

Report of the SNCT Support Group Meeting 23 September 2025

The SNCT Support Group meets as required between meetings of the SNCT. A meeting was held on 23 September 2025 and was chaired by Des Morris, Joint Chair, SNCT Teachers' Side.

The main items are noted below for the full SNCT.

1. Pay Update 2025/26

The Chair reported that the most recent pay offer had been unanimously rejected by the Teachers' Side on 28 August 2025. Arrangements were currently in hand to convene a meeting of the Extended Joint Chairs.

2. Reduction in Class Contact Time.

The Chair reported that a Teachers' Side paper had been tabled at the meeting of the SNCT RCCT Sub-group on 18 September 2025. There was a further meeting of the sub-group scheduled for 30 September 2025 at which it was expected that there would be a response from COSLA and Scottish Government to the Teachers' Side paper.

COSLA Joint Secretary advised that the issues of RCCT and use of time were on the agenda for the forthcoming meeting of COSLA Leaders on 26 September 2025 and that there may be a further update after the meeting.

3. ASN Working Group

The Chair reported that at the meeting of this group on 18 September 2025 a paper submitted by the Teachers' Side setting out proposed new wording for the Appendix 2.9 and the rationale for the position was briefly discussed. COSLA and Scottish Government required more time to consider the paper.

COSLA secretariat thanked Teachers' Side for the paper advising that part of the work to be undertaken was to look at potential unintended consequences of the changes proposed in the Teachers' Side paper.

The Chair confirmed that it was the view of the Teachers' Side that there should be a maximum class size of 6 in Special Schools and Units, the rationale for this having been set out in previous meetings of the working group.

It was noted that there was likely to be a further meeting of the group set for late October/early November 2025.

4. Job Sizing Review Group

The Chair reported that this group had met on 9 September 2025 to consider the outstanding matters remaining to be addressed following the agreement on a number of matters at the SNCT meeting on 14 May 2025. A further meeting would be arranged if necessary.

5. Pay and Leave Specification Group

Teachers' Side secretariat reported on the meeting of this group that took place on 9 September 2025. Work on calculators for new starts and leavers was underway and similar was planned for maternity/family leave calculations. It was intended that these calculators would be available through the SNCT website. Work was also being undertaken to produce a standard template for the calendars which would have to be available to enable teachers to make use of the calculators. In addition, a frequently asked questions document was being developed. The group had also concluded that joint legal advice would be required on the issue of calculations currently undertaken for teachers who gained promotion during the school year. This matter would be discussed further at a future meeting of the SNCT Joint Secretaries.

It was also reported that SPPA members on the group had concluded that as there would still be new start and leaver calculations the pension issue previously identified would require a pensions fix and this matter would be raised with the Strategic Advisory Board.

COSLA secretariat added that the calculator used for the calculations in the pay and leave specification would continue to be 1/235 and the group had identified that clearer and consistent communication would be critical in resolving some of the issues that had been identified previously.

It was noted that the group would meet again on 11 November 2025.

6. Position Statements from Employers and Scottish Government on Miscarriage Special Leave, Paid Leave for Fertility Treatment and Supply Teachers' Pay

The Chair reported that these matters had been raised by Teachers Side at earlier meetings of the SNCT Support Group. At the time these were presented the response from Scottish Government had been supportive and the response from the Employers' Side was that they would wish to consider the matters further. The Chair sought discussion on the matters.

On the issues of special leave for miscarriage and paid leave for fertility treatment Scottish Government Joint Secretary confirmed that Scottish Government were supportive, and ministers had asked officials to do what they could to support the proposals. On the issue of pay for supply teachers Scottish Government Joint Secretary advised that Scottish Government did not have a particular view on this matter. Scottish Government Joint Secretary confirmed that it was the intention to provide a written position statement.

COSLA Joint Secretary advised that the employers' position was that the issues of special leave for miscarriage and paid leave for fertility treatment were positive things that employers were keen to look at but that there was not capacity to do that at present due to other ongoing issues currently being worked on. COSLA Joint Secretary pointed out that there would be funding issues that would need to be

considered. In addition, there were some local arrangements already in place for this leave which would need to be examined. There would need to be further research on cost implications and the impact on local arrangements which would require to be presented to COSLA Leaders before a COSLA position could be established.

On the issue of pay for supply teachers COSLA Joint Secretary advised that there would need to be further work on the arrangements for Supply Teachers, particularly in light of the forthcoming Employer Rights Bill, and that pay could be part of those considerations. There remained at present an issue with capacity as mentioned earlier.

The Chair welcomed the contributions from Scottish Government and COSLA on these issues reporting that his own local authority had recently implemented arrangements for both leave categories covered above. The Chair confirmed that Teachers' Side also believed the provision of paid leave was essential, but these should be national provisions set out in the SNCT Handbook. In addition, this needed to happen as soon as possible to provide consistency and equity for colleagues across Scotland.

Scottish Government Joint Secretary added that Scottish Government also had capacity issues and that they too would need to do further work on costings but at the moment would work to provide a position statement reflecting the commitment to work to support the proposals.

7. Change of title from Instrumental Music Instructor to Music Instrumental Teachers

The Chair opened discussion on this matter pointing out that this had been brought to SNCT Support Group as discussion between GTCS, Scottish Government and the EIS regarding the implementation of the manifesto commitment to work to achieve GTCS registration for Instrumental Music Instructors had concluded that a change of title would help to move this matter forward. It was the view of the Teachers' Side that a change of title would not have further implications for this group of staff in terms of their conditions of service as set out in the SNCT Handbook.

Scottish Government Joint Secretary advised that the issue of GTCS registration was currently being considered by colleagues within Scottish Government who were working with stakeholders to develop a route map to registration. Scottish Government Joint Secretary further advised that it was his intention to write to Joint Secretaries setting out the current position in terms of where Scottish Government was with this matter and ongoing work to be undertaken. It was expected that at some point this matter would become a matter that required to be addressed through SNCT.

The Chair advised that the SNCT Support Group would await the letter and that the item should remain as standing item on the agenda at this point.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Bain (Employers' Side)
Stuart Brown (Teachers' Panel)
David Leitch (Scottish Government)
Joint Secretaries