SCOTLAND

NASUWT THE TEACHERS' UNION

MOTIONS

Scotland Conference 2026

SEC Officers: The Voice of Rural Teachers

Conference notes that rural schools can often feel overlooked in national conversations on education policy.

Conference notes that rural schools face many of the same struggles as their urban counterparts, including increasing violence and aggression, rising workload and the increasing impact of poverty. Conference is concerned, however, that deprivation is not only often more hidden in the countryside but also compounded by inaccessibility of opportunities and limited transport.

Conference further notes that:

(i) climate change is having a disparate impact in rural settings, affecting the safety, wellbeing and ability of schools to operate;

(ii) weather patterns, hotter and drier summers, periods of intense rainfall, and in some areas a growing risk of wildfires all affect surrounding land and communities;

(iii) wildfires and extreme weather impacts air quality for pupils, can damage school buildings, disrupt transport routes and place additional pressure on already stretched public services.

Conference believes that education has an essential role to play in moving towards a more sustainable future and calls on the Scotland Executive Council to campaign for:

a) schools to receive support to reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency, and contribute to the transition to a low-carbon economy;

b) a fair and inclusive transition which protects workers, supports communities, and ensures that the burdens and benefits of changes are shared fairly;

c) climate resilience planning in schools, including clear guidance on responding to extreme weather events, wildfire risks and poor air quality;

d) investment in school buildings so that they are safe, energy efficient and fit for the challenges of a changing climate;

e) teachers to have the support, resources and professional confidence to help young people understand the environmental challenges they will face and the solutions they can help create;

f) investment in rural schools as places where the next generation learns how to build a more sustainable and resilient society;

g) the challenges faced by rural teachers to be platformed nationally both within our union and within wider education policy.

SEC Officers: Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) Education

Conference notes the publication of the updated statutory *Guidance on the Delivery of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) Education in Scottish Schools*.

Conference welcomes the new thematic outcomes, which will apply to all schools and education settings and should be included across the curriculum.

Conference agrees that we need:

i. a consistent approach and guaranteed support for all schools;

ii. a national focus on RSHP education; and

iii. appropriate Personal and Social Education (PSE) delivery and implementation.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to campaign for:

a) exemplification, practical advice and training for teachers;

b) workload audits to ensure implementation of the updated guidance does not become a workload driver;

c) the role and responsibility of the local authority in respect of the RSHP curriculum to be clearly set out;

d) guidance and support for schools around the issues facing children and young people from online influences;

e) the impact of the updated Conduct of RSHP guidance to be evaluated within five years of publication, and appropriate steps put in place to adapt, continue and develop this work;

f) evaluation to be against success criteria discussed and agreed with NASUWT, which also considers the impact on learners; and

g) the Curriculum Improvement Cycle to embed the new thematic outcomes.

SEC Officers: Mentoring

Conference recognises the ongoing challenge of ensuring sustained engagement in union activism to further promote a workplace culture where the Union's presence is visible, collective and inclusive to ensure that every member is empowered and supported through trade union membership.

Conference believes that the development of a mentoring programme would encourage and facilitate NASUWT Scotland members and activists to progress and get more involved in trade union activities by advancing personal skills, knowledge and development.

Conference notes there would be many advantages to a mentoring programme including:

- increasing members' involvement in the Union;
- encouraging and supporting activists;
- providing training opportunities for both the mentors and mentees;
- supporting members and activists to take the next steps and progress within NASUWT's structure (as appropriate);
- helping to identify and address barriers towards reaching personal goals;
- allowing mentor and mentee partnerships to learn from one another and transfer knowledge, skills and experience;
- providing networking opportunities (internally and externally).

Conference further notes that a Mentoring Exchange Scheme would also allow the union to:

- better understand barriers to activism and engagement;
- monitor development and future success of the scheme;
- bring new people through our structures and into active roles in the union.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to pilot a Mentoring Exchange Scheme, following engagement with other STUC affiliates to establish comparative models and best practice, which would clearly articulate:

i. mentor roles and responsibilities;
ii. mentee roles and responsibilities;
iii. key features of a mentoring relationship;
iv. an application process to enter the Mentoring Exchange Scheme;
v. a selection process to match suitable mentors and mentees;
vi. a review process to evaluate the pilot process after one year with a view to further roll-out as appropriate.

Conference further notes that the five main strands of the NASUWT's equality groups are members who are: Black; Disabled; LGBTI; Women; and Young. Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive Council to evaluate the equality impact of any pilot scheme, reporting to Scotland Executive Officers on any impact on the groups which are under-represented as activists within the lay structure of the Union.

Aberdeenshire: Review of State Pension Age and Life Expectancy

Conference notes:

1. the UK Government's ongoing policy to increase the State Pension Age (SPA) to 67 and eventually 68;
2. that these increases were predicated on Office for National Statistics projections of 'ever-increasing' life expectancy;
3. recent data indicating that life expectancy improvements in the UK have stalled over the last decade, with some regions in Scotland experiencing a decline in healthy life expectancy.

Conference believes:

1. it is socially unjust to require teachers to work longer when the biological reality of ageing and the statistical reality of life expectancy no longer support the original 'longevity' argument;
2. the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to the SPA fails to account for the stark health inequalities prevalent in Scotland, where many teachers may face a significantly shorter retirement than previously estimated.
3. the physical and mental demands of a career in teaching make working until 67 or 68 increasingly unsustainable, leading to burnout and a recruitment and retention crisis.

Conference Instructs the Scotland Executive Council to:

1. **commission a formal review** into the impact of current SPA policies on the teaching profession in Scotland, specifically examining the gap between actual life expectancy and government projections;
2. **lobby the UK and Scottish Governments** to immediately review and reduce the SPA to 65, ensuring it reflects the current actuarial reality;
3. **campaign alongside the TUC and STUC** to demand a pension system that prioritises the dignity and health of workers over flawed fiscal projections.

Policy Committee: Inclusive Practice

Conference believes Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Inclusion should be a major part of the curriculum at ITE, in light of the increasing numbers of children and young people with an identified ASN. Conference is concerned that Inclusive Practice modules are not mainstreamed within all ITE institutes.

Conference believes that all graduate teachers should enter the workforce on a level playing field and that equality of training opportunity should be provided at a national level.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to campaign for:

(i) promotion to all teachers of the Certificate in Inclusive Practice;
(ii) national funding mechanisms to support further learning in Inclusive Practice for all teachers;
(iii) all student teachers to experience a period of time at a special school as a compulsory part of their university curriculum;
(iv) a streamline approach to professional learning throughout a teacher's career, from ITE to a graduate teacher scheme and beyond;
(v) lecturers at ITE to maintain their teaching practice through formalised links with schools;
(vi) better use of in-service days, distinguishing between mandatory training and professional learning for teachers.

Policy Committee: Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Conference notes that teachers are at the heart of the education system and fundamental in supporting all Scotland's children and young people to achieve their full potential. Conference believes therefore that it is critical that we can recruit and retain the best possible teachers.

Conference remains deeply concerned that the recommendations of the independent panel on career pathways for teachers have not been embedded and that the Scottish Government has failed to articulate a long-term vision or strategy for teaching in Scotland.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to bring a motion to the SNCT to include within national terms and conditions:

(i) a mechanism for recognition and reward of classroom teachers who wish to remain in role without progressing through a management pathway after national reconsideration of the implementation of chartered teachers, APTs and lead teachers;
(ii) a reward for service with time, such as a paid sabbatical or national flexi-leave policy;
(iii) a reassessment and reconsideration of management structures which have contributed to workload, such as Faculty Heads;
(iv) a means to recognise additional workload via pay or time-back;
(v) a voluntary transfer mechanism which is capable of operating within and across local authorities;
(vi) financial recognition via an increment for identified professional learning;
(vii) financial recompense and recognition for additional roles, such as national curricular development.

Conference further calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby Scottish Government and the GTCS to provide incentives and support for:

a) teachers who wish to change their GTCS registration;
b) private sector workers to consider teaching in shortage subjects;
c) teachers to move to rural areas; and
d) students to consider teaching.

Policy Committee: Parental Pressure and Complaints

Conference believes that increasing numbers of parents and carers are seeking to formalise complaints about teachers.

Conference notes that many of these complaints are vexatious or stem from underfunding of education at national and local level. Conference further notes the increasing use of tools such as ChatGPT to submit complaints.

Conference is concerned that teachers are:

(i) under increasing stress at work;
(ii) receiving threats of violence from some parents;
(iii) being recorded covertly with information shared on social media; and
(iv) being contacted outside school hours via social media.

Conference believes that guidance teachers and home-school link workers can feel particularly vulnerable.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

(i) promote the need for clear local authority guidelines on the kind of complaints which are actionable;
(ii) request that local authorities gather data from schools to assess how complaints are being handled;
(iii) campaign with local authorities to ensure reasonable time frames are kept during investigations;
(iv) engage with COSLA and local authorities to promote a threshold for investigation to be made clear in local policies, allowing councils to take action when parents are being vexatious;
(v) remind local authorities of their duty of care to employees at work and to secure mechanisms to protect teaching and support staff from covert recording and vexatious complaints;
(vi) continue to support members to seek redress where an assault has taken place.

Policy Committee: Mental and Physical Pain Management Support in Schools

Conference is concerned that many teachers are experiencing chronic pain while at work and believes that current systems are providing inadequate support and assistance.

Conference notes that there are a whole host of drivers for pain, including but not limited to women's health conditions; physical health conditions or disabilities; and mental health.

Conference understands that pain management can be both hidden and complex but believes that schools and employers can nevertheless play a significant role in tackling stigma and ensuring appropriate support for teachers at work.

Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive Council to campaign to ensure:

(i) schools, managers and society have a greater understanding of the impact of pain at work;
(ii) protocols are in place to support teachers in avoiding presenteeism;
(iii) workplaces are able to provide dignity to teachers who require access to toilet facilities during the pupil day;
(iv) the Union opens up conversations about pain management at work, encouraging workers to seek relevant support;
(v) mental health is included within the curriculum and teachers have time and resources to engage with this topic;
(vi) suicide and mental health are given sufficient priority by local authorities and Scottish Government.

Policy Committee: Support Supply Teachers

Conference is concerned that many experienced teachers have left teaching and would not return to undertake supply because of their experiences.

Conference notes that supply teachers are an essential part of a functioning education system yet many do not feel supported or welcomed in schools.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby Scottish Government, local authorities and COSLA to ensure:

(i) greater standardisation of systems between local authorities, including recording and reporting mechanisms;

(ii) greater standardisation in the mechanisms for sharing relevant ASN information on pupils and risk assessments with supply staff;

(iii) a review of the national risk assessment guidance is undertaken to assess effectiveness and implementation;

(iv) a cost benefit analysis is undertaken of running 32 different local authority reporting and recording systems;

(v) employers are aware of the protections for part-time workers in law.

Conference believes such actions will better support child protection and meet the needs of all children at school.

Conference further calls on the Scotland Executive Council to support members in securing compensation where their workplace has been unsafe.

Glasgow: Working Time Protection for Part-time Teachers

Conference notes that Section 3 of the SNCT Handbook establishes a 35-hour working week for all teachers and mandates that this applies on a pro-rata basis to those on part-time contracts.

Conference further notes that while Paragraph 3.9 creates an exception for parents' meetings, requiring attendance on a pro-rata basis even on non-contractual days, this must still remain within the overarching 35-hour pro-rata limit and comply with the Code of Practice on Working Hours (Appendix 2.17).

Conference is concerned that the lack of granular detail in school Working Time Agreements (WTAs) often results in part-time teachers being expected to attend a full suite, or more than their pro-rated share, of collegiate activities and parents' evenings. Conference asserts that failure to provide a corresponding reduction in other collegiate hours leads to a direct breach of a teacher's 35-hour pro-rata contract.

Conference believes that:

a) the contractual obligation for part-time staff to attend parents' evenings must not be used to circumvent the 35-hour pro-rata working week;

b) clarity is required at an individual level to ensure that collegiate time is not disproportionately front-loaded on a teacher's contracted days;

c) any attendance on a non-contractual day for parents' evenings must be offset by a clearly identified reduction in other collegiate time.

Conference instructs the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. seek changes to SNCT Appendix 2.7 and Appendix 2.17 to require that all school WTAs provide a breakdown, in hours, of the pro-rated class contact, preparation/correction, and collegiate time for every part-time post, expressed as a fraction of a full-time post (e.g. 0.8 or 0.25);

ii. demand that school management provide each part-time teacher with an individualised annual working time statement, including a personal calendar clearly identifying the specific collegiate activities and parents' evenings they are required to attend within their pro-rata hours;

iii. develop model LNCT wording and WTA templates which include worked examples showing how 'remaining time' is adjusted when a teacher attends a parents' evening on a non-contractual day;

iv. provide training for school representatives to ensure they can audit WTAs to verify that no part-time teacher's total annual working hours exceed their pro-rated fraction of the 35-hour week;

v. monitor the implementation of these protections through LNCT structures and report to the 2027 Conference;

vi. ensure any attendance on a non-contractual day for parents' evenings must be offset by a clearly identified reduction in other collegiate time.

Glasgow: Health and Safety: Rubber Crumb Infill in 3G Pitches

Conference notes with significant concern the mounting evidence regarding the health and environmental risks associated with rubber crumb infill in 3G artificial pitches. Conference further notes that rubber crumb, typically made from recycled car tyres, contains over 300 chemicals, including known or suspected carcinogens such as benzene, carbon black, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

Conference is appalled that teachers and pupils, particularly children and goalkeepers, are at risk of exposure to these toxins through the inhalation of dust, ingestion of loose granules, and skin absorption. Conference further recognises that 3G pitches are the single largest source of intentionally added microplastic pollution in the UK and act as 'vectors' for other toxic substances like PFAS.

Conference notes the landmark move by Scottish Premiership clubs to ban artificial pitches from the top flight, starting in 2026, and the European Union's move to ban the sale of rubber crumb infill by 2031.

Conference believes that the current 'precautionary approach' in Scotland is insufficient and that a total ban is necessary to protect the health of the school community and prevent Scotland from becoming a 'dumping ground' for non-compliant infill.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. **lobby the Scottish Government** to implement an immediate moratorium on the installation of new 3G pitches using rubber crumb in all Scottish schools and local authority sites;
ii. **campaign for a transition** to safer, sustainable alternatives such as cork, wood chip, or sand-dressed systems;
iii. **demand mandatory transparency** from local authorities regarding the chemical composition of existing pitches;
iv. **pressure the Scottish Government** to provide hygiene guidance and mandatory health warning notices at all existing 3G pitch sites.

Edinburgh: National Standards, Safeguarding, and Protection of Teachers' Terms and Conditions in Online Learning

Conference notes that online learning is expanding without nationally agreed SNCT standards.

Conference is concerned local authorities are seeking to reach online learning agreements which will lead to:

- inconsistent quality and inequitable access for young people;
- inconsistent tracking, monitoring and assessing of pupil progress;
- safeguarding concerns, including identity verification, pupil location, supervision and the inability to observe wellbeing, remaining unresolved;
- inconsistency in teaching quality when teachers cannot see pupils, read body language, or provide private, meaningful feedback.

Conference believes teachers will require dedicated training, time and ongoing support to develop the technical and pedagogical skills needed for online teaching.

Conference is concerned a hotchpotch of local approaches are appearing, without adequate national consultation, review or analysis.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. lobby government for a national forum to gather current practices and evaluate their effectiveness, leading to a digital strategy developed in consultation with teachers; and
ii. ensure that in all negotiations and discussions the following are protected and prioritised:
    a) Teachers' terms and conditions must be fully protected in any agreed online learning model.
    b) No teacher should be compelled to deliver online learning against their professional judgement.
    c) Schools must be given appropriate funding for the infrastructure required for effective online delivery.
    d) If the method of delivery is to be online, then there will not be a hybrid of live learning and online learning.

Conference further calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. lobby the Scottish Government, SNCT, and local authorities to develop a nationally regulated, well-funded, safeguarding-compliant framework for online learning which must address pedagogy, assessment, workload and infrastructure;

ii. oppose any expansion of online learning provision in local authorities until such a framework is agreed and properly resourced.

South Lanarkshire: Allergy Safety in Schools

Conference is appalled that 20% of fatal food-anaphylaxis reactions in school-aged children happens in school.

Conference notes that Benedicts Law has been written into law, ensuring schools in England have an allergy safety policy and provide allergy awareness training for all staff under new statutory guidance.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby Scottish Government to ensure:

a) supportive changes taking place in England further to Benedicts Law are replicated in Scotland;

b) all schools are supported to provide mandatory allergy training to all staff annually;

c) all impacted children have an allergy action plan or individualised health care plan;

d) the Spare Pens in Schools initiative is mandated and funded in schools, ensuring schools have two spare adrenaline auto-injector pens available;

e) compulsory learning on allergies takes place in schools for both learners and staff to increase awareness and prevent bullying;

f) support for the Benedict Blythe Foundation petition for implementation of Benedicts Law in Scotland.

Conference acknowledges the work undertaken by both Natasha's Allergy Research Foundation (NARF) and the Benedict Blythe Foundation and calls on the Scotland Executive Council to build closer links with these third sector organisations to support their campaigns in Scotland, including raising awareness of the NARF Allergy School programme.

Conference urges the Scotland Executive Council to support the Benedict Blythe Foundation petitions for allergy safety in schools.

Conference further calls on the Scotland Executive Council to support schools in the implementation of allergy policies using the gold standard model policy developed by Allergy UK, Anaphylaxis UK and the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

Glasgow: Implementation of the National Behaviour and Relationships Action Plan

Conference notes that the Scottish Government and COSLA have published the joint National Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools 2024–2027, setting out 20 actions in response to the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (BISSR) 2023.

Conference is concerned that monitoring of the Action Plan is currently focused at a national level through SAGRABIS, with a lack of transparent reporting on the extent to which individual local authorities and schools are implementing the required changes.

Conference further notes union evidence indicating that many teachers remain unaware of the plan, report no change in school practice, and continue to experience unacceptable levels of violence, aggression and abuse in the workplace.

Conference believes that:

a) the implementation of the National Action Plan must be mandatory and visible at local authority level and not left to the discretion of individual headteachers;

b) there must be robust, published data on which local authorities and schools have updated their behaviour policies and School Improvement Plans (SIPs) in line with national guidance;

c) classroom teachers and their representatives must be centrally involved in the review and redesign of school behaviour policies, including approaches to consequences and restorative practice.

Conference instructs the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. press the Scottish Government and COSLA to publish an annual implementation report detailing the support, training and resources provided by each local authority;

ii. campaign for a requirement that every school includes explicit actions within its SIP to revise

anti-violence policies and agree clear, consistently applied consequences in consultation with staff;

iii. provide training for school representatives to challenge non-implementation of the Action Plan at school and local authority level;

iv. lobby the Scottish Parliament for stronger statutory duties and resourcing to secure safe and respectful working environments in all schools.

Glasgow: Adverse Management Practices and Digital Workload

Conference notes with concern the continued rise of adverse management practices that infringe upon teachers' personal time and professional autonomy.

Conference specifically notes the unreasonable and increasing expectation in many schools that members must be available to respond to electronic communications, such as emails and digital platform notifications, outside of their directed working hours.

Conference is further concerned that for part-time teachers there is often no pro-rata adjustment to these expectations, leading to part-time staff being required to monitor and respond to communications on their non-contractual days.

Conference believes that:

a) the 'always-on' culture is a significant contributor to teacher stress, burnout and the current recruitment and retention crisis;

b) digital workload must be managed within the 35-hour working week as defined by the SNCT Handbook;

c) part-time teachers must have a pro-rata expectation regarding digital communication that respects their contractual fraction.

Conference instructs the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. campaign for a statutory 'Right to Disconnect' to protect all members from out-of-hours communication and to preserve the work-life balance of the profession;

ii. work with the SNCT to ensure that digital workload is explicitly addressed and capped in all local Working Time Agreements (WTAs);

iii. seek national guidance that explicitly forbids the expectation for part-time teachers to respond to or acknowledge work-related communications on their non-teaching days;

iv. provide resources and training.

Edinburgh: Graduate Teacher Programme

Conference supports the concept of a national Graduate Teacher Pathway (GTP), subject to further and better details being negotiated and agreed.

Conference abhors the cliff edge of support experienced by recently qualified teachers at the end of ITE and notes the variable experiences between ITE and the flexible route as highlighted by the GTCS.

Conference in principle supports:

a) a joint funding model between Scottish Government and local authorities which would better ensure an overview of workforce planning at all levels;

b) a system which could recognise previous experience and adapt to teachers with qualifications from outside Scotland;

c) a system which incorporates flexibility to accommodate caring or other responsibilities;

d) reduced class contact time for graduate teachers;

e) allocation of a mentor at school level and further identified supports at local authority level;

f) national professional development days.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to engage with the GTCS, Scottish Government and the Council of Deans through the Strategic Board for Teacher Education (SBTE) to explore and negotiate changes to the current graduate pathways.

Moray: Decline of Language Teaching in Scotland's Schools

Conference is concerned that language teachers are feeling increasingly demoralised by the lack of initiatives and projects promoting language learning.

Conference recognises we live in an increasingly globalised world and acknowledges that it is vital that speaking several languages is recognised as beneficial, essential and particularly important for young people.

Conference is worried that the national focus on STEM subjects acts to the detriment of languages.

Conference acknowledges that trips abroad, international exchanges and school partnerships are powerful tools for language learning, cultural understanding and personal development.

Conference notes that the UK–Ukraine school partnership is widely promoted, yet partnerships with other countries receive far less attention.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to campaign for the Scottish Government to support:

i. schools to develop multiple partnerships – not only with Ukraine, but with a wide range of countries across Europe and the wider world;
ii. strengthened partnerships with European countries;
iii. clearer structures and easier opportunities for schools to organise exchanges and trips abroad;
iv. language learning experiences to be embedded within the education system, in the same way as outdoor learning is actively encouraged and expected.

Highland: Crisis Intervention Support for Schools

Conference notes that schools can experience traumatic events such as fires, the sudden death of a pupil or staff member, civil disorder, racist incidents, or other crises that deeply affect the wellbeing of pupils, staff and the wider school community.

Conference believes that schools should not be left to manage such situations in isolation. Effective, timely and specialist crisis intervention can mitigate the long-term impact on learning, mental health and school cohesion.

Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive to:

i. lobby the Scottish Government and local authorities to establish and resource dedicated crisis intervention teams for schools;
ii. ensure that these teams are properly trained in trauma-informed practice, crisis response and community support;
iii. require local authorities to maintain such teams as a standing resource, available to be deployed immediately following a traumatic event; and
iv. work with education unions and professional associations to monitor and review the effectiveness of crisis intervention provision.

The intended outcome is that every school in Scotland can access specialist, rapid, and professional crisis support when needed, ensuring that pupils and staff receive the care and guidance necessary to recover, rebuild and sustain a positive learning environment.

Policy Committee: Scrutiny and Fairer Planning

Conference is appalled at the absence of national workforce planning data.

Conference believes that a national mechanism is urgently required to collate and analyse workforce data.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby Scottish Government to adopt a national system for workforce data collection which:

(i) is transparent;
(ii) co-ordinates data from across Scottish Government, local authorities and GTCS;
(iii) is able to provide accountability for national spending on education.

Conference further calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby for a system where:

a) local authorities who have failed to uphold nationally funded and agreed teacher numbers will have the allocated funding revoked;
b) education funding is ring-fenced; and

c) teaching is no longer part of the gig economy.

Conference finally considers that:

(i) the current model of education inhibits some schools and local authorities from being able to provide equitable education for all children; and

(ii) a more centralised model would have benefits for planning processes, maintaining teacher numbers and securing ASN resources due to economies of scale.

Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby Scottish Government to reform school education, starting with a full audit and review of the appropriateness of maintaining 32 employers within Scottish education.

Moray: Access to Work

Conference notes that Access to Work is administered and funded via the DWP, providing funded support for disabled people at work, with continuity of employment, relieving the burden on social security benefits.

Conference is concerned that since 2023 cuts have been made to support available, including the reduction in support worker hours, BSL interpreters and support for mental health.

Conference is further concerned by reports of delays of up to 254 days, cuts to existing funding and inconsistent decisions which will have a negative impact on disabled teachers' livelihoods and finances.

Conference is appalled that while the Scottish Government has made commitments to improve life chances and employment for disabled people it has been silent on the subject of Access to Work.

Conference considers that:

i. reasonable adjustments enable workers to fully and effectively participate in working life on an equal basis with other workers and therefore need to be funded;

ii. it is incongruent that Social Security Disability Benefits are devolved but not the funding for support into work.

Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby the Scottish Government to demand the devolution of Access to work to Scotland as an additional activity of Social Security Scotland with the appropriate funding to carry out the function.

East Dunbartonshire: Nicotine

Conference notes that cigarettes, vapes and nicotine pouches are all being consumed within schools by pupils and further that national regulation of nicotine products is failing to keep pace with innovation by the companies selling them.

Conference welcomes the recently published guidance for schools on how to address substance use among pupils but acknowledges this is only a first step and believes in the benefits of prevention and early intervention.

Conference further considers that schools, teachers and children and young people are currently being negatively impacted by silo-ed systems working across education, health and government as part of the current public health approaches to nicotine.

Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. consider vehicles for promotion of PSE materials from ASH Scotland to teachers;

ii. support preventative models of engagement in schools and with communities which raise awareness of the harmful impacts of nicotine;

iii. campaign for partnership approaches which involve schools, health, police, youth justice services and other stakeholders, to tackle the use of illegal and harmful substances by young people;

iv. campaign for better availability and signposting of cessation support and mental health and wellbeing supports for schools and the wider community;

v. call for greater action from government and other targeted support services to help deter young people from accessing or using illegal or prohibited substances;

vi. build collaborative approaches within government, third sector and others to progress and promote shared aims of tackling substance use in schools;

vii. lobby government to provide a consistent national approach across all schools and local authorities;

viii. approach Education Scotland to work collaboratively on professional learning for PT Guidance staff on nicotine harm prevention models.

Policy Committee: Continuum of Professional Learning for Teachers

Conference notes that there is no guarantee of professional learning on behaviour management, either at ITE or beyond. Conference is appalled that core parts of teaching, such as inclusion or behaviour management, are not threads which run throughout all professional learning.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to campaign with Scottish Government and at SBTE for:

(i) the core things which impact teachers and learners in the classroom to drive offers of national and local professional learning;

(ii) a review of the length of the postgraduate qualification to enable greater experience in the classroom;

(iii) a streamlined Graduate Teacher programme which would include a number of national days for professional development to cover key aspects required by the standards for registration such as:

- behaviour management;
- inclusion;
- subject/area learning and teaching;
- subject/area standards for marking & moderation.

Edinburgh: Learning Walks

Conference notes that learning walks are a practice in educational settings where senior leaders or colleagues visit classrooms to observe teaching and learning and are focused on constructive feedback and whole-school improvement rather than performance appraisal.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to propose a motion to SNCT to agree a national framework for Learning Walks which sets out:

- Agreed Parameters: the process of learning walks should be agreed upon with teachers, including details such as the date, time, focus, and the individuals conducting the observations.
- A clear focus on improvement: they should not be used to evaluate individual performance but rather to foster a culture of collaboration and shared learning.
- Feedback Mechanisms: to celebrate successes and identify areas for collective improvement.

Conference further calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

i. lobby the Scottish Government, SNCT and local authorities to develop a nationally regulated, well-funded, safeguarding-compliant framework for online learning which must address pedagogy, assessment, workload and infrastructure;

ii. oppose any expansion of online learning provision in local authorities until such a framework is agreed and properly resourced.