



The Educational
Institute of Scotland

[Name of Director of Education]
[Council]
[Address]

Ref: DB/LF/BA

18 September 2019

Dear [Name of Director of Education],

I write in reference to the forthcoming climate change school strike dates and the potential involvement of students from within your local authority.

As an institution the EIS broadly supports the aims of anti-climate change campaigns whilst recognising that individual teachers, irrespective of any personal sympathies, are governed as professionals by the GTCS Code of Professionalism & Conduct and should remain impartial and objective in teaching/discussing such matters with pupils. As employees they are required to operate the local authority's absence monitoring procedures and to ensure a "duty of care" is exercised in relation to pupils and students in their charge.

Accordingly, the EIS has advised members that they should follow their employer's advice for dealing with unauthorised absences.

However, we believe that advice should be founded on the basic premise that for pupils who are 16 or over, any decision to participate in the "strike" can be made on an independent basis and then processed in line with the Local Authority's policy and that for those under 16, pupils should be advised that they should seek parental endorsement if they are going to be absent and that parents should inform the school.

Further, whilst the EIS is not encouraging pupils/students to participate in anti-climate change strikes, we recognise that many will do so; we believe their right to do so should be respected and that participants should not be sanctioned or punished as a consequence. If we are to encourage our pupils to be confident individuals that effectively contribute to society on global themes including sustainability, we shouldn't seek to punish them when they campaign for global sustainability.

I would be grateful if you would consider advising schools within your council to act in accord with the suggestions made above.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Flanagan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'F'.

Larry Flanagan
General Secretary