



Absence Cover Pilot

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following discussions within the JNCC it has been decided to proceed with a pilot project designed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of absence cover in secondary schools. The pilot will be based in Biggar High School in the Clydesdale area.
- 1.2 The project will involve seconding 3 staff from existing area cover into the school. At the staffing exercise, these staff will be shown as being additional to core entitlement.
- 1.3 The pilot will operate from October 2008 until June 2010, thus guaranteeing the staff involved the stability of working in one school.
- 1.4 If a decision is taken not to extend the pilot then the staff involved will move back into area cover.
- 1.5 This approach will bring an additional 75 periods of cover availability to the school.

2. Personnel involved

- 2.1 The Headteacher of the school will draw up a list of departmental areas where the placement of an additional teacher would be beneficial and acceptable to other staff.
- 2.2 The opportunity to become involved in the pilot will be offered, in the first instance, to area cover staff whose base school is in the Clydesdale area.
- 2.3 Applicants who express an interest will be interviewed in all instances for the available posts. The panel will be chaired by the Headteacher of Biggar High School.
- 2.4 If there is insufficient interest from this group of staff the opportunity to become involved will be extended to all area cover staff in South Lanarkshire.
- 2.5 Again, all applicants will be required to participate in an interview process.

3. Operational issues

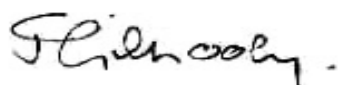
- 3.1 The area cover staff disaggregated as part of this pilot will be required to provide absence cover for up to 13 periods per calendar week.
- 3.2 The staff involved will be provided with a subject based timetable for 12 periods per week.

- 3.3 Other staff in a department who gain time as a result of the arrival of the new member of staff will be required to undertake more absence cover within the school
- 3.4 No other cover will normally be made available to the school for the first 20 days of any absence.
- 3.5 A situation will be deemed 'abnormal' when the sickness rate in the school is in excess of 10% of the teaching complement.
- 3.6 After the initial 20 day period centrally funded cover will be provided.
- 3.7 Cover will be provided, if available from the first day of maternity leaves.
- 3.8 For the purposes of identifying surplus staff during the pilot, the additional disaggregated staff will be considered separately. Calculations to identify surplus staff will be based on the core staffing entitlement of the school.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

- 4.1 The pilot will be monitored on an ongoing basis and more fully in June 2010.
- 4.2 The school will be required to keep a careful note of the precise nature of all absences and to ensure that they are coded correctly. Generally, 'non attendance' will be categorised as being due to: sickness, CPD or other
- 4.3 This careful recording of absence will be necessary to ensure the appropriate application of the 10% absence rule for the provision of centrally funded cover.
- 4.4 At the end of the pilot, all staff in the school will be asked their views on the success or otherwise of the project.
- 4.5 The views of other head teachers in the Clydesdale area will be sought to determine the impact of the pilot.
- 4.6 At the end of the pilot various existing agreements may be reviewed by the JNCC.

Joint Chairs of the South Lanarkshire JNCC



**Depute Director of Education Resources
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