

## **Letter received from the Department of Education on 24 March 2014**

### **School Business Manager Grant in 2014-15**

[The Review of Efficiency in the Schools System](#), published in June 2013, concluded that the most efficient schools employ, or have access to, a skilled School Business Manager (SBM) who takes on a leadership role. There is strong evidence that SBMs create savings greater than the cost of employing them. Fewer than half of the state-funded primary schools in England currently have access to a SBM while over 90% of secondary schools do. The Review announced that a grant scheme would be set up to enable more primary schools to have access to a SBM.

The Department is making available in the financial year 2014-15 a grant for small groups of schools, consisting mainly of primaries, to work in collaboration to employ a SBM. The grant will provide £25,000 to be match funded by the group of schools, to subsidise the cost of employing a suitable SBM for one year from September 2014, with a view that the post should become self-sustaining in the long term.

This grant is distinct from the Primary Academy Chain Development Grant announced in January, which provides at least £100,000 over two years to help clusters of three or more primary schools setting up a new Multi-Academy Trust to build strong partnerships and raise standards. That grant is also likely to be used in part to support the cost of a SBM. The Department believes that the MAT approach is the best solution for groups of primary schools; but that the importance of efficiency makes it worthwhile also to proceed with the grant announced in the Efficiency Review. Schools will not be eligible to receive both grants.

We expect to invite applications for the grant within the next month. We will be seeking applications from groups of 4-5 schools or academies (or a mixture of both), composed mainly of primary schools (but can include one secondary school), that can demonstrate how they could utilise the services of an SBM to realise longer term efficiencies. Applicants should demonstrate a commitment to providing continuous professional development for the appointed SBM. We intend to have very simple reporting and evaluation arrangements.

We are sending out this note now so that recipients can draw it to the attention of primary schools or academies who may be interested.

### **Expressions of interest**

If a school or academy would like to register an interest in further announcements about this grant, please email:

[sbm.grant@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sbm.grant@education.gsi.gov.uk)