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Policy paper

Reducing teachers' workload

Updated 26 March 2016

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We are working to help teachers concentrate on teaching by reducing the time needed for other tasks.

Teacher workload review groups

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Teachers say 3 of the biggest areas that can lead to unnecessary workload are:

- marking
- planning
- data management

We have set up review groups to make recommendations about reducing workload in these 3 areas:

- Marking Policy Review Group - to look at marking practices in schools that are raising standards successfully while reducing marking workload
- Planning and Resources Review Group - to consider the effect of lesson planning and use of resources in schools
- Data Management Review Group - to develop principles for good data management in schools, including how to monitor pupil progress

The groups published their reports on 26 March 2016:

- report from the Marking Policy Review Group
- report from the Planning and Resources Review Group
- report from the Data Management Review Group

The 3 chairs of the review groups wrote to the Secretary of State for Education to present their recommendations and the Secretary of State has responded.

Background to workload challenge

In October 2014, we launched the workload challenge. This was a month-long survey where we asked teachers for their views on how to reduce unnecessary workload.

The survey asked about:

- unnecessary or unproductive tasks
- strategies that work in schools to manage workload
- what government and schools can do to minimise workload

More than 44,000 people responded to the workload challenge.

On 6 February 2015, we published:

- an [analysis of the responses](#) we received from teachers
- our [response to the workload challenge](#)

In response to the comments we received, we've committed to:

- giving schools more time to prepare for any changes we make to accountability, the curriculum or qualifications - read our [protocol for changes to accountability, curriculum or qualifications](#) for more information

- sharing examples of successful practices schools have used to deal with teaching tasks that can cause unnecessary workload - see our [teaching blog](#)

- tracking teacher workload by running a large-scale survey every 2 years - in February 2016, we invited a representative sample of schools to take part in the first survey; we've now completed fieldwork for the survey and we'll publish the results later in 2016

As a result of the workload challenge, Ofsted committed to clarifying the guidance that explains what inspectors do and do not expect to see when they inspect a school. These updates should help teachers and school leaders avoid some unnecessary tasks.

Ofsted's latest ['School inspection handbook'](#) includes these updates.

Contact us

Email us if you would like to get in touch about workload or if you want to share examples of effective practices that reduce workload in schools.

Teacher workload team
Email
workload.solutions@education.gsi.gov.uk

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