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Joe Fitzpatrick
Convener
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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20 October 2022

Dear Joe,

Thank you for your letter of 27 September 2022 regarding support for ESOL/EAL speakers.

As the committee will be aware, education authorities and other agencies have duties under the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (as amended) to identify, provide for and review the additional support needs of their pupils. This includes those who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). EAL has been specifically identified as a potential additional support need within the Act's Statutory Code of Practice.

Education Scotland have confirmed that, in most cases, universal support for learners who have EAL is provided in early learning and school settings by early learning practitioners, teachers and classroom support staff. Similarly, in most cases, teachers with EAL pupils are provided with training to ensure that these learners are included as fully as possible in every lesson.

This training is often provided at the beginning of the school session, with supplementary inputs throughout the course of the year, to ensure that teachers are sufficiently upskilled to support EAL learners. In some local authorities this support is supplemented by bespoke inputs from a visiting EAL specialist.

The committee may also be aware that we are publishing an updated Additional Support for Learning action plan later this year. This updated action plan will detail both the completed actions and outline the work we intend to take forward over the next 18 months to improve the support offered to all children and young people.

I hope the committee finds this information useful.



SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

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