

Raising Standards and Tackling Workload

Implementing the National Agreement

June 2006

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

SUSTAINABILITY OF NATIONAL AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Schools will be in the process of considering their timetable arrangements for September 2006. They will be carrying this out in the context of the introduction of all the statutory changes to teachers' and headteachers' conditions of service. The third phase concluded in September 2005.

The Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG)¹ acknowledges the significant achievement in schools of the implementation of the provisions of the National Agreement.

The signing of the Agreement in January 2003 has been described as historic, but equally significant has been the ongoing work on the part of the school workforce, local authorities, and the social partners at school, local, regional, as well as national level, to support its implementation.

Schools which have successfully implemented workforce remodelling have recognised that the contractual changes for teachers and headteachers and the principles at the heart of the Agreement are designed to raise standards by enabling teachers and headteachers to focus on their core roles of teaching and of leading teaching and learning. An important and integral part of school improvement is enhanced roles for support staff who are qualified professionals in their own right, playing an important role in the education team. New or enhanced support staff roles attracting appropriate pay and grading within local structures and gradings help to underpin successful workforce reform.

Schools have used the remodelling change management process to embrace workforce reform and to develop high-quality implementation strategies, which both draw on the expertise of all staff and recognise the importance of tackling inappropriate or unnecessary workload and bureaucracy wherever it is present.

In particular the implementation of the National Agreement means that the following contractual conditions of service should now be in place for all teachers and headteachers:

- Teachers **cannot routinely be required to undertake administrative and clerical tasks** – teacher time is more exclusively devoted to high-quality professional teaching tasks.
- A **work/life balance clause** which entitles teachers to achieve a reasonable balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work. It is not in the pupils' interest for teachers to be working excessively long hours and therefore there needs to be downward pressure on excessive hours.
- **Leadership and management time** for all teachers at a school with leadership and management responsibilities – giving them a reasonable allocation of time within school sessions to support the discharge of their responsibilities.
- A **38-hour limit on the amount of cover** each individual teacher can be required to do in each academic year – this recognises that cover for absence is not an effective use of the time of teachers at a school. This provision has now been in place for nearly two years and schools should now have strategies in place to deliver the objective in the National Agreement that teachers at a school should only rarely cover.



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



NASUWT

NEOST



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

- A guaranteed minimum of 10% time within the timetabled teaching day for planning, **preparation and assessment (PPA)** – to relieve some of the existing workload pressures on teachers and to support high-quality teaching. This is guaranteed time that must not be used for any other activity, including cover for absent colleagues.
- Teachers are **no longer routinely required to invigilate external examinations** (e.g. National Curriculum tests, GCSE and AS/A2 examinations), recognising that invigilating examinations is not a productive use of teachers' time.
- **Dedicated headship time** specifically for headteachers, particularly those with a teaching commitment of over 50%, giving headteachers time to lead, as well as manage, their schools.

Governors are responsible for ensuring that all the contractual changes above are applied to headteachers.

These contractual changes are statutory; they are neither voluntary nor optional.

Ensuring quality workforce strategies

These statutory contractual changes should now be fully embedded in the way your schools operate and into the working lives of all school staff. Schools should also review existing practice and policies both in terms of quality and sustainability and to ensure that their implementation strategies continue to deliver the intended benefits for pupils and all staff.

Such school-level reviews must also ensure that there are clearly defined roles for support staff with associated career paths, access to training, etc. These roles must attract appropriate pay and grading, within local structures and gradings.

WAMG and local WAMG groups will continue to safeguard the improvements to conditions for the entire school workforce. This will involve active monitoring on a local authority and school-by-school basis, beginning immediately this term and continuing as part of WAMG's ongoing commitment to providing support and challenge for workforce reform.

WAMG is committed to taking action if any school has not implemented fully the statutory provisions.

