

Protection of Management Time

Issue

The need for protection of management time in Scottish schools.

Headline Position

For schools to be managed and led effectively, management time for Head Teachers, Deputies and Principal Teachers must be protected.

Full position

Head Teacher, Depute Head and Principal Teachers are specifically designated management roles within schools. Depending on the size of school and structures within local authorities, senior management teams can consist of only one person. People in these positions are there to lead and manage all aspects of school life and to maintain effective running of the school. Being diverted to take on duties of others in emergencies must be the exception rather than the norm otherwise the time school leaders devote to their core duties will be eroded (or have to be made up by working significant additional hours). Where it does become the norm these post-holders effectively become very highly paid supply or support staff.

The key issues which result in the erosion of management time for school leaders are:

- Cover for Reduced Class Contact Time – either by inadequate resourcing or to cover sickness absence.
- Increasing lack of availability of supply staff, both teaching and support.
- Increasing examples of school leaders' management time being sacrificed to give management time to school management teams.
- Lack of administrative staff and/or increasingly greater workload on current administrative staff, dependant on how local authorities are choosing to reduce their budgets.
- In some local authorities nursery Head Teachers are wholly class-committed.
- The tension between class commitment and management responsibilities.
- Huge additional workload from bidding and bureaucracy (linked to Named Person and GIRFEC) which distracts from learning, teaching and development.
- Increasing devolution of extra duties without extra resources and training to match. These include Named Person and Lead Professional roles.
- Additional tasks added to the role of senior management teams (or increased expectations from current tasks) which include National Improvement Framework, Maximising Attendance, Health & Safety, Professional Update, IT Systems, etc.

In some local authority areas headteachers are not counted as part of the pupil teacher ratio. AHDS believes this is good practice and should be replicated around Scotland. This arrangement allows the headteacher to focus on leading and managing the school and provides increased flexibility for dealing with or covering short-term exceptional circumstances.

Some local authorities have managed the implementation of reduced class contact time much more effectively than others. Authorities need to work together to identify best practice and to roll out the most effective models in all parts of Scotland.

- AHDS strongly recommends that the Scottish Government set up a group to determine minimum management time arrangements/structures for implementation across Scotland, particular attention should be paid to the role of teaching heads.

- AHDS strongly recommends that if the protection of teacher numbers is to continue nationally, so to should the protection of management time in order to ensure that our school leaders have sufficient time to manage and lead their schools effectively.