

# Framework for Workplace Practices in Primary Schools conducted by Sydney Catholic Schools 2020-2021

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## 1. Introduction

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The objective of this document is to provide a Framework, which allows certainty about work expectations that is enforceable and adhered to by Sydney Catholic Schools staff, whilst retaining flexibility to suit local needs. It operates at its broadest level to provide equity, predictability and consistency within and between schools of the Archdiocese.

In reaching this Agreement, the parties acknowledge that this document is underpinned by each of the entitlements and expectations of teachers in Catholic Schools contained in the relevant Sydney Catholic Schools enterprise agreement applicable to teachers, Sydney Catholic Schools policies and guidelines, and the AITSL and NSW Teaching Standards.

SCS and the IEU acknowledge the importance and changing nature of contemporary teaching. Expectations on teaching staff change with the primary purpose of improving educational outcomes for students. Teachers are expected to operate effectively at all stages of the teaching and learning cycle, including planning for learning and assessment, developing learning programs, teaching, assessing, providing feedback on student learning and reporting to parents/carers<sup>1</sup>.

SCS and the IEU recognise that teachers are professionals and that as professionals not all of these professional duties can be completed in the hours outlined in this framework.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/standards>

Nevertheless, Principals should aim to achieve equity of duties across all schoolteachers to balance workloads and ensure an appropriate level of work/life balance for all staff.

## 2. Work Categories

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Professional duties are grouped into four categories:

- *Face-to-face teaching*
- *Supervision*
- *Meetings and briefings*
- *Co-curricular activities*

### 2.1 Face-to-Face Teaching

Face-to-face teaching is the actual time a teacher spends with an instructional group that is timetabled activities, which require instruction of students, including supervision of students at assemblies and other timetabled school related activities. Standard face-to-face hours in the Archdiocese of Sydney are no more than 50 per fortnight (less the agreed PPT per fortnight).

#### 2.1.1 Professional Planning Time (PPT) for Teachers

The professional practice of a teacher requires that a teacher is released from face-to-face teaching in order to “plan for and implement effective teaching and learning” (Australian Teacher Standards, Standard 3). This requires that a teacher, among other things:

- establish challenging learning goals
- plan, structure and sequence learning programs
- evaluate and improve teaching programs
- engage parents in the educative process

In addition, the work of the teacher requires that they assess student learning, and provide feedback to students on their learning (Australian Teacher Standards, Standard 5)

- (a) Each full-time Teacher shall be entitled to **120 minutes of Professional Planning Time (PPT)** that is release from face to face teaching, each week. This provision is to support Teachers in achieving learning outcomes for students, for example by planning, programming and carrying out related administrative responsibilities. The use of PPT for this purpose is determined by the Teacher and cannot be utilised for school purposes or subject to direction by the Principal.
- (b) PPT will be taken on a weekly basis or otherwise as agreed between each Teacher and the Principal. Individual Teachers may agree to different models of release within the same school following consultation and agreement with the Principal. Requests by a Teacher for accumulated release time will not be unreasonably refused. Where full or part-day blocks of PPT are accumulated, Teachers are expected to attend school.
- (c) A part-time Teacher is entitled to pro rata PPT. A Teacher who has a load of 0.4 FTE or less may be required to take their proportion of their PPT in a way that is mutually convenient for the Teacher as well as for the school.
- (d) Where PPT is foregone because of an activity organised by the school on the scheduled day (e.g. sport and swimming carnivals or professional development day) or where PPT falls on a public holiday, the PPT will be rescheduled to another day.
- (e) PPT will not be rescheduled when a Teacher is on Personal/Carer's Leave except to the extent that the PPT has accrued for days worked. When a Teacher is on Personal/Carers leave, any accumulated PPT in excess of the weekly entitlement, which would otherwise be foregone on the day of the absence, will be rescheduled for another day.
- (f) Schools are encouraged to ensure that whole of school professional development days do not fall on the same day of the week.

### 2.1.2 PPT and Specialist Teachers

Teachers who have particular duties, including Special Education teachers, teachers of English as an Additional Language or Dialect, Literacy and Information Teachers, Reading Recovery teachers, and teachers of Visual/Creative Arts, Music or PE instruction and any other specialist teachers who are responsible for programming, planning or assessing are to

have PPT programmed into their working week. Schools allocate PPT for these teachers from within their general staffing allocation.

**Note:** Specialist teachers are expected to meet all the requirements of a teacher consistent with the expectations of a classroom teacher. This includes a contribution to planning, programming and assessment, collaboration with classroom teachers, management of student behaviour, involvement in school co-curricular activities, and all other expectations of a teacher proportionate to their FTE.

### 2.1.3 PPT and Promotion Positions

(a) A Coordinator/Middle Leader shall be entitled to a minimum of 60 minutes per week of executive release time per promotion point in addition to the release prescribed in Clause 2.1.1(a) for a teacher.

(b) An Assistant Principal shall be entitled to appropriate executive release, which shall be not less than the amount specified in the Staffing Guidelines published by Sydney Catholic Schools and generally in the range of 0.1- 0.6 FTE, in addition to the professional planning time prescribed in Clause 2.1.1 (a) for a teacher.

(c) A Religious Education Coordinator shall be entitled to appropriate executive release, which shall be not less than the amount specified in the Staffing Guidelines published by Sydney Catholic Schools and not less than the amount specified in Clause 2.1.3(a).

Additional release time allocated by the Principal to Executive staff over and above the minimum set out above, will be reviewed annually and may vary from year to year to meet the changing needs of the school.

### 2.1.4 Teacher providing PPT

The classroom teacher and the teacher providing release should work in close consultation for planning and delivery of teaching and learning. Both teachers share responsibility for assessment, reporting and other related duties in teaching the instructional group.

Schools may allocate teachers with particular skills and interests in specialist areas of the curriculum to teach across a stage or the whole school, Eg. Music.

### 2.1.5 Support for Graduate Teachers

Additional release from face to face teaching will be provided to support Graduate Teachers, by providing 12 days release per teacher from the commencement of employment; of which, one day is to participate in the SCS's new teacher orientation day, seven days for teacher support and four days for the Teacher's supervisor. This support for Graduate Teachers must be offered within the initial year of employment and be provided within the first two years. The Principal will consult with the Graduate Teacher on commencement and the supervisor as to how the seven days and four days are to be scheduled; provided that such days shall be directed to assist the Teacher in meeting Proficient Teacher accreditation requirements.

## 2.2 Supervision

Principals should aim for an equitable distribution of supervision duties (such as supervision of the playground before, after school, and at lunch and recess and transport supervision) across all teaching staff and should consult with staff regarding any proposed changes to current supervision arrangements.

## 2.3 Meetings and Briefings

Principals are encouraged to use efficient/creative ways of disseminating information to staff.

### 2.3.1 Definition of Meetings

For the purpose of this clause, staff meetings include all meetings convened or authorised by the Principal/School Executive including school/year/stage meetings, subject meetings, committee and curriculum meetings and planning sessions. Meetings do not include parent/teacher nights, morning briefings as referred to in Clause 2.3.3 and co-curricular activities listed in 2.4.

### 2.3.2 Meeting Times

In consultation with staff, the Principal will determine the number and configuration of staff meetings and will publish the dates on an annual or term basis.

Dates may be varied after publication, following consultation with staff, if circumstances necessitate a change. Principals may call an emergency meeting if required.

Where staff meeting time is structured to provide staff professional development, the Principal will, if possible, register such professional development for the purposes of ongoing Teacher Accreditation requirements.

From 2019, over a 10 week term, a teacher may expect to attend up to 10 hours at meetings convened or authorised by the Principal/School Executive which includes all meetings discussed in 2.3.1. It excludes parent/teacher nights and other items classed as co-curricular activities.

In addition to those 10 hours, an additional optional five hours may be made available for voluntary participation in professional learning activities per term to allow individuals to work towards the requirements of ongoing NESA accreditation. Such voluntary hours may be teacher directed or QTC registered PD courses provided at the school level. Mandatory professional learning such as CPR/first aid courses will continue to be conducted during mandatory staff meetings and staff professional development days rather than voluntary professional learning hours.

The Leadership/Executive team would ordinarily spend additional time each term at meetings.

### 2.3.3 Briefings

If required, a staff briefing may be held prior to the commencement of the teaching day and within the 30 minutes referred to in clause 3.0. Principals should aim to restrict the number and length of any briefing to enable staff to use the 30 minutes for professional duties and

preparation prior to classes commencing and engagement with colleagues in conversations around pedagogy and teaching practice.

A morning briefing should be used to inform teachers of administrative matters impacting the school, only where such matters cannot be effectively communicated by way of staff email, electronic or physical staff notice board or via appropriate electronic platforms such as ONCE. Provided such briefings are generally no more than 15 minutes duration and held generally no more frequently than once per week, such briefings do not count as meetings for the purpose of Clause 2.3.2.

## 2.4 Co-curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities (which must be approved by the Principal) are held outside regular school hours. Co-curricular activities may involve students and/or parents in events, sports or programs at the school or another venue and may result from a school's involvement in an association or network of schools.

Activities such as school camps, retreats, sacramental and related programs, school concerts/performances and excursions involve a time commitment as well as supervision of students. Such activities are recognised as co-curricular professional duties for the hours spent outside the "normal" timetabled school day.

The time commitment by a teacher to co-curricular activities will reflect personal circumstances, professional responsibilities, and such commitment should be consistent with that given by most teachers at the school. All teachers including classroom teachers, specialist teachers and literacy and information teachers contribute to co-curricular activities.

## 3. School Hours

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### 3.1 Starting Time

Apart from rostered duties, teachers are required to be in attendance each day 30 minutes before instructional groups commence.

### 3.2 Recess

Where practicable, Principals should endeavour to provide a short break for personal reasons on either side of recess for any teacher rostered on supervision duty for the entire student recess break.

### 3.3 Lunch

Teachers are entitled to a break of at least thirty minutes free of disruptions and meetings, and are free to leave the school premises during this time, provided the school administration is notified according to procedures established by the Principal. Principals may require a minimum number of staff to remain 'on site' on any day for 'emergency' or unforeseen circumstances to satisfy the duty of care obligations.

### 3.4 Finishing Time

Apart from rostered duties or scheduled meetings as per clause 2.3, teachers are not required to attend after the conclusion of instructional groups.

## 4. Part-Time Teachers:

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A part-time instructional group teacher will be:

- assigned a number of hours of face-to-face teaching in proportion to the number of hours assigned to a full-time teacher at that school
- assigned supervisory duties in proportion to the number of hours of supervision assigned to a full-time teacher; and
- may be required to attend a proportionate number of after-school meetings, on rostered workdays.

Where a part-time teacher attends a whole day or substantially whole-day staff development day, which is not a rostered work day, she/he will be paid at casual rates for the day.

## 5. Casual Teachers

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The parties acknowledge the importance of attracting and retaining casual teachers. When assigning duties to a casual teacher the school should be mindful of ensuring reasonable workloads. Before the commencement of duties, the casual teacher will be informed of the duties for that day. Relevant industrial entitlements for teachers are observed in the employment of casual teachers.

## 6. Instructional Group Sizes

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### 6.1 Size of Instructional Groups

#### **Single-year instructional groups**

A single year instructional group within Years K-6 would not normally exceed 30, recognising that for different instructional group activities the size of the instructional group may vary.

#### **Multi-age instructional groups**

Multi-age instructional groups may be formed for specific learning activities or for all instructional purposes. Such instructional groups may be formed for a variety of purposes, such as grouping of similar ability students, or as a way to deliver instruction to large student instructional groups. Such groups would not normally exceed 25.

#### **Instructional groups in general**

No instructional group will exceed 34.

From 2019 no instructional group enrolled in Kindergarten will exceed 32 students with other classes to be reduced to 32 over time by natural attrition. Over time, SCS will move towards a class size cap of 30 in all SCS primary schools in Years K-6.

### 6.2 General Principles

Sydney Catholic Schools Offices provides staffing to primary schools based on the Sydney Catholic Schools Staff Allocations (SAM) guidelines, as amended or replaced.

In addition to supporting the learning needs of students, additional resources should be allocated to address the workload of the teacher associated with the planning, assessment and feedback to students within the instructional group. Additional support for teachers teaching large instructional groups is provided at a minimum in accordance with **Table 1 - Loadings – Teacher FTE per fortnight**. Where a teacher is employed to provide large instructional group support the additional teacher supports all of the instructional activities of a teacher including assessment and providing feedback to students; support in report writing and parent feedback as practicable, data gathering and data interpretation.

### 6.3 Large Instructional group Support

(a) When the Principal considers that it may be necessary to exceed the recommended instructional group sizes of 25 for a multi-age instructional group and 30 for any other instructional group, the Principal will first consult with the affected teacher or teachers, then seek approval from SCS People and Culture before forming the instructional group and accepting additional enrolments.

(b) The loadings set out in the Appendix below will be provided to support large instructional single year and multi-year groups. The additional support will be provided to directly support the Teacher of the large instructional group. If the Teacher and Principal agree that a support staff employee rather than a Teacher should provide the support, the FTE teacher support set out below will be converted to support staff hours using a ratio of 11 support staff hours to 0.1 teacher FTE.

(c) Large Class Support loadings can be taken in the form of additional teacher release time to a level of 25% of the total allocation or higher as agreed with the Principal.

**Table 1 - Loadings – Teacher FTE per fortnight**

| Large instructional group Support | Kindergarten | Years 1-2 | Years 3-6 |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|
|                                   |              |           |           |

| Enrolments | FTE Support                                     | FTE Support                                 | FTE Support                              |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 26         | 0.1FTE<br>1 day teacher<br>per fortnight        | -                                           | -                                        |
| 27         | 0.1FTE<br>1 day teacher<br>per fortnight        | -                                           | -                                        |
| 28         | 0.15FTE<br>1.5 days<br>teacher per<br>fortnight | 0.05FTE<br>1/2 day teacher<br>per fortnight | -                                        |
| 29         | 0.15FTE<br>1.5 days<br>teacher per<br>fortnight | 0.05FTE<br>1/2 day teacher<br>per fortnight | -                                        |
| 30         | 0.15FTE<br>1.5 days<br>teacher per<br>fortnight | 0.05FTE<br>1/2 day teacher<br>per fortnight | -                                        |
| 31         | 0.2FTE<br>2 days teacher<br>per fortnight       | 0.1FTE<br>1 day teacher<br>per fortnight    | 0.1FTE<br>1 day teacher per<br>fortnight |

|    |                                                 |                                             |                                             |
|----|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
|    |                                                 |                                             |                                             |
| 32 | 0.25FTE<br>2.5 days<br>teacher per<br>fortnight | 0.15FTE<br>1.5 day teacher<br>per fortnight | 0.15FTE<br>1.5 day teacher per<br>fortnight |
| 33 | 0.3 FTE<br>3 days teacher<br>per fortnight      | 0.2 FTE<br>2 days teacher<br>per fortnight  | 0.2FTE<br>2 days teacher per<br>fortnight   |
| 34 | 0.4 FTE<br>4 days teacher<br>per fortnight      | 0.3 FTE<br>3 days teacher<br>per fortnight  | 0.3 FTE<br>3 days teacher per<br>fortnight  |

## 6.4. Support for students with identified special needs

In consultation with teachers, Principals should take into account the number of students with identified specific needs, the nature of these needs and the specific needs of each teacher when instructional groups are being arranged for the coming year or prior to the Principal placing students throughout the year.

Appropriate additional loading and/or instructional group support will be determined in consultation with the teacher and the Regional office and according to available resources.

## 7. Support for students with challenging behaviours

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(a) Employees may raise concerns about workplace health and safety in relation to students with challenging behaviours via the WHS committee at their school, through their IEU representative or directly with school leadership.

(b) Where a child represents a serious risk to the safety of employees, other students or the child, Sydney Catholic Schools will act within a reasonable and appropriate timeframe to ensure the health and safety of staff and students in accordance with Work Health and Safety obligations and the ["Supporting Students with Complex Social and Emotional Needs"](#) policy and guidelines. SCS will conduct a risk assessment and work collaboratively to develop strategies to support the student and teacher. This may involve the support of the regional consultant, regional wellbeing team, teaching and learning team and/or other relevant supports.

## 8. School/professional development

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Teachers will be provided with a minimum of five school/professional development days per annum. Two of these days will be scheduled for the last two days of Term 4 and will have the same status as other pupil-free, professional development days. These days will not ordinarily be substituted for any other pupil-free time in the school year. School/professional development days are not included in the meeting times for a school term.

## 9. Mobility of appointments in primary schools

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The Employer is concerned, with the resources available to it, to support the professional life of Teachers as well as ensuring the equitable distribution of skilled and motivated teaching staff between and among schools. Further, the Employer is concerned to maintain and develop possible employment opportunities for staff, including enhancing access to Middle Leader positions in schools by staff from other schools.

The parties recognise the benefits to an approach that networksschools for shared teacher development and growth. This includes the ability for teachers to move between schools to enhance professional growth, gain experience in a different setting, and ensure a balance of expertise across schools and to allow temporary teachers greater opportunity for

permanency within SCS. The parties encourage staff to move regularly throughout their careers to ensure they have experience in a variety of school, educational and pedagogical environments. For continual professional growth and development, staff are encouraged to consider a move between schools after ten years in one school.

The SCS Teacher Exchange Policy will continue to apply for movements between SCS schools and beyond the network on a temporary basis.

A teacher may also request a transfer after five years in one school.

## 10. Email policy

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SCS supports work life balance for staff and advises that employees are not expected to reply to emails outside of ordinary work hours (other than in the case of a genuine emergency). SCS has developed a parent communication information sheet which is available on the intranet policy portal which will inform all parents of this expectation.

## 11. Data collection

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SCS recognises that data is collected with the objective of improving teaching and learning. SCS is implementing the ONCE system with the intention that data will only be collected ONCE in one program and to avoid duplication of data wherever possible. Data collection will ordinarily only be required for improving teaching and learning or if required by the government.

## 12. Implementation

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Any teacher who has concerns that a provision of this Agreement is not being implemented or is the cause of unnecessary hardship or difficulty should first raise the matter with her/his Principal. The IEU Chapter representative may need to become involved. The school's People and Culture business partner and/or IEU organiser may also become involved in the resolution of the issue if attempts to resolve the matter at a school level have been unsuccessful.



Sydney Catholic Schools



### 13. Incidence and duration

The parties agree this Agreement will come into effect from the 2020 school year, will have a nominal life of two years and will conclude 31 December 2021.

  
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Tony Farley  
Executive Director of Sydney Catholic Schools

  
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Secretary  
Independent Education Union of Australia (NSW/ACT  
Branch)

Date: 22/10/2020

Date: 22/10/2020