

Title: Reduction in Class Contact Time in Scottish Borders Primary Schools **Number:** D4
Date: Update April 2011

An important part of the National Agreement was a commitment to reduce every primary class teacher's class contact time from the current 25 hours to 22.5 hours. This was fully implemented from session 2006–07 with part-time staff having their class contact time reduced on a pro rata basis.

Education and Lifelong Learning recommended that RICCT (Reduction in Class Contact Time) be implemented in the following ways:

- Specialist P.E teachers to provide lessons to all classes every week (recommended minimum is 45 minutes). This can make up part of the recommended 2 hours per week of quality P.E time.
- Music, Art and Drama teachers can be employed in a number of schools

The balance of time will be provided by:

- a Primary Curriculum Support Teacher (PCST) who will deliver a quality learning experience

or

- shared school time (e.g. assembly) can be used to give a numbers of teachers their allocation of RICCT time.

There will be no RICCT provided during the first week of any school year allowing for consultations, training, etc for P/CSTs.

If a teacher receives part of their RICCT allocation on a school holiday (e.g. May Day) the teacher will lose that portion of their non class contact time that week. Headteachers may wish to negotiate a balancing out of this lost time over the session so that the same staff do not lose out every time there is a holiday on that day.

Guidance on the deployment of PE, Arts and PCS Teachers

- Headteachers should set up a programme which allows the teachers and classroom teachers time for joint planning, exchange of information and assessment. This time should be part of the agreed allocation for preparation and/or collective activities. This would enable the school to communicate all relevant information to the teachers (e.g. medical, AS needs), and enable the staff to agree appropriate assistance, e.g. additional needs assistants or classroom assistants.
- Both classroom teachers and P/CSTs have an entitlement to appropriate time within the 35 hour working week for necessary collegiate work, and a responsibility to ensure that consultation leading to appropriate teaching and learning for each child takes place.
- P/CSTs are not there to assist or support other *teachers*, but as a member of the team which is responsible for the class, delivering agreed areas of the curriculum, and therefore carrying responsibility for planning, assessing, recording and reporting.

- As both class teachers and P/CSTs will be involved in the delivery of certain subjects, arrangements are necessary to facilitate assessing, recording and reporting. Class teachers could opt to be present at times during the PE lesson. This may be part of the planning or preparation process, or may meet agreed CPD needs.

Line Management

P/CSTs will be line managed by headteachers and this will be allocated and agreed prior to the start of a new session. Base schools will also be identified. For teachers who are employed in several schools their line manager will normally be the head of their base school or of the school in which they spend the bulk of their time. Senior Education Officers at headquarters maintain an overview responsibility for CSTs.

Timetabling

Headteachers will require to timetable carefully so that each teacher's non-class contact time is organised for each week of the session. The National Agreement makes clear that each teacher's class contact time should be 22.5 hours per week. There is no provision in the scheme for **aggregation**, which is the practice of carrying time over from one week to the next in order to allow teachers a longer period free from class contact, and the authority cannot advocate this practice, as it would be in breach of National Agreements on Conditions of Service. While individual schools might wish to negotiate such an option, they would have to understand that any teacher could refuse to take part in such a scheme, even if the majority of colleagues were in favour of it. Equally, a new member of staff would have every right to refuse to participate, as would a temporary teacher in the school.

Headteachers and their staff should agree arrangements to ensure that classes are handed over on time, e.g. from PE teacher to class teacher and vice versa so that entitlement to non-contact time is not compromised.

Where possible Headteachers should consider timetabling certain teachers (e.g. stage partners) to have concurrent RICCT to support joint planning, etc.

Absence

There is a commitment on all sides to ensure that the reduction of class contact time takes place each week, and equally a commitment that the way the reduction is achieved should contribute to the teaching and learning process, and to the advantage of the pupils involved.

There is an understanding that in the Scottish Borders, with a very wide variety of different school sizes and locations, any solution must be flexible, and able to meet the needs of the individual schools involved.

In the event of the absence of the teacher who is providing the additional teaching time, the following steps should be taken:-

- If available, a supply PE teacher should be employed to cover the classes.
- The class teacher could take the class, and have the non-contact time replaced later in the week or as soon as possible by the end of the following week. This should be done through the provision of supply teachers.
- A senior manager, (Headteacher or Depute Head) might take the whole school or a section of the school for a period of time to allow several teachers to retain their non-contact time. This could take the form of an assembly or other appropriate activity. There would need to be the appropriate number of responsible adults present.