

# Scotland can guarantee a future for our young people

Faodaidh Alba a dhol an urras gum faigh ar n-òigridh slighe air adhart



**#GREENHOLYROOD VOTE GREEN 2016**



# WE WILL CHAMPION:



From early years to university, Scottish Greens believe education is a right. We have schools and colleges to be proud of, but they have seen years of cuts. Scotland's educators are working flat out with an unsustainable workload. Green MSPs will fight for an end to Scottish government-led austerity to pay for more teachers, close the attainment gap and create more opportunities for everyone who wants to gain a place at college or university.

## 4,000 full-time equivalent teachers

We will tackle teachers' unsustainable workload by pushing for an additional 4,000 full-time equivalent teachers to be hired over the course of the coming Parliament.

## Help for all pupils experiencing poverty

Scotland's current attainment fund leaves thousands of pupils experiencing poverty without extra support. We will work with others to help tackle child poverty and reach every pupil with additional needs.

## Fair funding for college and university students

We will call for a guaranteed level of financial support for further education students and a fund for any student at risk of dropping out through hardship over the summer months.



"The Scottish Greens believe that people should have equal access to quality and inspiring education throughout their lifetimes. We want our schools, colleges and universities to be places that foster curiosity, creativity and growth, and where educators are supported to put learning before grades. With an innovative curriculum, greater financial support and increased teaching capacity, we believe we can nurture the skills needed for Scotland's society and economy."

**ISLA O'REILLY**

**SGP education spokesperson, second list candidate for Highlands and Islands**



# SCOTLAND CAN GUARANTEE HIGH QUALITY TEACHING

## 4,000 more teachers

Across all education sectors, just 9% of teachers and lecturers feel satisfied with their workload. Teachers at breaking point cannot provide quality learning environments for young people. Hiring 4,000 extra teachers would ease pressure and give smaller class sizes, allowing for more individual support – giving all students a better opportunity to learn.

## Support for learning

We will work to give the best teachers to the young people who need the most support by calling for Support for Learning to be a promoted post. This would help tackle inequality of outcomes for pupils with additional support needs, while attracting the best teachers. It would also help restore a career structure for teachers, enabling progression for the most skilled teachers who wish to remain in the classroom.

## Broader curriculum

Education should prepare the next generation in practical ways for the challenges they will face throughout their lives. Literacy and numeracy must sit alongside interpersonal skills, creative skills, confidence, physical education and good mental health. We will support a curriculum that gives students experience in global citizenship, environmental awareness, and their rights and responsibilities as Scottish citizens. All schools should provide robust 'relationship, sexual health and parenthood' education, covering the principles of equality, consent, signs of abuse and the full spectrum of gender and sexuality. The curriculum should also reflect modern industries, such as computer programming, bioscience, the creative industries and technological innovation.





## SCOTLAND CAN CLOSE THE ATTAINMENT GAP

### Guaranteed hours of education

Scottish Greens support a statutory guarantee of minimum education hours for every Scottish child. Local authority budgets are under immense pressure, but with a guarantee of 27.5 hours a week of education during secondary and 25 hours during Primary we will help avoid cuts that ultimately harm children's education.

### Attainment fund

The Scottish Government's Attainment Scotland Fund provides extra funds to schools with the highest concentrations of pupils from deprived areas. But thousands of pupils experiencing poverty miss out – child poverty is not exclusive to areas of deprivation and 36% of pupils from the most deprived areas go to schools without additional funding. Green MSPs will work with other parties to close this gap with funding that targets pupils in need who do not qualify for the Attainment Scotland Fund.

### Scotland Guarantee

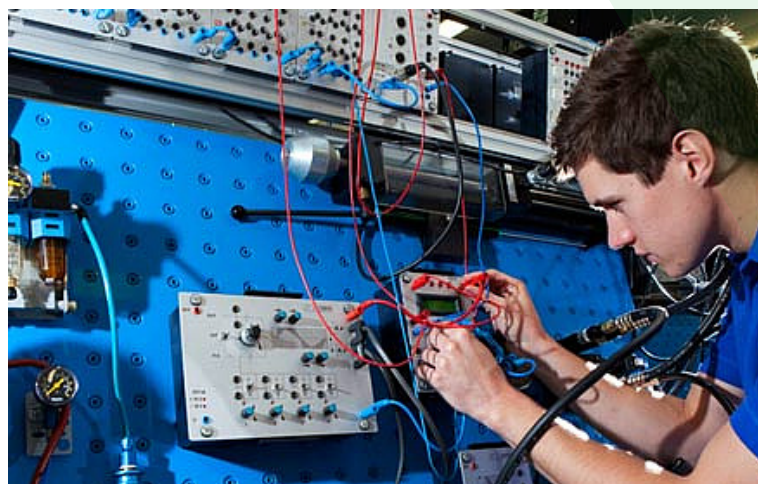
Green MSPs will campaign for a Scotland Guarantee of a job, training or education for every school-leaver. Latest figures show 8% of school leavers left school without a job or more education but this rises to 15% for pupils from the poorest areas. Local authority and Scottish Government action, such as the Edinburgh Guarantee and Opportunities for All, has helped reduce that number but too many young people are still left without the opportunity to work or study. Green MSPs will campaign for better opportunities for all young people leaving school.

### Oppose more testing

Greens will resist plans for a return to standardised national testing in schools. More testing contradicts the basis of Curriculum for Excellence, will increase bureaucracy for teachers, risks a return to harmful league tables and is not the answer to closing the attainment gap.

### Equality and diversity

Scottish Greens will show leadership on inclusive education policies for all pupils and families from primary age regardless of race, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, including a strong stance on bullying. We want to see all schools become UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools, where children's human rights are embedded in a school's ethos and culture to help all pupils realise their potential. Scottish Greens also support the Time for Inclusive Education campaign, which promotes inclusive LGBTI+ school environments. We will also push to strengthen links between education and other children's services with child poverty strategies. We believe in funding training for teachers so that they are able to tackle diversity issues in the classroom.





# SCOTLAND CAN SUPPORT FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING



## Funding parity for college and university students

Green MSPs will support a national entitlement to locally-delivered bursaries for all students in further education. This means that all students can access support and know how much they will receive before starting their course. This type of entitlement is already available for higher education students and provides much needed certainty. We also support the National Union of Students' Scotland's Shaping Scotland's Future campaign, including calls for financial support to increase with inflation, a benefits system that does not claw back student support payments and improved services for students experiencing mental ill-health.

## Investment in further Education

In recent years a number of further education courses have been cut and opportunities for part-time study reduced. Scottish Greens will call for greater investment in further education and for the re-introduction of part-time and access courses that are vital for allowing those from the most deprived backgrounds to access education. We will also support measures to address the underrepresentation of minority ethnic young people in further education.

## Funding for college student associations

Scotland's Further Education students need a stronger voice. We will call for institutions to adequately fund college student associations and unions. Currently they are underdeveloped and underfunded compared to their university counterparts, which have a track record of providing a strong voice for their students and effecting institutional change.

## Increased support for apprenticeships

The current Modern Apprenticeships scheme is highly gender-segregated and often pays poverty wages. Apprenticeships must pay at least living wage, regardless of age, must actively work to break gender stereotypes and must increase opportunities for disabled people and people from minority ethnic groups.

# SCOTLAND CAN DELIVER WORLD-CLASS HIGHER EDUCATION

## Student support during summer months

Summer can be a difficult time for students, as temporary work can be scarce. To give students financial support over the summer months, Greens will push for student options to access a national hardship fund to help prevent students dropping out of education between academic years, or to rebalance their bursary and extend their loan payments to stretch over the summer months.

## Widening access

Green MSPs will support action to break down the barriers to further and higher education. Scottish Greens' student support proposals are designed remove financial barriers to education and we agree with the Commission on Widening Access that "inequality in higher education is unfair, damaging and unsustainable". We will use its findings and recommendations published in March to ensure action on access to education is as bold as it can be.

## Resist marketisation

Scottish Greens support measures that will allow Scotland's universities to oppose the marketisation of Higher Education and to distance themselves from mechanisms such as the Research Excellence Framework, Teaching Excellence Framework and other artificially competitive funding mechanisms, enabling them to concentrate on real research and teaching.

## Support for international students

Greens will continue to place pressure on the UK government to reintroduce the post-study work visa – a scheme which allows international students to stay in Scotland after their studies. We believe that someone who has chosen to study here should be given the opportunity to stay in Scotland and contribute to their chosen field.



With thanks to worcsapprenticeships, The Guardian and Alba English for photos.

Promoted by Laura Cameron Lewis on behalf of the Scottish Green Party, both at 72 Newhaven Road, Edinburgh, EH6 5QG.

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