

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 23 MARCH 2004

A TEACHING PROFESSION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY REDUCTION OF CLASS CONTACT WEEK FOR PRIMARY TEACHING STAFF

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to outline the models of employing additional teaching staff in Primary Schools in order to meet the requirements of the Scottish Executive document "A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century" (TP21).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Within East Ayrshire, significant progress has been made to meet the requirements of TP21. Previous papers approved by the Education Committee have dealt with revised school management structures, job sizing, the introduction of Chartered Teachers, the revised scheme for Probationer Teachers and the introduction of additional support staff. This paper deals with another key element of TP21 – the reduction of the class contact week for primary teachers.
- 2.2 TP21 indicated that the class contact hours for primary teachers would be reduced to 23.5 hours per week from August 2004. Further, the class contact hours for these teachers would be reduced to 22.5 hours per week from August 2006. This will reduce the class contact week for primary teachers to the same level as that for secondary teachers; this has been negotiated and agreed as part of the national conditions of service for teachers.
- 2.3 This now requires local authorities to make significant investment in additional teaching staff through the financial allocations provided by the Scottish Executive to meet the implementation of TP21.

3. ADDITIONAL TEACHING STAFF

- 3.1 In order to determine the level of additional teaching staff required in each establishment, the following process will apply:
 - The staffing complement for each establishment will be determined by Teacher's Personnel Section by applying the revised class contact hours arrangements. This will provide the full-time equivalent (FTE) required in overall terms and for each establishment; this will normally mean an increase in teacher FTE per establishment, subject to the normal calculations based on school roll etc.

- Additional teaching staff will be recruited from the following sources:
 - East Ayrshire Permanent supply teacher pool.
 - East Ayrshire Temporary supply teacher pool.
 - Teachers completing their probationary period in East Ayrshire.
 - By open advertisement.

3.2 Significant work has been undertaken with each primary establishment on the requirements for additional teachers. It is anticipated that the following additional teaching staff are required:

- August 2004 – 32.6 FTE
- August 2006 – 23.9 FTE approximately

3.3 Each primary establishment is effectively having an increase in staffing complement, subject to the revised calculations with regard to school roll etc. The additional teaching staff may be allocated across a number of schools, depending on the model of staffing being applied in each school. These teachers will be allocated contracts with a clear statement regarding their place(s) of work, consistent with the normal practice in the authority.

3.4 The impact of the reduction in class contact hours on Pre 5 classes and establishments is still being discussed. A further paper concerning this matter will be brought before the Education Committee in due course.

4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This significant investment in additional teaching support will be funded by the ring-fenced additional resources allocated to East Ayrshire Council by the Scottish Executive to implement TP21.

There will be no additional funding demands on East Ayrshire.

4.2 Full consultation has taken place with Heads of Establishments and Trade Union colleagues and this will be continued with regard to the detailed implementation of this policy.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the additional teaching staff for August 2004 as outlined in section 3 above;
- (ii) Approve the additional teaching staff for August 2006 as outlined in section 3 above; and
- (ii) Otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

JMcC/EO'N
16/03/04

List of Background Papers

A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century, Scottish Executive

Members requiring further information should contact John McCarney, Head of Service – Schools Support Tel: (01563) 555631 or Janice Shaw, Personnel Manager (Schools) Tel: (01563) 576045

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**A TEACHING PROFESSION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
GUIDELINES ON THE REDUCTION OF THE CLASS CONTACT WEEK
FOR PRIMARY TEACHING STAFF**

1. INTRODUCTION

A Working Group commenced work in October 2003 and completed its business in March 2004. A number of possible models for the use of additional teachers in primary establishments were considered. The additional teaching staff are required in order to reduce the class contact week for primary teachers from the current 25 hours per week to 23.5 hours per week from August 2004 and 22.5 hours per week from August 2006.

2. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE REDUCTION OF CLASS CONTACT HOURS

2.1 The reduction in class contact hours means that a key issue is how teachers are to be released and their classes covered in a meaningful manner. The current norm in primary schools is that of the same teacher taking a class for the whole week. Currently, even when specialist teachers are brought in the normal class teacher usually stays with the class. However, the reduction in class contact time makes it inevitable that pupils will have some elements of the curriculum taught by another teacher. Thus, the crucial issue is how this change will enhance the learning and teaching of pupils.

It is vital to keep the learning and teaching of our pupils to the forefront. Pupils can benefit from interaction with a wider collection of adults and experience a wider variety of teaching styles. Pupils may also benefit from the expertise of teachers with specialisms, if this model is preferred. However, continuity and progression for the child remains vital and careful whole school planning will be required. It will also be necessary to change the perception held by teachers, pupils and parents that one teacher is responsible for the complete learning experiences of the child.

The new scenario does not mean that the class teacher is being released by another teacher, who then does the work left by the class teacher. The additional teaching staff must not be regarded as "supply cover" for existing class teachers. All teachers must take full responsibility for the area(s) that they are teaching, from planning through to assessment and evaluation.

The non-contact time may not always be provided in a block of 1.5 hours. Each school will operate a timetable to suit its own needs. However, it is recommended that the smallest block of non-contact time should be 30 minutes.

2.2 The following key points should be noted:

- The model for small schools may be different to that of larger schools.
- All teaching staff must have their class contact hours reduced to 23.5 hours and 22.5 hours per week respectively in August 2004 and August 2006. This reduction in class contact hours should be applied pro-rata to all staff who have a teaching role.
- If teachers with a specialism are teaching a particular class, the class teacher should continue to have an overview of that specialist area within his/her professional duties.
- Reporting to parents will be the responsibility of all teachers in terms of their detailed remit. Each school will agree appropriate arrangements for reporting to parents.
- Class contact hours for an individual teacher should not exceed the specified limits. Class contact hours can not be counted on a termly or annual basis.
- Arrangements must be made within the 35 hour working week for consultation/discussion time between teachers who are sharing a class.
- Timetabling will have to be structured to ensure there is a balanced curriculum for all pupils.
- Timetabling will have to ensure that pupils have the minimum of disruption with regard to timetables and different staff teaching them.

3. POTENTIAL MODELS FOR REDUCING CLASS CONTACT HOURS

3.1 Primary Teachers Working Across all areas of the Curriculum

Some schools may wish to have all of their teachers working across all stages of the school and all curricular areas. Teachers would be allocated to carry out normal classroom duties in co-operation with the normal class teacher. However, no teacher should be expected to have a timetable which consists solely of 1.5 hour blocks of teaching time with a number of different classes.

3.2 Primary Teachers with Specialisms

A number of primary teachers either have additional specialist qualifications or an interest in teaching an area of specialism. These teachers might work in the area of their specialism, but would also be available for teaching all other areas of the curriculum. In order to enhance learning and teaching in the primary sector, the required specialisms may focus on curricular areas such as Science, PE, Expressive Arts, Modern Languages, etc.

A variation on the above model is for these teachers with a specialism to teach that area only. This model may focus more normally on upper primary and the teachers would only be involved in teaching their specialism. However, they are fully qualified primary teachers and could be applied to teach all areas of the curriculum if need be.

3.3 Secondary Specialist Teachers

A number of schools may wish to use secondary teachers to teach specialist areas. This is more likely to apply in P6 and P7, with particular reference to areas such as

Science etc, and are subject to the normal GTC requirements. The use of these teachers must be discussed via the secondary school in the Learning Partnership. Where teachers from the secondary school are employed in the primary school, the appropriate resources for staffing must be negotiated between the primary school and the secondary school.

3.4 Use of Assembly

It may be possible to use a whole school Assembly to provide some of the reduction in class contact time for staff. This would allow staff time to work in their class/base, to work together if they wish or to provide more staff time for activities such as learning support, relevant work, etc. If holding an Assembly, the Head Teacher must ensure that sufficient staff are available to supervise pupils in a safe manner and that all Health and Safety requirements are met.

3.5 Consultation

The Head Teacher should consult with the staff in the school to discuss the potential models for reducing class contact hours.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The above offers a number of possible models. However, each school will operate a timetable according to their needs and will have to identify the requirements of their teaching staff. Thus, it is not anticipated that all school will operate the same model, but that there may be a number of models operating across the authority. Full consideration should be given to collaboration with partner primary and secondary schools within the Learning Partnership.

Background Papers

Timetabling in Primary Schools, Teachers Agreement Communications Team Briefing Paper,
October 2003

John McCarney
Head of Service: Schools Support

March 2004