

## Tips to Combat Stress in Schools

Schools should have due regard for their obligations under the Working Times Regulations, and for maintained schools, academies and MATs, the Competency Framework for Governance which states that all members of the Board should pay due regard to ensuring that leaders and teachers are able to have a satisfactory work-life balance and their obligations under the STPCD.

If a member of staff becomes ill through work-related stress which may eventually lead to a resignation or even dismissal, the employer will be judged on whether they have done everything they could to support their employee. In July 2018 and subsequently updated, the government published a [workload reduction toolkit](#) and [tips to reduce workload in your school](#), which were developed by education specialists following consultation with schools. The guidance sets out that all schools should:

### Identify the workload issues

In order to pinpoint areas of concerns, you can conduct staff questionnaires, workshops, informal discussions, group meetings and performance appraisals. All are useful ways to extract key workplace stressors and find common trends and patterns.

### Address the issues in your school

Once you understand what is causing stress in your school, you need to take action to reduce or eliminate the risks.

If, for example, lesson planning is the source of teachers' stress, think about how technology can be used to take the burden off teachers and how to promote greater collaboration between your teachers, and review whether your resources are aiding your employees in the right way. If poor management is the issue, ensure that performance management needs are being addressed. Coaching and development can be effective at trying to improve managers so-called 'softer' skills.

### Evaluate the impact

Once you have implemented the changes, you will need to measure the results. This could involve evaluating pupil results, assessing responses from surveys to parents or comparing outcomes from trying different trials.

### Top tips for combating stress

Here are some key tips intended to help eradicate stress caused by unnecessary workload:

- Look at effective use of technology.
- Review marking practices and think about conducting a feedback and marking workshop with staff.
- Assess curriculum planning.

- Consider the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and what it means for data management.
- Think about how you are communicating with staff and ways this can be done more effectively.
- Plan ahead for changes and implement them in a structured manner.
- Review and streamline your performance management processes and provide support for staff wellbeing, particularly for those in the early stages of their career.
- Consider implementing confidential Employee Assistance Programmes, counselling and other support provision for staff.

The full list of tips can be found [here](#).