

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: SHARED HEADTEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
Meeting: EDUCATION EXECUTIVE
Date: 17 JUNE 2014
Author: JOINT ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Falkirk Council agreed a Policy in June 2008 that allowed shared headships to be established for small primary schools that had not been successful recruiting a Headteacher as a first option. This Policy was developed following concerns regarding difficulties in recruiting headteachers and the positive outcomes of a pilot which demonstrated advantages for smaller schools.
- 1.2 Given the current financial situation it is imperative that as a service we explore every opportunity to make efficiencies when we can without having an impact on frontline services.

As a result of the Budget settlements of 2011 and 2013, shared headships were set up in:

- Beancross/Bothkennar Primary Schools
- Grange/Blackness Primary Schools
- Avonbridge/Drumbowie Primary Schools
- Limerigg/Slamannan Primary Schools

- 1.3 The following proposal for primary school shared headships would provide further opportunities for making budget efficiencies without a deterioration in educational provision.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 In order to give clear and transparent direction it is proposed that the Director of Education is authorised to:
- Secure the appointment of a shared headteacher for more than one primary school where circumstances allow (for examples if the current headteacher leaves or retires).
 - Consider the suitability of such arrangements for all primary schools whose roll is 100 pupils or less excluding nursery pupils.
 - Establish the joint management arrangements that would be needed on an individual basis that take account of local circumstances.

Ensure that parent councils are fully involved in developing the above management arrangements.

3. EXAMPLES OF JOINT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 It is likely that the most effective management arrangements would be a headteacher and senior staff (Deputes and Principal Teachers) with responsibility for both schools. A joint protocol for the two schools would be established in collaboration with staff and parent councils to ensure effective operation of the schools. Such a protocol would need to include:

- vision, values and aims
- school identity
- planning mechanisms
- joint working
- communications
- resources
- arrangements for parent councils
- roles and responsibilities.

3.2 There is no legal requirement for each school to have an individual headteacher however, it is still proposed to consult relevant parent councils and the Trade Unions on the above protocol. There is no statutory requirement to formally consult on changing management arrangements in schools under the Schools Consultation Act 2010.

3.3 These kind of joint management arrangements are becoming increasingly common across Scotland. At one time, rural authorities used this mechanism to manage small rural schools; increasingly more urban authorities have employed this approach to reduce costs but maintain the same levels of service. There is no evidence to indicate that in moving to this model of school management the quality or delivery of education has been adversely affected by such arrangements.

3.4 The table below shows all primary schools in the Council area whose rolls are 100 pupils or below:

Avonbridge Primary School	42
Blackness Primary School	32
Bothkennar Primary School	29
California Primary School	72
Drumbowie Primary School	17
Limerigg Primary School	31
Whitecross Primary School	74

4. RESOURCE AND QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

It is difficult to be precise regarding the levels of efficiencies that might be secured as this would be dependent on which schools shared a headteacher in relation to size, current salaries and additional costs. However, it is likely that the efficiencies secured would be between £20,000 and £30,000 each time a shared headship is established.

4.2 Human Resources

Each situation would have different personnel implications dependent on whether there was already a headteacher in post in one school or both posts were likely to become vacant at the same time. There are existing agreed formal procedures to establish levels of salary and management structures which would be used.

4.3 Equality

There are no equality implications arising from this proposal.

4.4 Vulnerable Families

It is not anticipated that these proposals would have any direct impact on vulnerable families.

5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 This proposal is intended to provide Falkirk Council with an opportunity to reduce expenditure without a reduction in service. Experience from other authorities indicates this is an effective approach to managing smaller schools in particular.

6. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 **That Education Executive approves the proposal that allows the Joint Acting Directors of Education to consider and implement the shared headships and joint management arrangements for primary schools in accordance with the steps outlined in section 2.1 of this report.**

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Joint Acting Director of Education

Date: 4 June 2014

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil