

C-19 Education Recovery Group

Minutes of meeting, Thursday 3 September 2020

Attendees

- John Swinney MSP, *Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Chair)*
- Councillor McCabe, *Children and Young People spokesperson, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities – CoSLA (Co-Chair)*
- Maree Todd MSP, *Minister for Children and Young People*
- Andy Drought, *Deputy Director of Workforce, Infrastructure and Reform, Scottish Government*
- Greg Dempster, *General Secretary, Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)*
- Larry Flanagan, *General Secretary, Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)*
- Carrie Lindsay, *President, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)*
- Ken Muir, *Chief Executive, General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)*
- Joanna Murphy, *Chair, National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS)*
- Jim Thewliss, *General Secretary, School Leaders Scotland (SLS)*
- Maria Walker, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*
- Gayle Gorman, *Chief Executive and Chief Inspector, Education Scotland*
- Alison Cumming, *Director of Early Learning and Childcare, Scottish Government*
- Diane Stockton, *Social and System Recovery Programme Lead, Public Health Scotland (PHS)*
- Fiona Robertson, *Chief Executive, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)*
- Graeme Logan, *Director of Learning, Scottish Government*
- Mick Wilson *Deputy Director of Education Analytical Services, Scottish Government*
- Sheena Devlin, *Executive Director, Perth & Kinross Council (ADES)*
- Sam Anson, *Deputy Director of Improvement, Attainment and Wellbeing, Scottish Government*
- Gillian Hamilton, *Strategic Director, Education Scotland*
- Jane Brumpton, *Chief Executive, Early Years Scotland*
- John Gallacher, *UNISON*
- Matthew Sweeney, *Policy Manager - Children and Young People, CoSLA*
- Lynda Fenton, *PHS*

Apologies

- Elizabeth Morrison, *Deputy Director, Scottish Government*

The meeting began with confirmation that the Scottish Government's COVID-19 FACTS poster was now available in 38 different languages, and this may be useful to a range of schools across the country reflecting the diversity of the school population.

There was an update on the activation of the teaching workforce, with figures just over 1,300 primary and 1,600 secondary, with a large proportion in the 56-70 age range. There was some discussion around how this additional resource might be best deployed, in terms of the activities supported, with suggestions of supporting e-learning, but with recognition that a lot of the requirement, particularly at primary schools, is in the classroom.

Members reviewed the updated Management Information report, which had been updated based on feedback from the previous meeting. The update included some additional data on testing. There was also a draft infographic paper presented for discussion, and it was agreed this should be developed further as a useful resource, noting that data could only be included where it is publicly available.

The group discussed a range of points which had been collected by way of feedback from members and their networks. Matters discussed included feedback on the introduction of masks, which was broadly positive but notably still challenging particularly for some groups e.g. young people with additional support needs. The availability of testing was discussed, and the impact of delays in testing staff particularly was having on workforce planning. The significant increase in demand for testing was also noted, along with the importance of testing in supporting the wellbeing of staff and young people. The benefits of consistency of engagement between schools and local public health teams was recognised, and some further thought will be given to tools that can support this consistency. Consideration is also being given to how young people might be better involved in community messaging on public health, which is important given the return to school has increased young people's visibility in and interaction with local community settings.

Actions to be taken forward

- Develop the infographic for public distribution, presenting key management information
- Consider how best to provide support for school leaders in running schools, recognising challenging operational conditions
- Consider and further develop guidance around school/public health interactions
- Discuss with testing policy team the current situation with demand for and accessibility of testing, including messaging
- Consider the specific measures that need to be put in place to help young people with additional support needs adjust to the return to school.

Next meeting: Thursday 10 September 2020