

Children taking fewer subjects in school under the SNP

13 Jun 2019



Pupils in Scotland are on average taking fewer subjects at s4 level now than when the SNP's Curriculum for Excellence was introduced, it has been revealed.

Research by the Scottish Conservatives has shown there are now 165 schools in Scotland where pupils take six subjects or less.

In 2013, that figure was only 46.

In contrast, the number of schools where pupils take seven or more has almost halved in that timeframe, from 308 to 182.

Nicola Sturgeon was challenged on the issue at First Minister's Questions today.

But in response to Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson, she said discussing the issue was simply "talking down Scottish education".

That follows education secretary John Swinney's view that critics of the SNP's performance on education were merely embarking on a "moan-fest".

The statistics revealed today have also been backed by Professor Jim Scott, an expert on subject choice.

He said: "Just over 200 schools have declines, or significant declines, in the number of entries, where-as just over 50 demonstrate an increase."

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"If we're going to improve education in this country we need to accept the evidence.

"That evidence shows a child in s4 is, on average, taking fewer subjects than they would have done just a few years ago.

"But this exchange again proved this SNP government is simply unwilling to act.

"If both Nicola Sturgeon and John Swinney don't start listening, the education system under their control will continue to go downhill.

"This is the consequence of schools simply not having enough teachers or resources to deliver the world-class levels of education Scots deserve.

“Nicola Sturgeon should spend less effort trying to shoot the messenger, and more time acting on the evidence.”

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12 Jun 2019



The SNP Climate Change Secretary has today failed to support more ambitious targets for energy efficient homes that would have helped to combat fuel poverty.

During a Ministerial Statement on greenhouse gas emissions, Roseanna Cunningham would not back an EPC target of C or lower for all residential properties by 2030.

This comes despite the parliament voting in agreement of the amendment, put forward by Scottish Conservative MSP Alexander Burnett in May last year.

The Cabinet Secretary refused to acknowledge the positive impact this would have on fuel poverty and instead made claims that increasing energy efficiency would disadvantage people.

On multiple occasions, Mr Burnett has called for the Scottish Government to follow the will of the parliament and implement these targets.

Mr Burnett, on receiving yet another refusal for support from the Minister, said:

“This is hugely disappointing and irresponsible of the SNP government, but comes as little surprise.

“Acting on this amendment would greatly benefit those living in fuel poverty, and we need to see action by 2030.

“This parliament has taken measures to react to the global climate emergency we are all responsible for.

“The SNP are quick to shout about climate change and Scotland’s plans to live more sustainably, yet refuse to take significant action to ensure Scotland is

progressing into a more energy efficient and sustainable future.

“Scotland has the potential to lead the world in living more sustainably, but this SNP government is holding us back”.

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SNP ‘complacent’ on serious organised crime

10 Jun 2019



The Scottish Conservatives have accused the SNP of complacency in the face of a rising threat of organised crime in Scotland.

Three Scottish Parliamentary written answers have highlighted the SNP’s current lack of activity on tackling organised crime.

The answers show that last year only 79 charges were reported to the Crown Office for involvement in or failure to report organised crime, down from a high of 212 in 2014-15. In addition, only 4 people were convicted last year under the same sections.

At the same time, a report from the National Crime Agency and Police Scotland has said that the threat of organised crime is increasing, with 164 known organised crime groups (OCGs) comprising 3,282 members under investigation.

The answers also highlight that over the last 4 years there have only been 14 specific training sessions on anti-money laundering delivered to 6 credit unions, which brings the total ‘trained’ credit unions to only 38 out of 110 total. This is despite a pledge to roll out this training to all credit unions.

Lastly, the Scottish Government has failed to publish an annual report on its serious organised crime strategy since 2016.

Liam Kerr, Scottish Conservative shadow justice secretary said:

“These answers highlight the SNP’s utter complacency on organised crime.

“We know that the number of criminals involved in this kind of activity is in the thousands, so this level of SNP inaction is baffling.

“It beggars belief that while gangs are operating at this level, the number

of charges and convictions is going down.

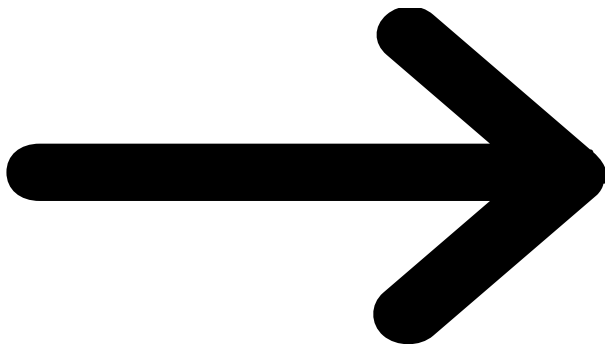
“The SNP’s failure to ensure Police Scotland has enough frontline officers clearly has a negative effect on their ability to catch and prosecute these highly organised criminals.

“These answers totally undermine any SNP claim that they are taking this threat seriously.”

[SNP criticised for “moanifesto” of failures over 12 years in government](#)

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9 Jun 2019



With 100 weeks to go until the Holyrood 2021 election, the SNP government has been slammed for a “moanifesto” written during “12 years of misrule”.

Pressed by Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson at this week’s FMQs, SNP deputy John Swinney dismissed national concern over multi-level classrooms as a “moan-fest”.

It followed evidence that more than a hundred Scottish schools are being forced to teach three levels of pupil at once amid teacher shortages.

Last night, Scottish Tory deputy leader Jackson Carlaw criticised Mr Swinney’s “arrogant” performance while Nicola Sturgeon attended D-Day 75th anniversary events.

And he pointed to dozens of SNP failings – dubbing it their moanifesto – showing there is “plenty to complain about” on their mishandling of Scotland’s economy, education system, frontline policing, council funding,

the NHS, housebuilding, agriculture, railways, and devolved welfare.

He said:

“John Swinney’s embarrassing stand-in act last week summed up this SNP government – arrogant, defensive and utterly in denial.

“As this manifesto shows, after 12 years of SNP misrule, there’s plenty to complain about.

“Ruth Davidson’s Scottish Conservatives won’t be silenced by SNP bullying.

“We will continue to call out our SNP incompetence whenever we see it.”