



Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association

Press Release – For Immediate Release

11 May 2022

Home Economics is disappearing from Secondary Schools

Appendix B

Comments from Members

“Due to the nature of the subject, we work during lunch time, break time and often after school just preparing for lessons”.

“Not having a technician is one of the biggest issues. If there was it would allow teaching staff to focus on teaching and learning, not preparation. It would give staff time to develop new courses and introduce alternative qualifications”.

“HE has had to be removed from the S1 curriculum and double periods for BGE have been removed. Ironically, we have staff and auxiliary help but no accommodation so the HE curriculum has been devastated”.

“More workload less help and significantly reduced support staff being employed to save money. Teachers stretched to limit”.

“Home economics teachers are being put under more pressure and their workload is increasing constantly. The ever-increasing workload is too much”.

“Teachers are spending more and more time before and after school on tasks which are not in our remit!”

“It is a disgrace that we have no auxiliary support in HE in my local authority. It is so unfair when other authorities still have support, and we don't”.

“I have some school assistant support, but I am completely exhausted by the end of the week. Plenty of pupils wish to take the subject but there is not enough staff to enable this”.

“Our department used to have 6 full time HE staff members. In the last 4 years staff have left due to various reasons and have not been replaced. We now only have 2 full time members of staff. My feeling is that the Department is getting run down due to a lack of specialist teachers available but more importantly as it is perceived as an expensive subject e.g., cost of food / repairs to equipment”.

“We are having to regularly work with a lack of equipment as ‘there is no money to repair the broken equipment’. Our department is very poorly resourced”.

“In the last few years, the following courses have been removed from the curriculum due to the Department being run down: Health and Food Technology and Fashion and Textiles. We now only teach mainly Hospitality that was not part of my degree”.

“We have had S2 removed from the Department due to staff shortages which is also affecting pupil uptake in S3. This was promised to be only temporary, but we still do not have S2 on our curriculum. We now currently have an ASN teacher teaching HE in the Department who is not an officially qualified HE teacher”.

“We should have auxiliary assistance, but our auxiliary is currently on long term absence. This means that my colleague and I are usually spending per week at least 10- 15 hours extra on the following – • Food ordering • Lifting and putting away vast numbers of crates of food being delivered • Stock control • Food prep – weighing and measuring • Shopping for food – at night in our own time • Cleaning out of fridges etc • Laundry. As a result of this extra work, we therefore do not have time to carry out any development work, completion of tracking, reporting etc. This all must be done in our own time at night”.

“Please note all the additional work is obviously now becoming a major concern – so much so the extra workload and stress of carrying out the job is now having a detrimental effect on my health”.

“Home economics departments are often single person departments and do not have the support in place. Ultimately the quality and experience of Home Economics of many students across Scotland is vastly different due to the excessive demands and expectations placed upon their teachers”.

“Something must be done to support myself and other home economics teachers before the subject and staff are destroyed. We are overworked, undervalued and simply at our wits end of what else to do. There are shortages in this subject as the working conditions are simply not sustainable and influence our personal life and mental health”.

“The challenge Home Economics Teachers face compared to other colleagues is not equitable. Early mornings, late nights, no interval, or lunch. Trying to teach young people to prepare healthy meals which is crucial in the challenges our public health face come at a cost to Home Economics teachers’ family lives”.

“Home Economics is well supported in our school. Although the number of teachers has reduced over the years this is largely due to staff moving to other schools, promotion etc and a lack of available HE teachers. Management here understands the value and the need for practical subjects to be included in the curriculum”.

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