

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
9 JUNE 2010**

**SUBJECT: POLICY ON PAIRED HEADTEACHERS FOR PRIMARY
SCHOOLS**

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 The reason for this report is to invite Committee to agree the policy on paired headteachers.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D1 of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 **It is recommended that Committee agrees the policy on paired headteachers in primary schools.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The quality of school leadership is vital to school improvement and to raising standards of attainment and achievement. This is backed up by research work on schools and relates directly to:

- the appointment of headteachers
- the development of headteachers
- the circumstances of Moray as a rural authority
- giving headteachers the time and opportunity to lead.

3.2 In session 2007/08 the department radically overhauled the appointment procedures which are now far more robust and which give a greater focus to the quality of a candidate's leadership and management skills.

3.3 The department has also adopted a number of strategies, including individual staff development, peer support and support networks, in order to enhance the leadership capacity of our headteachers and senior managers in schools.

3.4 As a rural authority, Moray, like many other Education Authorities, has found it difficult to fill some vacancies for headteachers, particularly in schools with a class committed headteacher. Those vacancies which have been filled, have often attracted a very small number of applicants and have often had to be re-advertised on several occasions. Clearly, it is vital to ensure that we support our schools by appointing and developing the highest possible calibre of candidates. We, therefore, need to be more flexible in our approach to school management in order to ensure that we attract the highest possible calibre of applicant.

3.5 Paired Headteacher Pilots.

- 3.5.1 On 06 December 2006 (para 25 of the minute refers), Educational Services Committee agreed to the piloting of a paired headteacher model involving Glenlivet and Tomintoul Primary Schools.
- 3.5.2 At the meeting of the Education and Social Services Committee on 09 April 2008 (para 7 of the minute refers), Committee agreed to pilot a paired headteacher model involving Inveravon Primary School and Knockando Primary School.
- 3.5.3 The pilot in Glenlivet and Tomintoul was evaluated on three occasions and the final report presented to Children and Young People's Services Committee on 28 January 2009 (para 20 of the minute refers). The pilot in Inveravon and Knockando was evaluated on two occasions and the final report presented to Children and Young People's Services Committee on 12 August 2009 (para 28 of the minute refers).
- 3.5.4 The evaluations of both pilots were extremely positive with support staff, teaching staff, the headteachers and the parents from all schools providing overwhelming support for the paired headteacher model.
- 3.5.5 The positive feedback outlined a number of advantages which stakeholders considered pertinent to the situation in the four schools under the paired headteacher model:
- clear direction provided by the headteacher.
 - the headteacher was able to focus on leadership.
 - the headteacher was able to channel efforts into school development.
 - improved teamwork on the part of staff.
 - high level of collegiality.
 - very good communications within the schools.
 - positive links with parents.
 - each school retained its own identity but benefitted from closer links.
- 3.5.6 For Glenlivet/Tomintoul and for Inveravon/Knockando, Committee agreed the following recommendations:
- to the paired headteacher model becoming the permanent promoted staff structure.
 - to the headteacher/acting headteacher being confirmed as the headteacher of both schools.
 - to the advertising of permanent principal teacher posts – one for each school.
- 3.5.7 One of the clear points emerging from the pilots was the ability of the headteachers involved to focus on leadership and to develop their own leadership skills and capacity. The outcomes for the children in three of the pilot schools have been the subject of external scrutiny by HMIE and have been evaluated positively. Thus, the Senior Management Team is confident that the two pilots have demonstrated the clear potential for high quality leadership within a paired headteacher model.

- 3.6 It was also noted that fifteen out of Scotland's thirty-two authorities have 'shared headships'. Indications are that these arrangements work well.
- 3.7 Given the above, a paper was submitted to Children and Young People's Services Committee on 07 October 2009 at which it was agreed that wider consultation should take place and a draft policy be brought back to this committee for further consideration.(See **Appendix 1**)
- 3.8 The consultation process involved school staff and pupils. Parent Councils were also consulted with a request that they discuss with their headteacher their consultation mechanism for parents. A few headteachers involved the children in the consultation. Additionally, a meeting for representatives of Parent Councils was held on 02 March. Also, although not part of the formal consultation, at a meeting with Portknockie Community Council the members indicated that they would wish their school to be considered for a paired headteacher. Finally, responses were sought from the unions, from ICE representatives and from the Bishop of Aberdeen for our denominational schools.
- 3.9 Results of the consultation have been placed in the Members' Library and Portal for reference.
- 3.10 The consultation results do not provide a clear picture either for or against the proposals. In a number of cases there are clear opinions, either for or against the proposals, across a school community with the opinions of the headteacher, staff and parents showing a high degree of agreement. In other cases there is a much greater spread of opinion either within or between groups. The comments raised were many and varied with a number of people clearly having given considerable thought to the potential advantages and disadvantages
- 3.11 Points for Members to Consider:
- there is no clear view emerging from the wider consultation;
 - the evaluation of the pilots (2) were very positive in all respects;
 - the experience in other Authorities with similar arrangements has also been positive and there are increasing numbers of paired/shared Headship arrangements across many Authorities;

 - the EIS state that, in their opinion, the paired headteacher model should only be considered after a failure to fill a vacancy following a minimum of two adverts. This clearly misses the points outlined in the "Background and Rationale" in the policy paper;
 - having considered all of the feedback, the Senior Management Team of Educational Services remain committed to the policy as outlined in **Appendix 1** and recommend it to Committee.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan

This report relates to Key Priority 5 (Attainment and Achievement – Children and Young People) in the Single Outcome Agreement. It links to Action Area 1 (Leadership) in the Service Improvement Plan of Educational Services.

(b) Policy and Legal

The permanent appointment of a paired headteacher to Glenlivet Primary School and Tomintoul Primary School was made by Children and Young People's Services Committee on 28 January 2009 (para 20 of the minute refers). The permanent appointment of a paired headteacher to Inveravon Primary School and Knockando Primary School was made by Children and Young People's Services Committee on 12 August 2009 (para 28 of the minute refers).

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

The costs of the paired model will vary depending upon the circumstances in each school/pairing. In some schools Principal Teacher posts already exist whereas in others they will require to be established. Any additional costs incurred will require to be contained within existing overall resources.

(d) Consultations

Details of consultation have been given earlier in this report. Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, and Grant Cruickshank, Principal Personnel Officer, have also been consulted and agree with the financial and personnel aspects of the report respectively.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 It is recommended that Committee agrees the policy on paired headteachers in primary schools.**

ITEM:

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Background Papers:

Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Children and Young People's Services
Committee/9 June 2010/Policy on Paired Headteachers for
Primary Schools