

Lynne Neagle MS
Cabinet Secretary for Education

29 September 2025

Follow-up to teacher recruitment and retention evidence session

Dear Lynne,

Thank you to you and your officials for giving evidence on the teacher recruitment and retention. It was a really informative session, and will be very helpful to our deliberations.

As we mentioned during the session, there were some questions which we did not have chance to cover, and we felt could be answered as effectively in writing. There was also an agreement to investigate what data, if any, is available in relation to class sizes in secondary schools. I would therefore be grateful if you could respond to the following questions:

1. The Committee has heard that there are issues for how ITE providers can plan provision given the time taken between UCAS offering a place at ITE and a student's acceptance. The Committee has also heard that, in order to apply for a postgraduate course, students have to access the undergraduate part of the UCAS website. Are you aware of these issues, have you had any discussions with UCAS about them, and to what extent are you able to influence them?
2. The Committee has heard concerns about routes into school leadership and the NPQH in relation to the cap on numbers and whether it is broad enough. Are you aware of these concerns and how can they be addressed?
3. Estyn's evidence said that there are no national approaches to identify future leaders and provide pathways to leadership for those early in their career. To what extent does this impact on the recruitment and retention of school leaders and in what ways do you see the Welsh Government have a role in improving this? During the evidence session you referenced the work Dysgu will be doing to review the existing leadership programmes with a view to developing provision that meets the needs of potential future leaders. Do

you know what the timeline is for this initial work, and will it inform the development of the Strategic Education Workforce Plan?

4. The Committee has heard that there may be an under-representation of teachers with disabilities within the workforce. To what extent do you agree with this and have you considered any incentives or other ways to support more disabled people to become teachers?
5. The Education Workforce Council told the Committee that the teaching workforce in Wales is supplemented by those who have gained their PGCE in England. Given they would not have been exposed to the new curriculum in Wales, do you have any concerns about how this will impact its successful implementation?
6. During the session, you briefly referred to teaching assistants sometimes covering lessons. To what extent do you understand the scale of the evidence that they and HLTAs are being asked to teach classes? How can we better understand this and address associated concerns?

We are aiming to publish our report shortly after Christmas which we hope will be helpful in terms of the development of the Strategic Education Workforce Plan. As a result, it would be helpful if we could have your response by 3 November. If you envisage any challenges with this date, please contact Naomi Stocks, Clerk.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS

Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.