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TEACHERS CRITICAL OF SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FOR LACK OF PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING MANIFESTO COMMITMENT ON CLASS CONTACT TIME REDUCTION

The SNCT Teachers' Panel, made up of trade unions representing Scotland's teachers, has strongly criticised the Scottish Government for the severe lack of progress in delivering the SNP 2021 Manifesto commitment to reduce teachers' class contact time by 90 minutes per week, to 21 hours. Two and a half years since the manifesto pledge was made, and now midway through the parliamentary term, there has been little or no progress towards the implementation of that promise made, not only to teachers, but to the whole electorate.

Scotland's teachers currently have amongst the highest class-contact commitments in the OECD, adding additional workload pressures onto an already severely burdened teaching workforce. The manifesto promise to reduce class-contact time commitments would, if properly implemented, ease the pressure on over-burdened teaching staff by allowing essential additional time for preparation and correction of student work.

Commenting today, following a meeting of the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) yesterday, the Chair of the SNCT Teachers' Side, Des Morris, said: "Sadly and frustratingly, there has still been very little progress on the delivery of the manifesto commitment to reduce teachers' class contact time. The Teachers' Side has been pushing for confirmation that this promise will be implemented in full. More than two years down the line from the commitment being made ahead of the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections, we have no progress and very little clarity on precisely how and when this promise will be delivered."

Mr Morris added, "The Teachers' Side of the SNCT is keen to work constructively towards the delivery of this commitment, which will bring significant benefits to teachers and students alike. We require clarity on the precise details of the plan to implement the reduction in teachers' class-contact hours. Teachers are very clear that they expect this commitment to be delivered to bring Scottish teachers more closely in line with their colleagues elsewhere in the OECD, and that they expect the additional non-contact time to be allocated to preparation and correction of student work. This commitment must be fully funded, so that it does not add further to the workload of promoted staff. The Scottish Government and COSLA must deliver a very clear plan for delivering this important commitment, so that all parties can work together to ensure that this manifesto promise is kept, in the interests of Scotland's learners and teachers."

(ENDS)

Issued by the EIS Communications department, acting on behalf of the SNCT Teachers' panel.