The Educational Institute of Scotland

Workload

Introduction

1.1 The 2010 Annual General Meeting approved the following resolution:

"This AGM instructs Council to consider ways in which:

(i) concerns over excessive workload can be publicised and:

(ii) best practice in terms of managing workload can be disseminated."

1.2 The 2001 Agreement, A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century, established a 35 working week for teachers. The aspiration was that the working time of teachers could become expressed as class contact time and the time remaining. The transitional arrangements were designed to be expressed as class contact time, personal time (set at ⅓ of class contact time) and the time remaining to be used for collegiate activities in accordance with a schools Working Time Agreement.

1.3 In 2007 the SNCT agreed that the transitional arrangements would become permanent and that the Working Hours: Working Week of Teachers would continue to be expressed in relation to maximum class contact (22.5 hours) minimum personal allowance (7.5 hours) and the time remaining to be agreed in accordance with the **Code of Practice on Working Time Arrangements.**

1.4 The SNCT has considered the issue of workload. External Research was commissioned by the University of Glasgow (Menter et al). The Research concluded that teachers were working beyond contractual hours by an average of 10 hours weekly and more for promoted staff.

1.5 The SNCT has, through the Review of LNCTs Working Group, issued guidance to LNCT on the management of workload through local monitoring to ensure effective working time agreements. This culminated in the **Report on Teacher Workload** (JS/09/11).

Best Practice in Managing Workload

2.1 LNCTs are well placed through routine monitoring of Working Time Agreements to disseminate best practice in managing workload. One LNCT has issued guidance to establishments based on an LNCT report.

2.2 The guidance issued by SNCT to LNCTs to assist this process is appended (Appendix A). **The Report on Teacher Workload** (JS/09/11) has led to SNCT asking all LNCTs to report on steps taken to manage workload by issuing a questionnaire which requires LNCTs to report on steps taken to make Working Time Agreements more

effective and to develop collegiality. This work has still to be finalised due to other workload pressures within the SNCT.

2.3 The development of good practice can also be assisted by reissuing EIS advice on School Improvement Plans (Appendix B).

Publicising Excessive Workload

3.1 Poor management of workload can arise from a number of factors. Firstly, where schools do not use the process of reaching Working Time Agreements effectively workload can escalate. Secondly, where School Improvement Plans are not linked to resources including teacher time, workload issues can be disregarded. Thirdly, there can be circumstances in which individual teachers may, for many reasons, develop excessive workload patterns.

3.2 The process of reaching agreement at school level on a Working Time Agreement should be rigorous. Discussions should be informed by monitoring workload and by recognising unreasonable workload pressure over the session. Working time Agreements will not assist in the management of workload unless the WTA is informed by the actuality of teachers' work.

3.3 Current Institute advice on the School Improvement Plan stresses the need for all staff to be involved when formulating the plan and during the implementation of the plan. Further it is recommended that the plan should include thorough costing of resource requirements (time, materials, staff development and finance).

3.4 In relation to circumstances where individuals require assistance to manage workload, Councils should have clear support mechanisms as part of stress management procedures. It should be a requirement of staff development for Headteachers and other managers to support teachers in relation to reducing excessive workload.

3.5 Where there is evidence of an institutional, as opposed to individual, excessive workload the issue, other actions, for example use of internal grievance procedures should be considered. The presumption should be that it is in the interests of Councils, through LNCTs, to manage institutional problems. Publicity should be considered by the national body as a final resort and only where there has been a failure of LNCTs and grievance procedures to resolve issues.

Conclusion

4.1 This paper should be issued to LA Secretaries and branch representatives.

The issue of workload will be part of the evidence submitted by the EIS to the McCormac Review of Teacher Employment.

JS/09/11

2 September 2009

Dear Colleague

TEACHER WORKLOAD

The SNCT has approved the Teacher Workload Report prepared by the Review of LNCTs Working Group. The Report is appended and has been drawn from responses received from LNCTs on initiatives that they are undertaking in relation to managing teacher workload. The Report provides advice and shares best practice regarding the management of workload.

The SNCT recognises that there are still issues to be addressed by LNCTs regarding teacher workload and the SNCT will continue to monitor activities in this regard, offering both advice and support in order to assist with any workload issues that may arise.

As the Report states, each LNCT should develop a workload action plan. LNCTs should also develop mechanisms to keep the plan under review and to report the plan and review mechanism to the SNCT.

This Report should be placed on the agenda of your LNCT for discussion and action.

Yours sincerely

Tom Young (Employers' Side)
Drew Morrice (Teachers' Panel)
Stephanie Walsh (Scottish Government)

Joint Secretaries

To: LNCT Joint Secretaries
Cc: Chief Executives
        Directors of Education
        Directors of Personnel
        Directors of Finance

REPORT ON TEACHER WORKLOAD

Background

1.1   The 2001 Agreement introduced a 35 hour working week for teachers in Scotland.

1.2   The Agreement established 3 categories of teachers' time: class contact time, which was to reduce to a maximum of 22.5 hours across all sectors, personal time which was one third of class contact time and the use of time remaining which was subject to agreement at establishment level.

1.3   The Agreement also stated that, from August 2006, at the earliest, teachers' contractual obligations would be expressed solely in relation to class contact time and the use of the time remaining. This stage, Stage 4 of the implementation of the Agreement on working hours required the SNCT to sample workload.

1.4   In 2005 the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) commissioned research on workload. The Commission was undertaken by the University of Glasgow, Faculty of Education. The report was issued in August 2006. The can be found on the SNCT website (www.snct.org.uk/workingpapers.php).

1.5   At the SNCT meeting in September 2006 the SNCT agreed to evaluate working arrangements at local level to assess the wider cultural climate in schools. When this evaluation was considered the SNCT agreed that the criteria in Annex D of the Agreement did not exist in sufficient extent to move to Stage 4 of the Agreement on working hours.

1.6   The SNCT developed its work through the SNCT Working Group, Review of LNCTs. The Review of LNCT Working Group issued advice on Working Time Agreements in January 2008 and in that correspondence LNCT Joint Secretaries were advised that the SNCT would be seeking evidence of how LNCTs were

assessing control of teacher workload. The Working Group considered responses from all LNCTs and identified a number of key issues (Appendix 1). This report reflects on the key issues which were identified.

1.7   A letter was issued by the Joint Secretaries in June 2008 which required a response from each LNCT on any initiatives or advice at Council or establishment level to address workload and any evaluation of the effectiveness of workload initiatives/advice.

1.8   The Review of LNCTs Working Group has considered responses received from all LNCTs. These responses have formed the basis of this report.

Introduction

2.1   The SNCT endorses a view that there is no single approach to addressing teacher workload. This report is designed to stimulate discussion within LNCTs and within establishments.

2.2   However, there are a number of common features emerging in responses which underpin initiatives on trying to manage teacher workload. These are: (i) a commitment to collegiality at council level and establishment level; (ii) clear guidance on working time agreements; (iii) clear monitoring procedures; (iv) evaluation of current arrangements leading to further advice; (v) particular initiatives focussed on controlling workload.

Collegiality

3.1   The development of collegiality is critical to the success of the 2001 Agreement and the SNCT set out a Code of Practice. (Appendix 1.4, SNCT Handbook). The establishment which strives towards collegiality is best placed to manage workload.

3.2 The SNCT commends the practice of LNCTs holding events or conferences to develop collegiality. Such events inform not only participants, but can inform all teachers and headteachers by sharing the outcome of such conferences and events. Some Councils have published the outcomes of such events and distributed these to establishments. The document thereby becomes a focus for in school discussions and for sharing good practice.

3.3 A small number of LNCTs have been aware that collegiate working can be emphasised by the "badging" of advice on workload similar to the "badging" of LNCT agreements. This sets a clear message on the role of the LNCT within the Council.

3.4 While there is a need to plan and deliver conferences and events on a collegiate basis, the SNCT recognises that the commitment of key persons sends an important message to all parties. In particular, the Director of Education, or equivalent, can play a crucial part in developing collegiality by attending and contributing to events. If the ethos of collegiality is embedded in the work of the Council, and is seen to be led by example, there is more likely to be engagement at establishment level.

3.5 There is little evidence of direct participation of elected members in local events. At national level the SNCT has found that the role of elected members has contributed much to events, not least in the positive message it can create. The SNCT recognises the demands and pressures on senior elected members. Nevertheless, we would encourage consideration of the role of senior members in conferences and events.

3.6 The SNCT noted good practice in involving LNCT representatives in developing an authority wide improvement plan. This type of initiative is a very good example of developing openness and trust between the parties and breaks down some of the perceptions which can create difficulties between education officials and teachers' representatives.

3.7　The SNCT also noted the involvement of teachers' representatives in working groups of the Council, developing, for example, policies on forward planning and reporting.　This type of joint working not only fosters the development of collegiality it allows an open dialogue on workload issues.　Where teachers' representatives are bypassed on authority working groups an impression is created, intentionally or not, that collegiate working is narrowly circumscribed and relates to the work of the LNCT on matters devolved by the SNCT.

3.8　An alternative strategy is to empower schools to devise their own models of forward planning, assessment and reporting to minimise workload.

3.9　Another noteworthy initiative has been the willingness of some Councils to engage with teachers' representatives in bureaucracy audits.　While the bureaucratic requirements on schools will, in many cases, be necessary there is still a benefit in trying to examine the volume of demand and to consider how to manage and limit that demand.

Working Time Agreements

4.1　The SNCT notes that LNCTs have developed clear guidance to assist establishments to reach agreement on working time.　Such advice is embedded in the work of the LNCT and reaching agreement at establishment level is a vital part of every school's collective bargaining machinery.

4.2　LNCTs have developed mechanisms to monitor Working Time Agreements.　It is not for the SNCT to advocate any single model of monitoring.　LNCTs will have to consider issues of capacity, in relation to availability of LNCT members and the number of establishments in each Council.　In many cases the monitoring of returns is supplemented by school visits, either on a random basis or targeted to situations where concern is raised by a return.　Random sampling or analysing

all responses are examples of good practice. Some LNCTs publish all WTAs to assist schools and this approach is commended to all LNCTs.

4.3 School visits require to be managed carefully and should be aimed at being supportive rather than being inquisitorial. The school visits should exemplify good practice in collegiate working by supporting and assisting colleagues in schools.

4.4 There is an acceptance by many LNCTs that evaluating Working Time Agreements is a complex area of work. However, a number of LNCTs recognise that schools can be supported in this process. The evaluation of a WTA is crucial in adjusting arrangements for the following session and to allow teachers to recognise that evaluation of WTAs and consequent actions in terms of time allocations in the WTA is important in trying to manage workload more constructively. It can be a valuable stimulus for professional discussion on the most effective use of teachers' contractual time in delivering quality learning and teaching in the classroom.

4.5 While in service days are for school management to arrange a number of Councils have encouraged the use of such time to deliver authority priorities. One Council has established a practice of advising schools that the Council will ask school to reserve time on, say, 2 INSET days for authority priorities. These priorities are discussed within the LNCT before being passed to school level.

4.6 Another Council has encouraged specific sessions on collegiality issues on INSET at the start of the academic session. This allows staff to be involved in discussion on priorities for the session ahead and to plan workload and staff deployment in the session ahead.

4.7 In one Council area the Council, following LNCT discussion, targeted CPD resources to a number of CPD priorities. The Council recognised that this limited the wide diversity of personal development needs that arise from personal

review meetings. The SNCT notes this approach but advises that limiting focussed CPD opportunities to a small number of specific objectives should be handled sensitively and have regard to individual CPD needs.

4.8 It is heartening to note that some LNCTs are not only reviewing Working Time Agreements through formal negotiating structures but are engaging directly with teachers. In some Council areas LNCTs have provided the opportunity for individual teachers to complete questionnaires or surveys on the work approach of LNCTs in aspects of its work, for example, the management of workload and the development of strategies to tackle workload. Such an approach is commended and can inform Councils on effective use of INSET time.

Individual Responsibility

5.1 In setting out advice on workload, the SNCT acknowledges the finding in the SNCT workload research that all teachers have to consider their own workload:

"Few respondents indicated that their duties could be performed within the 35 hour planning framework. It would seem that for those participants the 35 hour week has set up an impossible ideal that they routinely work beyond…..A large number of comments referred to teachers' views of their own professionalism and the obligations they feel towards the children and to the teaching profession." (Paragraph 5.11)

5.2 Teachers can reflect on their own workload although it is recognised that teachers, like many other professionals, can work long hours from a sense that professional commitment obliges them to do so.

5.3 While LNCTs can set out mechanisms to assist and manage workload each teacher has a responsibility to critically examine workload demands, to exercise professional judgement on workload issues and to raise concerns when demands are unreasonable.

5.4 If the desire to provide an improved work-life balance is to be meaningful then there is an individual, as well as a collective, responsibility to bring this about. The SNCT report on the Teacher Working Time Research laid an obligation on LNCTs to undertake further work to assist teachers on task prioritisation. This is clearly relevant to teachers developing confidence to manage time more effectively.

Authority Support Measures

6.1 The management of workload requires a commitment and support from the employer. This was evident in the requirement of the 2001 Agreement, set out in Annex E, that support staff should be introduced to remove from teachers a number of administrative and non teaching tasks that teachers should not be expected to undertake routinely.

6.2 In this regard there is concern that this element of the 2001 Agreement is under financial pressure in a number of Council areas. The SNCT had previously issued advice in relation to good practice across support staff. It is a requirement for both the SNCT and for LNCTs to monitor the provision of support staff and the impact of such staff on the workload of teachers. In particular, the obligation on all parties to ensure that the terms of Annex E of the Agreement are being met is a prerequisite to address teacher workload.

6.3 The SNCT has noted that a number of authorities have used QIOs in monitoring Working Time Agreements. The ultimate authority on such matters can only be the LNCT but, if this is understood, the support from QIOs in assisting establishments in workload management and collegiate working, is welcome. The approach taken by QIOs in assisting establishments should, by itself, be a model of collegiate working. There will be an implicit or overt message in this approach that the Council is acknowledging that teacher workload is central to

managing improvements and the Council's process of supporting establishment self evaluation requires workload and collegiality to be addressed.

6.4   Another commendable initiative has been the introduction of guaranteed management time for promoted post holders. While all teaching staff have workload pressures, the burden on promoted staff is recognised in the University of Glasgow report for SNCT. Where the time for management is protected through a local arrangement or agreement, then there is an opportunity to manage the workload of promoted staff. A number of Councils had previously addressed management time and it is heartening that more Councils are making such provision.

Staff Health and Wellbeing

7.1   A number of LNCTs have considered the question of teachers' workload in the broader context of health and wellbeing. This type of holistic approach offers the opportunity of placing workload in the context of key work stressors and of recognising that a reasonable and proper work-life balance can be crucial in enduring wellbeing in its broadest meaning.

7.2   In this regard some Councils have engaged in stress audits across all employees. Furthermore, some Councils have progressed the outcome of such audits through actions using HSE's Stress Management Standards as a starting point.

        What is not yet clear is whether this type of approach has led to direct action across any Council.

7.3   While Councils do provide support for teachers who require counselling arising from the pressures of the post, the SNCT is clear that counselling services which are very welcome are not a solution and that workload pressures must be addressed.

Conclusion

8.1   This report should be issued to all LNCTs with a requirement that each LNCT should develop a workload action plan. LNCTs should also develop mechanisms to keep the plan under review and to report the plan and review mechanism to the SNCT.

Appendix 1

Teacher Workload – Key Issues

Working Time Agreements

(i)   Centrally provided guidance

(ii)   Monitoring procedures

      (a)   all returns
      (b)   random sampling
      (c)   percentage   of   annual   returns scrutinised

(iii)   Visiting – linked to monitoring or random visits

(iv)   School based evaluation

      (a)   time allowances
      (b)   areas of work
      (c)   adjustments required
      (d)   new priorities identified

(v)   New initiatives – use of CPD to tackle workload

(vi)   Surveys, questionnaires to inform LNCT

Collegiality

(i)   Conferences, events   – joint working

(ii)   "badging" of materials   – LNCT circulars, letters

(iii)   Ethos and leadership   – role of Director

		– role of Education Convener
(iv)	Joint working	– improvement plan – authority and school
(v)	Targeted work	– planning – reporting – other working groups

Authority Support

(i)   Guaranteed management time

(ii)   Maintaining Support Staff

(iii)   Role of QIOs to support LNCT initiatives

Other Initiatives

(i)   Stress auditing and management

(ii)   Health and wellbeing

(iii)   Staff welfare

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN:
POLICY AND ADVICE TO SCHOOLS
(updated)

Introduction

This paper updates EIS policy and advice on School Development Planning originally approved by EIS Executive Council in 2001. It now has a particular focus in relation to the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, both in relation to the delivery of the curriculum itself and appropriate assessment arrangements.

The School Improvement Plan and Teacher Workload

- The School Improvement Plan is one method which offers teachers a protection against unacceptable increases in workload. It offers some control over the pace of change within schools as well as the potential for staff within the school to ensure that the Plan can be implemented within the framework set by the SNCT Handbook of Conditions of Service in respect of the working day, week and year.

- The School Improvement Plan needs to be linked to school working time agreements, which determine, through negotiation, the balance of time available for collegiate work, including development work, in relation to a 35 hour working week.

- Additional time may be available for the implementation of the School Improvement Plan through Inset days and for some aspects of funded CPD arrangements. Teachers may also agree to use some of their own annual 35 hours of CPD time to take forward an element of the plan.

- However, the School Improvement Plan cannot in itself resolve all issues of workload. Teachers must have regard to the protections afforded in terms of their own contracts.

- Teachers at all levels of the school must also have regard to issues of collegiality and seek to enhance teacher empowerment and professionalism throughout the education process. Genuine collegial processes in schools have the potential to raise levels of professionalism, while at the same time managing working time and controlling workload burdens.

Current Practice in Relation to the School Improvement Plans

- Since the planning process began in schools, practice in relation to the School Improvement Plan has developed in different ways within different schools: in some schools there are workload committees; some schools have set up school planning consultative groups; and in many schools, large secondary schools in particular, the process of improvement planning is in part devolved within the

school, e.g. to secondary subject departments. Many schools and authorities have moved, also, to 3-year cycles for improvement planning.

- However, it is apparent that in many schools practice is unsatisfactory. In particular in many schools teachers are not fully involved in the process.

- The impact of the Authority's Improvement Plan on schools and also the existence of cluster improvement plans have added to the difficulty of managing workload.

The School Improvement Plan: General Principles

The School Improvement Plan, which is a statutory requirement, is central to the way in which the school operates and therefore should be informed by a number of agreed principles.

- The Plan must be realistic and achievable both in terms of the timeframes for its contents to come on stream and the time resource made available for Plan-related work to be undertaken in the course of the teachers' contractual working day, week and year.

- Whilst the Plan should have regard to government policy (especially the context of Curriculum for Excellence and the four capacities) and to the local authority plan, schools should be able to determine their own priorities within this framework. In particular, a balance needs to be maintained between authority/cluster priorities and the capacity and needs of individual establishments. This is especially relevant to smaller schools.

- The School Improvement Plan is an important element in addressing issues of teacher workload, in particular through the management of teachers' working time. The Plan should be sufficiently detailed and costed to allow for an evaluation of its feasibility when measured against the available resources, including teacher time for familiarisation with key documents and new resources, developing materials and participation in staff development activities. The new requirements of summative assessment will need to be taken into consideration as well.

- The Plan should set out focussed priorities for establishments, relatively few in number, and avoid developing lengthy wish lists.

- The Improvement Plan could involve a certain amount of devolution of decision-making and implementation. For example, in secondary schools, subject departments should have a direct input to the process of formulating the draft Plan and a direct role in implementing specific elements within the approved Plan. A similar approach may be taken in larger primary schools, with groupings of staff from different stages providing their ideas.

- To be effective, the planning process in schools should be cognisant of all aspects of the work of the school, including ongoing maintenance and consolidation of work, resource and financial management, workload issues and staff support.

The School Improvement Plan: The Process of Formulating the Plan

- The School Improvement Planning processes should reflect good collegiate practice within a school and seek to ensure that all teachers have the opportunity to have an input.

- The planning process should itself be the basis of both prior and continuing consultation with all teaching staff.
- The planning process should be planned in advance to ensure that identified collegiate time is made available for all staff to have an appropriate input at an appropriate time to the planning process.

- All aspects of work and decision-making within the schools should be clearly related to the planning process, e.g. curriculum development, staff CPD, staff PRD and devolved school management.

- Workload management must form an integral part of discussions as part of the planning process is to ensure that the individual and collective work of teachers is capable of being undertaken within the time available.

- The School Improvement Plan – including rigorous costing of resource requirements (e.g. time, materials, staff development, and finance) and the clearly-identified resources to be provided for this purpose – should be made available to all staff prior to approval of the Plan.

- Some schools have found that the establishment of a School Planning Consultative Group (dealing with School Improvement Planning, the School's Devolved Budget and Workload management) is the most effective approach to use. The EIS considers that EIS School Representatives have an important contribution to make to such Consultative Groups or similar arrangements, either directly in that capacity, or indirectly following election to the Consultative Group by colleagues.

The School Improvement Plan: Implementation

The involvement of all staff in the school (whether or not there is a consultative group or workload committee overseeing the implementation of the Plan) should be just as integral to the process of implementation of the plan as to its development. The implementation process should involve staff in a number of ways and at a number of stages.

- There should be continuing consultation about the human, material and financial resources and support needed in order to take forward the implementation of the Plan.

- There should be regular monitoring of the Improvement Plan involving all staff, through previously agreed mechanisms. Dates for undertaking the monitoring should be agreed and indicated in the annual school calendar for staff.

- Staff in the school have the right to be fully involved in discussion about any need for significant revisions to the Plan (together with their practical, resource and workload implications) in the course of the year. Such changes should not be a common occurrence. For example, action plans arising from HMIE visits should be built in to future improvement plans, normally, rather than supplanting existing proposals. The outcome of local authority reviews /quality assurance visits should not require agreed improvement plans to be altered at once.

- Workload issues, whether emanating from the plan or from any other source, should be discussed regularly and frequently, involving all staff, at staff meetings, the dates of which have been previously agreed. There must also be opportunity for

direct input from all staff and EIS representatives into discussions on all issues relating to workload.

Advice to Schools

The purpose of the EIS nationally is not to set a template for the way in which the school planning process should operate, but rather to advise its members of a framework within which the planning process can operate successfully. The key element to this success is the collegiate working of all staff within the school. This is integral to the implementation of CfE.

- EIS members in schools should meet to discuss whether the broad principles set out in this paper are being adhered to both in terms of the nature of the School Improvement Plan itself, the preparation of the Plan and its implementation, monitoring and evaluation process.

- The litmus test for a School Improvement Plan is whether the plan has been properly costed, in all its aspects, and can therefore be regarded as achievable within the time frame envisaged.

- Where difficulties arise in a particular school, these should be discussed at the school EIS meeting. In the first instance, the EIS Representative should convey the views of members to school management with the aim of resolving any issues in line with EIS policy. The results of these negotiations should be reported back to the school EIS membership and a decision taken on whether this should be referred by the EIS School Representative to the local association secretary.

- The local association secretary will take this forward at authority level, if appropriate, and should look for support from the EIS Area Officer where required.

- The EIS nationally will monitor the effectiveness of arrangements, in particular through contact with local association secretaries. To ensure an accurate view, it is important, therefore, that individual EIS School Representatives should discuss with secretaries not only difficulties which have arisen within the school but also examples of good practice.

CHECK LIST
School Improvement Plan: four key issues

- The Plan should operate in the context of implementing Curriculum for Excellence
- The Plan should be the product of collegiate activity and consultation
- The Plan should be realistic and achievable
- The Plan should support management of workload issues through rigorous costing of resource requirements, including time for staff development.