



Scottish Council of Independent Schools

Press Statement : 25 September 2008

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS REMAIN STRONG

The independent sector in Scotland has had a good start to the session, with a healthy complement of pupils and stunning exam results, says the Scottish Council of Independent Schools¹.

There are 31,840 children in Scotland's independent schools, the highest number in the past decade, apart from last year when the number was 32,065².

"We are much encouraged by the strength of the sector and by the commitment of parents. They value the education their children receive, seeing it as a priority, and are highly supportive", said Judith Sischy, Director of the Scottish Council of Independent Schools. "Our numbers have been and remain remarkably stable and this year's fluctuation of 225 children across the whole sector is negligible. Indeed, against the decline in the total pupil population in Scotland, this is a real achievement".

The latest Scottish Government pupil projections confirmed the sector's stability over a long period, a trend forecast to continue: *"following trends in recent years, the number of pupils in independent schools has been projected to remain constant. Projections for publicly funded schools have then been reduced to account for the resulting slight decrease in the proportion of the population in publicly funded schools"*³.

SCIS data indicates that day school fees this year have risen on average by 5.4%, making the current average primary 1 and secondary 1 fees respectively £6,246 and £8,691 per year. "Schools are sensitive to the economic climate and are striving to keep fees as low as possible", said Judith Sischy. "All schools offer some form of financial assistance".

¹ See SCIS Press Release August 08, available at:

<http://www.scis.org.uk/assets/files/Press%20Release%20SCIS%20Schools%20Exam%20Results%2021%20Aug%202008.pdf>.

² Refer to charts 1 and 2.

³ 'S1 & S2 Maths & English Class Sizes, Children Educated Outwith School, Pupil Projections and Provisional Pupil Numbers', 20th November 2007, (pp. 7).

Table 1

| | 2008/09 | % change | 2007/08 | % change | 2006/07 | % change | 2005/06 | % change |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| # of schools in directory | 70 | | 75 | | 72 | | 70 | |
| Nursery | 1,779 | 1.4 | 1,755 | 1.6 | 1,784 | 2.2 | 1,745 | 3.6 |
| Primary | 11,601 | -0.8 | 11,695 | 2.1 | 11,454 | -0.1 | 11,465 | -1.4 |
| Secondary | 18,460 | -0.8 | 18,615 | 2.4 | 18,178 | 0.7 | 18,046 | 0.7 |
| TOTAL | 31,840 | -0.7 | 32,065 | 2.1 | 31,416 | 0.5 | 31,256 | 0.1 |
| Boarding | 3,523 | -2.0 | 3,596 | 4.7 | 3,434 | 3.7 | 3,312 | 4.5 |
| Day | 28,317 | -0.5 | 28,469 | 1.9 | 27,982 | 0 | 27,944 | 0.6 |
| TOTAL | 31,840 | -0.7 | 32,065 | 2.1 | 31,416 | 0.5 | 31,256 | 0.1 |

Chart 1 - SCIS pupil numbers in day and boarding schools 1998-2008

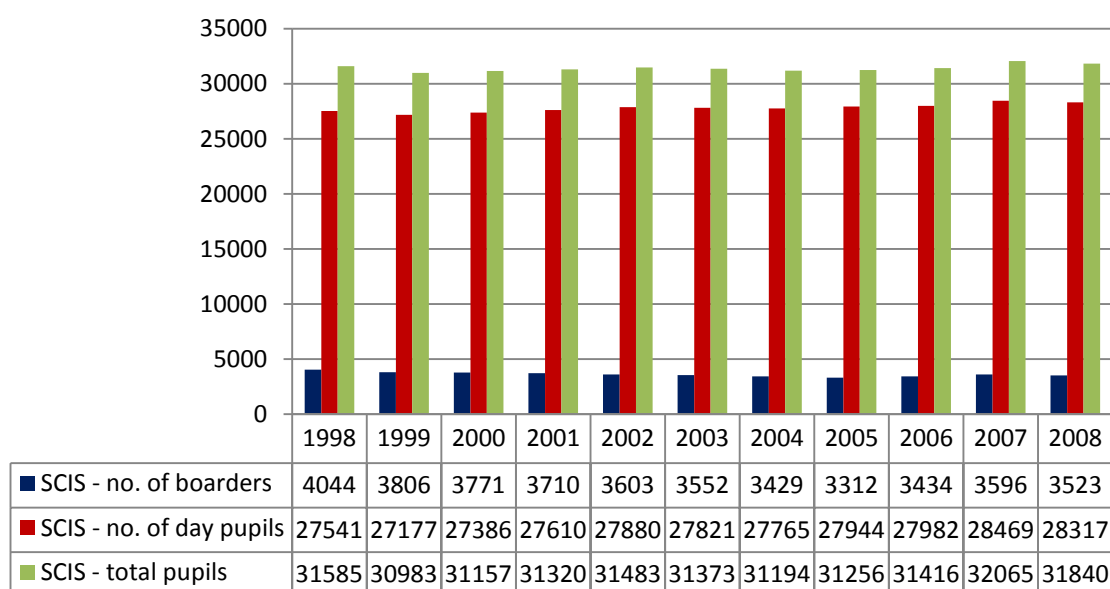


Chart 2 - SCIS pupil numbers in primary and secondary schools 1998-2008

