

# Addressing Workload:- Supporting trainee & early career teachers to thrive & not merely survive



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## Why?

- To improve teacher **morale, mental and physical wellbeing**.
- To give teachers the **time and space** to focus on what matters most and what is in the interests of teachers and their pupils
- To give teachers time to focus on their own **professional development**.
- To improve **teacher retention**, particularly in the early stages of a teachers' career and **aspiration to leadership**, and to **attract more entrants** to the profession.
- To aid school improvement by **strengthening capacity and capability** of school leaders and teachers.

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## Overview

- **Context**
  - What recent surveys tell us about perceptions of workload from trainee and early career teachers
  - Summary of actions taken by DfE since 2014 Workload Challenge
  - Recommendations for ITE providers arising from three independent reports
- **Considering the Implications**
  - Addressing workload within & through Initial Teacher Education
- **Where next?**
  - The Workload Reduction Toolkit

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## Context Setting

What recent surveys tell us about perceptions of workload from trainee and early career teachers

**Workload is a significant barrier to teacher retention.** Our survey of school leaders found that workload is the most important factor in retaining teachers: **67% of respondents reported that workload is a barrier to retention.** To help tackle teachers' workload, in March 2016 the Department published reports from three independent groups on marking practices, lesson planning and use of resources, and data management. Our survey found that 81% of school leaders are aware of this guidance but only **44% are engaged with it.** (National Audit Office 2017)

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## Context

ATL Survey (2017) – Trainees & NQTs

- 54% of respondents did not think they would be teaching in ten years' time – 24% did not think they would be teaching in five years' time
- 87% cited workload as the biggest issue which demoralised them
  - 79% felt that they did not have a good work/life balance
  - 81% felt that they did not have time to participate in hobbies
  - 80% felt that they did not get enough time to relax
  - 76% felt that workload pressures were preventing them from seeing their friends
  - 68% felt that due to pressures they did not get to spend enough time to spend with their partner
- 53% felt that workload prevented them from being able to properly reflect on practice

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## Views of NQTs

- "Planning takes all weekend and I spend hours marking. Although there are wonderful 'light bulb' moments, there are not usually enough of these to wipe out the downsides. At the start of my second term as a NQT I am exhausted and starting to be demoralised." (Secondary NQT)
- "I saw this as a vocation, a lifelong dream following a successful, non-teaching career elsewhere. I now have no time to spend with family or even speak to them. I can't sleep, have no social life but still love 'teaching'; it's the rest of it that's unbearable." (Primary NQT)
- "I enjoy the work and the challenge, but am shocked at how many hours I work at weekends and on my two "days off". (Secondary NQT)

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## DfE NQT Survey (2016)

- **Large Workloads:**
  - "Throughout my induction year I have worked from 8am-5:30pm Monday to Friday. I have also worked 8-10 hours at weekends during my first term, 6-8 during my second term and 4-6 during my third term. I also work 20-30 hours at home during school holidays. If my workload was reduced I wouldn't have needed to do so much work at 55 home."
- **Training, Entitlement & Transition:**
  - "My school has often not provided NQT time during the week, making it difficult for continuous professional development and observing other teachers"
  - "I have been placed in a position where I do not have a head of department or a subject specialist to help me learn my subject skills"
  - "Some of the training as an NQT can simply re-hash PGCE training as they can be combined sessions for UQT's as well as NQT's"
- **Mentors / Induction Tutors:**
  - "NQT tutors need to know how to speak to and support NQTs. This means that they ought to know how to give two targets and a strength (for example), just as we expect students to do when reflecting on their own learning. My tutor will support me if I ask a specific question but, aside from that, I feel largely like I have been on my own during this period and, if not for my family, I would have already left"

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## Context Setting

### Summary of actions taken by DfE since 2014 Workload Challenge

"One of the biggest threats to retention, and also to recruitment, is workload. **Too many of our teachers, and our school leaders, are working simply too long hours** – and too often on tasks that the evidence shows are not helping children to learn.

We need to get back to the essence of successful teaching; strip away the workload that doesn't add value and give teachers the time and the space to focus on what actually matters. Trust teachers to teach. That's in the interests of teachers but it is also in the interests of children." (Damien Hinds March 2018)

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## Considering the implications

- Awareness raising:
  - Partnership
  - Trainees
- Supporting partner and trainee engagement with the recommendations
- Review of
  - Expectations across ITE provision (including professional placement)
  - Provision – how the recommendations are embedded in centre and school-based training and content
- Consideration of the workload agenda as part of wider wellbeing and resilience
- Harnessing of good practice within partnership to support ITE provision and wider partnership

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## Implications: ITE Content

### Time to talk:

- How have you considered the recommendations of the independent reports in relation to your ITE provision and content?
- How, as providers, are we drawing upon our collective knowledge of the challenges faced by trainees, NQTs and early career teachers in relation to workload and addressing and pre-empting this within our provision & content:
  - Centre & school-based training
    - Skills and strategies – e.g. time management / prioritisation strategies
    - Professional studies
    - Subject disciplines
    - ...




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## ITE Content: Example Considerations

"There is a myth among new and beginning teachers that the longer spent planning a lesson, the more successful it will be...We know of trainee teachers who have spent so long planning that when they come to teach they are already exhausted!" (Fautley & Savage 2013:25)

### Planning and resources:

- A differentiated approach to supporting trainees to develop the skills of planning – including the skills of planning sequences of lessons
- Supporting trainees to evaluate, adapt and make use of:
  - Published / commercial schemes of work
  - Resources

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## Drawing upon your partnership

*"The day allowed me to put theory into practice. The knowledge that I built up through the workshops, undertaking practical tasks, then observing allowed me to understand how I can deliver quality teaching and promote great pupil progress using a range of formative assessment strategies."*

*"Today was a revelation! Seeing how a school focuses on the use of verbal, immediate feedback and the impact this has – on both the pupils' learning, not to mention the teachers' workload was fascinating and made me reflect on how to provide feedback which is impactful whilst also not time intensive"*

*"The day really informed my confidence with practical assessment and feedback strategies and the ways in which teachers can work with children during lesson time, which was interesting e.g. guided group work."*

*"What was really useful was the sharing of the planning approach that supports the teaching of mathematics in the school. The modelling of this approach has helped me understand that lessons planning does not need to take hours, but can be simplified for an even greater impact."*

*"I've come away from today with such a bank of useful resources and strategies. Having the opportunity to both see these applied so effortlessly within various classes and speak with the various teachers about how they implemented them was extremely useful. Much more confident now about using time efficiently with assessment."*

*"I've come away feeling far more confident about how to adapt a unit of work so that it meets the needs of my pupils"*

*"The session really helped me to think about how to prioritise work and think about tasks in relation to their urgency and importance. I also liked the idea of using 'must, should and could' as a way to categorise my tasks in relation to the time I've set aside for work"*



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## Implications: Assessing Trainees

*"Systems for trainees to record and demonstrate how well they have met all of the teachers' standards are extensive, but somewhat over-complicated and repetitive. Copying evidence into different formats adds a bureaucratic administrative burden to trainees' days and weeks, which is not in keeping with the spirit of recent recommendations on the reduction of teacher workload. Trainees gain little from undertaking this extra activity." (Ofsted ITE Report January 2018)*

### Advice to schools:

- **'collection of evidence should be proportionate and not increase workload for teachers (for example, teachers should not be asked to produce written evidence against each of the Teachers' Standards).'** (DfE September 2017)

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## Assessing Trainees: Considerations

- Approach used by the ITE partnership is proportionate and recognises the trainee's stage of development;
- Any process has purpose and a clear rationale linked to the contribution towards a trainee's development;
- Quality of evidence rather than quantity;
- Avoid duplication of material;
- Time allocated as part of both centre and school-based training;
- Consideration of the demands of the process on the trainee, the ITE provider and the school.

**Training and Assessment Toolkit: Promoting Accuracy**  
"Trainee, with mentor, identifies a sequence (or sequences) of lessons which can be used to evidence pupil progress over time and through this the quality of the trainee's teaching overall"

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## Implications: Professional Placement



### Time to talk:

- What are the particular workload challenges faced by trainees on professional placement?
  - How do you prepare your trainees for these challenges?
  - What additional interventions / support are in place?
- How have you worked with your partnership to ensure that there is a shared understanding relating to trainee expectations on professional placement?
- How do you facilitate opportunities for your trainees to collaborate, share resources, discuss ideas etc. whilst on professional placement?
- How do you ensure that expectations do not inadvertently add additional workload burdens to mentors?

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## Where next?

### The Workload Reduction Toolkit




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## ITE Workload Toolkit Area - Themes

Raise awareness / take action / embed / collaborate / share practice

- Mental health and well-being
- Addressing workload through ITE content
- Addressing the particular workload challenges faced by trainees on professional placement
- Addressing potential workload challenges for schools, mentors and trainers
- Embedding the spirit of the recommendations in the culture of ITE
- Supporting the wider partnership with the recommendations of the three reports

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## Guidance for schools: Supporting NQTs & Early Career Teachers

- Identification of factors that impact on the workload of newly qualified teachers and teachers in the early stages of their career
- Questions for school leaders to consider:
  - Support structures
  - Professional development opportunities
  - Helping NQTs / early career teachers to manage expectations
  - Workload burdens associated with monitoring, support and induction / appraisal cycle
  - Supporting transition points
- Signposting for school leaders
- How can mentors / induction tutors support mentees
- Principles for effective mentoring and coaching
- Questions for induction tutors and mentors to consider

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## Guidance: Supporting NQTs & Early Career Teachers

In development:

- Guidance for appropriate bodies
- Guidance for NQTs and teachers in the early stages of their career

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## Moving Forward

What are the implications for your ITE partnership?



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