

**GUIDELINES FOR
VISITING SPECIALIST
TEACHERS**

Table of Contents

- 1. Working Practices**
- 2. Roles and Responsibilities**
- 3. Timetabling Principles**

1. WORKING PRACTICES

1.1 Base School

The network Coordinator will allocate each Visiting Specialist a base school within their CSN. The school where the visiting specialist spends the majority of time will be identified as the base school. For the purposes of calculating travel and subsistence, the base school is the normal place of work.

A base(s) for the storage of specialist specific resources and an access point for information, mail and e-mail will be arranged by the network coordinator(s) within the CSN(s).

The Excess Teaching Staff – Transfers policy is applicable to all unpromoted teachers.

1.2 Class Contact

All full time Visiting Specialists are class committed for up to 22 ½ hours per week. Travelling time within the school day will be counted as class contact time. See Reference 1, Section 8 and Appendix 3 for part time teachers.

Class time with each P4-7 class should be no less than 45 minutes and 4-6 classes only may be timetabled each day to ensure best practice. Where it is possible to allocate time for Visiting Specialist input to P1-3 classes the times may be of shorter duration.

1.3 Collegiate Time

The weekly 5 hours collegiate time will be allocated in agreement with the visiting specialists and their network coordinator in the agreed negotiating forum, and, for planning purposes only, may be aggregated into a total of 190 hours of collegiate time.

Requests from individual schools for collegiate time with Visiting Specialists will be sent to the network coordinator to be agreed with the Specialists and allocated in accordance with the Guidelines on Working Time and Collegiate Activities.

1.4 Council Policies

Visiting Specialists will have access to appropriate council policies and staff circulars from their base school.

1.5 Guidelines on Behaviour Support

Visiting Specialists should be provided with a copy of schools' behaviour policy and adhere to such. They must also liaise with the head teacher or nominated depute head teacher and/or the classroom teacher on all aspects of pupil behaviour. They should be provided with any relevant medical information.

Where a member of support staff is scheduled for a pupil or group of pupils, they should accompany the class during Visiting Specialist input.

1.6 Health and Safety

Visiting Specialists should work in accordance with the health and safety policy of their school, and should have access to the written policy. They should be provided with any relevant Risk Assessments.

1.7 Induction and Training

Arrangements will be made for the induction of newly appointed Visiting Specialists by the network coordinator to include one day to job shadow an existing Visiting Specialist. An on-going programme of support and staff development will be planned on school in-service closure days throughout the session.

Full-time staff are expected to attend 5 days in-service. Teachers employed on a part-time basis have a pro-rata entitlement to 5 days in-service. When this involves working days in addition to the pro-rata portion of 195 days, these days will be undertaken with pay. These additional days will be subject to agreement between the network coordinator and the Visiting Specialist.

1.8 Leave of Absence – Special Leave

All requests by Visiting Specialists for special leave must be made through their network coordinator, giving as much notice as possible. Paid leave (LvAp1) and unpaid leave (LvAp2) forms are available in all schools.

1.9 Mileage

Visiting Specialists will be classified as essential car users and will be entitled to claim mileage from their base school, but where an employee travels from home to a place other than their base school, then the amount claimed should be the **lesser** of a) the distance actually travelled or b) the distance which would have been travelled if the employee had started their journey at their base school.

1.10 Occasional Days and Public Holidays

Visiting Specialists will take the occasional days chosen by their base school. Part-time Visiting Specialist Teachers are entitled to

occasional days and public holidays on a pro-rata basis, agreed at the beginning of the session with the head teacher of the base school.

The teachers' working year is expressed solely as 195 days, but the occurrence of public holidays and occasional days impacts on the working year of part time teachers. Where the working pattern is such that a part time teacher would be unable to take public holidays and occasional days then other arrangements should be made to enable the teacher to take this leave. Likewise, if the working pattern would result in a part time teacher receiving more public holidays and occasional days than they are entitled to then arrangements would need to be made to ensure that the leave was appropriately adjusted.

Part time teachers are required to work their pro rata share of 195 days.

1.11 Planning and Preparation

The Visiting Specialist will be required to undertake forward planning on an individual basis as part of the Working Time and Collegiate Activities Agreement.

1.12 Professional Development and Review

Reviews for Visiting Specialists will be undertaken by the network coordinator in line with Aberdeenshire Education, Learning & Leisure policy. The authority coordinator will hold the budget for CPD.

1.13 Sick Leave

In the event of illness or any other absence, the Visiting Specialist or their representative must notify the network coordinator concerned as soon as practicable. The network coordinator will make arrangements to advise other schools timetabled for that day.

For an absence of 4-7 days a self certification form (S/69) must be completed and submitted to the network coordinator on return to work. For absences exceeding 7 days, a doctor's sick note is required (on 8th calendar day) and should be sent to the network coordinator with the self-certification form to cover the first 7 days of absence.

1.14 Lunch Break and Travel Time

Visiting Specialists have an entitlement to a minimum of 40 minutes lunch break. During this time, they should not be driving and under no circumstances should lunch be taken whilst driving to the next school.

Travelling time will be taken from either the morning or afternoon session by agreement with the network coordinator and head teachers to fit in with school timetables.

However, there may be occasions when a Visiting Specialist will have to travel between schools throughout the school day and travelling time will be taken from either school by agreement with the network coordinator and head teachers to fit in with school timetables.

Travelling time allocations are as follows:

Up to 5 miles – 10 minutes

6-10 miles – 15 minutes

11-15 miles – 20 minutes

Only in exceptional circumstances will visiting specialists be asked to travel in excess of 15 miles at lunchtime.

1.15 The Working Week

The working week is 35 hours which comprises of a maximum of 22.5 hours class contact time and each full time teacher will have a minimum of 7.5 hours personal allowance for preparation and correction and a further 5 hours for collegiate activities. The 2.5 hours non class contact time will be timetabled in blocks of not less than 45 minutes. There should be no aggregation of working hours over a period longer than a week. The weekly 5 hours collegiate time may however be aggregated over the school session for planning purposes only.

1.16 Travel and Subsistence

All Visiting Specialist staff are allocated a base school from which mileage, when travelling on authority business, will be calculated. Travel expenses and subsistence incurred through normal timetabled duties are claimed on form TRAV 01 (white). A list of dates is given for submission on TRAV 01. These forms must be completed and submitted timeously month by month to the network coordinator. **Travel costs for in-service travel are claimed on form GF58 (orange).**

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Visiting Specialist Teacher

Deliver a quality education to pupils in accordance with national curricular guidelines and council policies and guidelines.

- to teach assigned classes/groups of pupils;
- to plan, prepare, assess and record appropriate activities for all pupils within the schools' policies and procedures;
- to report and discuss pupils' progress with teachers, parents and any other bodies;

- to maintain good order and discipline among pupils and to safeguard their health and safety;
- to advise and guide pupils on issues relating to their education;
- to promote a climate of creativity and enterprise

Contribute to the professional and corporate life of the school(s)

- to contribute to the development of the school curriculum;
- to participate in the professional development and review scheme and undertake appropriate continuing professional development;
- to contribute to the professional development of colleagues, including probationary and student teachers;
- to participate in the administration and organisation of the school, as appropriate;
- to accept a commitment to the corporate life of the school in relation to pupils, parents and staff – teaching and non-teaching;
- to cooperate with promoted and non-promoted staff and with any other relevant bodies;
- to become familiar with and implement operational and curriculum matters.

Operate within Aberdeenshire Council's framework for Quality Assurance and Development;

- to participate in the self evaluation of the school through use of "How Good is Our School?" and "The Child at the Centre";
- to contribute to the establishment of priorities for the Improvement Plan and thereafter the Action Plans, as appropriate;
- to contribute to the evaluation of agreed specified targets;
- to contribute to the identification, organisation and management of resources.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Class Teacher

- The class teacher will liaise with the Visiting Specialist regarding the needs of specific individual pupils.
- Effective use of both teachers' and pupils' time must be ensured, and good use made of opportunities to plan collaboratively as agreed within the Working Time and Collegiate Activities Guidelines.
- The class teacher will liaise with the Visiting Specialist on planning, delivery, assessment, recording and reporting.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities of the Head Teacher and Promoted Staff in the schools in which Visiting Specialists are deployed

- The head teacher/promoted staff must ensure that all staff are aware of the ways of working of the Visiting Specialist Service, and are implementing these accordingly.
- The head teacher/promoted staff must ensure appropriate, effective and flexible use is made of Visiting Specialists' time and that adequate and appropriate time is arranged for liaison with relevant staff to plan collaboratively as agreed within the Working Time and Collegiate Activities Guidelines.
- It is vital that the management team involve the Visiting Specialist nurturing a sense of belonging and enabling them to feel part of the school team.
- The head teacher/promoted staff should liaise with Visiting Specialists on planning, delivery, assessment, recording and reporting, quality improvement, classroom observation and professional development needs.
- The management team should ensure the availability of necessary resources and their accessibility to the staff.
- Policy documentation should be made available to the Visiting Specialists, including health and safety and an efficient and effective communication system established for dissemination of information.
- The head teacher will inform the authority coordinator if there are work performance and potential disciplinary issues involving the Visiting Specialist.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities of the Network Coordinator

- The network coordinator will be the operational line manager of the Visiting Specialist working in CSN schools, on behalf of the authority coordinator who has overall line management responsibility for the Visiting Specialist Service. Specifically the network coordinator will be responsible for timetabling across CSN schools, PDRS, working time arrangements, resolving issues of concern referred by Visiting Specialists or head teachers where possible, authorising travel and subsistence claims and leave of absence requests and absence management.
- The network coordinator will undertake their timetabling in consultation with schools and Visiting Specialists, addressing issues of schools indicated requirements and equitable provision.
- The network coordinator will ensure the smooth operation of the council's PDRS and CPD procedures conducting these annually with Visiting Specialists working in the CSN to identify strengths and agreed areas for CPD.
- It will be the network coordinator's responsibility to ensure the implementation of the agreed ways of working of Visiting Specialist including Working Time Agreements with each Visiting Specialist working in the CSN and the establishment and maintenance of strong communication links.
- The network coordinator will inform the authority coordinator regarding leave of absence requests which he/she is unable to authorise and absence management issues which cannot be resolved locally.
- The network coordinator will forward details of vacancies for Visiting Specialist posts to the authority coordinator who will arrange for the vacancies to be advertised.

2.5 Roles and Responsibilities of the Authority Coordinator

- The authority coordinator will lead and manage the Visiting Specialist service across all 17 CSNs and be the overall line manager of the Visiting Specialists.
- The authority coordinator will allocate Visiting Specialist time to CSNs and oversee the timetabling process for Visiting Specialists by network coordinators.
- The authority coordinator will coordinate and arrange CPD activities and INSET for Visiting Specialist and regular meetings of network coordinators. He/she will promote links and joint ways of working with other strands of the Education, Learning and Leisure Service

including Cultural Services, Sport and Recreation, and the Instrumental Music Service, and with external bodies.

- The authority coordinator will provide advice and support to network coordinators and establish and maintain strong communication links with network coordinators, Visiting Specialists, head teachers and QIOs.
- The authority coordinator is, as overall line manager of the Visiting Specialists, responsible for administering personnel policies and procedures in relation to grievance, discipline and work performance. However, in accordance with these policies and procedures, every effort should be made to resolve such matters at the lowest level possible (deployed school or network coordinator).
- The authority coordinator will arrange for all vacancies for Visiting Specialist posts to be advertised, on receipt of information from network coordinators.
- The authority coordinator will undertake classroom observation of Visiting Specialist in selected schools on a planned basis as part of the Visiting Specialist Service Improvement Plan.

3. TIMETABLING PRINCIPLES

3.1 The Authority Coordinator

- The authority coordinator will allocate visiting specialist FTE to CSNs taking account of the requirements for delivering Reduction in Class Contact Time and the breadth of visiting specialist disciplines.

3.2 The Network Coordinator

- The network coordinator will consult and liaise with head teachers and Visiting Specialists and, where appropriate, the neighbouring network coordinator.
- The network coordinator will ensure an allocation of time to cover the elements of 22 ½ hours class commitment for teachers and Visiting Specialists in accordance with the agreed Guidelines of Working Time and Collegiate Activities
- The network coordinator will also be responsible for the allocation of base(s) for visiting specialists, travel and subsistence and arrange for suitable base(s) for the storage of resources and the dissemination of information to the visiting specialists.

3.3 The Head Teacher

- The head teacher will allocate all P4-7 class teachers 2 ½ hours non-class commitment per week and on a pro-rata basis for part-

time staff. The allocation should be in blocks of no less than 45 minutes. Within the primary and nursery sector, to achieve the minimum non-contact period of 45 minutes, time may be aggregated for staff on a contract of 0.2 fte or less. This is the only occasion where time can be aggregated and only then by agreement between the teacher and head teacher. If there is no such agreement, non-contact time should be allocated on a weekly basis.

- Circular ST4/109 Statement of Collegiality and the Working Time Agreement provides further details on class contact for full and part time teachers

References

1. ST4/109 Statement of Collegiality and the Working Time Agreement. Available on:
 - a. Lotus Notes under E&R Circulars and on
 - b. www.snct.org.uk. Select “LNCT Agreements” and then filter Aberdeenshire.

June 2008