

Teacher Workload and Retention Conference - 5 March 2020

Speaker Notes relating to teacher workload and retention

Martin Fuller, Head of Maths, Admiral Lord Nelson School

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To help reduce workload and make feedback more effective we changed our marking policy in maths– we now mark weekly, 3-4 questions only. Two on the current topic, one on the previous topic and one topic that has been identified as a weakness from a previous assessment. We call this our Marked Review and it is embedded across the department and has made feedback more effective and less time consuming. Our team continue to tweak and improve the process but the new policy has made a huge impact in lots of ways, students are much more positive about maths and the team now really value the time they spend on marking and giving feedback.

Polly Honeychurch, Headteacher, Cottage Grove Primary

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In a large workforce it is easy to go unnoticed or to not know what others in your organisation are up to. In order to improve whole school communication and let everybody feel a valued part of the school team at Cottage Grove we have introduced a weekly 'bulletin of brilliance'. This is a chance for any member of staff to notice things that have gone well in the previous week. This might be someone they notice who has been supportive to them, someone who has gone the extra mile to make life easier for others. Everybody's contributions are combined into one bulletin which is emailed out to all staff. At the end of the working week it is lovely to be able to read the bulletin and celebrate the successes we have collectively had in the past week. Even in the toughest weeks there is always something to celebrate.

Roberta Kirby, Headteacher, Fernhurst Junior School

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I am in my fifteenth year as Headteacher at Fernhurst Junior School and have previously worked at 2 other Portsmouth Schools, prior to that I taught in Leigh Park in Hampshire. I am currently an LLE. I love my job and I recognise it is only part of me, I am passionate about my family life and being a mother and grandmother is a major part of my life and wellbeing. School staff deserve a life beyond the school gates and they deserve a home life even in term time! I believe they achieve more and are better role models if their own well-being is positive.

Deb Mason, Vice Principal, Miltoncross

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Teacher Workload and the retention of staff are key areas of my role at Miltoncross. Staff and student wellbeing has always been a high priority of the school. One strand of what I do is looking at supporting workload of staff from reducing data drops to flexible “department led” marking policies driven by the needs to the subjects. Our pedagogical model is a fundamental part of our teacher workload strategy by being a clear statement of expectations. Retention of good staff is a key concern and led to the creation of a bespoke RQT programme. We also work hard to create a collaborate, sharing ethos amongst the staff from events such as half termly teachmeets, joint planning sessions or CPD loyalty cards to promote a reduction in workload.

Emily Pountney, Vice Principal, Portsmouth College

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I am Vice Principal at Portsmouth College leading on the Curriculum, Teaching & Learning but also Staff Development and as part of that Staff Wellbeing. The college has around 250 staff and we are in our third year of developing our approach to Staff Wellbeing. In Year 1 we started having a yearly Wellbeing Day on one INSET Day in October which had fantastic feedback, then formed a staff working group and created a Wellbeing Strategy and introduced weekly wellbeing activities. In year 2 we appointed a Wellbeing Champion and conducted a wide ranging staff survey which led to a number of changes to our processes and planning in response to findings. This year we are focusing more on workload and staff benefits and have formed a staff Wellbeing Steering Group who will be looking at the next phase of development.

Judith Rutherford, National Leader of Governance

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Judith is a governance expert who, after a successful career in audit and risk management, now works with schools and their governing bodies to improve outcomes for children. She is a Chair of Governors, a National Leader of Governance, Consultant for the National Governors Association and has been appointed as an External Educational Expert by the Department for Education. Judith has a particular interest in the ways in which effective school governance arrangements can take account of the impact on workload for Headteachers and Senior Leadership Teams.