

Report to: Schools' Forum

Date of meeting: 19 November 2021

Report By: Kim Larkin, Apprentice Programme Co-ordinator & Martin Kelly, Apprenticeship Levy Strategy Manager

Title: Use of the apprentice levy by schools

Purpose: To brief Schools' Forum on current use of Apprenticeship Levy and highlight how it could be better utilised with the support of the East Sussex County Council Apprenticeship team

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Schools are encouraged to meet with the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Apprenticeship team to discuss best use of the Apprenticeship levy for staff training and workforce development.

1 Background

1.1 Since April 2017, all employers with a pay bill over £3 million per annum must pay 0.5% of their annual salary expenditure into the Apprenticeship levy. For maintained schools, the local authority is the employer, and the County Council collects and pays the levy on their behalf, and in turn supports schools to identify apprenticeship training to recoup against the levy.

1.2 Since the levy was introduced East Sussex maintained primary and secondary schools have paid **£1,970,095** into the levy. In the 2020/21 financial year, schools contributed **£441,000** to the county council's overall Apprenticeship Levy fund. This is compared to **£606,000** from the county council's core business services. Schools are not limited to withdrawing their own contributions from the levy pot, they are able to draw from the whole ESCC levy pot.

1.3 Further areas to note include:

- Apprenticeships are available for all school staff at all levels of skill and experience, offering the opportunity for those starting out in their career, as well as those wanting to undertake development training.
- There is no financial cost or change to employment terms and conditions for existing staff to access professional training and qualifications.
- 20% of learner working time must be spent learning towards their qualification (calculated over the term of the apprenticeship), and schools using the levy have managed the 20% learning time in several ways to minimise time out of the classroom. Training providers are on hand to ensure the learners are on track and work flexibly with the schools to ensure that the schools needs are met, and any disruption is kept to a minimum.

2 Progress to date

2.1 Since the introduction of the Levy in 2017, Primary schools have made the best use of recouping Apprenticeship levy spend on staff training and development, as the following table illustrates:

ESCC Levy pot contributions	Approx. annual contribution based on 2020/21	Contribution to date since April 2017	Money spent/committed from ESCC Levy for training since 2017	Number of staff trained	Number of schools
Primary schools	£301,000 p.a.	£1,335,868	£951,974	207	56
Secondary schools	£133,000 p.a.	£589,247	£255,740	27	8
ESCC core business	£606,000 p.a.	£2,625,812	£2,429,048	316	N/A

2.2 To date, secondary schools have a smaller committed spend and fewer learners than the primaries, and a significant part of the funding spent/committed went on a small number of staff undertaking higher level qualifications which are higher in value. Therefore, there is funding in the central Levy pot for secondary schools to take a greater share.

2.3 Schools have accessed the following apprenticeship training through the levy:

- Teaching Assistant at level 3
- Early Years L2 and L3
- Teaching at Degree level
- Accountancy at level 4 & 6
- Business Administration at levels 3 & 4
- ICT at level 3
- Chartered Manager Degree level apprenticeship
- Property Maintenance at level 2
- School Business Professional at level 4
- Schools Specific Operations Manager at level 5
- Educational Leader (senior leader) level 7 Master's Degree apprenticeship
- Coach/Assessor at level 4

2.4 There are several other apprenticeships available to schools, and there are more currently in development that will be of interest, including Level 7 SENCO. The apprenticeship team are also working with partnering apprenticeship training providers in the hope that they will be able to deliver the Level 6 Careers Development Professional Apprenticeship, which we anticipate being able to launch in 2022.

3. Conclusion

3.1 As net contributors, there is significant scope for both primaries and secondaries to make more use of the Apprenticeship Levy. Primary schools have led the way in apprenticeship take up and working with training providers, who are now experienced in working within the school environment. We would encourage all schools to look at how apprenticeships can support staff development and assist retention.

3.2 The County Council recommends that schools contact Kim Larkin, Apprentice Programme Co-ordinator, to arrange a meeting and discuss how apprenticeships can support workforce development. Contact: kim.larkin@eastsussex.gov.uk / 07736 485896

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