

Thursday 2nd April

COUNCIL LEARNED NOTHING AS RENFREWSHIRE SLIPS TO BOTTOM OF CLASS

- **Worst pupil teacher ratios of any secondaries in Scotland**
- **One of the biggest teacher losses in Scotland**
- **All progress made by Labour wiped out**
- **More teacher cuts to come**
- **Education not getting its fair share**

Last week, official government statistics revealed Renfrewshire axed 122 teachers last year – the third largest cut in Scotland after much larger councils Glasgow and Aberdeen.

Further new figures obtained from the Scottish Parliament by Wendy Alexander reveal the true extent of the Renfrewshire cuts. Renfrewshire is one of just three councils to have cut 7% of its teachers in just one year. Worse still, at least a further 28 teacher posts are to go next year.

Teacher numbers in Renfrewshire are falling faster than school rolls and pupil teacher ratios are now rising again.

Wendy hit out:

“The total number of pupils in Renfrewshire is still falling as it has been for 10 years. But the SNP are cutting teacher numbers faster than pupil numbers are falling. The result is that overall pupil teacher ratios in Renfrewshire are now the second worst in Scotland and the worst in Scotland for secondary schools. This deterioration has happened since the SNP came to power.

Overall, Renfrewshire is in the top 3 in both total teacher losses and in teachers axed in percentage terms in all Scotland. This is a dreadful double whammy – a real blow to parents, pupils and teachers.

In just one year the SNP have destroyed all progress made by Labour on teacher numbers in Renfrewshire in recent years. Of 74 posts created under

Labour's four year administration from 2003 to 2007, the SNP have wiped out 83 already. Over the last year Renfrewshire has lost at least 2 teachers every single week.

Worse still the SNP led Council have appeared to learn nothing from their awful track record. Not only have they axed 122 teachers this year, they plan to get rid of at least another 28 teachers in the next year and force many nursery teachers to redeploy or go. These cuts are hitting children's education and destroying morale. The Finance Secretary John Swinney himself stated in a letter to me recently that Renfrewshire Council will have an extra £26.4m, or 7.2%, from the Scottish Government to spend in the coming year. There is no excuse for further cuts."

The SNP led Council have chosen to deprive Renfrewshire's education service of its fair share of Scottish Government monies and this is the result."

One local Renfrewshire teacher looking for a job told Wendy:

"I changed from being qualified in Environmental Biology to teaching as there was supposed to be a job once you had qualified or so you were led to believe. I am now working part time in a pub and wondering what was the point of going to University at all."

Wendy continued:

"The SNP's school report is a disaster:

- Teacher numbers - failed
- Class sizes of 18 - failed
- PE in school - failed
- Nursery school teachers - failed
- School building programme - failed

The SNP Government say their policy is for councils to use falling rolls to cut class sizes. This is not happening in Renfrewshire. Instead teachers are being cut faster than rolls are falling."