

No to separation, yes to education

30 Mar 2017



The number of supply teachers in Scotland's schools has plummeted across the country under the SNP, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

During First Minister's Questions, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson revealed that in council regions all over Scotland, the banks of supply teachers who can fill in to help schools are significantly down on the start of the decade.

Following a Freedom of Information request, it emerged that:

- The number of supply teachers in Glasgow has fallen from 2396 in 2011-12 to 1391 in the current year.
- In Edinburgh, reserves have halved – from 305 to just 165.
- In the Scottish Borders the numbers have gone down from 346 to 217.

It comes as teaching leaders warn that the short supply of teachers across Scotland is now reaching critical levels – and Education Scotland said this week that the recruitment crisis is damaging the quality of education.

The lack of supply teachers means that many schools are struggling to maintain staffing numbers when permanent teachers are unavailable.

Earlier this month, it emerged that Blairgowrie High School put out a call to parents to see if any were able to help teach maths.

Following First minister's Questions today, Ruth Davidson said:

"We know the lack of teachers in schools is damaging the quality of education on offer to children. That's the view of school inspectors and teacher leaders.

"Now we learn today that the number of supply teachers giving crucial back up to schools is nose-diving right across Scotland too.

"For parents who just want their children to get a decent standard of education, it is deeply worrying.

"This failure to properly staff our classrooms is the result of ten years of neglect by this incompetent SNP Government.

"We face a crisis in classrooms across Scotland and Nicola Sturgeon must sort out her priorities. She said education would come first.

"Instead, her government has delayed its education reforms and failed to propose a single debate on education since October last year.

"Today Nicola Sturgeon claimed she 'delivers'. Yet this is the First Minister

whose government hasn't passed a substantive bill in over a year in office and – since last summer – has spent a staggering 43 hours debating the constitution.

“The First Minister must think again. No to separation – yes to education.”

Please see the figures on supply teachers here:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Supply-Teachers-UPDATE.xlsx>