

PUPIL SUPPORT STAFF WORKING GROUP

Minute of Meeting, 18 February 2021

Welcome and introductions

Attendees:

David Roy, Scottish Government (Chair)
Marion MacRury, Scottish Government (Minutes)
Frances Foreman, Education Scotland
Peter McNaughton, ADES
Matthew Sweeny, COSLA
Maria Pridden, Unison
Janette Kerr, ASLO (Education Support Officer Dundee City Council)
Sally Cavers, Children in Scotland
Deborah Lynch, Scottish Government
Jo Fell, Fife Council (Training & Development Officer)

Apologies

Tracy Manning, Scottish Government
Dougie Atkinson, Voice
Simon Cameron, COSLA

Welcome and Introductions

1. The Chair (DR) welcomed members to the meeting and introductions were made for the benefit of new member, Jo Fell. DR noted that busy period/resourcing had prevented scheduling a meeting before now. Tracy Manning (TM) has temporarily been deployed to assist with work on Covid testing in schools but DR noted that steps were being taken to backfill position and provide continuing support to the Group. Marion MacRury (MMR) was attending to take a note of the meeting on this occasion.

Note of last meeting

2. The minute of the last meeting of 9 December was approved. The following update on action points was provided as follows:

- **On-going** - Consider how best to communicate the role of the group to the wider education system in an attempt to both raise profile and avoid duplication. (SG/ADES)
- **On agenda** - Convert ASLO paper and associated job descriptions into an overarching paper that explains the spread of practice (SG)
- **On agenda** - Share overview of remit / regrading work that had previously been developed (Maria)
- **Complete** - Share additional responses following the ASLO meeting on 11 December. (Janette)
- **Complete** - Secretariat to canvas for dates in January 2021 for next meeting of the Group.

- **On-going**, to discuss over Spring - Secretariat to also consider the development of a paper on professional standards for the next meeting of the group.

Summary Analysis of Roles/ Job Descriptions

3. DR referred to the two circulated meeting papers. The first analysis paper was undertaken by SG and highlights the differences in information available as well as the breadth and complexity of the sector. It was noted that a more formal collection would be required to enable more detailed analysis.

4. Janette Kerr (JK) provided a summary of analysis paper of Pupil Support Job Descriptions. It showed again the spread, diversity and variation of roles. Members noted its helpful analysis which raised questions on areas such as working hours/pay, skills sought/required. It was acknowledged that the analysis was incomplete as it did not capture job descriptions from all 32 local authorities.

5. The group discussed how best to involve more local authorities and obtain improved data. Members also considered realistic and achievable next steps and agreed that currently it would be difficult to drive forward further analysis and discuss any form of harmonisation. It was agreed that recognising the important contribution of this workforce would be helpful, possibly by DFM, and the creation of blogs/opinion pieces/case studies about the work of the group would also be well received.

Draft Professional Learning Framework

7. Fran Foreman (FF) summarised the circulated draft, the aim being to develop a National Professional Learning Framework for pupil support staff and local authorities which would be freely accessible and encompass primarily self-directed learning resources. FF advised it was beginning to be populated with the intention of rolling out in August 2021.

8. It was acknowledged that expansion of the list of available resources should be completed to include local authority resources, where permission and copyright allowed. Members stressed the importance of clarifying the purpose of the framework i.e. audience and that early liaison with local authorities as employers would also be required. FF confirmed it was envisaged that it would be initially hosted on the National Improvement Hub, with similarities in style to the Autism Toolbox / Dyslexia Toolkit.

9. DR referred to the August 2021 target date and what steps/funding would be required to enable this. FF advised that the Group could assist in developing a project plan/spec, communication strategy and agreeing a quality assurance criteria. It was agreed to develop a paper, incorporating a timeline up until August.

10. Members agreed that Directors of Education should be informed at an appropriate stage in development and to utilise networks such as the ADES Networks (Personnel/Resources). The Scottish Learning Festival was suggested as a suitable launch point and it was agreed to look at including a proposal for this

year's virtual event. It was further agreed that the views of stakeholders be sought as a means of road-testing the draft resource.

Next Steps -where do we want to get to by June 2021?

11. The following steps/action were agreed:

- Action 5.1 Finalise paper of analyses on terms and conditions.
- Action 5.2 SG to develop paper on professional standards for consideration at next meeting.
- Action 5.3 SG/ES to develop a paper setting out plan/timeline up until August/September for next meeting. Include proposals and opportunities to raise awareness.
- Action 5.4 SG to confirm submission arrangements for SLF 2021 proposals.

Any other business

12. The date of the next meeting would be scheduled for March.