

Bulletin

for EIS Representatives and Branch Secretaries

Scotland's largest
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education trade union

eis

November 2020

www.eis.org.uk

COVID-19 Update

Dear Rep,

As you will be aware school-based members have been issued with links to the updated guidance on schools (www.eis.org.uk/Mailings/Guidance) including heating and ventilation and some subject specific areas. Education Scotland has produced a summary of the changes, which was also included in the ebulletin as a link (www.eis.org.uk/Mailings/ES).

In general terms the guidance has been strengthened - a number of previous "coulds" becoming "shoulds" - but clearly the biggest single change has been the articulation with the Strategic Framework levels and in particular the introduction of face coverings in classroom settings for the senior phase, and for all staff in communal areas such as staffrooms.

As ever, the refreshed guidance should trigger a review of current risk assessments and the agreed mitigations in place.

The publication of the guidance on a Friday for operational implementation the following Monday has been problematic, and a number of issues are still being clarified e.g. rules on PE at Secondary and the meaning of guidance for paused shielding teachers. We will be keeping members informed as we get resolution to our various queries.

The Executive Committee meets on Friday 6th November and will consider how we should respond if any Council area moves to Level 4. The EIS is clear that this should trigger consideration of blended or remote learning and, subject to Executive approval, we would plan to consult members directly in such a circumstance. The EIS would expect to be involved in any Council level consideration around what Level 4 might mean locally.

Level 4 also has implications for Colleges and Universities and these issues are being pursued by FELA and ULA.

It is likely that we will issue a members ebulletin following the Executive Committee. In the meantime, thank you for your continuing work on behalf of members. If there are specific areas where you would wish additional support, specific guidance, or where you wish to feedback on behalf of members, please do not hesitate to email me directly at LFlanagan@eis.org.uk.

Best wishes,

Larry



Education Scotland Equity Audits

Education Scotland is conducting research across all 32 local authorities involving a total of 54 schools nationally to gather sample evidence of the equity impact of school closure during lockdown on children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

During the period of lockdown and school closure the EIS called for equity audits to be conducted with a view to additional resources being allocated to children and young people who have been disproportionately affected by school closure and lockdown.

The Scottish Government included a commitment to carry out equity audits within this year's Programme for Government and assigned Education Scotland this task. Consequently, Education Scotland Attainment Advisors will be engaging with headteachers, teachers, pupils, parents and school community partner organisations through interviews and focus groups for a three week period throughout November.

Education Scotland has been clear that this is a research activity, not a scrutiny exercise, and that they have designed it to be bureaucracy-light.

Action for Reps: Please publicise to members that the EIS is supportive of the equity audits and of time being made available for teachers to participate in the short focus group sessions, in the event that their schools are included in the sampling.

EIS-FELA Forth Valley College members vote to take action short of strike

Members at Forth Valley College voted in favour of action short of strike as the college has replaced lecturers' posts with 'instructor assessors'. In the ballot, 80% of participating members voted for action, with a turnout of 53%. Action short of strike action will begin at Forth Valley College on November 10th. EIS-FELA members across Scotland are seriously concerned that the role of college lecturers is under threat.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Show solidarity with members taking action by posting on Facebook or Twitter on 9th November – don't forget to tag @eisforthvalley #CollegesNeedLecturers

Oppose the Privatisation of Shetland College

The EIS has concerns over the proposed merger of Shetland College, Train Shetland and NAFC, in particular that the newly merged institution would be a private company as opposed to a public body like almost all other Scottish colleges. The campaign is now heading into the Scottish Government consultation phase and the EIS-FELA Branch are looking for your support.

We are asking EIS members to get behind the campaign and call on the Scottish Government to reject the proposal that Shetland College is taken out of public control.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Share messages of support for the campaign by posting on Facebook or Twitter – don't forget to tag #KeepShetlandCollegePublic @EISFELAShetland

EIS Anti-Racist Poster

Racism is real - and we must work together to end it. Our new posters raise awareness of the importance of us all standing together against racism. Take a small step and begin to make a big change for race equality.

Action for Reps and Branch Secs: Please display the included poster prominently in your establishment.

Student Teacher Placements

The current Covid-19 pandemic is presenting many challenges for all Teachers and schools. Student Teachers may well have begun their 4th Year BEd or PGDE placement in your school and will also be looking for advice and support during this difficult time.

Action for Reps: Approach new students and encourage them to join the EIS online via the website. This is free until the end of their Probation Year.

TUC Accredited Training for Reps and Activists

The EIS is offering an online four day TUC accredited Reps Training course (broken into 2 x 2 days) over the 26th and 27th of November 2020 and the 21st and 22nd of January 2021.

The EIS is also offering a two day TUC accredited Health and Safety Reps online training course on the 28th and 29th January. Having a Health & Safety Representative in your workplace is extremely important, it is a key role and can make a tangible difference to working conditions, especially in the time of Covid-19.

Action for Reps: If you are interested in either of these training courses please contact your Local Association Secretary and then register with Jennifer Cook JCook@eis.org.uk.

Learning for School Reps and Local Association Secretaries on Anti-Racist Trade Union Leadership

For the Fair Work agenda to succeed, we need to grow our knowledge on how to organise and mobilise for workers who are underrepresented and face additional barriers.

With this in mind, the EIS is now pleased to offer learning opportunities for School Reps, Equality Reps and Local Association Secretaries to lead the change in schools towards race equality.

This essential course for trade union representatives will enable you to be an effective voice for anti-racism within education and within the trade union movement. The sessions are delivered in partnership with SAMEE, the Scottish Association for Minority Ethnic Educators. For more information, and to sign up, visit the Equality section of the EIS website.

Action for Reps: Please make members aware of the anti-racist trade union leadership course.

Learn Online with EIS: Equality Taster Training

Are you committed to equality, but not sure where to begin in terms of challenging inequality and advancing equality in your role as an EIS Rep? The EIS is pleased to announce the launch of a new online training offer- Equality Taster Training.

This training will:

- Increase your knowledge of equality legislation and how it relates to education
- Raise your awareness of inequality and increase your confidence in addressing it

Teachers bear witness every day, to the enormous consequences inequality has for education. In these times of uncertainty, there is power in knowledge of rights, responsibilities and how you can realise them within your workplace and classroom. This training can either be the start of your learning journey about equality, or a helpful refresher.

The Equality Taster Training consists of four modules which can be completed flexibly to work around your time. The complete training will take around 2-4 hours to complete, depending on the amount of additional reading you choose to do. Visit <https://equality.eis.org.uk/tastertraining/> to find out more and start your learning.

Action for Reps: Please make members aware of the available training.

Contact your EIS Organiser

If you would like advice on rep training or building your branch, please contact your EIS Organiser. You can find their contact details on the EIS website.

COVID-19

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Close to Colleagues? Wear a Mask



2m



Stay Safe

— Stop the Virus —

www.eis.org.uk/Health-And-Safety/COVID19

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