

Code of Practice on Working Hours, Working Week

There is evidence that current provisions have been set aside on an ad hoc basis in some schools. These include where the arrangement of providing Class Contact Time is organised in larger blocks of time, or where a teacher has provided cover in unforeseen circumstances.

Where there is a collegiate agreement in the school's Negotiating Group on a planned, flexible approach to working hours within an individual establishment and the national criteria outlined below is met, a school can develop an alternative approach to working hours. Schools are encouraged to engage with LNCT Joint Secretaries if advice is required on formulating an alternative approach. These will be submitted to LNCTs with the WTA for confirmation that they meet the national criteria.

LNCTs should also confirm:

- that agreements are set within a clear and transparent process which will be monitored by the school's negotiating group and the LNCT to ensure agreements have been reached collegiately.
- that there is a facility for monitoring the flexible approach within schools
- that advice and guidance, in accordance with this Code of Practice, is provided by LNCT Joint Secretaries to establishments on situations which may arise including emergency cover.
- that the implementation of this Code of Practice is monitored by LNCTs and reported to the SNCT on any unresolved difficulties which arise.

Thereafter, LNCTs will note plans on the basis of informed consent unless there is evidence that the national criteria have not been met or where the proposal produces staffing consequences which cannot be delivered.

National Criteria:

- (i) A school may operate class contact time, preparation and correction time and remaining time over a longer period, normally 2 weeks, but not exceeding 4 weeks;
- (ii) Maximum class contact time in any single week is restricted to 25 hours, subject to an average of 22.5 hours over the agreed period of variation.
- (iii) Any reconfiguration of class contact time would be subject to discussion and agreement between the Headteacher and the relevant teaching staff.
- (iv) The school proposal signed by the Headteacher and a representative of the teaching staff should be submitted to the LNCT Joint Secretaries.

- (v) Preparation, correction and collegiate activities are key elements of the work of teaching professionals and Headteachers must allow appropriate time for such core activities.
- (vi) The working week must average 35 hours over the agreed period of variation. Preparation and correction remains as a minimum, one third of the class contact time delivered each week. The remaining time is for collegiate activities, as per the schools Working Time Agreement. Where class contact time is varied from 22.5 hours per week the agreement must show how this will be averaged out over the period of variation, including staffing arrangements; time for preparation and correction will be guaranteed within that period.
- (vii) This flexible approach should be planned prior to the beginning of the academic year; this should be part of the school's annual working time discussions and not normally used to deal with short term cover situations. Any flexible approach will be reviewed on a regular basis by the school Negotiating Group, any revisions which are deemed necessary will be subject to the same level of joint agreement outlined in (iii) and (iv) and reported to LNCT.
- (viii) Planning at school level should be characterised by collaborative, consultative and collegiate processes focused on the best outcomes for the school and its pupils.

Time and place arrangements will be retained.