

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Dyslexia
held in the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 7th December 2016.**

1. **Present:** Margaret Mitchell MSP, , Donald Cameron MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP, Tom Arthur MSP
Rosemary Bowe, Nita Redfearn, Aileen Orr, Julie Ross, Cathy Mcgee, Gillian Evans, Andy Laverty, Lynn Dobbie, Joe Moran, Annette Foulcer, Mary Evans, Dianne Smith, Helen Fleming, Jennie Guise, Monica Gribben, Jay Kirkland, Margaret Crombie, Martin Davies, Stuart Lucas, Hamish Hunter, Annie Watson, Rosemary Burke, Margaret Crankshaw, Hazel McPake,
2. **Apologies:** Oliver Mundell MSP, Elaine Smith MSP, Clare Haughey MSP, Mike Gibson, Clare Slipper, Julia Trotter, Rose Lea, Marie Lockhart
3. **Minutes of last meeting:**
Minutes approved by Mary Evans, Seconded by Rosemary Bowe
4. **Business arising from last meeting**
There was no business arising from the previous minutes.
5. **Making Sense of Dyslexia Review**
Presentation by Fran Ranaldi, Development Officer, Education Scotland

Deborah Walker, Scottish Government Wellbeing Unit gave a brief introduction to the progress of the Working Group established to respond to the recommendations of the review published in May 2015.

Fran Ranaldi provided background information about the review and highlighted three key actions which had provided the framework for the work being undertaken:
 1. The establishment of a multi - agency working group (including representation from the Cross Party Group) which had developed work streams to address each of the five key recommendations;
 - Access to up-to- date practical advice for schools, learners and parents;

- High Quality Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) at school, local authority and national levels related to meeting the needs of learners with dyslexia;
 - ITE/ Postgraduate course content to include dyslexia and additional support needs;
 - Action to improve the quality of educational outcomes for learners with dyslexia (including Dyslexia Friendly Schools/ Inclusive Practice);
 - Improved availability and use of reliable information/data on learners needs, development and achievements
2. 23 month jointly funded secondment (December 2015 – October 2017)
 3. Re-development of the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit for teachers and parents

Fran provided information about a draft framework being developed which included training modules for dyslexia and inclusive practice from introduction level to GTC recognised.

She highlighted that the approach being taken to inform the work included a pilot schemes in a number of local authority areas across Scotland. These pilots focused on a range of issues identified in the review including:

- Parental Engagement
- Learner Engagement
- Early identification, monitoring and support
- Career long professional learning
- Curriculum accessibility and IT
- Literacy

The presentation also focused on Assessment and that assessment was not a single test and that a 'screener' was not a complete assessment. In addition the point was made that an assessment does not need to be carried out by an educational psychologist within the 3 – 18 school setting.

There followed an emotional discussion about the current position within local authorities regarding teachers being instructed to undertake assessments without adequate training and the lack of monitoring of the

quality of assessors and assessments being made. Examples were also given of local authorities instructing staff not to use the term 'dyslexia'.

The issue of schools telling parents not to label their children with dyslexia was also raised and the potential damage that could cause with regards to data on dyslexia and in denying children the appropriate targeted resources.

The CPG was gravely concerned about the reduction in additional support for children and young people with dyslexia. It was reported that across Scotland local authorities expenditure cuts were having a serious impact on the lives and opportunities of those with dyslexia and other additional needs.

This was considered by the CPG members as a very serious issue and one which required to be further explored. It was agreed that it would be useful to seek the views of the General Teaching Council for Scotland and this issue be seen as a priority for the next GPG meeting.

In addition, members were made aware of the Scottish Government's consultation on the future governance of education.

The Convenor thanked Fran for her presentation and reinforced the points made in the CPG submission to the review that the outcome of the work being undertaken had not only to address 'processes' within schools and local authorities but also evidence measures being developed to address issues around 'cultures and relationships' and the continuing inconsistencies within and across local authorities.

6. Membership Subscription

Members were reminded to pay their £5.00 annual subscription towards costs of refreshments at meetings and stationery.

7. Date of Next meeting

To be confirmed for February 2017.