

Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

Meeting: Children Families & Schools Sub-Committee

Date: Monday 14th March 2005

Report of: The Director of Children, Families and Schools

Subject: Update on the recruitment and retention of teachers and qualified social workers in Brighton and Hove

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 This report is to update members on the recruitment and retention of teachers in Brighton and Hove schools and qualified social workers within the Social Care Services.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the arrangements for newly qualified teachers is noted.

2.2 That the encouraging improvements in the recruitment and retention of qualified social workers is noted.

3. Background

3.1 Brighton and Hove have good arrangements for the recruitment and retention of teachers in the city. During the LEA Ofsted/SSI Inspection in 2004 our recruitment support for schools was graded as 1 (the highest possible score). Recruitment and retention is also a priority in our Education Development Plan. For the past four years we have had a partnership arrangement with Hays Education to provide specific recruitment support for teachers. This has been funded through a government grant from the Teacher Training Agency of £50,000. In 2005-6 the grant in its present form

will cease. The precise details of the grant that we expect to replace it are not yet known.

- 3.2 The main source of recruitment of teachers for our schools is through the newly qualified. The work provided through Hays Education includes attending on our behalf, student teacher recruitment events, marketing Brighton and Hove nationally, maintaining a student teacher database and helpline and promoting recruitment and retention initiatives such as housing schemes.
- 3.3 The local arrangements for the recruitment and retention of qualified social workers have improved considerably over the last three years. This has been achieved in the context of a national shortage of qualified social workers, which has been compounded this year by a fallow period following the extension of social work training from two years to three years duration. The Directorate has softened this impact by investing in a three-year Open University Diploma in Social Work Course (DipSW), which will graduate ten students later this year and a further three in 2006. The Directorate will also second existing graduate employees onto a work based social work programme which is being developed by a local University.
- 3.4 The Directorate monitors the position of qualified social work appointments on a monthly basis and this started from a low point in the spring of 2002 with more than 40% vacancies in qualified social work positions in the front line social work teams. The current vacancy rate is 7.4% although it remains somewhat fragile with continued turnover.

4. Newly Qualified Teachers

- 4.1 Brighton and Hove schools have on average around 100 newly qualified teachers (NQT) each academic year. In order to become a qualified teacher, newly qualified teachers will have either successfully completed a recognised teaching qualification such as the Post Graduate Certificate in Education and the required basic skills tests or have completed an employment based training route such as the Graduate Teacher Programme. The NQT must then successfully complete an induction year teaching in a mainstream school. Schools with an NQT receive £1000 per term for each full time equivalent NQT they employ to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities for NQT induction.
- 4.2 During the induction year the NQT is working to meet the Induction Standards which are nationally set. They are allocated a school-based tutor who is responsible for organising NQT support in school and completing the necessary assessments and reports to set deadlines to confirm progress. The LEA is the Accountable Body

responsible for ensuring that the schools are meeting the statutory requirements of support for NQT, as well as for quality assurance and also provide a central NQT induction programme.

- 4.3 The central induction programme for NQT includes behaviour management, child protection, time management, assertiveness, special needs, classroom effectiveness and for primary NQT personal and social education, ICT, art and design and parents' evenings. In addition an NQT tutor programme is in place to help them to carry out their role successfully. A planning day for tutors and NQT's is also offered.

5. Focus on NQT's in the academic year 2003-04

- 5.1 There were 104 NQT (101 full time, 3 part time) in Brighton and Hove schools during the academic year 2003-04 in forty-four schools (including two private schools). In 2003-04 no NQT failed, nine left before the end of the induction year (five because of fixed term contracts and four for other reasons), and two had their induction year extended.
- 5.2 The LEA quality assurance visits to schools showed that the majority provided a good level of support to the NQT's they had appointed and the NQT's felt confident that their induction into the profession was effective. One school was shown not to provide the appropriate support and specific advice/actions were agreed with the headteacher and governing body. Five schools requested LEA support for individual NQT's who they felt were making insufficient progress towards the Induction Standards. Additional support was provided for these five schools through Advanced Skills Teachers, Consultants and in one case through a placement at another school.
- 5.3 A review of the quality assurance procedures was carried out in 2003-04 in order to have a more detailed understanding of the quality of school support for NQT. The findings from this review have been incorporated into the guidance for 2004-05. This is with the intention of sharing best practice and working to address areas of less well-developed practice.

6. Other Recruitment and Retention Activities

- 6.1 In addition to the recruitment of newly qualified teachers support is provided for return to teach programmes and in 2004 we were successful in bidding to the TTA to run a secondary Return to Teaching Programme in 2005 through our Training Schools. Unfortunately the course had to be cancelled, as we were unable to recruit sufficient returners.
- 6.2 Detailed exit and entry information is collected, analysed and reported to the Recruitment and Retention Working Group. This information is used to inform activities. Interestingly housing which was a key reason for leaving Brighton and Hove

since the key worker housing scheme has been in place and the Teacher Let Scheme is becoming less of an issue. The main reason for leaving is promotion.

- 6.3 Special assistance with hard to recruit posts can also be provided such as senior management recruitment. This includes ensuring that the recruitment information is of the highest quality and promotes the post in the most positive way.

7. Qualified Social Workers

- 7.1 The front line social work teams have on average 90 qualified social work posts including some at a senior level and the core qualification has to date, been the DiPSW or CQSW (usually two years full-time at an accredited college), now a three-year degree course. Further post-qualification training is arranged through the Post Qualifying Award in Social Work, which consists of two award programmes. PQ1 is completed within the first two

years after qualifying and is followed by the Child Care Award which forms Part 2 of the PQSW framework.

- 7.2 The Directorate restructured social work pay scales, which were introduced in Spring 2002 and resulted in improved initial starting salaries and incremental progression linked to post-qualification attainment. This has resulted in more than 80% of the current qualified staff having successfully completed the PQ1 and a more competitive salary range.
- 7.3 The records demonstrate that as of 01 January 04, 116 qualified social workers were in post across the Directorate compared with 133 as of 31 December 2004. During 2004, 34 qualified staff left for various reasons including ill health, career breaks, securing promotion elsewhere and domestic reasons but 56 qualified social workers were appointed.
- 7.4 The Directorate also introduced a premium payment for those qualified Social Workers operating in 'hard to recruit to teams' (DAT and Fieldwork Teams), which is a modest additional payment, which reflects the especially stressful nature of the Child Protection role. Turnover in these teams was at an extremely worrying level and this payment together with other measures was instrumental in bringing about the improved overall position.
- 7.5 A particular difficulty in attracting staff from other areas has been the high cost of local housing and the Directorate has achieved considerable flexibility in extending the keyworkers housing scheme. This is a government led initiative to help key workers purchase a home through an interest free equity loan. The loans are available to help those who would otherwise find it impossible to buy a home on their current income and need to live a reasonable distance from the workplace.

7.6 In Brighton & Hove this scheme is run by Moat Housing Group. The exact loan received will be determined by an assessment of an individual's housing needs, household income, any equity held and property prices in the area, in which the keyworker is working and intending to purchase. The subsequent loan is placed as a second charge on your property. 11 social work staff have enquired for this scheme and 7 of them have taken up the opportunity.

7.7 The Directorate has also sought to extend to qualified Social Workers keyworkers, housing opportunities made available to teachers. This required introducing greater flexibility in what was a national criterion and has been done on a case-by-case basis with limited success. Relocation expenses have also been used flexibly to encourage experienced applicants to relocate to Brighton & Hove.

7.8 There is recent evidence that the Directorate has started to attract qualified staff from neighbouring authorities and if the recent reductions in the volume of looked after children can be sustained, an easing of the pressure on staff will be a further welcome development which will bode well for retention.

8 Financial Implications

8.1 Schools with NQT are required to provide NQT's with 10% less timetabled teaching time to enable them to carry out work to meet the Induction Standards. All schools with NQT's receive £3000 for one year per full time NQT to enable them to provide this additional support. Most schools take their role with NQT very seriously as they recognise their contribution to helping to prepare future teachers. From September 2005 in addition to the 10% lighter timetable required for NQT (i.e. 90% teaching), they are also required to have a further 10% reduction (i.e. 81% teaching) because of the implementation of Phase 3 of the school workforce reforms. The anticipated results of this additional requirement is that schools may find it increasingly difficult to meet timetable requirements, as well as increased costs when appointing NQT's. The traditional view that NQT were less expensive to appoint than more experienced colleagues, certainly during their induction year, may no longer be true.

8.2 We do not yet know the details of the TTA grant that is going to replace the current funding. We have been advised verbally that we will be eligible for the new funding stream (£50,000) but that it will have a wider remit around the recruitment and retention of the whole school workforce.

8.3 The cost of the restructured social work salaries was initially met through a single status one-off payment and the on-going costs (including the premium payments) have been factored into the Directorate's budget planning.

9 Consultation

9.1 The recruitment and retention work is monitored through a working group with representatives from schools, Brighton and Hove human resources team and local universities. In 2003, the make up of the working group was extended to include representatives from social care and the youth service as, although the TTA grant is specifically for teacher recruitment, the lessons learnt have been applied with good effect to the recruitment of staff in hard to recruit sectors including social care staff.

10 Conclusion

10.1 The quality of teachers in our schools is high and as an LEA we work hard with our schools to ensure that they are fully supported in the recruitment and retention of staff.

10.2 The overall recruitment position of our qualified Social Workers has improved considerably over the last two years but the position remains somewhat fragile. The nature of the tasks remains extremely challenging and there is still a national shortage. The profile of the staff at the front line is also changing with younger and less experienced staff, opting for mainstream Child Protection work. This has required adjustments in workload allocation, supervision arrangements and management in order to support new staff and encouraging them to remain with us. The early indication is that this is resulting in improved overall retention.

10.3 It remains a significant challenge to increase longevity of service for social workers working at the front line in Child Protection and LAC teams. Locally, the most recent analysis confirms that our social workers remain in the DAT and Long-term fieldwork teams for an average of 2.5 years (slightly less within the DAT due to the nature of the work) compared to a national average of 18 months. The introduction of premium payments and the opportunity for accelerated incremental progression on completion of PQ1 training, have both helped to extend longevity but, essentially, a significant number of staff still find an undiluted diet of child protection investigation activity to be extremely challenging to such an extent that, they can only manage the role for a limited period of time.

