



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State

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Dr Christopher Baker

THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY FOR SCHOOLS

I write to set out my priorities for the work of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) in the coming year.

The TDA is the agency that is responsible for the funding of teacher training in England and for improving the quality and efficiency of all routes into the teaching profession. It also plays a role in the continuing professional development (CPD) of serving teachers.

Initial Teacher Training

My White Paper, *'The Importance of Teaching'*, published on 24 November 2010, set out my vision for a major radical reform of the school system, including the need for us to make every effort to ensure that there is a continuing supply of highly qualified, highly suitable people entering the teaching profession. I look to you to make a reality of this in the coming year.

In my letter to you of Monday 31 January 2011, I confirmed my expectation that the number of teacher trainees that we will need in September 2011 is around 34,000. It will be important that you recruit these trainees and work with schools and teacher training providers to ensure that trainees have a high-quality experience that prepares them well for their first teaching posts. That must span subject knowledge, including a proper command of the use of systematic synthetic phonics where appropriate, and classroom management.

I place a great premium on quality – and I look to you to ensure that this intake and subsequent intakes of trainees are the very best we can recruit to teaching, both by stimulating demand and through the effective management of teacher training provision.

You should also manage – on my behalf – the relationship with Teach First, the charity which recruits exceptional graduates into teaching and whom I see playing an increasingly important role in securing new teachers. I also expect you, working with my officials, to make a success of the White Paper's stated ambitions in respect of enabling both leavers from the Armed Services and other suitable career changers to enter teaching.

I am grateful to the Agency for the way in which it is working with my officials on a new approach to initial teacher training. We will shortly be consulting more widely on our initial teacher training strategy, with a view to making changes for September 2012. I will look to you to take forward activity on the back of this; providing me with reassurance that any new arrangements for funding, for assessment and for diversifying provision are well-managed, sustainable and cost-effective.

There will continue to be a need for information about, and marketing of, teaching as a career; and a stream-lined process for expressing interest in, and then applying for, teacher training opportunities. I look to you to improve continuously the systems we have – and to ensure that we are well-prepared for the future. I want it to be as simple as possible for people with the right qualifications and aptitudes to find a route into teaching that works for them.

Professional development

The White Paper signalled my expectation that schools should take increasing ownership of professional development issues. We want to establish a strong culture of professional development where schools think actively about how all their staff contribute to pupils' achievement and teachers take responsibility for leading their own and others' development by sharing effective practice.

We will need to consider with you and others, when and how to encourage schools to take more responsibility for improving themselves. We will look to you, in your role as the body responsible for identifying the skills needs of the schools workforce, to work with us to support the sector in taking increasing responsibility for its own workforce development. You will wish to consider using some of your administration funding allocation to manage any historical knowledge and information arising from this during the year.

Training Schools and Teaching Schools

The White Paper also included an ambition that initial teacher training should be increasingly school-led. I want you to continue to support those schools which have been designated as centres of excellence in training and development, namely

training schools, in 2011-12; and to work with the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services as it begins to make a reality of the new network of Teaching Schools. Teaching Schools will be outstanding schools that have the role of leading the training and professional development of teachers and headteachers. I am also keen for the Agency to play the leading role in establishing University Training Schools. Based on a Finnish model, University Training Schools will be schools set up and run by a university that combine excellent teacher training, research and high quality teaching and learning in the classroom.

Skills Development

My officials will continue to discuss with you the work we can do together to support further the skills of teachers who are already in the workforce, including as we review teachers' standards and develop a revised National Curriculum, new English Baccalaureate and expectations for a truly rounded education.

We will, for instance, wish to talk to you about a number of the recommendations in the Henley review of music education, which was established to consider what is needed to ensure that every child should experience the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and to sing.

There is always scope to do more in respect of the teaching of particular subjects, including for example maths, physics, chemistry, and modern foreign languages, as well as for particular pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or English as an Additional Language. We need to ensure we have a coherent and cost-effective offer in place for teachers.

You will also be aware that we have recently published a Green Paper about our plans to improve the outcomes for children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, and I would welcome your support in working with officials to take forward the commitments identified in this document. I also look to you to continue to work with the school partnerships you have established in order to support improvements in the quality of teaching, especially for children with SEN.

In line with my priorities, I am not expecting you to take forward any new work in respect of masters-level qualifications; whether through the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) or other post-graduate professional development (PPD) activity, and would ask you to take steps to conclude any ongoing activity in this area arising from existing commitments.

Funding

I am pleased to make available to the Training and Development Agency for Schools up to £543m for the financial year 2011-12 for programme expenditure and £24.6m for administrative costs.

Next Steps

My officials will work with you to understand your detailed proposals for taking forward all of the work set out here. I urge you to be as efficient and cost-effective as possible in all of your planning. To that end I want to draw your attention to corporate information below that you will need to take into account and implement as you take forward your work.

It will be important that you work with my officials to establish a shared understanding about how you plan to use funding in relation to the priorities set out in this letter. While you will need flexibility to manage funding across programmes and to respond to in-year pressures, I expect you to inform us in a timely fashion where you find that spend will deviate significantly from what has been agreed. This will be a challenging financial year for the Department for Education and our agencies, so it will be important that you work with my officials to ensure that any underspends or savings are detected early and can be deployed in line with my priorities. No transfer of budgets from programme to administration is permitted.

ALB REFORM PROGRAMME

The Coalition Government is committed to the Arms Length Body (ALB) Reform Programme as a means of radically increasing the transparency and accountability of all public services. The reform process, which covers all of HM Government's Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) as well as other public bodies, is designed to help reinvigorate the public's trust in democracy and also to ensure that the Government operates in a more efficient and business-like way. The programme will ensure we have the right organisations in place to implement Government policy and it will play a major part in delivering savings over the next four years.

As you know, in the Department we are in the process of reducing the number of ALBs and improving accountability by bringing some of the work previously done by ALBs back in to the Department and creating Executive Agencies which are more directly within the Department's control; removing duplication; looking for ways to achieve efficiencies and cost reductions through the sharing of services; and better aligning our ALB sector with the rest of the Education system. The TDA has a significant role to play in making this vision a reality and we expect to work with you over the coming year to implement any planned changes to your organisation or reforms we are making to all our ALBs.

TRANSPARENCY

The Government remains committed to greater transparency so that the public can hold politicians and public bodies to account. As part of this you are already publishing information on spending on salaries, organisational costs and services you buy. In line with all Government departments and Arms Length Bodies you have already published individual salary information for your senior staff earning over £90k, along with organisation charts to demonstrate the groups of people your senior staff are responsible for, and the costs of these groups.

We expect you to continue to publish this data and to continue to co-operate with transparency requests, ensuring data is submitted to deadline and in the required format.

EFFICIENCY CONTROLS REMAIN IN PLACE

The Efficiency Reform Group was established by the Cabinet Office in 2010. It has brought together expertise from across Government: from different parts of Cabinet Office, HM Treasury, and the Office of Government Commerce. It aims to make Government more efficient (by reducing operational overheads to give taxpayers better value and allow resources to be focused on key priorities); and to reform radically the way public services are provided (to ensure they meet rising public expectations, improving transparency and accountability and shifting power to people and creating the Big Society).

The Efficiency Reform Group has introduced a series of financial and management controls to make sure that only essential recruitment and procurement activity is undertaken by Government Departments and organisations like TDA which are funded by Government. These controls include:

- a freeze on all external recruitment;
- Treasury approval for appointments with salary packages which total more than the Prime Minister's salary of £142,500;
- a freeze on new advertising and spending on marketing;
- a freeze on new contracts and contract extensions; and changes to ICT projects of over £1 million and a review of all existing ICT projects;
- a freeze on any new spending on consultancy services from outside bodies;
- a ban on new property acquisitions, property leases and lease extensions; and
- all other procurement subject to stringent Value For Money appraisal and reporting of all spend to HM Treasury on a monthly basis.

In certain specific circumstances exemptions can be sought by your Chief Executive. Exemptions need to be cleared by the Department, HM Treasury or the Cabinet Office depending on the nature of the exemption. The details of the various exemption processes were sent to your organisation in July 2010.

NEW TREATMENT OF ADMINISTRATION BUDGETS

You will be aware that there are changes to the administration budget for the Department's Arms Length Bodies (ALBs), which include TDA, starting in the 2011-12 financial year. Most significantly, the administration budgets for ALBs are being met from the Department's own overall administration allocation.

Administration budgets cover the costs of all activities not related to direct frontline service provision or in support of frontline service delivery. The Department has provided TDA with detailed guidance on the types of spending which are considered as administrative activity; for TDA this will include items such as staff salaries, pensions, accommodation and office services (eg: stationery, telephone charges and computer maintenance). It is important that TDA works closely with the Department's Sponsorship and Finance teams to make sure this guidance is followed.

GOVERNANCE AND RISK

It is vital that the TDA has in place robust processes which can help it identify difficulties which might arise which could hamper delivery. We expect to see both robust processes for spotting such difficulties early and dealing with them effectively so that service delivery is maintained. TDA should also continue to work with the Department to make sure there are appropriate external checks on the work it delivers, as required by the Permanent Secretary. I expect the TDA to raise immediately with the Department any potential problems related to delivery, including any arising from organisations with which you are working.

EDUCATION WHITE PAPER

The schools White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, set out a radical reform programme for the schools' system, with schools freed from the constraints of central Government direction and teachers placed firmly at the heart of school improvement. It offers freedoms to all schools in a way that encourages them to work with each other to improve.

The White Paper signals a radical reform of our schools and I look to the TDA to work collaboratively with the Department to support the implementation of these reforms, which are absolutely essential if our children are to get the education they deserve.

REDUCING BUREAUCRACY AND RED TAPE IN SCHOOLS

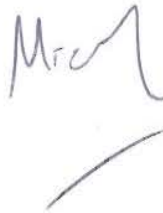
TDA will continue to run an effective and efficient Information and Research Management Service (IRMS) service, to support the construction and dissemination of high quality, relevant research and data collection and to minimise stakeholder burden. In addition, we will require the TDA to support the Coalition Government's drive to reduce bureaucracy in schools by streamlining communications, removing central prescription and minimising data collections.

I recognise that the decision to close the TDA, as part of our Arms Length Body reforms, creates a challenging context for your organisation, not least because the TDA will have a significant role to play in making the vision I have set out here a reality. However, I have every confidence that you and all of your staff will continue

to work effectively on the priorities set out in this letter, at the same time as engaging constructively with my officials as we put in place new Executive Agency arrangements. I look forward to working with you over the coming year.

I am copying this letter to the Chief Executive, Graham Holley.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M Gove', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

MICHAEL GOVE