

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Dyslexia held in the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020.**

### **1. Present:**

Margaret Mitchell MSP, Tom Mason MSP

Lee- Anne Quinn, Fran Ranaldi, Cathy Mcgee, Lena Gillies, Liz Roger, Owen Ferry, Patricia Hewitt, Claire Wilson, Margaret Crombie, Julie Ross, Michael Sinclair, Jennie Guise, Stuart Lucas, Martin Davies, Jasmine Miller, Joe Moran, David Jones

### **2. Apologies:** Maurice Corry MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP, Elaine Smith MSP, Gillian Evans, Mary Evans, Lynn Dobbie, Julia Trotter, Hamish Hunter

### **3. Minutes of last meeting:**

The minutes were approved by Margaret Crombie, Seconded by Stuart Lucas.

### **4. Business arising from last meeting**

It was noted that Dyslexia Scotland Young Ambassadors had visited the Scottish Parliament to raise awareness of dyslexia during National Dyslexic Awareness Week.

### **5. Presentation: Jasmine Miller**

#### **Understanding the experiences of autistic and dyslexic women in transitioning into tertiary education**

Jasmine provided details of her research commissioned by the General Teaching Council in Scotland. The research involved young women ,some who were autistic, others who were dyslexic and some with a mix of learning differences. Its findings included late identification as common factor, the importance of support from friends, families and the institutions involved. It also noted that the main factors that impacted on confidence levels related to study skills, receiving instructions and on mental health in general.

Key implications identified included:

- Schools should teach more strategies around independent living skills;
- Students should familiarise themselves with the tertiary education environment;
- Students should become more familiar with assistive technology earlier;
- Tertiary Education institutions need additional training/ awareness around the needs of students.

## **6. Presentation: Martin Davies Reading for Meaning**

Martin provided a detailed insight into the importance of reading for meaning based on his extensive research and studies over many years in his work to support children and young people with dyslexia.

He illustrated through examples the importance of not just being able to read words and sentences but to understand how structure, tone and intonation are vital if reading is to have meaning.

Martin emphasised the importance of support within schools and advocated the use of volunteers in the classroom similar to the work he had undertaken for many years through the Retired Senior and Volunteer Programme.

## **7. Open Discussion**

Jasmine responded to a number of questionnaires relating to her research and stressed the importance of self confidence and being prepared for new environments and challenges.

Martin responded to a range of questions on his research and members also provided information about techniques and approaches which were currently being used in schools.

**8. Any other business**

It was noted that the final report on the Making Sense: Education for Children and Young People with Dyslexia in Scotland 2014 Review would be published on 30 January 2020 and that the next CPG meeting would focus on the report.

**9. Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020