to address the issues raised.

Thank you and I look forward to your response which I will share with my constituent.

Enclosure 30 – PDF – text of Response to Enclosure 20

Our Reference: 202400429127

Your Reference: (Case Ref: WR6963)

25 September 2024

Dear Willie,

Thank you for your email on 27 August, on behalf of your constituent about employment as a teacher in the state sector in Scotland.

While I appreciate your constituent's concerns, you will be aware that statutory responsibility for the delivery of education sits with local authorities – as set out under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. This includes the recruitment and employment of teachers including recruitment practices; therefore the Scottish Government has no locus to intervene on employment matters.

If your constituent has not already done so, I would suggest they contact the local authority to discuss their concerns further. However, if your constituent is able to share further details of this matter with my office, I would be keen to understand the rationale being presented by the local authority in question.