

Enterprise and Learning Committee

EL(3)-22-08 (p3): 1 October 2008



**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES
ENTERPRISE AND LEARNING COMMITTEE**

**REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
TEACHER WORKLOAD AGREEMENT**

EVIDENCE FROM NUT CYMRU

NUT Cymru welcomes the opportunity to provide written evidence to the Enterprise and Learning Committee on the implementation of the Teacher Workload Agreement. The STR,B in its ninth survey on teachers' workloads^[1], offers significant statistical evidence regarding the current position relating to the workload of teachers. As before, the 2008 survey is based on the completion of teacher 'diaries' by 1,903 randomly selected teachers in maintained primary, secondary and special schools including a representation from Wales. In fact, the Report supports the anecdotal evidence NUT Cymru collects from its members and our concerns that the Teacher Workload Agreement has done little to ease the workload of those in the classroom.

In addition, the NUT commissioned work which led to a report entitled "Pressure and Professionalism: The Impact of Recent and Present Government Policies on the Working Lives of Teachers"^[2]. The information received in that report, prepared by Professors John MacBeath and Maurice Galton, supports many of the STRB findings from the perspective of NUT members.

Average weekly hours worked by full-time teachers

During 2008, teachers and head teachers in **primary, secondary and special schools** saw a rise in working hours from those recorded in 2007, a year which had shown a marked reduction. The survey findings show all categories of teachers working more hours in 2008 than in 2007. Deputy Heads in secondary schools saw a big rise in their average working hours, from 53.6 to 58 hours per week. The figures place current workload back to similar levels endured by teachers in 2003, the year in which the first phase of the Workload Agreement was introduced to address the issue.

The total average hours per week worked by teachers is shown by the extract from the results of the survey set out in the table below. Comparison by year makes for depressing reading, even taking into account the decreases most notably observed for 2007.

	1994	1996	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Primary schools									
Head teachers	55.4	55.7	58.9	55.5	55.6	52.9	53.5	54.2	55.2
Deputy heads	52.4	54.5	56.2	56.4	55.7	55.7	53.4	51.4	52.8
Classroom teachers	48.8	50.8	52.8	51.8	52.5	50.9	50.1	51.5	52.2

^[1] The full document can be viewed on the Office of Manpower Economics website at: <http://www.ome.uk.com/downloads/2008%20Teachers%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

^[2] The full document can be viewed via the University of Cambridge website at: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/press/dpp/2008032201>

Secondary schools									
Head teachers	61.1	61.7	60.8	60.9	60.8	62.6	65.1	57.6	59.5
Deputy heads	56.9	56.5	58.6	56.5	54.1	58.1	61.0	53.6	58.0
Department/faculty heads	50.7	53.0	52.9	52.7	51.6	51.2	51.5	50.2	52.9
Classroom teachers	48.9	50.3	51.3	50.8	49.9	49.3	49.1	48.7	49.9
Special schools									
Classroom teachers*	47.5	50.0	51.2	47.6	46.3	45.6	43.9	45.0	48.3

Analysis by gender

In the 2006 survey, female classroom teachers appeared to work significantly longer than male classroom teachers – one hour longer in secondary schools and nearly two hours longer in the primary sector. The 2007 figures suggested a lessening of this disparity - particularly in secondary schools, where female classroom teachers' hours were almost identical to those of their male counterparts. In 2008, male and female hours worked were almost identical in secondary schools, while in primary schools male teachers worked an average of 53 hours compared to 52.1 hours for female teachers.

Analysis by class size

The survey reveals that primary teachers with class sizes of 30 or more worked an average of 52.8 hours, compared to 52.2 hours where the class was between 25 and 29 pupils and 52.1 hours where the class contained fewer than 25 pupils. This has significance for us in Wales, where members inform us that, despite class size initiatives in the primary sector, little appears to have changed and that the workload of class teachers remains unhealthily high.

Concerns were also raised by members in this area in respect of new WAG initiatives and especially the Foundation Phase. Initially, these related to the potential impact upon workload if individual schools were unable to finance the staff ratios demanded by the Foundation Phase because of the failure to provide sufficient funds in the devolved budget to allow schools to employ the necessary manpower.

Additionally, concerns have also now been raised regarding the workload for teachers within the early years' setting, where the desired staffing ratios are being achieved but which also means that teachers often then become responsible for the line management of support staff at a level that is above and beyond the responsibility of a classroom teacher.

Administrative Tasks

Photocopying and mounting displays still occupies one hour per week for primary teachers – both tasks which should have ceased in 2003 with the first tranche of workload reforms. Primary teachers also spend 2 hours a week setting up and tidying classrooms. Secondary teachers spend less time displaying pupils' work (0.1 hour per week) but spend nearly an hour a week setting up and tidying classrooms and nearly half an hour on 'simple clerical activities.'

MacBeath and Galton found that teachers still engage in a range of administrative tasks because some choose to do things which they see as integral to their teaching and because delegating these tasks often proves more time-consuming than doing it themselves. Additionally, the nature of highly pressurised, complex and wholly unpredictable school life means that teachers have to think, plan on their feet and take whatever course of action a situation demands.

Both secondary and special classroom teachers are spending more time on administration in 2008 than in 2007. For primary teachers, the figure was virtually unchanged. This concern is highlighted in the STRB Report. See the table below:

Hours spent on Administrative support

	2007	2008
Primary Classroom Teachers	4.9	4.7
Secondary Classroom Teachers	2.8	3.1
Special Classroom Teachers	3.1	3.3

In Wales, the problem is exacerbated by the large number of small rural schools; members teaching in these tell us that they have continued to undertake administrative tasks because "there is no one else to do it." Within these schools especially, there remains a significant reliance upon the teachers' good will and commitment to the education of the pupils that suggests that no real changes have been felt by those in the classroom.

Work/life Balance

NUT Cymru continues to advise members who consider that their 10% PPA time is being eroded or impinged upon, often in circumstances in which the day-to-day operational needs of the school require some flexibility. Teachers who do opt to be flexible rarely see their 10% made up later in the week or the PPA cycle operated by the school. We fear that the true extent of the number of teachers affected in this way will never be recognised due to the existence of a silent majority willing to accept requests made by SMT members who, in their turn, have very few alternatives.

There is, however, some evidence that PPA in particular has contributed to a better work/life balance overall but there is a danger, especially in secondary schools, that PPA time is consumed by the increasing pressures of disruptive behaviour and ill-conceived inclusion policies. The NBAR review in Wales is welcome and will undoubtedly in future help address problems in this regard.

Secondary head teachers are shown to be working 10% of their total working hours at weekends, up from 7.5% in 2007. For primary classroom teachers, there was a rise from 8.8% in 2007 to 9.5% in 2008, not surprising given the overall increase in average working hours. Evening work continues to be the lot of all teachers

Leadership and Management Time

There is little evidence to suggest that those in management positions have benefited from the Workload Agreement; indeed, they appear to be under greater pressure than before, in part from arranging for teachers to have more professional development time, juggling the problems that can arise from the 38-hour cover limit, and in large part from having to implement new policy initiatives and from community and parental pressures.

Dedicated Headship time

The first response received to NUT Cymru's own survey of Head Teacher members in respect of this element of the Workload Agreement was succinct and to the point: "Don't make me laugh!"

The STRB survey reveals that over 40 percent of secondary head teachers and roughly 30 percent of primary heads continued to work in excess of 60 hours per week. These figures are almost identical to the 2007 figures.

Conclusion

NUT Cymru is committed to a high quality education service that meets the needs of all our children and young people. In order to achieve this, the removal of excessive and unnecessary workload for its members in Wales is of vital importance.

The Enterprise and Learning Committee review of teachers' workload is welcome but must lead to positive recommendations that will have a real impact upon teachers working in Wales.

NUT Cymru
26 September 2008

^[1] The full document can be viewed on the Office of Manpower Economics website at: <http://www.ome.uk.com/downloads/2008%20Teachers%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

^[2] The full document can be viewed via the University of Cambridge website at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/press/dpp/2008032201>