

TEACHER PANEL

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FRONT LINE OF TEACHING

Purpose

1. This an opportunity to share thoughts and observations on:
 - a) What are your reflections on the challenges and opportunities associated with being a teacher in Scotland today?
 - b) What are your reflections on the recently published teacher diversity report?

The Teacher Panel is therefore asked to consider these questions in advance of the meeting.

Background

2. The following paragraphs provide background to a number of key issues which may be raised during this agenda item.
3. Mental Health and Wellbeing

This year's Programme for Government includes a commitment to invest in school counselling services across education in Scotland. This will create around 350 counsellors, ensuring that every secondary school has access to counselling services, whilst also improving the ability of local primary and special schools to access counselling. This will be supported by the provision of £11m in 2019/20 rising to £15m per annum thereafter.

The Scottish Government recognises and values the role that Educational Psychologists play in supporting learners, and is committed to delivering a sustainable and regular supply of educational psychologists to meet future need. In May 2018 we reached agreement with COSLA for a new partnership funding package for trainee educational psychologists which will deliver up to 30 new educational psychologists a year: this is worth more than £4m in the initial 3 years.

4. Mainstreaming

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on education authorities to provide education in a mainstream school unless specific exceptions apply. The exceptions, which should be applied exceptionally, are:

- the education provided in a mainstream school would not be suitable for the aptitude and abilities of the child in question
- it would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom the child would be educated
- placing the child in question in a mainstream school would incur unreasonable levels of public expenditure that would not otherwise be incurred

The guidance on the application of the presumption dates back to 2002 and the Scottish Government has committed to updating this guidance. A consultation on revised guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming launched in November 2017 and closed in February 2018, with subsequent analysis of the responses being published on 27 June 2018. We aim to publish updated guidance in 2019.

The guidance aims to bridge the gap between legislation, policy and day-to-day experience of decisions around placement, to ensure that local authorities have the guidance required to help their decision making in applying the presumption of mainstreaming. As the implementation of the presumption of mainstreaming requires a commitment to inclusive practice and approaches to be effective, the guidance clearly links inclusive practice with the presumption throughout and includes key features of inclusion and guidance on how to improve inclusive practice in schools.

5. Workload and Bureaucracy

In response to challenges relating to workload and bureaucracy, the Scottish Government has undertaken a range of actions aiming to both de-clutter and clarify the curriculum, and reduce teacher workload, helping to ensure that teachers can focus on providing valuable learning experiences for our young people. These actions include:

- The publication of clear and practical advice for teachers and practitioners on planning, learning, teaching and assessment. This statement from the Chief Inspector of Education attempted to address the difficulties associated with unclear expectations, unnecessary auditing and assessment and tracking arrangements. It is the responsibility of schools, local authorities and national agencies to implement the advice at every level.
- The development of benchmarks in each curriculum area, giving teachers definitive guidance on assessing learner progress from ages 3 to S3, and replacing a much larger volume of existing material.
- A focused review on the demands placed on schools by each local authority in relation to CfE. The report's findings should empower teachers to challenge unnecessary workload demands.
- The launch of a new Education Scotland website, including a new and improved National Improvement Hub, containing a significantly streamlined set of resources for teachers.

6. Teacher Numbers, Vacancies and Student Intakes

Figures on teacher numbers, Initial Teacher Education intake and teacher vacancies have recently been published:

- The total **number of teachers** (FTE) based in all publicly funded early learning and childcare, primary, secondary and special schools, or in centrally employed (visiting specialists), was 51,959 in September 2018. This is 447 more than the 2017 total (51,513).

- The Vacancy and Provisional Student Intake figures were also published on 10 December. This shows that permanent teacher vacancies have reduced from 816 in 2017 to 606 in 2018. Student teacher intakes have increased for the third year in a row from 3,861 in 2017 to 3,902 in 2018.
- 107 awards of STEM bursaries have been made for 2018 intakes into STEM subjects with the highest demand i.e. Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Technical Education and Computing Science. The Stem bursary advisory group, comprising membership from Scottish Government, SDS, and the universities, is currently giving consideration to the bursary scheme for next year.

7. Diversity Report

Teaching in a Diverse Scotland: Increasing And Retaining Minority Ethnic Teachers In Scotland's Schools was published on 14 November 2018. The report makes 17 recommendations which aim to increase the representation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) teachers across the teaching profession in Scotland.

The Working Group, chaired by Professor Rowena Arshad, Head of Moray House School of Education and Co-Director of the Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES), supported by educational colleagues with expertise in equalities issues, worked together to consider:

- whether ITE programmes and associated recruitment activity are attractive and relevant to students from minority ethnic backgrounds;
- whether university admissions processes are sufficiently enabling to capture the range of possible applicants from diverse backgrounds;
- student placement experiences and the on-going support for students from minority backgrounds; and
- the retention of student teachers and teachers from minority backgrounds.

The Working Group used a range of methods to gather information to support the development of this report, including analysing recently published data such as the teacher census statistics and academic reports on diversity in the profession; consultation with local authorities and education organisations, stakeholder engagement sessions and the findings of two surveys conducted with teachers during the period the Working Group has been established.

More detail is contained within Annex A below.

Annex A

‘Teaching in a Diverse Scotland: Increasing And Retaining Minority Ethnic Teachers In Scotland’s Schools’

Facts and Figures

There are a range of statistics available about the ethnic make-up of the teaching profession in Scotland available in the report itself – see pages 7 and 8 alongside Annex A of the report.

- Scotland’s Census 2011 recorded that the percentage of people in Scotland from minority ethnic groups is 4% and this compares to 2% reporting as being from a minority ethnic background in the 2018 Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland publication.
- Scotland’s Teacher Census Data 2018 presented the percentage of primary and secondary teachers by ethnicity between 2008 and 2018. Where this information has been disclosed, the average percentage in the primary sector is just under 1.1% and in the secondary sector is just under 1.8%.

In terms of the number of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in promoted posts (please note that 2018 data for promoted posts is not yet available):

- The number of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in promoted posts across the whole profession is 75 or 0.6% of the total number.
- The number of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in promoted posts in the primary sector is 19 or 0.4% of the total number.
- The number of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in promoted posts in the secondary sector is 53 or 0.8% of the total number.

The evidence base in respect of this issue was enhanced during the lifetime of the Working Group by the publication of two useful reports published alongside *Teaching in a Diverse Scotland*. These were:

- Glasgow City Council Research Paper – *Ethnic Diversity in the Teaching Profession: A Glasgow Perspective* (January 2018) which conducted a number of focus groups and surveys with both teachers and pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and general pupil and teacher surveys; and
- *The EIS Members Experience of Racism Survey* (Spring 2018). A survey of minority ethnic members on their experiences of racism and Islamophobia in education.

Key Findings

Closing the awareness gap: the Working Group found that there is a fundamental lack of understanding of race issues across the profession and this acts as a major barrier to diversifying the teaching workforce. The report discusses racism, including Islamophobia that BME teachers have experienced both in the workplace and in

attempting to gain promotion. It also reflects on the lack of visibility of racial diversity within curriculum, that perpetuates racial stereotypes and attitudes including from parents and pupils. The supporting recommendations aim to increase awareness and raise the profile of the race equality protected characteristic.

Associated recommendations

- 1. The current review of Professional Standards for teachers by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) should ensure that race issues are explicitly referenced within the context of inclusion, equality and diversity.*
- 2. By August 2019 the SBTE should commission a plan to raise awareness of how everyday racism, institutional racism or bias manifests itself within education settings.*
- 3. By August 2019 Education Scotland should update all of its educational leadership programmes to include content that develops an understanding of how everyday racism, institutional racism or bias affects the workplace and to be able to identify steps for addressing this.*
- 4. Local authorities should ensure that the need to recruit and support a diverse workforce is understood by all relevant staff. By August 2019 COSLA should indicate what steps it has taken to ensure that responsibilities in this area are firmly embedded into recruitment processes.*
- 5. Local authorities and schools should recognise multilingual teachers as valuable members of staff who are able and capable of enhancing the learning of a wide range of pupils, not just pupils for whom English is an Additional Language.*

Attractiveness of teaching to students from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds: the report discusses the reasons as to why individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds are less likely to consider teaching as a career, including the lack of promotion prospects, poor experiences as students and probationers, experiences of discrimination from colleagues, parents and pupils and perceived low levels of pay. The supporting recommendations aim to encourage people from all backgrounds to consider teaching as a career and to ensure racial equality and diversity is given more prominence in the curriculum.

Associated recommendations

- 6. Local authorities, ITE providers, Skills Development Scotland, the GTCS, Scottish Government and relevant third sector organisations who have experience in this area should take joint action to encourage young minority ethnic people to identify teaching as a profession of choice.*
- 7. Education Scotland, through its work with the Curriculum Resource Group, should ensure that curricular materials available to teachers better reflect racial diversity and that quality anti-racist resources exist alongside*

appropriate staff development for teachers, and clear guidance on how resources should be used.

Effectiveness of university admissions processes in capturing a diverse range of applicants: the report strongly argues that there is a need to gather data on university admissions processes to develop a better understanding of the way entry requirements potentially act to reduce successful applications from BME students. Further consideration is needed to understand the impact of the interview process on BME applicants and whether contextualised admissions would provide more opportunity to applicants from a BME background. The report also acknowledges the need to raise awareness among university staff of race equality matters as well as discussing how they could encourage individuals from under-represented communities to apply. It also focuses on whether the GTCS Entry Requirements are a barrier for some applicants from BME backgrounds.

Associated recommendations

8. *Universities providing ITE and the GTCS should examine national entry requirements, selection, admissions and interviewing practices to ensure that institutional barriers, conscious or unconscious bias do not deter applicants from being selected.*
9. *University admission systems for ITE to take steps to ensure the varied skills and experiences of minority ethnic applicants are appropriately valued and that equivalencies are recognised, particularly for those with overseas qualifications.*
10. *Universities providing ITE should gather new data about application, interview and completion rates for minority ethnic students. This work should start in the 2019/20 academic year and be shared with the Diversity in the Teaching Profession Working Group.*

Student placement experiences and support for students: the report argues that teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds are often faced with difficult challenges in the early part of their career and while citing evidence that suggests that, in some cases, complaints have been inappropriately handled. The report also considers the experience of BME students in initial teacher education programmes and the quality of mentoring support they received. The supporting recommendations aim to provide more guidance to ITE providers and employers on race equality and equity and to ensure there is more support for students who experience discrimination while on placement, probation or in permanent post.

Associated recommendations

11. *Universities providing ITE should use the Self-Evaluation Framework published in September 2018 to evidence the ways in which culturally-responsive pedagogies and anti-racist education are embedded in their curriculum content.*

12. *Starting in 2019, as part of their accreditation of ITE Programmes, GTCS should ensure that universities who provide ITE add specific guidance to programme and placement handbooks providing clear advice to students on the support they can access if they experience discrimination or harassment.*
13. *Local Authorities should prepare more detailed guidance to support probationer teachers and teacher mentors to understand the legal and statutory requirements with respect to race equality and diversity and their rights as employees should they face discrimination or harassment.*

Retaining student teachers and teachers from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and supporting promotion at all levels: the annual teacher census suggests there is a lack of promotion opportunities for BME teachers, and the report therefore argues that there is a need to provide more support for teachers from BME backgrounds who have the ability to undertake promoted posts. As part of this the report recognises that it will be important to improve the understanding of school leaders and those on promotion panels on race equality issues. The supporting recommendations aim to ensure institutions are proactive in race equality and create the time to discuss the possible issues with regard to racism and discrimination.

Associated recommendations

14. *Local authorities should recognise and support aspiring minority ethnic teachers and encourage them to apply for promotion both within schools and across the wider education service. As part of this local authorities should examine how racism, institutional racism, bias (conscious or unconscious), and lack of awareness act as blocks to the promotion of BME teachers. This should be done in partnership with BME teachers who can inform such an exercise.*
15. *A national mentoring network for minority ethnic staff should be established by March 2019. This network should be developed and led by the GTCS, working in partnership with BME teachers and relevant groups who have experience in this area. The mentoring process should include the ability to spend time in another school or authority to shadow a promoted member of staff.*

Responsibility of the Education Sector: the report highlights the need for the education sector to work together to take meaningful action in this area while arguing that key elements of education governance, including the Teacher Panel itself, should consider ways in which membership can be diversified. The supporting recommendations aim to help create a culture of diversity across education bodies.

Associated recommendations

16. *All education stakeholders must ensure public facing opportunities e.g. website, promotional flyers, marketing brochures for ITE programmes or courses reflect the diversity of Scotland's population. All education stakeholders to ensure that conferences and high-profile events include*

keynotes, presenters, discussants and workshop leaders from a range of diverse backgrounds.

17. *Boards and other bodies involved in the governance of Scottish education should ensure their membership includes representation from minority ethnic teachers. To include minority ethnic members of the GTCS, the Scottish Education Council, Teachers' Panel, Curriculum Advisory Board, the Education Leaders Forum and the SBTE.*

Teaching in a Diverse Scotland: Increasing And Retaining Minority Ethnic Teachers In Scotland's Schools is available to view online:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/teaching-diverse-scotland-increasing-retaining-minority-ethnic-teachers-scotlands-schools/>