

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM

Date:	25 March 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	04
Title:	Funding schools for teachers on long term suspension		
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1 REPORT SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper, requested by Schools Forum, clarifies RBWM's existing policy on funding schools for the additional costs incurred when a teacher is suspended. It sets out the criteria for paying additional funding to schools, the period over which funding will be paid, and how payments will be funded. The updated policy is attached at Annex A. The previous policy is attached at Annex B. The main change is that allocations will in future be funded from the de-delegated 'Staff costs' budget, not the de-delegated Contingency Budget. This change is to ensure consistency with Schools Funding Regulations.

2 RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 That Schools Forum approve the updated policy on funding schools for the additional costs incurred when a teacher is suspended, attached at Annex A.

3 DETAILS

- 3.1 RBWM's existing policy on funding schools for suspended teachers has been in place since 2008. Recent claims from schools under the policy have highlighted the need for clarification of the policy, particularly in relation to the maximum period where payments will be made. Schools Forum received a paper in January 2015 which identified that £177k had been paid to schools under this policy since 2013-14.
- 3.2 Payments for suspended teachers are funded from Dedicated Schools Grant and fall within the scope of schools' de-delegated budgets arrangements¹. This means that the policy only applies to maintained schools, not academies or free schools, and only if de-delegation has been approved by the relevant school sector before the beginning of the financial year.
- 3.3 The eligibility criteria are unchanged from previously but the wording has been clarified. Schools are eligible for funding if:
- The teacher is suspended on full pay for a period greater than three months.
 - HR have agreed that the suspension is necessary.
 - The school is eligible for funding under the 'de-delegation' arrangements (see section 2 of annex A).
- 3.4 The policy also clarifies that schools will only receive additional funding for costs incurred after the first three months of the suspension and for a maximum of nine

¹ Paragraph 30 (j) ("Staff costs supply cover") of Part 5, Schedule 2 of [the School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014](#). Paragraph 30(j) refers to "Expenditure on making payments to, or in providing a temporary replacement for, any person who is [...] suspended from working at a school"

months. Schools will be responsible for costs incurred in the first three months. These limits are the same as before.

- 3.5 Allocations to schools under this policy have previously been paid from the de-delegated central school contingency fund. Schools Finance Regulations and associated guidance stipulate that payments should instead be funded from the Staff Costs – supply cover budget, provided that schools have approved the de-delegation. Allocations will therefore be charged in future to RBWM's de-delegated Staff Costs' budget, not to the Contingency budget. This is spelt out in the updated policy. For 2015-16, both maintained primary and secondary schools have approved de-delegation to provide a central Staff Costs budget², so both sectors will be eligible for funding under the revised policy in 2015-16.
- 3.6 This change also means that only the Director of Children' Services and the Head of Finance, or their representatives, will in future be responsible for considering requests for funding, not the School Funding Contingency Panel as before. Decisions will in any case be determined largely by whether or not the request for funding meets the eligibility criteria set out in the policy.
- 3.7 The updated policy also clarifies the funding arrangements where schools convert to academy part way through the year. These arrangements are consistent with the EFA's school funding guidelines.

² This budget also includes payments under the maternity scheme, and payments to schools for staff on public duties, e.g union duties and jury service.

Policy on funding schools for a teacher on long-term suspension

1. Purpose

This policy provides a mechanism for reimbursing a school for the additional costs incurred when a teacher is suspended.

2. Scope

Expenditure on suspended teachers is allowable under paragraph 30 (j) (“Staff costs supply cover”) of Part 5, Schedule 2 of [the School and Early Years Finance \(England\) Regulations 2014](#)³. This section deals with ‘de-delegated budgets’. This means that additional funding for suspended teachers will only be payable to maintained schools, and only if de-delegation for ‘Staff Costs’ has been approved by the relevant school sector before the beginning of the financial year⁴.

3. Criteria for additional funding

A school may apply to the Director of Children’s Services (DCS) and the Head of Finance (HofF) for additional funding towards the cost of a suspended teacher provided that the following criteria are met:

1. The teacher is suspended on full pay for a period greater than three months.
2. HR have agreed that the suspension is necessary.
3. The school is eligible for funding under the terms described in section 2.

4. Process

A request for funding under the suspended teacher policy, signed by the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors, should be made in writing to the Head of Education and copied to the Finance partner – Children and Schools. It should set out details of the suspension, and the relevant costs for which funding is being sought. Relevant costs would normally be expenditure incurred in making salary payments to the suspended teacher or in providing a replacement.

The DCS and the HofF, or their representatives, will consider the request for funding within one month of receipt of a request, and notify the school of the outcome within ten working days after that. If approval is withheld, the notification will outline the reasons for this. The decision of the DCS and HofF is final.

5. Funding

If approved, the following limits will apply:

³ Part 5 is headed “Items that may be removed from Schools’ Budget Shares”. Paragraph 30(j) refers to “Expenditure on making payments to, or in providing a temporary replacement for, any person who is [...] suspended from working at a school”.

⁴ If a school converts to academy after the 1st of September, any claims will be honoured to the end of the financial year when de-delegation ceases.

- Additional funding will be allocated only for relevant costs incurred after the first three months of the suspension. The school will be responsible for costs in the first three months.
- Funding will be payable to the school for a maximum of nine months.
- Payments will start after the first three months from the date of the suspension and end on the first anniversary of the date of the suspension or when the teacher returns to work, whichever is sooner.

Expenditure incurred in reimbursing schools under this policy will be chargeable to Dedicated Schools Grant, under the de-delegated 'Staff costs supply cover' budget. Any unspent de-delegated funding remaining at the year-end may be carried forward to the following year and used specifically for de-delegated services.

6. Schools converting to academies

Where a school converts to academy after 1 April, up to and including 1 September, RBWM will retain any de-delegated funding until 1 September and honour claims under the policy up to this date, after which de-delegated funding is recouped by the EFA. Where a school converts to academy on or after 2 September, up to and including 31 March, RBWM will retain any de-delegated funding for the remainder of the financial year and honour claims up to the 31 March.

Version control:

Updated March 2015

Approved by Schools Forum xx March 2015

To be replaced by policy at Annex A

Funding for long-term suspension of teachers

The contingency panel have requested that a policy be put in place to allow additional funding to be allocated to a school with a teacher who is on long- term suspension.

Criteria for additional funding

- The teacher is suspended on full pay.
- HR agreement that suspension was necessary. For example; when a Criminal Court hearing is pending.
- Suspension for a period of over 3 months.

An application in writing to Learning & Care Finance. Panel members to be given case details. Applications to be approved officers if criteria met

- An application for funding will not be approved by right.

Funding

- Schools to apply for funding after first 3 months. First 3 months salary & on-costs paid by the school.
- Actual cost of staff member reimbursed (month 4 onwards). Limited to 12 months.

All funding for this new budget is to be taken from within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Funding to be held in the Schools Specific Contingency. Any under spends on this fund would to be carried forward.

Under the regulations and RBWM terms of reference for the contingency panel, funding can be allocated to schools in exceptional circumstances, as well as for the correction of errors & unplanned pupil number increases.

January 2008.