



Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association
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NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION - DECEMBER 2016

SNCT Pay Claim 2017

The Teachers' Side of the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) has agreed a pay claim for 2017. It is therefore expected that all parties will act in a collectively responsible way to protect national negotiating procedure and national pay and conditions for all teachers in Scotland. The claim:

- reference the shortfall in teachers' salaries from the value of the 2003 element of the agreement A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century (8.1%) (CPI) or 16.4% (RPI) and set out a strategy to seek in the first instance to pursue a **salary increase to bring Scottish Teachers into line with average teachers' salaries across the OECD and graduate earnings** across the economy.
- emphasise the importance of **reward at the top point of the main grade scale** in the retention and recruitment of teachers particularly following the decline in career structures since the 2001 National Agreement.
- **restore the pay and working hours of short-term supply teachers** to the level of other teachers.
- bring **class contact time of Scottish teachers into line with OECD figures** and to pursue a **reduction in class sizes** to control teacher workload.
- pursue further a **national staffing standard** and protection of teacher numbers.
- consider the issue of **masters' level pay to support masters' level qualifications**.

See full SNCT Claim [SNCT-pay-claim-2017](#)

The SSTA is supporting the pay claim and will work towards ensuring all elements of the claim are pursued. Unfortunately, national pay and conditions is not the case for all teachers across the United Kingdom and for any party to undermine the SNCT could bring an end to national pay and conditions in Scotland. It is incumbent upon all parties to promote and support the pay claim.

SSTA Put Pupils First - Give Teachers Time to Teach!

Teacher Shortage Widespread and Behaviour Problems Increasing

The shortage of subject teachers and supply teachers is having an impact upon the majority of secondary schools by an increase in teacher workload and adversely upon pupils learning. The SSTA is becoming increasingly alarmed at the complacency in some local authority and government circles that believe there is not a teacher shortage. However it is acceptable that some classes are collapsed, left unsupervised or herded together in an assembly hall to prevent pupils being sent home.

Teachers are in many cases timetabled up to the maximum 22.5 hours and in some instances having to take two National Qualification classes at the same time. This leaves little flexibility in the system. The 'knock on' impact is that many senior colleagues in schools are taking cover classes and are unable to support teachers when faced with behaviour problems in and outside the classroom. This lack of support undermines and demoralises the teacher and can lead to additional stress and staff absence. The SSTA will be conducting surveys in the spring term to get a 'true' picture of the teacher shortage crisis and the increase of incidences of poor behaviour in schools.

SSTA The Voice of Secondary Teachers

HMIe – The New Inspection regime

Members share their views having just gone through a visit from the Inspectors

Comments from a DHT:

When we were first told that we were getting a five day inspection, I thought the week was going to be very hard. It wasn't. The inspectors arrived and the school management had to meet them and present our view of where the school was. The inspectors were friendly and the meeting itself was relatively informal in that people chipped in with comments or questions as seemed appropriate. Ninety minutes later, the inspectors set off in all directions to see classes: senior management returned to normal duties. On the Tuesday one inspector came looking for me to arrange a time to discuss a matter that was in my remit. We met on the Wednesday and I was able to set out in detail the things the school had in place to deal with the particular issue that interested him. Again, the inspector was friendly and the session felt like a discussion rather than an interrogation. Normality for me then returned until the Friday when senior management met the inspectors for detailed feedback on their findings. I was impressed by how well they understood the school in such a short space of time. A few observations from my

experience: firstly, many class teachers appeared to 'play safe' rather than risk delivering more interesting and exciting lessons that may not go so well. This adversely affected the inspectors' views of the quality of teaching in the school. Secondly, inspectors were more interested in evidence of impact on pupils rather than piles of paper. Don't think you have to spend hours getting every minute of every committee meeting in place - a few minutes per committee is sufficient to give a flavour. Thirdly, inspectors are not interested in hearing excuses for how things are - they just assess how things are and give advice on what needs to be improved. Finally, don't be surprised if the raised expectations lead to a poorer report than you had hoped for. 'Satisfactory' is no longer satisfactory.

Class teacher experience:

Initial reactions are that it is far less daunting than I anticipated it would be. The inspectors themselves were very approachable, not at scary as I had imagined. I went along to the drop in session they ran after school (loaded down with examples of our coursework and pupil efforts) and this was a great way to show the inspection team the things we are most proud of as a department. The inspectors were in classes a lot less than I had anticipated, on a full

timetable I only had 15 minute drop in visit – I spent most of the week actually wishing they would come through the door. I specifically requested a visit with one class – I wasn't letting them leave without showing off some of our strengths, they stayed for the period which was an excellent way for them to get a more comprehensive idea of how our L&T is rather than seeing snippets (and probably missing the bit you really wanted them to see). The inspection team also had specific curricular areas they visited – this was very helpful and I believe it gave a really thorough overview of how a faculty as a whole is doing.

My advice to colleagues would be to ensure that you know your pupils; the needs they have and be able to explain HOW exactly you meet them as a class teacher. I would also encourage teachers to invite the inspection team in – rather than the dreaded waiting around I felt this was an excellent way to showcase some of the most effective L&T that happens in your classes. Most importantly, be yourself – if you are using an exercise / active learning technique that you have never tried before, the inspectors will likely be able to see this straight away. Stick to your strengths and do your practice runs now – long before those inspectors arrive so that you feel confident and comfortable.

Annual
Benefit
Statement
Guide

> Click here

sppa
SCOTTISH PUBLIC PENSIONS AGENCY

TEACHERS ANNUAL PENSION BENEFIT
STATEMENTS 2016



> Click here

SPPA has now published 2016 Annual Benefit Statements online for active Scottish Teachers scheme members. All members are advised to check their statements by logging on to www.SPPA.gov.uk

SSTA – The Voice of Secondary Teachers

Asbestos Register in Schools

Asbestos is an extremely hazardous material which was used as a fire retardant in older buildings. This material however is responsible for the deaths of around 5000 workers each year (source HSE). Asbestos is dangerous when disturbed as fibres are released into the air and inhaled. Symptoms often take the form of Asbestosis, Pleural Thickening, and Lung Cancer (Mesothelioma). However, these symptoms often take 10 to 50 years to develop and when these symptoms appear, it is often too late.

Buildings constructed before 2000 will likely have asbestos in the fabric of the building. Due to the hazardous nature of the substance staff within the school building should be aware of the dangers. All schools must have an Asbestos register available in the school office which should have been provided by the local authority after a full survey was carried out of each school. All staff in the building have a right and members should feel obliged to view this document, paying particular attention to the area in which they work to ensure that they are not carrying out any actions that will disturb the substance. Any work

affecting the fabric of the building should not be taking place unless the Asbestos register has been checked.

If no Asbestos register is available to view in your building this should be raised as soon as possible with the SSTA Health and Safety rep who will raise this matter with the school's Building and Services Manager.

Edwin Philpott

SSTA Health and Safety Representative

Risk Assessment

Like it or not, risk assessment is here to stay. It is a means of controlling risks in the workplace. Our employers have a responsibility to make sure that any risks we face in the day to day delivery of our jobs have been considered and the risks minimised. It is a tool to manage risk. It is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather identifying steps to control risk in the workplace.

The Health and Safety Executive have created a checklist for class teachers that can be completed in around twenty minutes to ascertain whether your classroom poses a risk to yourself or your pupils. It can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/classroom-checklist.htm>

This checklist does not cover drama and sports facilities or specialist classrooms, including laboratories, art, IT, design and technology facilities. In these specific environments, where more specialist equipment and/or substances are in use, risk assessment and management appropriate to the activities should be in place.

Speaking as a teacher who has in the past taken pupils out of school on trips to the theatre, skiing, careers conventions and the like, it becomes a bit more complicated. Can we foresee all the risks that could be presented outwith our usual place of work? I have to admit that while I see the purpose behind the activity, I am less than confident in covering all eventualities that ultimately I could be held responsible for, if something was to go wrong.

In school, we have recently started teaching 'Rural Skills' as part of our Wider Achievement Programme. This involves pupils using what could be potentially lethal tools, yet those found in every garden shed in the country: forks, spades, secateurs, hoes, shears... It would be a useless exercise for me as the teacher to identify all that could go wrong if these tools were used in any way other than that for which they were designed. I feel it more appropriate for the pupils to identify for themselves the risks involved in swinging around a spade or throwing a fork. By raising

the awareness of the participants, we surely reduce the risk and encourage proper use of potentially dangerous tools in the wrong hands.

With all the talk currently about reducing teacher workload is it the job of the teacher to complete risk assessments? According to a Depute Director of Education – "No." A teacher may contribute to the compilation and completion of a risk assessment but unless a member of staff has attended 'Risk Assessment Training' it remains the remit of a member of the management team who should have been trained in Risk Management; similar to the pupils using garden tools for the first time.

Whether you would wish to take a risk of venturing anywhere these days without having first completed a risk assessment and what I think is more important – informing participants of the risks involved is entirely a 'no brainer'. We, after all, have the pupils' welfare at the heart of all that we do.

Kevin Boland

SSTA Health and Safety Representative

Education's role in the global refugee crisis

With war, conflict and political turmoil chasing ordinary people from their homes, good quality education is crucial in the way it can help forcibly displaced people rebuild their lives. There are significant challenges to refugees accessing education and teachers are concerned. While education is not the only solution, there is definitely no solution without education.

Why is it a crisis? The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recently reported that there are around 65.3 million forcibly displaced people globally, a third of whom are considered refugees. About half of refugees under the UNHCR mandate are children: 6 million are of school age, many separated from families or travelling alone. Because refugees typically spend about 20 years in exile, a refugee child has little prospect of returning home before adulthood and their only access to education is in their host country. Unaccompanied minors need shelter, food, healthcare, education and protection from abuse, but too frequently young migrants in transit spend extended periods of time out of education. In many cases youngsters are waiting until they reach their destination or are being denied the opportunity to learn through lack of resources or qualified teachers.

Of the 6 million children under the UNHCR mandate about 3.7 million have no school; refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school than non-refugee children. Globally, 90% of children receive primary education but amongst refugees this drops to 50%. As children get older, this deteriorates further: 84% of adolescents attend lower secondary but only 22% of refugees have the same opportunity. Just 1% of refugees find university places compared with a

global figure of 34%.

Can't we just wait for things to improve? Regrettably, these migration trends may not be temporary. Blinkered approaches from some right-wing populist politicians are risky, stirring up resentment and storing up problems. The UN Sustainable Development Goals and the imperative to support security, democracy and sustainable development means that the European Union, governments, civil society and the trade union movement must stand together to respect the rights of all people.

What is government doing about it?

According to UK Government figures, the UK has the 9th highest number of EU asylum applications, sitting way behind Germany, Sweden and Hungary. Unlike transit countries such as Greece and southern Italy where many local people and volunteers make extraordinary efforts to balance arriving migrants' needs with those of local permanent populations, there are some challenges the UK does not have to face. Scotland this year welcomed more Syrian refugees than any other part of the UK, settling a disproportionately large number compared to the population, and some local authorities have been commended for their leadership in this respect.

As a comparatively wealthy destination country with a policy of Getting it Right for Every Child, Scotland is well placed to welcome settling refugees, but improving communication and proper staff support are still important. Schools need assistance to be able to give extra attention to young refugees (eg intensive language learning, trauma counselling) and in-service is necessary to help teachers meet young refugees' educational needs. There is a

risk that schools' ability to cope will be stretched beyond reasonable limits by further resource reductions.

What are unions doing? Education International (EI, the world's largest federation of teaching unions) recently brought together refugees, education union leaders, refugee teachers, education ministers and international experts to launch ongoing international dialogue. Andreas Schleicher, OECD Director for Education and Skills, demonstrated his findings that migrants and refugees perform better in countries with inclusive public school systems, and induction programmes and language courses are the first steps towards successful integration. Discussions addressed challenges confronting classroom teachers, and delegates agreed action points to improve refugee education in their home countries. EI is now developing a collaborative global teaching network for sharing educational resources and pedagogical communication.

What about the teacher shortage? EI is establishing ways to assist forcibly displaced teachers to be able to become qualified teachers in their host countries, for example by helping to locate qualifications paperwork which can sometimes be hard. Filippo Grandi, UNHCR, points out, "Refugees have skills, ideas, hopes and dreams... They are also tough, resilient and creative, with the energy and drive to shape their own destinies, given the chance." It is tremendously important to identify and recognise forcibly displaced peoples' prior learning, acquired skills and qualifications. This is essential for self-esteem and financial security, and to enable them to contribute to the economy of their host country.

As well as practical support, what

can schools do? UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools programme, centred on the Convention on the Rights of the Child offers excellent opportunities for school communities to explore world citizenship and the freely available 'Empowering Global Citizens' course offers suggested teaching approaches. Building a society with an understanding of human rights-based approaches starts in childhood, and respecting the rights of others helps make schools safe places, free of prejudice, bigotry, intolerance and bullying. Schools which are committed to respecting rights report happier, safer learning environments for everybody.

And the wider community? New ways to enhance rights teaching and language learning are also emerging. A recently-released pack from 'learningthroughfilm' aims to help schools, groups and social organisations deepen their understanding of human rights using short documentaries and workshops. SQA-endorsed smartphone apps such as Journey2English can help vulnerable people with little or no English to integrate into communities where opportunities for language learning may be limited or full up. Practically and philosophically, education works for everyone: for the refugee and the non-refugee, for the warmonger and the peacemaker, the

child, the parent, the politician and the voter. John Comenius, the father of modern education and a refugee himself wrote, "Let us have but one end in view, the welfare of humanity; and let us put aside all selfishness in consideration of language, nationality, or religion." And in Grandi's words, **"Refugees face two journeys, one leading to hope, the other to despair. It is up to us to help them along the right path."** Education is essential.

Euan Duncan, President

Subscriptions 2017

The General Treasurer informed Council that subscriptions would increase from January 2017 by 15 pence per month for full-time members and by 7.5p pence per month for part-time, temporary, job-share or supply contracts and retired members.

The reduced annual subscription for 2017 for full-time members will be £169.95 and £84.97 for part time, temporary, job-share, supply and retired members, if their fees are paid by annual direct debit or cheque by 31 January 2017. This saving is clearly of advantage to members and is only available to those who pay before the end of January.

The rates for 2017 are as follows:

Full-time members

£169.95 if paid annually by 31 January 2017 or £185.40 if paid afterwards;

£15.45 per month from January 2017, when paid by monthly direct debit.

Retired, part-time, job-share, temporary or supply members:

£84.97 if paid annually by 31 January 2017, or £92.70 if paid afterwards; £7.72 per month when paid by monthly direct debit.

Full details of subscriptions rates can be found at www.ssta.org.uk/subs2017

Members who have elected to pay their subscription by annual cheque are reminded that these should be forwarded the Association offices by 31 January 2017.

Members who pay annually by cheque are encouraged to transfer to annual Direct Debit. Paying by Direct Debit guarantees that the payment will be taken in time to obtain the discounted subscription. Direct debit instruction forms can be completed online or downloaded from the website at www.ssta.org.uk/ddi. Members who have opted to receive information on revised subscription rates directly to their home addresses will be contacted early in the New Year.

Claim the tax back on professional fees

Two-thirds of the annual subscription payable to the Association is allowable for income tax relief. Section 343, Part 5, Chapter 2 of the Income tax (earning and Pensions) Act 2003. A Proforma letter is available [here](#) that shows subscription rates for Association membership over the past few years.

Further information on how to claim the tax back can be found on [Tax Relief for professional fees and subscriptions](#), or the HMRC website.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION YEAR 2015

In accordance with section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, please find below the Association's financial statement to members for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015.

1. FINANCIAL STATEMENT INCOME

EXPENDITURE

Membership Subscriptions	£992,706
Other income	<u>£38,314</u>
	£ 1,030,840

*Annual Operating Costs	<u>£ 1,094,393</u>
Appropriations SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	£(63,553)

*including:

In respect of	Act. General Secretary, Fiona Dalziel	General Secretary, Seamus Searson
Salary	£6,084.	£71,373
Superannuation and NIC	£1,926.	£20,615
Employee's Superannuation	£698.	£7,071.88
Key Person's Life policy premium	£99.	£0
Essential user's car allowance	£262	£2,887.45

Honoraria to elected Office Bearers:

General Treasurer	£	5,769
Minutes Secretary	£	5,769
President	£	2,472
Vice President	£	<u>1,030</u>
	£	15,040

The Association does not maintain a political fund.

2. STATEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH s32A(6A) OF THE ACT OF TULR(C)A 1992

"A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or have occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct. The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police. Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he may apply for material assistance from the Commissioner for the Rights of Trade Union Members and should, in any case, consider obtaining independent legal advice." A copy of the full financial report has been issued to each school representative and will be available for inspection. Any member wishing an additional copy should write to the General Secretary.

Independent auditors' report to the members of SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

We have audited the accounts of Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association for the year ended 31 December 2015 which comprise the Cash Flow Statement, Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the association's members, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the association's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the association and the association's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Finance Committee and Auditors

As explained more fully in the

Statement of Finance Committee's Responsibilities, the Finance Committee members are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. We have been appointed under the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1992 and report in accordance with regulations made under this Act. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the accounts in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's (APB's) Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of audit of accounts

A description of the scope of an audit of accounts is provided on the APB's website at www.frc.org.uk/apb/scope/private.cfm.

Opinion on the accounts

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the association's affairs as at 31 December 2015 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992; and
- the information given in the Finance Committee's Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1992 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the association has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Stephen Grant, Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of Tindell, Grant & Co, Statutory Auditors 6 Munro Road, Springkerse
Stirling FK7 7UU

Tindell, Grant & Co. is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Office Bearer Election

President

Kevin Campbell, the Fife District Secretary and current Vice President has been elected as SSTA President 2017-2019.

Vice President

John Guidi, East Renfrewshire District Secretary

Ward McCormick, East Ayrshire District Secretary

have been nominated as Vice President 2017-2019. A postal ballot will take place in January. The ballot will open on Tuesday 17th January and close on Tuesday 31st January 2017.

All members are advised to ensure that the address details the Association holds for them is correct. Members can update their details via the SSTA website at www.ssta.org.uk/updatedetails



OBITUARY

George Sturrock was a long serving member of the SSTA who had served as President from 2001 to 2003 during the difficult years of McCrone implementation. He played a crucial role in the negotiations in particular with job sizing about which he had serious reservations. In the face of much opposition, George did much to help smooth some off the very rough edges of this process and many members will recall the “Mail the Minister” campaign directed at Scottish Government. George was the District Secretary for Dundee City and had also served twice as Vice President.

Christmas/New Year Closure of the SSTA Office

Members are asked to note that the Association office will close at 3pm on Friday 23 December and will re-open for normal business after New Year on Thursday 5 January 2017 at 9am. An emergency service will be in operation during the holiday period. Details of the emergency contact service will be published at www.ssta.org.uk/contact-us/ prior to the office closing on Friday 23rd December.

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