

Classroom teachers - directed time

The phrase 'directed time' is the time for which the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document provides that a teacher (other than a member of the leadership group or a Leading Practitioner) shall be available for work in any school year at such times and such places as may be specified by the head teacher.

The Document provides that a full-time teacher shall be available for work for 1265 hours over 195 days, of which 190 days shall be days on which the teacher may be required to teach pupils in addition to carrying out other duties. The other five days (often called teacher days) are to be used for preparatory meetings and work by staff, including professional and curriculum development. The five teacher days should be planned as part of the school's calendar (on which statutory guidance has been given in relation to plans for cover – see rarely cover. Head teachers should consult with staff and their union representatives when planning the calendar and publish it to them.

The Document provides that, in addition, a teacher shall work such reasonable additional hours as may be needed to enable him or her to discharge effectively his professional duties, including, planning and preparing courses and lessons and assessing, recording and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils. This additional work is outside the definition of directed time, as the employer shall not specify when or where the additional hours are undertaken. The duties of head teachers to have regard to teachers' balance between work and other parts of life (see below) apply to this additional work as well as to directed time.

Lunch Breaks

Lunch breaks are excluded from directed time. A teacher cannot be required to undertake midday supervision and shall be allowed a break of reasonable length either between school sessions or between the hours of 12 noon and 2.00 p.m. There is no statutory guidance on the definition of "reasonable" in this context, but schools should have regard to the health and safety benefits of an adequate period for rest and refreshment for all employees in the school.

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document specifically states that no teacher may be required under his or her contract of employment as a teacher to undertake midday supervision. A teacher may be employed under a separate contract as a midday supervisor, but the LA does not recommend this practice. In any case, health and safety legislation gives workers an entitlement to an uninterrupted break of at least twenty minutes when daily working time is more than 6 hours.

Travel

Time spent travelling to or from the place of work does not count against the 1265 hours.

Allocating hours

In allocating the 1265 hours the starting point is the length of the pupil day. It is recognised that schools in the city start and finish the pupil day at different times and that each school will therefore need to undertake its own calculations. Schools will also use periods of working time immediately before and after the pupil day for general pupil supervision. This is called 'buffer time' in Birmingham. To these daily working hours should be added the hours for the five days on which pupils are not present. Schools have been recommended to allocate six hours of working time for each of these five days, but if the day is not spent at the normal place of work, then time should also be allocated to cover travel in excess of the teacher's normal journey to work.

If a teacher is directed to attend a course on one of the 195 days, the period of actual course work set out in the course programme should be counted as directed time, together with any time spent in travelling in excess of the teacher's normal journey to and from work. The teacher will not normally be expected to be on duty for less than the length of the school day.

Remaining Hours

Having added together all the foregoing hours a number of hours will then remain out of the maximum of 1265. Head teachers are not obliged to direct teachers for all of these hours but may allocate hours for other duties, such as meetings with parents and staff meetings, and are advised to hold a few hours in reserve for unforeseen needs. The dates and times of such meetings, other than in emergencies, should be determined in relation to the requirement to allocate the 1265 hours reasonably over the year and should be notified to staff at the end of the preceding academic year. There may be occasions when the head teacher proposes, due to unforeseen circumstances, to alter a date for a meeting after school, but this should be subject to consultation with staff and should have regard to the possibility that employees may have regular domestic arrangements planned in advance for the year which cannot be altered at short notice or for odd days.

Teachers in Residential Special Schools

Full-time teachers in residential special schools are subject to directed time in the same way as teachers in other schools. Extraneous duties, which attract the extraneous duties allowance, are separate from directed time and will by definition be undertaken outside the pupil day. Normally, teachers should not be required to commence extraneous duties immediately after the end of timetabled teaching.

Other teachers

Although the provisions for 195 days and 1265 hours do not apply to head teachers, other teachers in the leadership group or Leading Practitioners, a head teacher is also responsible for directing the working time of these other teachers. The advice given above on lunch breaks, meetings after school, work/life balance and reasonable hours is equally applicable to their working time. The Document provides that these other teachers shall, in addition to the hours during which they are required to perform their duties as specified by the head teacher, work such reasonable hours as may be needed to enable them effectively to discharge their professional duties.

Part-time teachers

Part-time teachers (other than a member of the leadership group or Leading Practitioners) are required to be on duty for the same fraction of 1265 hours as the proportion of full-time calculated for their salary under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The number of working days will depend on the working pattern agreed with the teacher on appointment and forming part of the contract of employment. (For further advice on part-time teachers see "part-time teachers" document, and/or STPCD).

Work-life balance and flexible working

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document provides that governing bodies and head teachers, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the head teacher and teachers at the school being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work.

The Document states that, in having regard to this, governing bodies and head teachers should ensure that they adhere to the working limits set out in the Working Time Regulations.

The statutory guidance on work/life balance includes advice on employers' duty to employees at common law and their legal duties under health and safety legislation, as well as specific provisions about reasonable hours of work under the Document itself. Although this statutory guidance has not been published since the 2013 Document, it remains useful and a copy of it from the 2013 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (known as Section 4) is available online.

The authority encourages schools to review their working practices with these requirements in mind and to promote employees' well-being as an essential part of their plans for healthy schools.

Flexible working

The Department for Education has issued guidance for school leaders to help them consider how best to encourage, support and enable flexible working requests in schools. The guidance applies to all schools maintained by the Local Authority, Academies and Free Schools.

Planning, preparation and assessment

All teachers, including all those on the leadership spine, who participate in the teaching of pupils are entitled to reasonable periods of Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA). PPA time must amount to not less than 10 per cent of the teacher's timetabled teaching time, defined as "the aggregate period of time in the school timetable during which the teacher has been assigned by the head teacher in the school timetable to teach pupils".

In the case of classroom teachers "reasonable periods of time" must be within the 1265 hours (or appropriate proportion of 1265 hours for part-time teachers) and "must be provided in units of not less than half an hour during the school's timetabled teaching week". Teachers must not be required to carry out any other duties, including the provision of cover, during their guaranteed time for planning, preparation and assessment.

Where a teacher's existing planning, preparation and assessment time exceeds ten per cent it should not be reduced to ten per cent, as this would contravene the no-detriment provisions of the national agreement and the statutory guidance accompanying the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. Some schools may choose to use higher level teaching assistants as one of the strategies for releasing teachers for guaranteed PPA time, providing that the head teacher is satisfied that the higher-level teaching assistant meets all the provisions of the regulations and guidance on specified work.

Leadership and management time

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document provides that "a teacher with leadership or management responsibilities is entitled, so far as is reasonably practicable, to a reasonable amount of time during school sessions for the purpose of discharging those responsibilities." The entitlement is additional to the contractual provisions on work/life balance and guaranteed time for planning, preparation and assessment. Because of the varying nature and extent of responsibilities held by teachers there is no formula for appropriate amounts of time. Time should be allocated taking account of the nature and extent of the responsibilities of each member of staff and the management structure of the school. In order for the time to be meaningful it should not be allocated in short blocks of ten or twenty minutes here and there.

Dedicated headship time

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document states that head teachers are "entitled to a reasonable amount of time during school sessions, having regard to their teaching responsibilities, for the purpose of discharging their leadership and management responsibilities."

The appropriate committee of the governing body should identify the resources necessary to enable the head teacher to take up the entitlement to dedicated headship time. Dedicated headship time should be identified on the school timetable.

It is recommended that each year the Clerk to the Governing Body ensures that the Chair places on the agenda an item under which the head teacher will confirm to the Governing Body that he or she has taken dedicated headship time in accordance with the school timetable, or otherwise advise the Governing Body of any difficulties which may have arisen. It is not for the governing body to specify what the head teacher does during dedicated headship time, but the head teacher may usefully share with governors some information on the activities undertaken over the past year. A fuller report may also form part of the annual review of the head teacher's performance by the appropriate committee of the Governing Body.

There is no national, statutory guidance on an appropriate amount of dedicated headship time. The Birmingham local authority recommends governors to ensure that a minimum of ten per cent of the hours during which the school is in session (the pupil day) is taken by the head teacher as dedicated headship time. This time must be taken during the school sessions and should be identified on the school timetable. It is also recommended that the head teacher take this time as a single block, so as to have a reasonable length of uninterrupted time in which to concentrate on leadership and management responsibilities without being distracted by routine operational matters.

Head teachers are to manage their own dedicated headship time and decide for themselves how best to spend it. Governing bodies can expect dedicated headship time to be used for a broad range of activities, which may include:

- Developing strategic leadership and management issues
 - Reviewing school improvement, the quality of teaching and learning, and the progress of pupils reading and research
 - Professional reflection and dialogue during dedicated headship time the head teacher will not be required to deal with routine matters
 - Asked to take telephone calls, or deal with enquiries in person
 - Expected to cover for absent colleagues
 - Required to meet parents, governors or other visitors to the school
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During dedicated headship time it is recommended that the head teacher is interrupted only in an emergency or when, exceptionally, he or she has given a prior indication that he or she would wish to be disturbed for specified reasons. The head teacher will make appropriate arrangements for dealing with enquiries, visitors, etc. similar to those applying when the head teacher is off the premises attending meetings or visiting schools. Dedicated headship time is separate from, and additional to, any guaranteed time for planning, preparation and assessment to which the head teacher is entitled commensurate with his or her teaching timetable.

Training and development

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document states that all staff in the school should have access to advice, training and developmental opportunities appropriate to their needs, including needs identified in objectives and planning and review

statements under the performance management regulations, in accordance with the policies of the authority and the governing body.

Newly qualified teachers - statutory induction

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document states that "a teacher serving an induction period under the Induction Regulations must not teach for more than 90% of the time a teacher at the school would be expected to teach". The working time of newly qualified teachers should therefore take account of this reduction and time should be allocated for other teachers to supervise, train and support a newly qualified teacher during induction.

Working time regulations

For employees over the age of 18, the Working Time Regulations impose a maximum 48-hour average week, the average to be taken over a 17-week period, with a minimum of twenty minutes' break after six hours. (The limits differ for younger employees and Birmingham City Council imposes a minimum of thirty minutes' break after 6 hours.) For further guidance see the "Working Week and Working Time Regulations" document, including a model opt-out form.

Teachers' annual leave

Teachers do not have a contractual leave entitlement, but they do have a statutory entitlement. For the purposes of statutory annual leave under the Working Time Regulations, it has been agreed locally that their leave year runs from 1st September to 31st August. The Working Time (Amendment) Regulations 2007 improved the statutory annual leave entitlement for employees, increasing it to 28 days (or 5.6 weeks) paid annual leave with effect from April 2009. This entitlement is not additional to the current school closure periods but is offset against them. Teachers are required to take their statutory annual leave during periods of school closure.

