

GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL LSCs ON SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF: TRAINING, CAREER PROGRESSION AND WORKFORCE REFORM

Executive Summary

1. This document provides guidance for local LSCs on the priority placed nationally on school workforce reform, and on successful practice in supporting the development of school support staff. Its purpose is to encourage you to work actively with schools, LEAs and training providers to support school workforce remodelling.

2. The guidance reflects commitments in "Raising Standards and Tackling Workload – a National Agreement" which was signed on 15 January 2003 by school workforce unions, local authority employers and national government, in particular the statement that:

“Support staff will be increasingly recognised for the contribution they make to raising standards, and they will have access to expanded roles and improved career opportunities.”

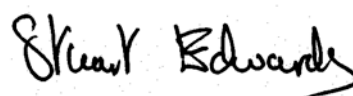
3. The guidance also reflects the top-level LSC commitment, encapsulated in an exchange of letters between David Miliband (Schools Minister) and John Harwood (June 2003 - copies at Annexes [A and B]), to support the Government's school workforce programme and deliver planned targets. David Miliband invited LSC to set out a programme to contribute to the training and career development for school support staff, a workforce of some 350,000 that has grown rapidly in recent years. In reply, John Harwood gave firm LSC commitments to:

- a. double the number of places on an innovative pilot programme to deliver 1,000 support staff in training by March 2004;
- b. create a school sector plan through a national Executive Director-led LSC group backed by a national network of LSC staff; and
- c. convene a high-level group of school employer and school workforce representatives to advise on the sector plan.

4. The outcome of the exchange of letters is a joint LSC-DfES programme of work, backed by £500,000 specific DfES funding in 2003-04 to provide for the costs of accelerating and extending the existing LSC national pilot, and opening the way to access mainstream adult participation and other budgets held at local LSC level with effect from 2004.

5. This guidance explains the work of the national pilot. It asks all local LSCs to work proactively and in close collaboration schools, LEAs and key partners to support the development of this key local workforce. We hope it will inform and support your partnerships to take forward this high priority initiative, and we would welcome your comments.

6. If you have any further questions, please contact Ianthe Wright (ianthe.wright@dfes.gsi.gov.uk) on school workforce reform, or Sally Lewis (sally.lewis@lsc.gov.uk) on the LSC school support staff pilot and sector plan.



MICHAEL STARK	STUART EDWARDS
Director, Skills and Workforce Development	Deputy Director
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National Agreement and School Workforce Reform

7. On 15 January 2003 a national agreement was signed between school workforce unions, local authority employers and the Government, promising joint action to help every school to raise standards and tackle workload issues. One of key aspects of the agreement is to develop the role of school support staff.

8. Over 350,000 staff working in schools are deployed in roles other than as teachers. They are a very diverse group, many part-time and playing multiple roles within the school. Some provide direct support for pupils and their teaching and learning; others play a key role in the management and administration of the school. The range of existing roles includes teaching assistants, learning mentors, technicians, special needs assistants, librarians, caretakers/site supervisors, catering staff, midday supervisors, bursars, and other administrative and secretarial staff, including special examination officers and clerks to governing bodies.

9. The range of skills is therefore diverse, as is the extent to which training and development has been available. Many of these staff are very skilled and experienced, though do not necessarily have qualifications. Other staff are already well qualified, but need more specialist training. Some still lack basic skills or Level 2 qualifications. All will have development needs as the workforce reform agenda progresses, and schools are also expected to take on additional support staff in new roles. Quite apart from the direct impact on schools and education, upskilling this substantial workforce should make a substantial contribution towards the national adult skills agenda, at basic, foundation, technician and higher levels.

10. The national agreement sets out a timetable for specific changes to teachers' contracts which will place new demands on support staff and generate new training needs. Annex [C] lists the range of largely administrative and clerical tasks, which from September 2003 teachers can no longer be expected to undertake routinely. From the following September, there will be a limit on how often teachers can be expected to provide cover for absent colleagues, and this is likely to create a demand for well-trained support staff to act as cover supervisors for short-term absences. Similarly, from September 2005, teachers will be entitled to a minimum allocation of time for planning, preparation and assessment, and support staff in new roles such as Higher Level Teaching Assistants will play a key role in enabling this to happen. Across the board, increasing use of ICT in management and planning as well as in the classroom is likely to generate new ICT training needs, especially for support staff taking on roles hitherto usually performed by teachers, e.g. examinations officers and data managers.

11. The Government has previously consulted on a strategy entitled "Developing the Role of School Support Staff" [<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/archive/archive1.cfm?CONID=200>], on which many local LSCs provided helpful comments. This envisaged three broad developmental routes: a) assistance in teaching and learning (mainly teaching assistants), b) behaviour and guidance, and c) administration and organisation (including site supervisors and ICT technicians). Implementation of that strategy is now being taken forward rapidly and key developments were summarised in a "Prospectus for Developing Training and Qualifications for Support Staff in Schools" (see Annex [D]). This was published alongside the exchange of letters between David Miliband and John Harwood, and features the key areas where it was agreed nationally that the LSC would make a particular contribution, as well as other significant developments such as the Teacher Training Agency's work to establish standards and training for Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

LSC national school support staff programme

12. The first key development has been an extension of the School Support Staff Pilot, supported by additional DfES funding. This is directed particularly at the administration and organisation route. Phase 1 of this pilot has focused on relevant qualification routes for site supervisors, administrative staff and midday supervisors. Phase 2 will be looking to extend this work to broaden the occupational areas and increase the levels of attainment and geographical spread. There is a range of existing qualifications, in the main based on occupational standards adapted from similar roles in different sectors, but the pilot aims to re-assess these adapted training programmes and where necessary, develop new pathways. We are now confident of achieving the aim of 1,000 support staff in training by March 2004.

13. Work is also now advancing rapidly on a school support staff sector plan drawn up by a group chaired by Rob Valentine, Executive Director of Nottinghamshire LSC, and we have been very encouraged by the number of local LSC staff coming forward to join the national network which is backing this development. In addition, the programme outlined in the Executive Summary will:

- a. measure the baseline of school support staff training
- b. review qualifications mapping and identify competences for school support roles without accredited qualifications
- c. identify opportunities for further support through the Union Learning Fund
- d. oversee and advise on the development of the overall sector plan
- e. provide advice and guidance to all local LSCs, to build a firm foundation to roll this out as a national programme of good practice
- f. identify opportunities for working in close collaboration with schools, LEAs and key partners, to promote the dissemination of information on training and career progression, including access through a web site/portal

14. These developments recognise the significant contribution made by support staff towards raising standards and pupil achievement. Improvements in school standards contribute directly towards LSC Corporate Plan targets to improve knowledge and productive skills of the whole population to world class standards by 2010. Because of this direct impact on our targets, we have a special interest in upskilling the school support workforce, and can legitimately give it priority over most other adults.

How can local LSCs help and support schools?

15. In the light of this, local LSCs should seek to develop long-term, close working relationships with their LEAs and schools. Key areas to consider and offer support on include:

Strategic Workforce Development Plans, e.g. covering;

- a. diagnosis of staff training needs in relation to job roles and the school development plan
- b. encouraging a systematic Training Needs Analysis (TNA) process, ideally within the framework of a whole-school commitment to the Investors in People standard (on which see Peter Housden's letter of January 2002 to

Chief Education Officers, attached at Annex [E]);

- c. support for the development of a school staff training plan, responding to the TNA and underpinning the success of the School Development Plan through targeting of training resources, delivered in innovative and cost-effective ways.

Establishing clear lines of communication:

- d. a local LSC nominated officer to establish a close working relationship with the LEAs in their area e.g. with the Remodelling Team Adviser or Workforce Development Strategy Manager and agree between them a first point of contact for schools
- e. link schools to Basic Skill Champions and Union Learning Representatives.
- f. provide Information and advice services via IAG Partnerships to help staff identify training routes and career paths.
- g. facilitate 'cluster' working with FE and other providers.
- h. explore training and assessment within confederations of schools.
- i. support schools to develop a people-centred learning culture to underpin school performance and success through liP
- j. engage schools in specific opportunities in the school sector pilots and other LSC national initiatives and targeted programmes including: Employer Training Pilots; pilots of new ICT user qualifications; and action promoted under the Union Learning Fund.
- k. link schools into useful networks or groups and share good practice

Providing information to schools/LEAs for further opportunities for training and development

- l. support staff to accredit their skills via NVQ/VRQ programmes or F/AMAs.
- m. support workforce progression through Foundation Degrees.
- n. support training in specific areas, notably team leadership and ICT.
- o. support schools to embed NVQ assessment processes via work based assessor awards - A1 and A2 units.
- p. identify and promote delivery of flexible ways of training and learning to fit in with staff and school needs and continuing professional development.
- q. develop customised provision to meet school support staff roles.

Sharing information to inform and develop strategies on workforce planning and access to resources

- r. share local area demographic/labour market intelligence to inform workforce planning, support the development of positive action strategies.
- s. help schools to access targeted non-LSC funding notably ESF, SRB and

RDA, as well as target-led LSC resources focused on adults lacking an initial level 2 qualification.

- t. identify and support basic skill needs to enable staff to increase their contribution to school effectiveness and to open opportunities for other training and development opportunities.

Funding and charges

16. This guidance envisages a wider use of main LSC programme funding in support of learning for school support staff than has generally applied. This is appropriate given the high priority of this workforce for the delivery of national education objectives and LSC Corporate Plan targets. However, it is important to note that the guidance does not require LLSCs to offer such support and help free of charge or matching contributions. There are two reasons for seeking these. First, there is a clear correlation between the success and completion rates on adult learning programmes for which employers make a financial contribution. Success rates on programmes towards which schools and/or LEAs contribute cash from their own resources (including Standards Fund) may be more successful than those which are offered entirely free. Second, LSC budgets for adult learners are finite, and the Skills Strategy requires re-targeting of resources towards priority groups and (on average) significantly larger employer fee contributions towards LSC adult learning programmes than has hitherto been common.

17. At the same time, school and LEA budgets are tightly stretched, and in deciding what fees or matched funding contributions are appropriate, LLSCs will need to judge carefully the elasticity of demand. Successful LLSCs will find the right balance locally, expanding take-up by schools of effective new approaches through a targeted use of subsidies, sometimes on a loss-leader basis with a view to recovering a greater proportion of full cost later.

Next Steps

18. LSCs are invited to:
 - a. review their relationships and working arrangements with LEAs and schools, particularly in relation to the National Agreement: Raising Standards and Tackling Workload.
 - b. develop a local plan of support and action, drawing from a full range of budgets and services
 - c. nominate a member of staff to feed back examples of good practice and development through the national network being set up under Phase 2 of the programme, helping to identify emerging needs and innovative ideas for this rapidly developing workforce. **The nominated officer should contact Sally Lewis, School Support Staff Strategy Manager (sally.lewis@lsc.gov.uk) to ensure key staff are linked into this national network**
 - d. establish/strengthen contacts with LEAs and schools. A useful contact will be the LEA Remodelling Champion, appointed by the Chief Education Officer of each Local Authority, both of whom will receive a copy of this guidance.

Annexes [A/B]: Exchange of letters between David Miliband and John Harwood



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tel: 0870 0012345 dfes.ministers@dfes.gsi.gov.uk
David Miliband MP
Minister of State for School Standards

John Harwood
Chief Executive
Learning and Skills Council
Cheylemore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT

12 June 2003

Dear John

TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

I am writing today to invite you to confirm how you propose that the Learning and Skills Council will step up its contribution to developing the skills of support staff working in schools.

Better training and career development opportunities for the 350,000 or more support staff working in our schools in England is a high priority for the Government. This is critical for delivering the National Agreement to tackle teacher workload and raise standards for individual pupils. It is also be an exciting element of the workforce skills agenda. We want to bring about a step change, working with partners.

DfES is already working closely with the local employers and support staff unions. Significant developments are in hand such as the Teacher Training Agency's work to develop the standards and training for Higher Level Teaching Assistants. However, we want to ensure that training and qualifications are more readily available for the whole range of support staff in schools. We have invested more than £37 million this year in schools and LEAs for this purpose, and we are aware that in some parts of the country local LSCs are already working in partnership to make a significant additional contribution. I would now like to invite you to set out how this can be developed into a more concerted strategy across the country.


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I understand that officials have had initial discussions, and the Department is prepared to provide a secondee with a limited amount of additional resource to help instigate this work and ensure it produces rapid results. I should be grateful if you would now confirm how LSC intends to take this forward and ensure the engagement of all the key partners.

I look forward to hearing your response to these proposals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Miliband". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

DAVID MILIBAND

13 June 2003

David Miliband MP
Minister of State for School Standards
Department for Education & Skills
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Thank you for your letter of 12 June.

LSC will be glad to support this important initiative, which goes with the grain of our workforce development strategy. School support staff play a vital role in delivering our own agenda, and we share your wish to provide better support towards training, qualifications and improved career opportunities for them. The additional resource and high level support which you are able to provide will enable us jointly to make faster progress than would otherwise have been possible

Working closely with key partners and stakeholders, the LSC plans to develop a programme of action to help many more school support staff get training towards valuable transferable qualifications. We welcome the proposed secondee who will work with our sector manager for education and public sector workers, namely Gail Bailey. Working with your officials we will develop a programme to put the development of school support staff at the heart of the LSC's mainstream agenda. We will:

a) Extend immediately our highly innovative programme of school support staff pilots.

This began late last year and is running in nine local LSCs (namely: Birmingham & Solihull, Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole; Derbyshire; Hertfordshire; Lincolnshire and Rutland; London South, East & West; North Yorkshire). The existing programme will deliver qualifications to 480 school support staff in these locations by March 2004, focusing on three occupational groups namely site/premises staff; administrative staff; and midday supervisors. With the resource you have committed, we will be able to double this number, aiming to develop 1,000 staff in all, and drawing in additional schools and LEAs, and widen the occupational groups.

b) Create a school support staff sector plan, drawn up by a national LSC group, chaired by an Executive Director, and backed by a nationwide network of local LSC staff.

c) Invite representatives of school employers and the school workforce to join a top-level group with national and local LSC representatives and a DfES observer. This group would be charged with:

- Issuing guidance to LSCs and LEAs highlighting existing opportunities for collaboration and examples of good practice;
- Measuring the baseline of school support staff training which currently takes place, whether funded by LSC or other sources, and to assess how much of it leads to qualifications, and transferable skills mapped to required competences;
- Reviewing the outcomes of a qualifications mapping exercise commissioned by DfES, and co-ordinating further work to map and identify the competences required to perform any key school support staff roles where suitable accredited qualifications are not currently available;
- Identifying opportunities where new developments could be initiated through bids to the Union Learning Fund;
- Overseeing and advising on the development and implementation of the overall school support staff sector plan, and advising on how this should be taken forward through future LSC grant decisions.

This is a great opportunity to work together with all the main stakeholders interested in school support staff. I would emphasise that time is of the essence if we are to make progress within this financial year, and so the early appointment of a suitable secondee is going to be of cardinal importance.

Yours sincerely

John Harwood

Annex [C]: Tasks teachers will be giving up to support staff

As a result of The National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload, teachers should have support so that they can focus on teaching and learning and expect administrative and clerical processing either to be automated by technology or to be done by support staff. Consequently, contractual changes have been made so that from 1 September 2003 teachers should not routinely be required to undertake administrative and clerical tasks, including:

- Collecting money from pupils and parents.
- Investigating a pupil's absence.
- Bulk photocopying.
- Typing or making word-processed versions of manuscript material and producing revisions of such versions.
- Word-processing, copying and distributing bulk communications, including standard letters, to parents and pupils.
- Producing class lists on the basis of information provided by teachers.
- Keeping and filing records, including records based on data supplied by teachers.
- Preparing, setting up and taking down classroom displays in accordance with decisions taken by teachers.
- Producing analyses of attendance figures.
- Producing analyses of examination results.
- Collating pupil reports.
- Administration of work experience (but not selecting placements and supporting pupils by advice or visits).
- Administration of public and internal examinations.
- Administration of cover for absent teachers.
- Ordering, setting up and maintaining ICT equipment and software.
- Ordering supplies and equipment.
- Cataloguing, preparing, issuing and maintaining materials and equipment and stocktaking the same.
- Taking verbatim notes or producing formal minutes of meetings.

- Coordinating and submitting bids (for funding, school status and the like) using contributions by teachers and others.
- Transferring manual data about pupils not covered by the above into computerised school management systems.
- Managing the data in school management systems.

The changes to achieve the above took effect in every school on 1 September 2003.

From September 2004 there will also be limits on the amount of cover that teachers can be asked to do for absent colleagues: in some cases this will mean that support staff are deployed to supervise the classes affected.

In addition, from September 2005, teachers will be given guaranteed time, during the teaching day, for planning, preparation and assessment. They will also no longer be required to invigilate external examinations. These contractual changes can only be delivered if schools embrace fully the contribution of well-trained support staff, particularly the new cadre of Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

Annex [D]: Prospectus for Developing Training and Qualifications for Support Staff in Schools

Prospectus for Developing Training and Qualifications for Support Staff in Schools



The National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload undertook to improve training and create new career paths for support staff. Eight key developments are now in hand, supporting the local work of schools and LEAs.

1. Induction training. DfES is funding and providing materials for locally delivered induction training for teaching assistants. Similar induction training is now being developed for other support staff and will be available from October.

2. Teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants. National occupational standards and NVQs are now in place for teaching assistants at levels 2 and 3. The Teacher Training Agency is consulting on standards for HLTAs and developing a range of flexible training and assessment models, including links with foundation degrees. Piloting will begin in the Autumn with full roll out by Easter 2004, building up over the next 3 years to a capacity to train 20,000 HLTAs a year.

3. Science technicians. Science technician training will be at the heart of the professional development opportunities to be offered by the new national network of science learning centres, which are being set up through a £51million partnership with the Wellcome Trust. DfES is also working with the Royal Society and the Association of Science Education in following up their reports on science technicians.

4. School bursars and business managers. The National College for School Leadership has developed two training programmes for bursars. 750 bursars will participate in the Certificate in School Business Management Course during 2003-04, which gives a comprehensive grounding in the main aspects of the bursar's role. A Diploma in School Business Management is being piloted with 100 more experienced bursars, often those working in larger schools or across federations.

5. Behaviour management and pupil support. From September, training will become available for support staff through the behaviour and attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy, delivered as part of a whole-school approach on the same basis as for qualified teachers. In addition, a five day initial training course is funded by DfES for all learning mentors in Excellence in Cities areas, and a project is focussing on training for support staff in Learning Support Units.

6. Qualifications map. DfES is commissioning an exercise to map all the different qualifications available to support staff from awarding bodies across the country. Results should be available in the Autumn Term. This will enable better information to be provided on progression routes and accreditation, and identify any gaps to be filled.

7. Learning and Skills Council sector pilots. 1,000 places will be provided this year on an innovative pilot programme to deliver qualifications for support staff in roles such as administrators, midday supervisors, and caretakers.

8. Learning and Skills Council sector plan. The LSC is to develop a sector plan for improving access to training and qualifications for all types of school support staff. This will be developed by a national LSC group, backed by a nationwide network. Local authority employer and support staff union representatives will help oversee and advise on the development and implementation of the sector plan.

Annex [E]: Peter Housden's letter to Chief Education Officers

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28 January 2002

TO: ALL CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICERS IN ENGLAND

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE AND SCHOOLS

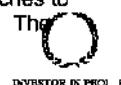
Dear Chief Education Officer

I am writing to clarify the Department's view of how the Investors in People standard relates to the key aspects of school improvement and management. We do not advocate it as the only approach, and we recognise the value of other "excellence" models. However, now that nearly one-third of all maintained schools – both primary and secondary – have achieved or are actively pursuing recognition, it is clearly the best established standard and is providing cost-effective results. This letter is therefore to encourage you to consider whether your teams working with schools are well enough informed about the potential of the Investors standard to help schools improve, develop their people and manage performance.

There is good evidence that Investors supports school improvement. An NFER study in June 2000 found a clear positive link between achievement of the standard and OFSTED's assessment of teaching quality. For this reason Investors enjoys the support of key national partners including OFSTED. The great majority of schools which have achieved the standard say that it has directly contributed to raising pupil achievement, through a more focused approach to training and development. This view seems to be shared by schools of all types and sizes.

In terms of staff development the case is also robust. Investors sets a framework for development and achievement in which schools have shared plans, individual contributions are recognised, and new skills are valued. This fits particularly well with the Secretary of State's recent Social Market Foundation speech on the future of teaching (http://www.dfes.gov.uk/speeches/12_11_01), which emphasises development of the whole school workforce. The Government believes that effective professional development is at the heart of school improvement, and CPD is thus one of the themes that Ministers asked all LEAs to address in their second Education Development Plans. The CPD strategy "Learning and Teaching" published last March strongly encouraged schools towards Investors because of the evidence that it strengthens a school's commitment to professional development – which in turn helps attract and retain staff.

There is also a benefit in terms of performance management. Systematic approaches to performance management will maximise the contribution of each member of staff. The



process of setting personal objectives, reviewing progress at regular intervals and getting feedback and recognition is assisted by a whole-school Investors approach. Recent feedback from OFSTED suggests that performance management is becoming widely established, but that substantial further work is required to realise its full potential.

Lots of myths about Investors in People have grown up over the years, especially around perceived bureaucracy, paperwork requirements, and costs. The enclosed leaflet 'Valuing the Standard' addresses these and other practical issues, and signposts additional DfES materials written specially for schools and those working with them.

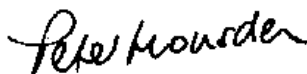
The Learning and Skills Council is strongly supportive of schools' use of Investors to support school improvement and raise achievement. Your local LSC and/or its Business Link partner is very likely to have advisers with particular expertise in working with schools. An LSC pilot project is being developed which aims to improve the skills of support staff in line with an Investors whole-school needs assessment. In addition, the Department and LSC are looking at the costs of advice and assessment, and at ways to reduce these and bring greater consistency across the country. Further details will follow direct from LSC in due course.

Many LEAs do directly contribute towards schools' costs of achieving recognition, using the Small Schools Fund, Standards Fund or other resources. In most cases, the trigger has been the recognition of the link to EDP and school priorities. Whether and how much to subsidise schools in this way is of course a matter for local decision. Arguably, too large a discount may risk reducing the school's own commitment to the process. In our view the right balance here is best struck by a targeted approach which ensures that no school is seriously put off by financial considerations.

In conclusion I should emphasise that Investors is neither a panacea nor a soft option for schools. It brings benefits but only when the initial commitments are followed up vigorously so that it is not just a "plaque on the wall". Having said this, the evidence does suggest that Investors is often a catalyst for improvement, and a means towards continuous improvement across all staff, and to that extent it can be a useful and cost-effective tool for LEAs to use, alongside others.

If you would like to know more about Investors you can either approach your local LSC or Business Link, or email Christine.EATON@dfes.gsi.gov.uk. Tel: 0114 259 1174.

Yours faithfully



Peter Housden
Director General for Schools