

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

SUBJECT. PURCHASING SERVICES THROUGH THE NORFOLK EDUCATION ADVISORY SERVICE

WORKING TITLE: PURCHASING SERVICES THROUGH THE NORFOLK EDUCATION ADVISORY SERVICE

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HEADTEACHERS/CHAIRS OF
GOVERNORS OF NORFOLK LEA
PRIMARY SCHOOLS **FORMAT LETTER**
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
MALCOLM REEVE

Summary

THIS LETTER FOCUSES ON ONE OF OUR KEY AREAS OF WORK NAMELY THE ADVICE, TRAINING, CONSULTANCY AND PROJECTS WHICH ARE ACCESSED BY SCHOOLS PURCHASING ADVISER TIME AND EXPERTISE DIRECTLY OR THROUGH A PACKAGE.

ACTION REQUIRED.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:

NONE

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Your Ref.

Our Ref. neas/RL/fclcr

Date: 23 February 1999

To: All Primary Headteachers/Chairs of Governors of Norfolk LEA Primary Schools

Dear Headteacher/Chairs of Governors

Purchasing Services through the Norfolk Education Advisory Service

I wrote to you during last **term** setting out some of the structural changes in the Advisory Service. At that time I outlined the fact that the income of the Service is dependent on several key areas of work. We are now refocusing all of our work into the central theme of continuous school improvement. This letter focuses on one of our key areas of work namely the advice, training, consultancy and projects which are accessed by schools purchasing adviser time and expertise directly or through a package.

You will, recently, have received details of the package of support to be purchased for 1999-2000. We have had several discussions, in recent months, with headteachers in the County and we were all concerned to clarify the ways in which bought in support can be better integrated into supporting schools raise standards of achievement. We have, therefore, carried out a review of the way we work with schools and this has led to two changes in the way in which we will work with you in the coming year.

Guaranteed Inservice Training

The first of these is that for the first time the packages contain the option to secure priority places on inservice training courses which are guaranteed to run. This will be of interest to all schools and goes a long way to overcome the problem of cancelled courses, particularly in the west of the county.

These courses have been carefully selected from next year's training programme and will be in considerable demand, addressing as they do, the priorities which will be common to all schools in the coming year.

Improved School Based Advice

For some time we have been concerned that making brief visits for after school staff training sessions is not the best way to support headteachers, subject co-ordinators and other staff in their school improvement role.

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There is often too little time to assess the context of the school, to engage in discussion with key staff or to develop advice on which the school can build effectively.

Therefore the second new development is that from the Summer Term, advisers will only be available to work in schools for whole day or half day blocks of time.

Changing the ways we work will require a new approach to capitalising on the range of support that an adviser can offer. Overleaf are some 'cameos' which illustrate how your school could benefit from this approach. We will add to these as further examples of practice emerge from schools. If you have any strategies for working with advisers which you would like to pass on to other schools, we would be delighted to hear from you.

There will still be opportunities for advisers to make shorter inputs to after school meetings for project funded activities such as drugs and health education and networks involving non-school providers.

We look forward to building a sound working partnership with you.

Yours sincerely

Fred Corbett

Chief Adviser, Head of Service

USING ADVISER SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL SELF-REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

Some headteachers have asked us to provide prompts about ways of working effectively with advisers. The most effective practice ensures that the adviser works on priorities drawn from the school's improvement and development plan (or management plan). The INSET Opportunities booklet is a good source of ideas about the current key areas of our work. We are interested in ensuring that our work is about school improvement and schools can, and should, negotiate adviser inputs through their RDA or directly with one of the Principal Advisers in the Advisory Service Senior Management Team.

The cameos which follow are designed to illustrate effective practice and prompt further thinking about how schools and advisers work together to have the greatest possible impact on school improvement.

Case Study .y 1

The school plans a curriculum development day on a specific topic. An adviser is identified to support the school and the headteacher or co-ordinator provides the adviser with a brief on the current stage of development and the issues to be addressed. The school negotiates a mixture Of adviser input and adviser led discussions. During the day there are opportunities for the adviser to support the chosen development by looking at documentation, children's work and teachers' assessments, the subject leader's records or discusses management of further developments with the headteacher. The adviser leads working groups during the day and assists in the production of an action plan for the further development of the topic.

Case Study 1a

The school splits the curriculum development day between two topics and engages two advisers for half a day each.

Case Study 2

The school feels that all the staff would welcome an input at a staff meeting on a particular topic such as:

the role of the co-ordinator, teaching literacy in mixed age classes, improving the teaching of reading, moderating teacher assessments, improving children's independence as learners, developing mental calculation ... and many more!

The specialist adviser is engaged for half a day. Arriving after lunch, the adviser talks to the headteacher about the school and the current stage of development of the topic or subject. The adviser makes prearranged visits to classrooms to see children at work or meets with the subject leader. They discuss planning, documentation or how to act on the outcomes of previous monitoring. They talk through the staff meeting and what needs to be achieved. The adviser feeds back to the school at the staff meeting and makes the prearranged input. After the staff meeting the subject leader and headteacher meet with the adviser to discuss next steps.

Case Study 2a

The school is unable to release the subject co-ordinator during the afternoon and the headteacher is also teaching. The adviser arrives earlier for a discussion over lunch. When afternoon school starts the adviser works alongside teachers in selected classrooms, talks to children, looks at a sample of work, or takes a demonstration lesson. Notes are made to contribute to the subject leader's monitoring and evaluation role. The adviser feeds back to the school at the staff meeting and makes the prearranged input. After the staff meeting the subject leader and headteacher meet with the adviser to discuss next steps.

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Case Study 3

The main focus of the activity is support for the headteacher on a management issue. The adviser is engaged for the morning and brings example documents and ideas relating to the topic. The time is spent in detailed discussion, working alongside the headteacher leading to an action plan for the future. Alternatively, about two-thirds of the time is spent with the headteacher and the remaining hour is spent in discussion with the deputy headteacher, or the Chair of Governors. It may be especially helpful to have adviser support in discussing or clarifying issues or proposed developments with key players in the school

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Case Study 4

The Review and Development Adviser is due to make a routine termly visit for the morning. An arrangement is made to purchase an additional half day of his or her time to make a more detailed study of some aspect of the school's work or assist in the professional development of an individual member of staff. The subject co-ordinator is released to carry out a paired lesson observation with the adviser. Alternatively, the headteacher and the adviser undertake a paired observation and compare evaluations. The adviser gives professional development advice to the deputy headteacher or a subject leader and talks through their job description and contribution to the school.