

## The Management of Highland Schools

### Parent Information Leaflet

Over the past few years, it has become apparent that school leaders, are moving closer towards collaborative working to support children and young people. *“A key priority, particularly in sparsely populated or relatively isolated areas of the country, is the issue of sustainability”.*

***Opening up Learning in all-through Schools, Education Scotland,(2010).***

“The range of ideas that were agreed for further consideration included the development of best practice management structures, to reflect new school clusters around new delivery models and natural communities. This builds on existing thinking about the organisation of the curriculum, and particularly the senior phase, greater collaboration across schools and colleges, and the enhancement of distance learning”.

**The Education, Children and Adult Services Committee 17 March 2016 (ECAS) Report Number 25/16 Management of Schools Update.**

### Background:

The Highland Council area is a vast geographical area covering very rural, remote and island communities as well as small towns and the city of Inverness. There are 177 Primary schools and 29 Secondary schools. The school rolls in Primary range from the smallest being 2 pupils on the island of Rum to 411 pupils in Dingwall Primary.

**There are a variety of models of Head Teacher positions across these schools, often developed in reaction to recruitment difficulties.**

- Single Primary school Head Teacher
- Cluster Primary schools Head Teacher
- Cluster Primary/Secondary schools Head Teacher
- Single Secondary school Head Teacher

We have also been considering the necessary management arrangements for new 3-18 campus models.

There are presently: 32 Primary Cluster Head Teachers; 2 Secondary Heads who manage 3 -18 campuses; and 108 posts in single Headteacher schools, making a total of 140 Primary and 29 Secondary Headteachers across Highland. 19 of these posts are presently vacant. There are varying management structures within Secondary Schools, but a more standard model within Primaries.

Across Scotland, there are shortages of quality applications for vacant Head Teacher positions, resulting in posts being re-advertised a number of times. Some national work is being carried out to consider the issues which are impacting on this and to identify possible solutions for improving the situation.

**This new approach is necessary, because of the:**

- Sustained requirement for Head Teachers to maintain quality and lead school improvement.
- New corporate management systems, placing new demands on school management.
- Pressures on time to manage, especially for Primary Head Teachers who are also class committed
- Challenges filling Head Teacher and other management posts.
- Continued challenges presented by the Highland geography.

## Management structures and school groupings (led by Head of Education)

This work stream will focus on the concept of what defines a school – e.g. cluster, 3-18 models etc. It will set out an approach to grouping schools which will involve them being managed differently, and provide the means to sustain a greater number of schools in their communities. The following projects will be explored and developed:

- To establish school groupings which will allow Highland to provide a sustainable education model for Highland.
- To review the cluster management model.
- To set out frameworks for a variety of school management structures age ranges – 3-15, 3-18, 15-18, 12-18 & 3-11.
- These frameworks will include making best use of a revised administrative support, and a revised janitorial services model to support Headteachers in leading their schools.
- To set out new staffing parameters for primary staffing and establish the concept of Early Level teaching.

## Establishing Revised School Groups

The objective here is to establish school groupings which will allow the authority to deliver sustainable educational provision across Highland. The approach will maximise the number of schools that are educational viable. However this will require a revised management approach provided by approximately 31 fewer Head Teachers.

### Reviewing Cluster Management Model

The objective here is to ensure that future Cluster Management arrangements in Highland schools build on the best practice that currently exists in school and delivers effective management across the cluster schools.

The following work has been carried out:

- A review of existing arrangements has been carried out. An initial report has been produced for the Head of Education.
- Cluster Management procedures from other authorities have been investigated.
- Leadership development has been identified as a key priority and this will now be taken forward by the strategic leadership group.
- Revised consultation procedures have been produced. A significant aspect of the new arrangements will be that while there will be a requirement for officers to consult key stakeholders regarding possible arrangements, strategic decisions will be required to confirm the final model.

## Timescales: 2016-17

- **Late August/early September:** Member seminar also involving some Head Teachers to reflect on overall objectives and work undertaken to date.
- **August–September:** 4/5 area based workshops for Head Teachers, including dedicated sessions for each ASG.
- **September–October:** collation of the initial proposals from these workshops.
- **November–December:** 4/5 area seminars involving Head Teachers and Members, to discuss and clarify proposals for consultation, also identifying actions that require more immediate Committee decisions.
- **From January,** detailed discussions with schools and stakeholder groups, ASG by ASG, on proposals for the future organisation of provision.

*The Education, Children and Adult Services Committee Reports: 8 October 2015, 20 January, 2016, 17 March 2016, May 2016*