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Nicola Sturgeon today refused to take responsibility for Scotland's falling education standards – 24 hours after her education secretary admitted SNP cuts “probably” went too far.

At First Minister's Questions, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson highlighted how the SNP's “boom and bust” approach to teacher training meant schools across the country were struggling to recruit staff.

John Swinney conceded this was the fault of the SNP's workforce planning, which previously saw too many teachers being trained in relation to demand.

However, the First Minister instead tried to shift the blame to the UK Government, even though education is entirely devolved to Holyrood.

Ms Sturgeon also failed to condemn a series of tweets by SNP MSP John Mason, suggesting Scotland had “moved on” from the need for high standards of literacy and numeracy.

He also claimed surgeons don't need to spell, IT workers shouldn't bother with grammar, and that there was too much emphasis on “the academic” in the past.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

“The education secretary admitted the SNP was to blame for a shortage of teachers – but today Nicola Sturgeon wanted to put that blame on everyone else.

“If the First Minister is serious about sorting out education, she has to address what's gone wrong on the SNP's watch.

“Instead, she wants people to forget about a decade of failure, forget about the mess the Scottish Government has made of education, and forget about the children who've been failed by the SNP.

“And instead of facing up to the consequences of SNP failings, Nicola Sturgeon wants to lay the blame at everyone else's door.

“That's not competent government and, if John Mason's views on education are

anything to go by, it explains exactly why Scottish education under the SNP is in such a mess right now.”

John Swinney admitted yesterday the SNP “probably” went too far in cutting teacher training numbers:

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/scotland/cutbacks-in-scottish-teacher-training-went-too-far-swinney-admits-sl60sz63m>

Student leaders previously called for an end to “boom and bust” training numbers:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/education/teacher-training-places-are-cut-by-40-1-789809>