

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Dyslexia
held in the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 2nd March 2016.**

1. **MSP's Present:** Margaret Mitchell MSP, Stuart MacMillan MSP,
2. **MSP Apologies:** Elaine Smith, Claudia Beamish

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting** held on 9th December 2015

Approved: Lynne Dobbie Seconded: Margaret Crombie

4. **Business arising:**

All business was included in the agenda.

5. **Review of the work of the Cross Party Group**

The Chair and Secretary had prepared and circulated a 'Legacy Paper' describing the work of the group during the life of the Parliament outlining the subjects discussed at each meeting and the key issues that had been raised.

The group were reminded of the purpose of Cross Party Groups and the priority themes previously agreed as the focus of the Group's deliberations, namely:

1. The impact of dyslexia on education and learning;
2. The impact of dyslexia on health and wellbeing;
3. The impact of dyslexia on behaviours;
4. The impact of dyslexia on transitions, training and employment.

Subjects covered over the Parliament included:

September 2011 – Dyslexia within Scottish Prisons highlighting the challenges faced by the Scottish Prison Service and prisoners and the positive work being developed in partnership with Dyslexia Scotland.

November 2011 – Cross Party Group hosted a reception in the Parliament with Sir Jackie Stewart as the key speaker.

January 2012 – Presentations on Educational research involving primary age pupils.

March 2012 – Presentations by Skills Development Scotland regarding support for dyslexic adults in training and employment.

May 2012 – Focus on the impact of dyslexia on health and wellbeing highlighting joint work between NHS Education and Dyslexia Scotland

October 2012 – Presentation by Tam Baillie, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People on the role of the Commissioner and the Rights of Children and Young People.

February 2013 – Presentation from representatives from the Department of Work and Pensions and Remploy regarding support for Dyslexia employees.

April 2013 – Presentation by the Association of Principal Educational Psychologists on the role of the Educational Psychologists in identifying and assessing for dyslexia.

June 2013 – Presentation by Education Scotland on the processes and remit for the proposed Review of Dyslexia across Scottish local authorities.

October 2013 – Chief Mcgee, Chief Executive of Dyslexia Scotland gave a presentation on the organisation's strategic Plan, key priorities and the work of local branches.

February 2014 – The CPG held an open discussion session to reflect of the work of the group.

May 2014 – The CPG considered the Education Scotland Making Sense: Education for Children and Young People with Dyslexia Report published on 14th May 2014. The CPG submitted a response to the report to Education Scotland.

October 2014 – Presentation by Education Scotland on the key conclusions and recommendations of the Making Sense Report and their proposed plan of action.

February 2015 – Informal meeting with Dr. Alasdair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's languages.

May 2015 – Presentation by Cathy Mcgee, Chief Executive, Dyslexia Scotland on the work of the Scottish Government/ Education Scotland

led Working Group progressing the recommendations of the Making Sense Report.

December 2015 – Presentation by Education Scotland on the progress in relation to addressing the issues raised in the Making Sense Report.

March 2016 – Review of the key issues identified over the life of the Parliament, their current status and priorities for the future.

KEY ISSUES

The reluctance of schools to carry out, and the prohibitive cost of psychologists' tests (approximately £700) to diagnose dyslexia is a key issue, which it is hoped will be addressed through the work being undertaken by Education Scotland and the Scottish Government Working Group, together with the other key issues listed below.

- The difficulty of addressing dyslexia issues with prisoners on short term sentences;
- The need to ensure appropriate support is available to young people and employers particularly young people on Modern Apprenticeships;
- The potential to arrange joint cross party group meetings where appropriate;
- The level and nature of support from Job Centre Plus and Careers Advisers;
- The implications and opportunities presented by new technology in the workplace;
- The need to ensure actions on dyslexia do not solely focus on literacy and numeracy but on wider impacts.

The following issues will be considered as part of the Education Scotland response to the Making Sense Report:

- Inconsistencies across Scottish local authorities in adopting the agreed definition of dyslexia;
- The availability of qualification in Scotland in relation to dyslexia and assessments;

- The under- reporting of the incidence of dyslexia in schools;
- The differences across and within local authorities in awareness and use of the Online Toolkit;
- The role of tutors and assessors;

A key future role of any future CGP would be to monitor the outputs and outcomes from the Making Sense Report.

Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked members for their commitment to the work of the group and outlined the process to re-establish the group following the Holyrood elections.