

Message from the General Secretary

Dear Rep

May I take the opportunity of this final Rep's bulletin of the calendar year to firstly thank you for all your hard work on behalf of members in this most difficult of years and, also, to offer you seasonal greetings, combined with a warm wish that you enjoy a good festive break with family and friends.

Here's hoping that 2022 will be a better year for all.

All the very best



Covid-19 Update

A recent Covid update was issued to all EIS members and included information and guidance about the new Omicron variant. The bulletin is available to view on the Member Bulletins section of the EIS website (www.eis.org.uk/News/Bulletins).

Included with this Reps' bulletin is a "**Letter to all early learning and childcare (ELC), schools and higher and further education settings: Omicron variant**" concerning the current Covid-19 Omicron variant situation. This letter was recently issued from Public Health Scotland to Directors of Education to offer clarity in the current, rapidly developing situation.

Updated COSLA Covid advice can also now be found in the Covid section of the EIS website (www.eis.org.uk/Health-And-Safety-Advice/COSLAAdvice).

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Please read over the latest advice from Public Health Scotland and COSLA and share with your colleagues.

Ventilation

Ventilation is a key mitigation against the spread of Covid. Members who are concerned about ventilation in the workplace should contact their EIS Rep or EIS Local Association Secretary.

A recording of the recent H&S Ventilation and Safety in Schools webinar along with the relevant resources can also be found in the Past Webinars section of the EIS website. The webinar covered advice and information about current ventilation guidance, relevant workplace rights and legislation that underpins safety in the workplace.

Action for Reps: Please display the ventilation poster included with this bulletin in your establishment.

EIS Curriculum and Pedagogy Guidance

The Education Department has updated the EIS Curriculum and Pedagogy Guidance for Primary, Secondary, Special Education (Primary) and Special Education (Secondary). This is accessible in the Covid section of the EIS website. The updates take account of adjustments to the Scottish Government Guidance on School Trips.

Action for Reps: Please refer to the latest advice in relation to any relevant collegiate discussion.

Probationer Teacher Recruitment

New Probationers: There may be current probationer teacher colleagues who have not joined the union. EIS membership is free for all current probationers until December 2022. After that, probationers can get a further 50% discount on full membership for the following nine months if they update their direct debit details with us by the end of their 18-month free period. If they joined the EIS as a student then they should update their membership details, for example school details, at the start of their probationary year. This will assist us in continuing to offer support.

Previous Probationers: There may still be teachers in your school who are no longer in their probationary period but did not join at the end of their free membership (ended Dec 2020) - please check and follow up, if they did not set up a direct debit with the EIS they are not members.

Action for Reps: Please approach any new probationers or colleagues who are recently out of their probationary period in your school and encourage them to join for free.

Council Nominations 2022/2023

The EIS Council is the principal executive committee of the EIS. It meets around five times a year, usually in Edinburgh and at the AGM.

Nomination forms for members interested in standing for election to Council for 2022/2023 will be available from the EIS website.

We encourage members of the EIS BAME, Disabled and LGBT Networks to consider standing for election to Council. Being part of EIS Council can be an empowering and beneficial experience, and an opportunity to raise the profile of issues you care about. Further details can be found in the enclosed flyer.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Please make members aware of upcoming council nominations and display the enclosed flyer on school notice boards.

National Occupational Networks – Additional Support Needs, Educational Psychologists, Headteachers and Depute Headteachers, and Instrumental Music Teachers

National Occupational Networks operate to represent certain members who are part of an occupational group within the EIS, who have distinctive interests and who may not be represented in other structures within the Institute. These groups operate on behalf of four categories of members – Additional Support Needs, Educational Psychologists, Headteachers and Depute Headteachers, and Instrumental Music Teachers.

Networks operate to offer a forum for such members, to keep the main body of the EIS advised of developments in these areas and to allow proper assistance to be offered to these members in matters which affect them.

New elections to the Networks are now underway, and EIS Representatives are asked to ensure that their Headteacher/Depute Headteacher (where a member) and any other relevant members in their establishment are made aware of these elections and have the opportunity to nominate themselves for election.

One Network representative is elected for each Local Association area and members may nominate themselves. The period of office is three years and Networks normally meet on around two occasions each year.

Online nomination forms are now available to applicable members on “MyEIS” and should be completed prior to 17th December 2021.

Action for Reps: Please ensure that information on this election is brought to the attention of your Headteacher or other relevant categories of members in your establishment, and that suitable members are encouraged to stand.

No Planet B

A reminder that the EIS No Planet B digital exhibition of pupil work on climate education is open. EIS members are welcome to visit the exhibition with (or without) their pupils and to leave a message of encouragement for the contributors to see in the Visitors' Book.

The exhibition will be open for some time and members are welcome to add further contributions of climate themed pieces of pupil work at any time during the remainder of this academic session. All schools/classes who contribute will receive an eco-friendly certificate and all individual young people, a biodegradable badge to mark their contribution to the exhibition.

Action for Reps: Please remind members of the No Planet B Exhibition and the ongoing opportunity to contribute pupil work.

Welcome Packs for Young People Arriving in Scotland

In response to the arrival of Afghan refugee families to Scotland, the Equality Department has updated the Welcome Packs for young people arriving in Scotland to include translations in Dari and Pashto, in addition to French, Polish and Arabic. Hard copies will be sent out to local authorities early in the new year when we also plan to provide audio recordings in each language to accompany the Parents' Guides.

In the meantime, all of the information packs are accessible online and available to download, in all of the aforementioned languages via the EIS website.

Action for Reps: Please direct members to the online tools for pupil use as necessary.

Professional Learning

The EIS is committed to providing all members with high quality professional learning opportunities that support career-long professional development. As a member, any of the various training courses and professional learning seminars organised by the EIS are open to you.

A selection of professional learning courses will be delivered online throughout the coming months. Details of these courses have been included with this bulletin.

Action for Reps: Please promote these opportunities within your local areas. For more information, or if you would like leaflets to circulate at meetings and events, please contact Pauline McColgan (pmccolgan@eis.org.uk).

Collaborative Action Research: Facilitator Training Sessions in January 2022

EIS Members are invited to take part in a new Collaborative Action Research scheme to support their professional learning.

Across 2021-22 the EIS is planning to support members in undertaking collaborative action research to further professional learning and empower teachers through practitioner enquiry.

This will involve developing programmes of collaborative practitioner research and enquiry, with members who are pursuing overlapping or complimentary topics networked into 'Action Research Clusters' supported by EIS members trained as 'cluster facilitators'.

These clusters will facilitate peer support, information sharing, professional learning and collaborative agency. This will enable teachers to play a more empowered role in promoting learning through collaborating with other professionals.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Please pass this opportunity on to any members or existing networks you think would be interested. Members can register their interest today via the EIS website.

Furthering Disability Equality at Work

The Equality Department has worked with a steering group of fantastic members to create a film that raises awareness and celebrates the lived experiences of disabled educators and their contributions to the profession.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Please share the film with your colleagues. Members can view the film on the EIS website. (www.eis.org.uk/Disability-Equality/Film).

Equality in Focus Webinar Series

The EIS Equality in Focus learning series, funded by Scottish Union Learning to increase confidence and commitment in relation to equality matters within Union activity.

The upcoming workshops in this series are:

- Mobilising against Anti-Muslim prejudice at work: 11th January 4 - 6.30pm.
- Dynamics of Gender at Work: 18th January 4–6.30pm.
- Furthering Disability Equality at Work: (date tbc)
- Equality in Recovery Workshop: 2nd February 4 - 6.30pm.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Please share this information with members and direct those interested to book their place via the EIS website.

EIS LGBT+ Informal Network Event: Film Screening & Post-Film Chat

We are hosting an online screening of 50 Years Legal on Thursday, 13th January 2022, at 5pm. Following the screening, from 6:15pm-7:30pm, there will be a meeting of the EIS Informal LGBT+ Network, to discuss the film and catch up on the current LGBT equality work of the EIS. The informal meeting will also feature information about becoming active in the Union, and upcoming Council elections.

Full details, including how to sign-up, can be found on the event page on the EIS website (www.eis.org.uk/LGBT/The-EIS-LGBT-Network-Presents-50-Years-Legal).

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: All EIS members are welcome at the film screening, and LGBT members are especially invited to join our pre-screening discussion. Please share with any colleagues who would be interested in attending.

TUC Training Courses for Reps

Training is available for all School Reps, run in conjunction with the TUC. The 4-day EIS TUC Reps' Training course is offered in 2 x 2-day blocks and is aimed at Reps who are relatively new in the role or those who have had no formal union training. Details of training dates can be found in the meetings and events section of the EIS website.

Action for Reps: If you are a Rep, Health and Safety Rep or are a member interested in becoming one then please contact your Local Association Secretary to be nominated, who will then register with Jennifer Cook (jcook@eis.org.uk).

Updating Member Details

If you have new colleagues in your establishment who are EIS members, they should update their school base or personal contact details on the MyEIS section of the website. Remind them to log on using their EIS number. It is quick and simple to set up a password.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Alternatively, as a Rep you should have access to member lists for your school and you can update details on their behalf also using the MyEIS section which you can access at www.eis.org.uk/Account/EISLogin

Contact your EIS Organiser

This is the ideal time to set up an EIS branch meeting, we are still working and living in challenging times and having an active EIS branch is essential. Your EIS Organiser can offer support with this by attending and speaking on a specific topic or answering member queries.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Contact details for EIS Organisers are available on the EIS website.