

# Teacher workload cut by five hours a week over past three years

Teachers' working hours have fallen by almost five hours per week over the past three years, according to research published today (Fri 11 Oct).

In the second Teacher Workload Survey, teachers and middle leaders reported working an average of 49.5 hours per week in 2019, down by 4.9 hours compared to 2016. Headteachers and senior leaders also saw a significant fall, to an average of 55.1 hours per week in 2019.

The findings, taken from a representative survey of over 7,000 teachers, middle leaders and senior leaders, showed the reduction has been driven by cuts to time spent on burdensome tasks outside the classroom. Teaching time has remained broadly stable over the period.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

For too long, teachers have been working too many hours on time-consuming admin tasks that simply don't add value in the classroom.

But the findings in today's report give me real optimism that, working with the profession, we are making a real difference, driving down the number of hours teachers work on these burdensome and unnecessary tasks.

However, I am not complacent, and it's clear from meeting many teachers across the country that we have more to do.

Today, I'm announcing how schools across the country stand to benefit from our £14 billion pound investment. As well as further measures to support staff through new technology to improve timetabling and curriculum resources to reduce planning time, this funding should help to ensure teachers spend more time doing what they do best, teaching our children.

Teachers and middle leaders in primary schools reported working an average of 12.5 hours during weekends and evenings, down by 5.0 hours compared to 2016. For secondary teachers, this came to an average of 13.1 out-of-school hours, a reduction of 3.8 hours compared to 2016.

To ensure that teaching remains an attractive profession, and the most talented teachers are motivated to stay in the classroom, the Department is working to meet commitments in the Recruitment & Retention Strategy.

These include:

- Announcing a significant step towards early roll-out of the Early Career

Framework programme in Bradford, Doncaster, the North East and Greater Manchester, from September 2020 – the appointment of providers of fully funded support packages for new teachers and mentors;

- Launching a new opportunity for schools and colleges to participate in the EdTech Innovation Testbed, helping to identify digital tools that can reduce teacher workload as well as trialling ‘best-in-class’ timetabling software to facilitate flexible working;
- Launching an expressions of interest process for schools and colleges to apply to become EdTech Demonstrators – providing peer-to-peer support on the use of technology, including for tackling teacher workload;
- Updating the school workload reduction toolkit, which contains practical materials for schools to tackle teacher workload, to make it easier to use, with better navigation and simpler, reduced text;
- Announcing an extension of nine Curriculum Fund pilots for up to an additional two terms, after initial research showed almost half of teachers said that their workload had decreased, saving teachers time from creating schemes and lesson plans from scratch; and
- Publishing flexible working resources, including case studies to provide practical support for schools in implementing further flexible working for teachers and leaders.

Ambition Institute, Education Development Trust, Teach First, and UCL, Institute of Education (IOE) have been awarded contracts to provide high-quality support packages for schools in early roll-out areas. They will produce and deliver these programmes working with a range of regional partners.

New teachers and mentors in Bradford, Doncaster, the North East and Greater Manchester will be able to benefit from materials and training as part of early roll-out of the Early Career Framework programme from September 2020.

Headteacher of Charles Dickens Primary School and Nursery, Cassie Buchanan said:

The survey outcomes are a positive shift in the right direction and reflect the strong commitment and actions by heads and school leaders.

At Charles Dickens Primary we no longer give children extensive written feedback. Instead, we spend time identifying what children do not know and planning lessons to address this. We have also reduced data collection so that teachers have more time to adapt lessons for the children in their class and professional learning.

I have learnt that change for my teachers will only come when senior leaders take positive steps which engage with the evidence of what works for improving children’s outcomes and learning from schools which are already reducing workload successfully.

Joysy John, Director of Education at Nesta, said:

By getting schools and colleges to test products in a real world setting we hope to bridge the gap between industry and the education sector. We want schools and colleges from across England to sign up to the testbed.

Through participating in the Testbed, staff in our schools and colleges will have an opportunity to trial technology products, further their professional development and better understand what works.

Matt Davis, UK Director at Education Development Trust.

We know that the learning curve for teachers is steepest in the early years of their careers, and that high-quality teaching is the biggest in-school factor in raising the attainment of children.

The Early Career Framework offers a really comprehensive roadmap of the knowledge and competences which will make novice teachers more effective in the classroom. With our support, mentors in their schools will help to develop new teachers' expertise and make a positive difference to their competence, confidence and motivation at this crucial stage in their careers.