

Directed time and the Government White Paper – *Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child*

The NASUWT maintains that working hours are essential in order to help schools and teachers plan so that the school day is effectively managed and teachers are able to achieve a satisfactory balance between work and home.

The Union is aware that there are a number of members who will be concerned about issues to do with working hours, given the recent publication of the Government's White Paper, *Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child*, and the reference to a national expectation for schools on the length of the school day.

The Union has produced this advice and guidance to ensure that members are aware of their rights and entitlements and supported during this time.

In England, local authority maintained schools operating according to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) must open for 195 days, of which a classroom teacher can only be directed by the headteacher to work for up to a maximum of 1,265 hours over 195 days of the year. This is calculated on a pro rata basis for part-time teachers.

Of these, a maximum of 190 days involve teaching children and young people. The remaining five days are non-teaching days when teachers may be asked to undertake other duties related to their role as a teacher. These are often known as in-service training (INSET) days. These limits do not apply if you are paid on the leadership range.

You should be provided with a directed time budget at the beginning of each academic year based around the school day, which identifies the number of hours you are being directed to undertake the professional duties of a teacher, including your timetabled teaching time, as well as any meetings and duties such as parental consultations, planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time, leadership and management time (as appropriate) and meetings.

Whilst schools have the autonomy to decide the structure and duration of their school day, including the start and finish time, as well as school sessions and breaks, schools should continue to employ teachers in accordance with the provisions of the STPCD, including the provisions relating to teachers' days of work, working time and duties.

Furthermore, directed time must be allocated reasonably throughout the days you are contracted to work. You do not have to be directed to work right up to the limit of 1,265 hours.

Once you have been provided with your directed time budget/calendar, you should not be directed to undertake other duties by your employer.

If you work in a local authority maintained school in England, the provisions around directed time are statutory and your school cannot choose to ignore them.

Some academies may operate terms and conditions which do not adhere to the STPCD. They are therefore able to set a different directed time calendar, specifying working time which may be in excess of the 1,265 hours and 195 days a year identified in the STPCD.

However, your working time should be clearly defined in your contract of employment and the NASUWT believes that this must be subject to consultation with the school workforce and their

recognised trade unions. This should further be provided on an annual basis as part of a directed time budget.

You can find further details of the allocation of directed time, including the NASUWT calculator, on our [Directed Time page](#).

The Union has also produced a specific directed time calendar policy checklist to assist and support you. This can be found at: www.nasuw.org.uk/DirectedTimeEngland.

The White Paper – Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child

Whilst the recent White Paper references a national expectation for schools on the length of the school day, it should be noted that much of the detail about how this expectation should be met in practice has yet to be published.

Indeed, the White Paper states that it '*will publish guidance on best practice in the summer to support both the minimum expectation for mainstream schools and the wider ambition for all schools to consider increasing time in school where appropriate*'.

Whilst the White Paper makes it clear that schools have until 2023 to do this, it should be noted that the provision contained in the White Paper is **non-statutory**.

As such, the NASUWT believes that no school should be moving to change the length of its school week until guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) has been published which will detail what schools should look to do and how they should do it. There is a serious risk that any changes that schools might attempt to implement at this stage will be inconsistent with this guidance and will need to be revised or discarded subsequently as a result.

The Union will be engaging directly with the DfE on this guidance and will be insisting that schools are expected to take this forward in a way that does not undermine the terms and conditions of employment of teachers and school leaders.

Furthermore, the Union believes that any such guidance should make it clear to schools that any changes must be done in full consultation with the school workforce and their recognised trade unions, as well as parents and the local community, recognising the potential impacts on those affected.

This should include the school being asked to undertake an equality impact assessment to show that any proposals do not have a disproportionate impact on certain groups with protected characteristics. In doing so, any potential issues can be identified, and agreed solutions put in place.

If your school is seeking to change the school day without adhering to the advice and guidance contained within this briefing, or you are unsure whether a limit applies to your working time, then contact your School Representative or Local Association, as they will be best placed to address the issue with your school in the first instance.

When contacting your Local Association, it would be helpful to provide the following information:

- your full name; and
- the details of the school you are employed at, including information about the local authority or academy trust.



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