



REPORT TO EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE – 1 FEBRUARY 2018

Primary Curriculum – Update on Managing Non-Class Contact Time

1 Recommendation

- 1.1 Note the update within this report on progress to date with arrangements in schools to ensure that non-class contact time (NCCT) is covered in schools.**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 Following the reports to Education & Children's Services Committee on 31 August and 7 December 2017, this is a further update on progress with the changes in the way that Non-Class Contact Time (NCCT) is covered in primary schools.
- 2.2 All class teachers in primary schools are entitled to two and half hours of NCCT per week. This is important preparation time away from the class and another teacher will cover their class. This entitlement is covered by Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers and Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers agreements.
- 2.3 In the main, NCCT was previously covered by a centralised model of Visiting Specialist Teachers (VSTs). However, in areas of Aberdeenshire where the model was not working effectively this meant that alternative arrangements needed to be put in place e.g. cover provided by promoted post holders or if available the use of generic supply, and in some cases class teachers were not getting their NCCT.
- 2.4 As outlined previously, in line with national policy direction there is a move away from this centralised model of deployment to one where schools and clusters can work collegiately to agree the composition of teaching staff to best meet their local need. There will be no reduction in teacher numbers. It will simply be a change in the way in which teaching staff are deployed and managed. This approach is consistent with the national changes which will increase the flexibility and responsibility of Head Teachers to deploy teaching staff in their schools.
- 2.5 Headteachers can review the skill set of their individual teaching staff through the Professional Review and Development process and consider whether there are either areas where specialised support might be beneficial, or where resources and training can be deployed to support teachers who are less confident in certain areas of the curriculum.
- 2.6 It is not anticipated that there will be a disproportionate impact on smaller and rural schools. University training for primary teachers covers the full curriculum and primary teachers are expected to be able to deliver the breadth of the curriculum. However, in addition, as outlined above, Head

Teachers already have the flexibility to work with other schools in their cluster to share teaching staff with particular sets of skills. A worked example of this is attached at Appendix 1.

- 2.7 It is recognised that this change has not been universally supported, and that the change process may be difficult for the staff involved. The service continues to work with individual VSTs to support them through the change and to emphasise that their skills and experience are important
- 2.8 The service is committed to retaining as many as possible of those currently employed as VSTs who want to continue to work as teaching staff for Aberdeenshire Council. This will ensure that their skills set will be retained and can be shared with other teaching staff as appropriate.
- 2.9 The work to retain as many VSTs as possible includes the commitment to secondary registered teachers to allow up to 5 years to transition to primary registration.
- 2.10 The changes have already been implemented in certain areas within Aberdeenshire and in those areas the new arrangements are working well.
- 2.11 Meetings continue with Visiting Specialist Co-ordinators, as line managers of the VSTs, where information is exchanged so they are fully up to date and can pass this to the relevant staff within their Network where appropriate. Individual meetings with VSTs will take place as appropriate to continue to provide support in the transitional period.
- 2.12 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section E.3.4 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the delivery of Education services.
- 3.2 The Director of Education and Children's Services has exercised her delegated powers in accordance with Sections A.2, A.3, E.3.13 and E.3.26 of the List of Officer Powers in Part 2B, as the decisions made relate to the appointment of employees, the interests of the effective operation of the Council's Services, school staffing levels and management of the arrangement for curriculum development.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because this report updates committee on an operational change and does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.
- 4.2 The staffing implications are implicit within the report and there are no financial implications.

4.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

AORP003 Workforce. The actions in this report help to address attracting and retaining the right skills. Link to [Corporate Risk Register](#)

On a Service Level:

ECSR002 Developing Excellence and Equity. The actions in this report help to ensure that there is a full complement of teachers in all Aberdeenshire schools. Link to [Directorate Risk Registers](#)

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18 January 2017

Appendix 1

Comparison of previous model with new model

This is an example for illustrative purposes showing three schools in a model using VSTs and two options of how the new model could work.

The Context

This scenario involves the following

School 1

2 classes = 2 class teachers each entitled to 2.5 hours per week = 5 hours per week non-class contact time

School 2

5 classes = 5 class teachers each entitled to 2.5 hours per week = 12.5 hours per week non-class contact time

School 3

14 classes = 14 class teachers each entitled to 2.5 hours per week = 35 hours per week non-class contact time

Total of 52.5 hours of non-class contact time to cover across the three schools

1. The Existing Model

When considering requirements for the three schools the Head Teachers agreed on a collegiate basis to utilise hours available as follows:

21 hours Music Teacher
21 hours PE teacher
12.5hours Art Teacher

2. Primary Curriculum Model

Option A

The PE teacher has chosen to pursue a return to secondary.

School 1

Headteacher has skills within teaching staff team to deliver all aspects of the curriculum but feels that a more specialised support for music would be helpful. Works with Headteacher in school 3 to utilise the current Music VST as a Teacher of Primary for 2.5 hours per week delivering music.

School 2

Headteacher has skills within teaching staff team to deliver all aspects of the curriculum

School 3

Headteacher has skills within teaching staff team to deliver all aspects of the curriculum but feels that more specialised support for art and music would be helpful. The current Arts VST is employed as a Teacher of Primary for 12.5 hours per week delivering Art. The Headteacher of school 3 works with Headteacher in school 1 to utilise the current Music VST as a Teacher of Primary to deliver music. This teacher will work 21 hours per week in total with 18.5 hours at school 3 and 2.5 hours at school 1.

Option B

The Music Teacher is dual registered, and arrangements have been made for them to teach 14 hours per week in the local secondary.

School 1

Headteacher has skills within teaching staff team to deliver all aspects of the curriculum.

School 2

Headteacher has skills within teaching staff team to deliver all aspects of the curriculum but feels that more specialised support for music and art would be helpful.

The current Music VST is employed as a Teacher of Primary to deliver music for the 7 hours per week they are not in the secondary school.

The Headteacher of school 2 also works with Headteacher in school 3 to utilise the current Art VST as a Teacher of Primary to deliver art for 2.5 hours per week.

School 3

Headteacher has skills within teaching staff team to deliver all aspects of the curriculum but feels that more specialised support for PE and art would be helpful.

The existing PE VST is employed as a Teacher of Primary to deliver PE for 21 hours per week.

The Headteacher of school 3 works with Headteacher in school 2 to utilise the current Art VST as a Teacher of Primary to deliver art. This teacher will work 12.5 hours per week in total with 2.5 hours at school 2 and 10 hours at school 3.

