

Raising Standards and Tackling Workload

Implementing the National Agreement

March 2004

department for
education and skills
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

The notes issued by the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG)¹ represent the agreed position of all the signatories to the National Agreement.

LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION – SUCCESS FACTORS

LEAs and local union branches have worked tremendously hard to support the implementation of the National Agreement. As a result, schools have made substantial progress: the vast majority are now taking concerted action to reduce workload in order to raise standards. However, many will need further support and challenge if they are to implement the more stretching contractual changes that come into force in September 2004 and September 2005. The role of LEAs and local unions will be increasingly important in ensuring continued success.

The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group has identified a number of emerging 'success factors' that characterise those LEAs that are leading the way in implementing the reforms. These include:

- a cross-functional team within the LEA, led by the school improvement service and the human resource (HR) service, supported by colleagues from pupil support, finance, capital and governor services. The team needs to have clear leadership at a senior level;
- engagement with local stakeholders in the form of regular joint meetings, modelled on the national WAMG. These groups work best where they include the remodelling advisers and all relevant parties (e.g. teaching and support staff unions). The purpose of the group should be to play a powerful role in supporting schools in implementing the agreement and in promoting raising standards through workforce reform. In order to highlight the benefits of workforce reform it will be necessary to raise awareness locally, including through the provision of training;
- a commitment from LEAs to disseminating and promoting the benefits of agreed national guidance and WAMG advice notes, supporting local implementation and providing a source of intelligence/feedback;



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



the education union



PROTECTING YOU
AT WORK

NAHT

NASUWT

NEOST

PAT
Professional Association of Teachers

SHA

T&G

UNISON
the public service union

¹ The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group is composed of representatives from ATL, DfES, GMB, NAHT, NASUWT, NEOST, PAT, SHA, T&G, UNISON and the Welsh Assembly Government who are all signatories to the Agreement.

- a clear commitment to local frameworks and grading structures that reflect and take account of new demands on school support staff. The support staff unions should be fully involved in developing these frameworks. The National Joint Council for Local Government Services has recently published guidance on grading structures and job profiles to help in the development of local career structures. This guidance, 'School Support Staff – The Way Forward', can be accessed at www.lgemployers.co.uk/publications/fullpublications/support. The series of joint WAMG advice notes also sets out agreed guidance on implementing the Agreement, including the roles of support staff;
- a clear strategy, shared with local stakeholders, that makes optimum use of Standards Fund Grant 508c (and from 04/05 Grant 25) to build capacity in the LEA to deliver workforce reforms and support schools in the process;
- engagement with the National Remodelling Team (NRT) in England. This engagement will include the nomination of early adopter schools and schools for the next tranches, the dissemination of NRT information and materials (for example, the guidance issued for governors) and the feedback of local information to the NRT. In order to achieve the latter, it will be necessary for each LEA to have a clear process for being able to identify the position on remodelling in all schools.

The contractual changes for teachers in the National Agreement are statutory and must be implemented in full. However, there are a range of strategies, set out in the Agreement and subsequent WAMG guidance, that schools may choose to employ in order to implement them in a sustainable way, including the development of extended roles for support staff. It is inappropriate and unacceptable for local groups to seek to reach local agreements which prevent schools from accessing the full range of strategies. Local groups may, however, wish to devise local strategies that support schools in implementing the National Agreement and remodelling their workforce.

The WAMG recommends that all LEAs and local union branch secretaries review their existing local arrangements against the success criteria identified above to ensure that the best possible support and challenge is delivered to schools on remodelling. The full implementation of the National Agreement will benefit all members of the school workforce and help to achieve the objective of raising pupil standards.

