NASUWT THE TEACHERS' UNION

F IS FOR... FUNDING.

CUTS UNCOVERED

Podcast Companion Toolkit

FIX OUR FUTURE. FUND EDUCATION

F IS FOR...

FUNDING.

Cuts Uncovered

EPISODE 1 PODCAST TOOLKIT

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PODCAST EP1: DISCUSSION GUIDE

Use this discussion guide to stimulate conversation around issues raised in the podcast that are also occurring in your school and local area. You could do this in a formal setting, during a podcast screening, or informally if a colleague or friend mentions listening to the podcast.

Some questions are specifically for teachers. Some questions can be adapted to involve other school staff and community groups.

1. F is For... is set in a 'dream staff room', where the chairs are comfy, refreshments are plentiful, and teachers have time to connect and rest. What would be in your dream staff room, and why?

2. Which resources or facilities for pupils and teachers has your school or college lost, due to lack of funding? What is the impact of these losses?

3. For supply teachers: How has your pattern of work changed over the last couple of years? Are you receiving more work, less work, or the same amount of work? How has your rate of pay changed?

4. Do you regularly get a reasonable lunch break where you can sit down, eat, and rest? If not, why not?

5. How often does your PPA end up consisting entirely of planning, preparation and assessment? Have other tasks crept in?

6. Thinking about your previous answers, how does lack of education funding impact your personal life and work-life balance?

7. What is the cost of diminished school funding for the pupils in your class (or for the leaders in your school)? How will their futures change, if funding continues to trend down?

8. For teachers on the main and upper pay scales: Have you ever heard of a directed time calendar for teachers? If so, do you have one?

9. You are now the Education Secretary, with control of the education budget! What would you change first, and why?

10. Can any of the issues surfaced in your discussion be resolved through the Union? (If in doubt, speak to your workplace rep or local union office.)

FOUR THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EDUCATION FUNDING IN ENGLAND

1. **Education funding as a percentage of GDP – our country's economy – is near the lowest it has been since the 1960s**. It currently sits at 4.1% of GDP, almost 2% lower than the necessary 6%. We know a higher spend is possible because in 2009/10 education funding sat at 5.6% of GDP. Politicians may say that there is no more money available for education; we say that current choices made about education funding are clearly harming pupils, teachers and school staff.

2. **According to the Department for Education's own modelling, a quarter of schools are at 'serious financial risk'**. This is just the tip of the iceberg. This September, 70% of teachers told NASUWT they feel that their schools do not receive the funding they need to deliver quality education and learning, and 69% said they will not have the required resources to meet the needs of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) pupils. Three-quarters are spending their own money on classroom resources and items for pupils, with 20% spending more than £50 per month. One in ten spend over £100 per month.

3. **Falling pupil numbers may affect funding, but school staff and resources are shrinking at a disproportionate rate**. The National Audit Office forecasts a drop of 56,300 (1.3%) primary pupils in the system in 2027. This could mean that schools receive £288 million less in per-pupil funding. But 40% of teachers tell NASUWT that their school has implemented split classes (classes containing more than one age group), 67% have experienced cuts to teaching assistant support, and 69% say staff who leave are not being replaced. Instead of smaller class sizes benefitting pupils and teachers, classes seem to be getting bigger, and in-classroom support is growing scarce.

4. **The Government has pledged many millions of pounds to fund a reform of the SEND system, but this amounts to very little on the ground**. This funding is designed to support mainstream schools and colleges in accommodating a majority of SEND pupils. However, NASUWT calculates that the current investment amounts to just £23,000 per school or college. This would not even fund one extra member of staff on minimum wage for a year, let alone extra SEND specialists.

FIX AND FUND: DIRECTED TIME

In F is For...Funding Cuts Uncovered, learning more about directed time – and obtaining a directed time calendar – are highlighted as an important way for teachers to gain more control over their workloads and working lives.

In this section, you can:

- play a game to test your understanding of directed time;
- look at an example of a real directed time calendar (rarely seen in the wild, alas);
- expand your knowledge of directed time; and
- find out what to do next if you don't have a directed time calendar, or have issues with your calendar.

Print option for the game: print pages 6-7. Cut out the task options on page 7 and arrange them onto the chart.

No-print option for the game: sketch your own version of the chart and write tasks onto the chart.



WHICH TASKS COUNT AS PART OF DIRECTED TIME?

GAME: organise these tasks onto the chart on the next page – if you can!



TEACHING TIME	PARENTS' EVENINGS	WORK DURING LUNCH BREAKS
AFTER-SCHOOL MEETINGS	RESTOCKING THE STATIONERY CUPBOARD	TRAPPED TIME
WEEKEND AND HOLIDAY WORK: STATED IN YOUR CONTRACT	AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS	WEEKEND AND HOLIDAY WORK: NOT STATED IN YOUR CONTRACT
PPA	EXAM INVIGILATION	'BUFFER TIME' AT THE START OR END OF THE SCHOOL DAY
REGISTRATION	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MEETINGS	INSET DAYS
TAKING PART IN A COVER ROTA	ASSEMBLIES	WORKING ON YOUR NON-WORKING DAYS (FOR PART-TIME TEACHERS)
MOVEMENT TIME	WORK RELATED TO TLRS OR ADDITIONAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES	SCHOOL BREAKS IN THE MORNING OR AFTERNOON
RESIDENTIAL TRIPS	OPEN EVENINGS	COVER IN UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

TASKS THAT CAN BE PART OF DIRECTED TIME	TASKS THAT CANNOT BE PART OF DIRECTED TIME

DON'T FORGET TO SIGN THE PETITION!

As part of the Fix Our Future, Fund Education campaign, we're asking the Government to raise education funding to 6% of GDP. You can support this goal by signing the petition.

Please share this petition with colleagues, friends and family. **TOGETHER, WE CAN FIX OUR FUTURE**.

SIGN THE PETITION
FIXOURFUTURE.CO.UK

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A REAL DIRECTED TIME CALENDAR

Not all of the tasks on this calendar will appear on your calendar – it should be personalised to you and your workplace.

What do you notice about the total hours across the year?

Directed time budget 2025-2026						
Weeks in a school year:	38					
	Minutes per session	**Sessions per week**	**Sessions per year**	**Hours per year**		**Trapped time**
Before school (8:35-8:40 Monday – Thursday)	5	4	152	12.67		
Morning briefing (8:25 start Friday)	15	1	38	9.50		
Registration/assembly	15	5	190	47.50		
Lesson time	**60**	**25**	**950**	**946.00**		
Movement time	5	10	380	31.67		
Break time	25	5	190	79.17		
Additional duty	25	1	38	15.83		
Training Days x4 (+1 disaggregated)	360		4	24.00		
CPD (Department x21 + Year Team x2)	60		23	23.00		
Behaviour CPD x5	80		5	6.67		Add 20 min 15:10 – 15:30
Whole School CPD x5	110		5	9.17		Add 20 min 15:10 – 15:30
Parents' Evening x9	Y7:290, KS3 & 4: 230, KS5: 230		9	35.50		Add 50 min 15:10 – 16:00
Year 6 Open Evening	260		1	4.33		Add 80 min 15:10 – 16:30
6th Form Open Evening	260		1	4.33		Add 80 min 15:10 – 16:30
Total lesson time duties				**946.00**		
Total other duties				**303.33**	23.98%	of the full 12,65 hours
Total Hours				**1249.33**		

UNDERSTANDING DIRECTED TIME

Now that you've completed the game, it is time to check your understanding of directed time. Use this section to check your answers and develop your knowledge of directed time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is directed time?

Directed time is the number of hours a teacher can be directed to work by their headteacher each year. This should be clearly laid out in an itemised calendar for the year.

A full-time teacher in England can be directed to work 1,265 hours across the school year, spread over 195 days (190 contact days and five INSET days). **1,265 is the limit – not a target**. A directed time calendar should leave a few contingency hours 'in the bank' for use as appropriate across the year (just like in our example).

Once your calendar is set for the year, it should not be changed without consultation.

I'm expected to work outside my contracted hours in order to get the job done. What's the point of a directed time calendar?

Some tasks that teachers are expected to carry out must be included in directed time. When these tasks are included correctly in your calendar, it can free up time and space in other areas, and even highlight workload issues that leaders must then address.

While you may need to work outside your contracted hours in order to complete tasks such as preparation or assessment, the hours in which this work takes place cannot be specified by your school. It is up to you as the teacher to determine when you do this work. As a consequence, this work does not count towards directed time.



By including necessary tasks in your contracted hours – and empowering you to eliminate unnecessary tasks or meetings – your directed time calendar should allow you to better organise your work and workload across the school year.

Does directed time apply if I work at an academy school?

Most often, yes – and there are easy ways to check if you're not sure. Directed time applies in all schools and colleges that follow the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD). All local authority schools and the vast majority of academy schools follow the STPCD. If you're not sure whether your school follows the STPCD, check your contract or ask your line manager.

If your local authority school becomes an academy, you should retain protections under the STPCD as part of the TUPE process. This includes directed time.

Does directed time apply if I work at a college?

Directed time applies if your workplace follows the STPCD. Check your contract to find out whether your workplace follows the STPCD.

Does directed time apply if I am part time?

Directed time applies in all schools that follow the STPCD, which means that it applies to full- and part-time teachers in those schools. As a part-time teacher, you should receive a personalised directed time calendar tailored to your yearly contracted hours as a percentage of 1,265.

For example, if you work 60% of the week, your directed time would equal 759 hours across the school year. You should expect your directed time calendar to reflect 759 hours of directed time. All of your duties should be proportionate.

You can only be directed to work on your contracted days. For example, if you are contracted to work on Mondays and Tuesdays, you cannot be directed to work on a Thursday.

Does directed time apply if I am on the leadership pay range?

Directed time does not apply to teachers on the leadership pay range. Headteachers are entitled to dedicated headship time, which should constitute a reasonable amount of time in order to discharge responsibilities effectively.

All school leaders should have an adequate work-life balance. If you are on the leadership pay range and experiencing problems with your workload and working hours, your union rep or local secretary should be able to help.

While you cannot be directed by your school to perform some tasks, they may still need to be on your directed time calendar.

This is because some tasks – such as after school clubs and residential school trips – require that you volunteer to work on them. Your school cannot direct you to do them, but if you volunteer, time spent on them should count as part of your directed time.

I don't have a directed time calendar. How can I get one?

If you don't have a directed time calendar, you can ask your headteacher for one at any time of the school year. The calendar is part of your contract so you should be able to see it without any formal process or meeting. Talk to your union rep, local secretary or regional centre if you need support with this process.

Each year, headteachers should renegotiate directed time calendars during the summer term so that they are ready for the autumn term in good time. It is a good idea to initiate discussion about next year's directed time calendar as soon as you can after the Easter break.

GAME ANSWERS

Which tasks count as part of directed time?

Lessons (for ECTs, this should be reduced as per your induction period).

PPA (your minimum 10% allotted time for planning, preparation and assessment – not for other tasks like meetings).

Buffer time – this is the defined period before and after school sessions when teachers may be allocated on-site supervisory duties, lasting no more than ten minutes per session.

Morning and afternoon break supervisory duties.

Assemblies.

INSET days – five per year, including those disaggregated.

Performance management meetings.

Trapped time – this occurs when meetings or other events are scheduled after school. You will often be 'trapped' on the campus waiting for the meeting to start because there isn't enough time to do anything else.

Registration.

Open evenings.

Parents' evenings.

Time to complete TLR responsibilities (this should be separate or additional to your 10% PPA).

After-school meetings (one per week is reasonable).

Cover in unforeseen circumstances – if you need to provide cover for another teacher in unforeseen circumstances, this should count as part of your directed time (and is a good example of contingency hours being used).

Working on evenings or weekends if this time is specified in your contract – this must be specifically addressed, and cannot be part of 'reasonable' expectations.

Movement time – time when you're travelling to and from different working locations, whether on or offsite.

Contingency time – usually at least 50 hours across the school year.

All other times you are directed to work by your school.

Which tasks do not count as directed time?

Lunch times – you cannot be directed to work during your lunch break.

Taking part in a cover rota – you cannot be directed to take part in a cover rota. If you provide cover occasionally, in unforeseen circumstances, then this would count as part of directed time.

Working on evenings or weekends if this is not specified in your contract.

If you're part time: coming into school on days you are not contracted to work. If you agree to do this – for example, for a meeting – you should get that time back, or be paid for it.

After-school clubs – you cannot be directed to work on an after-school club or extracurricular activity. Only if you volunteer can they count as part of your directed time.

Residential trips – you cannot be directed to work on an evening or weekend trip. Only if you volunteer can they count as part of your directed time.

Exam invigilation.

Reorganising the stationery cupboard.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Check your directed time calendar against this list. Is there anything missing? Do your yearly hours add up to 1,265 or your part-time equivalent?

Talk to your colleagues: are they having similar issues? Would they like to work on this together so that you can all be empowered to better plan your workloads?

Speak to your workplace rep, local secretary or regional centre for advice on next steps. They can also help you to obtain your calendar if you do not have one.

RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

NASUWT's full guide to Directed Time in England – Use this to deepen your understanding of directed time policy, and to find answers to remaining questions.

NASUWT's Protecting Directed Time Toolkit – Use this to address problems arising from your workplace's current directed time arrangements.

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