

## **JOINT STATEMENT ON EMPOWERING SCHOOLS AGREEMENT**

An agreement has been reached between Scottish local government and the Scottish Government which sets out our shared commitment to empower our schools. This work will start now and be taken forward with pace over the summer. The Education Bill will not be introduced to Parliament at this time.

Under the agreement, headteachers will be supported to make more of the important decisions on learning and teaching and the day-to-day running of their school. This agreement between the Scottish Government and local government is an important step towards more empowerment for schools over key aspects of school life and will make a real impact on the ongoing commitment of both Scottish Government and local government to raise standards and close the poverty-related attainment gap.

The joint agreement which sets out the agreed principles underpinning the development of an empowered school led system will be supported by an Action Plan to be taken forward between the Scottish Government and local government. This should lead to empowered schools delivering improved outcomes for Scotland's children and young people in collaboration with Scotland's Local Authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives.

Deputy First Minister John Swinney said:

“Closing the poverty-related attainment gap and raising standards for all is a priority for both the Scottish Government and local authorities. We are already working in partnership to achieve this shared vision through Regional Improvement Collaboratives, for example.

“I very much welcome this latest landmark agreement which will fast-track the empowerment of schools, with the support of the local authority, to take key decisions to improve the life chances of our children and young people – a central plank of our education reforms.”

Councillor Stephen McCabe, COSLA's Spokesperson for Children and Young People, said:

“I am pleased that our concerns have been recognised by the Scottish Government and I believe that the principles we have agreed will allow us to focus on improving outcomes for children and young people. We welcome the commitment by Scottish Government to co-produce any framework and guidance which supports this work going forwards. We will of course need to ensure that additional requirements on local government are fully funded. As always, the focus for COSLA remains to ensure that the needs of children and young people are central to all decision making.”

26 June 2018