

Schools Forum

23 January 2007

New Delegations from April 2008: Maternity Leave

**Members of the Schools Forum are requested
to note this report for consultation**

1. Purpose of the Report

To give consideration to the delegation of expenditure related to making payments to, or in providing a temporary replacement for a woman on maternity leave or to a person on adoption leave.

2. Background

Currently costs associated with maternity leave are deducted from the centrally retained elements of the School Budget. Schools incurring expenditure for maternity cover are asked to complete a maternity reimbursement claim form which is then forward to education finance. The reducing salary of the employee and the cover costs incurred are calculated and the school will be compensated for only the additional costs incurred over what was originally planned for in their staffing budget.

Under fair funding an opportunity was taken to look at further delegations to schools, including responsibility for long term sickness and maternity costs. Investigations were undertaken by the LA's insurance department into the options available in the market place for insurance cover for our schools. Following consultation with the LMS Formula Working Party it was agreed to delegate long term sickness but not maternity leave at that time.

The LA acts as a broker for CAPITA and a large number of our schools purchase their sickness insurance via this route, however a number of schools make their own arrangements. We have been approached by a number of insurance companies who tell us that some of our schools have now added maternity replacement to their policy. With this in mind contact has been made with CAPITA to discuss how a policy covering both sickness and maternity might operate and a representative of the company attended a meeting at the EDC and some preemptive discussions took place.

A number of local authorities have now taken the decision to delegate this responsibility to governors and perhaps, as the concept of insurance cover has become an integral part of the budget setting process, consideration should be given to increasing governors' delegated responsibilities to include this budget.

While there are currently operational issues around the Trent payroll information available to schools, we are seeking the views of the Forum on this consultation matter.

3. Action

Views are invited from members of the Forum about the possible future delegation of funds for maternity leave.

