

News story: Curriculum programme pilots to reduce time spent planning lessons

A multi-million pound fund to make it easier for teachers to find high-quality lesson plans and resources and cut unnecessary workload has been launched today by School Standards Minister Nick Gibb.

The [first round of £7.7million Curriculum Fund](#) will provide grants to schools to help them share teaching resources with other schools, saving teachers from having to repeatedly create lessons plans from scratch.

It comes after research by the Department for Education found that many teachers feel lesson planning creates unnecessary workload and that they want easy access to practical resources that will help them put together innovative and effective lessons.

The initiative is the latest step by the department to meet the Government's manifesto commitment to provide schools with tools that will cut unnecessary workload, freeing them up to focus on what matters most – teaching.

Schools Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Having easy access to high quality curriculum resources will not just save teachers time, it will make it easier for them to deliver knowledge-rich and engaging lessons that help young people to acquire the knowledge and skills they need.

This fund will help great schools share resources that they know are effective. This will help to spread excellent teaching practices and continue the drive to raise standards in our schools.

Since the £7.7m Curriculum Fund was first announced in January, the Department for Education has worked with school leaders, teachers and experts from across the profession to understand how teachers plan lessons and use resources such as textbooks – with research showing that teachers feel lesson planning continues to result in unnecessary workload. Schools can apply from today for grant funding to share their high quality curriculum programmes.

The Education Secretary Damian Hinds has pledged to champion the teaching profession and to work with teaching unions and Ofsted to reduce workload in schools – and in [his first keynote speech at the Association of School and College Leaders' \(ASCL\) conference](#) in March 2018 he set out his intention to use the Curriculum Fund to make it easier for schools and teachers to share and access high-quality resources.

The opening of the application window, which closes on 17 September, follows a number of recent announcements to help schools free their staff from unnecessary and time-consuming tasks, including:

Notice: Phyllis Court Club autumn time trial 2018: river restriction notice

River Thames restriction information for Sunday 14 October 2018.

Notice: Cookham Regatta 2018: river restriction notice

River Thames restriction information for Saturday 1 September 2018.

Press release: Top football agent scores £1.2 million tax avoidance own goal

Former football agent Jerome Anderson has lost his £1.2 million tax battle with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

The case, heard at the Upper Tribunal, shows that Anderson and 8 others failed in their attempt to avoid large amounts of tax.

The scheme involved investments in the recruitment and training of young footballers at the Bafana Soccer Academy in South Africa.

Anderson attempted to use this investment to claim a £3 million artificial trading loss to reduce his tax bill by huge amounts of money.

The tribunal found that Anderson's activities were more like those of an investor, and this didn't show that he was trading.

This decision means he could not claim a trading loss and tax was due.

Penny Ciniewicz, HMRC's Director General for Customer Compliance, said:

The court has made it clear that these schemes don't work.

Our public services rely on everyone paying their taxes and it's unfair for people not to pay their share.

Anyone who's caught up in tax avoidance and wants to put it behind them should come forward now and settle what they owe.

This latest victory continues HMRC's excellent record of winning 9 out of 10 tax avoidance cases taken to court, with many more settling what they owe before reaching that stage.

Further information

You can read the [Upper Tribunal decision](#).

This was the first case to consider section 74B of the Income Tax Act 2007, an anti-avoidance provision that denies an individual any sideways loss relief claimed where that individual carries on a trade in a 'non-active' capacity and where that loss arises in connection with tax avoidance arrangements.

An image of Penny Ciniewicz, Director General of HMRC's Customer Compliance Group, is available on [Flickr](#).

[Notice: The Skiff Championships regatta 2018: river restriction notice](#)

River Thames restriction information for Sunday 26 August 2018.