

Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Directorate
Procedures and Guidelines

THE 35 HOUR WEEK – FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

2026/27

1. GENERAL

The 35-Hour Week Agreement in Dumfries and Galloway is governed by the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Conditions of Service (see **Appendix 1**). Within these parameters there are several principles which should govern schools' approach:

- (a) The target is that of *improvement* in pupil outcomes through:
- the professional learning of staff;
 - supporting a collegiate culture within schools;
 - a reduction in workload and bureaucracy;
 - appropriate and effective management;
 - partnership with other groups, particularly parents/carers;
 - innovative approaches to the curriculum.
- (b) Planning on the part of the Headteachers and staff will be important in order that there is a clear awareness of each session's requirements. The majority of activity should be carried out within the context of the Education Authority's Improvement Plan and the School/ELC Improvement Plan. School Improvement Plans are required to be submitted by the 30 May 2026.
- (c) The code of practice set out in the SNCT Conditions of Service Circular 14/43 is central to agreement on those activities which can be undertaken within the 35-Hour week.
- (d) This Agreement represents a broad Education Authority framework within which Headteachers and teachers have flexibility to reach an agreement which meets local circumstances within the parameters outlined within this document.
- (e) In negotiations, it should be remembered that there are, effectively, THREE BLOCKS OF TIME:
- class-committed
 - preparation and correction
 - personal - collegiate activities and professional development
- (f) The implementation of the school's 35-Hour Week Agreement will be monitored termly by the School's Working Time Agreement Committee (SWTAC), with regard to any unanticipated issues such as those exemplified below:
- School inspection
 - Long term or significant absence of staff
 - School closures
 - National requirements
 - Service disruption
 - Health related pandemics

2. SCHOOLS AGREEMENTS

2.1 Mechanism for Agreement at School Level

(a) A SWTAC with the following representation will be established:

- Headteacher;
- Teacher Trade Union representative(s);
- Teaching staff representatives (from all sectors – ELC/Primary/Secondary where appropriate);
- Each school within a shared management arrangement should be represented.

(b) The recommended number of staff representatives will be in line with the table below:

Total Number of Teachers	Staff Representatives (including Trade Union Representatives)
1 – 5	whole staff
6 – 19	3
20 – 39	4
40 – 59	5
60 – 79	6
80 – 99	7

(c) The Headteacher and staff representatives will prepare a draft School Agreement on the working year in line with this Agreement. The draft Agreement should be linked to the School Improvement Plan and must include Form B which highlights key events such as reporting periods, parent/carer consultations, staff meetings, SQA deadlines, professional review interviews and forward planning. It is good practice to have a commentary of the breakdown of the allocation of hours. For part-time staff, an agreement on which INSET days and collegiate sessions are to be attended should be reached before the summer holidays. Changes can be negotiated as part of the normal SWTAC review process.

(d) Meetings of the SWTAC may be noted and a summary circulated to all staff.

(e) **The draft Agreement and Form B will be issued to all staff for comment a week in advance of a meeting to be held to discuss any relevant issues prior to a vote being taken by a secret online ballot of the whole staff using MS Forms.**

1. The votes will be collated by the Headteacher and the representative of the Union with the largest number of members (or failing that a staff member nominated by the SWTAC staff members).
2. The agreement will not be forwarded to the relevant LNCT 35-Hour Week Monitoring Group unless 50%+ 1 of all staff who vote in the ballot approve it. Where an agreement is not reached and the return may be delayed, an email should be sent to DGSWTAC@ea.dumgal.sch.uk to alert the LNCT representatives to this delay.
3. Staff eligible to vote include part-time and visiting specialists based at the school, i.e. those who have that school as a nominated base school.

4. The SWTAC should use Glow Forms (managed and sent by the school clerical staff/SSM) as an **anonymous voting system** which maximises participation. A spreadsheet detailing the ballot results will be automatically generated upon the closure of the vote. This spreadsheet will be reviewed by the Headteacher and a union-side representative who will each validate the vote. The Glow Form will allow only one vote per school email address and will anonymise the returns. Responses must not be reviewed until the end of the voting period.

The question to be asked on MS Forms is thus:

Do you accept this year's School Working Time Agreement? (please tick as appropriate.)

- a. Yes
- b. No

- (f) An agreement should be reached as early as possible in the summer term therefore the process should commence at the start of term 4, in April. To assist with forward planning, the LNCT will provide suggested model Agreements to assist with the school negotiations.
- (g) The final Agreement will be forwarded to the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) **by Friday 5 June 2026**. Please email to DGSWTAC@ea.dumgal.sch.uk.
- (h) Negotiation at school level will agree the **Form B** detailing activities to be included within the 35-Hour week appropriate to a particular school. This must be provided in support of the School Agreement to the LNCT **by Friday 5 June 2026**. This will be used by the LNCT Monitoring Sub-groups if further clarification of the agreement is felt necessary. Schools are required to provide the rationale behind the Form B. The monitoring groups will meet on the week beginning 8 June with all returns to schools by Friday 12 June. Where a resubmission is required, this should be received **by Friday 19 June 2026**.

Failure to reach school/partnership agreement:

- (i) In the event that an agreement cannot be reached, the Headteacher or a Trade Union representative should refer the matter to the LNCT Joint Convenors without undue delay.
- (j) This will involve the Joint Convenors of the Management and the Trade Union side investigating the case and attempting to resolve the impasse.
- (k) Continued failure to resolve the dispute may result in referral of the matter to the Joint Chairs of the SNCT.
- (l) Teachers will continue to have access to formal grievance procedures.

2.2 LNCT Monitoring of School Agreements and Calendars

- (a) All School Agreements and Calendars will be referred to the LNCT SWTA Monitoring Sub-groups of the LNCT (see below). There is one for Primary Schools and one for Secondary Schools.

Current Membership of Monitoring Sub-groups

Primary:

Elaine Dennis, Hecklegirth Primary School
Amy Graham, Crossmichael Primary School
Rachael Chandler-Rogers, Noblehill Primary School

Secondary:

Jay Young, Dalbeattie High School
Sarajane Moffat, Stranraer Academy
Jamie Farquhar, Stranraer Academy

- (b) Further clarification will be sought from any school where these does not appear to match this framework Agreement. Advice and assistance can be offered by members of the LNCT SWTA Monitoring Sub-groups in order to resolve these issues.
- (c) If this clarification does not resolve the issue, it will be referred to the Joint Convenors to ensure that a satisfactory agreement is reached and re-submitted to the LNCT SWTA Monitoring Sub-Groups.

3. TIME/ACTIVITIES TO BE COVERED BY THE AGREEMENT

For **all** schools:

- (a) The time available for all teachers for required school activities is 5 hours per week pro rata. For any teacher who has a lesser amount of class contact, the preparation and correction time would be a third of actual class contact time.

For teachers in secondary schools the requirement for class cover in the event of absence should be taken into account before allocating time to activities.

- (b) Activities agreed by the LNCT which are subject to agreement at school level are (in no particular order of priority):
- Planning
 - Parents' Meetings/Reporting
 - Development
 - Staff Meetings
 - Professional Review & Development
 - Assessment/Maintaining Records
 - Supporting Learners
 - Health & Safety
 - Flexibility
- (c) It is suggested that time is allocated for health & safety matters. Whilst not identified in the SNCT Handbook's list of activities, allocating a proportionate amount of time for health & safety brings positive benefits for staff and pupils.
- (d) It is important that proper account is taken of all management duties and responsibilities and that specific time for these duties and responsibilities is agreed and allocated.

- (e) Whilst this Agreement provides an Education Authority framework, it will be for individual schools to reach school solutions appropriate to their particular circumstances. Thus, the amount of time required for activities such as report writing will vary from school to school - and possibly from teacher to teacher - dependent on the number of reports required per year and the method of reporting.

Schools will wish to review their approaches to how certain tasks are undertaken in order that bureaucracy can be minimised, and professional activity maximised. As a general principle, no more than one after-school activity should be scheduled in any given week. The only exception to this guideline is attendance at pre-arranged parents' evenings.

- (f) Some of the tasks will fall within the category of "collegiate" while others will be "individual". In both cases, and as already indicated in (d) above, time allocations will vary from school to school and, in some cases, may vary from teacher to teacher. It is good practice to agree time allocations for report writing in terms of time per report rather than time per class (to take account of varying class sizes).
- (g) Where a teacher is employed on a part-time basis, the teacher will not be employed for more than one discrete block of time in any day. Other than in exceptional circumstances, they shall be obliged, on a pro rata basis, to undertake and be paid for all of the contractual commitments required of teachers as set out in Section 2 (Main Duties) and Section 3 (Working Year and Working Week) of the National Scheme of Conditions of Service.
The pro rata arrangements for teachers on part-time contracts, relating to remaining time, shall occur on days when the teacher is employed. The exceptions to this rule are parents' meetings and INSET days when the part-time teacher will comply, on a pro rata basis, with the arrangements agreed for the establishment.
- (h) For teachers who work in more than one setting priority should be allocated to Parents' Evenings and Report Writing for each setting worked in. The remaining time should be agreed with the schools worked in as to the 35 Hour Agreement. Teachers should agree their own personalised Form B (see attached) with those schools. For peripatetic staff, please refer to Section 6. below.

For Primary Schools with an ELC - separate agreements require to be sent on appropriate forms for each setting only if the Nursery is led by a teacher.

4. PRIMARY SCHOOLS WITH SHARED MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Primary schools which have shared management arrangements have the option to submit separate or collective agreements. Should the majority of staff agree to a collective agreement then a representative from each school within the partnership should countersign Form A.

Individual schools within any shared management arrangement are still entitled to have their own Agreement ratified as per the arrangements detailed in Section 2.1 (e).

4.1 Collegiate Working

Consideration might be given to joint collegiate working, between the schools, on curriculum and shared tasks, taking into account each school's calendar.

4.2 Travel Considerations

If joint working has been agreed, travel times between the schools must be built into each school agreement. Budget considerations should also be borne in mind.

5. ALL-THROUGH (2-18) SCHOOLS

Schools with all-through arrangements should consider the opportunities for shared/cross sector working and reflect this in their calendars. All-through schools must submit separate agreements for nursery, primary and secondary staff as per the above processes.

6. PERIPATETIC TEACHING STAFF

This statement provides clarification for managers and teaching staff on the application of contractual provisions relating to contact time, preparation and correction time, and collegiate activities within the 35-hour working week. It is intended to support consistent and fair implementation across all schools and services, including where colleagues have significantly varied teaching commitments. It is recognised that some teachers, by the nature of their role, may not have regular learning and teaching duties (contact time). The following duties can be considered as **remit-specific duties**:

- Caseload management
- Meetings
- Administration
- Liaison with children, families, and partner agencies

These duties should be agreed with the line manager and aligned to the core functions of the role. This list is not exhaustive. The specific duties should be agreed with the line manager.

For the above activities, 22.5 hours can be allocated, with 7.5 hours preparation and administration. With 5 further hours agreed via the Working Time Agreement for collegiate and service improvement work.

Peripatetic staff are required to submit their Form B to their Line Manager by the 30 June 2026, following the submission of schools' returns on the 5 June. Line Managers will then agree the working time arrangement for the staff that they manage.

7. CLUSTER WORKING

Schools should consider the opportunities for Cluster working and reflect this in their calendars.

8. NOTES ON PARTICULAR ACTIVITIES

For particular guidance on Planning in Secondary Schools see Appendix 2, for Primary Schools see Appendix 3.

8.1 Parent/Carer Engagement/Consultation

(a) Schools are empowered to decide on the most appropriate means of sharing pupil progress. Where schools choose to have formal parent/teacher consultations there will be a maximum of five formal contractual meetings per year for staff and the time allowed for each meeting will be the actual time spent at the meeting, plus 50% in respect of preparation, plus actual travel time.

(b) Where it is agreed that planned informal meetings will take place with individual parents throughout the year a maximum of five hours should be allocated for this purpose.

(c) Whatever planned approach to parental engagement is agreed, there should be up to a maximum of 30 hours allocated for this purpose.

(d) Where it is agreed that a Parent/Carer Consultation Meeting be held end-on to the school day, a break of 30 minutes should be built in prior to the start of the meeting. However, for primary schools, given that there are only 5 hours per week available for collegiate activity, it is clear that sticking rigidly to the 35-hour week may not, on occasion, meet the requirements for a Parent/Carer Consultation Meeting. Accordingly, the weeks which fall before and/or after a planned Parent/Carer Consultation Meeting may be “borrowed against” to allow for sufficient time for the meeting to take place. Efforts should be made to avoid this being necessary, however.

8.2 Faculty/Departmental Meetings (Secondary)

(a) Since the circumstances which prevail will vary from school to school, it is not appropriate to be prescriptive about when these meetings should be held. Some meetings may therefore be arranged in the course of the school day where this is possible and does not result in inappropriate timetabling constraints; there should, however, be no presumption that meetings will be held during the school day.

(b) In accordance with **Appendix 1** and this Framework Agreement, those taking part should reach agreement on:

- the timing of meetings
- the pattern of meetings
- the duration of meetings

8.3 Tackling Bureaucracy

Dumfries and Galloway Council is committed to tackling bureaucracy. Appended to this document is the most up to date advice, provided by the LNCT and this should be read in conjunction with this Framework.

8.4 Supporting Learners

This category should be used throughout the year for teachers to consult with additional support for learning teachers and other professionals and prepare for Child’s Plan meetings as well as preparation of differentiated materials to meet the needs of these learners.

8.5 Time Spent Out of School

(a) The SNCT Handbook (see **Appendix 1**) recognises that staff should be able to be out of school at those times when they are not required in school. This means that a member of staff may be off-site at any time when he/she is not required for class cover or previously agreed collegiate duties in a given week.

(b) **Schools must, however, be in a position to cover staff absence at all times.**

(c) There may be agreed non-contact times when it is open to a member of staff to be “off-site” provided that, on each occasion, he/she informs the school management.

(d) Off-site arrangements should be borne in mind when organising evacuation procedures.

8.6 Flexibility/Supervised Pupil Activities

Time allocated in this category can be used to respond to unplanned activities which require to be addressed. It should also be used for staff attending SWTAC meetings.

(a) Flexibility can also include supervised pupil activities. It is not possible to categorise all activities, but it is important that staff involvement outwith the school day with pupils/students be recognised.

(b) Activities could include:

- study groups
- school trips
- school shows/concerts
- residential stays
- sports

(c) All such involvement should take place within the spirit of “voluntarism”. There is no suggestion that Headteachers would require staff to undertake such activities.

(d) At the same time, it is recognised that the level of staff time committed to such activities could not be fully embraced within the 35-hour week. The level of this recognition should be agreed as part of the negotiation exercise within the school.

LNCT Support Group
March 2026

Document History

Scheme Guidance

Version	Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes
		April 2023	Annual updates (dates)
	April 2024		Annual updates
3.0	21 March 2025 LNCT Support Group		Annual updates Reference under 7.3 to the updated LNCT Tackling Bureaucracy paper. Addition of appendices 2-6 relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on Planning in Secondary Schools • Guidance on Planning in Primary Schools • Guidelines for Self-Evaluation Through Observation for Effective Learning and Teaching
4.0	20 January 2026 LNCT Support Group		Annual updates. Addition under 6.0 Peripatetic Teaching Staff Addition of DGSWTAC@ea.dumgal.sch.uk email address

Committee Approval

Version	Committee	Committee Date

Distribution

The approved version of this document is distributed to:

Name	Version	Date

Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Handbook (relevant sections)

3.6 Teachers (other than short term supply teachers) shall have a 35-hour working week. The working week shall apply on a pro rata basis to teachers on part-time contracts.

3.7 Within the 35-hour week, a maximum of 22.5 hours will be devoted to class contact except for those teachers on the National Teacher Induction Scheme. Other teachers who are undertaking probation outwith the National Induction Scheme will be treated as teachers, in relation to this Section.

3.9 An allowance of no less than one third of the teacher's actual class contact commitment is provided for preparation and correction. The use of remaining time will be subject to agreement at school level within LNCT guidelines, based on the Code of Practice on Working Time Arrangements (see Appendix 2.76). The pro rata arrangements for teachers on part-time contracts, relating to remaining time, shall occur on days when the teacher is employed. The exception to this rule is parents' meetings when the part-time teacher will comply, on a pro rata basis, with the arrangements agreed for the establishment. Any variation to this is subject to the Code of Practice on Working Hours, Working Week (Appendix 2.17).

3.10 All tasks which do not require the teacher to be on the school premises can be carried out at a time and place of the teacher's choosing: teachers will notify the appropriate manager of their intention in this respect.

3.11 In addition to the provisions of paragraph 3.5 above, teachers (other than short term supply teachers) have a contractual requirement to complete a maximum of 35 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) per annum. Teachers on part-time contracts will complete CPD per annum on a pro rata basis, in accordance with the pro rata contractual arrangements that apply to the working week. Further details on CPD are provided in Section 9 (Other Provisions).

3.12 Travelling time between schools during the school day shall be regarded as pupil contact time except during the midday break when the teacher shall have a personal break of not less than 40 minutes.

3.13 The contractual commitments required of teachers, as set out in Section 2 (Main Duties), will take place at a suitable time on a day on which the teacher is employed.

3.14 In accordance with Appendix 2.17 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.

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 remain as a minimum, one third of the class contact time delivered each week. The remaining time is for collegiate activities, as per the school's Working Time Agreement. Where class contact time is varied from 22.5 hours per week the agreement must show how this will be averaged 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.

Guidance on Planning in Secondary Schools

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Effective planning in secondary schools is fundamental to delivering high-quality education and achieving positive outcomes for all learners. Planning provides a structured approach to curriculum delivery, ensuring alignment with national frameworks while promoting consistency, equity and creativity.
- 1.2 This LNCT Agreement sets out the procedures to be followed in all Secondary Schools to ensure that:
- There is a consistent and collaborative approach to school planning processes.
 - Paperwork and bureaucracy is minimised, ensuring efficient workload management which, in turn, supports professional wellbeing.
- 1.3 By adopting effective planning strategies, schools can foster an engaging and inclusive environment that supports both learner achievement and teacher professionalism. This guidance recognises the need for flexibility in secondary schools, balancing the standardisation of key priorities with the autonomy required to address unique school contexts and learners needs.
- 1.4 There are three types of planning in Secondary Schools:
Long-Term Planning
Medium-Term Planning
Short-Term Planning

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Headteachers and Teachers, through the agreed 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.
- 2.2 There are three stages in the curricular planning process:
- Stage 1: **The Working Time Agreement (WTA)**
 - Stage 2: **School Improvement Planning**
 - Stage 3: **Teacher Planning**
- 2.3 Planning in Secondary Schools should be collaborative involving teachers, departments/faculties and senior leadership. Regular reflection and review of improvement planning ensures they remain relevant, responsive and impactful.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

WORKING TIME AGREEMENT

- 3.1 The School Working Time Agreement, and in particular the use of collegiate time, is fundamental in ensuring teachers can effectively manage and implement planning within the 35-hour week.

- 3.2 The School Calendar for staff must clearly set out agreed dates throughout the academic year for collegiate time to effectively manage the workload associated with improvement planning and implementation.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

- 3.3 School improvement planning is a structured, evolving process to identify priorities, target set and implement strategies to improve learning and teaching as well as school performance. It serves as a roadmap for continuous improvement ensuring that a school meets the needs of its learners, staff and community while aligning with national and local education standards.
- 3.4 The School Improvement Planning process should reflect good collegiate practice and distributed leadership at all levels within a school.
- 3.5 The School Improvement Plan should be made available to all staff prior to final approval of the Plan.
- 3.6 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. Any significant revision to the Plan in the course of the year should be discussed and agreed by all staff. Actions arising from Education Scotland, Care Commission or Validated Self-Evaluation visits should normally be built into future improvement plans rather than supplanting existing proposals.

TEACHER PLANNING

- 3.7 **Long term plans** are the curricular frameworks created and followed by schools and their practitioners that demonstrate progression throughout a learner's journey, across the curriculum and beyond e.g. wider achievement.
- 3.8 **Medium term plans** (blocks of learning) should indicate the theme or context and outline experiences and outcomes the grouping of children for differentiation and the key benchmarks being assessed. Teachers have the opportunity to discuss medium term plans with each other and the Leadership Team as they are being formulated. These working documents can be altered and amended throughout the block of learning, based on evaluation. Sufficient time within the school's working time agreement should be allocated for the purpose of planning in this way.
- 3.9 **Short term plans** may take the form of a weekly/daily plan or diary where the teacher puts the medium-term plan into effect through his/her own detailed preparation. This helps the teacher in classroom management and organisation, in structuring differentiated 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. Such plans should not be submitted to the Headteacher/Line Manager for approval. However, Headteachers/Line Managers are expected to take an active interest in the class work of all staff.
- 3.10 Where a child has additional support needs individual planning may be required.

Guidance on Planning in Primary Schools

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Effective planning in Primary Schools is fundamental to delivering high-quality education and achieving positive outcomes for all learners. Planning provides a structured approach to curriculum delivery, ensuring alignment with national frameworks while promoting consistency, equity and creativity.
- 1.2 This LNCT Agreement sets out the procedures to be followed in all Primary Schools to ensure that:
- There is a consistent and collaborative approach to school planning processes.
 - Paperwork and bureaucracy is minimised, ensuring efficient workload management which, in turn, supports professional wellbeing.
- 1.3 By adopting effective planning strategies, schools can foster an engaging and inclusive environment that supports both learner achievement and teacher professionalism. This guidance recognises the need for flexibility in Primary Schools, balancing the standardisation of key priorities with the autonomy required to address unique school contexts and learners needs.
- 1.4 There are three types of planning in Primary Schools:
- Long-Term Planning
 - Medium-Term Planning
 - Short-Term Planning

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2 Headteachers and Teachers, through the agreed 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.

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WORKING TIME AGREEMENTS

- 3.1 The School Working Time Agreement, and in particular the use of planning and collegiate time, is fundamental in ensuring teachers can effectively manage and implement planning within the 35 hour week.
- 3.2 The School Calendar for staff must clearly set out agreed dates throughout the academic year for collegiate time to effectively manage the workload associated with improvement planning and implementation.

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- 3.3 School improvement planning is a structured, evolving process to identify priorities, target set and implement strategies to improve learning and teaching as well as school performance. It serves as a roadmap for continuous improvement ensuring that a school

meets the needs of its learners, staff and community while aligning with national and local education standards.

- 3.4 The School Improvement Planning process should reflect good collegiate practice and distributed leadership at all levels within a school.
- 3.5 The School Improvement Plan should be made available to all staff prior to final approval of the Plan.
- 3.6 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. Any significant revision to the Plan in the course of the year should be discussed and agreed by all staff. Actions arising from Education Scotland, Care Commission or Validated Self-Evaluation visits should normally be built into future improvement plans rather than replacing existing proposals.

TEACHER PLANNING

- 3.7 Long term plans are the curricular frameworks created and followed by schools and their staff that demonstrate progression throughout a learners journey, across the curriculum and beyond e.g. wider achievement.
- 3.8 Medium term plans (blocks of learning) should indicate the theme or context and outline experiences and outcomes the grouping of children for differentiation and the key benchmarks being assessed. Teachers have the opportunity to discuss medium term plans with each other and the Leadership Team as they are being formulated. These working documents can be altered and amended throughout the block of learning, based on evaluation.
- 3.9 Short term plans may take the form of a weekly/daily plan or diary where the teacher puts the medium term plan into effect through his/her own detailed preparation. This helps the teacher in classroom management and organisation, in structuring differentiated 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. Such plans should not be submitted to the Headteacher/Line Manager for approval. However, Headteachers/Line Managers are expected to take an active interest in the class work of all staff.
- 3.10 Where a child has additional support needs individual planning may be required.

GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY AGREEMENT

Planning/ Parents' Meetings / Reporting

It is acknowledged that schools have different arrangements / systems for all of these. Schools are also at different stages of developing these areas. Therefore, it has been agreed that a minimum of 90 hours be allocated in total to these areas.

This allows flexibility to meet the needs of individual schools.

Professional Review & Development (PRD)

Annual meeting and preparation for this (e.g. 2 hours).

Development

This could be whole school, partnerships, cluster, areas of the school, working groups. There should be an agreement on the timing, the members of the group/pattern and duration of the meetings among staff. Travel time should be included.

Staff Meetings

E.g. half an hour before/after school most weeks for communication of the week's events, other meetings are after school for general purposes.

Assessment/ Maintaining Records

This would include gathering evidence before report writing. Also, day to day assessment and preparation and recording of this e.g. PLPs. This could be done in non-contact time or at home.

Flexibility

Time allocated in this category can be used to respond to unplanned activities which require to be addressed e.g. additional planning time, curriculum development time or staff meetings. (This may be required to address requests for information, changes in planning formats or changes to other procedures by local or national bodies.)

Flexibility can also include supervised pupil activities. It is not possible to categorise all activities but it is important that staff involvement outwith the school day with pupils/students be recognised.

Other Issues

1. *Offsite arrangements:*

Staff may make offsite arrangements for tasks which do not require the teacher to be on the school premises: teachers must notify their appropriate manager of their intention in this respect. All staff should be in school at opening time in case of staff absence.

2. *Supporting Information:*

Please include any supporting information you took into account in reaching your agreement.

GUIDELINES FOR NURSERY AGREEMENT

Planning/ Parents' Meetings / Reporting

It is acknowledged that nurseries have different arrangements / systems for all of these. Nurseries are also at different stages of developing these areas. Therefore, it has been agreed that a **minimum of 90 hours** be allocated in total to these areas. **There should be a weekly allocation in the Parents' Meetings / Reporting column.**

Professional Review & Development

Annual meeting and preparation for this (e.g. 2 hours).

Development

This could be nursery, whole school, partnerships, cluster, areas of the school, working groups. There should be an agreement on the timing, the members of the group/pattern and duration of the meetings among staff. Travel time should be included.

Staff Meetings

E.g. half an hour before/after school most weeks for communication of the week's events, other meetings are after school for general purposes.

Assessment/ Maintaining Records

This would include gathering evidence before report writing. Also, day to day assessment and preparation and recording of this e.g. PLPs. This could be done in non-contact time or at home.

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Other Issues

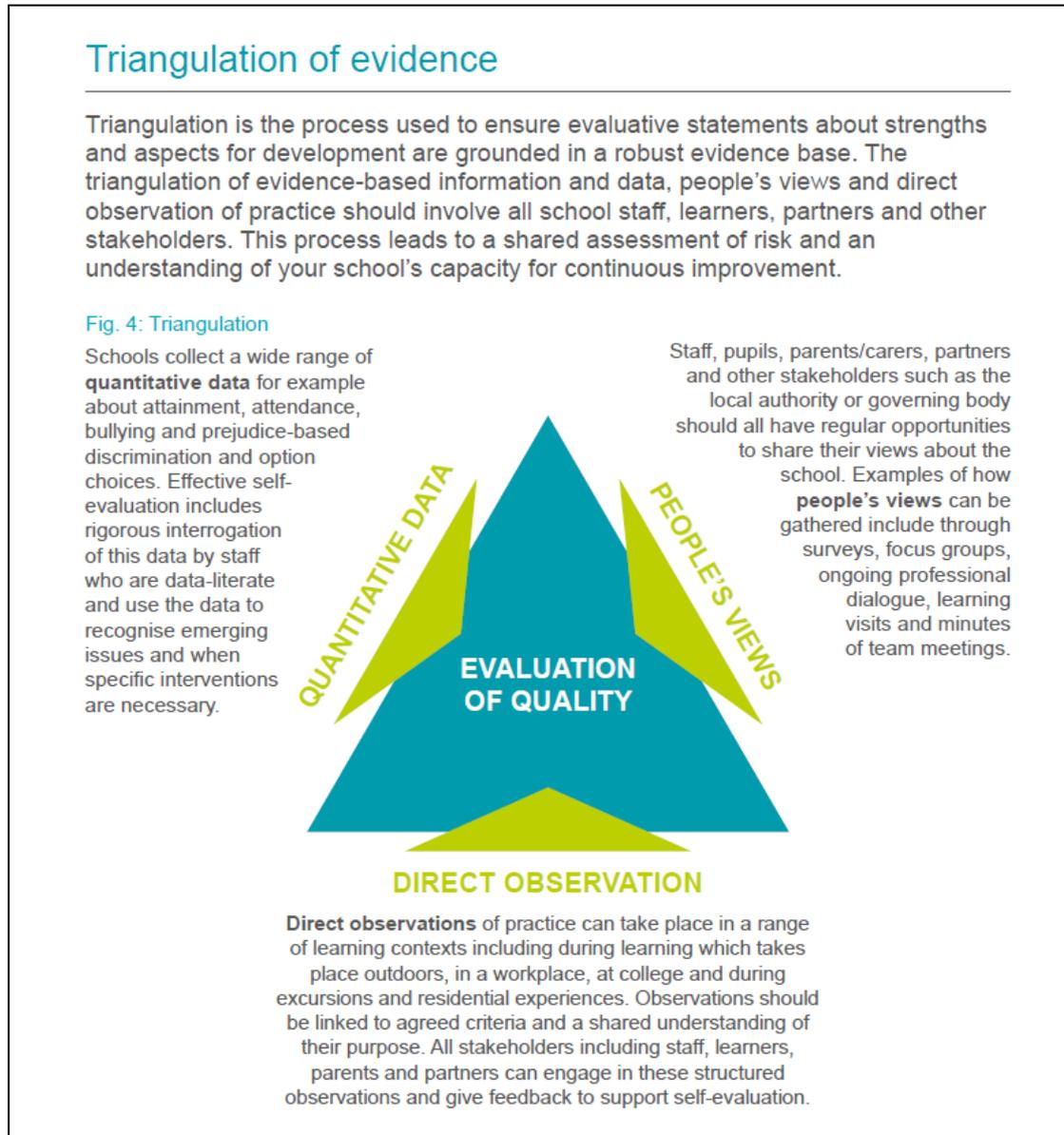
Offsite arrangements

Staff may make offsite arrangements for tasks which do not require the teacher to be on the school premises: teachers must notify their appropriate manager of their intention in this respect. All staff should be in school at opening time in case of staff absence.

Guidelines for Self-Evaluation Through Observation for Effective Learning and Teaching

CONTEXT

The vision of Dumfries and Galloway Education Service is to raise attainment for all through supporting a culture of empowerment, collaboration and creativity. Self-evaluation is integral to delivering this vision through developing practice and provision, for the purposes of improving outcomes for all learners.



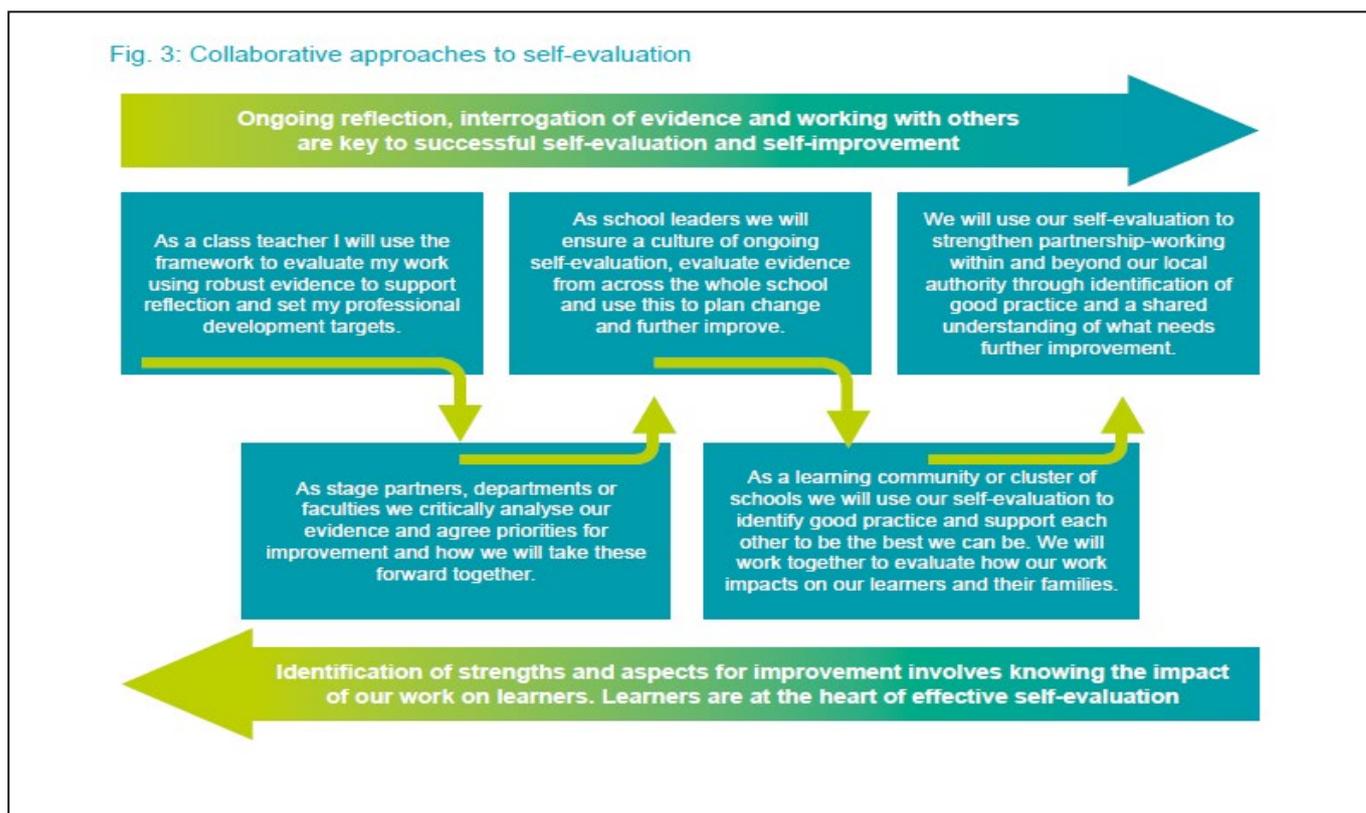
Ref: figure 4 Transition, HGIOS4, P11

2. CLIMATE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE STANDARDS

The climate for observation of learning should be based on collaborative, reflective dialogue which takes a close look at practice and provision.

“Headteachers have overall responsibility for ensuring the school has a clearly communicated strategic plan for self-evaluation which is ongoing and evidence based. However, all staff are responsible for ensuring active self-evaluation in partnership with all stakeholders is at the heart of school improvement. Self-evaluation should not be seen as an “add-on” or involve lots of additional time and bureaucracy. It should focus on the key work of your school – learning and teaching. Evidence gathered should arise from your ongoing work.” **(HGIOS 4, P12)**

Observation of learning is about the development of learning and teaching as a whole and is both an individual and collective responsibility. Professional dialogue (which should explore the practice, be constructive, formative and identify if applicable, the next agreed steps) surrounds the observation of learning process.



Ref: figure 3 Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation HGIOS4, P10

The overall purpose of observation of learning is to build a learning culture which

- evaluates the way in which teaching positively impacts upon learning
- ensures that all learners’ needs are met
- shares good practice throughout a school
- enables staff to develop greater awareness of their own strengths and areas for professional development
- provides a stimulus for professional dialogue amongst staff

Self-evaluation, the observation of learning and the related professional actions are integral to/permeate the GTCS Standards (see examples below) and as such are essential elements of every teacher’s ongoing professional learning/are essential to meeting the standards.

Examples of Related Professional Actions from the Standards

The Standard for Full Registration

3.3.2 Engage in reflective practice to develop and advance career-long professional learning and expertise

- reflect and engage critically in self-evaluation using the relevant professional standard;
- adopt an enquiring, reflective and critical approach to professional practice;
- enhance learning and teaching by taking account of feedback from others including children and young people and actively engage in professional learning to support school improvement;
- work collaboratively to contribute to the professional learning and development of colleagues, including student teachers;

The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning

3.3.2 Engage in reflective practice to develop and advance career-long professional learning and expertise

- engage in rigorous, evidence informed self-evaluation of practice;
- investigate, analyse and evaluate the impact of practice and make changes accordingly;
- show professional courage and judgement to support and challenge system improvement through:
 - understanding and exploring local, national, and global contexts and the complexity in which teachers interact; and
 - contributing to a learning culture that supports and facilitates professional dialogue, debate and constructive feedback;
- lead and contribute to the professional learning of colleagues, including student and probationer teachers

The Standards for Middle Leadership

3.4.4 Utilise and support systems for ongoing monitoring and review of the school and learning community improvement agenda

- adopt a range of approaches to enable and support colleagues to undertake regular and systematic review of progress towards team, school and learning community priorities, including resourcing decisions, to evaluate the impact on every learner;
- undertake regular and systematic review of a range of processes which enable colleagues to contribute to the overall monitoring and review of change through the improvement planning cycle; and
- systematically use a wide range of evidence to review and inform an improvement cycle which impacts on the development of the learning environment.

The Standards for Headship

3.4.4 Develop systems for ongoing monitoring and review of the strategic improvement cycle with the school and learning community

- undertake regular and systematic review of progress towards the school and learning community priorities, including resourcing decisions, to evaluate the impact on every learner;
- establish, sustain and review a range of strategic processes which enable colleagues to contribute to the overall monitoring and review of change through the improvement planning cycle; and
- effectively utilise a wide range of evidence to review and inform an improvement cycle which impacts on the development of the learning environment.

The full text of the Standards can be found using the link below.

<https://www.gtcs.org.uk/knowledge-base/articles/a-guide-to-the-professional-standards>

3. PROCEDURES

Considerations

There is no single set of procedures for observation of learning which will suit all schools. The format will vary. Observations may involve teachers from different schools, stages, subjects or levels of responsibility. Schools should agree their own procedures which best serve their particular needs and circumstances through collegiate discussion. The very process of agreeing the procedures will help to develop the right climate for effective observation of learning and teaching and engender the necessary sense of ownership.

There are three broad approaches to observation of learning; learning walks/classroom visits, formal observation and peer observation.

Maximising the benefits of observation of learning/classroom visits requires that the process be **meaningful** and methodical. Key components of the process have:

- a fully discussed and agreed approach to the process
- clarity about the purposes of the observation/classroom visit
- meaningful feedback delivered timeously to those observed
- a direct relationship with the school's priorities as identified in the improvement plan
- a reasonable frequency of observations/classroom visits, by peers, line managers or others
- an evaluation of the process and programme

It is important for teachers to both undertake learning visits and to have others visit their classes. By doing both they learn from, and with, those around them. All involved need to know the intentions of the lesson or learning activity to be observed, to enable them to discuss the extent to which the experiences led to the intended outcomes for learners.

Procedures to Support Formal Observation of Learning

- A Formal Observation is defined as a pre-planned visit:
 - To observe learning and teaching
 - Where a focus has been agreed beforehand
 - A professional discussion afterwards to share feedback
- All of the above elements must be included in this process.
- The number of formal observations of learning for each teacher will normally be two within the academic year. These can be conducted by the headteacher, line manager, or link QIO. Exceptions to this rule include probationers, HMle inspections, authority inspections or any staff member who is going through competency procedures.
- Where a "learning walk" includes notetaking and/or feedback (specific or generic) this is counted as a formal observation. However, this does not preclude school leaders from informally "dropping in" to lessons as part of taking an active interest in learning and teaching. However, no notes or recorded feedback should be made of these visits. Such drop-ins should not extend beyond 10 minutes duration.
- Observations of learning do not always need to be for a whole lesson. They should, however, have a clear purpose and an outcome. The nature and length of the observation will depend

upon the purpose of the visit. Procedures and supporting paperwork therefore need to be flexible.

- Appropriate supporting paperwork should be agreed as part of the process of creating the right climate and developing a sense of ownership over the whole process (see above).
- Whichever observation format is agreed it should support professional dialogue. There will not be any overall numerical grading or ticking of graded boxes of the observation.
- When designing an observation of learning recording sheet, it is essential to have a manageable focus.
- Any further observations will be voluntary and by mutual agreement.

USEFUL LINKS

The Standards for Registration

<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/standards/standards.aspx>

How Good is Our School? 4

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4_tcm4-870533.pdf