

FEDERATION HEADTEACHER POLICY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

1 Background and Rationale

In Moray the Senior Management Team in Education and Social Care agrees with the evidence from research that the key to school improvement is the quality of our staff and particularly the development of the skills and talents of our headteachers and teaching staff. In order to allow this development and to ensure it is undertaken in a comprehensive, planned and systematic manner, it is vital that schools have high quality headteachers who are clearly leaders and specifically leaders of learning. We see the paired headteacher, executive or multiple pairing (ie more than 2 school) models as a way of releasing headteachers from an on-going class commitment so that they can lead and focus on their own development and that of their staff, in order to improve the outcomes for children and young people in Moray. Therefore, from a research-based and philosophical standpoint we recommend the federation models. As part of our Schools for the Future Policy, federation models are suggestions when recommending the sustainability of a school for the future.

However, from a pragmatic and practical point of view, we acknowledge that there is a small, but significant, counterweight to the above. As we are a small rural authority with a limited number of staff applying for senior posts, we need to keep options open for those staff who might aspire to senior positions.

As a result of the above we need to be flexible in our approach in order to ensure we have high quality leaders in headteacher posts. Ideally, to strengthen leadership and management in our schools, we aim eventually to have no class-committed headteachers in Moray. The Children and Young People's Services Committee agreed to consider pairings as vacancies arise. Federation models would provide further leadership opportunities with Principal Teacher and Depute Headteacher posts.

When federation models are created the schools will retain their individual identities and operate as single schools where possible. Each will retain its uniqueness with a curriculum, uniform and identity to suit their local context and community. The headteacher may consider and plan opportunities for staff to work together if shared priorities exist across the schools. Joint planning, moderation or assessment practices will provide opportunities for staff to have a stage partner which is not possible within their own school.

It will be at the discretion of the headteacher and in discussion with staff, pupils and each parent council whether joint trips or joint events take place. Each school will retain its own pupil Council and parent Council. These things may evolve as the pairing develops. At the moment each school will retain its own budget. The Schools for the Future Policy recommends one budget across the federation but this will need to be considered when the Devolved School Management Budget is reviewed.

2 Aims and Outcomes

This policy sets out the principles/selection criteria and processes when considering a pairing, executive or multiple pairing model in primary schools under one headteacher.

3 Principles for Federation

A pairing can be considered either when a headteacher post falls vacant or as a result of a recommendation as part of a Schools for the Future Review visit.

Suitability will be determined on the basis of the following:

- A school will only be paired with another school from within its Associated School Group so that the headteacher 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
- The headteacher in one of the paired schools is non-class committed but the other is class committed and all other schools have already been paired (ie an executive model with a larger school and a smaller school). A separate paper will be required to inform Committee and request authority to proceed or not with the proposal.
- A multiple school model is considered where a pairing already exists in the Associated School group. This would be a federation of up to a maximum of 4 schools. Should this be the case then a separate paper will be required to inform Committee and request authority to proceed or not with the proposal.
- A multiple school model can be considered where 3 or more vacancies exist at one time or there is a vacancy in a paired school and either one or two other schools with headteachers who are either class committed or non class committed
- Where possible the schools considered as a federation model should be relatively close in proximity to each other. This may not be possible in some rural areas.

* The only exception to this would be a denominational school where discussions would include representatives of the Roman Catholic Church.

4 Appointment Processes for Federation Models

- 4.1 When a vacancy occurs for a class-committed headteacher post, the post should be advertised in the first instance. Should the post not be filled after one advert then possible pairings or executive model will be considered within the Associated Schools Group in the first instance. If a pairing is possible, the initial step will be to offer the remaining substantive headteacher an interview for the paired headteacher post. If the substantive postholder declines the offer of an interview, this will be dealt with under agreed staffing policies of the Council.

Where a substantive headteacher is not successful at interview and not appointed, the post will be subject to appointment via agreed appointment procedures.

- 4.2 When a vacancy arises for a class-committed headteacher post and a pairing already exists with the Associated Schools Group, consideration should be given to a multiple pairing model with a paper going to Committee with the proposal for agreement.
- 4.3 If vacancies arise in more than one school in an Associated Schools Group and pairing of these schools meets the selection criteria, this should be advertised as a paired headteacher post.
- 4.4 Parent participation in appointment processes are dealt with in the Headteacher and Depute appointment policy.
- 4.5 When a new pairing is created, the Headteacher will liaise with the Business Support Team to advertise and appoint the Principal Teacher posts. This will further enhance leadership capacity across the schools.
- 4.6 Where an executive model is considered, the Committee paper should outline the leadership arrangements which may include one or 2 DHT posts where appropriate.

5 Consultation Processes for Federation Models

- 5.1 Once a vacancy arises, the Head of Schools and Curriculum Development, the Business Support Team Manager and Quality Improvement Officer for the Associated Schools Group should consider federation model arrangements. This should be shared with the Education and Social Care Senior Management Team. If an executive or multiple pairing model is considered, this should result in a paper to Committee providing full information including management structure and requesting approval for this to be considered. If approval is granted by Committee then the following steps would be put into place.
- 5.2 The Quality Improvement Officer should inform Ward members as well as the Chair and Vice Chair of Children and Young People's Services Committee.
- 5.3 Where a pairing is considered with a school which has a substantive Headteacher, they will be consulted in the first instance so that they can accept the invitation to interview or decline the opportunity.
- 5.4 The parent council of each school should be visited by officers so that they can be informed of the proposed pairing or executive model being considered.
- 5.5 Officers should visit staff in each school to inform them of the pairing and changes to leadership and management arrangements when this goes ahead. Information should be provided about staffing policies and procedures should a Principal Teacher be appointed who is not on the current

staff.

- 5.6 In order to inform pupils of the new arrangements, children from an existing pairing should visit each school so that they can hear from their peers how the pairing has worked for them. They should be joined by their headteacher.
- 5.7 Once all consultations have been completed a letter should be sent to all parents/carers/parent council chairs and staff to inform them about the pairing or executive model and when this will take effect.

6 Review Date

This policy will be reviewed as and when required or within five years if no changes have been made by this point.