

From: **Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform**

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To: **Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee – 18 September 2015**

Subject: **Teacher Recruitment and Retention Activity for 2015**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: Annual Update

Electoral Division: County-wide

Summary: This report provides a general update on Teacher Recruitment and Retention Activity for 2015 and any key issues in relation to teacher recruitment and retention in Kent schools.

Recommendation: The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is recommended to comment and note the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report relates to teacher recruitment and retention activity for 2015, and provides a general update relating to the current position, progress and any key issues.

2. History and Background

- 2.1 www.Kent-Teach.com website was launched in 2000 in order to support schools in Kent with their recruitment. The Kent-Teach team maintain, market and promote the website and teaching as a desirable profession within Kent.
- 2.2 The website provides visitors with information on teaching careers and leadership, information on the county, job searches, help and support and resources via the blog and forum. Candidates can create an online profile which allows them to apply online and track their applications and set up job alerts.
- 2.3 Schools in Kent can either sign up to a monthly package which allows them unlimited advertising and access to the full range of KT services or they can advertise on an adhoc basis and pay per vacancy placed.

3. Progress to date

- 3.1 Having successfully supported schools with their recruitment for over 15 years the team have a strong grasp of the Primary school recruitment market in Kent and have established themselves as worthy competitors of much larger organisations in the eyes of the Secondary school market too.

The team are also developing innovative strategies to target the shortage and quality of teachers in Kent more directly by putting in place recruitment strategies that allow Kent to be proactive rather than reactive.

4. Website Development

- 4.1 The Kent-Teach website is crucial to the success of the team and is an integral part of all their recruitment strategies. The website was successfully rebranded and redesigned in the financial year 2013-14.

The new website design is accessible via mobile or tablet devices, Google Analytics shows that since its launch 45% of traffic to the website is now from a mobile or tablet device.

- 4.2 Digital media moves forward very quickly so the team constantly review and update the website and always address any feedback that is received from site members or schools. This flexibility sets them apart from their competitors.

- 4.3 In the year following the rebranding of the site, the team also developed 3 more areas of the site:

(i) Application Form

The application form has been updated to reflect the more varied needs of customers. As both Kent maintained schools and Academies use the site for advertising, a KCC branded online application form was no longer suitable for all customers. The newly redesigned application form has been streamlined to make it easier for candidates to complete and uses the school's own name and logo. This standard form is online only but schools have the option to upload their own form or redirect candidates to another website to apply.

(ii) Trust and Federation Advertising

Recognising a new need in the market with many schools becoming part of a federation or joining an academy trust the team have implemented a system which allows Trusts/Federations to be set up on the system as an organisation. This allows them to advertise for vacancies across a number of their schools and to link the schools within the Trust or Federation to their account. This means that Trusts and Federations are able to centrally manage their recruitment if they so wish, although the option is still available for schools to continue to maintain their accounts.

(iii) Talent Stream

The team also implemented a Talent Stream system on to the website which allows them to identify and track top quality candidates and signpost them to vacancies in Kent schools. This helps manage and track candidates that have been alerted to Kent-Teach via the work the team do in recruiting from universities around the UK and Ireland. The long-term plan for the talent stream is that the team will be able to track not only Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) but more experienced teachers and suitable leadership candidates.

4.4 New Website Developments

It is nearly two years since the relaunch of the website so the team have once again reviewed the functionality of the website and identified several areas for development which will be implemented over the summer of 2015 These include the following:

(i) Homepage

The homepage uses a structure of columns and boxes to direct visitors to the relevant information. The homepage is being reshuffled to group functional items; job search, NQT manager, Medway job page, enhanced featured jobs, featured schools and promotional items into the top section of the site and “added value” items like the blog articles, forum, twitter feed and upcoming events to the bottom half of the site. There is also the addition of a quick job search right at the top of the page.

(ii) Job Enhancement Options

The website already had functionality to allow schools to “feature” their vacancy. This has a lot of take up from schools so the team have expanded these options to now include the following:

Type	What does this include?
Featured job	Automatic listing on job search pages. Appear near the top of relevant search listings.
Enhanced Featured Job	Highlighted box. Automatic listing on job search pages. Appear at the top of relevant search listings. Listings on the homepage on rotation.
Featured School	School name, logo and number of jobs appear on scroll on homepage. Featured schools also appear on rotation in featured school box.

(iii) Blog

For the last two years the team have run a blog which provides resources, information and first hand tales of teaching from Teachers in Kent schools. Promoting these posts on social media drives traffic to the website and adds value to the service they offer their customers. The blog was redesigned to incorporate the news and events section, allow users to share content directly to their social media pages and to subscribe so they receive notification of new blog posts. The updated blog went live in May and since then the team have seen a 130% increase in traffic to the blog.

(iv) Members Area

The members' area is being redesigned to be more streamlined and easier to navigate.

(v) School Dashboard

The School Dashboard is being redesigned to help schools keep their account and actions up to date. It will be easier for them to review their account details, share feedback and news with the team and access their list of vacancies and NQT manager tasks.

(vi) Vacancy Uploader

The vacancy uploader function has been made more efficient and accessible.

(vii) Registration

The team have reviewed and shortened the registration process to allow for a quicker registration.

4.5 Customer engagement

The team ensure that they keep up to date with the latest research and methods for reaching their customers. Whilst the site is very effective for active job seekers, reaching that passive market can be more challenging and research shows that the best way to do this is to engage with your customers so that they have reason to keep in touch with you even when they are not actively job hunting.

(i) Social Media

Kent-Teach uses a number of social media platforms to engage with customers.

Kent-Teach find that their customers do view and read the information that is put out on these platforms but there is limited engagement from the point of view of customers "talking back" to them.

This year the team undertook a review of their social media platforms and conducted research to build a strategy for their social media activity. This has been invaluable and has shown an increase engagement via shares, likes and click-throughs.

Kent-Teach currently use the following channels:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Linked In
- Pinterest
- Google +

As well as using their own social media platforms to encourage traffic to the website and engage with their customers, the team have been assisting schools in running social media campaigns for their recruitment.

When the usual channels such as Kent-Teach, Guardian and TES have not resulted in an appointment KT have worked in partnership with advertising agency TMP Worldwide to run a Social Networking Advertising Package (SNAP) in order to promote their vacancy and reach a wider audience.

A SNAP campaign is more expensive than traditional advertising so the KT team offer this as an option to schools which have had difficulty in recruiting or who have a large number of vacancies.

(ii) Blog and Forum

In June 2013, Kent-Teach launched a blog and forum to encourage traffic to the site from people other than active job seekers. The blog aims to give an insight into teaching and Kent schools and the posts are submitted by teachers and leaders currently working with Kent-Schools alongside posts from the team itself.

The forum aims to give teachers a platform to pose questions, queries or debate with each other on topics about teaching.

The blog has been redesigned and has since seen a 130% increase in traffic.

4.6 Marketing Schedule

Kent-Teach has a well established reputation with 88% of its traffic being organic or direct (rather than through paid advertising or through another media). However it is important that this is maintained and so each year the team will implement a Media Schedule of advertising to keep the Kent-Teach brand recognised and to expand the reach of the brand beyond Kent.

Last year's campaign was a targeted campaign via Google Display Network and Keyword searches and ran for 36 weeks from September 2014 until end of May 2015 resulting in the following:

- 22,936 clicks across the 9 campaign locations
- £0.60 cost per click rate
- 1,834 submitted applications
- £7.50 cost per application rate
- Most effective keyword – “Kent Teaching Jobs”
- 90% of applications from desktop device /10% from mobile or tablet devices.

Kent was the most successful location with 39% of overall clicks and 60% of overall applications. London was next with 30% of campaign applications and 10% click to submit application conversion. The South East location performed better than other targeted areas.

4.7 Recruitment Fairs

The team attends a programme of recruitment events around the UK from October through to February in order to represent Kent schools and promote Kent as a desirable location for new teachers.

In 2014-15 the team attended 22 recruitment fairs which resulted in:

- 725 expressions of interest from teaching candidates
- 172 candidates went on to log on to the Kent-Teach website at least once
- 48 of these candidates have logged in 20 or more times
- 40% of these candidates have submitted at least 1 job application

4.8 Irish Recruitment

In order to address the shortage of teachers in Kent, the team have in the past recruited from Ireland where top quality teacher trainees do not find work due to the surplus of teachers.

In 2014 the team successfully placed 10 Irish teachers in 6 schools in Kent, with one of the schools taking a total of 4 teachers.

As well as helping the students to find jobs the team also assisted them in finding suitable accommodation and produced a brochure about their new local area for them. Research has found that this additional support is essential to ensuring that the teachers feel supported in their new jobs and are therefore more likely to settle in Kent for the longer term.

In 2015, the Irish market has become saturated with recruitment agencies recruiting teachers from Ireland. The team has seen a dramatic decrease in the number of trainee teachers interested in coming from Northern Ireland this year.

Kent-Teach has often had success with teachers from the Republic of Ireland but their graduate teacher training programme has just been extended to two years so no trainee teachers have come from Ireland this year. Kent-Teach may revisit this in 2016 when the trainee teachers will be finishing their two-year programme but it may be the case that there are still less available candidates given that there were no trainee teachers graduating this year.

4.9 Headteacher Recruitment

Kent-Teach works in partnership with the Schools' Personnel Service and the School Improvement Team to provide a comprehensive Headship recruitment package to Kent Schools.

In order to advertise the headships effectively Kent-Teach produce a microsite for each individual headship they support.

The team started using microsites for headship recruitment in January 2011 and since then just under 60% of headships advertised in this way have made a successful appointment on the first round of recruitment. Please refer to section 4.11 for statistics on the number of headship posts advertised for April 2014 – March 2015.

4.10 Partnerships

Kent-Teach has a contract with The Guardian that enables all vacancies posted on Kent-Teach to be placed on Guardianjobs.co.uk at no additional cost to the school. Kent-Teach pay a yearly fee to the Guardian and are provided with monthly reports on click-throughs to the Kent-Teach site.

4.11 Key Statistics

Kent-Teach statistics showing information for April 2014 - March 15:

	Number of Vacancies	Number of Applications
Teaching Vacancies	2,986	10,539
Leadership Vacancies	378	1,078
Support Staff Vacancies	2,416	38,761
Total	5,780	50,378

Visits	Unique Visits	New Visits
1,357,078	607,348	407,304

Total Members	New Members
85,680	16,493

Number of Schools registered on Kent-Teach	Number of Schools on Monthly Package
792	511

Number of Headships Advertised	Number appointed on 1 st Round
59	30

Since September 2014 the following new Headteacher appointments have been made:

- 32 Headteachers started in the Autumn term 2014
- 9 Headteachers started Spring term 2015
- 15 Headteachers started Summer term 2015
- 28 Headteachers are due to start in Autumn term 2015
- 2 Headteachers are due to start in Spring term 2016 (so far)

There are currently 63 schools without a substantive Headteacher for September 2015, but in each case robust interim leadership arrangements are in place. These arrangements include an Executive Headteacher, a Head of School or an Interim Headteacher.

5. Key Issues

5.1 In common with the national picture, schools in Kent are experiencing difficulty in teacher recruitment in Science, Mathematics, English, Modern Foreign Languages and Design Technology. The problem extends beyond the number of teachers as feedback from schools suggests that the shortage has led to further recruitment issues:

- Schools take on larger numbers of NQTs to meet the need for teachers but may not always be able to provide the support required.
- Schools feel that the quality of the candidates is not always as good as they would like.

5.2 Location can prove to be a problem for recruiting in Kent for a number of reasons:

- With a large coastline surrounding half of the county, schools in East Kent do not have the benefit of teachers crossing the border to teach.
- Being on the border of London, which is able to offer higher salaries, can mean that schools in West Kent often lose out to schools in neighbouring London boroughs.

5.3 2015 has also seen a number of other key factors affecting the number of teachers:

- Teacher trainee numbers are down by 12% nationally in the 2015 cohort.
- There has been an increase in teachers going abroad to work

6. Next Steps

6.1 Key activities for 2015-16:

- Review strategies for nationwide recruitment
- Continue to review and develop the website to ensure it remains innovative and up-to-date
- Maintain and build on customer engagement via blog, forum and social media pages
- Implement new website developments in time for September 2015
- Review and streamline Kent headship process
- Explore possibility of implementing a positive PR campaign for teaching
- Develop strategies for encouraging candidates into teaching profession

6.2 National Recruitment

In order to encourage the recruitment of teachers in Kent, Kent-Teach market outside of the county through a targeted Google Campaign, attendance at recruitment fairs and building relationships with teacher training universities.

Following a review of the data collected from last year's Google Campaign, this year's campaign will focus more on the South East areas.

6.3 Website Development

The team constantly reviews the website in order to keep up to date with current technology and recruitment advances. Large reviews are undertaken biannually by the team and small developments are considered at monthly team meetings in order to respond to customer feedback as timely as possible.

6.4 PR campaigns

The team is exploring ways in which it can raise the positive profile of teaching as a profession through the use of original video content and Twitter campaigns. By using their influence on social media they hope to encourage teachers to share positive messages about the profession as the antidote to the negative messages appearing in the mainstream press.

This is a long term strategy that will involve engaging with current teachers in a positive way and implementing strategies to engage with potential teachers early on.

6.5 Bespoke Solutions

The team is continuing to work closely with schools that have particular recruitment needs in order to provide innovative and bespoke solutions. This may include social media campaigns, signposting campaigns, videos and placement schemes.

7. Recommendation

Recommendation:

- 7.1 The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to comment and note the report.

8. Contact details

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