

SCOTLAND

NASUWT
THE
TEACHERS'
UNION

MINUTES OF SCOTLAND
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
2025

MINUTES OF SCOTLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Held on Friday 2 and Saturday 3 May 2025

Attendance

Delegates/Observers

Aberdeen City:	Kim Gillanders, Audrey Herriot, Jayne Smith
Argyll & Bute:	David Kearns, Jamie Wire
Dumfries & Galloway:	Marie McLoone
Dundee:	Kirstie Raeburn
East Ayrshire:	Denise MacColl
East Dunbartonshire:	Janet Westwater
Edinburgh:	Nahid Aslam, Ruth Lamont, Louise Pirie
Fife:	Bernadette Easton, Afifa Khanam, Elspeth Nolan
Glasgow:	Stuart Baird, Neil Farmer, Nicola Hassard, Linda McCann, Scott McGimpsey, Jimmy Prentice
Highlands & Islands:	Niall Mackinnon, Derrick Roberts
Midlothian:	Richard Garwood
North Ayrshire:	Hazel Gardiner
Highlands & Islands:	Niall Mackinnon, Derrick Roberts
Midlothian:	Richard Garwood
North Ayrshire:	Hazel Gardiner
North Lanarkshire:	Chris Graham, Zaf Hussain, Joanne Logan, Morag McDonald
Perth and Kinross:	Shaun Cooper, Laura McIvor
Renfrewshire:	Linda Gibson, Sarah Jakoby
South Lanarkshire:	Scott McGregor
Stirling:	Livvi Brooks
West Dunbartonshire:	John Doyle
West Lothian:	Mohammed Shafat
Guests	Eddie Carroll, Catherine Nicol

Officers

Northern Ireland	
Executive Council President:	Sally Rees
Wales Executive Council President:	Luke Lockyer
SEC President:	David Anderson
SEC Ex-President:	Sarah Walker
SEC Treasurer:	Carol Wood
NEM:	Nik James, Rod McCready
UK National President:	Wayne Broom

Staff

Acting General Secretary:	Matt Wrack
Deputy General Secretary:	Jane Peckham
National Official:	Mike Corbett
Policy Official:	Tara Lillis
Policy Casework Official:	Darren Waplington
Casework Official:	Claire McInnes
Organiser:	Stephen Brown
Events Officer:	Laura Imrie
Admin & Clerical:	Elena Miranda, Ruth Anderson
Office Manager:	Catherine Henry
Principal Official:	Fred Grindrod
Press and Media Officer:	Lena Davies

Friday 2 May 2025

12:15 to 13:30

12:00 INTRODUCTORY SESSION

Mike Corbett (National Official) outlined how Conference works and provided app instructions.

12:15 CONFERENCE OPENING

Sarah Walker (Ex-President), opened the first session – welcoming delegates and observers and sharing the Code of Conduct.

She then delivered a short speech.

13:15 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Jenny Gilruth, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, delivered a speech which was followed by a Q&A session.

14:00 LUNCH

FIRST PUBLIC SESSION

14:40 to 15:50

Friday 2 May 2025

Sarah Walker opened Conference to the first public session and inducted the new Scotland Executive Council President, David Anderson

The President, David Anderson, delivered his presidential address.

Nik James adopted Standing Orders

Linda McCann and Marie McLoone were appointed as Scrutineers.

The debate of Motions commenced.

FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISM AND HATE CRIMES

*Sarah Walker proposed,
David Anderson seconded:*

Conference believes that over the last decade, the Scottish Government has peddled a hostile environment agenda which has created the conditions for hatred to flourish.

Conference notes with increasing concern the prevalence of hate speech on social media and beyond, seemingly with impunity.

Conference is appalled to see the language of the far right and right-wing extremist influencers permeating and becoming normalised, including amongst some of our young people.

Conference is deeply concerned about the climate and impact of racism, sexism and misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and religious hatred affecting the lives of children and young people.

Conference is further concerned that teachers with protected characteristics are being disproportionately targeted with increased challenges to their authority as well as abuse and assaults.

Conference agrees that if such behaviours go unchallenged, this creates a corrosive working and learning environment which can have a devastating impact on the health and welfare of teachers as well as the young people witnessing it.

Conference is concerned that current behaviour approaches in schools take little cognisance of prejudice-based abuse, in particular the use of restorative approaches and the impact of these on staff who have been abused.

Conference applauds NASUWT's long and proud tradition of defending communities threatened by the far right and believes that work must continue today and into the future.

Conference asserts that it is incumbent on all of us to work collaboratively to challenge hate speech at all levels and calls on the Scotland Executive Council to help change the narrative by:

- (i) promoting positive stories of NASUWT members whose activism challenges far right narratives;
- (ii) providing training for members on difficult/challenging conversations;
- (iii) providing updates, training and webinars on equality issues, promoting and empowering allies to stand up for the rights of all;
- (iv) campaigning for earlier support and education on hate speech at primary school, recognising that, by secondary school, many pupils may already have been exposed to far-right narratives;
- (v) building solidarity with other trade unions and the STUC to ensure the movement remains vigilant and united against the threat of far-right populism which seeks to dismantle our values and democratic principles;
- (vi) offering ongoing solidarity with migrants, supporting community organisations such as Maryhill Integration Network (MIN) working to bring people seeking asylum, refugees, migrants and the

settled inhabitants together, recognising our country owes a huge debt of gratitude to those who have chosen to live in Scotland, both recently and across past generations and

- (vi) lobbying the SQA and Education Scotland to ensure appropriate inclusion of race equality and antiracist practice and content in the development of new or adapted course specifications, and relevant guidance.

The motion was

LARGELY CARRIED

PARITY OF ESTEEM FOR ALL SECONDARY PUPILS

Louise Pirie proposed,

Rod McCready seconded:

Conference notes that because N3 and N4 courses are internally assessed, some see these as 'lesser' than their equivalents at N5 plus.

Conference is concerned with reports of management practices within schools which undermine the internal assessment experience and, as a result, further undermine the achievements of many learners at N3/N4.

Conference believes the validity of N3 and N4 can only be secured where assessment practices are rigorous and calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby the Scottish Government, local authorities, the Curriculum and Assessment Board and the SQA to:

- (i) move to a model of external assessment of N3 and N4, which would provide integrity in the process, limit workload and provide protections to teachers against unreasonable management practices;
- (ii) publish clear rules to administer these qualifications, supported by local authority information dissemination;
- (iii) promote the value of the SCQF framework that sets out that Level 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 qualifications are equal to National 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 courses;
- (iv) promote the value of National Progression Awards to support schools and to support learners to the right pathways and destinations, in turn placing less stress on school league tables for the 'Magic 5' and
- (v) secure useful CLPL for staff, as opposed to a few hours on an in-service day to look up SQA Understanding Standards, ensuring such information and professional learning is released sufficiently early to be useful and SQA guidelines are sufficiently clear.

The motion was

LARGELY CARRIED

BREAK 15:50

SECOND PUBLIC SESSION

16:10 to 17:00

Friday 2 May 2025

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Roz Foyer, General Secretary STUC, delivered a speech to Conference.

The debate of motions then continued.

DUAL PRESENTATION AT NATIONAL 4 AND NATIONAL 5

Rod McCready proposed,

Carol Wood seconded:

Conference notes that, despite guidance issued by the Assessment and National Qualifications Group in 2017 referencing the importance of well-informed and accurate presentation decisions for National Qualifications candidates, there has been a significant increase in the number of candidates who are dual presented for National 4 and National 5 in the same subject.

Conference is concerned to note that, despite the recent joint letter from the Cabinet Secretary, the SQA and Education Scotland in 2024, preliminary SQA entry data for 2025 shows this trend increasing further.

Conference believes these presentation patterns have increased workload for both teachers and pupils, and have provided a poor experience for many young people.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to work with the Scottish Government, the SQA and Education Scotland to identify particular local authorities and/or schools which are making inappropriate National Qualifications presentation decisions and urges them to revise and review their practices.

The motion was

LARGELY CARRIED

'TEACHING IN A VACUUM': SUPPLY TEACHER HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

Janet Westwater proposed,

Shaun Cooper seconded:

Conference notes that supply teachers make a vital contribution to securing high educational standards for all children and young people.

Conference is deeply concerned with the results of the NASUWT Scotland Annual Supply Teacher Survey which showed that:

- (i) just over two-thirds (68%) stated they were not given the school's overall risk assessment;
- (ii) in excess of a third (37%) stated that they were not provided with the details of any designated contact(s) for any questions, problems or emergencies;
- (iii) well over half (55%) of supply teachers reported that they were not provided with the details of how to raise any concerns about health and safety;
- (iv) just under two-fifths (39%) reported that they were not provided with the details of how to call for assistance, including first aid;
- (v) well over a third (37%) of supply teachers stated that they were not provided with the details regarding access to computers, with log-in details;
- (vi) over half (53%) of respondents stated that they were not provided with a list of the pupils in the class(es) they would be teaching, including details of any additional information, such as those with medical conditions or additional support needs (ASN);
- (vii) over three-fifths (63%) of supply teachers stated that they had not been provided with the details of any pupils known to be potentially violent and how this should be managed;
- (viii) over two-fifths (43%) of supply teachers reported that they had not been provided with the behaviour management policy when undertaking assignments in schools, including who to contact.

Conference believes that local authorities are being negligent in their duty of care to many teachers generally, and to supply teachers specifically. Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive Council to campaign for:

- (i) equal access to support systems for supply teachers, including PRD and Glow logins;
- (ii) supply teachers to be provided with the appropriate information on site to ensure their safety at work;
- (iii) sufficient paid time for supply teachers to be able to read and absorb relevant information;
- (iv) a consistent and publicised national approach – a ‘Charter for Supply Teachers in Schools’ – to supporting supply teachers across local authorities;
- (v) union health and safety checklists to be utilised by local association representatives to negotiate locally to support supply teachers and
- (vi) seek feedback on existing local protocols for supply staff and any monitoring systems to assess implementation at local authority level, utilising Freedom of Information requests.

MOTION PAUSED AND VOTING SUSPENDED UNTIL 03/05/25

FIRST PRIVATE SESSION

17:00 to 17:45

Friday 2 May 2025

ARGYLL & BUTE: SCHOOL TOILETS

Jamie Wire proposed,

Derrick Roberts seconded:

Conference notes that:

- (i) inadequate access to clean and private toilet facilities can lead to significant health issues, including infections and stress, as well as negatively impact staff morale and
- (ii) sharing facilities with pupils compromises privacy and dignity, undermining professional boundaries and leaving staff vulnerable to allegations of misconduct.

Conference believes that staff toilets should be of adequate capacity, be of easy access, meet hygiene and accessibility standards and be separate to pupil facilities.

Conference is concerned that there is no explicit provision in the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967 for staff toilets to be separate from those for pupils in schools.

Conference is in fact appalled that some new school builds have no separate toilets, raising serious concerns about dignity at work for teachers and other members of the workforce.

Conference therefore calls upon the Scotland Executive Council to:

- a. promote the NASUWT School Toilet Facilities Campaign Toolkit to all reps;
- b. campaign for the School Premises Regulations to be amended to include the requirement for separate provision for staff toilets and
- c. write to all local authorities requesting specific training for managers and employees on gender-sensitive health, safety and welfare policies and procedures, including risk assessments.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ELECTION OF TEMPORARY TREASURER

Carol Wood announced as Temporary SEC Treasurer; no other nominations were received.

ELECTION OF TEMPORARY VICE-PRESIDENT

Nominations received from Afifa Khanam, Linda McCann, Derrick Roberts and Marie McLoone. Each nominee gave a three-minute speech. Voting commenced with a secret ballot.

Derrick Roberts was elected as Temporary SEC Vice-President.

MINUTES OF SCOTLAND CONFERENCE 2024

Sarah Walker proposed and Nik James seconded that the Minutes be adopted as a true and accurate record.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SEC ANNUAL REPORT

Rod McCready presented the SEC Annual Report, drawing attention to key areas.

Nik James seconded the SEC Annual Report.

Questions were invited from the floor.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SEC FINANCIAL REPORT

SEC Treasurer, Carol Wood, proposed and Rod McCready seconded that the financial report be adopted.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CLOSE OF BUSINESS FOR DAY 17:45

DRINKS RECEPTION & PRESENTATIONS 19:00

ANNUAL DINNER 20:00

THIRD PUBLIC SESSION

09:30 to 10:45

Saturday 3 May 2025

Jane Peckham, Deputy General Secretary, addressed conference.

Acting General Secretary, Matt Wrack, addressed conference.

Debate of motions reconvened at 10:07

'TEACHING IN A VACUUM': SUPPLY TEACHER HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

Motion tabled on Friday 2 May, voting reconvened at 10:07 on Saturday 3 May.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SCHOOL SECURITY

Carol Wood proposed,

Rod McCready seconded:

Conference notes that March 2026 will be the 30-year anniversary of the Dunblane Primary School shooting.

Conference further notes that this tragic event resulted in school security measures being tightened, access to school buildings restricted and visitors routinely vetted at the school door.

Conference is concerned that security measures have not been maintained in all establishments, with security having been reduced in some and control measures relating to access to establishments no longer strictly regulated.

Conference believes variability between schools can relate to the age of the school building, a lack of available resources for school maintenance, failures to adhere to protocols and, in some cases, neglect.

Conference believes that school security remains vital and calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby the Scottish Government to:

- a. commit to provide a consistent school safety and security experience for staff and pupils across Scotland;
- b. regularly review and report on school security to parliament and
- c. ensure sufficient resources are allocated to protect all school estates from attack or unwanted intrusion.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

STAFFING: A CRISIS COVERED UP?

Neil Farmer proposed,

Nik James seconded:

Conference welcomes commitments made by almost all local authorities to maintain 2023 teacher numbers.

Conference is concerned, however, that inconsistent data approaches between local authorities may mean that this headline is masking the reality on the ground and inhibiting a co-ordinated national approach to workforce planning.

Conference believes that:

- a. vacancies in key shortage subjects, such as Maths and Computing, are being covered by numbers elsewhere;
- b. vacancies are constantly filled with probationary staff, leading to instability and inconsistency in classrooms and departments;
- c. acting positions are becoming more common and more embedded as a systemic approach and
- d. teachers seconded, or working across the Local Authority, are being counted as 'frontline' teachers.

Conference believes that urgent action is needed to gain a true picture of the workforce in Scotland and further that without such clarity, solutions will be unable to be found.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) lobby the Scottish Government and SBTE to move with operational urgency to a system with robust data that allows for longer-term planning;
- (ii) engage with members, schools, local authorities and the Scottish Government to identify clear categories, which for example allow for supply, non-class contact teachers and shared headships to be identified, in order to better support national data collection;
- (iii) highlight nationally the challenges with only utilising a pupil/teacher ratio approach to workforce planning, including the different ratios which apply to specialist ASN settings;
- (iv) seek clarity from the Scottish Government and local authorities around the variety of different approaches which are being used across each local authority;
- (v) raise with the Scottish Government and COSLA the current challenges in recruiting and retaining teachers, particularly in some subject specialisms, and seek significant and genuine improvements to teachers' terms and conditions via SNCT as a vehicle for bringing more people in to teaching;
- (vi) press the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), Scottish Government and local authorities for a national stated approach to temporary, short-term cover of teachers beyond their registration category and employed role, supporting the GTCS statement that 'even where something is temporary, assessment should be made about whether the teacher has the appropriate knowledge and skills to teach what they are being asked to. This is why it is expected that as far as possible even temporary cover is managed within subject cognate groups'.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Shaun Cooper proposed,

Zaf Hussain seconded:

This Conference is concerned at the increased level of sickness absence among teachers, and this is often identified as stress-related.

Conference believes that employers are providing health and wellbeing support which is more reactive to sickness absence than preventative. Conference also believes morale is very low in schools, with teachers feeling that their health and wellbeing is not being valued nor supported by their employer.

Conference is concerned the majority of support services are advertised online and teachers are often unaware of these services and further that supports, such as reduced rates at Council Leisure facilities, have increasingly been removed due to budget cuts.

Conference urges the Scotland Executive Council to:

- 1) survey local authorities on the:
 - a. levels of teacher absence in relation to other council workers;
 - b. preventative health and wellbeing supports;
 - c. ways in which supports are advertised and
 - d. data on employee work satisfaction.
- 2) approach the Scottish Government to recognise and be more proactive when it comes to resourcing teacher health and wellbeing support before they become unwell.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BREAK 10:45

FOURTH PUBLIC SESSION

11:05 to 11:45

Saturday 3 May 2025

David Anderson proposed to reduce speaker times by one minute to accommodate remaining motions.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Debate of motions recommenced at 11:05

DATA IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

*Sarah Walker proposed,
Linda McCann seconded:*

Conference is concerned that Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) are not fit for purpose.

Conference notes that there remain multiple variations between schools, inhibiting easy comparison of data, which results from inter alia:

- a. a failing in the curriculum and it's exemplification and
- b. variations in practice across schools such as those who include additional support needs (ASN) children's data and those who do not.

Conference further notes that primary teacher professional judgement is coming under increasing attack, with downward pressure being placed on teachers to present improvements in attainment data.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) lobby the Scottish Government and Education Scotland as part of the curriculum review and reform to ensure that attaining a level is clear, easily understood and will not require excessive moderation;
- (ii) promote the use of lead teacher, both with the Scottish Government and also via SNCT, to support consistency in data approaches across schools;
- (iii) engage with the Curriculum Improvement Cycle to ensure the voice of teachers are at the heart of any reform;
- (iv) lobby local authorities to ensure moderation exists across all key areas of attainment, between primary teachers (uppers/P7/second level) and secondary teachers (third level), which will support an improved understanding of how teacher professional judgement in the primary sector at second level ties in with the expectations of each subject area at high school;
- (v) engage with local authorities and COSLA to address any undue challenges to teacher professional judgements and
- (vi) seek clarity from the Scottish Government regarding the amalgamation of ACEL data in any one setting.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ASN SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

*Carol Wood proposed,
Linda McCann seconded:*

Conference notes that Audit Scotland, in a recent briefing paper, has called for a fundamental review of planning and resourcing of additional support for learning.

Conference agrees that the Scottish Government and councils must fundamentally rethink how they plan, fund and staff additional support for learning as part of core school education in Scotland.

Conference is concerned that teachers are increasingly expected to teach children with such high and complex needs in mainstream classes that they require almost one-on-one support, at the same time as teaching the rest of their class.

Conference believes that all pupils deserve to have their additional learning needs met with specialist support, yet there is concern that the current system is failing pupils with ASN, their classmates and the teachers working to support them.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) engage with Audit Scotland, and thereafter the Scottish Government and councils, to improve current data collection practices;
- (ii) lobby Scottish Government to disaggregate data for Support Assistants (LSAs), setting out those who are identified to support an individual child and those who are supporting the wider school setting;
- (iii) foster links with sister trade unions representing Learning Support Assistants, supporting all relevant campaigns to increase LSA numbers and improve their contractual rights, including time for professional learning;
- (iv) seek increases to national funding from the Scottish Government, to support the necessary systemic change and
- (v) bring a motion to SNCT supporting (a) lower ratios for specialist provision and (b) calling for staffing ratios (teacher, plus support staff) formulas to be agreed for mainstream classes, which would vary dependent upon the number of ASN pupils on the register.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ASBESTOS EXPOSURE

*Denise MacColl proposed,
David Anderson seconded:*

Conference notes that the prevalence of asbestos in public buildings is well-documented, schools being no exception.

Conference is concerned that teachers can be exposed unknowingly to asbestos dust hazards and it has been shown that asbestos has been used in some school equipment, such as science labs.

Conference is appalled to find that a disproportionate number of teachers are contracting malignant asbestos-related diseases including mesothelioma, lung cancer, ovarian cancer and laryngeal cancer.

Conference further notes that in some industries those employed working with or in buildings with asbestos have this fact added to their medical records; this enables a person who contracts or develops an asbestos-related illness to be fast tracked for compensation. Conference is dismayed that this is not the practice for teachers.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby the Scottish Government to ensure that teachers who work or have worked in such buildings should have this fact placed on their medical records, in order that compensation can be awarded expediently.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SCHOOL INSPECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

*Neil Mackinnon proposed,
Derrick Roberts seconded:*

Conference believes that school inspection reporting in Scotland is bland, simplistic and judgemental and may not:

- (i) operate in accordance with
 - a. research ethical codes;
 - b. standard judicial processes and
 - c. transparent data validation.
- (ii) have means of appeal.

Conference notes that institutional and professional accreditation, development, update and regulation currently exist within procedures of Local Councils and the GTCS.

Conference considers that due to the complex and diverse nature of modern education, and the scale and nature of the changes and challenges now facing schools, grading and inspection as a snapshot may be inappropriate and potentially harmful.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- a. lobby the Scottish Government and MSPs to evaluate approaches to school accountability and institutional learning, utilising:
 - established methods of the learning sciences;
 - systems learning in public services and
 - the peer-led, enhancement-focused approaches of Scotland's tertiary sector.
- b. recommend these approaches, operated by existing bodies, to the Scottish Government and MSPs as an alternative to the establishment of a new stand-alone inspection body for Scottish schools.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEONATAL LEAVE

*Shaun Cooper proposed,
Linda McCann seconded:*

Conference welcomes the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023, which came into effect on the 6 April 2025.

This Conference urges the Scotland Executive Council to:

- 1) lobby COSLA and local authorities to effectively advertise this new support for parents and
- 2) submit a motion to SNCT Teachers' Panel to add this leave to the SNCT Handbook terms and conditions of employment.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SPECIALIST TEACHERS IN THE SENIOR PHASE

*Stuart Baird proposed,
Louise Pirie seconded:*

Conference notes that pupils in the Senior Phase are, on many occasions, being taught by non-subject specialist teachers which reduces the attainment of these pupils.

Conference is concerned that budgetary pressures are forcing councils to reduce the number of permanent supply posts that would ensure subject specialists are available for long-term absence cover.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) engage with Audit Scotland, and thereafter the Scottish Government, COSLA and local authorities, to improve current data collection practices;
- (ii) lobby the Scottish Government, COSLA and local authorities to initiate data collection around the number of Senior Phase lessons being taught by non-subject specialist teachers and ensure this is published;
- (iii) seek support from the GTCS in enforcing guidelines that ensure senior phase pupils are being taught by subject-specialist teachers and
- (iv) engage with parent groups to highlight our concerns and build a wider campaign.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BREAK 11:45

FIFTH PUBLIC SESSION

12:05 to 12:35

Saturday 3 May 2025

GTCS REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

*Laura McIvor proposed,
Shaun Cooper seconded:*

Conference is concerned to note that a new clause has been instituted within the GTCS registration process requiring the applicant to be signed off by a headteacher with GTCS registration.

Conference further notes this new process is causing registration delays for UK applicants outwith Scotland, can impact pay and affect recruitment.

Conference is concerned that this change has taken place at a time when Rural Authorities and schools are finding recruitment a particular challenge.

Conference therefore calls on the Scotland Executive Council to lobby the GTCS to rectify this discriminatory process.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ABSENCE COVER

*Nicola Hassard proposed,
Marie McLoone seconded:*

Conference is concerned that section 10.13.1 of part 4 of the SNCT Handbook on absence cover is not consistently applied across all local authorities and schools, leading to:

- (i) increased workload and stress for teachers and
- (ii) reduced pupil access to subject specialists.

Conference believes that all employers should adhere to all conditions in the SNCT Handbook, to the benefit of both teachers and pupils.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) gather data from members on the extent of non-compliance with the SNCT provision on cover, including identifying specific local authorities or schools where non-compliance is prevalent and the reasons for it;
- (ii) lobby the Scottish Government, COSLA and local authorities to initiate data collection around the number of occasions that this provision is ignored;
- (iii) engage with the Scottish Government and COSLA inter alia via the SNCT to:
 - a. support and facilitate the enforcement of this provision;
 - b. establish clear accountability measures for non-compliance;
 - c. increase funding for supply staff;
 - d. revise staffing models and
 - e. explore other proactive solutions to ensure consistent compliance, such as standardized reporting.
- (iv) engage with parent groups to highlight our concerns and build a wider campaign;

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

LUNCH 12:35

SIXTH PUBLIC SESSION

13:25 to 15:00

Saturday 3 May 2025

SCIENCE IN THE PRIMARY SECTOR

Linda McCann proposed,

Zaf Hussain seconded:

Conference notes the importance of quality science teaching to:

- (i) develop children and young people's curiosity and understanding of the world around them;
- (ii) build rigorous investigative skills and
- (iii) inspire interests in future scientific careers in Scotland's scientific industries.

Conference notes the performance of Scottish primary schools in the sciences continues to fall, despite many resources and projects in recent years. Conference also notes reports on improving science teaching have identified a lack of teacher confidence and resources.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) ensure research on Scottish Primary teachers' opinions on science provision in their schools is progressed and
- (ii) lobby the Scottish Government to improve the consistency of provision across authorities and encourage authorities to improve both standards of resources and staffing ratios for science teaching in the primary sector.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEURODIVERSITY & WOMEN

Louise Pirie proposed,

Bernadette Easton seconded:

This Conference notes that more women are being diagnosed as neurodiverse, yet many women are still waiting for tests and a diagnosis of neurodevelopmental disorders.

Conference notes the wide range of waiting times in Scotland highlights the serious issues of postcode lottery to receive a diagnosis and are symptomatic of a wider waiting times crisis in our NHS.

Conference is concerned that many people do not disclose the fact that they are neurodivergent to the employer because there is a fear of losing their job and of the stigma attached.

Conference believes workplaces remain both inaccessible and unsafe for many women, when the employer does not always understand what neurodiversity is and the needs of the person who is neurodivergent.

Conference believes that unions need to support these women to excel and thrive at work and also to educate and be accepted by employers and fellow employees.

Conference believes that unions need to campaign alongside others to reduce the barriers and challenges that neurodivergent workers continue to face and tackle the stigma and misconceptions about neurodiversity, calling on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- develop a model workplace policy focused on neurodiversity and women in the workplace which includes training for reps and activists to enable them to signpost members to the help they need;
- work with employers to improve workplaces for neurodivergent teachers in Scotland and help to eradicate the stigma;
- develop, deliver and promote training on neurodiversity for activists and members;
- consider hosting a workshop at a future Equality Conference on this topic;
- lobby the Scottish Government to invest in professional learning for all teachers on neurodiversity in women and girls; and
- ensure this is a campaign priority for the Union so all neurodivergent teachers can feel safe, supported and needed in their workplace.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUSTAINABILITY AND SCHOOL UNIFORMS

*Jamie Wire proposed,
Sarah Walker seconded:*

Conference believes that

- (i) the climate crisis represents one of the greatest threats to peace and security and to the quality of life of teachers and the children and young people they teach and
- (ii) education has a critical contribution to make to securing climate justice and a sustainable planet for future generations.

Conference supports the Learning for Sustainability Action Plan, published following the Vision 2030+ (2016) report.

Conference commends the 'School uniform and clothing: Guidance for schools and education authorities' which encourages schools to consider their clothing and uniform policy within the context of Learning for Sustainability; this approach can support pupils to understand wider social impacts of sustainable approaches, such as ethical procurement and human rights within supply chains.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- a. lobby the Scottish Government to make the national school clothing guidance statutory;
- b. promote with government, local authorities and schools the importance of sustainability in school clothing;
- c. campaign to ensure ethical sourcing is a core part of all school clothing policies;
- d. raise public awareness, including with teachers, the risks associated with fast fashion, including links to criminality and human rights breaches;
- e. lobby the Scottish Government to meet the priorities set out in the Vision 2030+ report and
- f. seek to build international solidarity with third sector organisations supporting workers abroad and campaigning against child lab

AMENDMENT

Add new point to end of motion after point (f). 'g. to ensure that;

- (i) there is national oversight of any procurement process.
- (ii) families on or below the poverty line have grants available.
- (iii) all processes and procedures are poverty proofed.'

The amendment was:

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The motion was

CARRIED

WORK-RELATED VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

*Scott McGimpsey proposed,
Derrick Roberts seconded:*

Conference notes with significant concern the high levels of work-related violence in schools, as evidenced by recent surveys and ongoing anecdotal reports.

Conference notes that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related violence as 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.'

Conference further notes that this can include:

- (i) verbal abuse or threats, including face to face, online and via telephone and
- (ii) physical attacks.

Conference is concerned that the normalisation of work-related violence in schools is causing significant levels of underreporting and profoundly affecting the mental health of teachers.

Conference notes that this is also leading to problems with recruitment and retention in the teaching profession. Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) lobby the Scottish Government to standardise health and safety reporting and methodology in Scottish schools, to aid the reporting of work-related violence.
- (ii) lobby the Scottish Government and local authorities to utilise collected data to:
 - a. inform the development of targeted policies and interventions;
 - b. address work-related violence and

- c. allocate resources effectively to support staff wellbeing.
- (iii) investigate the extent of underreporting of work-related violence in schools, including identifying factors that contribute to it and
- (iv) engage with broader community organisations to highlight our concerns over the normalisation of work-related violence and build a wider public campaign.

AMENDMENT

*Shaun Cooper proposed,
Jamie Wire seconded:*

Add new point to end of motion '(v). Lobby the Scottish Government and local authorities to ensure notices are displayed in reception areas of all education establishments explaining that violence and aggression in all forms will not be tolerated'

The amendment was: **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The motion was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS

*Hazel Gardiner proposed,
David Anderson seconded:*

Conference notes with concern that education has one of the highest rates of suicide and suicide attempts.

Conference is deeply alarmed at the survey results of NASUWT members that showed teaching had adversely affected their mental health.

Conference believes that the pressures of the job are leading to a mental health emergency within the profession.

Conference asserts that the mental health and wellbeing of workers is a critical factor for a productive and healthy workforce and therefore believes that unions have a critical role to play in advocating for effective strategies and support systems that address suicide prevention and raise awareness in the workplace.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) campaign for fully-funded mandatory Mental Health First Aid Training in all schools that includes suicide prevention and awareness;
- (ii) work with reps and local secretaries to ensure that suicide awareness and prevention are campaigning and bargaining priorities in all workplaces;
- (iii) lobby for increased funding for mental health services and treatment pathways that are accessible and available to all workplaces and sectors and
- (iv) support national campaigns to ensure work-related suicides are investigated by HSE and the RIDDOR regulations are amended to include work-related ill-health.

The motion was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

WORK-RELATED STRESS

*Rod McCready proposed,
Sarah Walker seconded:*

Conference notes with significant concern the high levels of stress reported by teachers in Scotland.

Conference believes that work-related stress is a serious occupational hazard that can have profound negative impacts on the health, wellbeing, and professional effectiveness of teachers, as well as on the quality of education provided to pupils.

Conference further believes that the lack of systematic data collection on work-related stress among teachers hinders efforts to fully understand the scale of the problem, identify its root causes, and develop effective interventions.

Conference calls on the Scotland Executive Council to:

- (i) lobby the Scottish Government to acknowledge work-related stress as a significant concern within the teaching profession;

- (ii) lobby the Scottish Government to record and monitor data on work-related stress among teachers in Scotland, with:
 - a. a standardised methodology for data collection;
 - b. confidentiality and anonymity for reporting teachers and
 - c. information on the prevalence, causes and consequences of work-related stress.
- (iii) lobby the Scottish Government to utilise the collected data to:
 - a. inform the development of targeted interventions to address work-related stress;
 - b. allocate resources effectively to support teacher wellbeing and
 - c. monitor the effectiveness of implemented strategies over time.

AMENDMENT

*Shaun Cooper proposed,
Derrick Roberts seconded:*

Paragraph 6 (iii) a. – after ‘targeted’ add ‘preventative as well as restorative policies and’

The amendment was:

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENDED 14:37

National Official, Mike Corbett, addressed conference with closing remarks.

VOTE OF THANKS.

Laura McIvor delivered the vote of thanks to Conference.

David Anderson officially closed the Conference.

CLOSE OF CONFERENCE 14:53