

Sycamore Short Stay School

Staffing Restructure Proposal linked to the
relocation of Abberley Street Site and Mere
Site onto the Sycamore Green Site

June 2014

Consultation Responses

Sycamore Short Stay School Consultation Responses

Following the consultation meeting on Tuesday 8th April, copies of the proposed staffing structure and implementation plan was distributed to staff and union colleagues. The consultation closed on Wednesday 21st May. In total, 12 separate responses were received, including 2 from union colleagues. I have arranged the questions and responses into the following areas:

Voluntary Redundancy
SEN Allowance / TLRs
Job Descriptions
Leadership and Management
Organisation
Secondments
Other points raised

Voluntary Redundancy

Q. Is it too late for me to apply for voluntary redundancy?

A. No. If you are employed within an 'at risk area' you can apply for voluntary redundancy.

SEN Allowance / TLRs

Q. Clarification requested regarding SEN allowance on Page 4 of the consultation document 'All teaching staff receiving the lower SEN allowance'

This appears to contradict the latest School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document that introduced a change to the determination and value of SEN Allowance payments. With effect from 01/09/10 the former SEN Higher and Lower allowances have been replaced by a spot value which will fall within a specified range.'

So, would the 'spot value' referred to in the letter not have been applied to all teachers throughout Dudley in 2010?

A. Yes you are correct the historical SEN allowance was replaced by a spot point and applied to all teaching staff.

Q. Request to reconsider the decision for teaching staff currently on historical 2 SEN points to retain this arrangement in recognition of our expertise, long-term commitment and innovative approach.

A. Whilst I fully understand disappointment at the proposal to bring all teaching staff to the same SEN spot point, I have had to be mindful of ensuring fairness for all teaching staff and ensuring the budget balances. The majority of teaching staff across sites have been on the lower SEN point and whilst, as outlined, at the consultation meeting, it would be good for all teaching staff to receive the higher SEN allowance, the implications would potentially be job losses further down the line. I have attempted with the proposed staffing structure to ensure

that all colleagues had a post wherever possible. I have also been mindful of comparison with similar such provision (PRUs and Special Schools) in neighbouring areas, evidence clearly indicates the lower SEN point is awarded.

The LA safeguarding of such allowances will be applied for a designated period.

Q. .The HLTA J/D specifies that the SEN allowance will be paid but the Level 3 J/D does not, could you confirm that both positions are subject to the SEN allowance.

A. I can confirm that both positions will receive a SEN allowance

Q. At the meeting with staff at the start of the consultation it was agreed that the lunchtime role would be made redundant, when will staff get their figures for their redundancy payment.

A. There is only one member of staff on a lunchtime contract (Lunchtime Supervisor). All other staff are on a supply / casual arrangement therefore no redundancy payments will be made.

Q. The issue of funding was raised; staff are concerned that they may be put at risk because funding is withdrawn when at present there are 2 groups.

A. No Teaching Assistant or HLTA posts are to be placed 'at risk'. Funding is based on pupil numbers not class groups.

Q. Clarification required regarding protection of management allowance as a result of potential loss of a TLR allowance

A. Any colleague who lost a TLR allowance as a result of the staffing restructure would have LA safeguarding of this allowance for up to three years.

Q. The arithmetic in regard to the number of teachers in the proposed staffing structure seems to prejudge certain outcomes by not allowing for an existing part time TLR holder to have a realistic chance of securing a TLR post in the new structure. We would like some clarification on this please, especially given the apparent considerable overlap in current and future job descriptions although with this, a projected cut in salary. There must be a genuine equal opportunity for all within the designated group to secure a TLR.

A. All teachers regardless of part time or full time have the opportunity of securing a TLR post within the new structure. The job description for the new posts have not yet been released other than the job outlines in the consultation document. I can confirm that the new TLR outreach post will carry a significant degree of increased responsibility compared to the old TLR post – reflected in the line management of a higher number of staff and having a significant strategic overview and being a member of the SMT. The post is initially ring fenced to those staff currently on a TLR allowance and will be open to part time or full time staff. The outcome of the selection process could result in one or combinations of more than one colleague appointed.

Job Descriptions

Q Query regarding current job description that includes IT strand to a post - should this still be reflected in some way to proposed job description, given that many of the assessments undertaken are set up and operated online

A: All Teaching Assistants will have a generic job description but there will be some IT aspects incorporated within this job description.

Q. Query regarding current job descriptions and new proposed job descriptions for the Lead Outreach Teacher being 'overwhelmingly identical'

A. No new job descriptions have been released to date, only the job outline. However, I would suggest the degree of responsibility held evidenced by the number of colleagues the successful candidate will be line managing along with the strategic aspect, evidenced by being part of SMT give some initial indications as to the distinct differences.

Leadership and Management

The proposed staffing structure shows the current leadership points range and state that this is under review. You mentioned previously that confirmation regarding head and deputy salaries may be delayed and linked into LA leadership / management review.

Given that we have been identified as a school, I believe that the head and deputy salary ranges should be set according to STPCD (and not as LA leadership posts). Confirmation required:

Q. Whether my understanding of how the head and deputy salary ranges should be set is accurate?

A. You are correct in stating that Heads and Deputies scales should be set in line with STPCD 2013.

Q. Whether these ranges will be finalised along with the staffing structure and put in place for September?

A. In light of the expected imminent changes (September 2014) to Teachers Pay and Conditions including Heads / Deputies scales, HR have advised that salary ranges for the Head and Deputy within the new structure be determined following the release of this information. Any such arrangement would be backdated to 1st September 2014. Until this has been confirmed the salary ranges remain the same.

Q. What the proposed salary ranges for head and deputy are?

A. As outlined above, the Heads and Deputy ranges to be determined once the new Teachers Pay and Conditions information is available.

Q. I notice that in the Job Description for the post of Deputy Head is L3 -7 (under review). The original Job Description for the Deputy Head was L4 - 7. I had a look at the Pay and Conditions document, and from what I can understand the pay range should be over 5 points.

A. You are correct that a School deputy salary range should be based on a 5 point scale not a 4 point scale. This is due to the original organisation of the Service. Now we are moving towards a different arrangement, pay ranges need to be in line with Schools Heads and Deputies. HR have advised that given expected changes (September 2014) to Teachers Pay and Conditions including Heads / Deputies scales, that salary ranges for the Head and Deputy within the new structure be determined following the release of this information. Any such arrangement would be backdated to 1st September 2014. Until this has been confirmed the salary ranges remain the same.

Q. As I am already on L7, does this mean that I can no longer make any pay progression

A. You are correct that when you reach the top of your scale, unless it is reviewed and changes agreed to the salary range you reach the ceiling.

Q. With regard to the proposed staffing structure (Appendix 3 diagram), does the diagram for Assessment Unit posts link (via the black line) to the SSSS in terms of the funding stream being incorporated, or does it relate to line management of AU staff

A: This relates to the different funding streams. Line Management will remain the same.

Organisation

Q. Will staff have designated roles as at present there are 2 teams, Mere based and outreach, will this remain the same.

A. As outlined at the consultation meeting the initial intention will be gain preferences from colleagues as to Outreach / Classroom based. On an annual basis the Head will then draw up the balance of work in negotiation with colleagues, depending on service needs & skills match. The will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Q. Will staff be required to work across all age groups?

A. The emphasis will be on using colleagues' strengths and skills but it is likely that as part of a team approach, colleagues may on occasions be required to work across other areas. This will be negotiated with the Head.

Q. Two staff receive the payment for the Cover Supervisor role. Will this stay and will other staff be given the option.

A. There will be no cover supervisor role within the new structure and therefore any such arrangements will cease.

Q. What will the start and finish time of the day be, and will there be any individual negotiations around personal circumstances.

A. Start and finish times for the school day are being discussed with all staff to try and ensure a preferred agreement. 8.30am – 3.30pm with a 30 minute lunch break appears the preferred option for teaching and teaching assistants /HLTA. Administration Officers start and finish times are I believe still to be confirmed but will be based on the above with an additional 4.5 hours to add. It will be expected that staff work to the hours above. If there are occasional

issues that arise around start and finish times to the day these can be discussed with the Head.

Q. When will one to ones take place?

A. I understand that the Head has already held 1:1 meetings with staff.

Q. Posts have been pre determined, citing example of 0.6 post within proposed staffing structure that can only be held by current 0.6 post holder

A. No posts have be pre determined. In future, a member of staff on a full time contract may be part classroom based and part Outreach based so could be made up of different portions

Secondments

Q. What happens with any secondment arrangements?

A. Those secondments that have a finish date will cease as agreed. It is intended that the long standing HLTA, SEYS secondment post will be incorporated within the new staffing structure from September 2014. This will be confirmed with HR.

Other points raised

1. We feel that the new structure needs a pastoral role. Given the nature of the children in the centre we feel curriculum access needs to be supported by a holistic view of the child. we also feel that the role should cover the primary shared provision pupils as curriculum responsibility lies with the school and this is the area which we are trying to develop and expand. This role would link partnership with centre and therefore would be significant in developing the working practice of centre/partnership i.e. revolving door.

R. I have discussed with the Head and we understand the gap you have identified. It is something we are giving some thought to especially in light of the increasing number of pupils who are now subject to short term placements. This is an area we will look at in greater detail.

2. Concern raised about one deputy head being available to cover both halves of the school at one time and break out space in the secondary part of school. Will there only be one safe area as opposed to the two areas that currently exist in our present arrangement,

R. The organisation of the site to ensure a supportive and safe environment is one that I know the Head is looking at and discussing with staff. The point regarding use of break out spaces is well made and one that again I know is being looked at closely to ensure we maintain a safe and productive working environment for all.

3. Clearly the changes to the funding of short stay schools and connected outreach work produce particular challenges. Bringing Key Stages together on a single site no doubt offers the opportunity to make economies in overhead costs. However there must be some concern about bringing together a large group of children with a wide age range and with some of the most challenging behaviour on a single site. Does this not produce a greater likelihood of younger children potentially copying more difficult behaviour from older students? Are there not potential issues arising from a 'critical mass' being in one place at one time? These

issues will, we think, need to be kept under very careful review. We understand that KS4 provision is now made entirely via other routes. Is this subject to review and evaluation? What options are there in this model to reconsider should the current approach not deliver?

R. There has been considerable thought given to bringing pupils from three sites and different age ranges onto a single site. The building will be zoned off via fob access. Younger pupils will be taxied directly into the School and therefore it is unlikely there will be any contact with the older pupils other than those we choose to encourage. The numbers on site potentially will decrease and with an increase in space and better 'fit for purpose facilities / building it is anticipated it will be a positive move forward. You are right about keeping provision and options under constant review. A feature of this type of provision is the constant adaptations and changes being made.

4. Clearly mixed age classes are inevitable and have been an historical feature of the PRUs. We would though have potential concerns if these now spanned an even wider number of years in the new arrangements. Staff teaching children outside the age range for which they may have been trained or have experience of working with may need the opportunity to access further and specific CPD.

R. You are correct that pupils have been taught in mixed age groups. It is unlikely that mixed age groups will span a wider remit, the proposed restructure and location onto a single site will give us greater flexibility to perhaps look at grouping pupils more appropriate to their emotional maturity e.g. year 6 and year 7 rather than Year 7s with Year 8 and Year 9 as is the case currently. Staff skills will be paramount in attaching to a class / area of work.

5. It will be vital, not least from a safety point a view, that there is adequate staffing for all groups and also some reserve capacity. The overall removal off a deputy Head post clearly reduces total capacity even given a degree of extra flexibility that comes with bringing all provision together on one site.

R. Whilst a Deputy Head Post is lost we have retained an appropriate staffing level and give a high priority to ensuring a safe and well ordered environment.

6. We understand that discussions are underway in regard to potential VR with one of the senior teaching staff and are very glad that there would then be no compulsory redundancies among teachers. On the other hand, teachers at Sycamore have a high level of expertise in dealing with some of the most demanding pupils in the Borough and the suggestion that some staff would lose the salary equivalent of one of two of the old SEN points is something we would ask was reconsidered.

R. Rationale for the proposed staffing structure has been to try and ensure there was a post for all staff wherever possible. Whilst I fully recognise the high order of experience, skills and commitment of the colleagues who received the historical 2 SEN points in respect of 'consistency and fairness' towards all teaching staff allied to working within a balanced budget there were no other options other than allocate at the lower SEN spot point. To do anything otherwise would be to put another post 'at risk'. There are TLR opportunities for staff and I

would welcome applications from the staff concerned. Those staff, as you are aware would receive LA safeguarding for a designated period.

Summary

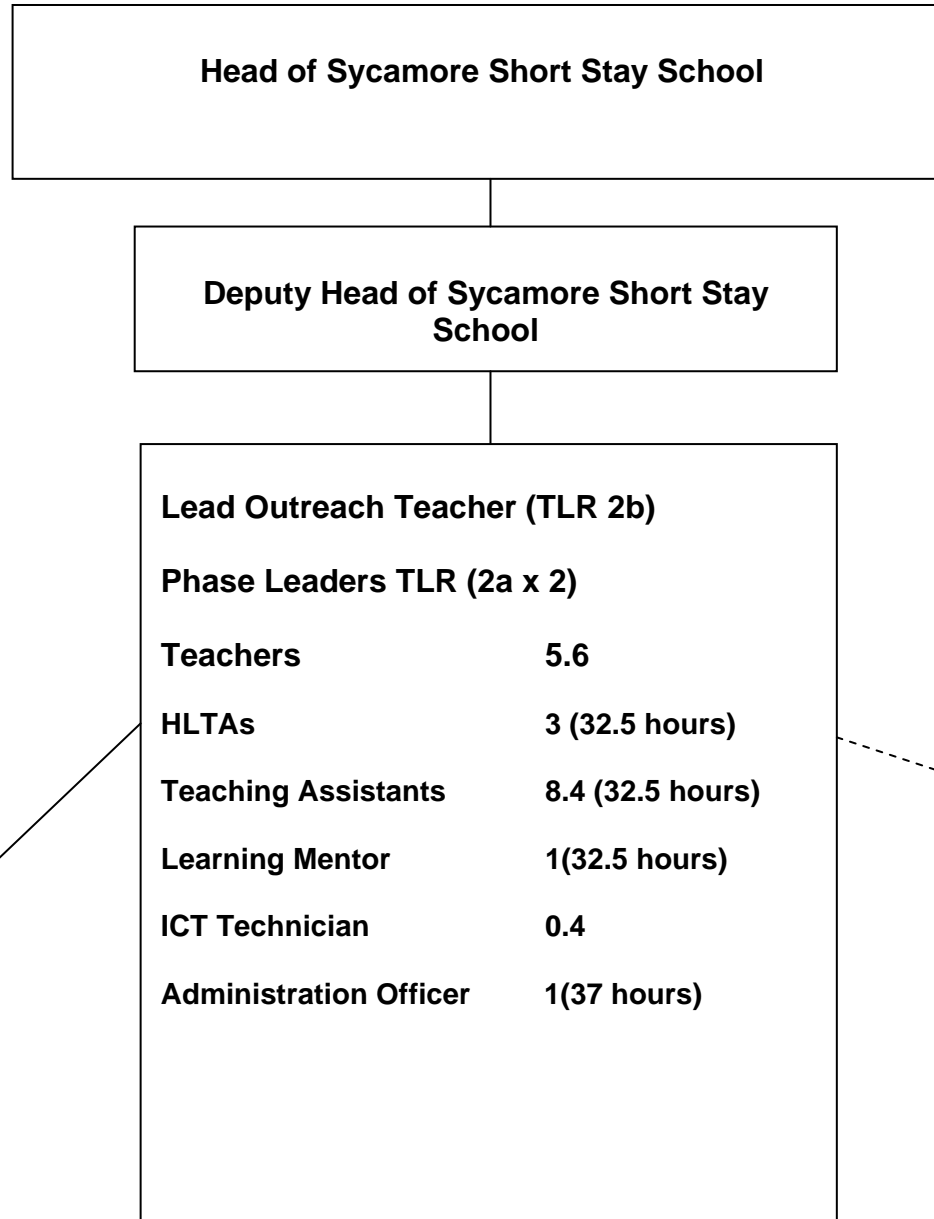
In addition to the responses received, three staff have expressed an interest in Voluntary Redundancy. All three staff are currently employed 'in areas at risk' (Deputy Head, Administration Officer and Lunchtime Supervisor). If these expressions of interests are progressed it would avoid Compulsory Redundancies. All other posts would therefore be via selection interview or the 'slotting in' process.

Following the consultation, it is proposed that there is no change to the original staffing proposal and that the attached staffing structure (appendix 1) including breakdown into Centre based staffing (appendix 2) and Outreach based staffing (appendix 3) along with the timeline below, are agreed as the final versions.

Timeline for Proposed SSSS Staffing Restructure and Implementation Plan

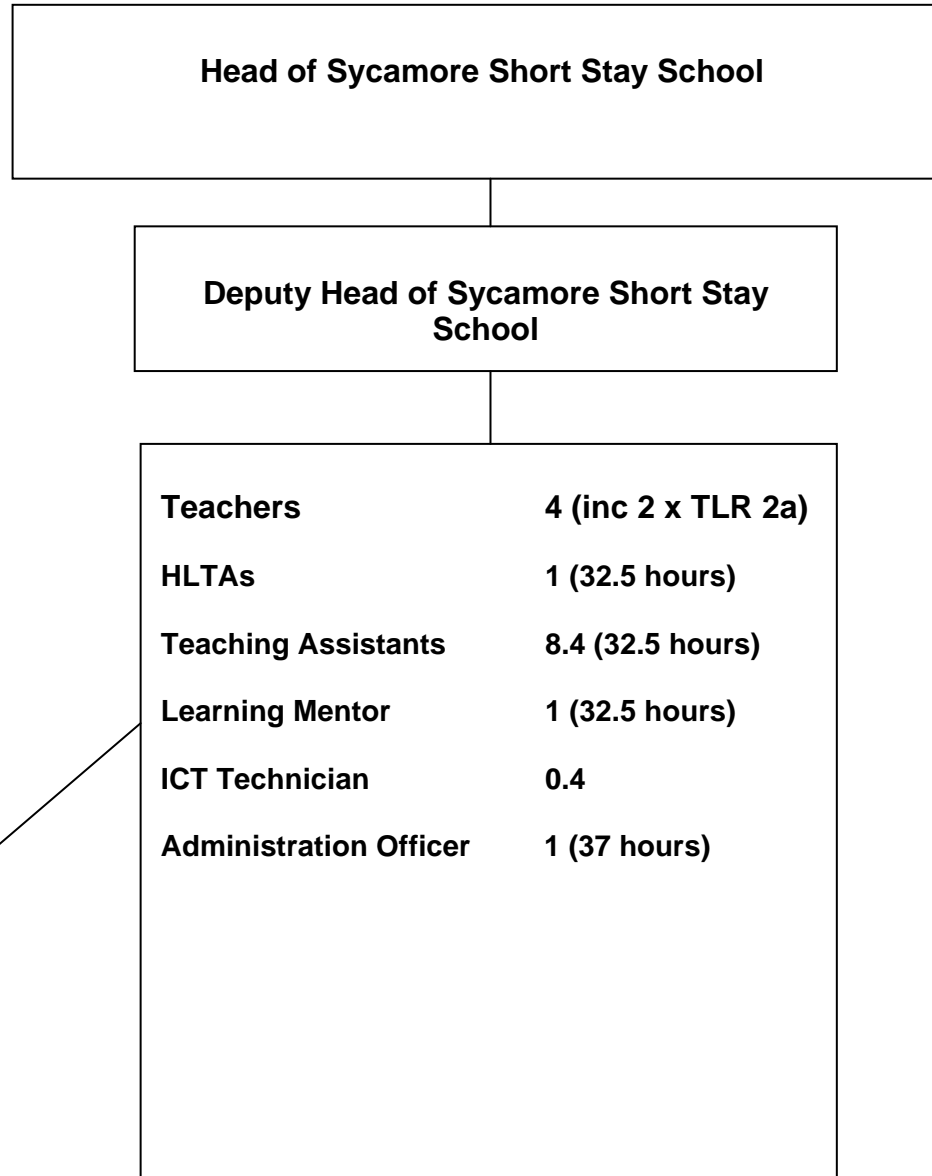
Consultation meeting with staff and unions (start of 20 working day consultation period)	Tuesday 8 th April 2014
Consultation closes	Wednesday 21 st May
Meeting with Management Committee / DSLT to discuss response to consultation and confirm final structure and next steps.	Wednesday 4 th June
Meeting with staff and unions to confirm response to consultation and any amendments to staffing structure and implementation plan	Thursday 5 th June
Finalised staffing structure in place. Job descriptions and person specifications for all posts made available to staff. Expressions of interest proforma and information to staff available.	Friday 6 th June
Expressions of interest invited for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Outreach Teacher (ring fenced to current TLR Outreach staff) • Primary / Secondary Phase Leaders (ring fenced to current TLRs and teachers) 	Week commencing Monday 9 th June
Closing date for expressions of interest for. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Outreach Teacher Post • Primary and Secondary Phase Leaders Posts 	Monday 16 ⁿ June (9am)
Selection interview date for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Outreach Teacher Post • Primary and Secondary Phase Leaders Posts Post filled on selection criteria linked to specific person specification based on experience, skills and knowledge.	Thursday 19 th June
Review of staffing plan following selection interviews, 1:1 / group consultations with all staff regarding the new structure, where they fit in and written confirmation to all staff.	Week commencing Monday 23 rd June

Head of Centre to meet with staff to sign new Job Descriptions and confirm focus of school site / outreach work for 2014/15.	
Responsibilities agreed for any staff who have safeguarded Management Allowance	
Any posts not filled, to be advertised externally	Week commencing: Monday 23 rd June
Interview date for any vacant posts	To be confirmed
New staffing structure in place	September 2014
<p>Whilst it is intended to keep to the schedule listed above, it may be necessary to move dates due to unforeseen circumstances. If this is the case, staff will be given prior notice.</p>	
<p>Interview Panels</p>	
<p>Interview panels for the Deputy Head, TLR posts and any vacant posts will be made up of a combination of the Service Manager, Head of Centre and Management Committee members.</p> <p>Interview panels for the Administration Officers Post and ICT post will be from a combination of above, along with a suitable specialist professional e.g. Senior Administration Officer, Senior ICT specialist.</p>	



Back on Track Funded Posts
 Early Years HLTA Posts x 2
 Assessment Unit Teacher TLR 2a 0.6
 Assessment Unit TA 0.8

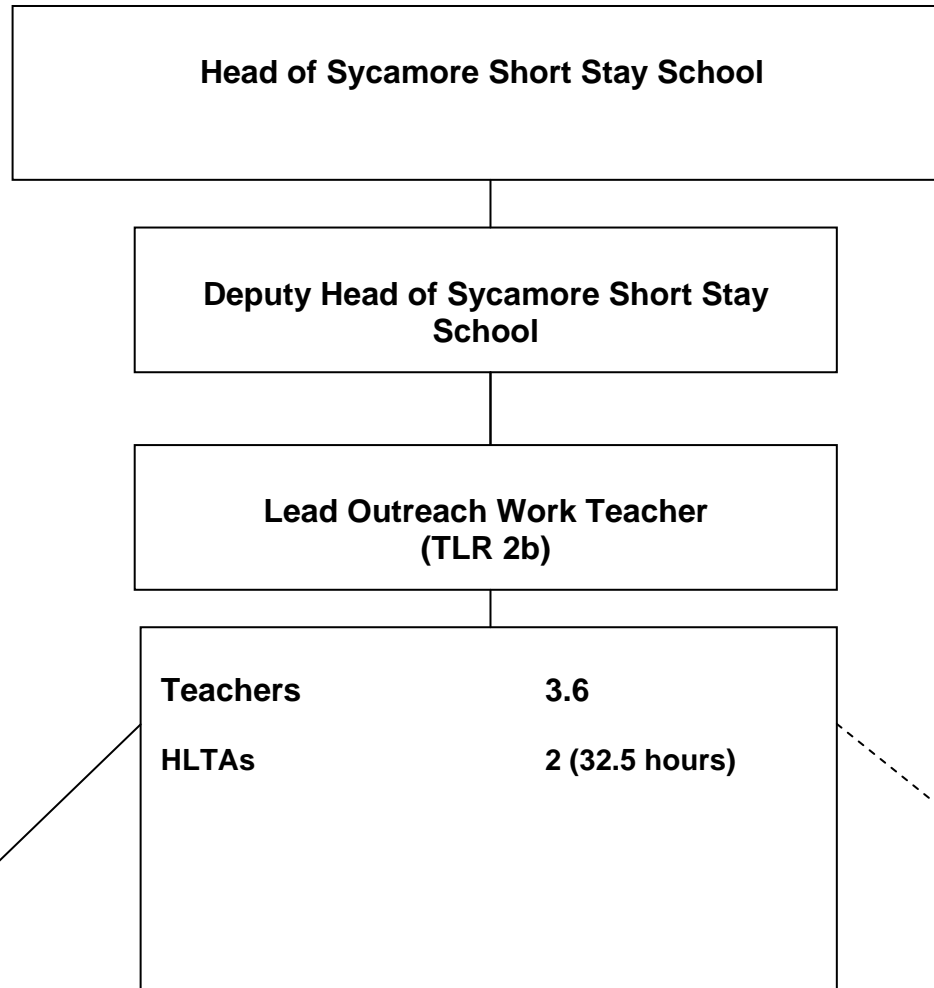
Youth Offending Service Funded HLTA Post



Back on Track Funded Posts

- Assessment Unit Teacher TLR 2a 0.6
- Assessment Unit TA 0.8

Appendix 3: Sycamore Short Stay School Final Staffing Structure - Outreach September 2014



Back on Track Funded Posts
Early Years HLTA Posts x 2

Youth Offending Service Funded HLTA Post