

Subject:

DE Circular Number 2026/13

Issued: 22 June 2026

GOVERNOR WORKLOAD AND WELLBEING CHAMPION

Audience:

- Principals, Vice-Principals and Teachers in Grant-aided Schools;
- Boards of Governors of Grant-aided Schools;
- Education Authority;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta;
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education;
- Governing Bodies Association (Grammar Schools);
- Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC);
- Teachers' Unions;
- General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland;
- EOTAS Centres.

Summary of Contents:

This circular, issued by the Department of Education, recommends that boards of governors should appoint a designated governor or subgroup of governors to act as workload and wellbeing champions for the school leader.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed to:
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Governors' Awareness:

Essential

Status of Contents:

For information and action by schools

Related Documents:

None

Superseded Documents:

None

Expiry Date:

N/A

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Introduction

1. The Department is committed to reducing unnecessary workload, strengthening professional trust, and improving wellbeing across the teaching profession.
2. **The Department is recommending that boards of governors should appoint a designated governor or subgroup of governors to act as workload and wellbeing champion for the school leader.**
3. This role will introduce a formal mechanism within school governance to oversee, monitor, and challenge workload expectations placed on school leaders and will be supported by the development and delivery of guidance and training for governors to ensure they are equipped to undertake the role effectively. This guidance will be developed during the Autumn term of 2026 and schools should take forward the identification of an appropriate governor(s) in the new school year and consider how their role might work best within their own school context.

Independent Review of Teacher Workload

4. Implementation of this recommendation will satisfy Recommendation 12 of the [Independent Review of Teacher Workload Report](#).

Recommendation 12 - Workload and wellbeing champion

The evidence from the Independent Review of Teacher Workload highlighted that school leaders are operating under particularly acute and sustained workload pressures. The cumulative impact of these pressures is significant, and excessive workload not only affects the wellbeing of school leader, contributing to stress, fatigue, and burnout, but also has wider implications for the effectiveness and sustainability of school leadership. Addressing these workload pressures is therefore not only a matter of individual wellbeing, but a critical system-level priority.

5. The Independent Panel therefore recommended that a designated governor should be assigned to act as a champion for school leader workload and wellbeing.

John Mason
Teaching Workforce Team