PRE BUDGET SCRUTINY
Autumn 2016

EDUCATION SCOTLAND
Anonymous Submission

Education Scotland

CfE and National Qualifications

Many of the problems that we face in schools regarding bureaucracy and workload should never have been allowed to arise and should have been picked up during school inspections. Had the concerns of teachers regarding the introduction of CfE and NQ’s been listened to we would not have to the current situation with teachers not having time to deliver courses effectively. The use of unnecessarily verbose language, conflicting information and lack of direction has been instrumental in bringing schools to their knees.

SQA Assignments - Many pupil will have considerable support, parents or siblings with a qualification to help with the subject being researched, indeed, many may have a parent who is a teacher in the subject for which the research is being carried out. These pupils will have a considerable advantage over pupils who do not have similar support. Pupils without supportive parents or access to necessary research materials out with school are clearly disadvantaged. Why has SQA been allowed to include such unfair assessments in the first place?

Stress - Pupils are extremely stressed about the assessment burden. This was always going to be the case. It was clear to teachers - why was it not clear to ES?

The Curriculum

I worked with another colleague and a number of primary colleagues to develop a ‘Science Passport’ which was to help with the transition between primary and secondary science. We were asked to consider putting it on the NAR once it was developed and if we agreed to do so there was a grant available to assist with the printing of the materials. We agreed. Little did we know what we had let ourselves in for. The detail of the problems we faced in dealing with ES became unsurmountable and suffice to say that our materials are not on the NAR. The reasons given were:

- it wasn’t clear where “the children had ownership”
- “aspects of the journey” were not clear enough
- details of the “professional conversations undertaken” were not sufficiently clear

These resources are now being used both in our school and in other secondary schools within our authority and we have had a couple of requests for permission to
use them by schools out with our authority. They are still not on the NAR and so cannot be accessed nationally which is a pity.

**Inspections**

During a recent inspection, despite a lengthy and frank conversation with the lead inspector, none of my comments were taken on board in the final report.

The information from the Pre Inspection Questionnaire, was ignored when the writing the final report and the issues identified by staff were not, therefore addressed.

A number of issues during the inspection were not addressed including:

- **Resources** – lack of funding for capital equipment; less than half the money to run a department that is double the size than I had 15 years ago; no money to buy text books; lack of equality – some pupils will have considerable support at home (parents, access to text books, access to technology etc.), others will not;
- **SQA exams**
- **Bureaucracy and unnecessary workload** – both of which take time away from the focus of the job – learning and teaching.