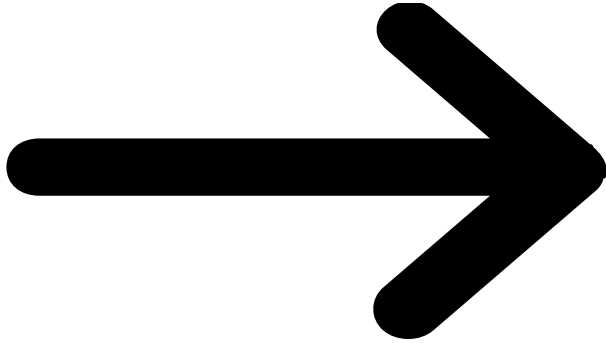


Sturgeon caves and agrees to education probe

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Nicola Sturgeon has caved to Scottish Conservative demands for a full inquiry into the state of Scotland's education system under the SNP.

Opposition MSPs yesterday voted for a formal probe into numerous failings which have occurred in Scotland's schools during the nationalists' time in power.

And today, at First Minister's Questions, Ms Sturgeon conceded that her government would have to abide by the decision taken during Scottish Conservative business at Holyrood.

Now the Scottish Conservatives have sought reassurances that the inquiry will be independent, and not result in a "whitewash verdict".

Earlier this week, the party sought a "reset" to the Curriculum for Excellence which would put a focus on traditional subject areas and knowledge.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

"After almost 13 years of failure, Nicola Sturgeon has finally agreed to investigate her own government's abject performance on education.

"The SNP has no-one to blame here but itself – it has been in sole charge of the brief for more than a decade.

"And in that time schools have had to limit their subject choice, children of different ages and levels are being taught in the same class by the same teacher, and standards in literacy and numeracy have been called into question.

"Teachers, pupils and parents – all of whom work tremendously hard – deserve far better than this.

"It's essential this full inquiry is impartial, independent and provides the

solutions we so desperately need.”