

Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

To: Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

On: 13 June 2017

Review of Teacher Exchange Scheme

Report by the Head of Schools

1. Background

- 1.1. The Teacher Exchange Scheme was introduced as a pilot for school session beginning August 2016 and has been rolled out again for school session beginning August 2017. This report details the evaluation of the pilot scheme undertaken in March – April 2017.
- 1.2. The scheme was designed to offer permanent teachers the opportunity for professional development, and also to support the Council to build capacity within its teaching staff. The scheme was not intended to cover any redeployment situation which may arise from reasonable adjustments being required to be made on medical grounds, or transfers arising exceptionally due to irretrievable relationship breakdown or arising out of disciplinary action.
- 1.3. The scheme is separate to the other policies / agreements that have been agreed at JNC.

2. Evaluation

- 2.1. In session 2016/17 there were 12 applications received, of which 8 were unsuccessful in their applications due to a lack of suitable match. However there were two successful teacher exchanges – one in the primary and one in the secondary sector.
- 2.2. To assess the pilot scheme feedback was sought from those who participated in the exchange process; the head teachers of the exchange schools and also the trade unions. Feedback was sought via 1-1 discussion with all 4 participants and written questionnaires and via questionnaires to head teachers.
- 2.3. The key strengths identified in the process were as follows:-
 - The application process was straightforward and guidance was clear (100% very good)
 - Arrangements for getting to know the new school/HT/Class (75% excellent or very good)
 - The exchange provided an opportunity for professional development and reflection (75% excellent or very good)

- Exchange organisation and arrangements for getting to know your new teacher (100% excellent and very good)
- The exchange experience (75% very good, 25% good)

2.4. A number of areas identified for further improvement were as follows:

- Induction for the exchange participants could be more actively managed in schools e.g. a mentor within the staff team similar to the NQT model
- The need for a formal 'check in' after the first 6 weeks or so just to make sure everything is going well with the placement
- At least 3-5 days of a 'mini' exchange at least 2 weeks before the end of term (for secondary when the timetable changes)
- A Head teacher report prior to the exchange would be helpful, as would information on teaching experience within the application form

3. Implementation

- 3.1. Following on from the feedback, revisions have been made to the policy and application form, which will be implemented for the teacher exchange programme in 2018/19, once approved by the JNC.
- 3.2. It is intended that there will be an annual briefing session for teachers interested in taking part in the scheme. Head teachers will be updated on the revised procedure at a Head teacher's meeting during session 2017/18. The purpose of these sessions is to enhance existing understanding of the scheme and maximise effectiveness when it's implemented.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that JNC approves the revised policy in appendix 1 and application form in appendix 2 of this report.

Renfrewshire Council

Teacher Exchange Scheme

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Teacher Exchange Scheme is designed to offer permanent teachers the opportunity for professional development, and also to support the Council to build capacity within its teaching staff.
- 1.2. The benefits of the teacher exchange scheme include:
 - ✓ Professional development or personal refresh
 - ✓ Develop knowledge in another area and enhance career development
 - ✓ Experience of a different school setting
 - ✓ Experience of a different school ethos
- 1.3 The scheme is for development purposes and it is not intended to cover any redeployment situation which may arise from reasonable adjustments being required to be made on medical grounds, or transfers arising exceptionally due to irretrievable relationship breakdown or arising out of disciplinary action.
- 1.4 The scheme will cover permanent unpromoted teachers who will complete a full evaluation at the end of the exchange. The scheme will continue to be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis by an Education Manager.
- 1.5 This scheme is separate to the other policies / agreements that have been agreed at JNC.
- 1.6 The exchange scheme will be applicable to those on teachers' conditions of service, governed by the SNCT Handbook

2. Eligibility

- 2.1. The requirements for a unpromoted permanent teacher seeking a teacher exchange are:
 - at least 2 years' continuous employment, on a permanent basis within Renfrewshire Council;
 - the exchange should be on a like for like pointage between both unpromoted teachers
 - a supporting statement of suitability and agreement for placement from the head teacher after a professional dialogue, the head teacher should confirm that there are no ongoing formally established competence process underway;

- once an application for exchange is approved, undergo a professional dialogue with the HT of the 'base' school and exchange school;
 - a willingness to teach at any stage if seeking a primary exchange but account will be taken of any desired preference, if possible.
- 2.2. Teachers who are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, and who otherwise meet the criteria set out in paragraph 2.1 above, may apply for an exchange.
- 2.3. For teachers who are about to embark on the final 'signing off' stage of Professional Update during the exchange, the teacher may request an appropriate manager from their base school.
- 2.4. A teacher may apply for up to three individual exchanges within a twenty year service period.
- 2.5. After completion of one exchange the teacher must return to their base school for a period of two years before making a further application.

3. Application, Decision and Appeal

- 3.1. Teachers should submit their application (see attached form) for an exchange to the Head of Schools by the end of March each year for consideration of an exchange in the following session commencing in the August. Thereafter, applicants will have an informal discussion with the education manager (probationer/students).
- 3.2. The process of matching exchange teachers will be managed by the education manager (probationer/students) in conjunction with the head of service.
- 3.3. A match cannot be guaranteed in every case and will depend on the eligibility of all applicants and the needs of schools and the service.
- 3.4. Teachers will be given a written response, setting out the decision in principle normally within four working weeks of application. Where the decision taken has been to refuse the request for an exchange, the council will set out the reasons for this decision in writing. These may include:
- the ability to match subject/pointage/denomination;
 - the ability to meet the needs of the service;
 - the impact on the quality of the service provided;
 - the impact on the performance of the school;
 - planned structural changes.
- 3.5. A teacher who has been granted an exchange and who, prior to the date of commencement, decides not to proceed must give the council four working weeks notice.

- 3.6. Where a teacher has made an application for an exchange and that application has been rejected, the employee may appeal this decision.

The ground for appeal must relate to :

- that the business reason for rejecting the request has not been sufficiently explained;
- the reason for refusal was not related to business reason;
- the manager did not fully consider request;
- the explanation of the business reasons was not correct;

- 3.7 An appeal will be heard by a head of service or nominated officer who had no previous involvement in the exchange agreement, with no further right of appeal.

4. Post Matching

- 4.1. Once a match has been agreed, the exchange will proceed as follows:

- primary teachers will go to their exchange schools for one day per week over a four week period (or in the case of part time teachers on a pre-agreed date) in May / June in order to get to know the exchange school by undertaking a programme of suggested activities there.
- Teachers and head teachers will work together to ensure that any time commitments fall within the teachers own school's working time agreement. Any time spent in the exchange school over and above this collegiate time can be counted as annual CPD;
- the class teacher in each school will continue to plan for her / his own class for the agreed days;
- any matters arising from teachers or head teachers during the course of the agreed days can be discussed in the first instance with the education manager;
- a secondary teacher's exchange may follow the above pattern, depending on the timetable requirements of both schools. Individual arrangements may require to be put in place.

5. The Exchange

- 5.1. The full time exchange will take place for a school session from the start of the session in August. In the case of a secondary teacher it may occur at the change of timetable should that be earlier.
- 5.2. The exchange teacher will plan for their exchange class/es for this period and will assess and evaluate as required by the exchange school.

- 5.3. Teachers on exchange will be expected to work within the exchange school's working time agreement, school policies and practices together with council policies.
- 5.4. The education manager will contact both the headteacher and teacher within 6 weeks of the start of the exchange to ensure everything is going well with the placement. Any matters arising from teachers or head teachers following this should be discussed in the first instance with the education manager.
- 5.5. Where possible, the headteacher should appoint a member of staff to 'mentor' the exchange teacher to ensure they are fully inducted and supported during the exchange.
- 5.6. At the end of the exchange, teachers should be willing to produce an informal verbal or a short written report of their experience, detailing how it has enhanced their professional development and how they believe the experience has benefitted the exchange school. A number of staff will be invited to share their reports at authority level.

6. Line Manager during Exchange

- 6.1 During the period of exchange the Head Teacher of the school in which the teacher is working for the duration of the exchange shall be deemed to be the teacher's line manager.

7. Conditions of Service

- 7.1 There will be no effect on pay, including any conservation of salary, incremental progression where it applies, or contractual status. The exchange will be treated as continuous service for statutory and contractual purposes.
- 7.2 There will be no entitlement to claim excess travel expenses.
- 7.3 The majority of the annual CPD plan will be agreed with the exchange school prior to the start of the academic session.
- 7.4 As the exchange is for a year, a teacher will follow the parents' reporting and meeting arrangements in her/his exchange school.
- 7.5 The teacher will be entitled to apply for early return from an exchange should there be unforeseen/exceptional difficulties which cannot be resolved satisfactorily. In these circumstances, the teacher should contact the education manager, with every effort made to resolve matters through discussion with all relevant parties e.g. teacher; head teacher; trade union; human resources; children's services management

7.6 A teacher will return to the post which s/he held prior to the exchange. However, if the exchange ends earlier than anticipated, return to the base school may not be possible until the end of the session. In these circumstances, the most suitable arrangements for an individual teacher will be sought e.g. if a primary teacher - a long term temp was available, then the teacher would be placed in this (temporary teacher then backfills this post). But if nothing long term, offer short term cover.

8. Contact with Base School during Exchange Period and Preparation for Return

8.1 Prior to the commencement of an exchange, the head teacher / manager and the teacher will meet to agree the nature and frequency of contact with the base school.

8.2 The head teacher / manager will in the later stages of exchange (i.e. from April) advise the teacher of any in-service, staff / dept / stage meeting or CPD course which teachers in base school will be undertaking and which might be helpful to the teacher prior to her /his return.

8.3 Towards the end of the exchange year, teachers who have been exchange partners will exchange their classes for a maximum of four days (or in the case of part time teachers on a pre-agreed day) in May / June in order to re-familiarise themselves with their home school. The teacher in each school will continue to plan for her / his own (exchange school) classes/ for these days. Timetable requirements in secondary schools may require a more individualised arrangement to be made for secondary teachers. Those who began exchanges early may need to return to their base schools before the end of session.

Renfrewshire Council
Application for Teacher Exchange (Revised)

Name:	
Home Address:	
E-mail Address:	
Contact telephone number:	
Name & Address of existing school:	
Post held:	
Date of Commencement of permanent employment within Renfrewshire Council:	
Current pointage (e.g. 1.0fte)	
Current Stage (if primary e.g. P3)	
Have you previously been on a teacher exchange ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes state when and duration No <input type="checkbox"/>

Teaching Experience:

Please provide a brief summary of your teaching experience to date:

Exchange Details:

Identify professional development benefits	
School(s) into which you wish to exchange (account will be taken of any desired preference, if possible)	
I certify that the information which I have given in this application form is true and complete. I have read the conditions under which a teacher exchange arrangement is granted and I agree to abide by these conditions. I understand that any incorrect or inaccurate information supplied by me in this form shall render my teacher exchange null and void.	
Signed:	Date:

**Reason for Applying for Teacher Exchange
(Identify any specialist skills you may have)**

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(please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

**Head Teacher's supporting statement of suitability and agreement for placement
(confirming that there is no ongoing formally established competence process underway).**

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Signed (Applicant): _____

Date: _____

Signed (Head Teacher): _____

Date application received: _____

Applications to be returned to Gordon McKinlay, Head of Schools, by

Approval to be completed by Education Service Manager

I approve the Teacher Exchange Application

I do not approve the Teacher Exchange Application

Signed:

Date: