

Ms Anne Glennie



Ar faidhle/Our ref: 2015/0011652
14 April 2015

Dear Ms Glennie

Thank you for your letter of 17 March to Angela Constance MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, regarding the teaching of reading in schools in Scotland. I have been asked to reply on her behalf.

It may be helpful to explain that the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), as the independent, self-regulatory body for the teaching profession, has the legislative authority for determining what constitutes a qualification for teaching and also setting the requirements of what must be provided by universities in teacher training courses. The process is that they scrutinise the content, nature and duration of those programmes and then if satisfied, they will formally accredit and approve the programme that the university has brought forward. The reason that this is the responsibility of the GTCS, is to ensure that a newly qualified teacher has the full range of professional skills and abilities to carry out their duties and in effect to meet the Standard for Provisional Registration which is the first in the GTCS's suite of professional standards for being registered to teach.

The GTCS have been independent of the Government since April 2012 and so you will appreciate that as a separate entity, the Scottish Ministers are unable to intervene in their processes and this would include the content of teacher education programmes.

The recently announced Programme for Government signalled a sharpened focus on the need for improvement in educational attainment and reducing the gap. That is why we recently launched the Scottish Attainment Challenge, backed by the £100m Attainment Scotland Fund over four years to drive forward improvements on educational outcomes in Scotland's most disadvantaged communities. The fund will be initially targeted at schools in Local Authorities with the biggest concentration of households in deprived areas. It will focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing in the Primary Sector to support children and young people in Scotland's most disadvantaged communities to achieve their potential.



I hope this reply is helpful.

Helen Reid
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