



**North Tyneside  
Council**

**Item 8**

# Briefing Notes

**To:** Schools Forum  
**Date:** 17 January 2024

<b>Author:</b>	Christina Ponting	
<b>Purpose of the Paper:</b>	Information	✓
	Consultation	✓
	Decision	✓

**Title of Briefing:** Special Leave – Part 1 & 2 Service Level Agreement (SLA) – Update

## 1. Background:

- 1.1. Reports have been presented to Schools Forum since April 2018 on how the SLA operates including cost /claims profile and refund levels. The SLA provides for:
  - Part 1 – absence of teaching staff on Maternity, Adoption, Paternity, Shared Parental Leave and Jury Service, (MAPS-J) where those employers chose to be part of this SLA.
  - Part 2 – reimbursement to the home/ host employer where staff are released to undertake trade union duties outside of the home/ host school (TUFT) – including teaching, leadership and support.
- 1.2. Maternity continues to account for the majority of claims for Part 1 and whilst these are variable in volume, cost and duration (resulting in predictions and budget planning requiring a wider number of assumptions) the vast majority of individuals consistently claim the entire paid leave element. For Part 2 the profile of use remains consistent with a small element of variance due to increased membership levels and changes to unit cost. The overall SLA operates within budget allocations, claims are paid retrospectively at year end and the value of claims is reviewed termly.

- 1.3. Schools Forum annually determine the unit/per pupil rate to ensure the rate considers inflation, employment cost pressures (including annual salary awards, pay progression/ reviews, other employment costs, e.g., employers pension, national insurance changes), membership levels and whether or not the SLA should continue.
- 1.4. Schools Forum agreed:
  - in January 2023, to continue to operate the Special Leave SLA for the 2023/24 Financial Year,
  - in April 2023 to increase the unit costs by 6% (from £27 to £28.62 overall: Part 1 £21.97 to £23.29 and Part 2 £5.13 to £5.43) with a pupil reference point remaining inclusive of Reception to Year 11.

## **2. Current Position:**

- 2.1. Part 1 – MAPS-J: claims to date data has been presented directly to Schools Forum members for this SLA year with the last date being provided in December 2023 showing claim levels and the value of claims YTD being higher than at the same point in previous years, lower overall claims but each claims having a higher claim value. This area continues to be difficult to predict and schools remain eligible to claim for each application that meets the criteria. The majority of claims continue to be for Maternity leave; however, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental leave have also seen an increase.
- 2.2. Part 2 – TUFT: claims remain line with expectations, but again the value per claim has increased due to the employment costs rather than the number of claimants/claims.
- 2.3. The following table provides further information:

Pay	Additional information
<p>Pay award:</p> <p>a. September 2023 was on average 6.5% for teachers.</p> <p>b. April 2023 support staff average pay award was 9.42% (Part 2).</p> <p>The SLA overall for both Part 1 and Part 2 (as noted above) increased in April 2023 (6%) to accommodate both a pay award and was also intended to accommodate pay changes linked to pay progression.</p> <p>Inflation/ cost of living increases are difficult to predict as formal pay conversations have not yet commenced across the sector due to delays in reaching agreements in 2023.</p> <p>Some current assumptions linked to affordability/ market forces are that pay awards for the public sector will be less than they were in 23/24.</p> <p>Employers pension contributions for April 2024 for teachers are to increase by 5%.</p>	<p>For Part 1, claim patterns appear to follow a 3 year cycle – two lower claim value years and one higher value claim year.</p> <p>Not all schools buy into both parts, 100% buy in to Part 2, but an increasingly reduced level now buy in to Part 1, resulting in the buy in profile changing from when the SLA was originally established.</p> <p>Refunds to school include employer costs for the main post only.</p> <p>For Part 1, Schools need to be in the SLA for a set period of time before and after the claim for a refund to be provided.</p> <p>The SLA is self-funding; however, Part 2/ TUFT is given refund priority.</p> <p>Refunds are paid in arrears as soon as possible after the SLA/ financial year end.</p> <p>Schools who are not part of the de-delegation arrangements are offered the same unit rate (e.g., Academies, Nursery, Special Schools, PRU).</p> <p>SLA % increase have historically been applied equally.</p>

2.4. For the SLA to continue for 2024/25 Schools Forum need to consider a number of points:

- a) Do they wish the SLA to continue and if so at what unit rate?
- b) Do they wish to cease all of part of the SLA?
- c) Do they wish to offer Part 1 of the SLA to the market and identify a lead school/ group of schools to undertake this?

### **3. Recommendations:**

- 3.1. Having read this report and clearly understanding the information provided, Schools Forum is asked to:
  1. Note the contents of this report.
  2. Decide if, and how the SLA will operate for the 24/25 SLA year?
  3. If the SLA is to continue what % increase is to be applied?
- 3.2. Members are reminded of who is eligible to vote and the voting table is noted at Appendix A for Reference.

## Appendix A – Voting Table

North Tyneside Schools Forum Member Roles & Voting							
de-delegation Primary	de-delegation Secondary	scheme for financing schools	consultation on funding formula	General Duties	Retained Duties	all other matters	<i>last updated September 2019</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Voting							<b>Phase</b>
School Members							<b>Role</b>
x		x	x	x	x	x	First
x		x	x	x	x	x	Primary
	x	x	x	x	x	x	High
	x	x	x	x	x	x	Middle
	x	x	x	x	x	x	Secondary
Other School Members Non Locality Based							
x		x	x	x	x	x	Primary/ First
	x	x	x	x	x	x	Secondary/Middle
		x	x	x	x	x	Nursery
		x	x	x	x	x	PRU
		x	x	x	x	x	Special
			x		x	x	Academy
Non Schools Members Non Locality Based							
		x	x			x	16-19 Providers
			x			x	EY PVI
						x	C of E Diocese
						x	RC Diocese
						x	Trades Union