



# Walsall Council

## Walsall Children's Services

**Report to:** Schools Forum

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014

**Subject:** Leadership development – funding support

**Contact:** Jane Doughty ([doughtyj@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:doughtyj@walsall.gov.uk))

**Lead Officer for School Improvement:** Leadership Development

**Purpose of the report:** To respond to the request made at the last forum meeting as indicated by minute note below.

### **Resolved**

*That the report be noted. That a report be submitted to the next meeting on the funding for middle leaders and accountability and progress in relation to the project and a further report be submitted to the next meeting to be held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2014.*

## **1. Executive Summary**

1.1 This report reminds Schools Forum how, if allocated, £50,000 can be used to support leadership development across Walsall schools. Members of Schools Forum may wish to target other leadership activity / roles rather than the ideas presented in this paper.

1.2 The report recommends that the funding is used to focus on building capacity at three levels of leadership across all phases, including nursery schools, in order support schools in their ambition to improve outcomes for pupils. Research clearly demonstrates that supporting, developing and improving leadership can improve pupil outcomes. The leadership of the headteacher is critical, so also is leadership across the school. Building leadership capacity to assure strong succession pipelines at all levels is essential.

1.3 The previous paper suggested that funds could be allocated to:

**Serving Headteachers** – to increase number of Headteachers who can support development of other Headteachers, particularly newly appointed c £9,000

**Senior school leaders** – build capacity of those close to Headship who can act as field force to “step up” into Headship posts c £8,000

**Research seminars** - following a need analysis, provide **bespoke research seminars / training sessions on identified topics** that draw on expertise beyond Walsall for a range of leaders c£7,000

1.4 Additionally, a suggestion was made that funds could be used to support middle leadership development across Walsall schools. Middle leaders are critical to the successful delivery of the curriculum, improving and sustaining the quality of teaching and raising outcomes for pupils. Research describes them as the “engine room of the school”.

**Middle leaders** – provide opportunities for recently appointed middle leaders to take up posts rapidly and effectively c £26,000

## 2. Leadership roles

2.1 As explained in the previous paper, it is important to use this funding to support developments that will increase both leadership capacity and capability at different levels of leadership so the expenditure is an investment for the future. Members of Schools Forum may, however, wish to use some or all of the money differently to promote leadership – or not allocate any funding to leadership development.

2.2 Concern has been expressed regarding allocating money to middle leadership as funding is now delegated to schools. All funding for professional development is, of course, delegated to schools, including school leadership development. Given the underspend in 2013 /14 and the fact that Walsall schools are facing particular challenges, Schools Forum may wish to allocate some funding to target leadership development across schools in the Borough. Their significance in school improvement suggests that middle leaders should be one of the target groups. Middle leadership is now also an Ofsted inspection priority.

2.3 As indicated in the previous paper, a range of different approaches could be taken to middle leadership development. These are only suggestions and, should Schools Forum wish to proceed, a group of nominated heads could consider these, and other ideas in detail, consulting more widely with colleagues before finalising the plan. This group would consider the whole project including the balance of activity / expenditure across different leadership roles.

### **3. Accountability and progress**

As suggested in the previous paper, a small group of headteachers could consider how money could be used and oversee the developments. These heads could be nominated through Schools Forum. Progress of the project would be reported through Schools Forum and the Assistant Director for Access and Improvement would hold accountability for the work.

### **4. Summary**

- . As requested a report is submitted on the funding for middle leaders and details of how accountability and progress of the project will be managed.