

DNCT/27

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
SERVICE**

**PLANNING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
November 2017**

Planning in Primary Schools

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 There is a clear national focus on ensuring all local authorities make real efforts to reduce workload and bureaucracy in schools. Primary curricular planning is an area that has undergone significant changes in the last 15 years and this advice sets out the broad guidelines that should be followed in all Dundee schools when considering planning.

1.2 This advice is based on the following:

- What to Do/What to Avoid advice drawn from Education Scotland's, Curriculum for Excellence – A Statement for Practitioners from HM Chief Inspector of Schools (August 2016).
- Recent Education Scotland report on bureaucracy and workload in schools ([https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-\(building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5\)/Tackling%20bureaucracy%20and%20addressing%20undue%20workload%20in%20schools](https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-(building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5)/Tackling%20bureaucracy%20and%20addressing%20undue%20workload%20in%20schools))
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2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 There are three stages in curricular planning:

- The Working Time Agreement which is agreed at school level and which may include programmes of work in line with national/council guidelines
- School Improvement Planning, which includes policy review and development;
- Teacher curriculum planning at class level.

2.2 Head Teachers and teachers, through the Working Time Agreement, have a responsibility to discuss and agree the School Improvement Plan. Teachers are responsible for teaching their assigned classes and implementing the plan as appropriate.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

WORKING TIME AGREEMENTS

3.1 The School Working Time Agreement, and in particular the use of remaining time, is fundamental in ensuring teachers can control their workload and implement the School Improvement Plan within the 35-hour week.

3.2 The School Calendar for staff must clearly set out agreed dates for the stages and review of the School Improvement Plan.

3.3 DNCT 4 should be referred to when constructing the Working Time Agreement. In particular, agreed planning by teachers and any monitoring of teachers' plans

must not be to such an extent as to reduce the time available for preparation for teaching to a level that means the 35-hour week cannot be met.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 3.4 The School Improvement Planning process should reflect good collegiate practice within a school, and should ensure that all teachers are involved in the process.
- 3.5 The planning process should itself be the basis of both prior and continuing consultation with all teaching staff.
- 3.6 The Working Time Agreement must ensure that identified collegiate time is made available to staff in order to have an appropriate input at the appropriate time to the planning process.
- 3.7 Workload management must form an integral part of discussions since part of the planning process is to ensure that the individual and collective work of teachers is capable of being undertaken within the 35-hour week.
- 3.8 The School Improvement Plan should be made available to all staff prior to final approval of the plan.
- 3.9 There should be regular monitoring of the Plan involving all staff. Dates for undertaking the monitoring should be agreed and indicated in the school calendar for staff.
- 3.10 Any significant revision to the Plan in the course of the year should be discussed and agreed by staff. Action plans arising from HMIE visits should normally be built into future improvement plans rather than supplanting existing proposals. The outcome of Quality Improvement visits should not require improvement plans to be altered immediately.

TEACHER PLANNING

- 3.11 Plans should outline experiences, outcomes and levels to be taught; the grouping of children for this teaching and the key experiences and outcomes which will be assessed.
- 3.12 Teachers, including support for learning staff, should have the opportunity to discuss plans with each other and the Head Teacher as they are being formulated. While this may present difficulties, it is important that such arrangements are made. Added comment or amendment during the term will allow the plan to be an ongoing record. Plans provide information on individual, group and class work and should help define what is assessed, recorded and reported.
- 3.13 Sufficient time within the school's working time agreement should be allocated for the purpose of planning in this way.
- 3.14 The teacher puts the plan into effect through his/her own detailed preparation. This may take the form of a weekly or daily plan or diary. This helps the teacher in classroom management and organisation, in structuring tasks for the children, and in ensuring resources are to hand. Such plans are for the class teacher's

own use and are not mandatory, but it is considered good practice to have in place a means of recording teaching and learning on daily/weekly basis.

- 3.15 Daily/weekly preparation is a matter for the individual teacher, and such plans should not be submitted to the Head Teacher for approval. However, Head Teachers are expected to take an active interest in the class work of all staff.
- 3.16 Planning beyond this level is considered to be excessive and should not be required or encouraged by Head Teachers.
- 3.17 Each school should develop a format for termly planning. This should evolve as Curriculum for Excellence is implemented in accordance with the School Improvement Plan.