Sara Bubb & Peter Earley

MANAGING TEACHER WORKLOAD

Work-Life Balance and Wellbeing

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and
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Abbreviations

ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
CPD	continuing professional development
CSBM	Certificate of School Business Management
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
GTC	General Teaching Council
GTP	graduate teacher programme
HLTA	higher level teaching assistant
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HoD	Head of Department
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
IAM	Institute of Administrative Management
ICT	information and communications technology
IEP	Individual education plan (for pupils with SEN)
IiP	Investors in People
INSET	in-service education and training
IRU	Implementation Review Unit
IWB	interactive whiteboard
KS	Key Stage
LEA	local education authority
Lig	Leadership incentive grant
LM	learning mentor
LMS	Local management of schools
LRA	learning resource assistant
LSA	learning support assistant
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LT	Leadership team
MARRA	monitoring assessment, recording, reporting and accountability
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NCT	Non-contact time
NHSS	National Healthy School Standard
NJC	National Joint Council for Local Government Services
NPQH	National professional qualification for headship
NRT	National Remodelling Team
NVQ	national vocational qualification
NQT	newly qualified teacher
NUT	National Union of Teachers
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
OSR	organizational self-review

PM	Performance management
PPA	planning, preparation and administration
PSHE	personal, social and health education
PwC	PriceWaterhouseCoopers
QCA	Qualification and Curriculum Authority
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SAT	standard assessment task
SBM	School Business Manager
SCT	school change team
SDP	School development plan
SEN	special educational needs
SENCO	Special educational needs co-ordinator
SHA	Secondary Heads Association
SLT	Senior leadership team
SMT	senior management team
SNA	special needs assistant
STA	specialist teacher assistant
STRB	School Teachers' Review Body
TA	teaching assistant
TES	*Times Educational Supplement*
TPA	teacher's personal assistant
TSL	Teacher Support Line
TSN	Teacher Support Network
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
VLE	virtual learning environment
WA	welfare assistant
WAMG	Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group
VRQ	vocationally relevant qualification

Preface

It is difficult to pick up a newspaper today without coming across an article or feature about education, especially one concerning teacher workload or recruitment and retention. Of course these are related and are often considered alongside the associated notions of staff wellbeing and teacher and headteacher stress. These are all big issues and ones which culminated in January 2003 when the government signed a 'historic' national agreement with the employers, headteacher associations and school workforce unions (with the notable exception of the largest teacher union, the National Union of Teachers). The agreement, which followed on from the proposals outlined in *Time for Standards* (DfES, 2002a), aims to help schools, teachers and support staff meet the challenges that lie ahead. It proposes action designed to help schools raise standards and tackle issues of workload. As the government Minister at the time said: 'we want to free up teachers' time to concentrate on what they do best – teaching'. The signatories to the agreement are acting together at a national level in the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group to oversee the delivery of a seven-point plan designed to create time for teachers and heads to improve standards. (Further details of the various phases of the national agreement which are statutory and affect staff contracts are outlined later in the book.)

It was within this context of work intensification and increased teacher workload being very high on the political agenda that we were commissioned by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) in the autumn of 2002 to undertake a six-month research and development project. We were invited to work with ATL teacher members to develop and trial a 'workload self-audit' – a tool that teachers could use to ascertain how many hours they were working each week and how they were using their time, with a view to considering how that time might be best used for professional purposes (teaching and learning), to enhance job satisfaction and to achieve a better work-life balance. It was our work on the self-audit that led to us to want to write this book.

There were several other factors, too, that made us feel there was a clear need for a book of this type. One of us (SB) has worked for many years with newly qualified teachers, both as a trainer and as a *Times Educational Supplement* (*TES*) agony aunt, and was very aware of the many things affecting their work – and life! – and the need to provide effective means of support to help prevent the high drop-out rate experienced within the teaching profession within the first three years of service. The other (PE) had researched and taught on various aspects of 'human resource management' and was very aware of the growing interest in such matters as staff wellbeing, stress management and the notion that some organizations were more 'toxic' than others! Also as a secondary school governor for many years, chairing the Personnel and Staff Development Committee, there was an awareness of recent high-profile stress cases with their legal implications for employers. In addition it was becoming apparent that some

government initiatives such as Investors in People, Healthy Schools and the Well-Being Programme had a lot to offer schools as they increasingly focused their efforts, rightly, on their people. After all if a school is spending the vast bulk of its budget on its staff, it makes sense to ensure the 'human resources' are giving of their best and that the school and governing body is a 'good employer'. This also makes a lot of sense for those schools finding it difficult to recruit staff – after all, if you have a choice as to where to teach where would you prefer to go – a school that is concerned with your welfare or one that is not?

The need for a book dealing with all these issues was obvious we thought, but we also felt that what was needed was not so much an academic tome but rather a concise, 'teacher-friendly' guide to this burgeoning field. We wanted to provide an overview by setting the scene but we also wished, by drawing on relevant research and writing, to offer a critical eye on what's happening rather than just following the government's agenda. What, for example, is the reality of workload reform in a time of budget constraints?

Of course the reader must be the judge of how successful we have been, but hopefully we will have achieved our main aim of offering the busy practitioner an overview of what's happening in this field, along with some suggestions and advice as to how to improve matters at both individual and school level.

The book is divided into three sections. We begin by looking at *wellbeing and workload*. What do we know about teacher workload and how teachers spend their time, what are the causes and effects of excessive workload, especially in relation to wellbeing, stress and, crucially, recruitment and retention? Chapter 2 asks what is happening to help address workload and wellbeing, and gives consideration to the plans for the remodelling of the school workforce with reference to, for example, the DfES's Transforming School Workforce Pathfinder Project, the National Remodelling Team (NRT), higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs), bureaucratic burdens, the Well-Being Programme and issues surrounding staff recruitment and retention.

The second section is entitled '*How do you change it?*' and consists of three chapters, the first of which covers the crucial area of managing change. It asks why is change necessary and why managing it is so complex, particularly dealing with resistance and conflict. Models for changing workload and wellbeing are examined, including the approaches of the National Remodelling Team and the Well-Being Programme.

Chapter 4 is about auditing how teachers spend their worktime and it is here we introduce the ATL worktime audit. We explain how to complete it and outline briefly the main findings of our piloting of the audit, including how teachers were able to make more effective use of time and to bring about change in their working lives.

The following chapter – Chapter 5 – continues this theme when it provides advice and guidance on taking care of staff. We look at work-life balance, time and stress management and, generally, how to make schools better places in which to work.

The third and final section provides *ideas for the different groups* working in schools – teachers, support staff and school leaders (heads, deputies, middle managers). Chapter 6 examines how teachers can save time by looking at the big time-consumers such as planning. It also considers marking, report writing, display and working with teaching assistants. The latter topic is given further consideration in the next chapter which discusses how support staff can be effectively deployed in schools. Paraprofessionals who teach and cover, including teaching assistants and HLTAs, are discussed along with staff in pastoral and administrative roles. Forms of organizational support provided by bursars and premises managers are also examined. The chapter concludes by considering a number of unresolved issues relating to support staff, such as whether an increase in support staff will mean fewer jobs for teachers, and whether we are just shifting stress and long working hours onto other people. Are we exploiting support staff and is teacher workload being reduced at their expense? We know, for example, that support staff earn significantly less than their professional colleagues.

In the final chapter consideration is given to school leaders who play a crucial role in staff wellbeing and workload – including their own! We focus on what is known about effective leadership and management in this area, and highlight some of the key skills which may need developing, such as meetings management, delegation and communication skills. School leaders and managers through their actions can help ensure the school as a workplace is relatively 'stress free' and that the workload and wellbeing of others is given the importance it deserves. However, there is also a need for their own wellbeing to be given high priority, something we argue that does not always happen as some heads and other school leaders take on more – not less – responsibility and workload! The wellbeing of school leaders, indeed all staff, is crucial to an effective school and it is hoped that this short book will be used to ensure that the school's most important resource is empowered and enabled to do its job well – which, of course, is to ensure the quality of education offered to its pupils is second to none!