



The Educational
Institute of Scotland

Humza Yousaf
First Minister of Scotland

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By email only
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Dear First Minister

I write on behalf of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) on the urgent matter of precarity of employment for thousands of teachers in Scotland, whose professional and personal lives are in turmoil, as a result of the lack of the job security that many were led to believe they would have by entering the teaching profession.

You may recall that I raised this issue with you in early June during the biannual meeting with STUC. I appreciated the concern that you expressed at the time and have become increasingly concerned myself as more and more members have contacted the EIS over the summer months in desperation at the prospect of no work when the new school session begins next week.

As I am sure you will understand, these members are facing the cost of living crisis like so many others in society- rents, mortgages, food, transport, energy bills...the list is long, and they are deeply anxious about being unable to meet these costs without being able to earn a sufficient and secure living in the months ahead.

They tell of significant levels of stress and anxiety. Many have children to look after, some are single parents and several of the members who have been in touch to seek the help of the EIS are pregnant. An expectant mother should not be in the unhealthy position of literally fearing for her future and that of her soon-to-be-born child.

Many members who have contacted us are facing yet another year of uncertainty, limping from one temporary contract to another, unable to buy homes or secure tenancies as renters, or to make any long-term plans for their future, without certainty of contract and geographical location of their employment. I'm sure you will agree that a constant state of limbo is not a happy place in which to be.

As you will appreciate, these are highly qualified professionals whose commitment to children and young people, to education and to the teaching profession in Scotland, has been demonstrated through the years of study that they have undertaken, often at

significant personal sacrifice and expense; through the successful completion of a rigorous probationary year; and through the achievement of an exacting suite of professional standards.

In embarking on such a path, many will have done so in direct response to the Scottish Government's own 'Inspiring Teachers' and 'Teaching Makes People' recruitment campaigns of 2016 and 2017, which rightly sought to bring more graduates into the profession. Regrettably for the thousands of teachers who undertook their ITE courses in good faith, the long-term staffing strategy for Education has not served them well, and too few have benefitted from the £145.5 million that the Scottish Government disbursed to local authorities last year for the recruitment of additional permanent teachers and support staff. As a result, a generation of newly and recently qualified teachers, the majority of them younger workers, are being held back in their career and personal development, whilst at the same time we have many experienced teachers who wish to but cannot retire early due to previous pension changes.

You will no doubt be aware that North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) notified 136 teachers in the final days of last term that they would not have even temporary employment in the new academic session. NLC is not alone.

Not only does the staffing situation that I've outlined negatively impact the lives and wellbeing of thousands of teachers, to the point that many are simply leaving or plan to leave the teaching profession in Scotland, the EIS believes that it falls short of delivering the quality of education that children and young people in Scotland should have the benefit of at all times, and particularly as our education system struggles to recover from the pandemic, and our most socio-economically disadvantaged children and young people from blow after blow of Westminster-driven austerity on their education.

On behalf of the EIS, I ask again that you give this matter urgent consideration and provide additional funding to local authorities that is effectively ringfenced for the recruitment of additional permanently employed teachers, as well as looking carefully at teacher workforce planning for the years ahead to ensure stability and sufficiency of teacher staffing within our schools ongoingly.

I look forward to being able to share your response with EIS members, particularly those who have contacted us in such desperation on this matter.

Yours sincerely



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General Secretary

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