

Independent schools hold firm as parents commit to children's education

Embargo: not for publication or broadcast before 00:01 on Wednesday 29 April 2009

Issuing SCIS's mid-year report of pupil numbers in independent schools in Scotland, Director, Judith Sischy said, "We are encouraged by the continuing strength of the independent schools. Pupil numbers remain remarkably stable, despite the recession and the decline in the total pupil population in Scotland, which is a clear indication of the commitment parents have to their children's education."

Headline figures¹

- SCIS represents **98%** of independently educated pupils in Scotland.
- As at September 2008 nearly **32,000** children were educated in SCIS schools. The number of pupils educated independently has reduced marginally by just 0.7% since 2007/2008 although the proportion of pupils in Scotland educated independently has increased slightly over the past 8 years to 4.3%
- The distribution of independent schools across the country is uneven: there are SCIS schools in 21 of the 32 Local Authorities. However, in some Local Authorities, pupils in SCIS schools account for a large proportion of pupils, for example 24% of all secondary pupils in Edinburgh and 16% in Perth and Kinross are educated independently.
- In terms of the number of pupils, the independent sector is equivalent in size to the **8th largest Local Authority** (it is the 11th largest in terms of primary pupils and the 6th largest in terms of secondary school pupils).
- In September 2008 there were 732 international boarding pupils in SCIS schools, with the majority coming from Germany, Hong Kong, China and Russia.
- In mainstream independent schools the equivalent of 91% of the S4 roll stays on at school until S6 to complete their secondary education.
- Of the 3,187 independent school leavers who left school in summer 2008, **85%** entered full time further or higher education.
- In terms of the number of teachers employed, the independent sector is equivalent to the **4th largest Local Authority** in Scotland. Including teaching and non-teaching staff, the independent sector is a significant employer, providing work for 7,000 men and women.
- In 2008/2009 SCIS schools awarded funds totalling £17.3 million to help parents afford an independent education for their children. 13% of children are currently benefiting from financial assistance.

For further information, contact Judith Sischy or Sarah Randell on 0131 220 2106.

¹ Sources: SCIS census, Scottish Government publications 'Pupils in Scotland 2008'; 'Teachers in Scotland 2008' and 'Independent School Census 2008'.