



Our Ref MW/IMcD
Your Ref

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To: Parent Council Chairs

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Dear Parent Council Chair

Recruitment and Deployment of Teachers

I am aware that Recruitment and Deployment of Teachers is a topic being discussed at Parent Councils across Aberdeenshire and I write to you to outline the ways in which the Education, Learning & Leisure Service is progressing developments in this area.

There is an increasing concern across Scotland about the recruitment and deployment of teachers. Some particular subjects are more difficult than others but the concern is expressed across all education sectors and subjects. The position in Aberdeenshire is even more acute.

The Education Learning and Leisure Service has utilised the usual cohort of permanent supply staff to cover both long and short term absences although they would normally only cover short term absences.

Currently there are 68 teacher posts advertised in both fixed term and permanent contract status.

Recruiting teaching staff is the highest priority at the moment. We are undertaking a number of initiatives. We are looking at migrating temporary staff with sufficient service in current positions onto permanent staff and offering permanent contracts, in particular temporary posts that have not received any applications.

We have recently offered the opportunity for secondments into class teaching posts to teachers who work in an area specific post, such as Support for Learning.

We are continuing to recruit supply staff and are currently encouraging any staff who are retiring and staying in the area to take up a relief/supply contract.

29 registered agency staff, from Ireland and Canada are working within Aberdeenshire. We are also encouraging all current probationer posts (105 approximately) to continue their careers in Aberdeenshire by highlighting appropriate relocation allowances available to staff.

To ensure that young people do not suffer schools are providing additional teaching sessions to enable secondary pupils who are affected by staffing difficulties to receive specific teaching and revision support. These sessions are held during and beyond the school day and open to all pupils taking the appropriate subjects. We intend to provide 16 classes each week over 8 weeks, twilight revision sessions and an exam conference.

In advertising for teachers we published an "advertorial" feature in the Times Educational Supplement Scotland to encourage applications from teachers within and beyond Aberdeenshire.

The Council is also using innovative electronic methods such as internet searches to direct prospective applicants to Aberdeenshire micro websites and to teaching vacancies. We believe we are the first Council in Scotland to utilise this new approach.

Further work is being undertaken to look at direct contact of individuals and schools (head hunting) using the skills and expertise of our internal HR recruitment team.

For 2014/15 we will again be seeking allocation of the maximum number of new induction probationers from the Scottish Government when these figures are released.

As a longer term approach we are continuing to encourage appropriately qualified employees living in the area but currently not qualified as teachers who may be interested to follow an accelerated post graduate course for teaching through the "D Lite" programme provided through Aberdeen University.

In addition, the Education, Learning & Leisure Head of Service (Policy & Resources) attends the National Teacher Workforce Planning Group run by the Scottish Government. This group will advise the Scottish Government and Local Authorities on additional resources that can be put in place nationally to plan future teacher development. He is also Joint Chair of the Association of Directors of Education for Scotland Resources Network and, as such, participates in national forums to share appropriate practice and solutions to resource challenges.

I hope that the steps outlined above have provided some reassurance that the Education, Learning & Leisure Service is treating the situation very seriously and actively exploring a range of solutions to meet the teacher recruitment challenge.

Yours sincerely



Maria Walker
Director of Education, Learning & Leisure