

Update on the Pay and Workload Agreement

The Education Authority and other employers have now issued guidance on time budgets as per the Pay and Workload Agreement. The guidance can be found at: www.nasuwat.org.uk/payandworkloadagreementni.

The NASUWT recognises that the COVID-19 situation is difficult to manage, but still expects that time budgets will be produced which comply with the contractual rights of each teacher.

Teachers and NASUWT Representatives should use the checklist on page 7 of the guidance to check that their time budget is contractually compliant.

17 August Opening

On 4 June, the Department of Education (DE) reported to unions that the Minister of Education had been floating the idea of schools returning from 17 August for specific cohorts of pupils, but DE officials indicated that if schools were to open early then it would be voluntary, both for schools and teaching staff. The NASUWT immediately lodged concerns in relation to the contractual position of teachers.

The Minister, in a webinar to a group of principals on 9 June, stated that schools would reopen for Years 7, 12 and 14 from 17 August on a compulsory basis. Unfortunately, some schools have begun to change return dates for teachers based on these comments. **To date, the Minister has not issued a formal instruction through an official channel. Therefore, schools should not change their agreed return date for the next academic year.**

The NASUWT is robustly challenging the Minister on his comments directly in meetings with DE, in the media and through working with our sister unions in the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. **Over the weekend the Minister has sought a meeting directly with the NASUWT and other unions to discuss our concerns.**

It is important to note that if schools were to return early, then the contractual position remains that teachers can only be directed on 195 days in any academic year.

The NASUWT has requested that the Teachers' Negotiating Committee meet as a matter of urgency to address these matters, to ensure that teachers' contractual rights are not infringed upon by schools. The NASUWT is seeking formal protection for teachers who:

- have booked holidays after 17 August;
- will be required to quarantine after 17 August;
- will have childcare issues after 17 August;
- have been advised to stay at home as they are in a vulnerable category.

For further support and guidance, please read our extensive FAQs which can be accessed at: www.nasuwat.org.uk/coronavirusfaqs.



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