

Trade association warns of overly complex recruitment guidelines in response to Education Select Committee

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Wednesday, 19 April 2023

In a response to the Education Select Committee's inquiry on teacher recruitment and training, the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) has warned that recruitment guidance in the sector needs to be simplified if talent attraction and retention issues are to be addressed.

In its response to a recent call for evidence, APSCo has urged the Committee to:

- Prioritise Early Years and literacy due to impact on later attainment.
- Allow more school based and localised decision making and reduce focus on external measurement as signifiers of success or failure.
- Finance more teacher training, increase routes into the profession and increase focus on wellbeing support.
- Reduce and clarify the Department for Education's (DfE) and Ofsted's guidance on recruitment and compliance. This includes producing clear pathways to recruitment that give headteachers the confidence to recruit themselves and removes unnecessary administrative processes and compliance steps.

Tania Bowers, Global Public Policy Director at APSCo comments:

"The shortage of teaching professionals is widely reported across the UK. In our own report – produced in conjunction with Broadbean – we found that vacancies in the sector are significantly higher for 2023 so far, with application numbers failing to match the growth in demand.

"We welcome any steps to support teacher recruitment, training and retention in the education sector and we hope that the information shared with the Select Committee helps inform real change, which is long overdue. Our members and their clients have reported consistent difficulties recruiting permanent and temporary resources as a combination of difficult working conditions and pay issues continue to prevent many from entering or remaining in the profession.

"APSCo believes that the current DfE and Ofsted requirements are too rigid and don't accommodate both the regional nuances and individual requirements of differing education institutions. Overly prescriptive guidance and programmes, top-down control, poor-morale amongst staff and a need for better pay and working conditions are all impacting skills availability across the sector.

"Although there's a shortage of staff across the entire education remit, our members have identified a critical need to prioritise Early Years teachers and support staff. The learning which takes place during this stage cannot be postponed until a later date and, as such, education will be lost permanently, adding to longer term learning challenges.

"We strongly believe that the rigid recruitment and compliance frameworks currently in place need reform that accounts for the complexities of hiring in education on a local, regional and national level."

Ends

Press contact

Vickie Collinge

vickie@bluesky-pr.com

01582 790 705

About APSCo

The Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) is the trade association for the professional recruitment market. APSCo Global comprises APSCo Asia, APSCo Australia, APSCo Deutschland and APSCo United Kingdom as well as APSCo OutSource, the trade body for the RPO and MSP sectors.

Find out more: www.apsco.org