*Parent template letter to Councillors. Remember to give your full name and address at the end of your email.*

Dear Councillor,

As the parent of a child in an Edinburgh school, I am writing to ask you to join me in supporting the EIS’s Save Our Schools campaign and to vote down the planned cuts to the City’s Education budget.

I am convinced that cutting £8.2m to schools will cause great harm to teaching, learning and wellbeing at a time when our teachers and support staff are:

* struggling to meet the Additional Support Needs of huge, and increasing, numbers of pupils;
* bearing the brunt on a daily basis of dysregulated pupil behaviour, such as violent and aggressive assaults;
* suffering enormously from workload stress and low morale.

Nationally, the proportion of pupils with an ASN has increased from 6.5% in 2009 to 37% in 2023. Here in Edinburgh this huge increase will be replicated. Those pupils need **more** to be invested in education, not less. But the same is also true of other pupils in their classes who may not have any ASN but whose learning is also affected because teachers are so over-stretched as they struggle to attend to those with the severest needs.

All pupils, but especially those with an ASN, require a lot of support as they move from primary to secondary education, and Edinburgh’s Transition Teachers have been doing a great job in providing that to them. And yet those roles are set to be victims of the proposed cuts. Their removal will add workload pressures to the teachers who will have to pick up on their duties.

Further cuts to Devolved School Management budgets, the exact details of which will be decided at individual school level, will erode all kinds of provision. Some Head Teachers will be forced to cut additional support for pupils, affecting those who most need the support of these vital school workers. Others will cut per capita department budgets in secondary schools, meaning that some courses especially in practical subjects cannot run or that basic essentials such as paper, pens and textbooks will be increasingly unavailable. Schools cannot run on ipads alone.

Finally, the hidden cost will be to the morale and wellbeing of teachers, senior leaders and support staff, as their stress levels worsen. Cuts like those proposed this year do not come with parallel reductions to workload – they simply demand the same, or more, with less, and increase the pressure in the system which is felt acutely by everyone working in schools in the form of increased levels work-related stress, depression and anxiety.

The quality of our children’s learning can only be eroded as their teachers’ health and wellbeing steadily declines. The full extent of this decline can be seen in the last survey of members run by the EIS over a year ago, in which 73% said they feel stressed in their job frequently or all of the time.

I call on you and your colleagues to oppose all the cuts to the education budget.

Yours sincerely,