



Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

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NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTTISH SECONDARY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION - NOVEMBER 2017

Teachers Must Learn to Say NO

Teacher Workload is still increasing despite the promise made by John Swinney, Deputy First Minister, in May last year that he wished to tackle teacher workload and allow teachers time to teach. The continuous demand for change and the introduction of new initiatives has led to many SSTA members saying "enough is enough".

The changes to National 5, the introduction of Benchmarks, the introduction of Standardised Assessments, together with the work created by Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and the promise of greater scrutiny contained with the Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RIC) are pushing teachers to the brink. The constant changes to the National Qualifications with more to come, the demand of local authorities and school managements to incorporate the Benchmarks into subject courses and tracking and monitoring exercises, are all outside the provisions set within the schools Working Time Agreements mean teachers must say NO.

All these changes end up with the teacher in the classroom. All these changes can be termed as 'New Initiatives' as in many cases were not envisaged when WTAs were being signed off in schools in the Summer. So why should teachers have to make these initiatives work when the most important task working with pupils is taken for granted. If teachers do not say NO then more initiatives and changes will follow.

SSTA members are still covered by the Industrial Action Ballot and are advised to say NO if time is not being made available. Teachers must not feel guilty in saying I have used the time made available and I cannot do anymore. Remember 'Put pupils First – Give Teachers Time To Teach!' and say NO.

Benchmarks

Education Scotland published Benchmarks for all subjects in March 2017. The SSTA had concerns with the process of consultation but many members have welcomed them at this time. Numeracy and Literacy are to be reported in the National Improvement Framework at S3 in 2018. There will be no report for other subjects. Education Scotland will be providing exemplifications with an emphasis on Holistic Assessments. Dissemination events are being arranged through Local Authorities. However, teachers are NOT required to use them but are for awareness raising. Inspectors will NOT be looking for Bench Mark evidence during Inspections. Education Scotland has stated

"At this point, there is no expectation that teachers will report on learners' achievement of a level in curriculum areas beyond literacy and numeracy.

The introduction of Benchmarks for all other areas of the curriculum needs to be proportionate and manageable. Teachers and other practitioners should be given time to engage in professional discussion to become familiar with the Benchmarks and start to use them in line with their school improvement plans".

SSTA Advice

- Members need to ensure that time to review the changes for the new courses and work on Bench Marks are allocated within the Working Time Agreement and other duties are set aside
- Any teacher asked to prepare materials or consult with staff should decline the request until adequate time is given by the Headteacher
- The SSTA recommends that all members 'use their professional judgment in relation to the prioritisation of tasks' and work within the contracted 35 hour week.

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President Kevin Campbell Biography



Born and raised in the East End of Glasgow to actively political parents, Kevin was brought up in a period of economic decline and Thatcherite hegemony. This led to his firm resolution that all people have to be organised to resist detrimental changes to their material conditions and to his involvement, almost continually, in the trade union movement.

Whilst at university, Kevin was actively involved in student politics and anti- racist organisations.

The decision to enter teaching was a fairly easy one.

Where better to uphold the ideals of fairness and equality than in the class room? Kevin's teaching career began in the North East of England. Peterlee's Shottonhall, not far from Sunderland, was somewhat a baptism of fire: An area of deprivation unequalled by anything he had previously seen. Shottonhall demonstrated how kids from the most difficult backgrounds can succeed when schools and teachers inspire them to achieve the potential each and every young person has within them.

Returning to Scotland and settling in Fife Kevin again opted to work in an area of severe economic difficulty: Levenmouth: comprised of the communities of Buckhaven and Methil, famous old towns known for decades of industry now gone completely. Kevin has taught in the area for the last 13 years, firstly at Buckhaven High School, then Kirkland High School and now in the brand new Levenmouth Academy.

Throughout this period Kevin has been an active member of the SSTA primarily because of the understanding that secondary teachers need a voice tailored to the demands of that sector. Kevin, almost immediately became a school rep and shortly thereafter joined the regional executive of Fife, the National Council and recently became the District Secretary for Fife. Through these duties Kevin is involved on a day to day basis working for the benefit of SSTA members and the young people they teach.

Notice Periods

Please remember that any notice period now needs to include 4 working weeks. This means that if you intend resigning around a holiday you will need to ensure you include 4 working weeks as well as the holiday period. You can give more than 4 working weeks' notice and you should always put your last day of service as the day before you would have been due back after any holiday period.

Classroom Observations

A school or local Classroom Observations Policy should be agreed by the school consultative committee. The Head Teacher can visit any class at any time but any other teacher observations should be agreed beforehand and feedback given to the teacher.

The Right to Flexible Working

Q1. Do all employees qualify from the arrangements?

No, you must have at least 26 weeks of continuous service with the employer and you can only make one request in any 12 month period.

Q2. What are the family circumstances which are taken into account?

None – all employees are entitled to apply for flexible working.

Q3. What are the relevant options?

There are a few basic possibilities.

These are: to change the number of hours worked per week or the times you start and finish your working day or perhaps, less likely for teachers, work from home. You could also request to job-share or to take phased retirement.

Q4. How do I go about requesting flexible working?

First of all check you qualify by reviewing your answer to Question 1.

You must make a written application. It is likely your employer will have a form to complete and it is helpful if you can offer a solution to how your change in contract could work for both your own and the school's benefit.

Q5. Will this change affect my terms and conditions?

Yes, this would be a material and permanent contractual change.

You must check what arrangements your employer will agree to put in place to allow your return to "normal" working should you wish to at some future date. The employer is under no obligation to agree this.

Q6. So, that outlines what I need to do. What about the employer?

The simple case first: the employer might agree

to your request.

Q7. What happens if the employer does not immediately agree to the request?

Then a meeting should be held to discuss the request. The employer needs to state the reasons for refusal and tell you that you have the right of appeal. The ACAS Code of Practice on the Employer's responsibilities is a good guide – <http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/f/e/Code-of-Practice-on-handling-in-a-reasonable-manner-requests-to-work-flexibly.pdf> Your employer needs to let you know within 3 months.

Q8. How do I appeal?

Employees no longer have the legal right to appeal but your employer may still have an appeals procedure. If you wish to appeal you must state your grounds including anything that you think was not taken into consideration adequately. Please seek advice from the Association on any appeal.

Q9. What about employer's reasons for refusal?

This legislation applies to all workers so the reasons can be quite varied.

Employers can reject an application for any of the following reasons:

- extra costs that will damage the business
- the work can't be reorganised among other staff
- people can't be recruited to do the work
- flexible working will affect quality and performance
- the business won't be able to meet customer demand
- there's a lack of work to do during the proposed working times
- the business is planning changes to the workforce

Getting It Right For Every Teacher



John Guidi,
Vice-President

Whichever way a teaching career path takes, the career structure is designed to provide increased satisfaction of a worker's career values and needs by targeting a series of jobs designed to get them to their career goal.

There have been various signals recently that indicate that all is not quite right in Scottish education system terms of recruitment and retention of teachers.

This year, the National Press stated that there is a shortage of English, home economics and STEM teachers. At present, there is a shortfall of 690 teachers across all sectors where secondary education accounts for half of the shortfall.

The shortfall of teacher recruitment and retention is a strain on the system as a whole. Classes may not be covered effectively, secondment opportunities maybe denied and promotion can be restricted. All these issues can be affected if there is a lack of specialist teachers.

Also in the last round of PISA results, Scottish education is regressing (rather than progressing) in terms reading, writing and maths. (Aka Literacy and Numeracy). In effect, learning standards have dropped along with the number of new recruits entering the profession.

With such evidence, The SSTA forwarded Motion E at Congress 2017

“..... to promote and incentivise subject specialists with an appropriate career structure thus

maintaining subject specialism and enhancing pupil attainment.”

To many subject specialist teachers there have been calls for a change in the career structure that is long overdue, however if a change takes place we should learn from what happened in the past.

Opportunity gained and then disregarded. A history lesson

In 2001, McCrone agreement was supposedly an opportunity to make the teaching profession fit for the needs of the 21st Century. It was an attempt to prevent the “boom and bust” approach of recruitment and retention.

McCrone introduced terms such as “signing out”, “collegiality”, “professional development” and “winding down”. The then new post of “Chartered Teacher” was formed in an attempt to promote and retain teachers in the classroom. In addition, there was also the introduction of “classroom assistants” to help the pupils and teachers and to raise pupil attainment. Combined with a “substantial” pay rise over a number of years, the recipe seemed to some extent have worked. There was an increase in teacher numbers and the whole system stabilised.

At that time, I had a personal interest in the career structure and McCrone. I was undertaking a M.Sc. assignment researching the management structure. It was evident that promotion in the secondary sector was most likely to be achieved via the “pastoral / guidance route” as there were more promoted opportunities it terms of scale in numbers compared to gaining promotion via the “Subject Route”. Also the concept of Continuous Lifelong Professional learning (CLPL) was not an integral part of career development.

But over the last 15 years the terms and conditions of the profession changed. Many local authorities created faculties reducing promotion via subject

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specialism, and then came McCormac Report in 2011, and the removal of Chartered Teacher. The net effect was to restrict the opportunities for those who wanted to remain in the classroom even further, combined with excessive workload with the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).

The delivery of CfE caused an imbalance of workload and additional responsibility on the subject specialist teacher, which was dependent on the subject and the number of teachers within a faculty or department.

The career structure had developed to a bias towards administrative leadership rather than pedagogical leadership. The present structure has been accused of favouring a “Top Down” management style of implementing local and national policies rather than developing a culture of collaboration, enterprise and creativity with multiple career pathways. It is ironic that CfE is to develop learners to be creative and enterprising workers for the future economy and yet those same ideals do not translate well for teachers within the present career structure.

For many subject specialist teachers the career ceiling is the top of the main grade scale, which is achieved within 6 years of teaching. The incentive to progress is to leave the classroom because that is where most opportunities arise.

The SSTA have stated repeatedly the preservation of Principal Teacher of Subject and Chartered Teacher along with effective and worthwhile development programmes of learning for teachers as a means to:

- Enhance recruitment and retention within the secondary sector,
- Bring equity and excellence to teachers in terms of career progression
- Raise attainment of pupils.

The SSTA's Salaries and conditions of service committee are bringing forward the need for a change in the career structure.

Present Day

The SSTA sent a delegation of National Executive representatives to John Swinney, Deputy First Minister, to discuss national educational matters and raised members concerns regarding the career structure for secondary teachers.

There are signs of possible change as the Scottish Government have sought advice from the International Council of Education Advisors (ICEA). They have listed three priority areas:

- Improving pedagogy for specific subjects, using clear evidence to identify what works in the classroom
- Developing effective leadership at all levels in Scottish education – unleashing un-tapped potential within the system
- Ensuring a culture of collaboration exists throughout Scottish education, at classroom, school, regional and national level.

It is indicated by the ICEA that there is a gap in status, remuneration and culture for specialist subject teachers. Surely if the Scottish Government wants to reduce the attainment gap then they should consider the value of expertise that subject specialist teachers bring to a child's education?

Ultimately, if history is not to repeat itself again, with the boom and bust cycle of recruitment and retention, the Scottish Government and the local authorities should not only be Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) but also applying (GIRFET) Getting It Right For Every Teacher!

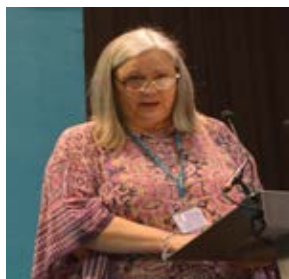
Members' Briefing - 5 December 2017

The SSTA will be holding a Members' Briefing on Tuesday 5 December 2017 at SSTA offices in Edinburgh. The General Secretary would like to meet with SSTA members to discuss the issues that face secondary teachers (pay, workload, SQA etc.) and how we protect and improve conditions for members. This is your opportunity to have your say.

Book your place at www.ssta.org.uk/events

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Working Year/Working Week for part-timers



Fiona Dalziel
Deputy General Secretary

Anyone considering going part-time should be aware of the effect this will have on their Working Year and Working Week. This can be a bit more complicated for part-time rather than full-time staff. A full-time teacher's contract consists of a few elements:

- 190 pupil days
- 5 In-Service days
- Contact time – maximum of 22.5 hours per week
- Preparation and Correction time (remaining time) – maximum of 7.5 hours per week (one-third of contact time)
- Collegiate time (set aside in the WTA) – an average of 5 hours per week
- Holidays accrued at 0.2051 for each working day, i.e. $195 \times 0.2051 = 40$ days – with the remaining 26 days considered as school closure days, neither paid nor allocated against holiday allowance.
- The full Working Year is therefore 195 days plus 40 days holiday = 235 days.

Part-timers therefore have to take all of these elements into consideration. For example, if you are working 0.6 you will be obliged to work:

- $190 \text{ pupil days} \times 0.6 = 114$ days per year
- $5 \text{ in-service days} \times 0.6 = 3$ days per year
- $22.5 \text{ hours} \times 0.6 = 13.5$ hours maximum contact time per week
- $7.5 \text{ hours} \times 0.6 = 4.5$ hours maximum preparation and correction time per week
- $5 \text{ hours} \times 0.6 = 3$ hours maximum collegiate time per week

Some years there may be a day or two less or more than 195 days, depending on the calendar and your obligation is to do your proportion of whatever days are allocated for that school year.

If you work on a Monday you may have to work extra days to make up for the holidays and if you work other days only you may be due time back. The main thing is to have a look at the school calendar for the year, work out how many working days are available, see how many days you will be working and compare it to the number of days for which you are paid. If you are going to be working less then you will be due time to the school, if you are due to be working more then you are due time back. This should be discussed with your line manager to find a mutually agreed solution.

The only element of collegiate time for which you have to attend on a day you do not normally work is a parents' night. However, you only have to do your proportion of whatever hours are put aside for this element either in days or hours. This should be agreed up front with your line manager.

Also, it is best if you discuss with your line manager beforehand, usually by the end of the previous school year, which In-Service Days you will attend. There may be whole-school training or some days which would be more beneficial for you to attend.



St Andrew's Day March & Rally 25 November 2017

The STUC are arranging the St Andrew's Day March & Rally this year. The event will take place on Saturday 25 November 2017, with march assembly from 10.30am at Glasgow Green, march off for 11am, and finishing with the Rally at Adelaides Auditorium, Bath Street.

Teacher Retention Crisis

Tackle the Abatement of Teacher Pensions

The SSTA is aware of the enormous effort the Government is making to attract graduates into Initial Teacher Education but is concerned that the teacher vacancy rates are steadily increasing. In an effort to address the qualified subject teacher shortage the SSTA would recommend that you attempt to encourage recently retired teachers, and those who are about to retire during this school session, to continue in teaching. A measure that would assist would be a relaxation of the punitive abatement rules on teachers in receipt of a teachers pension. The SSTA does not necessarily see this as a long term solution, but would help to reduce the pressure on existing teachers to deliver for all young people in schools with increasing teacher vacancies, maternity leave, sickness absence and serious lack of supply teachers.

As you are aware "Earnings from re-employed service are assessed annually at the end of each financial year (31 March). During any period of re-employment, a teacher's pension may be partially or fully abated, by the amount by which their pension (including any compensation payment or other UK teacher's pension) plus their re-employment salary exceeds their salary of reference".

At present all teachers have to restrict their employment to ensure they do not exceed the 'salary of reference' as their pension would be reduced by a pound for every pound above the

salary of reference. These teachers are unable to commit to a long-term supply contract when schools want consistency as they will exceed the salary of reference. If this measure was relaxed it would encourage more retired teachers to support the system. The Government would need to request a relaxation with the Treasury as it is their decision. (It is worth noting that teachers who retire on an Actuarially Reduced basis, before their normal pension age, are not subject to an earnings limit).

In addition, should the Government encourage employers to look favourably on requests for 'Phased Retirement' as a benefit to the education system in that these teachers would continue in employment and from our experience tend to remain and contribute to the education system beyond their normal retirement age.

The increasing demands of changes to national qualifications, standardised assessments, benchmarks together with the reduction of specialist teachers and others to support young people with additional special needs and behavioural issues is pushing many teachers to question continuing in the profession. An influx of experienced teachers would be a tremendous boost to morale (together with further reductions in workload and increase in salary).

[Extract of Letter to Deputy First Minister]

Accrual of Holiday when Acting Up

Teachers accrue holiday for each day worked at the rate they are paid for that day times 0.2051, approximately one day for each 5 working days. If you act up into a promoted post then you are accruing future holiday at the rate for that post. When the acting up post ends a calculation will need to be done on how many days of the working year you have worked at your normal rate less any holiday already taken at that rate plus how many

days at the acting up rate less any holiday already taken at that rate.

This means that if you act up for a substantial part of the year but are stepped down before the summer then the majority of your summer holiday will be still be due to be paid at the higher rate. Please contact the office for help and guidance with any calculations.

Teach First



Paul Cochrane
Salaries & Conditions Committee Member

Motion

'The SSTA is opposed to the introduction of the Teach First scheme in Scotland as we believe that Teach First would not maintain appropriate professional standards of teacher training. The Association urges the Government to reject the scheme.'

Teach First is a social enterprise registered as a charity with the aim of addressing educational disadvantage. It has American parentage after a 1990 thesis by Wendy Kopp at Princeton attracted funding from entrepreneurs with links to the management consultancy firm McKinsey.

Bloodline of Teach First

- A 1989 thesis by Wendy Kopp at Princeton leads to support by large corporate financial backers and 'Teach for America' is founded in 1990.
- In 1994, two 'Teach For America' Corps Members leave and start the KIPP (Knowledge is Power Programme). This is a body that promotes Charter Schools out-with local democratic control. KIPP often attracts accusations of self-selection of better pupils, has a high turnover of staff organization and an extended school week.
- In 2002, 'Teach First' is founded in the UK by Brett Harris Wigdortz a McKinsey Consultant.
- 'Teach for All' becomes the world-wide umbrella organisation for all groups in 2007.
- In the UK, only 40% of Teach First graduates

are still teaching after 5 years compared with up to 70% by traditional routes.

Indeed, PWC a Platinum Partner of the Teach First Scheme since 2009, proudly boasts that "We recognise that spending two years teaching at a school in challenging circumstances will prepare you for anything that a career with us could throw at you." Following completion of the two-year programme, participants become Teach First ambassadors and do not necessarily remain in teaching, indeed this could be described as an intellectual and academic pyramid scheme with the prime aim of developing leaders at the expense of, and not for, our education system.

A central principle of the umbrella organisation under which Teach First operates is that it must have, 'Independence from the control of government and other external entities, with an autonomous Board, a diversified funding base, and the freedom to make operational decisions, challenge traditional paradigms, and sustain the model in the face of political changes' The 2016 Financial Report indicates that their independence and diversification from Government extends to accepting 67% (£43m) directly from Government and 18% (£11.5m) in school fees of their £64m of income from the accountable bodies it strives to remain aloof from. To the best of my knowledge, 'school fees' are associated support and CPD supplied by Teach First to schools.

In fact, the Founder of Teach for America, Wendy Kopp said.

"We're a leadership development organization, not a teaching organization, I think if you don't understand that, of course it's easy to tear the whole thing apart." Critics claim this comment shows TFA exists more to advance the career of its recruits than of the students it claims to help.

John Wilson of the National Education Association (he's like SSTA General Secretary Seamus Searson but with a Cadillac) explained "We are beginning to see school systems lay off teachers and then hire Teach For America college grads." Wilson went on to say that Teach For America

brings in “the least-prepared and the least-experienced teachers” into low-income schools and makes them “the teacher of record.”

In reality, the accusation often thrown at Teach First is that they should be called, “**Teach First, Then Get a Better Job**’ – a mission that grates with those of us who see public service as a noble calling beyond the promotion of self.

In the TESS of 29th August 2016, Emma Seith pointed out that spending on ITE is now substantially lower than it was a decade ago. For the 2016-17 academic year, the teaching grant stood at £25.6 million – £13 million lower than in 2009-10 when £38.6 million was spent on teacher training. Trade Unions such as the SSTA warned the Scottish Government that cuts to training and recruitment would have consequences. It now seems that the teachers and trainers, who have demonstrated resilience in the face of austerity, are now going to be by-passed to fund an organisation that self-selects recruits and uses them as a Trojan Horse to access school CPD budgets while charging employers a finder’s fee. This money could be better spent.

It is an anathema to hard working teachers and our educational values in Scotland that Teach First could be able to take places that could easily be filled by graduates determined to build a sustainable career in teaching at a fraction of the

cost. Indeed, one wonders, after the revelations that Teach First have had un-minuted meetings with the Cabinet Minister, what is the ‘Quid Pro Quo?’ Is it to introduce Charter Schools free from local accountability as supported by KIPP Ambassadors?

Finally Council, a warning from Management Today July 2013. Part of the SSTA motion is that ‘*we believe that Teach First would not maintain appropriate professional standards of teacher training.*’ A graduate of the Teach First programme stated in 2013, “During my training, I taught a class for 20 minutes. That was all the experience I had when I was sent, alone, in front of my first class.” Surely we can expect the next generation of teachers to have more than 20 minutes experience in the classroom?

We have five Universities in the top 200 list of World Class establishments. Are we really saying that our best bet is a McKinsey Management Consultancy inspired, organisation that has 6 employees in the charity paid more than £100,000 per year? Are we proposing we pay fees to an enterprise that, due to its charitable status, returns no tax to the public purse despite taking at least £43m from us?

Mr Swinney?

‘Think First’ before you ‘Teach First.’

Conservation of Salary after Acting Up for more than 2 years

In line with the SNCT anyone acting up into a post for more than 2 years is entitled to conservation of the salary for that post for 3 years starting from the date when you are asked to step down. Appropriate notice for the post should also be given to the jobholder indicating that the acting up position is coming to an end, i.e. 8 weeks for a promoted post including 4 working weeks. This serves two purposes: 1. to compensate for the loss of salary after a considerable period of time and 2. to prompt a decision on making posts permanent rather than keeping temporary posts going for substantial periods.

It seems that some authorities are deliberately breaking contracts before the 2 year period is up

in order to stop members becoming entitled to conservation then, after a week or so, immediately reappointing the same individual. It is not legally acceptable that contracts are broken solely for this purpose. Frequently those acting up remain on distribution lists and have pupils referred to them during their “break in contract”. If you are asked by your Head Teacher or Human Resources to step down solely for this reason please make contact with the office. If you are asked to stop doing the post because the work is no longer required to be done or because someone else has been appointed to the post then these are legitimate reasons and we would not expect you to be asked to step up again after a short break.

Stonewall Report

Equalities committee is currently investigating the outcome of the Stonewall, School Report Scotland and thought that it would be beneficial to let the members be aware of the key findings. The committee is planning to publish an advice note shortly.

In 2016 Stonewall commissioned the Centre for Family Research at the University of Cambridge to conduct a survey with young people who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (or think they might be) on their experiences in secondary schools and colleges across Britain. Between November 2016 and February 2017, 3,713 LGBT young people aged between 11-19, including 402 living in Scotland, completed an online questionnaire.

Bullying and language

- **Half** of lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) young people in Scotland (48 per cent) – including **71 per cent** of trans young people – are bullied for being LGBT at school
- **More than three in five** LGBT young people (63 per cent) 'frequently' or 'often' hear homophobic language in school,
- **more than two in five** (43 per cent) 'frequently' or 'often' hear biphobic language and **more than half** (53 per cent) 'frequently' or 'often' hear transphobic language
- **Nine in ten** LGBT young people (91 per cent) regularly hear phrases such as 'that's so gay' or 'you're so gay' in school
- **More than two in five** LGBT young people who experience homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying (44 per cent) never tell anyone about it

How schools respond

- **Just a third** of bullied LGBT young people in Scottish schools (32 per cent) say that teachers intervene when they are present during the bullying
- **Seven in ten** LGBT young people (72 per cent) report that teachers or school staff only 'sometimes' or 'never' challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language when they hear it

- **Seven in ten** LGBT young people (68 per cent) report that their schools say homophobic and biphobic bullying is wrong, but just four in ten (41 per cent) report that their schools say transphobic bullying is wrong

Teaching

- **Two in five** LGBT young people in Scottish schools (41 per cent) are never taught anything about LGBT issues in school or college
- Just **one in five** LGBT young people (22 per cent) have learnt about safe sex in relation to same-sex relationships
- **Three in four** LGBT young people (75 per cent) have never learnt about bisexuality at school
- **Four in five** LGBT young people (78 per cent) have never been taught about or discussed gender identity and what 'trans' means

Support

- **Nearly half** of LGBT young people in Scotland (45 per cent) say that there isn't an adult at school they can talk to about being LGBT
- Just **four per cent** of LGBT young people who know of an openly bi member of staff, and only **two per cent** who know of an openly trans member of staff. Three in ten LGBT young people (28 per cent) know of an openly gay member of staff, and **23 per cent** know of an openly lesbian member of staff
- **More than half** of trans young people (53 per cent) say that staff at their school are not familiar with the term 'trans' and what it means
- **Two in three** trans young people (65 per cent) say that they are not able to use the toilets they feel comfortable in at school, while **more than a third** of trans young people (36 per cent) are not able to be known their preferred name at school

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Wellbeing and mental health

- **More than two in five** bullied LGBT young people in Scottish schools (43 per cent) have skipped school because of bullying about being LGBT
- **More than half** of bullied LGBT young people (56 per cent) feel that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying has had a negative effect on their plans for future education
- **Nearly all** trans young people (96 per cent) have deliberately harmed themselves at some point. For lesbian, gay and bi young people who are not trans, **three in five** (58 per cent) have self-harmed
- **More than two in five** trans young people (43 per cent) have at some point attempted to take their own life. For lesbian, gay and bi young people who are not trans, **one in four** (24 per cent) have tried to take their own life

At home and online

- Just **two in five** LGBT young people in Scotland (41 per cent) have an adult at home they can talk to about being LGBT
- **Nearly all** LGBT young people in Scotland (96 per cent) say the Internet has helped them understand more about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- **More than two in five** LGBT young people (44 per cent) have been the target of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse online
- **Nearly all** LGBT young people (98 per cent) see homophobic, biphobic and transphobic content online
- **Three in five** LGBT young people (62 per cent) think that online platforms are unlikely to do anything about tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic content or incidents when it is reported to them

SSTA District Meetings

Council 2 December 2018

Your District Secretary will be holding on local pre Council meeting between Saturday 10 November and Tuesday 20 November.

Items of business will include STUC Motions and National Award Nominations

Council 3 March 2018

Your District will hold an AGM between Saturday 9 February and Tuesday 20 February, During the AGM, appointment of District Secretary and Congress 2018 representatives will take place.

Discussion on Motions for Congress 2018 will also take place.

The closing date for Motion submission will be Friday 9 March.

Details of your local meetings can be found on our website <https://ssta.org.uk/events/>

POOR PUPIL BEHAVIOUR: AN INCREASING PROBLEM

The impact of a number of years of cuts to education spending, reductions in ASN and Guidance teachers is now being seen in many schools. Together with cuts in specialist support staff inside and outwith the school the foundations of good behaviour and meeting the needs of all pupils are being severely tested. The SSTA has made representations to the Deputy First Minister on the challenges these cuts have made upon the pupils and teachers' alike but to date little progress has been made.

SSTA presented a detailed report. The report can be found at www.ssta.org.uk/congress-2017/

(The direct link to the report is www.ssta.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SSTA-ASN-Panel-Report-Provision-of-Teachers-and-Pupil-Support-Assistants.pdf.)

Teachers captivate and educate successfully every day. Teachers and headteachers work hard every day, in the vast majority of our schools, to make schools havens of peace, security and good order. But teachers cannot teach and pupils cannot learn in an environment where there is disruption and violence, and where such behaviour occurs it cannot be explained away simply by attributing it to a teacher's inability to plan and deliver a lesson appropriately. This excuse is often made to deflect others from taking responsibility and offering appropriate and meaningful support to assist teachers in the classroom.

The main concern for teachers in all schools is the growing pressure from what is now the most common form of poor behaviour, so-called 'low-level disruption'. Constant challenges to authority, persistent refusal to obey school rules and frequent, regular verbal abuse of staff are the hallmarks of this behaviour. Its effects, if unchallenged, are corrosive and when sustained over a long period can have a devastating impact on the health and welfare of teachers. Many teaching hours are lost challenging this behaviour and teacher morale is reaching an all time low.

Teachers are entitled to work in an environment

free from violence and disruption and to appropriate access to training and support on behaviour matters. Pupils are entitled to a safe and orderly learning environment, together with effective teaching and support, to assist them in achieving their full potential. All pupils are entitled to inclusion in the education service and to have their educational needs met. However, for a small minority of pupils, inclusion in a mainstream school is inappropriate and access to specialist, alternative provision, of the highest quality, must be made available.

Effective school leadership, working in partnership with staff and trade unions, is essential to the establishment and maintenance of acceptable standards of behaviour in schools.

Local Authorities have a responsibility to support the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. Early identification and intervention are essential factors in successful behaviour management. Schools need support, and appropriate resources, to enable them to respond effectively, at an early stage.

Schools should be able readily to access external advice, support, and specialist provision without the requirement to negotiate burdensome, bureaucratic procedures. They must also be given flexibility within the curriculum, and adequate resources, to develop appropriate educational programmes to meet the needs of individual pupils.

There are times when, despite every effort made by the school, it is necessary to implement the exclusion procedure. Headteachers must be empowered to exercise their professional judgement in the use of exclusion. In the most severe cases, headteachers must be supported in excluding the pupil permanently. A decision to exclude a pupil must balance the interests of the excluded pupil against the interests of all the other members of the school community.

Local targets to limit or reduce the use of the exclusion sanction will not serve the interests of the school, or meet the needs of the individual pupil, and are unacceptable. Parents and carers have an essential role to play in assisting schools in maintaining high standards of behaviour. They have a duty to take responsibility for the behaviour of their child. Consistency of expectations by schools and parents/carers is essential, as is the need for effective liaison between the home and the school.

Local authorities must exercise their responsibility to support schools in maintaining good order and behaviour.

All schools should establish behaviour policies and strategies and a range of rewards and sanctions in consultation with staff and school workforce unions to promote acceptable standards of behaviour. Schools should ensure that their behaviour management policies are non-discriminatory in their scope and operation, including on the grounds of ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. Schools should collect and regularly review data on behaviour to ensure that their behaviour management policy is operating fairly and equitably.

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SSTA Put Pupils First - Give Teachers Time to Teach!