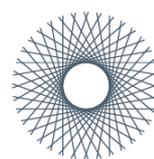


Strategy for reducing teacher workload and improving teacher wellbeing



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Rationale

As part of its duty of care to all employees, the Trust must ensure that academies have appropriate measures in place to support teachers' wellbeing. Excessive workload has been recognised nationally as a factor that impacts negatively on teachers' mental and physical wellbeing and on the recruitment and retention of teaching staff in schools.

In their survey on teacher wellbeing and workload, Ofsted concluded that *"concerns about the well-being of teachers are well founded"* (Ofsted, November 2018). 76% of respondents to the survey said that their job as a teacher impacts negatively on their mental health and 70% said they had to work in their free time.

The findings from the survey have been used by Ofsted to inform aspects of the Education Inspection Framework (September 2019) and the School Inspection Handbook (September 2019). Both documents state that leaders must be *"realistic and constructive in the way that they manage staff, including their workload"*. The inspection documents make it clear that school leaders' work to ensure teachers' workload is manageable will form part of the inspection judgement for the leadership and management of the school and therefore could impact on the overall effectiveness grade of a school.

The Trust recognises that teachers' health and wellbeing is likely to have a direct impact on pupils. In all organisations, employee wellbeing is an important factor in work quality, performance and productivity. Wellbeing is strongly related to work stress and a key player in employee absence. Demotivated and/or overworked staff are often disengaged and eventually leave as they see no other way of addressing the problem. Retention figures issued to Parliament by the DfE in February 2019 show that 22% of teachers leave the profession within two years of starting work as a teacher, 33% leave within five years.

The Trust recognises that some teachers will have leadership duties in addition to their teaching commitments. As part of the leadership role, leaders' duties and responsibilities will often have to be fulfilled outside of teachers' directed time. The Trust expects senior leaders and local academy governing boards to ensure the workload of other leaders is reasonable and therefore requires senior leaders to agree local practices for this.

In response to all of the above, the Trust has agreed the following strategies for reducing teacher workload with the aim of improving teacher wellbeing in its academies:

Main drivers for addressing teachers' workload:

- The Trust expects that all of its academies will use the recommended approaches in the comprehensive guidance documents and the toolkit produced by the DfE (July 2019) www.gov.uk/guidance/reducing-workload-in-your-school
- The Trust expects all of its academies to adopt the approaches in the DfE's Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy (February 2019) www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-recruitment-and-retention-strategy

Additional actions specific to the Trust:

- Reducing teacher workload will be part of the development plan for all academies in the Trust and strategies will be submitted to the CEO/AIL. Success criteria in each academy's development plan will include quantifiable improvements in the percentage of teachers who say their workload is reasonable and that they understand the steps school leaders are taking to manage teacher workload. Where the percentage of teachers who currently (September 2019) say their workload is reasonable is high (above 85%), the success criteria will include reference to sustaining this.
- All academies will consult annually with staff on strategies to reduce unnecessary demands. Each academy will also undertake an annual survey on teacher workload and will provide a summary of the findings to the CEO.
- The CEO will provide Trustees with a summary report on the academies' strategies for addressing teachers' workload and an impact report annually
- The Trust's overall Strategic Plan will include measurable KPIs on reducing teacher workload and improving wellbeing
- The Trust's annual staff survey will include questions on teacher workload and the school's work to address it
- In line with Ofsted's expectations, academies will collect formal assessment data no more than three times a year
- The central team will collect formal assessment data from headteachers no more than three times a year
- All academies in the Trust will have a comprehensive induction policy and plan in place for new staff which includes details of support systems available to staff and details of all personnel/HR policies
- All academies in the Trust will put in place measures to ensure teachers are not expected to regularly work or communicate on school-based matters at weekends or during their free time
- All academies in the Trust will put in place appropriate communication systems between parents/carers and teachers to ensure that teachers are not expected to contact or respond to parents/carers in their free time
- To help foster positive, constructive and mutually respectful relationships between parents/carers and staff, academies in the Trust may find it helpful to have a statement or policy which sets out their expectations for on-site behaviour of parents/carers

- All academies in the Trust will agree the dates for all main events, data collection and reporting requirements etc. for the year at the beginning of the autumn term to enable staff to plan and prioritise their workload
- All academies in the Trust must review their Behaviour Policy annually and ensure that the systems, expectations and procedures are designed to enable teachers to focus on their core purpose
- Teachers' job descriptions must be reviewed annually, as part of the appraisal process, so that teachers are clear about what is expected of them and so that their job description is based on the core purpose of teaching and their school leadership duties, where appropriate
- Headteachers will discuss and agree local measures for managing the additional workload of leaders in their school at each leader's performance appraisal meeting and will review the impact of the measures at one SLT meeting each term.
- The CEO/AIL will discuss headteacher workload at each headteacher's performance appraisal meeting and will work with the AGB to address any concerns

Summary:

The Trust recognises that teaching is a demanding profession but aims to ensure that those demands are reasonable so that teachers can reap the rewards that come from helping every single child in their school to achieve of their best.

Higher levels of teacher health, wellbeing and the improved retention of effective teachers, are likely to result in improved educational outcomes for children. A teacher with high job satisfaction, positive morale and strong mental health is better able to plan and teach creative, challenging and effective lessons.

Therefore, the Trust's strategy for reducing teacher workload will benefit both pupils and staff.