

SNCT STATEMENT ON TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

In recent years across Scottish Education the focus has been on empowering teachers and ensuring adequate time for teaching. Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) is about increasing professional autonomy and empowering teachers to improve the outcomes for pupils. All partners across Scottish Education, including the SNCT, seek to embed that ethos.

All teachers are required to meet and maintain the Professional Standards which are set by GTCS and give due regard to Professional Values enshrined by GTCS Code of Conduct. Teachers enjoy a position of professional trust and are accountable for the decisions and actions in their professional practice.

The teachers' agreement "A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century" (TP21) provided a commitment to enhance the professional role of teachers. This professionalism has been developed nationally through the SNCT, locally through LNCTs and through the increased professional autonomy provided by Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).

The SNCT continues to recognise that a climate of collegiality must underpin the enhanced professional role of teachers and that due regard to workload and contractual obligations should be given in order to allow them time to focus on their core role as leaders of learning. The SNCT believes that teachers are best placed to exercise professional judgement over how they manage and organise their time in school.

Teachers will not be asked to undertake administrative and non-teaching duties which are generally undertaken by support staff.

The Curriculum for Excellence Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy identified six main causes of excessive bureaucracy in the implementation of CfE and recommended a number of actions to address these to support teachers in the implementation of CfE.

The constituent parties to the SNCT commend the report and its recommended actions to teachers and the SNCT will consider taking forward the recommendation attributed to it through the work of the LNCT review working group.

The SNCT is committed to fulfilling its obligations to monitor teacher workload and situations in which teachers feel there is pressure to undertake tasks which they consider to be out with their remit. This will be reported to the SNCT through the Review of LNCTs Working Group. In addition, where difficulties arise on aspects of this agreement the SNCT will seek to assist to achieve resolution.

The SNCT will also require LNCTs to consider any circumstances relating to an inappropriate use of flexibility and to refer any unresolved disputes to the SNCT. Any such flexibility would be in accordance with the Code of Practice.

In addition the SNCT has played a key role in driving forward the teacher numbers commitment and the Scottish Government and COSLA, in recognition of the role of teachers, remain committed to this principle which has been formally agreed until March 2015.