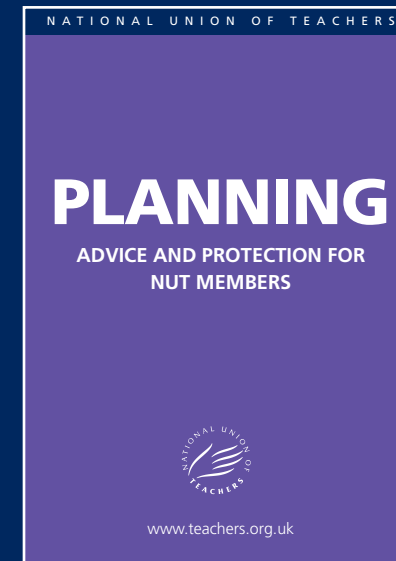


might initially be longer than those produced by more traditional means, although time can be saved if this work is able to be edited and re-used in the future.

Whilst it is true that no plans written by someone else can be completely suitable for an individual teacher or class, taking a pre-prepared plan and adapting it to a particular situation can save a lot of work. There is a range of high quality material for all of the primary core and foundation subjects available on the internet which many teachers have found to be extremely helpful.

Teachernet, (www.Teachernet.gov.uk/Useful_Lesson_Plans_And_Resources), for example, offers over a thousand lesson plans and resources which have been evaluated by teachers. These are downloadable in such a way as to enable teachers to alter them to suit their own needs. Links to other relevant materials from reputable sources, such as the QCA and the BBC, are also provided.

Schemes of work, which are identical to those published by QCA, are available on the Standards Site (www.Standards.dfee.gov.uk/schemes/). These schemes are able to be browsed, printed, downloaded and edited, saving time from not having to photocopy or write out extracts, for example.



PLANNING

ADVICE AND PROTECTION FOR NUT MEMBERS



www.teachers.org.uk

INTRODUCTION FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Current demands and expectations for planning contribute to teachers' excessive workload. The recently published *Teacher Workload Study*, undertaken for the DfES by Pricewaterhouse Coopers, found that planning and preparation was the second highest workload burden for teachers.

Much of this workload has been driven by the fear that teachers will be called to account by OFSTED and must have evidence of what has been taught. Local Education Authority advisors and inspectors can place immense pressure on headteachers to require of teachers detailed planning which is, in fact, unnecessary. Headteachers themselves can sometimes misinterpret what is expected of schools.

Yet OFSTED has insisted that the focus should be on what has been learnt rather than on what has been taught. Its 2000 – 01 Annual Report states that primary teachers' planning is effective in the vast majority of schools but "extensive and over-elaborate planning still creates unnecessary pressure on teachers' time". This finding is also relevant to other phases.

The National Union of Teachers ballot protecting members from bureaucratic burdens applies to excessive planning expectations of teachers. This protection arises from the principles enshrined in the report of the Government's 1998 Working Party on Bureaucracy and from the provisions of Government Circulars in England and Wales on Reducing Bureaucratic Burdens.

This leaflet provides advice and protection to members on excessive demands for planning which draws on the practical experience of NUT members in schools.

The relevant section of the NUT's guidance on protecting members from bureaucratic burdens is set out below and applies to the Union's guidance on planning.

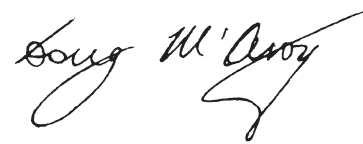
"The guidelines apply to NUT members in community and voluntary-controlled schools and in voluntary-aided and foundation schools.

The guidelines are issued as a set of instructions that, if followed, will reduce or remove bureaucratic burdens. They are written in such a way as not to leave members feeling isolated, nor feeling constrained against using their professional judgements.

Use of the guidelines will support, not hinder, members in their professional work. Members will exercise their professional judgement in deciding whether to draw on the protection afforded by the ballot. Where members consider that carrying out any aspect of the guidelines would, in fact, increase pressure on them, then they should continue to operate according to their professional judgement.

The NUT regional office, or in Wales, the NUT Wales Office, NUT Cymru, should be informed immediately if members believe that they are subject to excessive demands for planning."

Some activities set out in the NUT's guidance may appear specifically in job descriptions. Members requiring clarification should contact their NUT regional office, or NUT Wales Office, NUT Cymru.



LONG AND MEDIUM-TERM PLANNING

Long and medium-term planning should involve all staff in a key stage or phase working together to ensure coherence and curriculum continuity. Individual teachers should not feel pressurised to produce all such plans independently.

It is not reasonable to expect teachers to write new plans for every group or cohort of pupils. Plans can be stored and revised and, often, only minor amendment is necessary.

Long and medium-term plans can be photocopied from the relevant QCA or other curriculum documents or downloaded from the Internet (see below). It is quite acceptable to annotate, highlight, date and amend these.

SHORT-TERM PLANNING

Short-term planning is the professional responsibility of all individual teachers, who build on the medium-term plans by talking into account the particular needs of their class or groups.

Plans should be "fit for purpose". They should be useful to individual teachers and reflect what they need to be able to teach particular classes. Other teachers should be able to understand the plans.

Plans should be kept to a minimum length. They can be set out in the form of bullet points or notes, including how learning objectives will be achieved. Some teachers may want to record more detail than other colleagues. This is a matter of personal choice.

Plans are working documents and do not need to be beautifully presented or copied out for others.

Teachers should use their professional judgement on whether to use non-mandatory schemes of work.

Plans do not have to be very long or complex. They should be updated only when necessary and not more than once a year.

With the exception of some children with specific needs, lesson plans for individual pupils are not necessary. Planning should be kept to the minimum necessary. Weekly plans, for example, should only be necessary if identified concerns have been raised and planning forms part of those concerns. In this situation, teachers should be told the reason for the request, the basis for the concern and should be asked to hand in plans at a convenient time, by prior arrangement.

Teachers' lesson plans should be treated with respect. Other teachers should not write comments on them without consulting the teacher concerned.

Despite OFSTED's own conclusions about excessive planning, there are some inspection teams which still expect to be provided with plans which are unnecessary and over-detailed. Where members find that OFSTED teams have such expectations they should contact their relevant regional office or, in Wales, the NUT Wales Office, NUT Cymru, immediately, for advice.

USING ICT

The decision to use ICT in planning is very much dependent on individual teachers' access to it and on their levels of skill and confidence. It should also be remembered that the amount of time spent producing plans