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Secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Art, Craft and Design in Education

Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
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6 July 2023

Dear Gillian Keegan

Art and Design teacher shortages and bursaries for trainees

We hope you have received a copy of the [Art Now Inquiry](#) report launched in Parliament 27 June 2023. In the report, published by the All-Parliamentary Group for Art, Craft and Design in Education, there are five recommendations for your attention. Today we are writing to you with regards Recommendation 4, to address the art and design teacher recruitment, retention and representation in art and design. We are calling on you to reintroduce bursaries and increase the teacher supply model target for art and design too.

This is why:

According to your department's own data, the number of teacher vacancies for art and design rose this academic year to the highest level recorded since 2011, and the reported 'Rate of vacancies' in art and design rose from 0.4 in 2021/22 to 0.7 in 2022/23.

The National Foundation for Educational Research report that art and design trainee recruitment are currently set to reach only 58% of its target for this point in the year (26 June 2023). But, for those subjects that have had a bursary – there was a 13% increase in numbers. Bursaries are clearly an effective driver for recruitment.

We note that the DfE provides bursaries for subjects that recruit well against the TSM [Teacher Supply Model] target. Of particular note are biology and English – trainees in these subjects receive a £15,000 and £20,000 bursary – and they are set to recruit 77% and 92% of their targets respectively. The discrepancy and prioritisation of subjects is clear. Furthermore, we know that schools are finding it hard to recruit art and design teachers and art and design lessons are taught by non-specialists.

This is what NSEAD members are saying (5 July 2023):

'My school is in a tricky situation in that we have not been able to recruit a second art teacher, we have a full timetable of lessons including GCSE which will have cover if we can't find anyone.'

'I've had years of it. We've had to have agency staff and it's been really tricky. It's meant a massive increase in my workload too. I have responsibilities outside of leading my department and this year it's nearly broken me.'

'It's been similar for me we have had cover for music and drama which I have been running this year, totally feel your pain.'

'We've just the same situation. Cover since January!'

'I've had to adapt all of my schemes of work to be taught by non-subject specialists. This has meant that half of the cohort have had no real access to practical. Not only does this impact behaviour, but also recruitment into GCSE and students know they've had a raw deal. Quite frankly I'm not sure how much more I can take. It's really affected my mental health.'

We understand that difficult decisions must be made, and that the DfE will always need to prioritise its spending. However, now is the time to increase the teacher supply target and reintroduce bursaries for art and design trainees. The lack of supply, the inability to recruit is impacting on both workload and wellbeing of the workforce. Furthermore with such a huge shortage of specialist teachers standards will fall. Our subject urgently needs to recruit more trainees.

Can you confirm that art and design ITE bursaries are going to be reviewed by the DfE?
And if so, when?'

Yours sincerely



Sharon Hodgson MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Art, Craft and Design in Education (APPG)

Marlene Wylie, President, NSEAD

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pp. Earl of Clancarty, Vice chair APPG