

Report of the SNCT Support Group 21 April 2021

A meeting of the SNCT Support Group took place on 21 April 2021. The SNCT Support Group meets as required between meetings of the SNCT. The meeting was chaired by Des Morris, Joint Chair, SNCT Teachers' Side. The main actions items are noted below for the full SNCT.

1. Supply Teachers Portal – Update

The Group was provided with an update on the work on a new portal for the recruitment of all teachers following the decision by SEEMIS to discontinue this facility. This decision will have an impact on almost half the councils who currently use this facility when its functionality will cease in August 2021. COSLA representatives indicated that they were in discussions with other commercial companies to find a long term solution. It was reported that not all councils will use this new facility and that individual councils will decide on which system will be adopted to recruit supply teachers. The group noted that, arising from these developments the original ambition of the SNCT to have a national supply teachers' portal would not be realised. The group agreed to keep this matter on the agenda and seek a further update at the next meeting.

2. COVID-19 – Updates and Issues

2.1 Arrangements for teachers whose children are required to isolate

In the absence of a national agreement, the Group noted that discussions would have to take place locally. The Teachers' Side representatives asked employers to give sympathetic consideration to remote working requests from teachers whose children are required to isolate.

2.2 Protection of paused shielders and pregnant teachers

In the absence of a national agreement, the Group noted that discussions would have to take place locally. The Teachers' Side representatives stated that remote working should be the default position for pregnant workers who are 28 weeks pregnant and beyond or with underlying health conditions that place them at a greater risk of severe illness from coronavirus.

2.3 Covid Sickness Absence and Long-Covid

Following a lengthy discussion, the Joint Secretaries were asked to progress this matter further.

2.4 Compensatory Leave for self-isolation periods during school holidays

Following discussion, the Joint Secretaries were asked to progress this matter further.

3. The National Pay and Leave Specification.

COSLA representatives advised that the meeting of the Employers' Team and the COSLA Payroll Managers Group would take place on Monday 26 April. This Group also meet with representatives of SPDS (Society of Personnel and Development Scotland). The focus of these meetings would be sharing good practice and developing ways of mitigating the effects when teachers move post or gain promotion within their own councils in the same pay and leave year. Members of the SNCT Support Group were asked to outline their issues and send them to the Joint Secretaries.

4. Practical Subjects/Class Sizes

Following discussion, the Group agreed to return to these items at a future meeting. Future developments in these regards would be contingent on the outcome of the Scottish Parliament Elections 2021.

Yours sincerely

Simon Cameron (Employers' Side)
Louise Wilson (Teachers' Panel)
Stephanie Walsh (Scottish Government)

Joint Secretaries