

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Select Committee on Lifelong Learning – 25 January 2005

Report of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Supply Teaching in Dudley

Purpose

1. To inform the Select Committee about the support offered to Dudley schools with respect to supply teaching.

Background

2. The responsibility to provide supply cover for staff who are away from their teaching commitment lies with the headteacher of each school.
3. Headteachers have the power to employ supply staff from a variety of different sources. Currently, supply cover is accessed from;
 - Black Country School Improvement Partnership;
 - staff known to the school who are not in full-time employment; and
 - supply agencies advertised through the educational press.
4. In order to support schools in accessing appropriately experience and trained staff, the Directorate works in partnership with the Black Country School Improvement Partnership (BCSIP) to provide the Black Country Supply Service (BCSS).
5. Schools using the BCSS pay an annual subscription and a booking fee.
6. The service provides:
 - to headteachers;
 - a single point of contact to request staff;
 - a quality placement service;
 - advice and guidance.

- to teachers;
 - teachers' pay and conditions;
 - access to free continuing professional development linked to individual need;
 - continued pension rights (voluntary);
 - advice and career planning;
 - support and mentoring networks.
7. Staff employed through the BCSS are vetted and supported by training and development courses. This ensures that headteachers receive a quality assured appointment and are able to evaluate the placement with the BCSIP supply staff manager. This ongoing partnership helps to ensure quality and develop the experience of the supply staff within the region.
 8. Currently, 39 primary schools and 13 secondary schools in Dudley are registered with the BCSS. In the month of November 79 teacher placements were made through this service. Since September 2004, the BCSS has met 100% of the requests for supply staff made by Dudley schools.

Other routes for employing supply staff

9. Staff who are employed by schools through agencies advertised in the educational press and those known to them are monitored and quality assured by headteachers.
10. The Directorate strives to support all schools and particularly those facing challenging circumstances. In some instances it proves difficult for headteachers to appoint supply staff who can both teach effectively and meet the challenge of a school working under pressure. In these circumstances, the Directorate supports headteachers in trying to locate appropriate staff. The partnership with BCSIP is beginning to improve the quality of staff appointed under these difficult circumstances.

Other considerations

11. As school workforce remodelling progresses, schools may find it both more economic and more effective educationally to cover absent staff through Higher Level Teaching Assistants and Cover Supervisors, new

roles introduced under the national agreement. The impact of these changes will be monitored over time.

Finance

12. The partnership with BCSIP is funded through the base budget. Funding for individual supply teachers is provided for through individual school budgets.

Law

13. The Council have a general duty to secure that sufficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population of their area under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 which would include the need to ensure that supply teachers are available when required.

Equal Opportunities

14. The delivery of the support reflects the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that the Select Committee considers the report and comments as it sees fit.



John Freeman
Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Contact Officer: Jane Porter, Assistant Director, School Effectiveness,
Ext 4250

Background Papers

None