EIS Submission to Education & Skills Committee: Pre-Budget Scrutiny

1. The EIS is Scotland’s largest teaching union, with over 60,000 in all sectors and all grades. The aims of the EIS are the promotion of sound learning and the advancement of the welfare of teachers in Scotland. The EIS is the third largest trade union in Scotland and is an active member of the STUC and TUC.

2. The EIS is pleased to be invited to give evidence to the Committee on pre-budget scrutiny.

Background

3. The EIS understand that Committee has written to the Deputy First Minister identifying the following areas that it wishes to focus on: Additional Support Needs in Education, Pupil Equity Funding and College and University Funding. The EIS also understands from the Committee’s letter to the DFM that the Committee has sought information on Early Years Learning and Childcare (ELC) funding. This EIS submission seeks to cover these areas.

Additional Support Needs in School Education

4. The EIS has consistently supported the presumption of mainstreaming; we welcome diversity in classrooms and in educational communities. However, the Institute has consistently argued, also, in relation to meeting the needs of children who require Additional Support for Learning (ASL), that the success of ASL legislation and of the associated processes is dependent on the provision of adequate resources to meet the needs of each individual learner. We are gravely concerned, therefore, by the under-resourcing of the legislative commitment to include children with a range of sometimes complex needs in mainstream settings.

5. The number of children in Scotland with identified ASN has increased significantly in the last decade, from 17,626 in 2008 to 101,558 in 2018. The 2018 figure equates to 25.4% of the total school roll, compared with only 4.8% in 2009. Of the 101,558 pupils with additional support needs reported in the 2018 school census, 98,905 (or 97%) spend all their time in mainstream classes. The proportion of pupils with additional support needs in 2008 who spent all of their time in mainstream classes was 88%.¹

6. Resolutions expressing concerns at ASN resourcing have been carried in the last three EIS AGMs, reflecting growing concern about inadequate ASN Provision. Based on a survey of EIS reps in early 2019, an EIS report on ASN provision was produced. Two tables of data are copied below along with the report’s conclusions.

¹ Pupil census: https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus18
Table 1: Total Number of Primary Teachers\textsuperscript{2}, Primary ASN Teacher Numbers 2008-2018\textsuperscript{3} & Primary ASN Pupils\textsuperscript{4}

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Primary Teachers</td>
<td>19,797</td>
<td>19,504</td>
<td>19,659</td>
<td>19,944</td>
<td>20,153</td>
<td>20,668</td>
<td>21,252</td>
<td>21,893</td>
<td>22,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Primary ASN Teachers</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Primary Pupils with ASN</td>
<td>34,165</td>
<td>50,985</td>
<td>62,572</td>
<td>69,513</td>
<td>74,327</td>
<td>79,839</td>
<td>88,517</td>
<td>94,125</td>
<td>101,558</td>
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Table 2: Total Number of Secondary Teachers\textsuperscript{5}, Secondary ASN Teacher Numbers\textsuperscript{6} & Number of Secondary ASN Pupils\textsuperscript{7}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014\textsuperscript{c}</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Number of Secondary Teachers</td>
<td>23,177</td>
<td>22,571</td>
<td>22,460</td>
<td>22,188</td>
<td>21,925</td>
<td>21,590</td>
<td>21,528</td>
<td>21,707</td>
<td>21,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Number of Secondary ASN Teachers</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Secondary Pupils with ASN</td>
<td>28,622</td>
<td>40,565</td>
<td>48,486</td>
<td>55,124</td>
<td>59,234</td>
<td>66,433</td>
<td>75,257</td>
<td>82,712</td>
<td>90,685</td>
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7. The major conclusions of the EIS Report on the Impact of Local Authority Budget Cuts on ASN provision were:

   a. The majority of school reps report significant difficulty obtaining support from external agencies and services.

   b. A majority of respondents (92.4%) stated that the funding cuts have adversely affected the support provided to ASN pupils.

   c. The Teacher Census shows that the number of primary ASN teachers has dropped by 45.5% and secondary ASN teachers dropped by 27.7% between 2010-2018. These significant drops come in a time when the number of ASN pupils in mainstream schools has tripled.

   d. Member responses report that funding cuts to local authority education budgets have led to less support for pupils from external agencies, fewer resources, fewer classroom support assistants and fewer ASN teachers. The effect of these cuts is reported to reduce specialist support and provision for some ASN pupils and may, in some cases, move the main responsibility of supporting ASN pupils to the classroom teacher.

\textsuperscript{2} https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/teachcenssuppdata Table 1.1 (2018)
\textsuperscript{3} https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/teachcenssuppdata Table 2.8 (2018)
\textsuperscript{4} https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus18 Table 1.5
\textsuperscript{5} https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/teachcenssuppdata Table 1.1 (2018)
\textsuperscript{6} https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/teachcenssuppdata Table 3.9 (2018)
\textsuperscript{7} https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus18 Table 1.5
e. The reduction of ASN support combined with the huge increase in the demand for ASN support has also had an adverse effect on teacher workload and well-being. An EIS survey from 2018 concluded that workload and stress arising from ASN was the third greatest stressor to teachers after pay and general workload.

8. A separate EIS survey of all members was also published in 2019. This identified that meeting the needs of children and young people with ASN is a major priority among members, with over 78% of respondents stating that they disagreed that there was adequate provision for children with additional support needs in their school. The survey also showed that ASN provision is one of teachers’ “top concerns”.

9. Teachers want to provide the best possible educational experience for all young people but years of austerity cuts to ASN resources and staffing have left schools struggling to meet the specialist requirements of pupils. Although the EIS welcomed the Government’s additional funding of £15m in order to employ 1,000 extra classroom assistants to work with ASN pupils, significantly more additional funding is still required.

10. The EIS has welcomed the Scottish Parliament’s decision for the Government to review mainstream ASN provision. The EIS believes that this review will inevitably confirm the need for additional funding for ASN provision in order that the aims of the ASL Act, the Equality Act, the UNCRC, CfE and GIRFEC can be properly realised.

Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

11. The Pupil Equity Funding is allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap. Around 95% of schools in Scotland have been allocated funding.

12. The EIS carried out a survey of all its school representatives earlier this year and the major conclusions are set out below for the Committee:

   a. Almost all (96%) respondents stated that their school had received PEF Funding and 88% of responders stated they knew what the PEF funding had been used for.

   b. The survey showed that the most common use of PEF funding was: “Purchasing equipment and materials (inc breakfast clubs)” (61% of responders), followed by (in decreasing order); “Employing existing school support or admin staff for additional hours”; “Employing existing teaching staff for additional hours”; “Purchasing additional services from external sources – e.g. sports coaching”; “Employing additional support or admin staff”; “Employing additional principal teacher”; “Employing additional main grade teachers” and “Other”.

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8 https://www.eis.org.uk/Research/MemberSurvey
c. The majority (62.7%) of responders stated that PEF funding had been targeted on children from the most deprived families.

d. Question 5 of the survey shows that 26% of respondents felt that the PEF funding had been successful in raising attainment for pupils from the most deprived families, with 31% stating that it had not successfully raised standards. The largest group (42.6%) of respondents stated that they did not know whether PEF had raised attainment – some saying that it was too soon to measure the impact of the PEF funding.

13. The EIS recognises the mixed nature of the feedback and believes that this reflects early PEF outcomes in schools, not all of which are measurable. Whilst, the EIS has previously welcomed the PEF funding as a source of funding for schools, it does not wish "core" education funding to be reduced in real terms in order to fund national initiatives.

**Early Years Learning & Childcare (ELC)**

14. The EIS supports the expansion of ELC provision to 1,140 hours for 3-5 year olds by 2020 and the associated funding to make this happen. The EIS is of the view that early years education should be funded and delivered on the same basis as Scotland’s highly successful comprehensive education system - publicly funded, publicly provided, and free at the point of use.

15. The EIS view, like that of the wider STUC, is that the highest quality of ELC provision lies in local authority run nurseries where children receive the benefits of higher levels of skill among staff, more of whom are qualified to degree level, and where children are more likely to have access to a qualified teacher - as well as access to a suitable outdoor play area and play equipment.

16. It should be noted that access to qualified teachers is already falling within the early years and childcare system with a 40% reduction in ELC teacher numbers within early years settings between 2012-2018. There is now also considerable variability across and within local authorities in term of children's access to a teacher. While the Scottish Government has committed to ensuring only undefined 'access to a teacher', some local authorities, with legal impunity, have been removing teachers from nursery classrooms to reduce costs.

17. In line with Education Scotland’s own evidence, the EIS is of the view that the pedagogical input of qualified degree-educated teacher professionals, as part of a pre-5 workforce, is an essential ingredient to the CfE 3-18 curriculum, if it is to lead to more equitable outcomes as intended.

18. As reiterated within the findings of independent research by The Child's Curriculum Group, led by Professor Aline-Wendy Dunlop of the University of Strathclyde, 'Sustaining the Ambition: The Contribution of GTCS-Registered

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Teachers in Early Years\textsuperscript{10}, qualified teachers are central to supporting the education of early learners. The report concluded that:

- At a time when learning in the early years is recognised to be so critical, the numbers of GTCS-registered teachers in Early Learning and Childcare services is diminishing.
- Although their roles are fluctuating, changing and sometimes not well understood by others, specialist GTCS-registered nursery teachers are an essential part of leadership in the ELC workforce and bridge the early level of curriculum.

19. Our evidence suggests that the discussion of increased specialism should be re-visited, and at the very least:

- The models of teacher role should be expanded to reflect the new contributions some teachers are already making;
- Local Authorities and other employers should develop robust support systems in the light of the reported evidence that too solitary a role leads to a dip in commitment and confidence;
- GTCS should collaborate with Schools of Education to strengthen the early years component of teacher education, recruit positively for new postgraduate routes and address issues of teacher placement and the probationary year;
- With the small numbers of teachers employed in early years pre-school settings further attrition is not an option if policy objectives are to be achieved.

20. The Scottish Government states that: "the single most important driver of the quality of a child's ELC experience is a high-quality workforce."

21. NHS Health Scotland's review of 'Childcare Quality and Children's Outcomes' found that those settings with access to higher qualified staff, such as teachers or those holding an early childhood qualification, were more likely to offer high-quality experiences for children.

22. In terms of funding the expansion of ELC, the EIS notes the SPICe Briefing on ELC expansion\textsuperscript{11} that was published earlier this year:

A new, multi-year, funding package for ELC was agreed between the Scottish Government and COSLA in April 2018. Under the agreement local authorities are set to receive recurring revenue funding of £567 million per annum by 2021/22. In her statement to the Scottish Parliament on 1 May 2018, the Minister for Children and Young People Maree Todd MSP, said that this agreement: "will bring annual public spend on early learning and childcare to £990 million." This settlement was confirmed in the 2019/20 budget.

\textsuperscript{10} \text{https://www.eis.org.uk/Education-And-Professional-Publications/EYC-Study-2016}
23. The same briefing outlines the increase in staffing required to deliver ELC expansion:

*The Scottish Government anticipates that the majority of the additional workforce required to deliver the expanded hours will be at the practitioner grade (between 7,000-10,500 staff). In addition, the Scottish Government estimates 900 new managers will be required but assumes that these posts will be filled by practitioners up-skilling.*

*The Scottish Government estimates that the majority of new staff will be required in local authority settings, suggesting that the local authority ELC workforce will need to increase by between 65% to 100% (relative to October 2017).*

24. The EIS restates its concerns that the ELC expansion is not going to include a proportionate increase in qualified, GTCS registered nursery teachers and that this will reduce even further pupil access to a teacher. This will, no doubt, adversely affect the delivery of the CfE to 3-5-year-old pupils.

25. It is worth noting that at the most recent International Summit on the teaching Profession, Scottish Government and the EIS made a joint commitment to ensure that the role of education was sufficiently central to the planned expansion of pre-5 services. We would welcome evidence of this in terms of the projected areas of expenditure.

**Further & Higher Education**

26. The Scottish Funding Council’s Annual Report and Accounts 2018-19 highlights the successes in the further and higher education sectors in Scotland, quoting statistics which demonstrate an increase in the number of students progressing to positive destinations, as well as providing evidence of greater learning opportunities for learners across Scotland. Both the college and university sectors exceeded student activity targets and provide a commitment to ongoing work to address the attainment gap. Central to the performance analysis contained in this report is the hard work and commitment of staff in Scotland’s colleges and universities in seeking to implement key governmental policies and deliver successful outcomes for learners.

27. However, if the educational ambitions which are fundamental to the Scottish Government’s strategic priorities are to be met and developed, increased investment in both sectors is essential. The Audit Scotland ‘Scotland’s Colleges 2019’ and ‘Finances of Scottish Universities’ Reports clearly outline the challenges facing both sectors in terms of the ongoing delivery of these policy initiatives and in relation to the financial sustainability of many of the individual colleges and universities. Both Reports demonstrate the imperative for immediate action and investment.

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12 Scottish Funding Council Annual Report and Accounts 2018-19, page 3
28. Whilst the EIS acknowledges the investment which the Scottish Government has made in the college sector through national bargaining and the harmonisation of staff terms and conditions, it is clear that if the good work and positive outcomes, which are currently being delivered in the sector are to continue, then further investment is required.

29. The Audit Scotland Report clearly outlines the widening gap between income and expenditure in the college sector and highlights the significant concerns which exist around the financial health of individual colleges. In 2017-18, college income dropped in real terms by 1.9% whilst expenditure continued to rise in real terms by 0.3%\(^13\). Eighteen of the twenty incorporated colleges reported operating deficits, with the sector’s overall operating deficit increasing to £29.8 million\(^14\). Capital funding is also problematic, with allocations being insufficient to address colleges’ maintenance requirement\(^15\). The Report explores the risks associated with this and it is clear that further investment is needed to ensure that the colleges of the future are fit for the needs of staff and students alike.

30. The EIS is particularly concerned to note the reference in the ‘Scotland’s Colleges’ report to the suggestion that financial deficits are being addressed with a focus on staff reductions and the operation of Voluntary Severance Schemes\(^16\). This is particularly concerning when consideration is given to the funds currently held in Arms’ Length Foundations (£38 million)\(^17\). This funding could be more appropriately invested in the college sector and we are pleased to note that the Ministerial Letter of Guidance to the SFC refers to a review of the use of these funds, as well as calling for restraint in the pay settlements and pay packages for senior staff.

31. The Audit Scotland Report on the Finances of Scottish Universities highlights the contribution made by universities to the 11 National Performance Framework outcomes and the ‘valuable contribution that universities make to economic growth, as well as the wider social benefits of university education’\(^18\). However, it concludes that the Scottish Government must be aware of the challenges the sector faces as well as the risks that may affect delivery of its strategic objectives.

32. With a 11.6% real terms’ cut to higher education resource funding since 2014-15\(^19\), it is perhaps little surprise that Audit Scotland reports that more than half of all universities were in deficit in 2017-18\(^20\). Whilst the sector overall is in good financial health, there is significant variation across institutions with modern or post-92 universities being more reliant on SFC funding and having limited opportunity to generate additional income\(^21\). The divergence between these

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\(^{13}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Scotland’s Colleges 2019’, Part 1, pages 6-7

\(^{14}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Scotland’s Colleges 2019’, Part 1, pages 6-7

\(^{15}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Scotland’s Colleges 2019’, Part 1, pages 15-16

\(^{16}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Scotland’s Colleges 2019’, Part 1, pages 15

\(^{17}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Scotland’s Colleges 2019’, Part 1, pages 11

\(^{18}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Finances of Scottish Universities’, Part 3, page 35

\(^{19}\) Universities Scotland, ‘The Future of Scotland’s Universities’, page 2

\(^{20}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Finances of Scottish Universities’, Part 1, page 9

\(^{21}\) Audit Scotland, ‘Finances of Scottish Universities’, Part 1, page 9
institutions and the ancient universities who can draw on reserves is clear. The EIS believes that dedicated investment in these institutions is essential if they are to continue to deliver their pivotal role in the provision of higher education and in the furtherance of the widening access agenda.

33. There are a number of challenges facing both further and higher education; the potential impact of Brexit, the costs of pension contributions, the potential impact of the Augar Report and investment in the estate. However, staff remain the key asset in the delivery of education and with staff in higher education seeing their salaries fall by over 20% in real terms in the last ten years, fair and competitive remuneration must be factored into the budget settlement. Our members want to continue delivering the high-quality product for which Scottish education is renowned but this requires investment. Without sufficient investment, the continued contribution which colleges and universities make to individual learners and to society more generally is in jeopardy.

**Conclusion**

34. The Committee is invited to reflect on this report and recommend that the education budget for 2019-20 is increased in real terms to address the challenges set out in the above areas.