

ANNUAL REVIEW 2014

Choice | Diversity | Excellence



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Scottish Charity No SC018033



SCIS Governing Board 2014

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Prof. Anton Colella

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* Denotes those appointed at the SCIS AGM in April 2014. ** Denotes those retired at, or prior to, the SCIS AGM in April 2014. ^ Denotes co-opted member.

SCIS STAFF

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Director | John Edward |
| CPD coordinator | Nicola Dudley |
| Communications and marketing | Alison Herbert |
| Policy and liaison | Laura Forster (until 9. 2014) |
| | Ruth Mendel (from 9. 2014) |
| Finance, office manager, research | Alison Newlands |
| CPD administration, jobs & supply | Fiona MacAulay |

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Introduction

from the Chairman and Chief Executive

CHAIRMAN

The sector, along with the country, has been through a year of unprecedented anticipation. The lead-up to the referendum in September was intensive and challenging while it is too early to predict what the aftermath will bring. The sector has remained resolute and successful throughout, as it will in the periods of political and economic change to come.

Just as any school relies on all of its staff, teaching and non-teaching, to keep the experience for pupils as varied and rewarding as possible, the same is true for an organisation like SCIS. I want to take this opportunity to record the thanks of the schools and the Governing Board of SCIS to the six staff in Dublin Street who do so much to advance the sector. Much preparation, negotiation, advocacy and gentle persuasion goes on behind the scenes and under the radar to keep the independent sector in Scotland's beacon of choice, diversity and excellence shining, and I am grateful to Fiona, Alison, Nicola, Alison, Ruth and John for the work they do.

Professor Anton Colella
Chairman

DIRECTOR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We are often asked the country's direction of travel following the referendum of September 2014 or the recessionary times that preceded it. It is comfortably too early to say. It is, however, undeniable, that the sector's appetite for a spirited challenge remains undiminished.

Just as the OSCR test came to its close after an 8-year process, a Public Petition was raised in the Scottish Parliament that disregarded the test. Negotiations over the Teacher Pension scheme drew to a close, but the implications for schools and staff are yet to begin. A new First Minister took to the stage, and within a month the full GTCS registration of teachers was the subject of legislation after 15 years of discussion.

These, and many others, will occupy the minds of SCIS and those we work with in the months and years to come. They will be added to by further examination revision in Scotland and inevitable change elsewhere after the UK General Election. The landscape of Additional Support Needs provision, through the Doran review and other processes, will change radically. Likewise, benchmarking against, cooperation with, and possible expansion to overseas markets will continue the globalisation of aspects of teaching and learning.

As all of these rumble on, the schools in SCIS membership will continue to focus on what they do to their unparalleled best – delivering individual educational outcomes for pupils of all abilities. They all stand ready to share that experience, and hear that of others, should the offer of partnership and shared working be taken up. In the meantime, ours is a sector which is going nowhere but onwards and shrinking from nothing.

John Edward
Director/Chief Executive



Vision & Values

Scottish Council of Independent Schools is an educational charity representing over 70 member schools, which educates more than 30,000 children of mixed abilities from diverse backgrounds.

Objectives

to provide a professional service to member schools that is supportive, relevant and of high quality

to represent and promote the interests of the independent school sector

to enable the sector to make a worthwhile contribution to the development of education in Scotland

SCIS PROMOTES CHOICE, DIVERSITY AND EXCELLENCE IN SCOTTISH EDUCATION.

Aims

to advise member schools and their governing bodies on educational developments and legislation affecting independent schools (e.g. education, taxation, welfare, health and safety)

to communicate and negotiate with the Scottish Parliament, the Government, public and private bodies on behalf of the independent sector

to advance education via curriculum development and the training of teachers

to provide information, advice and guidance to parents



Activities and Achievements

SCIS SCHOOL STATISTICS

SCIS provides analysis of pupil numbers, staffing levels, examination results, leaver destinations and the financial assistance provided by independent schools – as well as ad hoc research work requested by the Governing Board of SCIS and individual schools. All research findings are published on the SCIS website. The historical and comparative data which SCIS provides helps schools demonstrate their value for money and evaluate their position in a wider context.

In 2014:

- SCIS remained equivalent to the seventh largest local authority in terms of pupil numbers in its member schools.
- The independent school sector employed 6.9% (3,506) of the teaching workforce in Scotland and was the 6th largest employer of teachers. There are almost 4,000 non-teaching staff including residential care, support and administrative staff.
- 89% of leavers entered further or higher education.



7,400
TEACHING AND
SUPPORT STAFF

PUPIL NUMBERS

4.4%
OF PUPILS IN
SCOTLAND ATTEND AN
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL



The independent sector is
equivalent in size to the
7TH LARGEST
LOCAL AUTHORITY
IN SCOTLAND.



Pupil Numbers

At the start of each new academic year SCIS conducts a census to gather data from member schools, which provides an overview of the sector. The analysis of this data is made available to member schools, the public and the press. Facts and statistics about pupil numbers and demographic projections can be downloaded from the SCIS website.

As at September 2014 there were 30,687 pupils in SCIS schools. Of these, 1,449 were children in nurseries, 10,777 were in primary schools and 18,461 were in secondary schools. Pupil numbers in the independent sector remain robust, with the slight dip from 2013 figures due mainly to the closure of two schools/nurseries in Aberdeen.

Financial Assistance

All member schools offer financial assistance, most commonly in the form of means-tested awards, granted on the basis of financial need. The level of financial assistance can vary considerably from a free place (where 100% of the fees are met by the school) to awards worth around 10% of the fees.

20%
of pupils in mainstream
SCIS schools received
FINANCIAL HELP
WITH THEIR FEES IN 2014-15

Totalling over
£45
MILLION

in assistance.



Economic Impact

In April 2014 BiGGAR Economics published a report on the economic contribution that SCIS members make to the Scottish economy. The key finding of this report was that members of SCIS deliver a substantial positive economic impact for the Scottish economy, including generated exchequer benefits worth £263 million. In 2013 this impact amounted to £445.8 million gross value added (GVA) and around 11,240 jobs.

Examination Results

Although most pupils in the independent sector sit SQA examinations, a significant number are presented for GCSE, A Levels and the International Baccalaureate. The full table of SQA results by school is published by SCIS each year and can be found on the SCIS website.

The latest Scottish examination results for independent schools are produced from the Scottish Qualifications Authority's post-appeals data, published in December 2014. The summary below provides a snapshot of the performance of candidates in independent schools. The information can be used in conjunction with the Insight website (currently under review) to compare results at individual schools with schools nationally.

Comparable figures for Scotland in International Baccalaureate, A Level and GCSE results are not currently available although individual results for each participating school are available. Each year the Independent Schools Council (ISC) releases A Level and International Baccalaureate results and Scottish independent schools are included in the data produced.

2014 Post-Marking Review SQA Results – all SCIS schools (mainstream and special)

| | SCIS entries as a % of all entries | Entries – SCIS schools | Entries – All schools | A-C pass rate % SCIS schools | A-C pass rate % all schools | % of entries awarded grade A SCIS schools | % of entries awarded grade A all schools |
|-------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Nat. 2 | | 29 | 903 | | | | |
| Nat. 3 | | 22 | 15,095 | | | | |
| Nat. 4 | | 474 | | 94.5 | | | |
| Nat. 5 | | 7,201 | | 94 | 81.3 | 68 | 39.5 |
| Int. 1 | 2.7 | 505 | 18,679 | 86.1 | 73.5 | 51.6 | 23.7 |
| Int. 2 | 10.9 | 10,541 | 97,124 | 95.8 | 78.2 | 71 | 32.4 |
| Higher | 7.6 | 14,633 | 191,859 | 91.6 | 77.5 | 52.4 | 28 |
| Adv. Higher | 16.2 | 3,629 | 22,431 | 92.6 | 81.5 | 51.1 | 30.7 |
| Scot. Bacc. | 6.8 | 12 | 177 | 100 | 81.9 | 75 | 40.7 |

This was the first year of the new National 4 and 5 qualifications with "dual running" of Intermediate 1 and 2, as well as the new Post Results Service, and the fourth year of Scottish Baccalaureate results.



PROMOTION



Enquiries

The volume of telephone enquiries and e-mail requests from prospective parents and member schools remained high in 2014. There is now a system in place where each enquiry is logged enabling SCIS to identify any patterns and trends. A significant number of enquiries is from prospective parents seeking advice and guidance on selecting a school and how to apply for fee assistance. Schools continue to use the services of SCIS to seek information on topics such as teacher registration and child protection issues.



Supporting Schools in their Marketing

The annual SCIS Marketing and Admissions Conference, attended by over 50 colleagues from member schools, was held at St Aloysius' College, Glasgow, and topics covered included social media and managing parents' expectations. As well as the conference, marketing and admission staff can attend termly meetings in the SCIS offices to share best practice and to discuss current issues affecting schools. It is always well attended and valued by all who participate. Details of this and other events for Marketing and Admissions staff can be found on the CPD pages of the website.



Scotland's Boarding Schools

In 2014 Scotland's Boarding Schools' website enjoyed its first full year and had over 20,000 visitors to the site. SCIS, with the support of the 18 mainstream boarding schools, continues to promote this important sector, which brings in around £27 million to the Scottish economy each year. There is also a @ScotBoardSchool Twitter feed.



SCIS Online

The SCIS website had almost 56,000 visitors to its pages in 2014. The website:

- Assists families looking for information about independent education
- Promotes CPD courses
- Advertises vacancies within member schools and an updated supply list
- Promotes SCIS services.

The SCIS Jobs page continues to be popular with schools, with the number of advertisements rising substantially in 2014.



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

The Continuing Professional Development programme offered by SCIS continues to be a highly valued part of the SCIS provision. The wide-ranging programme of events provides insights into current trends and new initiatives in education, a focus on the wellbeing and protection of children and young people, regulatory updates, seminars on SQA qualifications and valuable opportunities for networking and sharing practice. During 2014 89 SCIS courses and events were facilitated, catering for over 1800 delegates in a wide range of roles, from teachers to classroom assistants, boarding and nursing staff, administrative and marketing staff to senior managers and governors.

SCIS supported schools in meeting the requirements of GTCS Professional Update through the SCIS Professional Review and Development Framework, which was validated in full by GTCS in March 2014. Coaching as an approach to effective PRD meetings has been put into the spotlight by Professional Update and SCIS has organised regular coaching skills courses. Coaching as an approach to leadership is a well-established part of the SCIS School Leadership programme. The value of the SCIS Team and School Leadership programmes continues to be recognised with over 50 staff completing Team Leadership courses and 25 participants on the School Leadership programme during the school year.

As part of training to new and existing school Governors, SCIS provided details of variances in Scotland (and Northern Ireland) in education and charity legislation, among others, for the revised "Guidelines for Governors" published by the Association of Governing Boards of Independent Schools (AGBIS).

PASTORAL CARE
SCHOOL TRIPS
MARKETING
REGULATION
BOARDING
SUPPORT FOR LEARNING
TEACHING AND LEARNING
GOVERNANCE
OUTDOOR EDUCATION
HEALTH AND WELLBEING
CHILD PROTECTION
COACHING
ICT
LEADERSHIP
EMPLOYMENT LAW



The CPD programme can also be followed on Twitter at [@SCIScpd](https://twitter.com/SCIScpd).



SCOTTISH REFERENDUM, GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT

Referendum

The political focus of the year was, as in all areas, the independence referendum of 18 September. SCIS addressed some of the challenges the referendum presented in a document published at the time of the 2014 AGM. The guidance for charities from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) was highlighted in CPD for Governors and discussed with individual schools to ensure that activities within schools were not discouraged while the guidelines were observed. SCIS provided informal briefings as the debate developed and forwarded statements from the Scottish Government and other bodies on issues relating directly or indirectly to school-age education.

On 19 September 2104, SCIS released the following statement:

“The outcome of the referendum on Scottish independence, to remain within the United Kingdom, is clear and unambiguous. It is incumbent upon all parts of Scottish society to make the aftermath of the referendum as smooth and harmonious as possible. The schools, pupils, families, teachers and support staff represented by SCIS will play their full part in that.

Independent schools, like all of education, have undergone substantial change in recent years, in part as the natural result of the parliamentary devolution to Scotland in 1997. It is also an indication of the pace of change in education world-wide. Whatever the political weather, we can expect the pace of change to be sustained.

Although education policy is fully devolved, the commitment of three political parties to move beyond the proposals of the Scotland Act 2012 in terms of taxation and other powers will have implications for independent schools, and we will monitor these closely. We will also seek the support of all political parties for continuity in the choice, diversity and excellence that the independent sector – both mainstream and special needs – demonstrates.”

SCIS compiled a short informal report on referendum activity in the independent sector, including school debates, citizenship learning and mock referendums, at the request of the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee of the Scottish Parliament in December 2014.

Scottish Government

Regular engagement with political institutions remained a key priority for SCIS to maintain the independence, diversity and profile of the sector.

In November 2013, following her appointment as First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP appointed Angela Constance MSP as Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning in succession to Michael Russell MSP. Aileen Campbell MSP was appointed Minister for Children and Young People and Alasdair Allan MSP was re-appointed Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland’s Languages.

In December 2014, following the election of Kezia Dugdale MSP as Deputy Leader of the Scottish Labour Party, she was replaced by Iain Gray MSP as the Scottish Labour Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning.

In her first legislative programme in November 2014, the First Minister has outlined plans to require the registration of all teachers in independent and grant-aided schools in Scotland. While an ongoing issue for at least 15 years, the move to legislate finally on this issue will have substantial implications for some schools. SCIS will work very closely with schools, teachers and the Government and GTCS as the details of the proposal are put together and throughout the legislative process.

SCIS has worked with the Scottish Government on draft statutory guidance following the passing of the Children & Young People Act, which received Royal Assent in March 2014.



The Act includes responsibilities for schools relating to Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) and co-operation with local authorities, early learning and childcare provisions as well as the definition of the “Named Person” in a school setting. SCIS continued to provide representation on guidance on the education of children absent from school due to ill-health.

SCIS has liaised with the Scottish Government team developing “Insight”, the new Senior Phase benchmarking tool, which is replacing STACs (Standard Tables and Charts), in the hope that independent schools will be able to use the system from 2015 once data issues have been overcome.

SCIS responded to Scottish Government draft government guidance on updated accessibility strategies following the publication of Auxiliary Aids technical guidance as part of the reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils duties in the 2010 Equalities Act. Following this, SCIS will seek to update the comprehensive “Handbook for Accessibility” published in 2006.

In addition, SCIS provided responses to a range of government consultations, including:

- Youth Sport Strategy - Giving Children and Young People a Sporting Chance
- Planning Improvements for Disabled Pupils’ Access to Education
- National Care Standards Review.

In 2014 SCIS liaised with the Education Sector of Scottish Development International to highlight growing opportunities for international expansion of Scottish independent schools, particularly in mainland China and India.

Scottish Parliament

In addition to continued monitoring of the Scottish Parliament’s Education and Culture Committee, including responses to consultations on outdoor learning and Scotland’s Educational and Cultural Future, SCIS has been involved with the Public Petitions Committee in relation to Petition 1531. This petition, to “Remove Charitable Status from Private Schools” was opened in August 2014 and lodged on 2 October with 310 signatures – to which SCIS made an initial response. The Committee sought evidence, in writing, from the Scottish Government, CoSLA, SCIS and the Educational Institute of Scotland. The Committee also agreed to invite OSCR to give evidence at a future meeting.

School Inspections

In 2014 Lesley Johnstone became Lead Inspector for independent schools. Education Scotland HM Inspectors trialled new approaches to Quality Improvement through Professional Engagement (QUIPE) visits in independent schools. SCIS met with the inspectorate and schools in September 2014 to discuss QUIPE, as well as the proposed future of shared inspections with the Care Inspectorate. Education Scotland also began considering future approaches to inspection and review, to explore what inspection might look like in three to five years’ time.



Doran Review of Additional Support Needs

Along with individual member schools, SCIS sits on the Doran Review Project Board and also on Workstream 3 and Workstream 4 of the overall Doran Review. This process is moving forward and the Scottish Government has commissioned research which will help to inform its assessment of the service requirements of children with complex additional support needs across Scotland, and the final report due to be published in March 2015.



UCAS Tariff Consultation

SCIS responded to the above consultation to reinforce points relating to how Scottish qualifications are reflected in the Tariff and the use of the Tariff in supporting university applications made by pupils in Scottish independent schools. The realignment of Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers was welcomed and will have a positive impact on Scottish students applying to university, particularly those applying to universities outside Scotland where understanding of Scottish qualifications may be weaker. The new Tariff recognises the challenge and high standards set by the Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers.

For independent schools in Scotland offering a mix of qualifications across a variety of examination systems, including Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers, A Levels and AS Levels and the IB, the Tariff will help with equivalency of qualifications, which will help in communications with pupils, parents and admissions staff.

Care Inspectorate

SCIS has continued to seek an established and authoritative point of contact with the Care Inspectorate. A number of issues raised related to boarding schools inspections have required clarification, including guardianship. SCIS has in the past had an annual meeting between Heads of Boarding and the Care Inspectorate. This has been a very valuable opportunity for the Care Inspectorate to give updates to schools to try to help ensure clarity around expectations in inspections, and a forum for schools to raise any concerns or questions they may have.

Nursery Provision

SCIS continues to engage with the Scottish Government and local authorities to clarify the position on 600 hours' nursery provision as at least one local authority has reversed its position on the amount of weeks that independent school nurseries would be required to open.

Safeguarding Issues

The 2014-15 SCIS CPD programme will further reflect safeguarding issues to assist schools with recent changes and in being fully prepared for any historic safeguarding issues. Nicola Dudley is in the process of updating the SCIS Child Protection Guidance (2011) to take into account the revised National Guidance and Children and Young People Act. SCIS has also responded to an NSPCC brief on mandatory reporting forwarded by the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee.

Scottish Immunisation Programme

In autumn/winter 2014, seasonal 'flu immunisation was offered to all children at primary school.



Glow

By the end of 2014, the migration of Glow to Office 365 was complete and all independent schools had been contacted to sign new Memorandums of Understanding and data agreements with the Scottish Government and RM.

Curriculum for Excellence and National Qualifications

The 2013-14 Diet of new National 4 and 5 qualifications took place. In feedback to those examinations, SCIS continued to raise issues of over-assessment and verification materials in particular, as well as issues of changes in the proposed revised Higher and Advanced Higher.

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) confirmed details of the new services being introduced to replace its existing Appeals Service in 2014.

- The 'Exceptional Circumstances Consideration'.
- The 'Post-Results Service'.

Following the Diet of 2014, SCIS responded to a range of political and media comment which drew belated attention to



the charges attached to the Post-Results Service in the event of unsuccessful script reviews. Uptake of the Marking Review services was less than anticipated by the SQA.

In cooperation with the ISC and individual Schools' and Heads' associations, SCIS continues to monitor the proposed reforms to GCSE and A/AS examinations.

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)

Following the provision of guidance for schools on Professional Update, SCIS attended a validation panel at GTCS on 4 March 2014. This panel decided unconditionally that the SCIS PRD Framework and Professional Update guidance could be used by schools for validation by GTCS, and praised the documentation as "clear, comprehensive and helpful".

The framework outlines the key features essential to any PRD system within an independent school. Validation criteria have been established to clarify the key purposes, principles and features of Professional Update that should be embedded within the SCIS PRD frameworks and Professional Update guidance. The documentation is to ensure that by adopting and implementing the framework each school, following a successful endorsement panel, will be able to address and meet the validation criteria.

A meeting was arranged in December between GTCS, the University of Buckingham and SCIS. GTCS was keen to explore a way forward with the University of Buckingham so that teachers completing the PGCE in Scottish independent schools might be eligible for GTCS registration. Northampton University's Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) "top-up" programme, which awards a PGCE, has now been accredited by GTCS.

Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme (STSS)

The regulations "The Teachers' Pension Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2014" were formally considered by the Scottish Parliament in October, were signed by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance on 28 October 2014 and received the consent of Her Majesty's Treasury on 5 November 2014. These confirmed that access to the teachers' pension scheme for teachers working in independent schools registered with the scheme remained unchanged. A series of consultations was launched on aspects of the scheme applicable to existing, outgoing and new scheme members. Negotiations are underway on the governance of the new Scheme, which will have some input from the independent sector.



On employer contribution rates, SCIS made the case to the Scottish Government that the introduction of increased rates in April 2015, rather than September 2015 (as in England and Wales) would constitute a substantial addition to current year budgets. At the end of 2014 it was confirmed that new rates would apply from September 2015. Following revaluation, employer rates were set at 17.2% which represents an increase of 2.3% of pensionable pay.

Bribery Act

SCIS was in correspondence with the Editor of "Tatler" following enquiries to schools about allegedly lavish gifts from independent school parents to teachers, and implications under the Bribery Act. It was indicated that this was not a wide scale problem north of the Border.



CHARITABLE STATUS OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

In January 2014 OSCR announced that all 7 schools in the final batch of testing had passed the charity test.

- St Mary's School
- Craigholme School
- Morrison's Academy Trust Scheme
- Edinburgh Merchant Company Education Board (incorporating George Watson's College and ESMS)
- The Proprietors of the Edinburgh Academy
- Aberdeen Waldorf School Ltd (closed summer 2014)

Subsequently Wellington School, Loretto School and St Columba's School passed the charity test leaving only 2 SCIS schools under examination. In December 2014 OSCR produced a final briefing on the completion of the charity test – "Fee-charging schools, public benefit and charitable status".

OSCR consulted on its Corporate Plan for 2014-2017, and the SCIS submission made the following points:

- Since the introduction of the charity test in November 2006, 41 of the 98 charities reviewed in Scotland have been independent schools, some of which include more than 1 school. As a priority group, the entire mainstream independent school sector has now been reviewed, along with 1 grant-aided school. This has been an in-depth, complex and exhaustive process.
- As a result, no group in Scotland is better able to demonstrate its compliance with the requirements to meet charitable purpose(s) and the conditions of the 2005 Act. The review process, completed in January 2014, has produced a considerable amount of detail on the activities of the schools, both in terms of means-tested fee relief and other non-charged benefits to the community.
- As such, independent schools are well aware of the requirements placed upon them by the 2005 Act, and the benchmarks established in each published school review. As a result, OSCR can shift its focus to other groups of potentially high risk charities in future planning periods, secure in the knowledge that the independent school sector has been comprehensively tested and the requirements of the 2005 Act have been met.

SCIS also responded to the OSCR consultation on Targeted Regulation, which sought views on consultation on annual reporting, publishing of accounts, the creation of a trustee database and reporting of serious incidents.

SCIS was in communication with the Educational Institute of Scotland following a motion on the withdrawal of charitable status from independent schools that was passed at their 2014 AGM.



COLLABORATION WITH KEY BODIES

Throughout 2014, SCIS has represented the views and concerns of the independent sector on a wide range of bodies, through consultations and at events organised by national bodies for schools, education authorities, care agencies and others:

City of Edinburgh Council Child Protection Committee

Cultural Organisations and Local Authority Advisors group (COALA)

Doran Review of Additional Support Needs:

- Project Board
- Work streams 3 & 4

Scottish Government:

- Curriculum for Excellence Management Board
- Additional Support for Learning Team
- Safeguarding Network
- GIRFEC working group session - independent schools

General Teaching Council Scotland:

- Council
- Education Committee
- Professional Update Working Group

Education Scotland:

- National Safeguarding Network
- Professional Review & Development Working Group

Independent Schools Council (ISC):

- General Secretaries' Group
- Child Welfare Expert Group
- Communications working group

NHS:

- Scottish Immunisation Programme Steering Group
- Lothian independent school nurses network group

Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme:

- Scheme Negotiation Group
- Technical Working Group

Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (SCILT)

Scottish Continuing International Professional Development Programme (SCIPD)

Scottish Parliament:

- Cross Party Group on Children & Young People
- Cross Party Group on Sport
- Cross Party Group on Learning Disability

Scottish Qualification for Headship – East & West Consortia

Scottish Qualifications Authority:

- Advisory Council
- Results Services Review Group
- SQA/SCIS/SLS joint forum.



SCIS OPERATIONS, STAFF AND SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP

SCIS continued to benefit from the expertise and guidance provided by its Chairman, Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, and Mr Guy Cartwright, Bursar of the Edinburgh Academy, who assumed the post of Honorary Treasurer at the AGM of 2014, in succession to Jeremy Chittleburgh.

In September 2014, Laura Forster left her post SCIS as Policy and Liaison Officer to take up a position with HM Treasury in London. Ruth Mendel was appointed to the post in October 2014, joining SCIS from the constituency offices of Mark Lazarowicz MP and Malcolm Chisholm MSP.

The Governing Board records its appreciation and thanks for the work undertaken by all the staff of SCIS throughout 2014.

In November 2014 the SCIS Governing Board approved the membership of Ardfern Learning Centre, an all-through special school in Johnstone, Renfrewshire with 46 pupils.

Spark of Genius Education Services ceased to be members of SCIS at the end of 2014.

At the end of the 13-14 academic year, the Aberdeen Waldorf School closed for financial reasons.

SCIS membership remains open to independent schools registered with the Scottish Government which have had satisfactory inspection reports from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.

AGM

The Annual General Meeting, in April 2014, hosted a panel discussion with David Torrance (author and journalist), Ross Martin (Chief Executive of SCDI) and Seonag McKinnon (Communications Manager of the Church of Scotland). The Annual Dinner was addressed by Dr Pauline Dixon of Newcastle University.

The Hamilton School

Following parental complaints, investigations by Police Scotland and the Care Inspectorate, Scottish Ministers asked HM Inspectors at Education Scotland to carry out a special inspection of The Hamilton School, Aberdeen.

On 21 February Scottish Ministers took the decision to withdraw registration of the school with effect from 22 February 2014. Independent schools must be on the Register to operate in Scotland, and therefore the Hamilton School was closed with immediate effect as of the end of the school day on 21 February.

The SCIS Governing Board discussed the implications of the closure upon the sector in terms of the membership of SCIS itself. SCIS is not an accrediting body, and works on the principle that Scottish Government, Education Scotland and – where appropriate – Care Inspectorate approval is required for a school to operate as an independent school in Scotland. CPD provision, and comprehensive guidelines, put child protection at the centre of the training and advice SCIS is able to offer to member schools.



www.scis.org.uk

The members' area of the website is an excellent source of information with sections on the following regularly updated:

- Research
- Boarding & Residential
- Legal & Financial
- Teaching & Learning
- Care & Welfare
- Regulation & Inspection
- Policies & Guides
- Admissions & Marketing



twitter @SCISschools

SCIS continues to enjoy the benefits of Twitter – specifically the instant awareness, input and right-of-reply it gives to media commentary and opinion. SCIS currently has more than 1170 followers.

E-bulletin

The SCIS e-bulletin is issued monthly and is available to all school staff and governors. The number of subscribers has risen by over 30% this year. A full archive is available in the members' area of the SCIS website and schools are encouraged to share the login and password with staff and governors.

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