

## **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS FOR CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

### **PURPOSE**

1. To provide details of current issues in respect of recruitment and retention of teachers for Central Bedfordshire and an early indication of work taking place to address issues through the delivery of the Partnership Vision for Education.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **That Board Members:**

2. Consider and comment on work taking place to recruit and retain the best teachers for Central Bedfordshire.
3. Agree (given the early stage of delivery against the Partnership Vision for Education) that a further update on recruitment and retention of teachers for Central Bedfordshire be added to the Children's Trust Board forward plan.

### **PUBLIC**

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### **BACKGROUND**

4. At the Children's Trust Board meeting of 16 September 2016, a discussion took place which prompted Board Members to consider issues relating to the recruitment and retention of teaching staff. It was agreed for a report to be submitted '**setting out an explanation for the current difficulties in recruiting suitable teaching staff within Central Bedfordshire and the possible means of overcoming this**'.
5. Recruiting and retaining the best teachers for Central Bedfordshire are key to the delivery of the Partnership Vision for Education 2015-19 and work in respect of these is being overseen by the Partnership Vision for Education Board. Whilst delivery of the Vision is at an early stage, this report is intended to provide Board Members with some initial information on the current issues and how work is being progressed.

### **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION: THE ISSUES/ CURRENT POSITION**

6. It is understood (from feedback provided by local schools) that there are issues in the recruitment and retention of teachers for Central Bedfordshire. This is across all phases and includes Special Schools.

It also relates to specific subject areas such as Maths and Science. This picture reflects a national recruitment and retention issue.

7. This is further complicated in Central Bedfordshire by a number of factors:
  - The 3 tier system is not widely understood by teachers nationally, as there are few areas in the country that retain this model. The Teaching Schools are looking to articulate in a revised flyer for school recruitment packs the benefits this can bring to teachers in terms of experience and future career choices.
  - The significant number of smaller schools can be perceived as restricting career development by some teachers/aspiring leaders, as there is less opportunity in a small school to develop a career in one school. This can be overcome by staff having opportunities across more than one school, which has worked effectively in Central Bedfordshire. This approach needs to be better marketed.
  - Some schools in other Local Authority Areas are able to offer enhancements (London Fringe allowances, pay and accredited CPD) as part of a recruitment package, which most of our schools cannot afford.
8. To date, the Teaching Schools have been involved as follows:
  - Prepared a flyer for schools to send to applicants. (This will also be sent to Chair of Governors when they are recruiting headteachers.)
  - Attempted to set up a recruitment website on behalf of schools but there has been a lack of interest from schools due to the requirement to assist with funding.
  - Attended NQT Recruitment Fairs at local universities.
  - Attended Initial Teacher Education recruitment fairs to recruit trainee teachers.
  - Currently developing updated flyers for issue at the NQT and ITE recruitment fairs i.e. to target different audiences.
  - Promoting the School Direct route into teaching.

## **PARTNERSHIP VISION FOR EDUCATION**

9. The Partnership Vision for Education Board is responsible for monitoring delivery of the Vision, and work streams have been set up to support delivery. An objective of the 'School Leadership and Improving Outcomes' work stream is to work with teaching schools, academy sponsors, head teachers and national leaders of Governance to recruit and retain the best teachers.
10. At the last Partnership Vision for Education Board meeting (18 January 2016) an in-depth discussion took place on recruitment and retention. Points raised included:

- A co-ordinated marketing approach should be taken – with support in place to consider how to attract students to key courses, and retain staff (promoting future prospects).
  - Officers working in a recruitment environment would be better placed to consider marketing strategies and drive a campaign than those working in the education field.
  - Promoting Central Bedfordshire as a place to work could be quite easy (with different messages considered for each school phase). It was noted however that Central Bedfordshire schools are competing with others who can offer (for example) an outer London wage.
  - Consideration should be given initially to expertise within the community – i.e. whether there were any suitable volunteers who could assist in the recruitment and retention process.
  - Schools buying into a role was just one of a number of options that could be considered.
  - There was a need to think broadly in terms of the work skills / economic agenda. (This was being picked up and would link with schools and work skills/business needs.)
11. It was subsequently agreed for a Recruitment and Retention Group to be formed (with representatives from each school phase) to develop a Recruitment Strategy which could be considered at the Partnership Vision Board meeting.
12. At the Partnership Vision for Education Board meeting Head teachers questioned why the council did not allocate additional resource to this. There is no existing budget for this, hence the request for schools to contribute towards a post. The Chair (Director of Children's Services) agreed to take this back to the Chief Executives Leadership Team.

## **CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

13. This initial report was prepared in response to a request from the Children's Trust Board. It is recognised that the Partnership Vision for Education Board work streams have been in place for a short period of time and this report therefore provides some initial information on how work is progressing. It is recommended that the Trust Board be provided with a further update on progress – with the item being added to the Children's Trust Forward Plan.