

Wirral Special Schools



Clare Mount Specialist Sports College
 Elleray Park School
 Emslie Morgan Alternative Provision
 School
 Foxfield School
 Gilbrook School
 Hayfield School

Kilgarth School
 Meadowside School
 Orrets Meadow School
 Stanley School
 The Lyndale School
 The Observatory School
 Wirral Hospitals School and Home
 Education Service

Chair
 Bob Richardson
 [Gilbrook School]

Vice Chair
 Carolyn Duncan
 [Orrets Meadow School]

Monday, 29 September 2014

Dear Richard,

Could this be added to the agenda for School's Forum on Wednesday 8th October?

Job Evaluation Appeals

Following on from a meeting with the Headteachers of the special schools and Andrew Roberts on Tuesday 23rd September, there is considerable concern about the financial impact that the re-grading of Teaching Assistant 1 and Teaching Assistant 2 posts will have on school budgets.

The Teaching Assistant 1's are moving from Band C to Band D and the Teaching Assistant 2's from Band D to Band E. The new salary range came into force on 01.09.14. The re-grading relates to an appeal presented to the Local Authority by the teaching assistants in special schools. They put forward a case that job evaluation had not recognised the differences in the role of a teaching assistant in a mainstream school and in a special school. Following their successful appeal, the differential in their pay has to be backdated to 2007. The LA, as in all other previous cases of job evaluation, has committed to meeting the cost of the pay differential from 2007-2011 with schools having to meet the pay differential from 2011-2014 and to meet the new salary costs. This is going to have a detrimental effect on school budgets.

The total amount payable by schools is as follows:

	Elleray Park	Foxfield	Gilbrook	Hayfield	Lyndale	Meadowside	Observatory	Orrets Meadow	Stanley
TA1	27,500	63,266	0	9,730	1,946	0	4,868	17,032	4,868
TA2	88,662	101,032	41,238	87,632	84,536	88,662	9,280	67,320	97,940
Total	116,162	164,298	41238	97,362	86,482	88,662	14,148	84,352	102,808

Despite the LA being aware of the appeals being lodged in 2011, schools were not presented with an analysis of what the differential may look like if those appeals were successful. In fact HR informed schools that even if the appeals were successful it would not necessarily result in them having enough points to move from one band to another. Schools only became aware that the appeals were successful in July 14 and presented with the figures on 23.09.14. We now understand there is the added issue of Teaching Assistant Level 3's having had their appeals refused, but being told that they can appeal against the appeal decision! Should they win an appeal then the situation for schools would be financially unviable.

I am sure you appreciate that all Wirral Special Schools have significant numbers of Teaching Assistants at all levels, and all will have to plan for the future increased costs of these new contracts, which again are costs that were not planned for meeting the needs of our pupils. However, it is accepted that this is a necessary outcome.

However, the back pay total of **£795,512** has not been planned by schools, as you know any significant underspend in recent years has been subject to severe scrutiny by LA Financiers. Subsequently Special Schools are being asked to find this money in their current budgets. I know you will appreciate the impact this would have on Special School budgets, the necessary severe cuts that would have to be made, and the resulting catastrophic consequences on the future provision for pupils with Special Needs on the Wirral.

The whole situation is causing a financial nightmare for the special school sector and given the huge implications on budgets, schools are requesting support from schools forum. In particular, that the costs for this 7 year long review of contracts can be met by LA funds, accepting that Special Schools will, from this year, have to meet the increased costs to their budget from within their delegated funds for these changes to contracts.

Yours sincerely

Bob Richardson

Chair of WiSpHA