

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Personnel and Management Services Committee - 16 October 2000

REPORT ON: Education Department - Review of Training and Care Assistants

REPORT BY: Director of Personnel and Management Services

REPORT NO.: 393-2000

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report outlines a proposal to regrade and redesignate the post of Training and Care Assistant (Special Educational Needs) (SEN).

2 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:-

2.1 the post of Training and Care Assistant (SEN) in mainstream schools be redesignated Classroom Assistant (SEN) and be regraded from GS1 (SCP3-10) (£8,652 - £11,115) to GS2/3 (SCP10-15) (£11,115 - £12,405) (pro rata term time only), in light of the increased duties and responsibilities undertaken. This affects approximately 46 members of staff;

2.2 a qualification bar be placed at SCP12 (£11,685) until the postholder achieves the appropriate SQA PDA: Certificate Support for Learning Assistants, or equivalent, qualification;

2.3 postholders with 5 or more years' experience at the time of Committee approval progress to SCP13 (£11,898). This affects approximately 17 members of staff.

2.4 postholders without an appropriate qualification give an undertaking that they will gain one.

2.5 postholders with 5 or more years' experience either nearing retiral or unwilling to gain the qualification be held at SCP13 (£11,898).

2.6 postholders with less than 5 years' experience unwilling to gain the qualification remain on GS2 (£11,115 - £11,685).

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 It is estimated that the proposals contained within this report will result in a cost of £15,000 in financial year 2000/2001 and £33,000 in a full financial year. The cost will be met from the Education Department's Revenue Budget.

4 **LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

5 **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None.

6 **SUMMARY**

- 6.1 UNISON, on behalf of Training and Care Assistants in mainstream schools, submitted an application for regrading on the grounds of an increase in the duties and responsibilities being undertaken.
- 6.2 Following a detailed investigation, it was found that the duties carried out by the Training and Care Assistants in Kingspark School were similar in some areas. (Refer to generic job description Appendix 1). The Kingspark Training and Care Assistants submitted a successful application for regrading to the Appeals Committee in 1997 from GS1/2 to GS3 (SCP13-15) (pro rata term time only).
- 6.3 In addition, the recent introduction of Classroom Assistants in mainstream schools, graded GS2/3 (with a qualification bar at SCP 12), has further highlighted the considerable overlap in the parity of the duties undertaken by the Training and Care Assistant staff.
- 6.4 In order to standardise the type of posts deployed in schools, it is proposed to redesignate Training and Care Assistants in mainstream schools Classroom Assistants (SEN). In addition, the format of the job description has been agreed with the non teaching trade unions and standardised and is attached as Appendix 2.
- 6.5 Since re-organisation, the Education Department's Support for Learning Policy states the commitment given to training all staff involved in supporting pupils in our schools. Training and Care Assistants have been offered a range of training opportunities, both within term time and within their own time, with financial assistance from the Department. These opportunities were discussed in advance with the staff and were well received. The type of training undertaken ranges from first aid and moving and handling; specific types of training in supporting pupils with Autism and some staff opted for a National Certificate Modular training in Social Care and Education at Dundee College. This programme is ongoing. It is intended to further enhance these opportunities to offer an SQA PDA: Certificate Support for Learning Assistants qualification, which will be the minimum qualification required before a postholder can progress beyond the qualification bar on the salary scale.
- 6.6 It is intended to include all Training and Care Assistants (including Kingspark) in these training/qualification proposals, thus ensuring a qualified, trained and flexible staffing group within the Special Education Needs sector. However, staff currently based at Kingspark will have their salary placing in the upper part of the scale preserved, but will be encouraged to undertake the PDA Certificate training.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, the Director of Education and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report. The non teaching trade unions have also been consulted.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

9 SIGNATURE

J.C. Petrie
Director of Personnel and Management Services

Date