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**REPORT TO: SPECIAL EDUCATION CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 27 MARCH 2024**

**SUBJECT: FEDERATION POLICY FOR SCHOOLS**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND  
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval to scrutinise the reviewed policy and adopt this for future vacancies across schools.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee considers and agrees to:
  - i) acknowledge work to date and agree the reviewed Federation Headteacher Policy to be adopted for schools; and
  - ii) delegate authority to the Chief Education Officer, working with the Business Support Team Manager and the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers, to create a linear formula for management structure and staffing for any federation models and to review this regularly;
  - iii) adopt this policy for any future vacancies across schools from 1 April 2024;
  - iv) adopt option 6 management structure for the new pairing for St Sylvester's and East End;
  - v) adopt option 2 management structure for the new executive model for Newmill, Botriphnie and Rothiemay; and

**vi) instruct officers to review the current pilot across Milne's High School and Milne's Primary to bring back a report by the end of academic session 2024/25 regarding 5-18 campus model.**

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 As part of a review of Leadership and Management arrangements in Primary Schools in 2016, the Federation Headteacher Policy for Primary Schools was originally presented to the Children and Young People's Services Committee on 27 April 2016 (para 8 of minute refers) where changes to the proposed policy were made and Committee instructed the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to share the revised policy with the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) once these amendments had been made.
- 3.2 A subsequent update report was then taken to the Children and Young People's Services Committee on 22 June 2016 (para 14 of minute refers). At this time, it was also agreed to a full review of the Devolved School Management Scheme (DSM) to take place to consider management time for Depute Head Teacher (DHT) and Principal Teacher (PT) posts subject to funding being made available. Due to budgetary decisions subsequently taken, this was never implemented. The Paired Head Teacher Model for Primary Schools has since been the policy followed and implemented to date.
- 3.3 Following this meeting, many changes have been made to the DSM scheme for budgetary reasons as well as being relevant to leadership and management arrangements. A report was taken to the Emergency Cabinet on 14 May 2020 (para 7 of minute refers) to take account of updates to the scheme given budget decisions from 2014. In addition, changes were being made where nursery pupils were removed from calculations for school roll due to a new management structure for Early Learning and Childcare due to the implementation of 1140 hours. At this time, Committee agreed to three linear formulae (for staffing and management allocations) to be implemented in August 2020 for Primary Schools i.e.:
- for schools with no enhanced provision
  - for schools with an enhanced provision
  - for schools with paired head teacher arrangements
- 3.4 Changes to DSM at this time had to be cost neutral in order to avoid budget pressures. This decision superseded the desire in June 2016 to consider management time for Principal Teachers (PTs) and Depute Head Teachers (DHTs). Management arrangements agreed at this time were as follows:
- DHT in non-enhanced provision – 0.4 management time, 0.6 class commitment;
  - DHT in enhanced provision – 0.6 management time, 0.4 class commitment, to take account of the demands of child's planning

processes and management of support staff. This was budgeted for through removal of the PT post in enhanced provision schools from DSM allocation. Schools received PT ASN through ASN allocation;

- PT in paired schools received 10 days of management time over the course of the year through DSM allocation.

3.5 As a result of the adoption of the paired Head Teacher policy (**Appendix 1**) and in line with section 2.2, where there was a vacancy in a school with fewer than 145 pupils the post of Head Teacher was advertised as a single post initially and where there was difficulty in filling the post, a paired headship was considered. Five pairings were put in place across 10 primary schools:

- Newmill and Botriphnie (Keith Associated Schools Group)
- Rothiemay and Crossroads (Keith Associated Schools Group)
- Glenlivet and Tomintoul (Speyside Associated Schools Group)
- Knockando and Inveravon (Speyside Associated Schools Group)
- Portgordon and Portnockie (Buckie Associated Schools Group)

3.6 Of the 5 pairings, Crossroads primary has been mothballed as well as Inveravon which has now been closed following approval by Moray Council at their meeting on 24 May 2023 (para 12 of minute refers). The post of paired Head Teacher has become a normality across Scotland and a viable career path for Head Teachers who have a passion for leading small schools in particular. Research has been undertaken by Aberdeen University at the request of the Northern Alliance and provides evidence of the success of this leadership post within Education (see background papers).

3.7 Appointments to Head Teacher posts in Moray have been historically problematic with many posts being re-advertised multiple times. The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCs) also requires Head Teachers to hold the Standard for Headship by undertaking appropriate qualifications including Into Headship. Appointment on a permanent basis to a Head Teacher post is conditional with candidates requiring to hold a necessary Scottish or equivalent qualification.

3.8 Looking back over last school academic session (2022-23) 8 Acting HT posts have been advertised 3 of which have been re-advertised with 2 of these still being vacant. Officers had to initiate exigencies of the service for one post with a Depute Head Teacher (DHT) from another school in the Associated Schools Group (ASG) providing support until the post is filled on a permanent basis. Since August 2022, 6 permanent HT posts have been advertised with 3 being re-advertised. Two posts remain unfilled and are currently re-advertised on a permanent basis.

3.9 In the current session 2023/24 there are currently the following number of HT vacancies:

- St Peter's Primary School, Buckie, currently has no HT, permanent post been advertised once internally and 4 times externally. The most recent Acting HT has taken up a permanent DHT post elsewhere in Moray. Further to additional advertisements and in discussion with the local priest and Diocese, exigencies of the service have been enacted and an interim pairing is in place with the HT of St Thomas Primary School in Keith.
- Milne's Primary School, Fochabers has been vacant since August 2023 and has been advertised 2 times internally and once externally. A HT was redeployed from their post as Acting HT however has returned to their substantive post in January 2024. Using Exigencies of the Service, officers have put in place an Acting 3-18 campus arrangement with the Head Teacher at Milne's High School.
- Burghead Primary School, Burghead has been advertised externally (3 times) and internally (3 times) with exigencies of the service being enacted to put in place an Acting Head Teacher (DHT from another school) for 23 months.
- Dyke Primary School, Forres has been advertised externally once with no appointment. The current Head Teacher leaves post at the end of this session. The parent council are currently considering a video to supplement the advert.
- St Sylvester's primary has been advertised 4 times externally and 2 times internally. An extended acting HT arrangement is in place.
- Rothiemay primary has been vacant since 2022 and has not been advertised externally and once internally. An extended acting HT arrangement is in place.
- There are acting Head Teachers at Greenwards, Lhanbryde and Rothiemay Primaries. In order to support an Acting Head Teacher appointment at Greenwards Primary, an interim pairing has been put in place (exigencies of the service) at Logie and Dallas Primary Schools.

3.10 The principles of the current Paired Head Teacher Model are as follows:

- A school will only be paired with another school from within its Associated school group so that the Head Teacher links with one secondary school;
- The headteachers in both schools identified for pairing have a class commitment;
- The roll projections for both schools identified for pairing are such that the headteachers will remain class committed for the foreseeable future;

3.11 In addition, there will be factors which lead to a decision not to proceed with a paired model. These would include:

- Despite being in the same ASG, the proximity of the two schools is regarded as an issue;
  - The school with the vacancy is deemed to require short-term additional headteacher input beyond that available from a paired headteacher;
  - The school which does not have the vacancy has particular difficulties which would make pairing unwise.
- \* The only exception to this would be a denominational school where discussions would include representatives of the Roman Catholic Church.

3.12 Given that the service continues to face challenges in recruiting Head Teachers, particularly in primary, and given the number of alternative arrangements currently in place which are outwith policy it is proposed to move from a Paired Head Teacher policy to that of a wider Federation policy to allow for the following:

- Paired headships to be considered when a vacancy occurs for two primary schools where each Head Teacher is currently class committed;
- Paired headships to be considered when a vacancy occurs for two primary schools where one head teacher is class committed and one is not ie a larger school and smaller school;
- Executive or multiple pairings (i.e. more than 2 schools) can be considered where a vacancy occurs in an Associated Schools Group (ASG) where a pairing already exists and the Head Teacher has a class commitment;
- Paired headships are considered where a vacancy occurs in denominational schools with the pairing across 2 ASGs;
- That delegated authority is provided to the Chief Education Officer and Business Support Team Manager to consider an initial management structure for any new arrangements with the view to remaining cost neutral;
- Subsequently the linear formula for pairings will be extended to include larger and smaller schools as well as multiple pairings;
- The Chief Education officer will have delegated authority to consider federation arrangements when any vacancy occurs in order to reduce exigencies of the service and to support permanent leadership arrangements in schools in Moray.

3.13 It is proposed to adopt the following principles moving forwards in a new Federation Policy for Head Teachers as follows:

- A school will be paired with another school from within its ASG so that the Head Teacher links with one secondary school, except where any pairing is of denominational schools.

- A multiple school model is considered where a pairing already exists in the Associated Schools Group. This would be an executive or multiple pairing model. This federation can be used for up to a maximum of 4 schools.
- The headteachers in schools identified for pairing will normally have a class commitment .
- A school will be paired with another where the headteacher in one school is class-committed but the other is non class-committed and either all other schools have been paired in ASG or the distance between schools is too great (ie a pairing between a smaller school and a larger school).
- Where possible the schools considered for executive/multiple models as part of the federation policy should be relatively close in proximity to each other. This may not be possible in some rural areas.

3.14 Other factors to take into consideration are the small numbers of teachers who either hold the standard for headship qualification or are actively working towards this as a Professional Development Activity. The table below provides information on how many colleagues in Moray have studied into headship and how many of them are now in HT posts.

<b>Session</b>	<b>No in Into Headship</b>	<b>No passed</b>	<b>No in HT posts</b>
2023/24	2	2 on track to pass	1 (Permanent when passed I2H programme in July 2024)
2022/23	4	4	1 (Acting)
2021/22	8	7	4
2020/21	4	4	3

- 3.15 In addition, the service has, post Covid, restarted the leadership and management courses for those colleagues who are actively seeking a senior leadership post in Moray. There is currently 6 on the leadership course and over 20 on the management one. These courses have previously been successful as a stepping stone to a promoted post across Primary and Secondary.
- 3.16 Of the posts which are hard to fill, denominational schools are included in this list. The Chief Education Officer has communicated with the Director of the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) to discuss concerns regarding the appointment of denominational Head Teachers. This is a concern not only in Moray but across Scotland and further meetings are planned to explore this further.
- 3.17 Taking all the background into consideration, the Education service has considered a wide range of factors in order to review the current policy in operation (Paired Head Teacher Model) and to replace with a Federation Head Teacher policy (**Appendix 2**).

3.18 It is requested that Committee agree the new policy and that this should be used for vacancies which occur from 1 April 2024. In addition, the Education Service requests that the following interim arrangements are formalised as well as proposed new model(s) as follows:

- The interim arrangement for St Peter's, Buckie and St Thomas, Keith is formalised as a pairing;
- That the service creates a pairing between East End Primary and St Sylvester's primary (non-class committed HT and class-committed HT);
- That an executive/multiple pairing is put in place with the current pairing of Newmill and Botriphnie with the vacant Rothiemay Primary.

**Appendix 3** provides possible options for management structures for the latter 2 proposals with recommendations from officers being Option 6 for the new pairing and Option 3 for the executive/multiple pairing option as there is no current linear formula. Officers will develop this for any new models moving forwards.

3.19 Option 6 is recommended for the pairing between East End and St Sylvester's. The reason for this is it adds capacity in each school and although a cost to the Council, this provides stability in leadership across both schools where we are experiencing difficulties in recruiting to denominational schools. This is not a Moray issue but one which is being seen nationally too. There are risks associated with not considering a federation model at this time with regards to securing leadership and management arrangements in the longer term for St Sylvester's which has had interim arrangements for some time. This will impact on capacity to improve, self-evaluation gradings and any potential HMle inspection. The Service firmly believes that the option proposed provides the minimum requirements in terms of leadership arrangements and structure to support longer term improvement and stability.

3.19 There is currently a 5-18 campus model in place at Milne's High School and Milne's Primary School. Officers would like to review this pilot over the course of the next session with a view to taking a paper back to Committee in future to consider and recommend a future policy on 5-18 Campus model in Moray.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

This report was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan and in particular to Our People, Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.

##### **(b) Policy and Legal**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

**(c) Financial implications**

The preferred Federation model (Option 2) at Rothiemay will result in:  
Removal of HT at Rothiemay (£63,879).

Job-sizing of HT for Federation Model (£93,115 with oncosts).

Increase management time for all 3 PTs across the federation model to 20 days.

Resulting in a net saving across the Federation of £21,921.

The preferred Federation model at St Sylvester's and East End Primary (Option 6) will result in:

- Removal of HT at St Sylvester's (£68,265 net of oncosts).
- Job Sizing of HT for Federation Model (£103,898 with oncosts).
- Increase management at East End to non class committed DHT
- Addition of a class committed DHT at St Sylvester's
- Resulting in a net increase across the Federation of (£26,008).

*Corporate Management Team Additional Expenditure Warning  
When the Council approved the budget for 2023/24 on 1 March 2023 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers) it balanced only by using reserves and one-off financial flexibilities. The indicative 3 year budget showed a likely requirement to continue to make savings in the order of £20 million in the next two years. All financial decisions must be made in this context and only essential additional expenditure should be agreed in the course of the year. In making this determination the committee should consider whether the financial risk to the Council of incurring additional expenditure outweighs the risk to the Council of not incurring that expenditure, as set out in the risk section below and whether a decision on funding could reasonably be deferred until the budget for future years is approved.*

*The balance of the additional cost for one federation model against the reduction of cost of the other, leaves a residual balance of £4k which will be funded from the central Education budget, giving no cost to the Council at this time.*

**(d) Risk Implications**

The change to policy will reduce the number of HT posts in Moray however with posts vacant and unfilled the move to federation or additional paired headships will mitigate gaps in leadership and management with existing head teachers providing leadership across more than one school. There is significant risk to the leadership and management of denominational schools if the suggested federation does not go ahead as we are unable to fill these posts on a permanent basis



which will have an impact on the improvement journey, capacity to improve and any pending inspection by HMle.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

If a federation model is supported, it would require an additional PT in one school. There would be a requirement for additional teaching time given the increased management time for the 3 PTs from 10 to 20 days per year. Given that at the moment the HT in Rothiemay has a class commitment as a single teacher school, this would be backfilled with a PT.

**(f) Property**

There are no property issues arising from this report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

There are no implications arising directly from this report, however, equalities impacts and considerations have been taken into account in the previous deployment of resources to support the covid impacts and would be factored into any development of options directed by the committee beyond the budget pressures set out.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

None.

**(i) Consultations**

The Head of Education Resources and Communities, the Head of Financial Services, Head of HR, ICT and OD, Quality Improvement Managers, LNCT joint secretaries, Education consultative group and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer, have been consulted on this report and agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 Securing stable and high quality leadership across schools in Moray is a key priority in order to ensure that schools are well led, managed and that the needs of learners are met. With increasing difficulties being experienced in recruiting to posts, it is vital that any policy reduces the number of times exigencies of the service are enacted so that there is continuity in leadership and management across the school estate.**

Author of Report: Vivienne Cross, Head of Education  
Background Papers: Northern Alliance Research on Paired Headships  
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