

Schools Forum Paper

Funding for Specialist Leaders of Education

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to inform Schools Forum of the proposed allocation of a maximum £68k of funding currently held by Cambridge Education for school improvement, to be directed towards supporting the deployment of Specialist Leaders of Education.

2. Background information

Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) are outstanding middle and senior leaders with a particular area of expertise and a successful track record of school improvement work. Their role is to support leaders in other schools through coaching, training, group support, analysis and action planning.

SLEs are recruited and designated by Teaching Schools using criteria set by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and following a national timetable. Applicants undergo an assessment process, and the Teaching School is responsible for their subsequent deployment and quality assurance.

The type of deployment will vary according to local need; there is no preferred model and no pre-defined time commitment for a deployment. One deployment might require two days of support, another a more extended commitment over a period of time. Yet another might involve the organisation and delivery of training to leaders from more than one school. Deployments should be agreed between all parties prior to them taking place, with due regard for the capacity of the SLE and his/her school.

There is an expectation that schools arranging support from an SLE will pay in the same way as they would if they arranged for an external consultant. The Teaching School is responsible for setting the charging rates for SLEs in a particular area; however, the overlapping geographical areas of the teaching school alliances are leading to the emergence of a typical rate of around £375 per day. Teaching Schools do not receive any funding to support the deployment of SLEs from the National College, or from any other government source.

3. SLEs in Slough

The three Teaching Schools in Slough (Langley Grammar School, Lynch Hill Primary School Academy and Upton Court Grammar school) have organised one recruitment round, and a further round is expected to take place in May 2014. Potential SLEs may come from any school but must have the support and agreement of their headteacher to release them for an agreed amount of time.

Following the first round of recruitment, SLEs have been designated in the following areas of expertise:

- Computing/ICT
- Music
- Early Years
- Initial Teacher Training, CPD and NQT induction
- Geography
- Gifted and Talented provision
- Modern Foreign Languages

In the next round, priority will be given to areas such as maths and English, where recruitment was previously unsuccessful. SLEs designated in the next round would be available for deployment from September 2014.

4. Allocation of funding

There is an underlying principle that the deployment of SLEs as a 'traded service'; the school releasing the SLE should receive compensatory payment, and the SLE themselves should be remunerated for their contribution beyond their normal role.

However, we are at an early stage in the development of a fully charged model for school improvement. Some schools may be unable to meet the costs of the support which is believed necessary. Others may need to be convinced of the credibility of the SLE model before making what could be a significant financial input.

The proposed allocation would be used to provide:

- a) Additional funding to deploy SLEs to meet school improvement priorities for vulnerable schools whose budgets may be significantly constrained;
- b) Funding for one or more SLEs to work across the area on significant cross-school priorities identified by Cambridge Education (eg mathematics)
- c) 'Pump-prime' funding to cover the release costs of SLEs into schools for initial deployments, with extended deployments being fully charged. *(eg, "We can offer you two days of SLE time free of charge; further days would be charged at.....")*

The funding would be passed to the Slough Learning Partnership who will broker the deployment of SLEs, and will provide regular reports on the use of the funds back to Cambridge Education. The use of the additional funding to particularly support vulnerable schools would be in close consultation with Cambridge Education.

The appendix shows how the maximum funding figure has been calculated. The allocation would cover the period April 2014 – July 2015 with a review in the summer term of 2015. Further allocation would depend on an assessment of the impact of the SLEs during that time.

5. Recommendation

Schools Forum is asked to note the proposal as outlined, which is supported by Cambridge Education.

John Constable, Langley Grammar School
Dawn Bailey, Slough Learning Partnership
March 2014

Appendix

Costing model

The indicative proposal assumes:

- an SLE unit cost in line with other teaching school alliances of £375 per day.
- a total of 15 SLEs designated across the area following the second round of recruitment.

Possible Deployment	Unit cost	Maximum level of funding
Up to 12 secondary schools, each accessing up to two days of SLE time free of charge, with further deployment costs fully charged.	£375	£9,000
Up to 34 primary schools and early years settings, each accessing up to two days of SLE time free of charge, with further deployment costs fully charged.	£375	£25,500
Up to 10 'vulnerable' schools, supported with up to 5 additional uncharged SLE days.	£375	£18,750
Employment of one SLE on 0.2 FTE to work across the area on key priority.	0.2 x Lead Practitioner salary + on costs	£14,000
Total		£67,250