

Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet

Tuesday 17 July 2007 at 2.00 pm

County Hall, Oxford

ITEM CH6

Annex 1

Response by Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement
Planning Preparation and Assessment Time Scrutiny Review

(Recommendations in **bold**; responses in *italics*.)

It is recommended that the Cabinet should:

on behalf of the Oxfordshire County Council:

R1 issue clear, brief guidance on the legal position for all staff regarding PPA time, including the Health and Safety implications. This could be in poster format, supported by a frequently asked questions section on the Oxfordshire County Council website.

Agreed, but this is also about personal responsibility.

R2 consider the needs of staff to have space for uninterrupted work:

- **in the specification for new primary and nursery schools; and**
- **in auditing the level of accommodation in existing premises.**

and urge the DfES to address this, nationally.

Agreed, in principle. A large proportion capital is vested with schools in the form of capital grant and with this follows certain responsibilities about how it is used.

R3 monitor annually the impact of PPA time, encouraging schools to use the monitoring tool devised by West Sussex. Such monitoring should focus on the effect on staff, especially the head teacher, and the range and quality of the curriculum, including provision for children with special educational needs.

The decision to do this should be taken at school level.

R4 review training for primary and nursery schools to include support for:

- **head teachers on sharing the features of good practice, especially on the role of senior staff including themselves and on monitoring PPA time;**
- **support staff to enable those wishing to do so to take on roles involving duties currently, but not necessarily, taken on by teachers;**
- **governors in monitoring:**
 - i) the head teacher's role in releasing teachers, ensuring that the head's own PPA time is protected;**
 - ii) the morale and effective deployment of support staff; and**
 - iii) the range and quality of the curriculum.**

Agreed.

R5 continue to review its model pay policy and personnel guidance for schools, with a particular emphasis on the role and remuneration of school support staff.

Agreed.

R6 consider, in consultation with the Schools Forum, whether this Review makes the case for a revision of the Local Management of Schools formula, recognising the many other conflicting priorities, the need for predictable budgets and whether such a process would be a worthwhile use of time.

Agreed.

urge head teachers and governing bodies to:

R7 discontinue the use of teaching assistants taking whole classes on their own without additional and appropriate training, except for very short periods or in emergencies.

Agreed – will co-sign a letter from the Director for Children, Young People & Families.

R8 explore ways of providing a continuity of personnel either by building up capacity in house or buying in external providers, or a mixture of both, to ensure that the model is not dependent on the presence of one or two individuals.

Agreed.

R9 recognise the contribution of support staff who release teachers by providing planning time for them and by treating as a priority the enhancement of levels of pay to reflect the extent and level of increased responsibility.

Agreed - the value of support staff is recognised.

R10 monitor the model used to provide PPA time particularly in terms of:

- workspace;
- the impact on staff morale and workload; and
- the impact on the range and quality of the curriculum.

It is suggested that this should involve an annual report to the Governing Body, discussed prior to setting the next year's budget.

Agreed.

to influence the national situation:

R11 urge the DfES to conduct a wide-ranging, independent survey of the actual cost of successful and sustainable models of implementation of PPA time in primary and nursery schools with a view to this informing the grant settlement for 2008/9 if possible, or 2009/10 and future years. Such a survey should consider the interlinked issues of the range and quality of the curriculum, the implications in terms of workload for different groups of school staff, the different opportunities and challenges for schools of different sizes and types of catchment area and other aspects such as the provision of suitable space to enable teachers to gain the maximum benefit from PPA time.

Agreed.

R12 request that Ofsted consider the desirability of a brief commentary on PPA time being included in the school's self-evaluation form and of the Framework for Inspection requiring inspection teams to comment on the effectiveness of the model adopted.

Agreed.

R13 disseminate this report, or its summary as appropriate, to the Department for Education and Skills, to Government agencies including the Training and Development Agency for Teachers, Ofsted, the General Teaching Council for England and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, to other Local Authorities, to those organisations represented in the National Workforce Remodelling Agreement and others representing school staff, to Members of Parliament representing Oxfordshire constituencies, the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, and to staff and governors in Oxfordshire schools.

Agreed.