



STATE-FUNDED SCHOOLS (ENGLAND)

For too long, a teacher's contract has been stretched far beyond the rate of pay it specifies, creating ever-increasing workload and longer working hours. In many other professions, overtime pay would be awarded for additional hours worked. Why should this not apply in teaching?

Teachers, like other workers, are entitled to a proper work/life balance and the benefit that brings. Our 'Time for a Limit' campaign encourages members to take back some control of their working time by working to contract, and it suggests ways to achieve this.

There are a number of things you can do to take back control of your workload and working hours, in consideration of the following situations:

1. I am often expected to undertake duties outside school session times

For the majority of teachers, your directed time calendar will set out all of the duties that your employer can direct you to undertake within the contracted 1,265 hours (pro rata for teachers working part time) across the school year, including any duties outside school session times, attendance at meetings or training. If you are being asked to do more, then you are not being paid for this time and you have the right to say no.

If it is unclear whether the time to perform the duty in question is within your contractual obligations, then members should refer to the directed time calendar (if applicable) and seek confirmation from their employer.

2. I am being directed to undertake extracurricular activities and feel pressured into doing so

There is a clear difference between being compelled to undertake extracurricular activities and volunteering freely without pressure to do so. No teacher should be directed to undertake extracurricular activities, unless these have been specified and allocated within your contracted hours.

If it is unclear whether the time to perform the duty in question is within the 1,265 hours, you should refer to the directed time calendar or seek clarification from your employer.

Where members volunteer freely to undertake extracurricular activities and have not been placed under pressure to do so, those activities may continue at the teacher's discretion.

3. I am expected to undertake midday supervision of pupils

Unless stipulated and remunerated under a separate non-teaching contract, you should not be supervising pupils at midday.

4. I am expected to undertake work-related tasks or activities at lunchtime and don't get a proper lunch break

It is important that you get a proper lunch break to ensure your health, safety and welfare at work. You should not be directed to undertake any activities during your lunch break.

5. I am expected to undertake work-related tasks or activities on weekends or Bank Holidays

One of the main impacts on a satisfactory work/life balance is the expectation that teachers are never 'off duty'. Unless your contract expressly references weekend or holiday working, you should not be directed or expected to undertake work-related tasks or activities, including planning, marking and sending/responding to work-related emails on weekends or Bank Holidays.

6. My Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time is often used up with other duties

Timetabled PPA time is for teachers to carry out planning, preparation, marking and assessment activities. Other duties, including supervision of pupils and attendance at meetings, should not form part of your PPA time and you should not be directed to participate in them.

7. I am regularly asked to cover for absent colleagues

Cover for absence is not an effective use of a teacher's time. With the exception of teachers who are employed wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing cover, teachers should not be directed to cover for absent colleagues in circumstances that are foreseeable.

Foreseeable circumstances for a school will include events that may be anticipated on the basis of historic experience, events that are foreseeable in the normal experience (e.g. sickness absence, maternity leave), and events that may be expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision (e.g. educational visits).

8. A lot of my time is spent on routine administrative and clerical tasks

You should not be expected to use your time on routine administrative, clerical and organisational tasks which do not call for the exercise of a teacher's professional skills and judgement, including those associated with the arrangements for preparing pupils for external examinations, such as invigilation. An illustrative list of tasks that members should not undertake is available separately.

9. My school is still expecting me to participate in mock inspections

Mock inspections, or 'mocksteds', are not required for the purpose of statutory school inspection. Ofsted has been clear that it does not require schools to prepare for inspection. This means that schools should not produce data purely for inspection purposes. It also means that schools should not conduct mock inspections. It is vital that schools comply with this advice, as the focus should be on improving the quality of education.

10. My school's planning, marking and data management policies have not been workload impact assessed

It is essential that planning, marking and data management policies, practices and initiatives in schools make an effective contribution to reducing excessive workload burdens and ensuring that a teacher's time is directed towards activities that support pupils' progress most effectively.

Schools should ensure that marking requirements on teachers are evaluated for their workload impact and recognise that a teacher's time is a finite resource that should not be wasted on unproductive marking to the detriment of their entitlement to a meaningful work/life balance.

Changes to policies, practices and initiatives should be subject to consultation with the NASUWT and other workforce unions.

If you are concerned about workload in your school/college, contact your Local Association Secretary, National Executive Member or Regional Centre for support and advice.

