



The Educational
Institute of Scotland

To Heads of Education,
Scotland

Ref: LF/SL/HofEd

17 July 2020

Dear Colleague

I write with regard to education recovery for our pupils and the issue of the staffing required to support same.

At the moment, there is intense discussion around the process of how schools will reopen in August and clearly that is a pressing matter which we all need to attend to.

Beyond getting pupils back, however, lies an even bigger challenge about supporting their recovery from what will have been for many, indeed most, a traumatic experience.

I do not need to rehearse concerns about the deepening of disadvantage which will have occurred nor of the impact on educational attainment more generally, as I am sure you are well aware of these matters, alongside the potential damage done to children's well-being and welfare.

Tackling all of these aspects will be a labour-intensive process as children will need counselling, support and nurturing.

To this end we will need more teachers, more specialists, more support services.

I know that the Scottish Government has announced an extra £100 million over two years to support this process. Whilst welcome I think this is wholly inadequate to the need which will be there.

My purpose in writing this letter is to urge Councils to think big in articulating the scale of resource required. We have unemployed NQTs, RQTs, teachers on supply lists and temporary contracts – all of whom are anxious about their employment prospects for next session when there is such a glaring demand for all of them to be utilised in our schools.

The GTCS has identified thousands of retired or inactive teachers waiting in the wings to be deployed but before we even begin to consider this cohort, we need to employ the staff already there.

I am aware of the political dimensions to any discussion between COSLA and the Scottish Government around finance, but in there somewhere we are losing the focus on what the education recovery of pupils should actually look like.

Teachers make the difference – let's get as many as we can into our schools.

I would urge you to continue to use your leadership role within your authority to advocate for the resources needed to deliver for our pupils. If the EIS can support your efforts in any way, please let me know.

Best wishes,

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
EIS General Secretary