

UHI Research Database pdf download summary

Education in the Scottish Parliament

Redford, Morag

Published in:
Scottish Educational Review

Publication date:
2017

[Link to author version on UHI Research Database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Redford, M. (2017). Education in the Scottish Parliament. *Scottish Educational Review*, 49(2), 86 - 99.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the UHI Research Database are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights:

- 1) Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the UHI Research Database for the purpose of private study or research.
- 2) You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- 3) You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the UHI Research Database

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at RO@uhi.ac.uk providing details; we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

EDUCATION IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Morag Redford

University of the Highlands and Islands

PREAMBLE

This paper follows on from the previous bulletin (Redford 2017), which covered the education remit of the Parliament's Education and Skills Committee between September 2016 and January 2017. The following bulletin covers the Education remit of the Education and Skills Committee from January to August 2017.

SEPTEMBER 2016 – JANUARY 2017

The Education and Skills Committee had the following members during this period:

James Dornan (Convener), Johann Lamont (Deputy Convener), Colin Beattie, Ross Greer, Claire Haughey (from 19.04.17), Daniel Johnson, Richard Lochhead (to 29.03.17), Fulton MacGregor (to 29.03.17), Ruth Maguire (from 19.04.17), Gillian Martin, Tavish Scott, Liz Smith and Ross Thomson (to 14 June 2017). Full records of the Committee meetings, including minutes, official papers and transcripts of proceedings can be found on the Scottish Parliament website at: <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/99746.aspx> [accessed 27.10.17]

The committee began this period of work with a meeting where they considered the recommendations of their predecessor Committee (ES/S5/17/4/A) and agreed to write to the Scottish Government on issues arising from their discussion. They held a series of roundtable discussions in February and March taking evidence on personal and social education, additional support needs and the children's hearing system before discussing issues raised with ministers. This work was concluded in April and May with the publication of reports on those topics. Their meetings in May 2017 focused on their inquiry into teacher workforce planning and those in June on their inquiry into school infrastructure. The committee also heard evidence and approved a number of subordinate orders during this period. They reviewed their work programme, in private, at their meetings on the 29 March 2017 and 10 May 2017.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION (PSE)

The committee took evidence about personal and social education at a roundtable session on the 22 February 2017. They then reviewed the evidence in

private and wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills with topics for their meeting with him on the 8 March 2017. The committee considered a draft report at their meeting on the 3 May 2017 and an amended draft at their meeting on the 10 May 2017, when they agreed the report for publication.

Date of Committee	Witnesses
22 February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erin McAuley, <i>Scottish Youth Parliament</i> • Jordan Daly, <i>Time for Inclusive Education</i> • Joanna Barrett, <i>NSPCC</i> • Jack Douglas, <i>NUS Scotland</i> • Hilary Kidd, <i>Young Scot</i> • Clare Clark, <i>Sexpression:UK</i> • Janet Westwater, <i>Teacher</i>

The Convener started the meeting with a query about the content of PSE, this led to a discussion about a lack of awareness amongst teachers of the 2014 guidance on relationships, sexual health and parenthood. Jack Douglas said that the NUS believed that PSE needed to change to ensure ‘high-quality provision throughout Scotland’ (Douglas, 22.02.17, Col 16). Erin McAuley added that the Scottish Youth Parliament often had motions on the need for better sex education. The meeting then spent some time discussing who taught PSE in schools and the use of specialist staff, concluding that there needed to be a balance between teacher led sessions and external presenters. The witnesses made a number of points about the need to include PSE in initial teacher education programmes, to have appropriate programmes from Nursery onwards and to involve young people directly in the design of the PSE curriculum in each school.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS (ASN)

The committee took evidence about additional support needs at a roundtable event on 1 March 2017. A SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/17/6/1) on additional support needs was provided for the meeting. They reviewed the evidence in private at the end of evidence session and agreed to write to the Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland and all Scottish Local Authorities. The committee considered a draft report at their meeting on 3 May 2017 and agreed the report for publication.

Date of Committee	Witnesses
1 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sally Cavers, <i>Enquire</i> • Colin Crawford, <i>Glasgow City Council</i> • Carol Gilmour, <i>Parent and Foster Carer</i> • Kenny Graham, <i>Scottish Children’s Services Coalition</i> • Sylvia Haughney, <i>Glasgow City Council and Member of UNISON</i> • Professor Sheila Riddell, <i>University of Edinburgh</i> • Samreen Shah, <i>Bannerman High School and Member of the EIS</i> • Sharon Veelenturf, <i>Parent</i>

The roundtable began with a question from the Convener about local authority variability. In reply Sheila Riddell outlined differences between authorities in the percentage of children identified with ASN and differences in the use of co-ordinated support plans (CSPs) between authorities. Carol Gilmour and Sharon Veelenturf then talked about their difficulties in securing CPSs and the need to argue to secure them.

CSPs are important, and parents who are really driven are going to fight for them, but not everybody knows that they can. If they ask and are told by someone in authority that their child is not eligible, they will often just go away (Veelenturf, 01.03.17, Col. 6).

The meeting noted patterns in social deprivation in the way that children were identified as having ASN and discussed the lack of staff to assess children. Kenny Graham talked about the way that parents were ‘driving assessments, not the local authorities’ (Graham, 01.3.17, Col 10). Colin Beattie then asked if the 153% rise in the number of children with ASN since 2010 meant that teachers were being asked to support too wide a range of needs. The witnesses then discussed their individual response to the presumption of mainstream education and the need for all school staff to work in an inclusive structure to support children and young people with ASN in mainstream settings. The session concluded with a list of action points from witnesses: the need to quality assure provision, the focused spend of attainment fund money and specialist training for learning support teachers.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS, PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

The committee followed their separate round table events with evidence from John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills at their meeting on the 8 March 2017. The supporting papers for this meeting included a Themes paper (ES/S5/17/7/1), a Submissions paper (ES/S5/17/7/2) and correspondence from the Scottish Government (ES/S5/17/7/3).

Date of Committee	Witnesses
8 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Swinney, <i>Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Scottish Government</i> • Fiona Robertson and Donna Bell, <i>Scottish Government</i>

In his opening remarks to the committee John Swinney noted the strengths of Curriculum for Excellence, the policy structure that placed the child at the centre and the important connections between personal and social education and Scotland's inclusive approach to education. The Convener then asked about the ways that best practice in additional support needs was shared between local authorities. In his reply the Cabinet Secretary referred to the legislation and the role of the inspectorate, 'In guaranteeing that the interventions that are put in place at local level are of the quality to achieve what we all expect' (Swinney, 08.03.17, Col 4). Ross Thomson asked about the challenges faced by teachers due to the loss of teaching assistants. In his reply John Swinney noted the challenging fiscal situation and that the number of support staff in 2016 was 12,883 and that 12 % of the total education budget spent in local authorities was on additional support needs. Further questions related to support for parents to ensure equity of provision and John Swinney replied to these with examples of the support offered by the legislative framework. Ross Greer asked about the reduction in Additional Support Needs teachers and the special needs content of initial teaching qualifications, which John Swinney agreed to discuss with the 'colleges of education' (Swinney, 08.03.17, Col 12). The second part of the session focused on personal and social education, the range of topics included within that and the different ways in which health and wellbeing was taught. The session concluded with a discussion about the principles of the Curriculum and the guidance issued to teachers.

CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SYSTEM - TAKING STOCK OF REFORMS

The committee took evidence about the Children's Hearing System at a roundtable session on the 15 March 2017. Papers for the meeting include a SPICe briefing pack (ES/S5/17/8/1) and submissions from those attending the roundtable (ESS5/17/8/2). The committee concluded the meeting, in private, with a review of the evidence. The committee returned to the topic at their next meeting on the 22 March 2017 when they heard evidence from the legal profession and considered a written submission for the Law Society of Scotland (ES/S5/17/9/1). The committee concluded their work on this topic in an evidence session with Mark McDonald, Minister for Childcare and Early Years at their meeting on the 29 March 2017. The supporting papers for this meeting (ES/S5/17/10/2) was the collected submissions to the committee on the Children's Hearing Systems. The committee considered a draft report on the Children's Hearing Systems, in private, at their meeting on 19 April 2017 and agreed the report for publication.

Date of Committee	Witnesses
15 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daljeet Dagon, <i>Barnardo's Scotland</i> • Boyd McAdam and Jennifer Phillips, <i>Children's Hearing Scotland</i> • Kate Rocks, <i>Social Work Scotland</i> • Malcolm Schaffer, <i>Scottish Children's Reporters Administration</i> • Jennifer Davidson, <i>IICF & CELCIS</i> • Julia Donnelly, <i>Head of Representation, Clan Child Law</i>
22 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morag Driscoll, <i>The Law Society of Scotland</i> • Mark Allison, <i>Livingstone Brown</i>
29 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark McDonald, <i>Minister of Childcare and Early Years, Scottish Government</i> • Tom McNamara and Thekla Garland, <i>Scottish Government</i>

The focus of the discussion at the first session of evidence was to discuss reforms introduced in the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 with particular emphasis on the feedback loop, advocacy and the provision of legal aid. The meeting discussed the detail of different aspects of the reforms and noted that the children and family surveys carried out by the Reporter's Administration, 'showed some improvement in children's perceptions of how they were treated at hearing' (Schaffer, 15.03.17, Col 4).

The discussion with the second panel of witnesses discussed the role of solicitors in the hearing system and Morag Driscoll began the evidence by describing the important role of the 2011 Act in clarifying when solicitors are required at hearings. She also noted that the Act, 'guarantees that the system complies with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' (Driscoll, 22.03.17, Col 3). The committee then asked about the availability of legal aid and the role of lawyers within the system.

Mark McDonald made an opening statement to the committee at their final session of evidence, where he praised progress and identified future actions. The meeting discussed the level of involvement of solicitors with hearings and the use of the code of practice to inform their participation in children's hearings. Members then asked a number of questions about the use of advocates for the children, to which the Minister replied that pilots were being carried out in Fife and North Lanarkshire to consider how advocacy was taken forward. The meeting concluded with a series of questions about training and the introduction of a feedback loop to ensure that recommendations were being carried out.

COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE AND ROLE OF KEY EDUCATION AND SKILLS BODIES

The committee published this report in January 2017 and considered the response of key bodies to the report at their meeting on 29 March 2017. They

took evidence from Education Scotland about their response to the report on 26 April 2017. The Clerk provided a paper for the meeting that summarised the evidence submitted to the committee by Education Scotland and their response to issues raised in the report (ES/S5/17/12/1).

Date of Committee	Witnesses
26 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Maxwell, Alan Armstrong and Alastair Delaney, <i>Education Scotland</i>

The meeting began with a discussion of the themes in Quality and Improvement in Scottish education 2012 – 16. Liz Smith then asked a series of detailed questions about the relationship between Education Scotland, the Government and the Curriculum for Excellence Management Board. In his response Bill Maxwell said, ‘we continue to play a productive and positive role in helping to improve the system’ (Maxwell, 26.04.17, Col 5). Tavish Scott then asked about guidance for headteachers in relation to the pupil equity fund, which Bill Maxwell explained was an online resource called interventions for equity. Johann Lamont then asked:

Is not it the job of Education Scotland, as the education agency in Scotland, to identify interventions that work, and to work with local authorities and schools to implement those interventions (Lamont, 26.04.17, Col 11)?

The meeting then moved on to discuss school inspections, the number of inspections undertaken in 2016 and the number of inspectors employed. This led to questions from Daniel Johnson about the independence of the inspection role and the management of that within Education Scotland. Tavish Scott then asked, ‘Do inspectors assess the effectiveness of Education Scotland guidance in schools?’ (Scott, 26.04.17, Col 22) and suggested that the dual role of Education Scotland led to a conflict of interest in the guidance they issued. The session concluded with a series of questions from Johann Lamont about the PISA results.

TEACHER WORKFORCE PLANNING

The committee began their work on teacher workforce planning at their meeting on the 10 May 2017 when they took evidence from two panels of witnesses, the first comprising trainee teachers and the second qualified teachers. The papers for this meeting included a submissions pack of 70 responses to the committee questionnaire (ES/S5/17/14/1) and a SPICe briefing (ES/S5/17/14/2) which provided an outline of the teacher workforce planning process and an analysis of the questionnaires received prior to the closing date. All evidence submitted can be accessed through the committee website: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/104266.aspx> [accessed 27.10.17].

The papers for the meeting on 17 May 2017 include a SPICe briefing pack (ES/S5/17/15.1) which identified eight themes from the evidence submitted and linked to the content of discussions at the evidence sessions on the 10 May 2017. A second set of supporting papers (ES/S5/17/15.2) listed the submissions from

national organisations, professional associations and academics. The committee took evidence from organisations represented on the Teacher Workforce Planning Group at their meeting on 24 May 2017. This meeting was supported by a SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/17/16/1), submissions from panel members and each University providing ITE in Scotland (ES/S5/17/17/3). The committee took their final session of evidence on this inquiry from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and his officials at their next meeting on the 31 May 2017. This meeting was supported by a SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/17/17A) and a submissions pack (ES/S5/17/17/2) that highlighted recent submissions to the inquiry and provided committee members with links to previous written evidence. The committee considered the evidence in private following the final session of evidence on the 31 May 2017 and at their following meetings on the 14, 21 and 28 June 2017.

Date of Committee	Witnesses
10 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halla Price, <i>Trainee Teacher</i> • Kimberley Miller-Drummond, <i>Previous Trainee Teacher</i> • Mark Melrose, <i>Trainee Teacher</i> • Willie MacLeod, <i>Trainee Teacher</i> • Carys Boyle, <i>Trainee Teacher</i>
10 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emma Newton, <i>Teacher</i> • Isabel Marshall, <i>Headteacher</i> • Judith Williams, <i>Teacher</i> • Karen Vaughan, <i>Teacher</i> • Angela Kelly, <i>Teacher</i> • Linda Robertson, <i>Teacher</i> • Dr Shaun Harley, <i>Teacher</i> • Críostóir Piondargás, <i>Teacher</i>
17 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Rowena Arshad and Dr Lesley Reid, <i>University of Edinburgh</i> • Laurence Findlay, <i>Education & Social Care, Moray Council</i> • Dr Liz Lakin, <i>Learned Societies' Group on Scottish STEM Education</i> • Jane Peckham, <i>NASUWT</i>
24 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan Armstrong, <i>Education Scotland</i> • Kathy Cameron, <i>COSLA</i> • Greg Dempster, <i>Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)</i> • Martin Fairbairn, <i>Scottish Funding Council (SFC)</i> • Dr Morag Redford, <i>Scottish Council of Deans of Education;</i> • John Stodter, <i>Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Thewliss, <i>School Leaders Scotland (SLS)</i>
24 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken Muir and Ellen Doherty, <i>General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)</i>
31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Swinney, <i>Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Scottish Government</i> • Stuart Robb, and Mick Wilson, <i>Learning Directorate, Scottish Government</i>

The Convener opened the first session of evidence by asking witnesses why they wanted to become a teacher. The answers given ranged from impact on children to job security. Ruth Maguire then asked them about how they felt about teaching as a profession. In reply Mark Melrose and Willie MacLeod said that in general, 'the public perspective is very much that teachers are professionals' but that communications from the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Education Scotland, 'did not reflect professional communications between equal partners'(MacLeod, 10.05.17, Col 4). Liz Smith then asked about the theoretical and placement aspects of teacher training. The responses ranged from, 'Very little of what we work on at University seems to have any relevance in the classroom' (MacLeod, 10.05.17, Col 5) to 'Our workshops in the second semester were very practical and they gave us lesson ideas, which was helpful' (Boyle, 10.05.17, Col 6). Daniel Johnson then asked about literacy and numeracy in primary teacher training. In reply Halla Price said she would have liked more input on reading schemes and that there was not enough focus in her programme on their own mathematical knowledge and understanding. Daniel Johnson then paraphrased her reply and asked for agreement from the panel, that 'There is a lot of focus on the importance of literacy and numeracy, but not necessarily on the practical techniques of how to deliver them' (Johnson, 10.05.17, Col 7). Gillian Martin asked which science and mathematical qualifications they were expected to have prior to entering their courses. Tavish Scott followed this with a question about the balance between practice and theory. He received different answers and concluded himself, that, 'It varies from university to university' (Scott, 10.05.17, Col 10). The meeting then touched on internet safety, with answers varying from being taught about internet safety to others who said they had no input on teaching internet safety to children and young people. Ross Greer asked a series of questions about additional support needs which led the Convener to ask why there was disparity between the answers to which Willie MacLeod replied that they were all studying at different Universities. Clare Haughey asked about the ways in which the students fed back to Universities about their courses and fed back to schools about their placements. Johann Lamont followed this with questions about the ways that school placements were managed. The meeting then moved on to discuss recruitment and retention of teachers. The replies to this question focused on the wish to work close to where they had qualified as a teacher, with a number of witness commenting, that the areas short of teachers should be looking to recruit locally.

The convener opened the questions to the second panel of witnesses by asking them why they wanted to become teachers, with the majority of witnesses saying that they wanted to work with children and young people. Colin Beattie then asked a series of follow up questions about workload, and Angela Kelly replied,

It is overwhelming, and many staff often feel that they are juggling. Trying to prioritise is becoming more and more difficult because there are so many high priorities; you do not know which one to tackle first and which one can be left for a few days (Kelly, 10.05.17, Col 31).

Other witnesses then described the range of work involved as a teacher, the pace and number of changes, which Críostóir Piondargás described as, 'It feels as though we are shuffling the deck chairs' (Piondargás, 10.05.17, Col 35). The meeting then spent some time discussing the amount of knowledge of additional support needs the witnesses felt should be included in initial teaching education (ITE). Daniel Johnson then asked, 'Does teacher training currently prepare teachers adequately to teach the curriculum for excellence (Johnson, 10.05.17, Col 43). To which Shaun Harley replied, 'I do not think that it could, because it is part of the process of maturing into the profession' (Harley, 10.05.17, Col 43). The session ended with a discussion about staffing in nursery education, pupil support workers and supply teachers.

The convener opened the evidence session on the 17 May 2017 with a question about the recruitment targets for ITE. In reply Rowena Arshad described the difficulties universities had with the timing of the workforce planning system, Liz Lahkin noted the need for, 'a complete, reliable and accurate evidence base' (Lahkin, 17.05.17, Col 2) to inform the targets and Laurence Findlay commented on the success of a local partnership approach to recruitment. This final point led to a question from Tavish Scott about localised planning, to which Laurence Findlay replied, 'There is huge scope to develop a regional approach to planning for our future teacher workforce, and that could be done using the seven regional consortia (Findlay, 17.05.17, Col 3). Rowena Arshad added that working locally was one approach but that,

It is important that we have balance and a multipronged approach, because actually we want more people to be socially mobile and to move, not least for the cultural diversity of areas (Arshad, 17.05.17, Col. 3).

The meeting then discussed the ways in which incentives had been used by local authorities to recruit teachers and those interested in qualifying as teachers. Gillian Martin asked about the content of teacher training courses and Lesley Reid replied in detail about the pedagogical knowledge students acquired on ITE programmes. Liz Lahkin added ITE as a partnership between the school, the student and the University with the student holding responsibility to develop themselves as practitioners. Liz Smith asked about the teaching of literacy and numeracy in ITE programmes, and the meeting spent time discussing the level of skills students entered ITE programmes with. Tavish Scott asked about internet

security, and Rowena Arshad took the opportunity in her reply to remind the committee that:

We use the term “teacher education” in the sector, and the important reason for that is that we do not robotically train people to do A, B and C in a particular way. Curriculum for excellence is one framework, but those teachers will have lots of different curriculum frameworks over the lifetime of their study, and they have to be agentic and adaptive teachers (Arshad, 17.05.17, Col 17).

Daniel Johnson then asked if, ‘In preparing teachers to think about education, we have lost some of the technique’ (Johnson, 17.05.17, Col 23). In reply Lesley Reid talked about the need for student teachers to be able to explain and justify their choices in teaching so they can become adaptable and responsive teachers and concluded, ‘What you are calling the theoretical aspects of education provide that answer’ (Reid, 17.05.17, Col 23). The meeting briefly considered professional learning before moving to questions from Ross Greer about training for additional support needs, where witnesses acknowledged the challenges faced in providing a depth of relevant experience for student teachers. Ruth Maguire asked about placements, which Laurence Findlay felt needed the support of partnership work with local university partners. This led to an explanation from Lesley Reid about University local authority partnerships and the role of those partnerships in supporting joint work. The session concluded with a discussion about the recruitment and retention of staff.

The third evidence session for this inquiry began with a question from the Convener about the best way to link local workforce planning with national target setting. In reply John Stodter described the way in which current vacancy information, from each authority, had been added to the planning process. Kathy Cameron added information about the complexity of interpreting teacher vacancies. Liz Smith followed this with a question about the accuracy of vacancy statistics, to which John Stodter replied, ‘The issue when many different people are putting in data, the issue is how to make sure their answers are robust and reliable’ (Stodter, 24.05.17, Col 5). This led to a discussion about the workforce planning model and a comment from Martin Fairbairn that the main challenges for the model were in rural areas and added that it was more appropriate to use initiatives to address some of the issues, ‘Rather than trying to come up with a perfect model that will provide exactly the right number of teachers in, say, five years’ time’ (Fairbairn, 24.05.17, Col 7). The committee then directed a number of questions to John Stodter about the workforce modelling used in local authorities and the way the demand for supply teachers was included in those processes. Johann Lamont then asked about the use of incentives to recruit and retain career changers in teaching. In reply Greg Dempster said that there was differentiation available in teaching terms and conditions, but it was not known how often it was used. This led to a discussion about job-share posts and the difficulties of managing a larger part-time workforce. Claire Haughey followed this with a question about part-time or job-share posts for headteachers, to which Greg Dempster replied that he knew that there was a demand for it but that

members of his organisation had, 'asked their local authority for exactly that, but not been enabled to do it,' (Dempster, 24.05.17, Col 17). Johann Lamont asked about different ways of becoming a teacher, in reply to which Morag Redford described the 13 new routes introduced by Universities with the support of the Government. The meeting noted issues with school placements before moving on to discuss the challenge of recruitment in rural areas. Ross Thomson asked about the introduction of a Teach First-style system and Morag Redford replied that the Universities felt that their current programmes and new routes was a stronger way to develop the teaching workforce. The session concluded with a series of questions to panel members that came from focus groups held by the committee.

The second panel of witnesses on the 24 May 2017 were two representatives from the GTCS. Daniel Johnson opened the questions by asking if there was a need for a teacher training, 'to adapt for Curriculum for Excellence' (Johnson, 24.05.17, Col 36). Ken Muir replied that, 'that we still have a way to go for teachers to understand the philosophy and thinking behind it' (Muir, 24.05.17, Col 36). In response to further questions from Daniel Johnson about the content of University programmes Ken Muir explained;

When we accredit a programme, we try to ensure that there is enough scope within it for students to understand the complexities of teaching. We know that teaching is not an easy job—the folk sitting around the table who were previously teachers will know that. At the same time, the students must have enough opportunity to put the theory into practice, and they must be supported in doing so through the teacher induction year, which is their probationary year. In a sense, we have a two-year programme to prepare students, as much as possible, to become fully fledged teachers (Muir, 24.05.17, Col 37).

The meeting then considered the student placement system before moving on to discuss applications for registration from teachers who had not qualified as a teacher in Scotland before returning the management of the school placement system.

The final evidence session for this inquiry began with an opening statement from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills in which he focused on two areas of the evidence: the skills of newly qualified teachers and the national approach to workforce planning. He noted his concern about the evidence the committee had heard and committed the Government to strengthening teacher education programmes. He then went on to describe the national recruitment campaign for science, technology, engineering and mathematics and the interest that had generated in teaching as a career. Liz Smith followed this with a series of questions about the literacy and numeracy content of initial teacher education programmes. In reply John Swinney said that the Government would, 'Lead a process that involves all interested parties to make sure that initial teacher education delivers all that we require it to deliver for aspiring teachers' (Swinney, 31.05.17, col 6). Daniel Johnson then asked questions about vacancies and

workforce planning suggesting that the model used should look at, ‘The pattern of schools and models of teaching’ (Johnson, 31.05.17, Col 8). Tavish Scott gave an example of recruitment difficulties in Shetland and the Cabinet Secretary responded that the Government was introducing a series of reforms, ‘to help with the delivery of education where there are shortages’ (Swinney, 31.05.17, Col 10), and gave the example of funding for distance learning through the e-school in the Western Isles. Each member of the committee then asked about the areas they had led questioning in with earlier panels: Gillian Martin and Colin Beattie on recruitment and retention, Tavish Scott on online safety and SQA assessment changes before Ruth Maguire returned to the role of placements in initial teacher education. In his reply to her questions John Swinney said that there was a need for the GTCS, ADES and the Universities to review the system and improve the process:

Placements are a core element of our professional approach—they are an essential component of our approach to initial teacher education—but they must be delivered in a fashion that meets the needs of everybody involved (Swinney, 31.05.17, Col 22).

Ross Thomson then asked about support for the recruitment of teachers in the north east and Ross Greer about additional support needs. The session ended with a discussion of the teaching makes people campaign.

SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

The committee began an inquiry on School Infrastructure at their meeting on 14 June 2017. The papers to support the meeting included a SPICe briefing (ES/S5/17/18/1) and a submissions pack (ES/S5/17/18/2). A further SPICe report (ES/S5/17/19/5) was provided for the committee meeting on 21 June 2017, with a submissions pack of information from witnesses and stakeholders (ES/S5/17/19.6). The evidence and submissions from the first two panels was summarised and themes identified in the SPICe briefing (ES/S5/17/20/1) for the third panel on the 28 June 2017 with an additional paper highlighting new written submissions (ES/S517/20/2).

Date of Committee	Witnesses
17 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor John Cole • Ian Mckee, <i>RICS in Scotland</i> • Paul Mitchell, <i>Scottish Building Federation</i> • Jim Thewliss, <i>School Leaders Scotland (SLS)</i>
21 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Watton, <i>City of Edinburgh Council</i> • Allan Whyte, <i>Aberdeenshire Council</i> • Danny Lowe, <i>South Lanarkshire Council</i> • Dave Aitken, <i>Local Authority Building Standards Scotland</i>

28 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Stewart, <i>Minister for Local Government and Housing, Scottish Government</i> • Bill Dodds, <i>Directorate of Local Government and Communities, Scottish Government</i> • Scott Bell, <i>Reform Division, Scottish Government</i> • Peter Reekie, <i>Scottish Futures Trust</i>
--------------	---

The Convener welcomed the panel to the meeting on the 14 June 2017 and explained that the inquiry, ‘will focus on the lessons that are to be learned from the incident at Oxgangs primary school in January 2016’ (Dornan, 14.06.17, Col 2). Adding that they would consider remedial work on the school estate since January 2016 and the quality assurance practices for new school buildings. The evidence given at the first session of evidence on the 14 June 2017 covered the failure of the quality assurance procedures for 17 schools built in Edinburgh, the lack of visits to site by building inspectors and resulting lack of scrutiny. Witnesses on the 21 June 2017 gave further information about quality assurance processes and the different approaches taken by local authorities during the building of new schools under PPP arrangements. The committee then used the final session of evidence to question the Minister responsible about actions the Government was taking to address the issues identified in the Report on the incident at Oxgangs Primary School and points made during the first two evidence sessions.

EU REPORTER

The committee considered a paper by Gillian Martin, the EU Reporter for the Committee, in private at their meeting on 1 March 2017 and agreed further work with her.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

The committee took evidence on the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (Modification) Regulations [draft] from Mark McDonald, Minister for Childcare and Early years, and Jeff Maguire, Scottish Government at their meeting on 22 February 2017 and agreed the following draft order:

- S5M-03791 — Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (Modification) Regulations 2017 [draft]

The committee took evidence on the evidence on the Continuing Care (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 [draft] from Mark McDonald, Minister for Childcare and Early Years, Scottish Government and agreed the following draft order:

- S5M-03892 — Continuing Care (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 [draft]

The Committee heard evidence on the Registration of Independent Schools (Prescribed Person) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 [draft] from Shirley-Anne Somerville, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, Scottish Government at their meeting on 21 June 2017 and agreed the following draft order:

- S5M-06113— Registration of Independent Schools (Prescribed Person) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 [draft]

The committee considered and made no recommendations in relation to the following instruments during this period:

- Academic Awards and Distinctions (University of the Highlands and Islands) (Scotland) Order of Council 2017 (2017/146)
- The Education Authority Annual Plan Planning Period (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/165)
- Requirements for Teachers (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/170)
- The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Scotland) Amendment (SSI 2017/171)
- Education (Fees and Student Support) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/180)

REFERENCES

Education Scotland (2017), *Quality and Improvement in Scottish education 2012-2016*, Online at: <https://education.gov.scot/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/about-inspections-and-reviews/principles-and-frameworks/Quality%20and%20improvement%20in%20Scottish%20education>

[Accessed 27.10.17]

Redford, M. (2017) Education in the Scottish Parliament, *Scottish Educational Review*, 49 (1), 104-118