

TRADE UNION FACILITIES SCHEME 2019-20

Purpose of the Report

1. To propose a change to the Trade Union Facilities scheme for maintained schools for the 2019-20 financial year.

Information and Advice

2. By law trade union representatives are entitled to reasonable time off from their substantive employment to undertake official trade union duties and undertake training relevant to the role. The Nottinghamshire scheme, which meets the requirements of the DfE Guidance: Trade Union Facility Time in Schools (Ref DFE-00007-2014), ensures that all schools who contribute to the scheme can progress employee relations matters appropriately by providing access to locally elected accredited trade union representatives who can provide support and representation at hearings, appeals, consultation meetings and other employee matters. Schools (both maintained and academy) who do not contribute must make their own arrangements for trade union consultation and representation and liaise with Regional Trade Union Representatives. The current trade union facilities arrangements are as follows:
 - a) Academy Schools - Funding is delegated to individual academy schools and no change is recommended to this arrangement for 2019-20.
 - b) Maintained schools – Since April 2018 funding has also been delegated to individual maintained schools. This change in April this year has caused a lot of confusion with many maintained school head teachers not fully understanding the implications of not contributing to the scheme. As a result, the progress of employee related casework in a large number of schools has been delayed whilst arrangements are made to admit the school to the scheme. It has resulted in a significant amount of additional bureaucracy for schools and in the administration of the scheme and uncertainty over the overall budget as maintained schools decide to “opt in” part way through the year as they have not fully understood the implications until a significant employee issue arises, sometimes at very short notice.
3. The following recommendation is therefore made:
 - a) Academy Schools – no change to current arrangements. Academy schools to continue to opt in as required.

- b) Maintained schools – consult on reintroducing the de-delegation of trade union facilities funding in the 2019-20. This change will avoid future misunderstanding and ensure that all maintained schools gain immediate access to locally elected representatives when required at the start of the next financial year. It will also add financial certainty to the overall budget and ensure that all schools (including academy schools) who release their staff to undertake county-wide trade union duties receive a contribution towards staff cover costs without delay.
4. The proposed contributions from schools for 2019-20 is a per pupil charge of £1.51 for Primary and £1.64 for secondary which is the same as that for 2018-19.
 5. A follow up report will be made available in due course to the Schools Forum setting out the financial allocation to each trade union for the current financial year.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Schools Forum:

- 1) Note the contents of the report
- 2) Maintained Primary School members agree for the de-delegation of trade union facilities funding to be included in 2019-20 schools funding formula consultation.

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