



Archdiocesan Guidance on Headteacher Health and Well-Being

Governing Bodies have a statutory responsibility for the work-life balance of their Headteacher. The Headteacher has the responsibility for ensuring that teachers achieve the same.

Limiting unnecessary stress; working a reasonable number of hours and meeting the demands of the role, whilst maintaining a personal life, are essential to ensuring that our Headteachers can effectively fulfil the role in leading a school.

The School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (2015) states:

Governing bodies and Headteachers, in carrying out their duties, must have regard to the need for the **Headteacher** and teachers at the school to be able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work. (STPCD para 54.4)

Legislation underpins this, within the Health and Safety Act (1974); the Working Time Directive (1998) and the Employment Regulations Act (1999). Phase 3 of the National Workforce Agreement places responsibility on the Governing Body for:

- ensuring that the Headteacher has a reasonable workload in support of a reasonable worklife balance, having regard for health and welfare, and
- providing Headteachers with dedicated time that recognises their significant leadership responsibilities for the school

What is a reasonable work/life balance?

What constitutes a reasonable work/life balance is different for different people and different for individuals at different times in their life. Headteachers also have a responsibility themselves for their own work/life balance but do not always recognise this. Governing Bodies need to be proactive in exploring this issue with their Headteacher, to challenge them and to watch out for indicators such as health issues, stress, reduced attendance etc.

Dedicated Headship Time

Since September 2005 (STPCD 2005), Governing Bodies have had a statutory responsibility to ensure that the Headteacher takes dedicated headship time during the school working week. It is particularly important that the governors take an

active role in strategically monitoring that this time is taken. The Headteacher needs to focus on the important rather than the urgent in order to develop the necessary vision and direction to improve the quality of education and raise standards. Clearly this time alone will not be sufficient for Heads to complete all of their strategic activities. However, it will ensure that some highly productive, dedicated time, free from interruptions to lead, rather than just manage, their schools

There is no prescribed amount of dedicated headship time in hours, but many governing bodies look to a minimum of ten percent during the school week. This provides, for example:

- time for longer term strategic thinking, to consider what is on the horizon and how best to lead the school to meet these challenges
- dedicated time (off site) to engage in research/reflection in line with identified school improvement priorities either alone or in partnership with other professionals
- time to read, reflect on, interpret and consider the implications of Government or local initiatives etc
- for those heads who also teach, this provides allocated time to support this aspect of their role

It should not be interrupted by:

- routine matters
- phone calls or enquiries in person
- requirements to cover classes
- visitors - internal or external

This time may be spent off site; working individually; working with members of the senior leadership team, other Headteachers and associated professionals.

How can governors promote the health and well-being of their Headteacher?

In addition to the allocations of dedicated headship time, we believe that it is good practice to allocate specific funding for the support of headteachers' well-being and would recommend that funding for the equivalent of 3 days per year, should be set aside, as a minimum, to support this aim. This time can then be utilised in funded activities designed to support the specific well-being needs of the individual. We believe that access to supportive and non-managerial discussions will aid the well-being of our headteachers.

Headteachers often cite the loneliness of the role and the weight of responsibility, as factors leading to stress. We believe that **non managerial supervision**, is a proactive solution to the solitude often felt by Heads. Provided by a suitably trained and experienced external professional, such opportunities to talk to another

colleague, in confidence, can be the factor that averts the onset of stress. Funding for this activity would be met by the school, in line with the statutory duty of care.

We would advise that non-managerial supervision is undertaken by a colleague in a different Local Authority. The Archdiocese will broker appropriate training and will publish a list of facilitators to all Headteachers.

The identification of a named governor to lead on head teacher well-being ensures that this area is regularly reviewed. The named governor should:

- regularly discuss relevant matters in detail with the head teacher with some degree of confidentiality and thereby monitor any adverse impact on the Headteacher's health and well-being
- lead the governing body in an annual review of head teacher well-being
- attend training in relation to head teacher well-being and appraisal

Support for New/Acting Headteachers

We believe that New/Acting Headteachers should have access to the same level of support as more experienced colleagues.

In addition we will offer the following Induction support for newly appointed or Acting Headteachers:

- a mutually agreed 'mentor', from a Catholic school within the Archdiocese
- half-termly Archdiocesan network meetings to provide a 'menu' of information/guidance together with support for priority areas identified by the group.
- a range of briefing sessions, determined in consultation with new/Acting Heads
- pastoral support from the allocated Diocesan Schools Officer for those new to role

Outcomes

The planned outcomes of taking a positive action in terms of Headteacher wellbeing are:

- retention of high quality leaders in our schools
- improvement in the health and well being of headteachers in Archdiocesan schools and a reduction in absence due to stress
- ensuring that new/acting Headteachers have the necessary support to fulfil the role

- improved outcomes for children and young people by ensuring that the quality of leadership is maintained

Appendix One

Headteacher well-being – questions for governors

Is there an assigned governor responsible for Headteacher well-being, including workload?

How does this governor meet these responsibilities?

Does the Headteacher have designated headship time?

Does your Headteacher take a lunch break?

Is the Headteacher undertaking administrative duties that could be undertaken by others?

Is the Headteacher encouraged to attend cluster/network meetings?

Are the Headteacher Performance Management Reviews treated as a positive development opportunity?

Do you have a written policy statement on Headteacher well-being?

A written policy makes it clear to all parties what the arrangements will be. Reviewing this statement on an annual basis enables the governing body to assess the effectiveness of this policy and, thereby, ensures accountability

Are opportunities for the professional development of the Headteacher reviewed?

Does the Headteacher have the opportunity to work off site on a planned and regular basis?

How long are governing body meetings? Heads will already have had a long day. How long is their drive home? Legally, there should be an eleven hour gap before returning to work (Working Time Regulations 1998)

Do you praise, encourage, acknowledge the achievements of your Head?
Sometimes it is difficult for them to get this from their staff so there is a role for governors here

Appendix Two

Governing Body meetings - simple ways to support health and well-being of your headteacher

The following are offered for your consideration, but guidelines are most meaningful when determined in dialogue between the Headteacher and Governors

Always start Governing Body meetings on time

Ensure that the meetings have a guillotined finish time and that this is adhered to

Assume that governors have read the papers before the meeting

Ensure that effective clerking arrangements are in place

Delegate items to committees for longer discussion and debate

Sometimes use other senior staff to report to committees in lieu of the Headteacher

Avoid delegating the majority of matters to the Head or Chair

Meet at more flexible times e.g. during the school day, as soon as possible at the end of the school day

Amalgamate committees or run them 'back to back'

Understand the implications for time when the governing body requests the head to prepare papers/policies

Health and Well-being - Headteacher entitlement

The Governing Body of _____ Catholic School are committed to the health and well-being of the Headteacher, and in the light of this, we will support the following activities:

Audience	Activity	Outcome
All Headteachers	<p>Regular meetings between Governor (Health and Wellbeing) to focus on workload and possible areas of stress</p> <p>Access to funded release of at least 3 days per year, to provide opportunity for Heads' attendance at non-managerial supervision</p> <p>Allocation of 10% Dedicated Headteacher Release time</p> <p>Allocation of a named Governor for Headteacher Health and Well-being, who will be proactive in meeting the Headteacher regularly and supporting any identified need</p>	<p>Retention of highly skilled and experienced headteachers</p> <p>Reduction in absence due to work-related stress</p> <p>Greater capacity of headteachers</p>
Acting Headteachers New Headteachers	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <p>Allocation of time Mentor Head to provide support/guidance during the period of Acting Headship or for at least the first year of Headship</p>	<p>Positive impact on the recruitment of headteachers</p>

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors)

Date: _____