

DfE WORKLOAD SURVEY 2013 – SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The findings of the 2013 DfE Teachers' Workload Diary Survey were finally published on 28 February 2014, almost a year after the survey was undertaken.

Publication only took place following NUT pressure in the form of a freedom of information request the previous week.

This was the 12th survey undertaken; previous surveys were carried out in 1994, 1996, 2000, and then annually between 2003 and 2010. This was the first survey undertaken by the Coalition Government.

Although the DfE maintains that differences in methodology between 2010 and 2013 mean that direct comparisons cannot be made with earlier teacher workload surveys, the NUT's view is that this is a smoke screen designed to play down the huge increase in hours worked during the period that Michael Gove has been Secretary of State for Education.

How was the survey undertaken?

The data collection mode was a paper self-completion questionnaire. A questionnaire pack was mailed out to each selected teacher at their school. Teachers completed the questionnaire, recording time for two fixed days during the week commencing 11 March 2013. 6753 teachers were sampled and 1004 (15%) completed a usable diary survey.

What did the survey reveal?

The survey revealed steep increases in working hours for all categories of teachers compared with 2010, as depicted below, and which cannot be explained away by sampling differences.

Category of Teacher	2010	2013
Primary Classroom Teachers	50.2	59.3
Secondary Classroom Teachers	49.9	55.7
Primary Head Teachers	56.1	60.2
Secondary Head Teachers	57.3	63.3
Special School Classroom Teachers	46.4	50.2

Primary classroom teachers' hours have increased by over nine hours a week during Mr Gove's time as Education Secretary, and secondary classroom teachers are only slightly behind with nearly a six hour increase.



Other significant findings

- Every week, both primary and secondary classroom teachers work the equivalent of a day every weekend and a day outside the hours of 8am-6pm. (Primary classroom teachers work on average 7.7 hours at weekends and 6.4 hours per week before school and after 6pm. Secondary teachers work on average 6.2 hours at weekends and 5.8 hours before and after school every week).
- Despite there being a requirement that teachers should not routinely undertake work of a clerical or administrative nature, classroom teachers in primary schools spend on average over 4 hours every week on this type of work and secondary classroom teachers 2.3 hours.
- For the average primary classroom teacher, 19 hours of teaching per week generates a massive 22.6 hours of planning, preparation and assessment. For secondary classroom teachers, the corresponding figures are 19.6 hours of teaching and 18.9 hours of preparation. This is completely out of proportion and only serves to highlight what we already know about excessive accountability regimes in schools.
- Teachers who took part in the survey were asked to give examples of what they thought were unnecessary and bureaucratic tasks. Two common themes emerged – duplication and the level of detail required in certain circumstances. Duplication was referred to in terms of paperwork, marking and recording pupil progress and data analysis, reporting and evidence gathering. The level of detail required was considered to be unnecessary with regard to planning, marking and progress recording.

What is the DfE response to these findings?

The DfE response has so far been both defensive and dismissive.

The DfE has attempted to dismiss these findings, claiming that the 2013 figures cannot be compared to previous figures and that *'teaching has never been more attractive'*. These claims sound increasingly hollow in light of these findings.

Regardless of any comparisons, these figures cannot be explained away. However you look at it, working hours of nearly 60 hours per week are neither acceptable nor sustainable.

The DfE has also attempted to argue that it is *'freeing up'* teachers and cutting so-called *'unnecessary guidance'*. Clearly, this plan is not working; indeed the NUT has long argued that removing guidance is a complete red herring; it does not reduce workload if teachers then have to look for it elsewhere.

What needs to happen is for Michael Gove to engage with the NUT in the forthcoming programme of talks and take concrete steps to address the culture of excessive workload in the teaching profession.