



Teachers' workload and working time policy

NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS

**IDENTIFYING
PRIORITIES AND
RAISING CONCERNS**

A CHECKLIST FOR NUT REPRESENTATIVES

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INTRODUCTION

The ballot of members in the autumn of 2006 showed overwhelming support for the NUT's workload guidelines. The guidelines document 'Teachers' Workload and Working Time Policy' was sent to all NUT representatives before the ballot and a summary document was sent to the home addresses of members.

The guidelines documents gave detailed guidance on the Union's policies and on the relevant regulations, agreements and legislation on teachers' workload and working hours. The guidelines will be the subject of regular updates which will be posted on the Union's website www.teachers.org.uk.

This document, 'IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES and RAISING CONCERNS – A CHECKLIST FOR NUT REPRESENTATIVES', provides a checklist of key issues affecting teachers' workload, working hours and work-life balance to be discussed with NUT members in individual schools.

The section entitled 'Checklist Priorities' will help colleagues focus on the issues of greatest interest. The intention is to ascertain whether there are particular problems to be resolved or improvements to be gained. The aim is to achieve progress through consultation, discussion and agreement within the school. It is for NUT representatives and members to identify and prioritise the issues, if any, which they would wish to progress.

The prioritisation of issues by colleagues will be a guide as to the sequence in which they are addressed. Some issues may be of particular concern to groups of, or even individual, members.

It is important to include part-time teachers in these considerations. They must be treated fairly and equitably in relation to their full-time colleagues.

The NUT's campaign seeks to reduce working hours, remove excessive workload and achieve a better work-life balance for teachers generally. Every school, however, is unique and the circumstances of teachers in one will vary from those in another. Members will need to make judgements on pursuing issues, having given consideration to the overall balance of arrangements in their school. The Checklist Priorities section on page four will be helpful in focusing on the topics of greatest interest to your colleagues.



STEVE SINNOTT
NUT General Secretary

January 2007

CHECKLIST PRIORITIES

This list can be used to prioritise those topics, if any, which are of particular interest or concern to colleagues as individuals or groups.

The Checklist is not exhaustive. Where the concerns of members are not covered by the headings listed, reference may be made to the document, 'Teachers' Workload and Working Time Policy – Guidelines for NUT Representatives'.

Detailed questions can then be found under the appropriate heading in the CHECKLIST DETAILS pages.

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CHECKLIST DETAILS

The paragraph numbers listed at the head of each group correspond to the relevant paragraphs of the full guidance document. In each case, the questions refer specifically and solely to the position in the particular school where the workload, working time and work-life balance are under consideration.

The questions are a guide. They are not exhaustive and for topics not covered, reference can be made to the full guidance document 'Teachers' Workload and Working Time Policy – Guidelines for NUT Representatives'.

Working Time (Paragraphs 5-12)

Are teachers limited to working for a maximum of 195 days over the year? *Please note that the 195 hours limit does not apply to head teacher, deputy head teachers, assistant head teachers, ASTs and fast-track teachers.*

.....

Is the working time of the head teacher, deputy head teachers, assistant head teachers, ASTs and fast-track teachers reasonable?

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Are teachers directed to attend no more than five non-contact days per year?

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Are directed time activities restricted to no more than 1265 hours over the year, with pro-rata restrictions in place for part-time teachers?

.....

Are morning and afternoon break times included in the total of 1265 hours?

.....

Work-life Balance and Professional Duties

(Paragraphs 16-22)

Are teachers working reasonable additional hours outside directed time in order to undertake their professional duties?

.....

Are teachers experiencing a reasonable work-life balance?

.....

What steps do NUT members consider could be taken to address any problems arising from these issues?

.....

.....

Mid-day Break

(Paragraphs 26-29)

Are teachers allocated a reasonable period of time at mid-day?

.....

Is it recognised that for teachers, mid-day supervision of pupils is voluntary and entitles members to free school lunches on the days in question?

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Are teachers who cannot take their lunch other than in the presence of pupils in receipt of free school lunches?

.....

Is it recognised that during the mid-day break teachers may not be required to undertake any duties including attendance at meetings?

.....

PPA

(Paragraphs 30-31)

Are teachers receiving at least 10 per cent of their timetabled teaching time for planning, preparation and assessment?

.....

Is this time allocated in blocks of at least 30 minutes?

.....

Is the allocated PPA time during lesson time?

.....

Do teachers with management and leadership responsibilities receive adequate non-contact time for them to undertake their additional duties?

.....

Planning

(Paragraphs 41-46)

In accordance with NUT advice, does the school operate sensible arrangements for lesson planning?

.....

Are there any problems with unnecessary or excessive requests for planning documents?

.....

What steps do NUT members consider could be taken to address any problems arising from these issues?

.....

.....

Meetings and Parents' Evenings

(Paragraphs 51-60)

Are meetings well run and properly planned and organised in advance?

.....

Does the school limit the total duration of meetings, other than parents' evening, to no more than 60 minutes per week?

.....

Are meetings organised in accordance with the NUT's policy of an overall average of one meeting per week over a term and a maximum of two evening meetings in any one week, including parents' evenings?

.....

Are there sensible arrangements in line with Union policy in respect of part-time teachers' attendance at the above meetings?

.....

Reports on Pupils

(Paragraphs 78-79)

Are reports on pupils limited to no more than one report on each pupil per academic year?

.....

Have teachers been advised to limit the length of whole reports to a maximum of 400 words or individual subject reports to 40 words?

.....

Performance Management Arrangements in England (from September 2007)

(Paragraphs 81-88)

These arrangements are not yet in place. A further checklist on performance management and classroom observation will be provided when appropriate. The NUT's policies are set out below.

The performance management policy should be limited to a maximum of three the number of reviewees for whom a reviewer is responsible,

The performance management policy should stipulate for each reviewee that no more than three objectives should be set.

The performance management policy should provide that performance management planning and review meetings will take place solely within the time-tabled school day.

The performance management policy should stipulate that prior to any planning and review meeting there should be at least 5 days notice.

The performance management arrangements for part-time teachers should conform to the intentions of the NUT's guidance for full-time teachers.

Performance Management Arrangements and Classroom Observation in Wales

(Paragraphs 89-90)

Unlike in England, the Welsh Assembly Government has not published new performance management regulations. It will review the current regulations when it is time to do so as part of its normal cycle of work. Thus, the School Teacher Appraisal (Wales) Regulations 2002 remain in force, as does the NUT's current guidance in Wales, on classroom observation.

Do the arrangements for performance management and classroom observation in the school conform to the NUT guidance as set out in paragraphs 89-90 of the guidance document?

.....

Cover

(Paragraphs 91-93)

Is the maximum time during which a teacher may be required to cover limited to 38 hours per teacher per year as required in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD)?

.....

Is the cover burden spread evenly over the year?

.....

Are cover duties distributed equitably across all teaching staff?

.....

Invigilation of Examinations

(Paragraphs 95-96)

Have teachers been released from the invigilation of external examinations such as national curriculum tests, GCSE, AS/A2 examinations, mock examinations or other tests requiring alterations to the school timetable?

Administrative Tasks

(Paragraphs 97-100)

Are the provisions of the STPCD being applied such that teachers are not routinely expected to undertake clerical or administrative tasks which do not require the professional skills and judgement of a qualified teacher?

Classroom Observation in England

(Paragraphs 101-121)

Arrangements for Classroom Observation for the purposes of performance management are not yet in place. The NUT's policies are set out below. A further checklist will be published on these issues when appropriate.

The school's classroom observation protocol should limit classroom observations for the purposes of performance management and evaluation of standards of teaching and learning to no more than three times per year.

Class observation for the purposes of performance management and evaluating standards of teaching and learning should be limited to no more than three hours in total per year.

Teachers should be given at least 5 working days' notice of observations.

The school's classroom observation protocol should ensure that there is no bunching of classroom observations.

The arrangements for part-time teachers should be appropriate to their pattern of work.

Schools Causing Concern in England **(Paragraphs 132-135)**

If the school has been designated as causing concern by OFSTED and members believe that they are being subjected to excessive demands, has advice been sought from the NUT regional office?

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Class Sizes **(Paragraphs 184-185)**

Do the class sizes in the school meet the Union's policy on class sizes as set out in detail on pages 64-65 of the full guidance document?

.....

TAKING ADVICE

Following consultations with colleagues and where it is decided to pursue issues it might be helpful to contact the NUT locally before any meeting with the head teacher.

The name and address of the local NUT contact may be found on the obverse of each membership card.

The NUT locally will assist with strategies and tactics to deploy when approaching the head teacher. The NUT division is available to help and if necessary to be involved in discussions with the head teacher, from the outset.

RAISING THE ISSUES

The head teacher should be alerted to the concerns of members and a meeting sought to discuss how the school can address the concerns. This can be done jointly with colleagues in other unions or separately as appropriate.

Should the response not resolve the concerns, or assistance be needed in raising matters with the head teacher, then advice and assistance should be sought from the division.

The division has access as necessary to the support of the regional office in England or of NUT Cymru in Wales. They will be involved directly where negotiations fail and members wish to be balloted on industrial action.

The NUT's approach is to resolve problems through consultation and agreement within the school. Where negotiation is necessary the division or the regional office or NUT Cymru are available to assist or take responsibility for further approaches.

WHEN PROBLEMS ARE UNRESOLVED

Where problems remain unresolved, consideration should be given to further steps. Only when all efforts to reach agreement have been made and not succeeded does the NUT turn to industrial action.

In such a case, the steps to be taken are set out below.

- The NUT members in the school should be advised of the lack of progress.
- The NUT division should be made aware of the situation and be fully involved in seeking a settlement.
- Should there then be no progress the NUT school representative, in consultation with the division, should gauge the strength of support for a ballot on industrial action.
- Should the support for industrial action be sufficiently strong, the division secretary will alert the regional office or NUT Cymru in Wales, and will request that the Union organise an indicative ballot of members.

The decision to undertake an indicative ballot rests with the Union nationally. This ensures that the procedures are properly conducted.

An indicative ballot is for internal Union information only and the outcome will not be released generally. The indicative ballot procedure should not preclude discussions with the head teacher and representatives of the governing body. Attempts to seek a resolution should continue.

Should a full ballot then be held and the outcome be successful, the nature and detail of the action will be determined. Action will be sustained.

NOTES

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