

## **Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers**

**To: Renfrewshire Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers**

**On: 2 February 2016**

**Report by  
Joint Secretaries**

### **Tackling Workload**

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1. There continues to be significant concerns at both local and national level regarding workload of teachers.
- 1.2. It is important that we acknowledge and support all staff to ensure we reach our aspirations of the highest quality learning and teaching in all schools within nationally agreed terms and conditions.
- 1.3. Integral to managing workload in schools is that all school staff are involved in the construction of the working time agreement on an annual basis and that these agreements are adhered to by both sides and the integrity of the 35 hour working week is maintained on an ongoing basis.
- 1.4. SNCT published JS/15/62 on 21 December 2015. This seeks to ensure LNCTs are aware of the importance of managing teacher workload through appropriate use of working time agreements. This is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.5. Appendix 2 provides SNCT details on collegiality with reference to the working time agreement. This includes a set of questions that should be used in all schools. This approach ensures that teachers evaluate their personal workload against the figures agreed in the school. Responses to these questions provide good evidence of the ongoing evaluation of the working time agreement. They will also yield information which will feed into the school consultative group's annual review of the working time agreement;
- 1.6. Implementation of the agreed working time agreement should be monitored rigorously in each school. A mechanism should be in place to ensure issues are able to be resolved quickly and in a collegiate manner.
- 1.7. JNC has a role to play in monitoring workload and resolving issues that have not been resolved at school level. As a result workload monitoring reports will be brought to JNC on a regular basis.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1. JNC is asked to agree that
  - a) schools will ensure that all staff are involved in the construction of the working time agreement and that the agreement is both realistic and adhered to by both sides;
  - b) monitoring reports will be presented to JNC on a regular basis.



21 December 2015

**JS/15/62**

**Pay and Conditions Agreement 2015 - 17 – Working Time Agreements – Managing Teacher Workload**

Dear Colleague

The SNCT Support Group met on 26 November 2015 and asked the Joint Secretaries to remind LNCTs of the above agreement which is contained in the Handbook of Conditions of Service at Part 2 Appendix 2.18 and is also appended to this letter.

LNCTs are asked to draw this agreement and in particular the extracts reproduced below, to the attention of each school in their area to ensure that workload issues are taken into account during discussions on the preparation of individual Working Time Agreements for the 2016/17 school year.

Extracts from Appendix 2.18 – Managing Teacher Workload:

The SNCT seeks to control workload through the 35 hour working week. The SNCT has issued previous guidance on Working Time Agreements (JS/05/08) and the management of workload. The SNCT requires schools' negotiating committees to conclude written Working Time Agreements, subject to guidance provided by each LNCT. Working Time Agreements should provide the context to undertake the collegiate activities set out in the SNCT Handbook (Appendix 2.7) and should also inform the targets, time and resources in a School Improvement Plan...School improvement plans should set out agreed actions to reduce bureaucracy and tackle workload.

**Review and Evaluation** should be robust, evaluative and supportive and should build on professional self-evaluation, through a collegiate approach. The impact of curriculum change should be fully reviewed and evaluated by all stakeholders before being subject to further change. Schools should review and evaluate on a regular basis each session's Working Time Agreement to inform negotiations on the Working Time Agreement for the session ahead.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Tom Young (Employers' Side)  
Drew Morrice (Teachers' Panel)  
Stephanie Walsh (Scottish Government)

Joint Secretaries

**PART 2****APPENDIX 2.18****Working Time Agreements – Managing Teacher Workload**

The Tackling Bureaucracy Report in November 2013 asked the SNCT and LNCTs to “consider the outcome of the Group’s work in the context of their existing role.”

The SNCT recognised the main drivers of excessive bureaucracy in the Report and commits to strengthen extant mechanism to control teacher workload. The SNCT will share on its website examples of practice taken by some local authorities and LNCTs to tackle workload at local level – such examples will inform discussions across the LNCTs.

The SNCT agreed the Statement of Teacher Professionalism (Part 2: Appendix 2.6), that the focus on teaching and learning is about empowering teachers to improve outcomes for learners. This approach brings real benefits and at a local level we need to guard against too much paperwork and overly complex processes which get in the way of teaching and learning. Everyone has a part to play in tackling excessive workload which is:

*Anything that makes it impossible for teaching staff to complete their duties within the 35 hour week.*

The SNCT seeks to control workload through the 35 hour working week. The SNCT has issued previous guidance on Working Time Agreements (JS/05/08) and the management of workload. The SNCT requires schools’ negotiating committees to conclude written Working Time Agreements, subject to guidance provided by each LNCT. Working Time Agreements should provide the context to undertake the collegiate activities set out in the SNCT Handbook (Appendix 2.7) and should also inform the targets, time and resources in a School Improvement Plan.

The SNCT wishes to discourage unnecessary bureaucracy. School improvement plans should set out agreed actions to reduce bureaucracy and tackle workload. The impact of changes made should be evaluated by LNCTs and reported to the SNCT which may offer supplementary advice. The SNCT shall report its findings to the CFE Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy.

Each LNCT will have agreed monitoring mechanisms on Working Time Agreements.

This guidance offers further advice about local approaches to managing workload.

In preparing a Working Time Agreement Schools require to consider:

- (i) The time available for collegiate activities within the 35 hour working week.
- (ii) The School Improvement Plan.
- (iii) The lessons arising from the current WTA.

Collectively we have a duty of care to staff and learners, and recommend the following best practice principles. These principles should inform future practice in all schools and should be used when reviewing current practice.

## Key Principles

- a. Acknowledging the **professionalism of teachers** to meet the needs of young people for whom we have professional responsibility and to manage their own workload. Working relationships based upon shared responsibility, mutual respect and understanding should inform the management of workload.
- b. **Professional dialogue** is key to improving learning and managing workload. Paperwork should be kept to the minimum required to support this. Time should be set aside to facilitate this important process.
- c. **Curriculum Planning** planning should be proportionate and based on agreed policy guidance and capacity to deliver. Agreement about planning should be reached through consultation and negotiation. LNCTs should monitor the implementation of school curriculum planning and annually consider opportunities for change and improvement.
- d. **Documentation** should be concise and relevant, and allow scope for flexibility within a clear framework, subject to controlling workload demands.
- e. **Monitoring and reporting** systems must be fit-for-purpose. Reports should be relevant and meaningful for learners and parents/carers, and prepared by staff within agreed allocations of time.
- i. **IT systems** and software should support effective learning and teaching and their use should be guided by the principles of:
  - ii. Continuity,
  - iii. Accessibility,
  - iv. Ease-of-use,
  - v. Removal of duplication

**Review and Evaluation** should be robust, evaluative and supportive and should build on professional self-evaluation, through a collegiate approach. The impact of curriculum change should be fully reviewed and evaluated by all stakeholders before being subject to further change. Schools should review and evaluate on a regular basis each session's Working Time Agreement to inform negotiations on the Working Time Agreement for the session ahead.

Working Time Agreements are developed and agreed at a School level, in advance of each academic session. The Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers will have oversight to ensure the principles as set out in this guidance are implemented and should consider approaches to annually sampling the Working Time Agreements.

There needs to be a collective effort to ensure workload is manageable within the 35 hour working week.