

COVENTRY Fair Workload Charter

The Teacher Workload Survey 2016 and other local surveys, concluded that excessive workload is a major obstacle to our schools being able to successfully recruit and retain the best teachers and teaching assistants.

Recently, three national working parties established by the Secretary of State for Education have reported on the national picture and indicated how excessive workloads might be reduced.

On marking¹, the working party said:

- > 'The quantity of feedback should not be confused with the quality'
- > 'Schools should review their practice with the aim of shrinking the importance marking has gained over other forms of feedback, and stopping unnecessary and burdensome practice'
- > 'There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. A balance needs to be struck between a core and consistent approach and trusting teachers to focus on what is best for their pupils and circumstances'

On planning², the working party said:

- > 'Planning is critical and underpins effective teaching, but creating detailed written plans can become a 'box-ticking' exercise and create unnecessary workload – such daily or weekly plans should not be a routine expectation'
- > 'Schools should spend time planning collaboratively, and engage with a professional body of knowledge and quality assured resources.'
- > 'There should be greater flexibility to accommodate different subject and phase demands and needs in lesson planning formats.'

On pupil performance data³, the working party said:

- > 'Do not routinely collect formative assessment data. Summative data should not normally be collected more than three times a year per pupil.'
- > 'Be ruthless, only collect what is needed to support outcomes for children. The amount of data collected should always be proportionate to its usefulness.'
- > 'Be prepared to stop activity: do not assume that collection or analysis must continue just because it always has.'
- > 'Be aware of workload issues: consider not just how long it will take, but whether that time could be better spent on other tasks.'

FAIR Workload

The 'Coventry Fair Workload Charter' sets out what teachers and other staff can expect from the schools that sign up. Participating schools will be able to utilise the 'Coventry Fair Workload' logo in their advertisements and publicity. Ofsted have confirmed that the assurances contained in this agreement can be consistent with a good and better quality of teaching.

Coventry Fair Workload Charter schools want to be able to recruit and retain staff by:

- ensuring they have a fair and reasonable workload
- providing high quality training and professional development opportunities that meet the needs of individual members of staff
- providing a pay and rewards package at least that of the national agreement for teachers, and the Local Authority pay scale for support staff.



Coventry City Council

¹ 'Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking', DIE March 2016

² 'Eliminating unnecessary workload around planning and teaching resources', DIE March 2016

³ 'Eliminating unnecessary workload associated with data management', DIE March 2016

Staff working in a Coventry 'Fair Workload Charter' school can expect:

a. a fair and reasonable workload which will be ensured by:

- adopting a realistic approach to lesson planning which detailed written submitted plans are not the expectation, or by adopting schemes such as staff teaching directly from high quality schemes of work
- enabling teachers to engage in collaborative planning to develop their skills and knowledge, to share expertise, and to benefit from the expertise of others.
- the assessment policy clarifying what will and won't be marked. The policy will be based upon research evidencing practices that have been demonstrated to raise achievement. All marking should be meaningful, manageable and motivating.
- policies, and especially those governing marking, assessment, data entry, emails and communication, being reviewed during the school's usual cycle and a workload impact assessment for each carried out.
- for teachers, the workload requirements of all policies should be reasonably deliverable within an additional maximum ten hours per week, unless other contractual arrangements apply. For those with additional leadership responsibilities, a further one hour a day may be required.
- for staff other than teachers, the requirements of policies should be reasonably deliverable within contracted hours.
- providing a time budget in June each year setting out how the principles above will be implemented in the following year. This must meet the 1265 hour limit to directed time as set out in the STPCD.
- school and academy governors exercising their duty of care to employees with regard to workload, including for head teachers.
- individual workloads being monitored and the school's overall data shared openly and reported to governors. This information to be used in the Coventry Fair Workload Charter quality assurance process.

b. high quality training and professional development opportunities that meet the needs of individual members of staff by:

- enabling all staff to access high quality training programmes from a range of local or national providers
- enabling all staff to access the training programmes linked to different stages of career progression
- ensuring staff are well trained and appropriately qualified
- supporting teaching assistants in progressing to qualified teacher status where they choose to do so
- participation in the SCITT and Schools Direct route for support staff wishing to enter the teaching profession.

c. a Pay and Reward package at least that of the national agreement for teachers, and the Local Authority payscale for support staff



COVENTRY Fair Workload Charter



Frequently Asked Questions

Why would my school want to sign up to the Coventry Fair Workload Charter? What benefits are there?

Why would you not? This is a positive way to demonstrate that school is taking workload seriously for all staff. We know that workload is one of the biggest issues driving teachers out of the profession. The Charter is a positive way to attract new teachers to your school and retain them.

What happens when my school signs up?

The school will qualify for the Charter Mark which they can use on adverts for new staff. This is a powerful message to new candidates showing that the school cares for its staff and ensures a proper work/life balance.

What happens if we have a change of leadership?

It would be expected that the new Leadership would continue this positive work. It should be part of the interviewing process conducted by Governors so that candidates understand what is expected.

Do Governors have to agree this?

Governors have a legal responsibility to ensure a work/life balance for all staff in the school, including the Headteacher. The Charter is an important tool to help them meet their obligations.

How will adherence to the charter be monitored?

The school will be awarded the Charter Mark by gaining the required positive benchmark from an online survey completed by ALL staff. This survey will be conducted annually to ensure that your school continues to meet the criteria set out in the Charter. Don't worry if, for some reason, things have started to slip and the required survey benchmark is not achieved, the school will be given the opportunity to address the issues and reapply within 8 weeks. Having regular meetings with staff to monitor workload and ongoing adherence to the Charter will ensure the school maintains the Charter mark.

How will an adjudication process work?

It's simple, if the survey shows that 90% or more of staff agree that a reasonable workload is being maintained then your school will keep the Charter Mark.

Can the Charter be flexible? For example, there can be huge pressure around certain times of the year, can more time be expected from staff at these times?

We would expect that school tries to ensure a balanced workload by publishing the School Calendar well in advance. Sometimes, extra non-contact time can help to alleviate workload at certain times of the year or time can be set aside for certain tasks during Inset days.

Our school would like to join but can't meet all the criteria- will the accrediting body be flexible?

No, this Charter Mark is important and must be consistently applied. We know that each school is different. This is not about dictating how your school is run but there are expectations laid out in the Charter aimed at tackling the main drivers of workload in schools. The survey for all staff is important in ensuring your school meets the accreditation process - 90% or more responses must be positive.

We would like to join, where can we get more information?

Ask for one of the representatives on the Coventry Workload Group to come in and talk about it.

If we work to this Charter, how can we be sure Ofsted won't criticise us?

As you will see, the Charter follows much of the advice from the DfE and Ofsted itself.

I understand that the Charter is about Directed Time, but what if I want to work on a project or resources for my school voluntarily?

There is nothing to stop you doing this work as long as it is voluntary and does not become expected for all staff.

Who should be on the workload committee? Does it have to be the Health and Safety Rep?

No, but it's a good idea to have Health and Safety Reps included as they may have training and particular expertise on work-related stress. Staff should decide who would be best to represent them on the Workload Committee and feed back to colleagues.

How do we ensure everyone has a voice and feels included?

The Charter is for ALL staff in school. Make sure there are representatives from support staff on the Workload Committee meeting. The survey will be for all staff. Issues will be picked up in the survey that may be pertinent for certain groups of staff and will need to be dealt with.

How often should school Workload Committees meet?

We would suggest that in the first instance, groups meet every half term. Regular meetings throughout the year will make the accreditation process simpler and make keeping the Charter Mark easier. The more we talk about workload, the easier it is to find solutions.

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Guidance and Accreditation Procedures

A Adopting the Workload Charter in your School

1. Compliance with the Charter will be assessed annually by the school and by the staff in school. To ensure smooth running, it would be best practice to set up a 'Workload Committee' to meet periodically, assess progress and discuss areas that may need further work.
2. The composition of the 'Workload Committee' can vary from school to school, but we would expect there to be representatives from management, teacher Trade Unions and support staff Trade Unions. It also may include governors or other staff where appropriate.
3. The 'Workload Committee' should meet to discuss the 'Workload Checklist' (appendix 1) and perform a self-assessment against the criteria. If this shows areas where the school is not fully compliant, the 'Workload Committee' can then plan how to achieve compliance and set about implementing the changes.
4. When the 'Workload Committee' or school management feel that the school is meeting the Coventry Fair Workload Charter they can then apply for accreditation.

B Method of School Accreditation

1. Contact the 'Coventry Fair Workload Group' and request the 'Workload Charter Survey'. Inform all staff that the 'Workload Charter Survey' will be launched in school.
2. The 'Workload Charter Survey' will be launched electronically with all staff. Each question corresponds to a clause in the 'Coventry Fair Workload Charter' and will ask all staff whether they agree that the school is complying with that area of the Charter. The threshold result for agreement of compliance on each question will be 90% of relevant staff.
3. If the 'Survey' returns a positive result, and the staff in the school agree that the Charter is being fully implemented in the school, then accreditation will be granted immediately.
4. If the 'Survey' returns a negative result in any of the areas, then the 'Workload Committee' should meet to discuss the results, investigate the areas not agreed to be compliant and put together a plan of how to address the issues.
5. Once the school has addressed the areas of non-compliance, the 'Workload Survey' can be requested and relaunched with staff (as points B 1-4).
6. Once accreditation is agreed, the School can use the 'Coventry Fair Workload Charter' Logo and Kite Mark

C Annual Assessment and Ongoing Accreditation

The Coventry Fair Workload Charter and the school accreditation will be assessed annually as follows:

1. The 'Workload Committee' will meet regularly throughout the annual cycle, with calendared meetings to discuss the application of the Charter in school. At a point no later than 12 months after the previous successful 'Workload Charter Survey', the school should request the launch of the 'Survey' for all staff (Steps B 1-2). If the 'Survey' returns a positive result, and the staff in the school agree that the Charter is still being fully implemented in the school, then accreditation will be granted for the following 12-month period.
2. If the 'Survey' returns a negative result in any of the areas, then the 'Workload Committee' should meet to investigate the areas not agreed to be compliant and put together a plan of how to address the issues..

The School will remain accredited, but have a period of no more than 8 weeks to address the concerns from the 'Survey'. The 'Workload Charter Survey' would then be re-launched with staff. If the re-taken 'Survey' returns a positive result, and the staff in the school agree that the Charter is now being fully implemented in the school, accreditation will be granted for the following 12-month period. However, if the 'Survey' returns another negative result, the school will lose its accreditation and the right to use the 'Coventry Fair Workload Charter' Logo and Kite Mark. The school should then look to review workload in school in order to regain accreditation through the processes in sections A and B.

3. If the school loses accreditation, then the Workload Committee should review workload in school and look to gain accreditation through the processes in sections A and B.
4. There may be a situation where the results of a 'Survey' are disputed by a school's management. In such cases, the school management should inform the 'Coventry Fair Workload Group' of their intention to appeal the outcome within 15 working days. The appeals process for management and for staff is contained in section D.

D Appeals Process

The Coventry Workload Group hope that any disagreement between school staff and management over compliance with the Charter can be resolved at school level through a functioning and regularly scheduled 'Workload Committee'. Below are the procedures to follow should agreement not be possible:

1. The school management has the right to appeal the outcome of a 'Workload Charter Survey' if it feels that the Charter is being fairly administered and upheld in the school yet the whole staff 'Survey' did not meet the threshold.
2. An Appeals Panel, comprising a Workload Group Headteacher, a representative from the Trade Union side and a third independent member from either the Local Authority or a local Governing body will be convened to adjudicate
3. During the Appeal, the School Management Representative will put their case, and provide evidence to show that the school is meeting the Charter. Both the staff representative and the Appeals Panel will be able to ask questions of the School Management Representative.
4. The Staff Representative (or their elected Trade Union Representative) will then put their case and present evidence to refute the assertions made in step 4. The School Management Representative and the Appeals Panel will be able to ask questions of the Staff Representative/elected Trade Union Representative.
5. The Appeals Panel will consider the evidence and present a verdict to either uphold or revoke the accreditation status of the school.

If school staff feel that, in the period following accreditation, there has been a significant increase in workload and that the Charter is no longer being met, the following applies:

6. Members of staff concerned about workload in their Charter accredited school should raise their concerns with the Staff Representative on the schools 'Workload Committee'. The Staff Representative should request a meeting of the school 'Workload Committee' to be convened within the next 20 working days to discuss and address the issues. A plan of action should be put into place and shared with staff.
7. If, following the intervention, the member(s) of staff are happy that the issue has been resolved then no further action is needed. However, if the member(s) of staff are not happy that the issue has been resolved then this should be raised again in another 'Workload Committee'.
8. If members of staff or their representatives feel that insufficient progress is being made following the second meeting, they can request through the 'Coventry Workload Group' that a 'Workload Survey' is launched in the school, following the procedure set out in section C.



