Independent Review of administrative and compliance activities in Victorian government schools

Supplementary Appendices

April 2025

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Appendix A: About the Review

Context and terms of reference

In May 2024, the Minister for Education commissioned an Independent Review of administrative and compliance activities in Victorian government schools (the Review). The Review was tasked with recommending actions the Victorian Government and school staff can take to reduce and better manage administrative and compliance activities. The Terms of Reference for the Review are set out in the box below.

Box 1: Terms of Reference

The Minister for Education has commissioned an Independent Review of administrative and compliance activities in government schools, to be led by Katie Roberts-Hull.

The Lead Reviewer will be supported in this role by an expert Reference Group of current principals and other school staff to provide input to the Review from those with contemporary first-hand experience of school operations.

The Department of Education will also establish a Consultative Committee comprising representatives of principal unions, the Australian Education Union, professional associations, and peak bodies, to ensure comprehensive engagement with key stakeholders at all stages of the Review.

Secretariat support for the Review, the Reference Group and the Consultative Committee will be provided by the Department of Education.

The Review will make recommendations on the actions the Victorian Government and schools can take to reduce and better manage administrative and compliance activities. The Review will do so by considering:

- the significant drivers of administrative and compliance activity

- the technical sources of administrative and compliance activity, including legislation, regulatory and oversight requirements, policy and government initiatives

- solutions that can counter those drivers and reduce unnecessary activity (acknowledging that some level of administrative and compliance activity is a necessary part of school operations, for example activities to ensure child safety)

- the evidence on what has worked (and not worked) to date, to reduce and better manage administrative and compliance activity in schools

- approaches to reducing and better managing administrative and compliance activity, including what can be learned from other jurisdictions and sectors

- different models of support, including the value of centralised services, networked models, non-teaching staff, that would help build the organisational resilience of our schools

- what actions the Department of Education (the department) and its portfolio agencies can take to reduce and/or better manage administrative and compliance activity in schools

- what actions other departments and agencies (e.g. NDIS, Department of Families Fairness and Housing, WorkSafe Victoria) can take to reduce and/or better manage administrative and compliance activity in schools.

The Review will consider where different approaches may be required based on factors such as school type (primary, secondary and specialist) and context (such as geography, size).

The Review will also support the design of a pilot, as a 'try, test and learn' approach to reducing and better managing administrative and compliance activity.

The Review will consider the findings and recommendations of the Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Performance Audit of Principal Health and Wellbeing and provide advice on strategies for measuring workload and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives to reduce administrative and compliance activities for school staff.

The department will convene a time-limited Oversight Committee with responsibility for monitoring the progress of the Review, advising on risks and issues, providing feedback on Review products, and (once the Review has concluded) discussing next steps. The Committee will comprise:

- a Deputy Secretary-level nominee of the Secretary, Department of Education (Chair)
- a nominee of the Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- a nominee of the Secretary, Department of Treasury and Finance
- relevant Department of Education executives.

The Review will commence by May 2024 and provide a final report to the Minister for Education by December 2024.

Lead Reviewer and Review Team

The Lead Reviewer appointed to head the Review was Katie Roberts-Hull. Ms Roberts-Hull is currently Chief Executive Officer of Think Forward Educators and has extensive experience in education, both in Victoria and overseas. She holds a Masters in Public Administration and a Masters in Business Administration.

The Lead Reviewer was supported in her work by a Review Team, comprised of seconded Department of Education staff, and by external consultants, who were engaged to bring specific expertise to the Review.

Governance and advisory support for the Review

The Review was overseen and advised by the following governance arrangements:

Group	Membership	Purpose
Oversight Committee	Nominees from: - Department of Education - Department of Premier and Cabinet - Department of Treasury and Finance - Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	- Maintain overall oversight of the Review. - Monitor progress and adherence to Terms of Reference. - Advise and provide feedback on key Review outputs.

Administrative Workload Consultative Committee	Nominees from, unions, professional associations and peak bodies: • Department of Education • Australian Education Union (Victorian Branch) • Australian Principals Federation • Country Education Partnership • Principals' Association of Specialist Schools Victoria • Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals • Victorian Principals' Association	• Provide perspectives of relevant peak bodies. • Support engagement with relevant stakeholders. • Advise on consultation timing and approach.

School Staff Reference Group	Nominees from school staff, invited by unions, professional associations, peak bodies and regional department teams:
	
	• 4 principals
	• 4 middle leaders (assistant principals, leading teachers, or learning specialists)
	• 4 classroom teachers
	• 4 education support (ES) staff with significant administrative duties:
	    ▪ Business managers
	    ▪ Classroom support staff
	    ▪ Administrative staff
		• Provide perspectives of school staff.

Acknowledgements

The Review would like to acknowledge the support and contribution of:
- hundreds of school leaders, teachers, ES staff who engaged with the process during site visits and other consultation activities
- peak bodies who provided input, including unions, principal professional associations, and other representative bodies
- staff and executives at the Department of Education and other Victorian Government departments and agencies.

Methodology

A critical part of the Review was to define a process for developing a deep understanding of the drivers of administrative and compliance activities in schools while also capturing the lived experiences of school staff. It was deemed essential that school staff saw the Review as their own and that the recommendations that come from the Review have a felt impact.

To ensure these goals, the Review adopted a structured approach to identify and address the factors driving school administration and compliance activities in schools. It began with a desktop assessment of evidence-based reports, an analysis of recent principal surveys and a cross jurisdictional examination of the problem.

Additionally, building an understanding of existing state and federal legislation and regulatory requirements enabled the Review to form initial hypotheses regarding the challenges faced by school staff and to theorise potential solutions.

An open text form and the Review email were shared with all schools, inviting them to contribute their experiences of administrative and compliance workload and offer suggestions for reducing these tasks. Throughout Term 3 2024, the Review team conducted consultations across the state, visiting schools and hosting workshops to gather insights and collaboratively design solutions with school staff. These consultations also included meetings with unions, professional associations, peaks bodies and their various sub-groups. In addition, school staff were able to continue contributing through a second online form that identified additional issues, tested potential solutions, and participate in live virtual town halls.

The consultation process was comprehensive, and the feedback gathered—along with the findings from early research and desk-based analysis—formed the basis for a range of solutions. These were presented to stakeholders for further feedback and refinement before finalising the recommendations included in this report.

Theory of change

A theory of change is the process of thinking about and understanding how an intervention in a program or service can lead to more desirable outcomes. The theory of change for the Review is outlined in the image below.

Figure 12: Theory of change

| Admin and compliance work is necessary, but excessive volumes of this work impact job satisfaction, retention, and time spent on teaching and learning. | Regulations accountability, and community expectations have increased admin and compliance workload incrementally over many years, meaning the workload is now unsustainable. | Reassessing school responsibilities, improving efficiency, spreading low-admin practices, and providing responsive service to schools will reduce admin/compliance workload. | Reduced admin/compliance workload will allow school staff to focus more time on teaching, learning, and wellbeing. This will lead to both improved staff outcomes and student learning outcomes. |

Key research questions

Within the context of this theory of change, the Review was focused on understanding the **current state** of administrative and compliance activity in schools, and **possible solutions** to reduce unnecessary activity, make what activity remains more efficient, and better manage requests. To understand both, the work of the Review was focused on the key research questions in the image below.

Figure 13: Key research questions

Current state	Possible solutions

• What are the significant drivers of administrative and compliance activity?
 	
• What are the technical sources of administrative and compliance activity, including:
   • Legislation?
   • Regulatory and oversight requirements?
   • Policy and government initiatives?
	• What solutions can counter those drivers and reduce unnecessary activity?
	
	• What is the evidence on what has worked (and not worked) to date, to reduce and better manage administrative and compliance activity in Victorian schools?
	
	• What are approaches to reducing and better managing administrative and compliance activity, including what can be learned from other jurisdictions and sectors?
	
	• What are the different models of support, including the value of centralised services, networked models, non-teaching staff, that would help build the organisational resilience of our schools?
	
	• What actions should the Department of Education and its portfolio agencies take to reduce and/or better manage administrative and compliance activity in government schools?
	
	• What actions can other departments and agencies (e.g. National Disability Insurance Agency, Department of Families Fairness and Housing, WorkSafe Victoria) take to reduce and/or better manage administrative and compliance activity in government schools?

The engagement process that informed our findings

The backbone of the Review was a program of deep engagement with teachers, school leaders, school business managers and ES staff. These are the staff who:
- are the people who complete the administrative and compliance work in schools
- are best able to articulate the impact of this work on their jobs, their school and its community, and them personally
- can provide context for how different administrative and compliance requests play out in different contexts and schools
- can provide options for reducing the administrative and compliance burden, making requests for information more efficient and effective, and positioning the solutions in different contexts.

To engage with these staff and get their input into the Review undertook a large program of school visits, regional focus groups and online workshops that reached hundreds of school staff. Where possible, existing department engagement mechanisms were also used, to maximise the reach of the Review, give staff every opportunity to input, and minimise burden.

Consultation approach

A commitment to deep consultation

From the outset, the Review was committed to deep and genuine consultation with school staff, including principals, mid-level leadership, teachers, and ES staff.

The Review recognises the value of engaging those on the front lines, ensuring that every voice was heard and considered with respect, and also the value of aggregated input that can be provided by representative bodies including unions, professional associations and peak bodies.

Acknowledging that school staff are busy, that there is a diversity of staff and views, and that it is never possible to consult everyone in a workforce of over 90,000 employees, the Review put in place multiple forms of engagement, at multiple times of the year, to make every attempt to consult as widely as possible.

In hearing feedback about administration and compliance activity in schools – the workload, frustrations with it, and possible solutions for it – every point of input and every view was given thoughtful consideration.

The Review hopes that, as much as possible, the approach led to a clear and documented understanding of the challenges staff face. The insights gathered formed the foundation for the findings and recommendations grounded in the real experiences of those working in schools.

The consultation and engagement approach

The Review Team consulted with school staff through several different forums, including:

- **School visits:** The Review Team visited a range of metropolitan, regional and rural schools during Term 3 that were interested in sharing their views.
- **Regional focus groups:** The Review Team conducted regional workshops across Term 3, bringing together school staff from different school types and locations.
- **Online events:** The Review Team held online events including workshops, virtual town halls and focus groups.
- **Online confidential surveys:** The Review Team developed and deployed 2 short, confidential online surveys to all school staff who wished to have their say.
- **Use of other existing forums:** The Review Team leveraged existing forums and communication methods including Principal Forums and the annual statewide conference, the School Staff Survey and the Principal Survey.
- **Unions, professional associations and peak bodies:** The Review Team held focus groups with school staff members of Unions (such as the AEU sub-groups), peak bodies (such as Country Education Partnership) and professional associations (such as Victorian Principal Association).

Summary of consultations

Over the life of the Review, the Review Team:

- completed 29 school visits – 435 school staff
- held 44 in-person workshops – 269 school staff
- conducted 18 online focus groups and virtual town halls – 188 school staff
- heard from 526 school staff via online submissions
- reached 756 school staff via an online survey
- had 148 meetings with stakeholders.

In total, the Review reached over 2200 school staff across all these engagement approaches.
The Review Team is satisfied that the engagement depth and breadth accounted for:

- different school types (primary, secondary, P-10/P-12, specialist)

- different school contexts (cohort differences, geographic differences, size differences)
- different types of staff (leadership, teaching staff, ES staff in a variety of roles).

Table 5: Summary of consultations

School Visits											
Location		Type				Size			ICSEA		
Metro	Regional	Sec	Pri	Comb	Spec	<200	<999	>999	>1100	AVG	<980
9	20	10	13	3	3	3	21	5	4	4	21

Online Submissions			
Principals	Teachers	Business Managers	Education Support Staff
131	177	119	99

Online Survey Responses			
Principals	Teachers	Business Managers	Education Support Staff
187	255	175	139

In Person Workshops	Online Workshops	
Metropolitan (16) and Regional (28)	Virtual Town Halls (12)	School focus groups (6)
269 (all roles)	171 (all roles)	18

Minister	Heads of Department
The Hon. Ben Carroll MP Deputy Premier Minister for Education	Jenny Atta PSM Secretary Department of Education

Department of Education
Executives, Divisions and Authorities

- Audit and Risk Committee (Chair)
- Early Childhood Education
  - Victorian Child Information Sharing
- Financial Policy and Information Services
  - Deputy Secretary
  - Information Management and Technology
  - Procurement
  - Financial Services
- First Nations Strategy, Policy and Programs
  - Deputy Secretary
- People and Executive Services
  - Deputy Secretary
  - Employee Safety, Wellbeing and Inclusion
  - Operational Policy, School Engagement and Compliance
  - Communications
- Policy, Strategy and Performance
  - Deputy Secretary
  - Education Policy and Reform
  - Performance and Evaluation
  - Portfolio, Strategy and Planning

- School Education Programs and Support
  - Deputy Secretary
  - Statewide Programs and Tech Schools
  - International Education
  - Wellbeing, Health and Inclusion
  - Inclusive Education
- Schools and Regional Services
  - Deputy Secretary
  - Assistant Deputy Secretaries
  - Regional Directors
  - Area Executive Directors and SEILs
  - Operations and Governance
  - School Provision and Establishment
- Schools Workforce
  - Deputy Secretary
  - Schools Human Resources
  - Workforce Policy and Strategy
- Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
- Victorian School Building Authority
  - Chief Executive Officer
  - Strategy and Planning

- o Planning, Risk and Non-Government Schools - Senior Secondary Pathways Reform Taskforce - o Delivery - o Policy, Design and Coordination		- o Major Projects and Property - o Corporate - o Asset Management - o Project Delivery	

Unions, Professional Associations and Peak Bodies

Union Execs	Union Sub-Groups	Peak Body Executives	Peak Body Sub-Groups
- Australian Education Union (AEU) - Australian Principals Federation (APF)	- AEU Council - AEU Education Committee - AEU Education Support Staff group - AEU Occupational Health and Safety Committee - AEU Primary teachers' group - AEU Principals Group - AEU Specialist school teachers' group - AEU Principal Special Schools group - AEU Secondary teachers' group	- Business Managers Victoria (BMA) - Country Education Partnership (CEP) - Principals Association of Special Schools (PASS) - Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals (VASSP) - Victorian Principals Association (VPA) - Parents VIC	- APF State Council - BMV x 3 workshops - CEP x 2 school workshops - VASSP x 5 - PASS forum - VPA State Council

Other Jurisdictions | | **Other consultations** |

Other Jurisdictions	Other consultations
- New South Wales Department of Education - Queensland Department of Education - South Australia Department of Education - Understanding and Reducing the Workload of Teachers in Western Australian Public Schools[1] - Western Australia Department of Education	- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership - Deloitte Access Economics - Nous Group - Outdoors Victoria - Victorian Catholic Education Commission

Review Governance Groups

School Staff Reference Group	Administrative Workload Consultative Committee	Oversight Committee
4 meetings	6 meetings	4 meetings

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[1] Viviane Robinson, Viviane Robinson Consulting Peter Hamilton, Hamilton Associates November 2023 "Understanding and Reducing the Workload of Teachers and Leaders in Western Australian Public Schools"

Appendix B: Submissions and survey results

526 school staff submitted to the Review via an online submission tool, which was open between June and October 2024:

- 177 teachers
- 131 principals
- 119 business managers
- 99 other school roles.

The Review's online submission tool included 2 broad open-ended questions. Responders outlined many concerns and recommendations regarding the administration and compliance burden carried by school staff.

Summary of key themes and suggestions from teachers

Workload management and administration support: Teachers would like to see unnecessary documentation be reduced, including eliminating repetitive data entry and utilising existing databases for compliance tasks. Hiring more ES staff to handle administrative duties would allow teachers to focus on teaching, with suggestions for having an ES staff member in each classroom and a dedicated role for data collection. Additionally, creating a long-term planning document to outline tasks like lesson planning and training will help keep workloads manageable.

Meeting efficiency and structure: There is a need for meetings to be limited to essential topics and consider making some optional to assess attendance and engagement of teachers. Ensure meetings allow for two-way communication rather than being purely directive. Additionally, teachers are asking schools to encourage the use of emails for non-essential updates that don't require discussion to save valuable time.

Professional development and training: To support beginning teachers, structured assistance needs to be implemented to help them adjust to classroom demands and workplace expectations, including pre-service preparation for smoother transitions. Additionally, simplifying the Professional Development Plan (PDP) process for all teachers will reduce administrative burden and shift the focus toward genuine professional growth rather than mere compliance.

Curriculum and resource accessibility: Improving access to teaching resources and curriculum documents would enable teachers to spend more time on instruction rather than planning. Additionally, teachers want consistency in the tools and systems used across schools to help reduce the cognitive load associated with adapting to multiple platforms.

Reporting and data collection: Teachers would like to see the frequency and depth of reports shift to only focus to end-of-semester summaries that provide meaningful insights for parents. Additionally, they would like to see greater leverage of existing data collected for compliance purposes, particularly for NCCD data and Individual Education Plans (IEPs), to minimise duplicate efforts and streamline the reporting process.

Time management and work-life balance: To promote a healthy work-life balance, teachers want schools to respect their contracted work hours, ensuring that any additional tasks have designated time outside of teaching responsibilities. It's important to realistically assess the hours required for tasks compared to what is feasible within a standard work week. Additionally, teachers want dedicated time for essential responsibilities such as parent communications, planning, and administrative duties, without infringing on their teaching time.

Trust and professional autonomy: Teachers want schools and the department to foster an environment of trust by reducing micromanagement and allowing teachers to use their professional judgment in planning and executing their teaching responsibilities.

Summary of key themes and suggestions from principals

Compliance and documentation: There is a need for streamlined compliance processes and a centralised platform for documentation to reduce the time spent on administrative tasks. The current use of multiple systems (AIMS, Panorama, CASE21 etc.) complicates data management and increases frustration.

Support for facilities and OHS: Principals advocate for dedicated roles, such as facilities managers and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) officers, to handle compliance and maintenance issues. Many indicated that these responsibilities should not fall solely on principals, who are already stretched thin with their teaching and leadership duties.

Administrative efficiency: Suggestions include reducing the frequency and complexity of surveys and compliance documentation, as well as simplifying processes for hiring and dismissing staff. Principals request the removal of redundant forms and processes that hinder operational efficiency.

Role of the department: There is widespread dissatisfaction with the current support from the department, particularly regarding the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA). Principals want more responsive support for building upgrades and maintenance, with fewer bureaucratic hurdles.

Equity in resources: Concerns about equity in access to resources and support for students with disabilities were raised. The administrative burden associated with Disability Inclusion Profiles (DIPs) is viewed as disproportionate, favouring those with private support.

Streamlined communication: Better communication from the department regarding policy changes and compliance expectations is needed. A unified system for managing these communications could help reduce confusion and improve compliance.

Professional development: There is a call for more professional development tailored to the specific needs of administrative staff, ensuring schools can effectively manage their operations without overburdening principals.

Focus on instructional leadership: Ultimately, principals wish to shift their focus back to instructional leadership, emphasising student learning and wellbeing rather than navigating complex compliance requirements.

Summary of key themes and suggestions from business managers and other school staff

Training and development: Enhanced training programs for business managers are essential for improving their understanding of compliance and operational needs. This training will help staff navigate regulations effectively. Additionally, increasing access to AI tools like Microsoft Copilot and Google Gemini will streamline workflows and boost productivity across the organisation.

System upgrades: Outdated systems like CASE21 need urgent replacement, and critical systems like eduPay and AIMS should be updated to modern standards. A centralised administration system is also needed to reduce redundancy and improve efficiency in administrative functions.

Process optimisation: Standardised digital forms for common tasks can ensure consistency and cut down on time spent on formatting. Implementing workflow automation software will streamline routine tasks like scheduling and notifications, allowing staff to focus on more strategic work.

Compliance and governance: Enhancing support for OHS compliance is vital. Centralising OHS activities will reduce the burden on individual schools, allowing them to focus on education. Simplifying compliance processes to fit the size and capabilities of schools will also help ease administrative strain.

Funding and staffing: Increased funding for administrative support is necessary to hire sufficient office staff, particularly for compliance tasks. Establishing equitable pay for administrative roles will promote fairness and improve job satisfaction among business managers and staff.

Communication and collaboration: Improving communication with divisions like HR is essential to lessen the administrative burden on schools. Faster response times and better support will help streamline processes. Strategies to manage interruptions and share best practices will foster a more collaborative environment.

Administrative workload management: Creating standardised job descriptions for all administrative roles will clarify responsibilities and expectations. Additionally, developing a formula for workload allocation will help manage tasks effectively, preventing staff from becoming overwhelmed.

Recognition and respect for roles: Recognising the increased workloads of business managers and administrative staff is crucial. Salary adjustments should reflect their growing responsibilities. Greater respect for ES staff will enhance morale and create a positive workplace culture.

Policy and procedure optimisation: Establishing a centralised information hub will reduce redundancy in data entry and streamline access to administrative policies. Simplifying compliance policies will make them easier to understand and less time-consuming.

Facilities and resource management: Centralising facilities management can relieve pressure on principals and business managers, improving resource use and facility management. Adequate funding for maintenance is essential to keep school facilities operational and safe.

Overall strategy and implementation: Effective planning and communication are essential for the successful rollout of new initiatives. Timely implementation will minimise disruptions and help staff adjust to changes. Streamlining compliance tasks will reduce the administrative burden and enhance efficiency.

Organisational structure review: Reviewing and redesigning organisational structures will help minimise administrative burdens on principals and teaching staff. This will identify areas for efficiency gains and allow educators to focus more on teaching.

Integration of systems: Streamlining software systems is vital to reduce data entry duplication. A centralised database that integrates various functions will improve data accuracy and overall operational efficiency.

Feedback mechanisms: Regularly gathering staff feedback on administrative processes is crucial for identifying issues and areas for improvement. Effective feedback mechanisms will ensure staff voices are heard, leading to ongoing enhancements in administrative practices.

Overall, the submissions reflect a widespread desire among teachers, school leaders and other staff for significant reforms to alleviate the administrative burden, improve efficiency, and enhance support structures for schools.

Review Survey

The Review conducted a survey of school staff in Term 4, 2024. The survey was open to staff in all roles, including principals, teachers, business managers, and ES staff. The survey was advertised in the School Update, on social media, and emailed directly to Review participants.

Respondents

Overall, there was a good mix of respondents across school types, with most responses from primary (n = 397) and secondary (n = 275) schools. Responses are also from a variety of staff types. There were a smaller number of responses from Pri/Sec (n = 38) and Specialist (n = 42) schools.

A significant proportion (129, 47%) of responses from secondary schools are from teachers, while a lower proportion of secondary principals responded to the survey compared to other schools.

Observations:
- Overall, 53% of respondents work in primary schools, followed by 37% from secondary schools, 6% from Specialist schools and 5% from Pri/Sec schools.

- 43% of respondents whose main role is teacher work in primary schools, 51% work in secondary schools and 4% and 5% work in Pri/Sec and Specialist schools respectively.

- 68% of respondents whose main role is principal class work in primary schools, in contrast, only 18% work in secondary schools, 9% work in Specialist schools and 5% work in Pri/Sec schools.

- 63% of respondents whose main role is business manager work in primary schools, 27% work in secondary schools and 5% and 4% work in Specialist and Pri/Sec schools respectively.

- Finally, 38% of respondents whose main role is ES staff work in primary schools, 47% work in secondary schools, 4% work in Specialist schools and 11% work in Pri/Sec schools.

Figure 14: Composition of respondents by school type
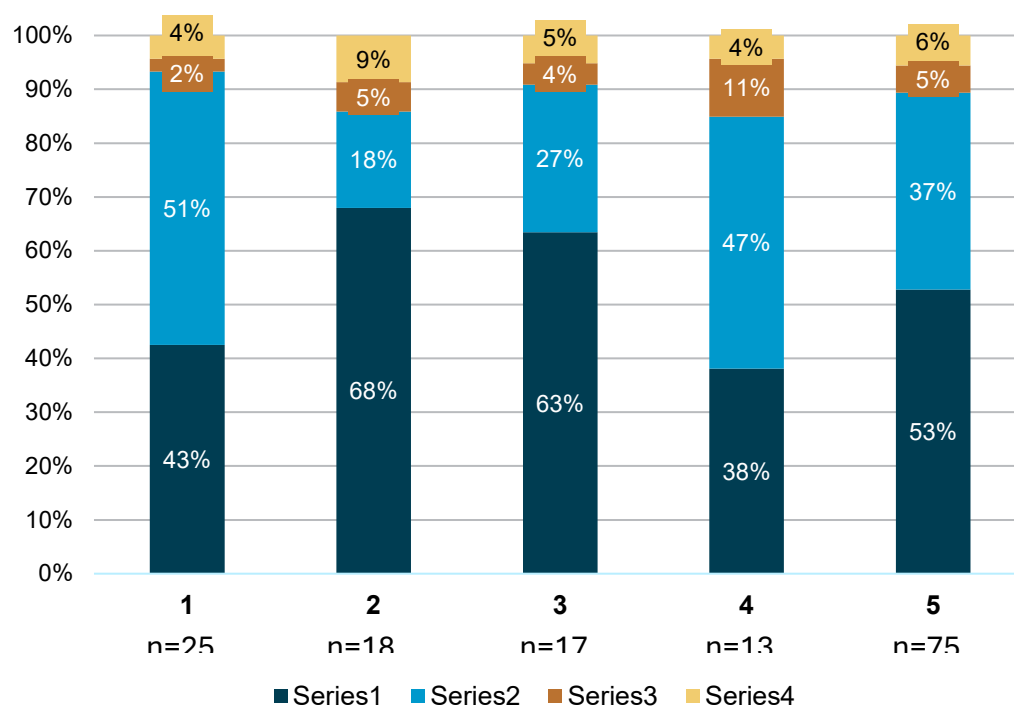
Notes: BM = Business Managers; ESS = Education Support Staff (excluding Business Managers).

Figure 15: Composition of respondents by roles
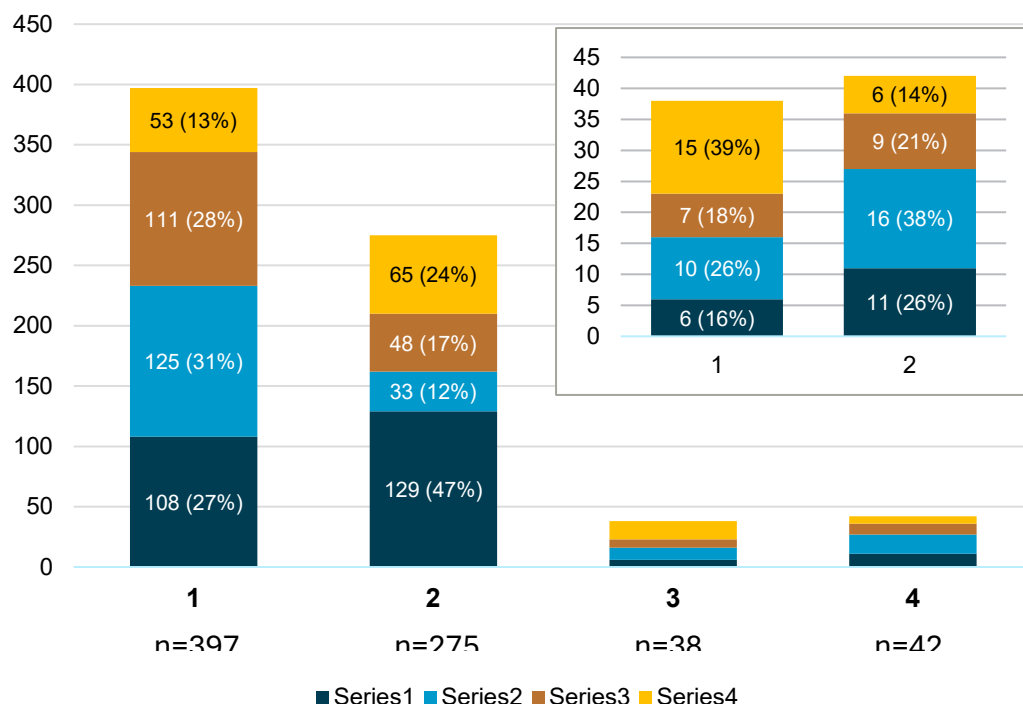
Notes: BM = Business Managers; ESS = Education Support Staff (excluding Business Managers).

Survey analysis

Administration and compliance workload has been increasing for some time

Overall, over 80% of staff reported their administrative and compliance workload has been getting worse either recently or for some time. The vast majority of staff who reported that their administrative and compliance workload has been getting worse suggested that it has been getting worse for some time. This pattern is observed in all school types.

Around 90% of teachers, principals, and business managers reported their administrative and compliance workload has been getting worse recently or for some time. A lower proportion of ES staff reported their administrative workload worsening, with 62% of respondents reporting their administrative workload has been getting worse recently or for some time.

Figure 16: How has your administration and compliance workload changed over time? By school type (all staff)

Legend:
- Has been getting better for some time
- Has been getting better recently
- Stayed about the same
- Has been getting worse recently
- Has been getting worse for some time

Overall: 526 (71%), 102 (14%), 92 (12%)
Primary: 284 (72%), 56 (14%), 44 (11%)
Secondary: 191 (71%), 32 (12%), 40 (15%)
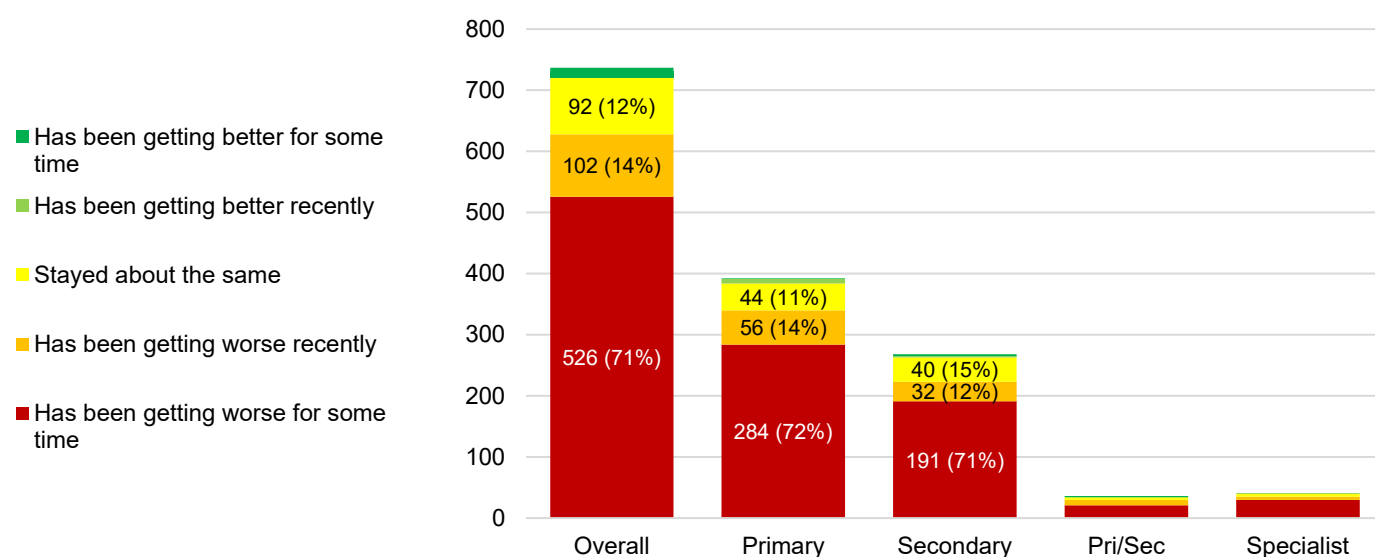
Figure 17: How has your administration and compliance workload changed over time? By staff type (all staff)

Legend:
- Has been getting worse for some time
- Has been getting worse recently
- Stayed about the same
- Has been getting better recently
- Has been getting better for some time

ESS: 57 (44%)
BM: 133 (76%)
Principal: 143 (79%)
Teacher: 193 (77%)
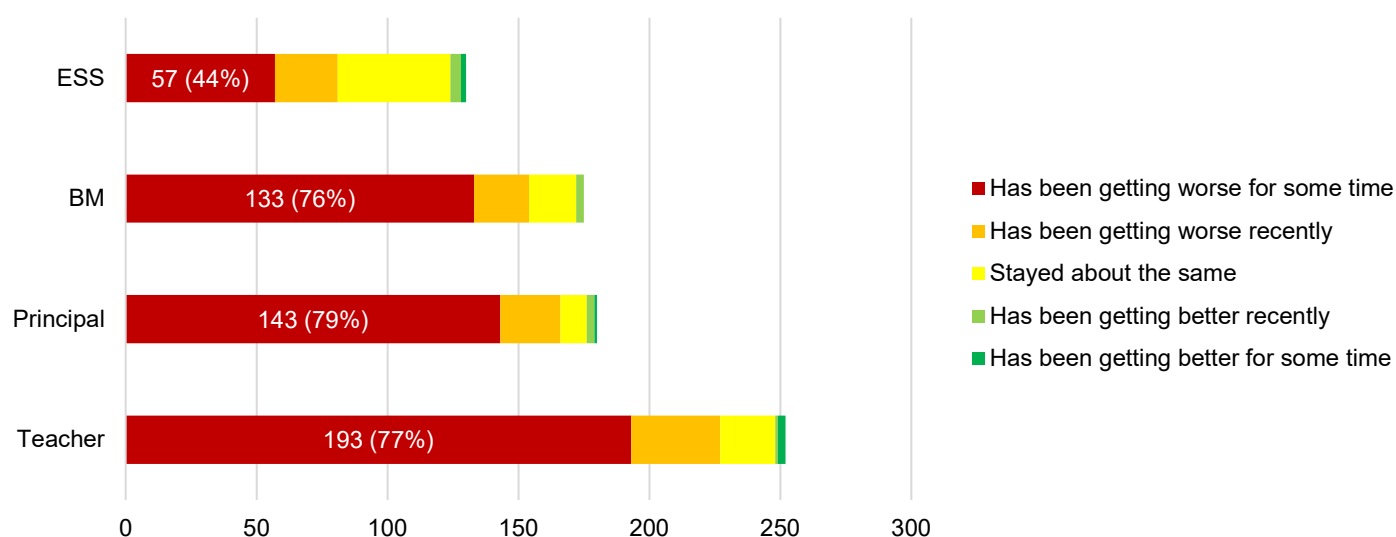
Notes: BM = Business Managers; ESS = Education Support Staff (excluding Business Managers).

Experience of teachers, principals and business managers are highly similar across Primary and Secondary schools with a significant majority reporting their administrative and compliance workload has been getting worse recently or for some time.

A lower proportion of ES staff reported worsening of administrative and compliance workload in both primary and secondary schools.

Figure 18: Respondents' perception around changes to their administrative and compliance workload by staff type, primary and secondary schools.
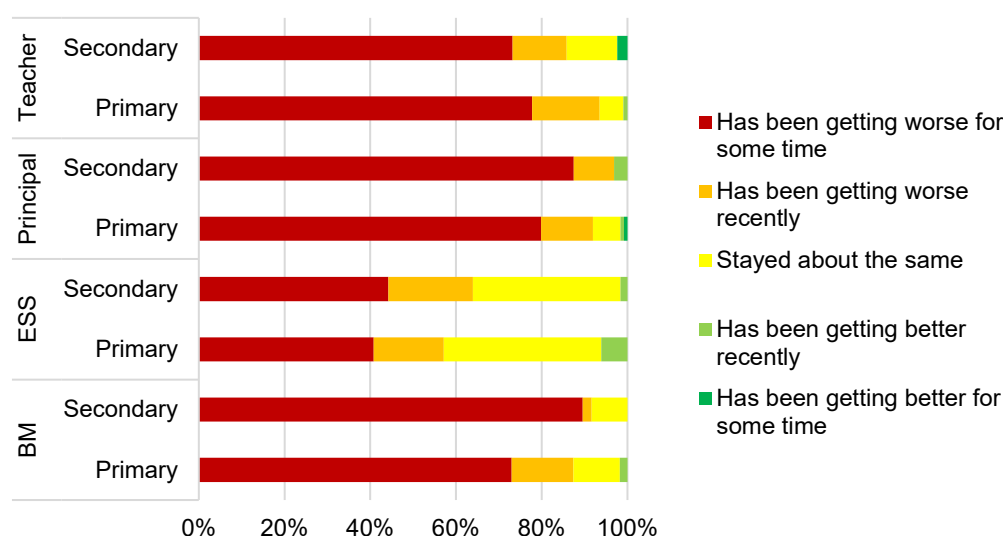
Notes: BM = Business Managers; ESS = Education Support Staff (excluding Business Managers).

Figure 19: Respondents' perception around changes to their administrative and compliance workload by staff type, pri/sec and specialist schools.
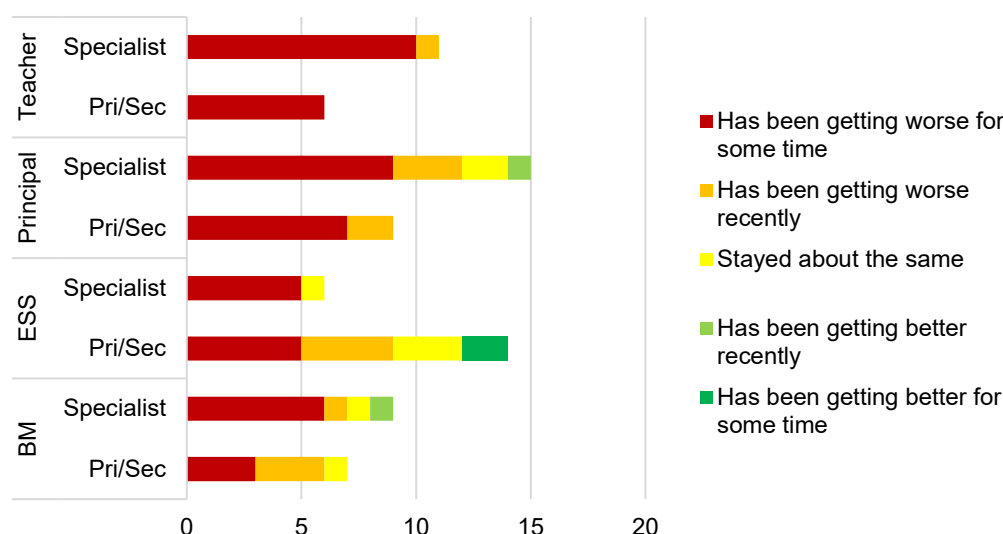
Notes: BM = Business Managers; ESS = Education Support Staff (excluding Business Managers).

The number of respondents from Pri/Sec and Specialist schools are small, but those that did respond demonstrated similar patterns as those in primary and secondary schools.

Figure 20: How has your administration and compliance workload changed over time? By school size (all staff)
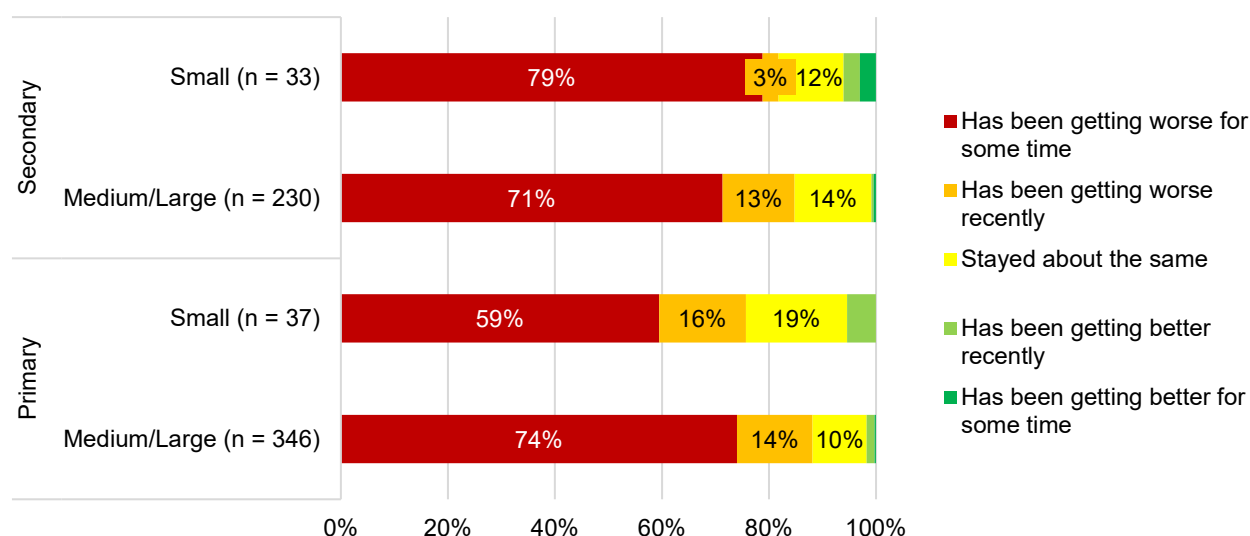
Note: Small school defined according to thresholds set out in Small School Base funding line of Student resource package. Primary: <= 80, Secondary <= 400.

A smaller proportion (74%) of respondents in small primary schools reported their administrative and compliance workload has been getting worse compared with respondents in medium/large schools (88%).

In secondary schools, a marginally lower proportion (82%) of respondents reported worsening of their administrative and compliance workload, compared with respondents in medium/large schools (84%).

Teacher time spent on administration and compliance work

Teachers reported they typically spend between one and 20 hours per week on administrative tasks. A typical teacher is reported to spend approximately 8 hours per week.

Teachers in secondary schools reported spending lower hours (6) on administrative and compliance tasks compared with other schools (between 8-12).

Figure 21: Approximately how many HOURS PER WEEK are you doing administration and compliance work? By school type (Teachers)
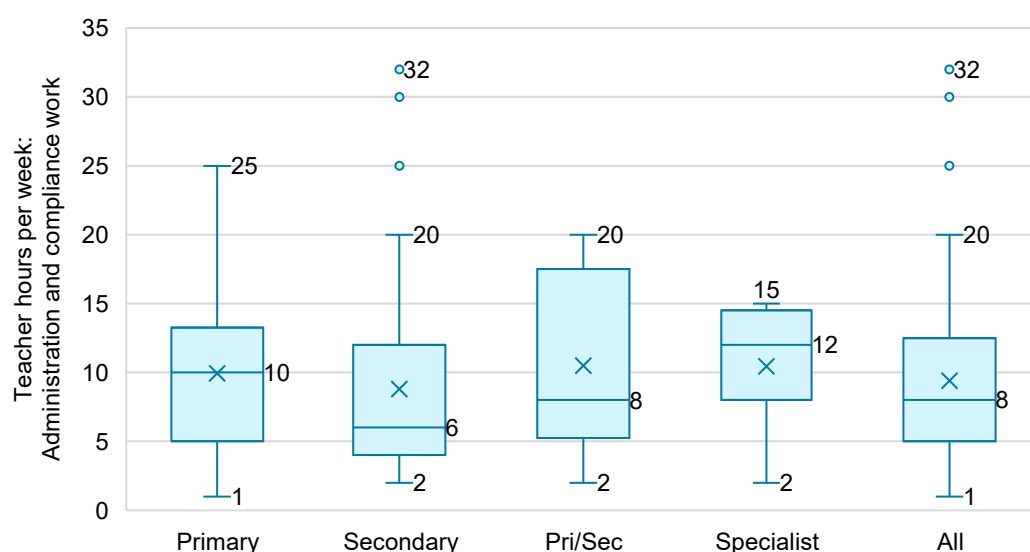
Is administration and compliance the top workload issue?

There is an even split between teachers reporting administration and compliance being their top issue and those reporting having another workload or wellbeing issue that they care about more than administration and compliance.

Among principals, this split is also near even, with 53% reporting administration and compliance as their top issue and 47% reporting there being another workload or wellbeing issue that they care more about.

Figure 22: Is administration and compliance your top workload and wellbeing issue? By staff type. (Teachers, principals)
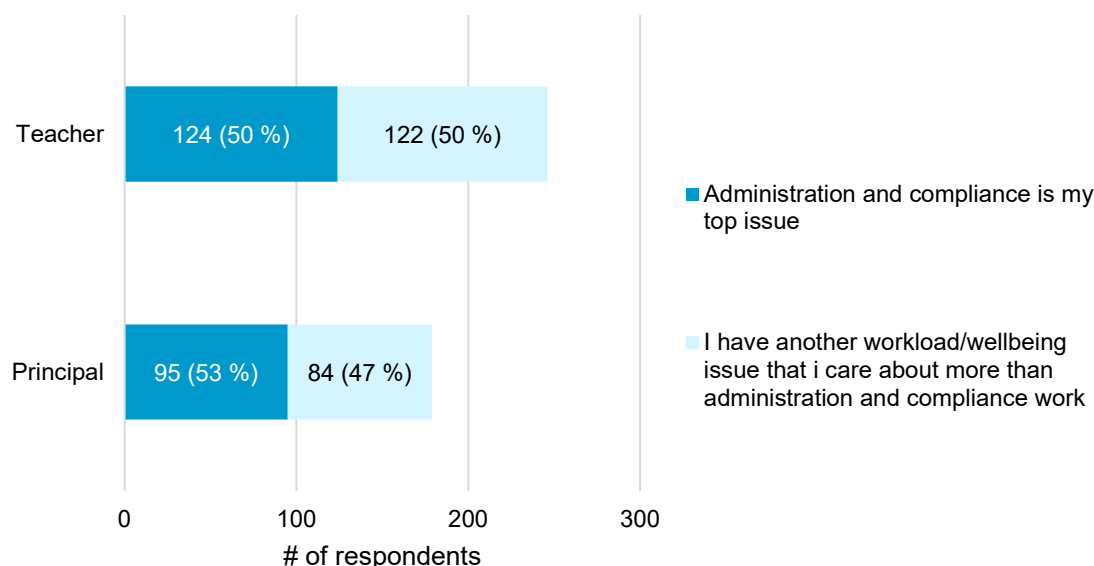
How manageable is teacher administration and compliance workload?

49% of teachers, when asked how manageable their overall administrative and compliance workload is, reported that the workload is unmanageable.

A higher proportion (56%, 59) of primary school teachers reported unmanageable administrative workloads compared with secondary schools (42%, 52).

In general, lower proportions of teachers reported unmanageable administrative and compliance workload in secondary schools compared with primary schools across schools of all sizes.

Slightly higher proportions of primary school teachers working in the bottom and top enrolment size quartiles (59% and 61% respectively) reported their administrative and compliance workload as unmanageable, compared to the middle 2 size quartiles (55% for Q2 and 51% for Q3).

In secondary schools, lower proportions of teachers working in the bottom and top enrolment size quartiles reported their administrative and compliance workload as unmanageable, compared to those working in the middle 50% of schools in terms of size.

Figure 23: How manageable is your overall administration and compliance workload? By school type (teachers)

Legend:
- Mostly manageable
- Somewhat manageable
- Unmanageable

17 (7%) 111 (44%) 124 (49%)
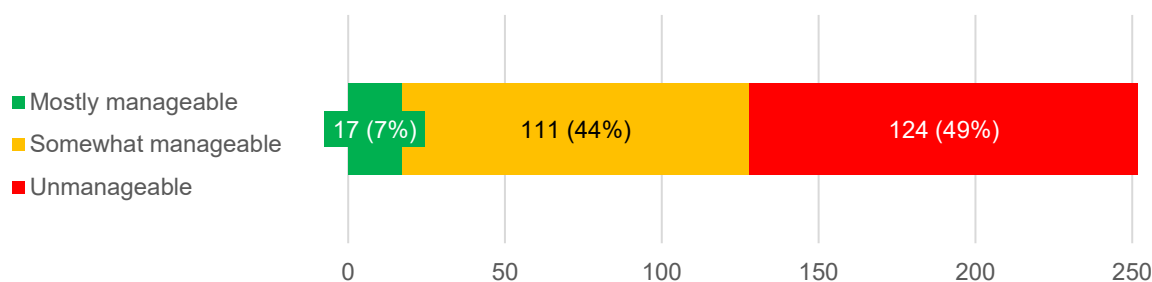
Figure 24: Proportion of respondents reporting administrative and compliance workload unmanageable. By school size quartiles (teachers)

Per cent of teachers reporting administrative and compliance workload **unmanageable**

1: 0-200: 59%, 200-355: 55%, 355-500: 51%, 500+: 61%
2: 0-700: 29%, 700-1000: 44%, 1000-1500: 50%, 1500+: 40%

Series1   Series2   Series3   Series4
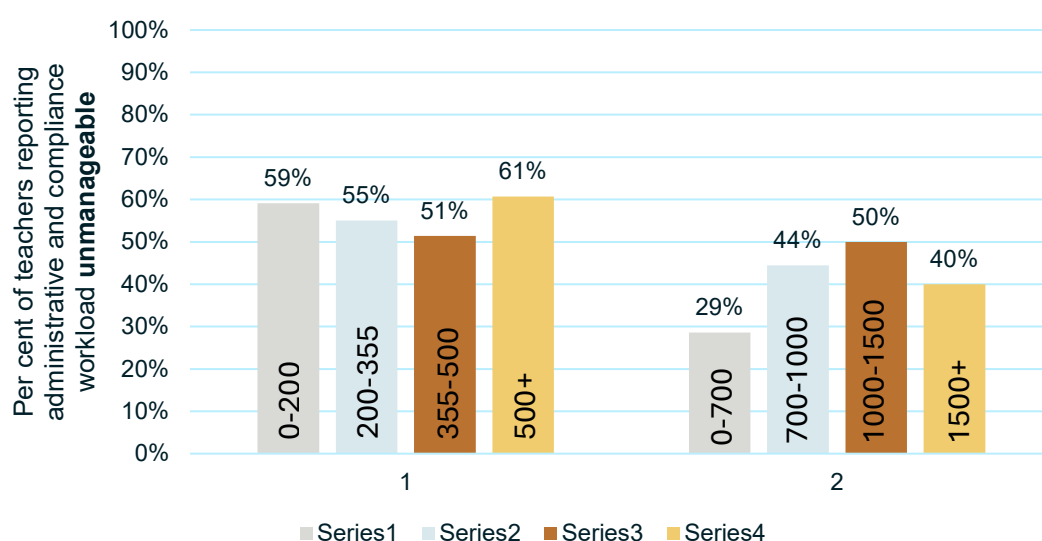
Notes: Size quartiles are defined with respect to each school type. Pri/Sec and Specialist schools are not on this chart due to small number of respondents.

Size quartile definitions:

Primary: Q1 (0-200), Q2 (200-355), Q3 (355-500), Q4 (500-).

Secondary: Q1 (0-700), Q2 (700-1000), Q3 (1000-1500), Q4 (1500-)

Biggest administrative and compliance frustrations
Primary school principals reported OHS and School planning (e.g. School Review, Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)) as the top 2 areas of frustration in school administration.

Secondary school principals reported Complex HR (e.g. WorkCover, underperformance) and school planning (e.g. School Review, AIP) as the top 2 areas of frustration.

Figure 25: Which 2 areas of administration and compliance are your biggest frustrations? (Choose up to 2 areas) By school type (principals)

Legend: ■ Secondary ■ Primary

Categories (top to bottom):
- OHS
- School planning (e.g. School Review, AIP)
- Facilities and grounds
- Complex HR (e.g. Workcover, underperformance)
- Audits
- Writing and implementing policies
- Emergency management
- Financial management
- Routine HR (e.g. payroll, recruitment)
- School council administration
- Issues with digital systems
- Other

X-axis: # of principal respondents (0 to 70)

Opinions on digital systems

Principals reported AIMS, CASE21 and the Schools Targeted Funding portal to be the least user-friendly, with 88% (143), 69% (113) and 65% (93) reporting them to be somewhat challenging or very challenging to use respectively.

Principals find Panorama, the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) and SPOT to be the most user-friendly, with 85% (155), 82% (150) and 74% (134) reporting them to be somewhat user-friendly or very user-friendly.

Figure 26: How user-friendly are the following digital systems? (principals)

Legend: ■ Very challenging to use ■ Somewhat challenging to use ■ Somewhat user friendly ■ Very user friendly

Categories (top to bottom):
- AIMS (n=162)
- CASE21 (n=164)
- School targeted funding portal (n=143)
- eduSafe Plus (n=181)
- Recruitment Online (n=176)
- Edupay (n=181)
- Emergency management portal…
- Student activity locator (n=171)
- SPOT (n=182)
- PAL (n=182)
- Panorama (n=182)

X-axis: Per cent of principal respondents (0% to 100%)

22

Principals are reluctant to hire more administrative staff

75% of principals reported they would feel personally uncomfortable spending more of their school budget on administrative staff, whilst only 17% of principals reported they would feel comfortable spending more.

Figure 27: I would feel personally uncomfortable spending more of our school budget on administrative staff (for principals)
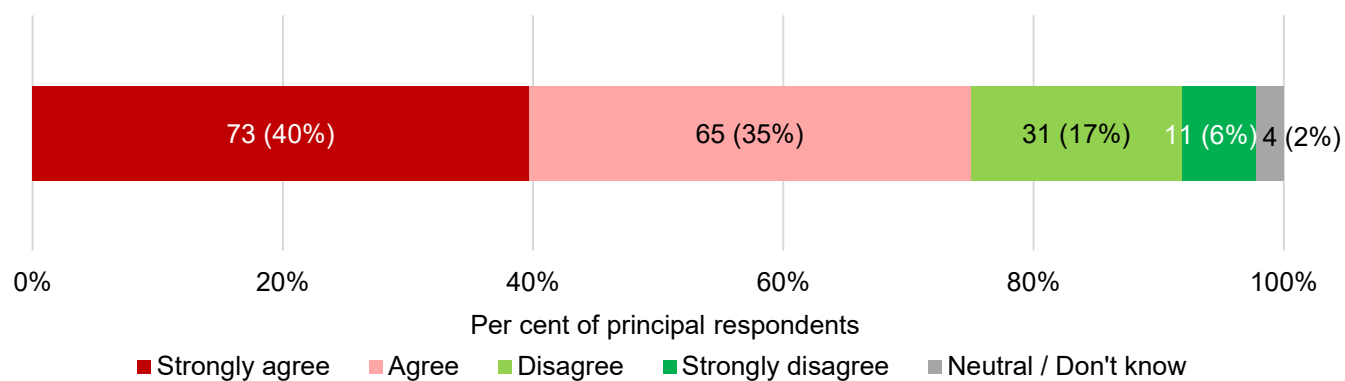
Appendix C: Supplementary evidence

Shielding and buffering data

Observation: Schools in "High" performance categories across both learning and wellbeing domains tend to have higher proportion of staff reporting good shielding and buffering on average, compared with schools in "Developing" performance categories.

DSPM learning domain

Dependent variable: Percentage endorse good shielding and buffering (from SSS)				
term	estimate	std.error	statistic	p.value
(Intercept)	54.396	1.550	35.099	0.000
Reference group: Learning: Developing				
Learning: High	12.706	1.841	6.901	0.000
Learning: Improving	6.939	2.038	3.405	0.001
Learning: Medium	9.753	1.766	5.524	0.000

DSPM wellbeing domain

Dependent variable: Percentage endorse good shielding and buffering (from SSS)				
term	estimate	std.error	statistic	p.value
(Intercept)	51.800	1.399	37.032	0.000
Reference group: Wellbeing: Developing				
Wellbeing: High	19.537	1.699	11.500	0.000
Wellbeing: Improving	6.708	2.084	3.219	0.001
Wellbing: Medium	10.996	1.603	6.861	0.000

Observation: no strong statistical association detected between SFOE bands and proportion of staff reporting good shielding and buffering.

Dependent variable: Percentage endorse good shielding and buffering (from SSS)				
term	estimate	std.error	statistic	p.value
(Intercept)	61.38561	1.180844	51.98451	0
Reference group: SFOE: High				
SFOE: Low	2.804956	1.561183	1.796686	0.072631
SFOE: Low-Medium	2.729864	1.627682	1.677149	0.093768
SFOE: Medium	1.996692	1.6264	1.227675	0.219804

Data on ES staff

As of 30 June 2023, the department employed 28,376 staff (21,630 FTE) in ES roles.[2] This workforce is larger than sworn police and protective services officers, and eclipsed within the Victorian public sector only by

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[2] Department of Education, Annual Report 2022-23, page 49. Excludes staff on schools' local payroll.

teachers, nursing and midwifery professionals, and Victorian Public Service employees.[3] Over 80% of ES staff are women and 56% work part time.[4] In 2023, 74% of ES staff were employed at salary range 2 (approximately $54,000 – $70,000) and their average actual remuneration was $52,236.[5]

The ES workforce has more than doubled over the last decade, up 169% from 10,542 staff (8,517 FTE) in 2014.[6] This growth outpaces the considerable growth in teachers (up 56%) and enrolments (up 16%) over the same period.[7] This growth in part reflects significant new investment in health and wellbeing services in schools as well as supports for students with additional needs, but it also reflects the growing administrative and compliance requirements of operating a school. The department does not currently collect data on ES staff role types, so it is not possible for the Review to give an accurate picture of what proportion of the growth, or the overall workforce, relates to administrative activities.

Despite significant growth, Victoria's ratio of teaching to non-teaching staff in schools remains modest in comparison to other Australian jurisdictions, and factoring in departmental staff only worsens this position relative to others. In Victoria, there is 0.51 FTE of non-teaching staff supporting each FTE teacher, less than every other Australian state and territory. Victoria's department is the smallest relative to the size of the teaching workforce of all states and territories, and Victoria's school-based support workforce is the equal smallest (with NSW) on the same basis.

Figure 10: Number of non-teacher employees per teacher employee, 2023
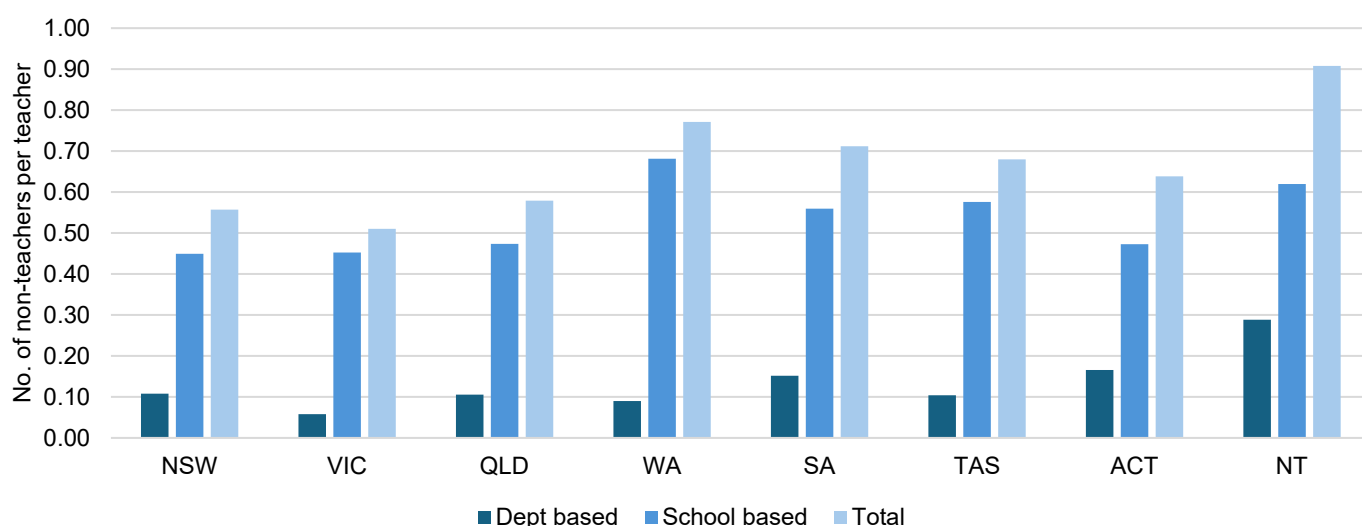
The absence of role type data for ES staff means that the department can generally only identify and communicate with ES staff with particular administration responsibilities (for example, to offer finance-related training to finance managers, or offer facilities managers tailored support with a change in OHS requirements) if those staff make themselves known to the department. Together with the department's practice of funnelling all communications via the principal, this hampers the effectiveness of delegation and innovation in role types. It also means that the department cannot monitor the supply of, and demand for, different types of ES roles or engage effectively with tertiary students in relevant fields to promote the opportunities of a career in education – something it does extensively for teachers.

Administrative ES staff

Based on survey responses from principals, the Review estimates that approximately 4,000 – 9,000 FTE staff in schools (regardless of classification and excluding the principal themselves) spend most or all of their time on administrative duties. While the share of staff in administration roles tends to increase with school size (and available budget), there are large variations between similar sized schools.

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[3] Victorian Public Sector Commission, Public Sector Workforce Data 2023, Employee occupations and pay grades 2023 - VPSC
[4] Victorian Public Sector Commission, Public Sector Workforce Data 2023, Employee occupations and pay grades 2023 - VPSC
[5] Victorian Public Sector Commission, Public Sector Workforce Data 2023, Employee occupations and pay grades 2023 - VPSC
[6] Department of Education, Annual Report 2014-15, page 48. Excludes staff on schools' local payroll.
[7] All Schools FTE enrolments - Feb 2014 - Dataset - Victorian Government Data Directory; All Schools FTE Enrolments - Feb 2023, Victoria - Dataset - Victorian Government Data Directory

Figure 11: Number of staff spending most or all of their time on administration and compliance, by school size band
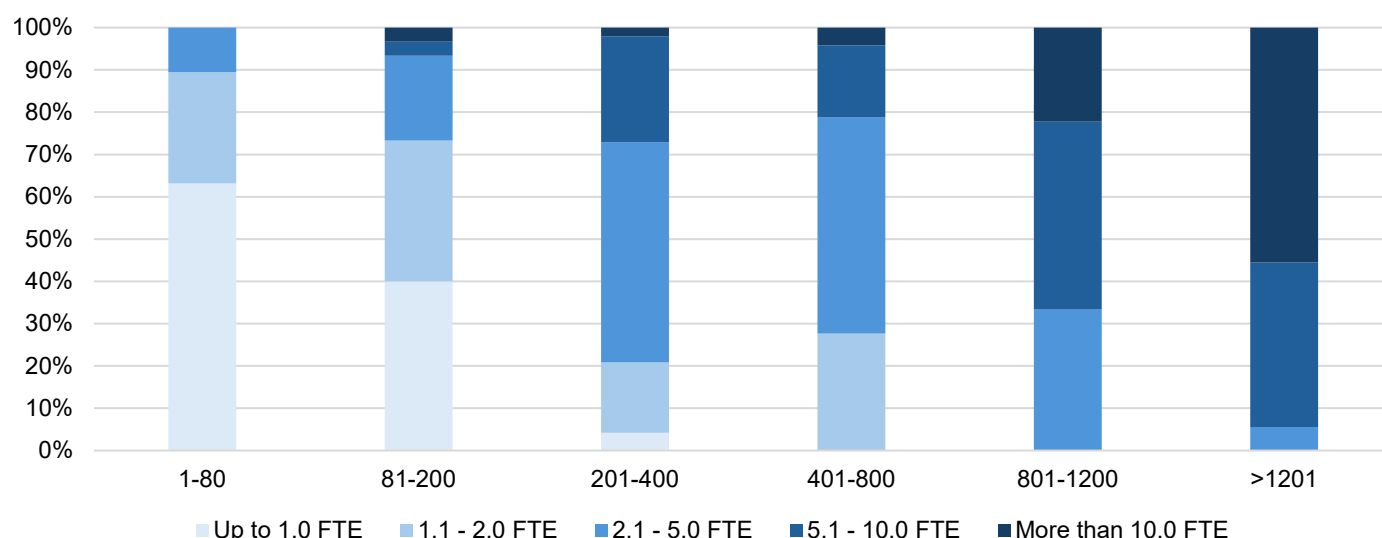
While average mainstream schools employ just under a third of their workforce in non-teaching roles, the range between the smallest and largest shares of non-teaching staff is very large. Analysis by the Review suggests that the prevalence of disadvantage (and associated funding) only partially explains the level of variation.

Table 6: Non-teachers in schools as a proportion of that schools' workforce, by type and sector, 2022

	Minimum	Average	Maximum
Primary	0%	27%	61%
Secondary	18%	29%	47%
Combined	11%	29%	51%
Specialist	23%	53%	75%
Government sector	0%	29%	75%
Catholic sector	7%	30%	54%
Independent sector	12%	38%	71%

New Disability Inclusion approach

What school staff like about the new process:
- The reforms emphasise student strengths and necessary adjustments. By moving away from a deficit-focused perspective, this shift has fostered a more positive experience for both students and their parents, reducing workload from complaints and disputes.

- Teachers are able to contribute their experiences of supporting the student and have a 'voice', alongside the student and their parent.
- More students are having their additional needs met and school staff are increasing their knowledge and capability of meeting diverse needs.

Concerns about workload from the new process:
- Documenting the evidence for DIPs can be time-consuming and requires considerable resourcing to support teachers to access allied health specialists, to help track the evidence trail, to follow the process

correctly, to coordinate time for the teacher to complete paperwork and attend meetings, and to liaise with parents.

- The paperwork required to develop a DIP is lengthy including conducting Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Skills Assessments, completing various allied health, medical and specialist forms, creating IEPs and Behaviour Support Plans that highlight student adjustments, documenting how lesson plans are differentiated to cater for adjustments, and documenting meetings with specialists and other staff regarding a student's needs. Some teachers believe that the administrative requirements of Disability Inclusion (DI) are compromising their broader work responsibilities, including the actual delivery of differentiated teaching.

- Reviewing detailed and sometimes minor adjustments for individual students in DIP meetings, particularly those in specialist settings, is considered by some teachers to be unnecessary. Even where allied health and medical reports, shared with facilitators prior to the meeting, clearly outline the adjustments needed for some students and strongly demonstrate that these meet maximum funding criteria, schools are still being asked to step through every element of evidence in the profile meeting in detail when the funding outcome is already evident. It is not clear to the Review whether this is actually a department requirement or whether it is part of local variations in practice between facilitators.

- The new DI digital portal lacks features that existed on the former Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) digital system that helped reduce work for schools. Schools report it is now difficult to find key information such as funding levels, report due dates, review dates, category details and student IDs. This information was easily accessible on the former system, along with a simple funding allocation list that was particularly useful for specialist schools where all students have individual funding allocations. School staff told the Review that the new DI digital portal requires more work from them in order to obtain basic information.

- The new DI process has resulted in specialist schools being required to use 2 separate portals to enter the same student information, one for verifying student enrolment eligibility in a specialist setting, and another for DI funding purposes. The previous PSD digital system was used for both these functions.

- DIPs are currently prepared as electronic documents rather than in a common digital platform. School staff expressed mixed opinions about the possibility of a fully digital system for DIPs. Some saw the potential for a redesign of the process to reduce administrative 'friction' and save staff time, for example using pre-populated fields drawing on data in other systems, providing more drop-down boxes and integrated guidance materials, and making it easier for all involved to share information. Others expressed concern that the negative features of the current approach would be 'baked in' to a new system and become expensive and time-consuming to change.

- NDIS workers and other external agencies are promoting DI reforms to parents of their clients and advocating that they approach their child's school and request a DIP. School staff report a growing demand from parents for school staff to develop a DIP for their child to receive individual support, despite school staff knowing that the student will not meet the funding criteria. This is adding to school staff workload with additional parent meetings and increased communications. In some instances, external agency workers directly advocate on a client's behalf and school staff are 'caught in the middle' and having to push back on these demands.

There is a concern that teachers, in particular, have a high workload with DIPs:
- Some schools are managing the increased workload associated with preparing DIPs by using casual relief teachers (CRTs) to cover classes while the teachers complete DIP paperwork. Recruiting and managing CRTs in itself adds to administrative workloads in schools that adopt this strategy. It also disrupts the teaching and learning of students and can impact the wellbeing of students with behavioural or emotional needs, which can create further additional work.

- As funding for students with a disability is dependent on the DIP process, it can place additional pressure on teaching staff prior to and during profile meetings.

- Profile meetings are lengthy, lasting up to 2 hours, and involve a detailed review of all 31 categories set out in the DIP. Preparing for, attending, and following up on even one meeting can take 9-12 hours, the equivalent of one full week of a teacher's planning and preparation time. Even in mainstream settings, some teachers have 10 or more students requiring a DIP; for these teachers, DIP administration would

displace approximately a full term of planning time. In very small schools, DIP processes scale particularly poorly and present significant logistical and scheduling challenges.

Foundation and Year 7 are key points in time that have additional workload:

- The Review heard that some teachers are not wanting to work in Foundation level due to the additional DI work that comes with new students with additional needs entering school.

- The current practice of reviewing DIPs in Year 7 places increased pressure and work on Year 7 teachers, and the secondary school environment comes with additional complexities given that student learning and wellbeing is shared by a larger number of teachers who must each separately document adjustments for every student with a DIP in each of their classes (whether these adjustments vary between subjects or not). Secondary teachers told the Review that the level of individualisation required makes it hard to achieve economies of scale.

There are many resources available, but teachers would like them to be streamlined:

- The department has developed numerous resources, guidance materials and templates to support the DI reform and the DIP process, but these resources are spread across 2 PAL topics, approximately 30 pages, and dozens of linked documents. School staff reported challenges in navigating these resources and finding what they need.

- Many teachers questioned the utility of the department provided template plans. Many teachers stated that the templates are not used in the classroom because they are too long and impractical.

The timing and design of DI creates administrative issues with school budgeting and workforce planning:

- For principals and business managers, having to complete budgets and workforce planning before they are advised of DIP outcomes creates additional administrative complexity, slows the delivery of funded supports for students, and can impact school staff relationships with families.

Detailed findings on compliance requirements for students from diverse backgrounds

Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD)

Schools with significant numbers of CALD families may need to translate written and verbal communications, significantly increasing workload, particularly during parent-teacher meetings. The transition of CALD students is challenged by student management systems not being designed for their unique needs, increasing administrative work.

Although the department identifies which schools need Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) using department data, it still requires the identified schools to submit detailed grant applications justifying the provision of a CLO. Successful schools are expected to account in detail for the associated spending and performance of their CLOs. It is not clear why this support is structured in this way, when other supports are simply provided to schools identified as in need of the support.

Koorie students

Koorie Education Supports Officers (KESO) play an important role, but some schools report that engagement with them leads to additional administrative work. This can discourage schools from engaging with KESOs and benefiting from their expertise.

Students in Out of Home Care

Students in Out of Home Care (OoHC) and/or students with Child Protection Service involvement Schools report that case managers of OoHC students or Child Protection Service workers will sometimes request in-school observations, with unclear expectations around teacher involvement. School staff report that case managers for OoHC students and/or Child Protection Service workers will often request written observation reports from teachers, with no clear guidance or purpose.

Child Protection Service workers or case managers regularly request school staff to be part of a Care Team meeting for students in OoHC and/or students that have Child Protection Service involvement. A care team meeting is a formal process for sharing information and working together to identify, assess, and manage risk. The purpose of a care team meeting is to keep victims and survivors safe. School staff are being

increasingly expected to take a central role in these by providing updates on students, and families, and following up requests. School staff report that their role in these meetings is to supplement the administration workload of the Child Protection Services rather than attending to provide educational expertise.

The LOOKOUT service has several administration and compliance requirements that increase the work for school staff with high populations of students in OoHC, including mandated IEPs, Student Support Groups, data collection and recording, requests for updated home placement details of students, case management reports and Educational Needs Analysis (ENA) assessment reports.

Student Support Services can take up to 12 months to undertake an ENA for a student in OoHC creating an increase in teacher administrative workload as student learning, wellbeing and development needs can change from the initial referral period, creating the need to re-do the same paperwork. Compulsory ENAs for students in both OoHC and in a specialist school setting are often redundant considering the assessments they have undertaken for enrolment purposes.

Students in contact with Youth Justice

There is a high documentation demand on school staff for students in the Youth Justice system, particularly around transitions between school and the justice system. School staff observe they lack the necessary guidance and resources specifically for managing the complex needs of Youth Justice students.

Compliance training and mandatory modules

The table below sets out the mandatory and strongly recommended training modules required for teachers.

Table 7: mandatory and strongly recommended training modules for teachers

Mandatory for all teachers	Mandatory for teachers in relevant circumstances	Strongly recommended (but not mandatory)
• Addressing workplace bullying • Anaphylaxis briefing (twice per year) • Child Safe Standards training • Diabetes • Disability Standards • Equal opportunities • Hazardous manual handling & ergonomics • Human rights and responsibilities • Health, safety and wellbeing for employees • Protecting children – Mandatory reporting and other legal obligations • Respectful workplaces • Sexual harassment	• Teacher teaches a student with anaphylaxis • Teacher teaches a student with asthma • Teacher teaches a student with epilepsy • Organising an excursion • Teaching science • Teaching technology • Driving during work time • Anaphylaxis supervisor Nationally Consistent Collection of Data coordinator (add 9 modules) • International student coordinator • First aid officer • Working in a school accessing students with disabilities transport program	• Information Security • Privacy • Restraint and Seclusion • Conflict of Interest • Fraud and Corruption (Note: incomplete list)

• **Slips, trips and falls prevention** • **Understanding DET Values – Schools**	**(Note: most teachers would need to do at least one of these)**	

Administration for semesterly reporting to families

Teachers are required to report student achievement and progress to parents at least twice per year aligned with the standards set by the Victorian Curriculum 1.0. This process ensures parents have accessible and meaningful information about their child's academic performance and wellbeing. These requirements are not in scope for change. Instead, the Review has examined the administrative tasks behind reporting and how different approaches to semesterly reporting can impact the administrative workload of school staff.

There are large differences between schools in how streamlined the reporting process is. Schools that have minimised teacher workload, but still provide high quality reports to parents, exist across Victoria and are models for what the future of reporting can look like to be best practice both for families and for teachers.

Table 8: What is in-scope and out-of-scope

What is out-of-scope	What is administration and compliance
• Changing the minimum requirements for reporting to parents	• Unclear requirements leading to schools doing additional unnecessary work • Automation of data systems • Duplication of data entry

"The last reports I spent at least an additional 40 hours of my own time writing, editing, correcting other teachers reports and then uploading to Compass." - Teacher

Key findings about administration for semesterly reporting to families:

• **Teachers have varied opinions on whether semesterly reporting is a problematic administrative workload area**. 34% of teacher survey respondents reported that the administrative workload for semesterly reports to parents is 'very problematic', 42% said it was 'somewhat problematic' and 22% said it was 'generally not a problem'.

• **Many schools have been successful at simplifying semesterly reporting to reduce teacher workload.** These schools usually have not gone through an extensive consultation process to make this change. The schools have found that families are happy with the simplified reports because simpler reports are often easier for to read.

• **Some teachers spend up to 40 hours on reporting while others spend very little time.** The differences are based on school-based reporting policy. In schools with a lot of personalised written comments, no automation of data into reports, and no continuous reporting – reporting is a very time-intensive administrative burden. There is also a lot of work to check the reports, usually done by middle leaders in schools. This checking and editing work can take significant time. But there are many schools where teachers report almost no administrative burden with reporting.

• **Unclear department reporting requirements may be leading to school staff doing more work than they need to.** Both teachers and principals wanted more clear guidance from the department regarding the format, frequency, length, and depth of student reports. This lack of clarity in reporting expectations has led to high variability in report length and depth.

• **There is variable in parental engagement in reports.** Many school staff are seeing less than 50% of parents opening reports. The varying levels of parent engagement amplify the frustration associated with

the reporting. Teachers report that they invest significant effort in preparing reports that are often not read or discussed with teachers, contributing to dissatisfaction with the time it takes to do the task.

- **Variation in digital platforms leads to variation in administrative workload.** School staff use a wide range of digital platforms to report to parents, many of which create additional administrative burden. School staff are interested in having more consistency across all schools.

Efficient administrative semesterly reporting practices in schools:

- continuous reporting of data as assessments are completed (instead of inputting all assessments in the system at the end of the term) – but careful to not add extra administrative workload for progress reporting, instead automating parent access to assessment data. This usually allows families to have more useful data that they can act on thorough the term instead of waiting for end-of-semester reports.

- automatically generate end-of-semester achievement levels from data entered into data collection platform.

- minimal or no written comments and use of standard comment banks

- use twice yearly parent-teacher meetings in place of detailed comments

- eliminate duplication of reporting documentation

- dedicated pupil-free time for writing reports.

Barriers to reducing administration work for semesterly reporting to families:

- inconsistent digital platforms for creating the reports and automating data from assessments

- unclear policies, or communication of policies, about the minimum reporting requirements

- lack of examples of efficient administrative approaches to reporting.

Box 7: Example of a primary school simplifying semesterly reporting

A Victorian government primary school simplified semesterly reporting to parents which significantly reduced teacher administrative workload, while still meeting the mandatory reporting requirements. The school leaders decided to move to a continuous reporting platform where teachers input assessment results as they are completed, and families have access to these results via a platform login throughout the term. The continuous reporting is the same amount of work overall for teachers, but the work is more manageable because it is spread out each week rather than completed all at once at the end of the semester. Families benefit from getting access to up-to-date information that can be acted on quickly, rather than waiting for the summative report at the end of each semester.

The school automated the end-of-semester reports from its student data platform and removed all written comments so that there is little additional workload for teachers. In place of written comments, the school holds meetings with parents each semester and as needed throughout the term if the continuous reporting of assessment data flags any potential learning details to discuss. Middle leaders at the school quality check the semesterly reports which is now a simplified process without the written comments.

Teachers say there is a significant felt impact of these changes, reducing their administrative workload at the end of each semester. The school leaders made these changes without a detailed consultation process with the school community as it was clear to the leaders that they needed to identify ways to give teachers more time to focus on teaching and learning. School leaders have received feedback from families that they are happy with the simplicity of the semesterly reports and that they appreciate the timely continuous reporting data.

Principal Survey summary

The Review conducted analysis of the Semester 1 and 2, 2023 and the Term 1, 2024 principal surveys. The potential solutions provided by principals to the department via these surveys are summarised under 15 key themes:

Accountability requirements
- Minimise teacher documentation for accountability.
- Reduce quantitative data collection, tracking, and reporting demands on teachers.
- Replace PDPs with professional discussions where teachers provide feedback on their contributions to school Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) goals.

ES staff
- Employ teacher aides and non-teaching staff for administrative tasks and student supervision.
- Assign dedicated staff to manage OHS compliance for groups of schools.
- Provide 0.5 FTE ES staff for schools with fewer than 100 enrolments to assist with compliance.
- Offer ES technical support for navigating systems like AIMS.
- Allocate funding for ES staff to support schools in providing student meals.
- Recruit allied health professionals to work directly in schools, expanding their roles to include youth workers, sports and recreation professionals, community workers, medical staff, and mental health practitioners.
- Centrally fund a business manager position for each school with regional oversight and training.

Buildings and maintenance
- Employ dedicated VSBA staff to assess and address building issues at schools.
- Ensure timely communication between schools and the VSBA.
- Centralise management of building maintenance, repairs, audits, OHS, capital works, and minor works.
- Involve regional staff in school site improvements instead of competitive grants.
- Outsource OHS tasks to specialised contractors.
- Provide funding for each school to employ an OHS staff member.
- Monitor contracted cleaning services closely or decentralise cleaning contracts to schools.
- Contract an annual facility audit and repair management service for all schools.
- Fund each school to employ a maintenance worker, prioritising older schools.
- Assign dedicated department school project managers to schools handling multiple maintenance projects.
- Prioritise asbestos removal in schools to eliminate ongoing management responsibilities.
- Fully fund and manage necessary works identified in VSBA's Request for Enhancement (RFE) for ongoing upgrades to schools.

Central response
- Standardise department policy templates to simplify school approval processes and allow minor adjustments without annual resubmission.
- Streamline data collection by reducing redundancy in surveys overlapping with VAGO information.
- Implement effective issue triaging for timely support responses to school emergencies.
- Increase department staff to enhance responsiveness and school support.
- Establish dedicated teams in central or regional offices for managing 'Permission to Teach' applications.

- Consider reverting to the LAB model over the School Administration Support Hub (SASH) for improved effectiveness.

- Provide a department directory for regional staff roles, ensuring schools have clear support contacts.

- Enhance communication channels between central and regional divisions to improve coordination.

- Centralise mandatory training like First Aid and asthma management to reduce school burdens.

- Create a procurement panel for schools to select assessment and reporting providers.

- Equip teachers with a comprehensive data management system like Panorama for streamlined handling and reporting.

- Establish a central panel for schools to procure common supplies.

- Centralise the collection of school records for streamlined archiving.

- Expand in-person training for office staff to complement webinar-based development.

- Centralise curriculum management beyond lesson plans to include tasks like 'I can statements.'

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement

- Consider increasing principal salaries or implementing Time in Lieu (TIL) for covering additional staff duties during shortages, ensuring fair compensation for added responsibilities.

- Revise negotiations for school leaders and teacher wages and conditions to account for diverse needs across educational settings, moving away from a 'one size fits all' approach.

Finance

- Release indicative budgets earlier to enable schools to plan more effectively and allocate resources efficiently.

- Communicate funding decisions for specific initiatives and programs like the Tutor Learning Initiative and Middle Years Literacy and Numeracy Support initiative earlier, facilitating better long-term planning and continuity.

- Increase overall funding to schools to support enhanced educational outcomes and resource allocation.

Human resources, OHS, and workers compensation

- Designate a single point of contact for HR issues to streamline communication and resolution.

- Increase HR staffing to ensure prompt responses to school inquiries and accurate information dissemination.

- Ensure funding for assistant principals in all schools regardless of student enrolment numbers.

- Centralise WorkCover management to reduce administrative burden on schools.

- Expand support staff for handling conduct issues in schools for quicker resolutions.

- Provide training to schools on new recruitment models for effective implementation.

- Establish a clear process for schools to manage TIL with specific guidance.

- Introduce a centralised or regional induction program for international teachers to standardise onboarding.

- Review implementation models to minimise administrative burdens on schools, reallocating support responsibilities for programs like Teach Today, Teach Tomorrow.

- Centrally manage international teacher recruitment to lighten the workload for hard-to-staff schools.

- Streamline risk management processes into a central and accessible platform.

- Allocate dedicated personal assistant time to every principal, supported by a designated budget line.

- Provide ongoing support from Curriculum Access Coordinators to principal teachers, especially in small schools, covering the role of Professional Learning Community leaders.

- Introduce a dedicated school leader role focused on improving workload and wellbeing conditions for teachers and leaders.

IT and digital
- Simplify and streamline the AIMS portal for user-friendly navigation similar to platforms like SPOT and EMPS.
- Design the Principal Page to consolidate essential tools and resources, including portals and checklists, for easy access.
- Consolidate online portals and platforms to reduce complexity and enhance familiarity for school staff.
- Expand department login access permissions beyond principals to facilitate efficient administrative tasks.
- Minimise mandatory online learning modules for school staff to reduce workload.
- Conduct an audit of the AIMS platform to optimise navigation, simplify processes, and remove unnecessary steps.
- Update systems like Panorama to support schools in reducing workload and increasing efficiency.
- Centralise procurement of a comprehensive student management system (e.g. Compass) for school website management, student assessment, and data collection, integrating with Panorama.
- Invest in an accessible AI system for administrative functions across schools.
- Replace outdated systems like CASE21 with modern, efficient alternatives.
- Leverage existing school systems to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.
- Source a user-friendly IT system for teachers to record student assessment data and reporting.
- Reduce digital communications to teachers to optimise their time for teaching.

Legislation
- Provide access to the Law-and-Order modules at any time.

Media
- Create a government campaign targeted to the Parent Community regarding the appropriate behaviour expected when dealing with schools and the unacceptable behaviours that will not be tolerated.

Policy
- Allow flexibility in school enrolment policies to accommodate students with additional needs, preventing schools at capacity from turning them away.
- Ensure alignment between department School Enrolment policies, the Parent Handbook, and DE website information.
- Conduct consultations with schools prior to implementing significant policy changes, such as recruitment procedures.
- Review expulsion policies to diversify placement options for expelled students, mitigating concentration in larger schools.
- Tailor support and management expectations according to the size and staffing profiles of individual schools.

Principal support
- Implement induction programs as standard for acting principals to support their transition.
- Streamline onboarding processes for new principals with clear guidebooks and checklists.
- Schedule monthly mental health check-ins with professionals for all principals.
- Open principal conferences to both principals and assistant principals.
- Reduce external meetings and demands to minimise principals' time away from schools.

Reviews and audits

- Stagger reviews to avoid multiple assessments in a year and schedule them away from report writing periods.

- Simplify audits to ensure consistency across auditors and reduce demands on schools.

- Schedule audits during less busy times, such as Week 1 of term.

- Review the AIP process to align it with its intended purpose and reduce administrative burdens.

- Decrease VRQA questions and compliance requirements in the School Review process.

- Centralise checklists and planning documents for all reviews and audits in a single, accessible location.

School programs
- Coordinate the timing and frequency of new initiatives and programs to avoid simultaneous rollouts for smoother implementation.

- Simplify and streamline the DI pathway for schools to reduce paperwork and administrative tasks.

- Ensure schools have adequate time for input into program evaluations.

- Provide timely communication to schools regarding program status, whether ongoing or undergoing changes.

Student Support
- Expand the DI Program to include students with specific medical needs like diabetes, requiring adult support.

- Provide school support to facilitate student access to external mental health services.

- Increase department support to address rising issues with student behaviour in schools.

- Establish a unified resource hub to efficiently address complex student and parent behaviours.

- Ensure timely assessment of students with extreme behaviours to support school management.

- Enhance department assistance in managing increased requests from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to support students in OoHC.

- Implement comprehensive allied health services in schools for convenient access to specialist care such as speech therapy, psychology, and occupational therapy.

- Develop a centralised platform for service providers to register, submit necessary documentation, complete department-approved inductions, and request bookings that schools can easily manage.

Appendix D: Case Studies

During research and consultations, the Review collected a range of case studies on administrative and compliance arrangements for schools in Victoria and other jurisdictions. Some of the most interesting of these – and in particular, those that highlight innovative practices to reduce and better manage administrative and compliance workload – are set out in this appendix.

Effective system level approaches to administrative and compliance priorities

Consultation and feedback efforts: Engage Victoria and the Victorian Government Public Engagement Framework

One example of a process to streamline consultation and feedback efforts is from the Victorian Government. The Victorian Government Public Engagement Framework sets standards, principles and expectations for quality public engagement in Victoria and provides a set of outcomes so that the government can evaluate engagements and focus on continuous improvement.

As part of this framework, the Government launched the Engage Victoria consultation platform which aims to create a meaningful opportunity for the public to influence and shape project outcomes by providing feedback.

A useful feature of the Engage Victoria platform is that users can opt in to receiving updates about any project. This allows people to follow the projects they care about the most, and see what updates happen as a result of the feedback provided.

Creating a government school staff version of the Engage Victoria platform could help:

- school staff better understand how, when, and where to provide feedback about administration and compliance workload issues
- allow school staff to only receive notifications and requests about the projects they opt into (noting this will not always be appropriate – for example, evaluations which may need a representative sample of schools, and some engagement may relate to the department's employer/employee relationship with school staff)
- standardise the feedback collection mechanisms across the department so that it is easier to track administration and compliance issues over time
- make school staff feel like their feedback is more meaningful by allowing them to follow updates on projects.

Communication with schools and the former School Delivery Unit (now part of OPSEC)

In 2018, the department set up the School Delivery Unit (SDU), which in 2019 moved to the Operational Policy, School Engagement and Compliance (OPSEC) division. Before the SDU's introduction, school staff were experiencing frequent communications often with limited coordination across the department. All groups could send communications directly to school staff, typically via email, with limited restrictions or oversight.

This overload of communication led to frustration from school staff about the volume, confusion about priorities, and a perception that the department was out of touch with the realities of school operations.

The SDU was established to act as a gate keeper for school staff to reduce department requests, as well as a critical friend for department business units in planning communications to school staff. Business units were required to apply for permission to correspond with school staff, which included documenting the purpose, necessity, timing, and impact of the communications.

The SDU (now OPSEC) continues to have authority to:

- recommend whether communications should be issued to schools (noting that the approver is the Assistant Deputy Secretary, SRS)
- suggest modifications to improve clarity or relevance, or to remove unnecessary workload burden
- deny communications that were deemed unnecessary
- defer communications that were non-urgent or poorly timed.

The introduction of the SDU had an immediate impact, changing departmental behaviour and fostering a culture of greater mindfulness around school operation and planning cycles. The volume of communications to school staff, however, remains high, but is less distributed from across the department.

School Records Management Program: Victoria

Many schools struggle to comply with their recordkeeping obligations under the Public Records Act 1973, holding large collections of hard copy records which may be un-catalogued, over-retained, not archived when required, and inadequately or unsafely stored (e.g. in ceiling spaces or under buildings) risking loss or damage to records and injury to staff. Responding to requests for records stored in this way causes substantial manual work for school staff.

Recognising these challenges, the department offers a service to school staff that aims to improve compliance while reducing administrative burden on school staff. Schools are selected to participate in the program via expression of interest and have an initial conversation about their needs with the central team.

Participating schools receive an on-site visit from archivists and trained records staff to organise records, collect and transfer permanent records to the State Archives, and dispose of time-expired records. Teams of 2 or more staff spend an average of one to 2 days on site at the school (though larger teams and more staff are made available in complex cases). Post visit support is provided including digitisation of permanent records for easy access by school staff, and remediation of damaged records.

School staff only need to provide information on the current state of the issues, arrange a suitable workspace for the visiting staff, and complete a post-engagement survey – all other tasks are completed by the visiting team. School staff that have participated in the program provide strong positive feedback both on the experience and the post-visit benefits, including time and space savings, and a sense of confidence that the school is now compliant with legal requirements.

The program is promoted mostly by word of mouth as well as via PAL. The Review found limited awareness of the program amongst school staff facing records management challenges, suggesting that there is an opportunity for stronger promotion. There is currently a waiting list for the service.

Case study: administrative workload for exams in a senior secondary school

Reducing teacher administrative workload can require a multi-pronged approach. In the below example, the teacher's workload is driven by documentation requirements that are partially from the VCAA exam policies and partially from decisions by the school. The workload is exacerbated by the school management system, which is different at every school.

A senior secondary teacher says, "Much of the administration completed by teachers is as a result of inefficient individual school policies. These are designed by people that are not trained to understand how to improve efficiency and the consequences of policy." The teacher is pointing to the issue of school-based decisions driving teacher administrative workload. However, the teacher is acknowledging that the school staff have not been trained in how to efficiently administer this exam protocol.

The teacher provided an example of the steps that are required to issue a 'Non-Satisfactory' for a single student as part of the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE):

1. Mark students work (if submitted in the first place) with feedback

2. Inform student they have not achieved the required mark

3. Document this conversation in our school management system

4. Call parents to inform them of the result

5. Document this conversation in the school management system

6. Document the result in the school management system and generate a *redemption letter*

7. Deliver the letter to the senior school leader to sign

8. Deliver the letter to the assistant principal to sign

9. Deliver the letter to the front office to be posted home

10. Fill out a google form for the student to be rostered on to our school's *redemption timetable*

11. Print out the redemption task (if this has already been created in the past, otherwise needs to be created from scratch) and deliver to Assistant Principal to be completed by the student

12. Collect completed redemption task

13. Mark the redemption task with feedback to assist them to improve

If student achievement is not satisfactory then:

14. Repeat steps 2-5

15. Generate an At risk of not-satisfactory letter

16. Repeat steps 7-13.

Examples of successful delivery of OHS supports

School A

A high school with over 1000 students has integrated their OHS management system into eduSafe Plus. The eduSafe Plus rollout provided excellent webinars for school staff plus the OHS induction for visitors and the online inspections have also been beneficial. The department OHS support team provided to the school was responsive and reduced the school staff OHS administrative and compliance burden.

School B

A small regional school has been provided with face-to-face support from a small school coordinator who attends the school once a term. A full day of facilities and some OHS support is provided. The school has a new acting principal, one teacher and a business manager who work three days a fortnight. The staff are time poor, and the school is unable to meet its administration and compliance requirements without hands-on support. They have also received face-to-face OHS support in preparation for their 2025 OHS assessment.

The principal and business manager are not experienced in managing staff workers compensation claims and have received Return to Work (RTW) coordinator case management support from the department. The RTW coordinator manages this case on behalf of the school. The only administrative task the school completes is obtaining the certificate of capacity from the injured worker and lodging it on eduPay.

These supports complete administrative tasks on behalf of the school, provide specialist advice and follow up school queries. This actively supports the school to meet their administration and compliance obligations.

Small Schools Program

The Small Schools Program (SSP) offers crucial support to small rural and regional schools to help manage routine maintenance, essential safety measures, OHS obligations, risks and RTW obligations.

Commencing in July 2022, the program will see 319 small rural and regional schools supported by 16 Facilities/OHS coordinators after a four year roll out. The SSP Coordinators will each support approximately 21 schools. Schools are chosen based on their location within a cluster, accessibility by the coordinator, and a range of circumstances across a school sector.

There are also four Return-to-Work coordinators that will support the schools in discharging their duties in relation to Workers Compensation claims and ensure the schools meets their return-to-work obligations.

From 2024, the department will use a new centralised model to complete the audit, inspection and testing of essential safety measures, including exit lights, fire extinguishers, fire doors and safe means of escape to reduce the administrative burden on school staff.

Workforce Planning Initiative: Victoria

The department's Workforce Planning Initiative attempts to influence positive school organisation design decisions through authentic, supportive conversations between current and former principals.

The initiative builds on key insights from the department's longitudinal research into principal work and wellbeing, conducted between 2014 and 2019, most notably that many schools are not well structured to support delegation and distributed leadership practices, and that principals were culturally inclined to see their role as doing everything themselves, rather than to ensure everything gets done.

The initiative employs 12 former school principals as 'local coordinators' whose role is to visit schools and work with principals to help them reorganise their school and their work. Each local coordinator works with between 13 and 18 school leaders, and to date the initiative has helped around 100 schools. Schools are identified for participation based on central data holdings, and do not need to complete an application process to receive support.

Supported by a department benchmark of 20% of staff in positions of leadership, the initiative gives principals permission to invest in leadership and organisation design in a way that many struggle to do when left alone. The initiative team also works closely with Financial Services division to ensure messaging about how to invest school funds is consistent.

While the initiative began with an objective of reducing workloads, it has shifted in implementation to focus on better design and distribution of work. Alongside this shift, the initiative is expanding to offer other supports, including guidance materials, tools and checklists, coaching, masterclasses, and targeted engagement with new principals.

Facilities and assets

South Australia

The South Australian Department for Education is responsible for managing the facilities and assets of its public schools and preschools and creating new facilities as demand increases.

The Infrastructure Division, which oversees this responsibility, adopts a customer-focused approach, treating schools as its primary clients. A key aspect of this work is the department's comprehensive oversight of its assets, allowing schools to stay focused on education while life cycle asset management, and facilities management, are handled by central and regional departmental staff, and through the department's contracted expert services.

South Australia's approach to education infrastructure is guided by the government's 20 Year Infrastructure Plan for South Australian Public Education and Care: Every School a Great School policy, which was publicly announced by the Minister for Education, Training and Skills in July 2024. It recognises, among other important determinants of education, the importance of high quality and fit-for-purpose infrastructure and focuses on three key areas: ensuring enrolment demand is met through the development of new schools; targeted uplift is provided at schools at the right time for the right reasons; and maintaining and sustaining existing assets to maximise their use and prioritise those most important to school communities.

Schools are allocated funds annually to cover minor and immediate repairs for works up to $10,000. For more significant issues, however, a system-wide approach is used by the Infrastructure Division's Asset and Facilities Services team. Schools log all works into a digital portal to help prioritise and trigger the appropriate responses. Additionally, clusters of around 120 schools (with plans to reduce this number) are assigned a designated Assets and Facilities Officer who develops and maintains a close working relationship with each site.

In early 2025, the department's Facilities Management Improvement Plan (FMIP) will be implemented allowing sites to quickly and efficiently engage the Infrastructure team to assist with site-funded works, and access to all supporting information. This platform is powered by industry leading software and AI technology and is currently being trialled across several pilot sites.

All South Australian public school planned maintenance includes a condition assessment by the Government's facilities management provider, who also undertakes breakdown, urgent, and minor works. Minor works can include maintenance backlog, refurbishment, or small construction projects, with budgets of up to $2 million, and higher in some cases.

The school principal's role in facilities and asset management is limited to staying informed about asset-related site activities, compliance, and safety works, and escalating any work beyond this scope to the appropriate experts – allowing the principals to focus on their primary role as educational leaders.

Capital projects are typically driven by life cycle asset management requirements, capacity requirements, and other socio-economic factors, and are funded through the State Budget process and annual appropriations. For new schools, formal business cases are developed in line with Infrastructure South Australia's Assurance Framework and is endorsed by Cabinet prior to funding.

Western Australia

In 2023, the Western Australian Department of Education (WA DE) commissioned an independent review to investigate the major drivers of excessive teacher and leader workload in its public schools.

In its endeavours to reduce the workload of schools, WA DE has implemented several other new practices. One of these is the Principal Policy Advisory Group which offer expert feedback to policymakers. This group, now part of the formal governance process, was created to help ensure that new operational policies do not inadvertently add to the burden on schools. It serves as a key strategy for the WA DE by providing advice on the impact and workload of new or revised policies to inform implementation. The group, composed of school leaders from all school types, meets once a term to review proposed WA DE operational policies. They provide thoughtful feedback, drawing on their expertise and the perspectives of schools. With a keen focus on language, they recognise that the inclusion of certain words or phrases can significantly impact workload at the school level. The feedback from the group helps the WA DE understand what the change or increase might be and what needs to be considered in its implementation. This has led to WA DE considering the most appropriate ways to implement policies, for example, digitising templates and releasing policies prior to the official implementation date to allow for familiarisation and feedback.

WA DE has created an additional systems support for school leaders and education regional office personnel who manage recurrent behaviours towards school staff by parents and carers. The team, skilled in trauma informed practices, may also act as a central communication point who provide a facilitator/mediator service during discussions between parents, carers, the school and allied professionals supporting student engagement and educational planning. The team also supports school leaders as they navigate frequent, complex communications/conflicts with parents and carers, where existing system supports have not yet gained traction. A principal's authority remains intact, with systems support at education regional offices and centrally enhanced.

Recent legislative changes to workplace health and safety (WHS) laws have placed an additional burden on WA schools, leading some to employ dedicated WHS/Safety personnel. Given this, schools now have the option to hire individuals for these roles, particularly in larger schools, where the WA DE has been exploring tasks that could be managed by non-educators with expertise in WHS. The WA DE's work health and safety team has been actively engaged in these discussions. While this area is still evolving, there is room for the WA DE to support schools, as this remains a relatively new issue, and principals have expressed ongoing concerns.

As part of the Teachers and Administrators General Agreement 2023, the department has recently established a Workload Intensification Taskforce comprising representatives from parties to the Agreement, led by an Independent Chair and reporting to the Minister of Education. The Taskforce will have a specific focus on the priority areas of classroom support, complex behaviour management, professional learning, compliance and individual student documented plans.

South Australia

South Australia outsources facilities management to a contractor that does all planned and unplanned maintenance, condition assessments and any asset management data entry. These tasks are removed from principal and school responsibility. Principals are still responsible to identify any safety risks, and any breakdowns. Schools are provided with an annual maintenance bucket for issues that arise.

The contractor also does minor works up to $2-3 million, for example gutting a learning area and removing asbestos, putting in new insulation, and rewiring. The department is also working on removing things like tree inspections from school responsibility.

The outsourced arrangement is, of course, not perfect and there is work underway to improve the responsiveness and customer service. But it does mean that in South Australia, principals have significantly less workload related to asset management.

"They are not asset managers, they are educators." – Bill Glasgow, Executive Director, Infrastructure in the South Australia Department of Education

South Australia does employ approximately 12 Asset and Facilities Service Officers who each have 90 school sites in their portfolio. These officers have worked in facilities management, and they know the history of the school, know the context, the leaders the business manager. They play a coordination role where sites have particular issues. There is a process for escalating high risk issues is via a case management system to provide more intensive support as needed.

The South Australia system also has a new Facilities Management Improvement Project which is being piloted to make it less stressful to engage with the facilities side of the department. The goal is to ensure school staff are heard, have responsive service, with a personal touch. There is an emphasis on creating a 'customer-centric' approach and a one-stop platform to get all services in a similar, consistent way.

Part of this new work is using AI to trial a new user-friendly portal. The AI populates responses to requests, with growing bank of knowledge. For example, with one to 2 clicks, if a school finds asbestos, the system will take staff through the steps they need to take for safety and then craft a response to send to stakeholders. The department will use AI to draw from current DE SA material including policy and guidelines and organisation charts and to quickly communicate with school staff who are the key department people to contact.

Occupational health and safety: Victoria

With OHS-related administrative demands escalating in recent years, Victorian school principals now face significant compliance challenges and workloads. Principals must ensure a safe work environment, oversee day-to-day safety operations, and manage rigorous documentation and assessments. This responsibility, while critical, places an intense administrative workload on school leaders.

This is an example of a regulatory or legislative requirement imposed on schools that the department and Victorian Government have limited ability to lessen. Under OHS law, the school principal is the line manager and worksite manager for school staff and has day to day oversight and decision-making capacity at the operational level. This is a duty that cannot be abrogated or transferred, as with similar duties faced by managers in any other workplace.

However, during the Review, it became clear that OHS compliance is placing a huge strain on schools – and particularly school leaders. Many leaders are ill-equipped to handle these complex demands, observe that the time spent on it detracts from broader school leadership and educational duties, and identified that there could be more support, better systems and direct involvement by the department to help schools to manage their OHS obligations.

Already, the department has recognised that, while it cannot legally transfer certain OHS duties from principals to central bodies, it could better support schools and design services that alleviate this burden. One such program – the OHS Services Program – piloted in 2024 and scheduled to launch fully in 2025, is a targeted intervention to support schools in meeting OHS obligations effectively.

This initiative is built on 2 key service components:

- Pre- and Post-Assurance Support – Schools with upcoming or recent OHS assurance assessments receive four days of on-site support, with OHS specialists assisting in documentation, risk management, and compliance checks. This proactive approach is designed to ensure schools are thoroughly prepared and supported during the assessment.

- Proactive OHS Services – For schools without pending assessments, 2 days of support from OHS experts aid in maintaining strong OHS protocols, risk mitigation strategies, and day-to-day safety management. This service ensures that schools not undergoing assurance reviews maintain compliance and safety standards.

Pilot program case studies from several schools highlight the positive impact of the OHS Services Program. Schools report significant reductions in OHS-related workloads, with principals able to focus more on educational leadership rather than the administrative complexity of compliance. OHS specialists offered tailored guidance that improved safety protocols, documentation accuracy, and the overall efficiency of compliance processes.

As the program rolls out fully in 2025, it has the potential to reduce the operational strain on schools, while maintaining statutory compliance. The Review Team offers no advice and has no view on the quality of the program, its likelihood of success, or its merit versus other options – but it is a positive example of the Department supporting schools in practical ways with the administrative and compliance burden, within the limits of what it is allowed to do under law and regulation.

Enrolments: Victoria

Administration work associated with student enrolment is triggered whenever students enrol in a school or transfer to a different school. However, it is also the job of schools to ensure they have accurate records about students at all times, including:

- their basic information

- their parents' details and circumstances

- any medical or legal requirements attached to them

- any additional supports they may require.

This requires schools to also periodically update the enrolment detail of all students.

Through the consultations for this review, stakeholders – and especially school business managers – were clear that the enrolment process is a source of significant administrative and compliance burden. The common frustrations were:

- that a lot of enrolment processes in a lot of schools remain paper-based, with parents filling out forms and staff having to manually enter details into systems

- the inefficiency and lack of functionality of these core enrolment systems – specifically CASE21 – which also do not adequately talk to other systems

- the double handling and lack of information sharing within schools and between schools driven by these poor and unconnected systems

- that different information about a student is held in different systems – including third-party systems – creating inefficiencies in accessing, using, transferring, and storing data.

In response to the high administrative burden associated with student enrolments, the department launched a pilot program to digitise enrolment across a selection of schools. This initiative aimed to streamline data entry, minimise paper-based processes, and reduce the double-handling of information. While the pilot represented a potential positive development, its implementation revealed the importance of user consultation and understanding the operational realities within schools before launching a new program or system.

Despite a promising premise, the design and implementation of the digital enrolment system was plagued by gaps in understanding about the practical flow of enrolment work in schools. Stakeholders told us that the department did not consult adequately with schools or business managers, who are the end-users of these systems. This lack of user insight created issues, for example, with the layout and order of the enrolment form, which did not match the order of fields in CASE21. This led to more work for administration staff, who had to navigate back and forth across multiple tabs when entering data.

While the department eventually engaged with stakeholders to improve the form's flow, and subsequent revisions made the process more intuitive, stakeholders provided feedback that this took too long and required too many requests and support tickets before the department would listen. An alternative approach, which involved several highly experienced administration staff and business managers being closely involved in design and development, likely would have reduced or eliminated these issues.

At present, the Review Team notes that the pilot continues to roll out, with 250 schools funded for participation. It should be noted that this leaves the vast majority of schools without access to the system, and that broader frustrations around interoperability, CASE21 limitations, and consistent data entry remain largely unaddressed.

Multi-school organisations: Victorian primary school

For the past 30 years, a primary school in the South West Region of Victoria has successfully operated with some of the characteristics of a Multi-School Organisation. Created from the merger of four small rural schools, the resulting school has preserved the four original school sites and maintained their respective names as campus names, while centralising key operational functions under a unified school framework. The school has an enrolment of 326 students, with campuses ranging in size from 55 to 148 enrolments.

The school has a single school council, one principal, 2 assistant principals (who also serve as heads of campus), and 2 additional heads of campus, ensuring strong leadership at each site as well as sharing of leadership responsibilities, with each assistant principal and campus head taking on certain school-wide responsibilities. The school also employs one business manager and three campus administration staff who work together as a team, with each performing a standard set of campus level duties (e.g. reception, campus newsletter) as well as holding a portfolio of school-wide roles (e.g. coordinating camps and excursions, purchasing office supplies). Additionally, the school's structure allows office staff across campuses to support one another, including the ability to answer phone calls remotely when on-site staff are absent.

This approach offers the significant benefits of scale while maintaining schools in local communities, and the school acknowledges that *"it would be very difficult to manage all the required tasks in a smaller school."* If the campuses were to operate independently as small schools, it is highly unlikely they would have the resources or capacity for a fully resourced leadership team and multiple administration staff. Many tasks that would otherwise require independent management by each school such as facilities, assets, some OHS obligations, and various risk reduction tasks, are able to be delivered collectively under single management.

Having four campuses does not eliminate all administrative and compliance challenges, and at times, it can create disadvantages for the school. Multi-campus schools do not receive additional resourcing to account for requirements to maintain individual traffic management plans, emergency management plans, first aid audits, and compliance with the Bushfire At Risk Register requirements, all of which add complexity and workload. Contractors sent by the department often arrive at different campuses unsure of what to do or where to go. Furthermore, Panorama and NAPLAN data requires significant time to disaggregate. The school is also likely to lose its Out of School Hours Care service next year due to changes in eligibility, which now requires single-campus applications instead of allowing the school to apply for 2 or more campuses under one grant.

Financial management: Finance Business Partners model (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools)

Since 2020, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) has operated an innovative Finance Business Partners (FBP) model in all 263 of its primary schools.

The core of this model is the centralised recruitment, employment, deployment and professional development of a workforce of approximately 60 FTE (70 headcount) qualified accountants as FBPs to provide strategic support with school finance and audit. FBPs are expected to invest significant effort in trust and relationship building with their portfolio of schools, but also call out issues when they see them in line with their professional obligations.

Each FBP works with a small portfolio of schools (on a 1:5 ratio) and is on site at each school for one day per week. FBPs are viewed by schools as part-time staff members and not central office staff; FBPs take their leave in school holidays and see their Central Office colleagues only once per term.

The explicit objective of the FBP model is to reduce administrative burden on school leaders, working on the principle that 'what can be done centrally, should be done centrally'. This has been underpinned by transformation of finance data capture, storage and access arrangements to ensure all essential information is visible to MACS central office.

MACS primary schools do not employ Business Managers in the sense this role is understood in Victorian government schools, though schools do employ non-accounting qualified administration managers (sometimes

titled as bursars) and other administration staff who play a facilitative role. Part of the role of each FBP is to mentor these administration officers and improve their confidence and capability.

The scope of the FBP role is varied and determined in large part by the needs of each school – but always strategic and not transactional. Rather than focusing on compliance, FBPs support schools to achieve their strategic objectives (e.g. high enrolments, capital works, etc) within the broader framework of accounting standards and organisational policies. Day-to-day the work of FBPs may range from preparing budgets, liaising with architects, analysing capacity for school fees based on parent/community characteristics, through to helping an administration officer make an invoice/purchase order or explain a finance concept in simple terms. While MACS is able to deliver 80-95% of financial audit functions from central data holdings, FBPs do assist with residual school obligations where required.[8]

Other features of the model include:
- instruction to FBPs not to share information about any of their schools with the others, but instead to encourage principals to lead that sharing

- a 'buddy system' where each FBP has a nominated peer who is on hand to provide urgent support in the event of illness or emergency

- two 'floating' FBPs who provide facilitation of projects on behalf of the whole group and as needed backfill for vacancies or long-service leave

- a small workforce of more senior FBPs (1:12 staff ratio) with five or more years of experience who can check in with principals on satisfaction and assist in managing the most challenging issues

- rotation of FBPs to new groups of schools every five years or as vacancies arise, both to bring fresh perspectives to the issues faced by each school, and as a fraud prevention measure.

Prior to the introduction of the FBP model, MACS schools relied on contracts with private accounting firms. These contracts varied significantly in cost and scope, and the depth and consistency of advice was similarly varied. MACS advised the Review that while the costs of the new model are higher, the quality uplift and the high level of school leader satisfaction (approximately 95%) make the investment worthwhile. An important factor in the decision that is not relevant for government schools was the requirement to shift all schools from cash to accrual accounting under changes to national charities regulations.

Compliance training and mandatory modules: Mandatory e-learning modules (NSW Department of Education)

In 2023, the incoming NSW government made a commitment to reduce school administration burden. As part of this commitment, the NSW Department of Education (NSW DE) is implementing a new approach to mandatory e-learnings for government school staff.

Having identified that its mandatory e-learnings were unpopular, time-consuming, overlapping, and/or out-of-date in terms of content, and very likely ineffective for their intended purpose, NSW DE began developing an alternative approach.

Rather than all staff completing an average of five hours of 'refresher' e-learnings each year (including refreshers required on annual, two-year, three-year and five-year cycles), NSW government school staff would instead complete an Annual Competency Check. This check takes the form of a 60-minute assessment with a branching question design built on contemporary understandings of effective adult learning. Participants receive three to four questions from each area of learning, and if they make errors are immediately shown information about what was wrong and why. The check can be paused and restarted at any point, reducing frustration from potential 're-dos'.

NSW DE has also reduced its mandatory 'on commencement' e-learning package from 8.5 hours to 6.5 hours, with some training now able to be completed progressively in their first 12 months. The commencement package includes only essential information such as child safety, OHS induction, code of conduct and anaphylaxis training. This package can also be used for seasonal worker groups like canteen volunteers, exam invigilators and seasonal workers, significantly reducing the burden on these groups.

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[8] Note that MACS schools are not individual financial entities, and their 'advisory councils' do not play a role in schools finance or audit.

This approach has been warmly received by NSW government school staff, including 'standing ovations' for NSW DE leadership at regional events. The approach has been strongly championed by the NSW DE Secretary and is supported by unions, regulators, and school employees, who have indicated that they appreciate both the time savings and the respect inherent in being treated like an adult learner.

Efficient administrative practices in schools

Efficient administrative practices in schools – general

Victorian primary school

A primary school in outer Eastern Melbourne, with an enrolment of 218 students, has been recognised in department data for prioritising support for teachers to focus on activities that directly impact student learning and wellbeing. The school is also commended for its strong commitment to minimising administrative burden and looking for effective ways to reduce teacher workload. Additionally, the school implements evidence-based strategies that not only improve student outcomes but also enhance teaching effectiveness and operational efficiency.

Some of the school's key strategies and practices include:
- Implementation of a strong tiered model of wellbeing support for students, including School-Wide Positive Behaviour as a Tier 1 strategy, initiated in 2017.

- All teachers working in teams and all teams being given time release together to plan.

- One of the 2 after school meetings per week is allocated to team planning.

- An embedded co-teaching model allows teachers to follow up any wellbeing issues during class time, and not during their break times.

- Teachers use existing lesson plans as a starting point for their planning and alter these for different diverse student cohorts and/or to make improvements. This has resulted in the school having a bank of detailed lessons that all teachers can access.

"Our planners are really detailed – they're so good. We've been so specific – at the end of our planning as a group, we have a look at what you want to change and archive it, we've been working with those planners for a few years. This year we have also been working with a university around thinking culture, these have been the main adjustments in our planners these last 12 months, along with addressing a new data set (our new kids), we integrate them into one another. The bulk of these planners will be able to be used again next year".

- Differentiation is created through an open-ended approach for all lessons, this supports around 95% of the students, with adjustments made to support the 5% of students that have a DIP.

- A move to a 'checkbox' semester report that shows student learning progression, with only one written paragraph that describes the student's social and emotional development.

"I feel like we are doing less, and it hasn't disadvantaged the parents at all, this is a better balance".

- The school has streamlined the lengthy department-provided IEP into a concise two-page document, focused on student goals and directly relevant to the work being done in the classroom. The IEP is viewed as a tool to support learning, rather than just a compliance mechanism for funding.

- A reduction in meetings with external services through strong push back by school leaders.

"It was frustrating in the past, the amount of time we spent in meetings, but the principal has changed that. Unless it definitely impacts the student then we say no to these requests, she (the principal) won't agree unless there is an absolute need".

- Students with NDIS therapists can see their workers onsite but only after school with parent supervision. This has eliminated the increasing pressure of services impacting on the teaching and learning of all students and the work of the classroom teachers.
- The principal addresses most parent issues, if parents begin impacting teachers then they alert the leadership team who will take targeted action.

"I recently had 3 negative prep parents, I alerted the principal to it, she then had a chat with them, following this she also decided to demo all our positive prep data at school council so that it gets out into the community. The buffering really helps – I would be burnt out otherwise".

- Office staff chase up attendance issues after 2 days. If a teacher has a concern they may call the family. For complex issues school leaders will follow up with families – attendance is a shared responsibility that comes from genuine concern for students rather than being compliance driven.
- OHS compliance is managed through the procurement of external experts.

Example school: Effectively managing a DIP

How a school is effectively managing DIP:
- A primary school located in an outer suburban area, serving nearly 300 students, has been recognised by the department for successfully embedding inclusive practices in its third year of implementing the DI reform. It is also acknowledged as a high-performing school, with effective strategies that allow teachers to focus predominantly on teaching and learning.
- The school has clearly defined processes for developing a DIP with the responsibility of this shared by staff across the school, although a large component of this work sits with the assistant principal as the DI coordinator. Both the AP and school principal state "*that they cannot imagine how a small school with low staffing numbers, as well as schools without a dedicated DI coordinator could manage the extensive workload*".
- The assistant principal initiates the DIP process by facilitating a two-hour meeting with the classroom teacher, school-based wellbeing officer, and sometimes the school's School Support Services key contact officer, although their time is limited. The school uses a simplified version of the DI adjustment table to support these meetings. This new table outlines the 31 activities that comprise a DIP, making it easier to understand and implement compared to the original, more complex version provided by the department. The assistant principal amends the school timetable and/or employs a Casual Relief Teacher to cover the teacher's class for this meeting, all of which adds to her administrative workload.
- Following the initial meeting the gathering of evidence to support the DIP begins. This is all consuming for the assistant principal as referral paperwork is sourced and completed, classroom observations and meetings with specialists are arranged, parent meetings held, adjustments embedded into planners, IEPs and other plans created and recommendations from the various reports are integrated into the student's profile.
- The school is fortunate to have a teacher on staff that has allied health qualifications, and this teacher's expertise is used for all DIPs at the school. The leadership team believes that this in-school expertise significantly contributes to the school's success in securing funding. The sophisticated language used by this teacher closely aligns with the terminology employed by the DI facilitators who assess student eligibility for funding.
- The assistant principal states that she experiences an enormous pressure and personal responsibility to secure a successful DI funding outcome. *"If I fail then it means a child misses out on getting the support they need. I need to ensure that everything lines up, all the adjustments, goals, evidence and the recommendations made by the allied health staff".* She works between 9 to 12 hours most days, which is a strategy adopted by both her and the principal to keep teachers *teaching* and focused on what matters most.

Suggested efficient administrative practices for disability and inclusion in schools:

- have an established schoolwide multi-tiered approach to supporting the wellbeing and learning needs of all students. Schoolwide Tier 1 strategies include some DIP recognised substantive adjustments, for example highly structured classrooms and scaffolding

- have a designated DI coordinator/coach to support teachers with adjustments and evidence tracking

- Strategically map out when to undertake each DIP so that they are resourced effectively

- adapt DE templates to still meet DIP criteria but are reduced in size and have a greater practical use e.g. two-page IEP.

Using administration staff to remove excursion work from teacher responsibilities

Some schools are developing effective systems to alleviate the administrative workload for teachers. One example is schools that assign administration staff to manage excursion and camp paperwork. For instance, one school created a new role, Campus Operations Coordinator, to oversee tasks such as pre-service teacher coordination, camps and excursions management, daily organisation and staff replacement, attendance follow-up, and more. While this role encompasses multiple responsibilities, it enables teachers to focus more on their core responsibilities of teaching and learning with students.

Efficient administrative practices in schools – Disability Inclusion Reform: Victorian specialist school

A specialist school in South-Eastern Victoria, with an enrolment of approximately 150 students with diverse needs, made significant efforts to prepare for the DI reforms before they were implemented in the region. Recognising the potential impact of these changes, the principal proactively anticipated the need for new processes and began establishing them in advance of the rollout. As a result, from the outset, staff had a clear understanding of what the new processes would entail, ensuring consistency was achieved early on.

One of the key strategies the school employs is an embedded, succinct timetable for all required activities to develop the DIP. Top of this list were their Year 6/7 review cohort. They ensure that they have all evidence required by the end of the school year, so that the DIP meetings can be booked and completed by the end of Term 1. The principal states that *'knowing the students really well, is so important for the success of the Year 7 DIPs and having prior knowledge of the students really assists with reducing the workload. I imagine it would be very challenging for schools that don't have this prior knowledge.'*
With the Year 7 cohort ready for their meetings at the beginning of the school year, Term 1 is used to focus on the gathering of evidence for the school's new prep students. This allows them to have all the prep student DIP meetings completed by the end of Term 2.

This school, like many specialised settings, takes a holistic approach to student learning and wellbeing, with a team of allied health professionals supporting the work of the classroom teacher. As such, the classroom teacher, occupational therapist, speech therapist, physiotherapist, and music therapist are all integral to the DIP meeting, with each contributing equally to its development. The school believes that it is essential for all team members to attend these meetings, understanding that having *"the right people in the room"* is crucial for achieving positive outcomes. However, this core strategy places significant pressure on both staff resources and the school principal, who often has to cover classes and, describes it as *"juggling a million things to make it happen"*.

The school has created a document to assist in the development of their DIPs. This is the only additional document that they have needed to introduce with the new reforms as the other evidence required has always been part of their practice. The new document includes a table highlighting each of the DIP areas, with a description of all activities that come under these and staff creating DIPs use drop-down boxes to highlight adjustments for each child.

Efficient administrative practices in schools – Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: Victorian primary school

A city based primary school, with an enrolment of close to 600 students, has successfully adopted a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to assist their teachers to stay focused on the teaching and learning, reducing the time they spend on administrative tasks. Data provided by the department shows that this model is having a positive impact on both the teachers and students at this school.

A key strategy of the school's MTSS is having a school-wide consistent approach in evidence-based teaching, learning and wellbeing strategies which they call 'Tier 1'. School staff maintain highly rigorous core practices that they build on and strengthen each year. All classrooms have visual timetables, the school rules and routines are explicitly taught, classroom displays are minimal and there are no announcements during learning time.

"Schools are always changing focus, moving too fast. We don't do this; we stay focused on what we know works and continue to build on this. We don't throw things out, we have embedded practices that work for all students. We support the teachers with ongoing learning of these via coaching and the use of video examples. We don't over complicate this; we keep it simple".

A high factor in the success of the school's MTSS model is targeted support to students who are struggling academically, this work is led by a team of intervention leaders. Aside from the model having a positive impact on student learning and wellbeing, it is helping to ease the workload for teachers.

The intervention team's work includes screening *all* students at least three times a year, and for students identified as Tier 2 and Tier 3 (additional needs) every few weeks. The team meets regularly to analyse student data to determine which students need intervention and what this will look like. The interventions include leaders providing small group instruction to students, coaching teachers to integrate brief, focused activities into daily plans, supporting ES staff in delivering targeted interventions to individual students at specific times, and facilitating whole-school professional development. The MTSS enables the classroom teacher to maintain most of their focus on whole class instruction with three levels of differentiated learning.

"The teachers know they are part of a team, that everyone works together to address challenges. They are not expected to solve problems alone. For support with a specific student, teachers can turn to the intervention leaders, and the team will assess the issue. Time is then set aside with the teacher for a roundtable discussion, where together the team develops strategies to best support the student and provide coaching to the teacher on effective implementation."

Efficient administrative practices in schools – National Disability Insurance Scheme: Victorian P-9 college

Requests coming into schools from external agencies have increased significantly with the introduction of NDIS in 2013. Students eligible for NDIS may have specialist workers such as speech therapists, occupational health therapists, psychologists to support them. Schools report an increased demand from agencies to conduct work with students during school times, to undertake observations and/or to work with teachers.

A P-9 college in the outer southern eastern suburbs has established a strong partnership with five allied health agencies to deliver NDIS support to eligible students in the school and its onsite Early Learning Centre (ELC). The agencies in the partnership specialise in physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, play therapy, and nutrition therapy. As part of this partnership, the agencies support the development of school and ELC staff capabilities in inclusive practices.

The school considers the partnership as a 'hybrid' model that ensures students get access to support services without needing to leave the school, it also has a clear agreement that teachers are not expected to meet with the allied health specialists regarding individual student plans. This aligns with department advice *"that therapies funded by the NDIS are related to the student's functional whole-of-life support needs, and not for educational purposes"* (DE NDIS Policy).

The partnership allows the school to retain control over which external allied health specialists they engage with, ensuring they receive the desired level of quality assurance and have their own professional needs met. With an established ongoing partnership, the administrative load and associated compliance activities in having visitors to the school is diminished. It has also enabled the school to have clearly defined boundaries with other external service providers. Whilst the school does not exclude any other services from working with students onsite, they have adopted a clear boundary that this only occur after 3pm and that the parent/guardians supervise any sessions.

Efficient administrative practices in schools – curriculum planning and reporting to parents

Queensland

Similar to Victoria, Queensland mandates that schools provide parents with academic reports twice a year. The Queensland Department of Education (QLD DE) offers clear guidelines on the format and content of these reports, ensuring consistency.

The student reports are typically a one-page document that includes the student's achievement against the QLD DE provided reporting A- E scale. QLD schools all use the QLD DE provided OneSchool digital platform for student academic reporting, which includes templates for each year level. The templates include:

- the learning areas and/or subjects provided in the reporting period

- the achievement, against the reporting scale

- results for behaviour and effort

- options to include comments, which is a school-based decision

- options to include comparative reporting, which is a school-based decision.

Completing academic reports using OneSchool ensures data is retained for the appropriate period of time and complies with the QLD DE's retention and disposal schedule. It also reduces variance of workload between teachers, and school staff are only entering academic data on to the one platform.

Victorian primary school

A regionally based primary school, with an enrolment of approximately 450 students, has successfully embedded a teams-based curriculum and lesson planning approach, that enables teachers to efficiently report on student achievement, learning and wellbeing. The curriculum and lessons plans are stored in a shared Google Drive accessible to all staff.

The curriculum and lesson plans are reviewed at regular intervals throughout the school year using a traffic light approach. The annual curriculum planning and review cycle (three points across the year) includes time for teacher teams to address 'yellow' re-writes and updates and 'red' new scope and sequence. Teaching teams assign responsibility for updating units of work, lesson plans, and assessment tasks as needed. This collaborative approach reduces the workload for individual teachers, while the use of templates and shared Google Drive resources helps minimise administrative tasks and ensures teachers work together, rather than in isolation.

The school's data collection process requires manual input, but all the assessment data is used to inform planning and is also utilised to share with students and parents via reports, twice yearly conversations and to celebrate success and highlight areas of improvement. Similar to the review process for curriculum, teacher and leadership teams regularly review assessment and reporting using a stop doing, keep doing, start doing approach. This has supported the development of a consistent approach to formative and summative feedback and targeted ongoing assessment tasks that feed into the semesterly student report ensuring the learning progress information shared with students and parents is purposeful and targeted.

Efficient administrative practices in schools – reporting to parents

The Review heard that student reports often contained excessive information, much of which was not useful to parents or students. As a result, reports were seen more as an administrative task rather than a valuable tool for reporting learning progress to parents.

In response to this feedback, the school invested in a new student management system with a reporting module that integrates data from other systems, reducing administrative tasks like manual data entry. Initially, the principal, along with teachers, redesigned the report to ensure it was meaningful for parents. They introduced word limits to maintain clarity, implemented a staff-generated comment bank to streamline the process, and aligned the reports with the twice-yearly parent, student, and teacher conference model.

The school continually reviews its processes to ensure teachers are supported in prioritising planning and preparation for high quality learning experiences for all students. The encroachment of administrative and compliance activities is carefully managed to minimise impact on teaching time.

Feedback from a range of high-performing schools as well as other sectors and jurisdictions, highlights that this approach is having a positive impact on teachers' perceptions of workload in their schools.

Efficient administrative practices in schools – communication (staff and parents): Victorian secondary school

A city-based secondary school with an enrolment of 1,260 students has introduced communication protocols to effectively manage common inquiries from parents. These are designed to help parents know exactly who to contact for various concerns, such as camps and excursions, student absences, academic progress, or the health and wellbeing of their child. Along with the contact details for key staff, the protocols outline the expected response times for parents to receive communication from the school. Some inquiries are handled by ES staff, while others are managed by teachers. The protocols also provide instructions on how to file a complaint, in accordance with the School Complaints Policy.

The communication protocols ensure that parents contact the appropriate person for the right issue, with a phone call being the preferred method of initial contact over email. This approach helps reduce the administrative burden on staff, eliminating the need to respond to emails or redirect inquiries to the correct staff member. It also encourages parents to build positive relationships with key school staff, gain a better understanding of how the school operates, and become familiar with the services available. The expected response times are monitored by the school to ensure timely communication. – "*with general queries we ask that you allow us 2 to 3 working days to provide you with a detailed response. We will endeavour to respond to urgent matters within one working day where possible*".

From a staff perspective, the protocols allow for quick response and efficient triaging of inquiries, while also providing an opportunity to build rapport with students' parents. This fosters trust and has led to a reduction in the volume of inquiries, helping to alleviate any anxieties teachers may have about handling potentially difficult conversations with parents. It also sets expectations for professional communication regarding issues and reduces the assumption that parents can contact classroom teachers for all matters, including minor ones.

As part of the school induction, staff receive training to enhance their communication skills. This training is designed to foster a mindset focused on building relational trust, in line with the school's core values.

The communication protocols go towards supporting teachers to focus their time and expertise on their core work, teaching and learning, reducing the time they spend on administrative and non-teaching activities.

Appendix E: Legal, regulatory, and policy context for administration and compliance

Most administration and compliance activity in schools stems from a robust architecture of legislation, regulation, and policy designed to uphold high standards across the system, ensuring the achievement of students, the effective operation of schools, inclusion of all students who need extra support, and the wellbeing and safety of everyone working and learning in schools.

However, while this architecture – and the administrative and compliance burden that stems from it – was largely unchanged over decades, in the past 10 to 15 years there have been significant changes made to the legal, regulatory and policy environment that has necessitated an increase in administrative and compliance activity. In most cases, these requirements were imposed on the Department, who then passed it down to schools.

This section details the legislative, regulatory, and policy foundation of the government school system in Victoria, and highlights several key changes over the past decade or so that have led to a significant increase in administrative and compliance activity.

Key reports informing the Review

While not an exhaustive list, several key pieces of work were pivotal to establishing a set of hypotheses about the situation regarding administration and compliance activity in schools, the impact it has on school staff, and the possible solutions to alleviate the pressures and make this activity more efficient.

In 2023, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office Performance Audit of Principal Health and Wellbeing found that:

- Principal class staff experience worse health outcomes than the general population. In particular, they have high levels of stress, burnout and sleeping troubles. However, they also found that Victorian government school principals report better health and wellbeing than government school principals in other states and territories.

- Workload is the greatest contributor to poor principal class health and wellbeing, with principal class staff pointing to 'the sheer quantity of work', 'the lack of time to focus on instructional leadership and positively impact the teaching and learning' and 'government initiatives' as the top three sources of stress.

- There has been an increase in principal class workload over the past decade, which is acknowledged by the department. Much of this increase in workload is associated with:

    o increases in general compliance requirements related to OHS and workers compensation

    o increases in general administration activities

    o changing government and community expectations about the role of school leaders

    o the increase in the number– and complexity – of issues involving students, staff and parents.

- Principal class staff work an average of 94 hours per fortnight – or 18 hours more per week than their 'ordinary' hours of work. Although the time fraction has remained largely unchanged since 2015, the complexity and intensity of the work is reportedly greater.

- The department has attempted to reduce principal class workload and stress and improve health outcomes, through a range of strategies and 28 initiatives. It also found the department's service culture had improved.

- Although the initiatives have been welcomed by principal class staff, none to date have made a significant difference to any of the outcome measures VAGO identified as proxies for principal class health and wellbeing. Namely:

    o workload (hours of work) has not reduced

    o workers' compensation claims have not reduced

    o return-to-work rates have not increased

- sick leave has not decreased
- principal class attraction and retention has not increased
- perceived levels of health and wellbeing have not improved
- levels of job satisfaction have not improved.
- levels of employee engagement have not improved.

- The department needs to do more to reduce the volume of work for principal class staff, not just focus on making their completion of work more efficient, although this effort has been welcomed.

- There are some gaps in the department's data collection, monitoring and evaluation approach that makes it more difficult to understand workload and the impact of individual initiatives.

In 2020, the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership report, Shifting the Balance: Increasing the focus on teaching and learning by reducing the burden of compliance and administration, found that:
- There is a growing body of evidence that indicates school staff are spending more time on compliance and administration.

- Reducing the amount of time teachers, middle leaders and principals spend on compliance and administration will free up their time to focus on higher impact activities.

- Most education jurisdictions, systems and sectors in Australia have a focus on 'reducing red tape', and that there are common factors of good practice for doing so, including:
  - integrating red tape reduction efforts into regulatory and policy making processes
  - designing and implementing targeted efforts to reduce activity duplication, such as creating compliance calendars that are reviewed to identify and eliminate redundancies
  - ongoing quality communication with school staff, and inclusive co-design of strategies to reduce administrative and compliance work and/or increase efficiencies
  - trialling and implementing alternative, risk-based or proportionate approaches to school compliance tasks. Leveraging existing mechanisms or forums for accountability and information gathering, rather than adding new requirements or creating additional processes for school staff
  - look for technological solutions to enhance initiatives and to streamline compliance and administration requirements
  - viewing 'red tape' reduction as an ongoing process and establishing clear procedures to support it over time, embedding it as a regular practice in policy design and implementation. Continuously consulting with school staff when proposing changes to compliance and administrative requirements, ensuring genuine input from those who will be responsible for implementing the changes.

In 2013, the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) conducted an inquiry into school devolution, exploring the impacts of increased school autonomy on performance and management. The inquiry report[9], found at the time that:
- Autonomy positively impacts student outcomes when used effectively. Schools that effectively utilise their autonomy show improved student outcomes, although not all schools are leveraging it optimally.

- Accountability structures are crucial to sustaining autonomy. There must be clear accountability frameworks in place to ensure that principals use autonomy to enhance educational performance, rather than simply adding to the compliance burden.

- There is inconsistent application of autonomy across schools. There is considerable variation in how principals exercise autonomy, often due to differences in leadership capacity and resource availability.

[9] Competition, V. and Efficiency Commission, 2013. Making the grade: Autonomy and accountability in Victorian schools. *Inquiry into school devolution and accountability, draft report, May. Retrieved, 20.*,

- Principal capability gaps affect the success of autonomy. Many principals do not have the necessary financial or operational management skills to maximise the benefits of autonomy, creating barriers to effective school leadership.

- Resource allocation remains a challenge. Particularly in disadvantaged schools, effective resource allocation remains difficult, limiting the potential for autonomy to drive improved outcomes.

- Administrative burden on principals reduces focus on leadership. Principals often face high administrative loads, limiting the time they can dedicate to strategic leadership and improvement efforts.

Key Regulatory and Oversight Bodies

Several regulatory bodies oversee different aspects of schools, ensuring compliance with standards and policies that govern education, safety, and teacher qualifications.

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA): The VRQA oversees the child safe standards in schools, and school registration and minimum standards in areas such as student welfare, curriculum delivery, and governance. It regulates education providers, including government schools, ensuring they comply with requirements under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and regulations. The VRQA has appointed the department's OPSEC Division as the 'Review Body' responsible for ensuring schools are meeting their obligations under the Minimum Standards for school registration.

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA): The VCAA develops and implements curriculum frameworks for schools, including the Victorian Curriculum F–10, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), and Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs. It also manages statewide assessment programs, such as VCE exams, setting benchmarks for student learning.

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT): VIT is the regulatory body responsible for teacher registration, professional standards, and teacher conduct in Victoria. It ensures that all teachers are qualified and monitors continuous professional development to ensure quality teaching practices. The VIT also investigates instances of misconduct, incompetence or lack of fitness to teach and regulates compliance with the Codes of Conduct and Ethics and has the power to de-register teachers.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA): For schools offering VET programs, ASQA ensures that registered training organisations (RTOs) meet national quality standards. Schools delivering VET subjects must comply with ASQA's standards, which involve assessment practices, student welfare, and financial management.

WorkSafe Victoria: WorkSafe regulates workplace safety standards, including schools. It ensures that schools adhere to OHS laws, overseeing risk management, injury prevention, and workplace compensation claims, safeguarding both staff and students from injury.

Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC): The primary regulator and source of independent advice to the community and Victorian government about how the public sector collects, uses and discloses information.

Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP): Victoria's child safety regulator is responsible for overseeing the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

A range of external review bodies, while not regulators in their own right, make findings and recommendations about the government school system which have flow on implications for school administration and compliance workload. These organisations include the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC), the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO), the Victorian Ombudsman, courts and tribunals (in particular the Coroner's Court of Victoria).

Legislation

The key pieces of legislation governing the operations of Victorian government schools provide the foundational legal framework for compliance, accountability, and operational standards. They are critical in shaping the policies and procedures schools must follow to deliver equitable and safe educational environments.

These include:

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 **(Vic) (ETRA)**: The ETRA is the cornerstone of Victorian education law, setting the legal framework for the delivery of education across the state. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Minister, school councils, and principals, ensuring that every Victorian child has the right to access education. ETRA mandates that schools meet specific standards in areas such as curriculum, student welfare, school governance, and safety. The Act also governs teacher registration, school funding, and the regulation of school operations through the VRQA.

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 **(Vic) and Child Safe Standards:** The Act establishes the Child Safe Standards, a set of compulsory principles designed to protect you people from abuse within organisations. Schools must comply with these standards, ensuring they implement policies and practices to prevent harm, address safety concerns, and promote child-friendly environments.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 **(Cth) (DDA)**: The DDA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, ensuring equal access to education for students with disabilities. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments to support students with disabilities, from physical accessibility to modifications in teaching methods.

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 **(Vic) (OHS Act)**: This Act mandates that schools provide a safe working environment for staff and students, free from risks to health and safety. Schools must manage occupational hazards, ensure staff are properly trained in health and safety protocols, and report incidents. Schools are required to develop OHS policies and conduct regular risk assessments to comply with the legislation.

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 **(Vic)**: This legislation governs the way schools collect, store, and manage personal information. Schools must ensure that data handling complies with privacy laws, protecting the personal information of students, staff, and parents. The Act requires schools to implement proper data security protocols to prevent unauthorised access or breaches.

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 **(Vic):** This Act prohibits discrimination based on attributes such as race, gender, and disability. It requires schools to ensure equitable treatment of students and staff and mandates inclusive education practices.

Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 **(Vic):** This Act governs workers' compensation claims in schools, requiring schools to manage workplace safety and provide support to staff in the event of injury.

Departmental Policy

The Department of Education in Victoria issues policies across a wide range of areas that govern the day-to-day operations of schools, providing clear guidelines for compliance and school performance. Many of these are driven by legislation and regulatory bodies, but some are decisions of government or the department's leadership.

These include areas such as:

* **Student Wellbeing**: Policies promote student mental health and wellbeing, enabling schools to implement tailored mental health support programs.

* **Human Resources (HR)**: Employment conditions, including pay, leave, and work conditions, which are negotiated with unions and set out in agreements such as the Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2022.

* **Infrastructure**: Schools are required to maintain their buildings and grounds following the Rolling Facilities Evaluation process and use the Asset Management Plan to track maintenance.

- **Finance**: Schools operate under a devolved financial management system, with policies outlining expenditure responsibilities through tools like CASE21, and budget reporting under the Student Resource Package.

- **Inclusion and Diversity**: Policies provide specific guidance for supporting Koorie students, students with disabilities, and other identified groups, aiming to ensure all students have equitable access to education.

- **Child Safety**: Schools are mandated to comply with Child Safe Standards, ensuring environments that protect children from abuse, with policies that cover staff training, reporting obligations, and child protection procedures.

- **Curriculum**: The department mandates curriculum requirements, including the delivery of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 and compliance with the VCAA guidelines for assessments like NAPLAN and VCE.

- **Student Management and Attendance**: Schools use systems like CASE21 and Compass to track student data, attendance, and academic progress, aligning with policies to reduce absenteeism and manage student wellbeing effectively.

- **Digital Technology and Data Privacy**: Schools must adhere to data privacy standards while using department-approved digital platforms, ensuring compliance with the *Public Records Act 1973* and guidelines on the safe use of technology.

- **Occupational Health and Safety:** Schools are required to follow OHS policies aimed at ensuring a safe working and learning environment, managed through systems like EduSafe Plus and regular OHS audits.

- **Workers Compensation**: Schools are required to manage workers compensation and return to work for employees in their school in line with legislation and policy requirements.

- **Procurement and Contracts**: Policies provide schools with procedures for purchasing goods and services, including using approved supplier panels to ensure probity and value for money.

Some examples of the department's effort to date to reduce administration and compliance workload

- Organisation Design Guide
- School Policy Templates Portal
- Complex Matters Support Team
- School Engagement Function
- Intensive OHS Support Program
- Small Schools Facilities and OHS Support Program
- Workers Compensation Dispute and Resolution Support Program
- Regional OHS Support Officers
- Review of the OHS Management System
- Enhanced Workers Compensation Administrative Support
- PAL
- School Audit Coordination Support
- Return-to-Work Coordinator Portal
- Principal Advisory Service
- School Operations Forward Planner
- SASH
- School Workload Impact Assessment Tool

- EduSafe Plus
- Reform Intensity Mapping
- New Model for School Compliance with Minimum Standard and Child Safe Standards
- School Compliance Checklist
- School Finance Liaison Officer and Strategic Finance Management Advisors
- Upgraded School Targeted Funding Portal
- VSBA Technical Leadership Coaches.
- Centralised Essential Safety Measures inspection and reporting.

Changes to OHS services from 2024-25

At the time of writing, the department had begun to roll out the new OHS Services Program which provides flexible, hands-on support to school staff to implement OHS policies and manage compliance. From full implementation in Term 1 2025, schools will receive up to four days of practical, proactive support from the expanded OHS Services team based in regions, as well as additional reactive support when required (e.g. when incidents occur or WorkSafe attend the school).

The Review conducted consultations with school staff largely prior to full implementation of the new program, and thus the findings reflect schools' perceptions of OHS administration and compliance obligations up to 2024. The findings and recommendations should be read in the context of the support offered by the new program, which promises precisely the kind of hands-on, practical supports that school staff told the Review they need to manage administrative and compliance workload.

Important inquiries and reviews

Mental Health Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System was established to address the escalating mental health crisis in the state. Its final report, released in 2021, found a fragmented, underfunded, and overstretched system, particularly for young people. The Commission made wide-ranging recommendations to reform the system, focusing on better access to services, increased funding, and greater support for early intervention.

The Royal Commission revealed that schools are often the first point of contact for students struggling with mental health issues, yet many schools lack the resources, training, and support to meet these needs effectively. The report highlighted the need for schools to play a more central role in mental health care for students, recommending significant reforms to increase the support schools receive in addressing mental health.

The Royal Commission's recommendations led to new initiatives such as the Mental Health Fund and Menu, which provide schools with targeted resources to support student mental health. However, implementing these programs has also increased the administrative workload for schools. Schools are now required to manage mental health-related funding, track the effectiveness of mental health interventions, liaise with external mental health providers, and ensure compliance with new reporting and accountability requirements. This adds to the compliance burden on schools, which must balance these responsibilities alongside their educational mandates.

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability was established to investigate systemic issues affecting the safety and rights of individuals with disabilities across Australia. The Commission aimed to drive reforms for greater protection and inclusion. Its final report, released in 2023, addressed many areas, including education, and highlighted the need for improved access and protections for students with disabilities.

In its findings on education, the Royal Commission emphasised the need for inclusive education environments. It identified barriers that students with disabilities face, including discrimination, lack of reasonable adjustments,

and systemic neglect in ensuring equitable educational access. The Commission called for strengthened policies and supports to ensure all students with disabilities can thrive in mainstream educational settings, urging schools and education systems to prioritise inclusion.

The Commission's recommendations have led to a significant shift in how schools manage their obligations to students with disabilities. This includes implementing the Disability Inclusion Reform, which introduces more robust frameworks for inclusive education, requiring schools to ensure compliance with updated disability standards, monitor and report on inclusion efforts, and provide IEPs. Schools must now liaise more frequently with support services, engage in more comprehensive planning for reasonable adjustments, and ensure they meet new accountability measures, increasing their administrative and compliance workloads.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The NDIS is a government initiative aimed at providing Australians with disabilities the support they need to live more independently and participate fully in society. The scheme offers funding for a range of personalised supports, including health, wellbeing, and employment services, designed to assist individuals in achieving their goals. The NDIS focuses on supporting individuals with permanent disabilities to improve their quality of life.

According to NDIS guidelines, the education system is responsible for providing all necessary supports that are typically offered to students, including adjustments to the curriculum, modifications to the learning environment, and access to specialised staff such as teachers and ES officers. The NDIS does not fund services that are considered part of the core responsibilities of the education system, such as educational materials or infrastructure.

The implementation of the NDIS has introduced new layers of administrative activity for schools. Schools are required to work closely with NDIS providers and families to facilitate student support, often involving the development and oversight of IEPs, engaging in multidisciplinary meetings, and managing referrals to external providers. In many cases, schools find themselves helping families navigate the NDIS process, creating additional workload for teachers and administrators, who must ensure alignment between NDIS funded services and the school's responsibilities under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

IBAC Investigations: Operations Ord and Dunham

IBAC has conducted significant investigations into corruption within the Victorian public sector, specifically targeting misconduct in the education system. Operation Ord and Operation Dunham revealed widespread breaches in financial management and procurement practices, leading to increased scrutiny and accountability measures across the school system.

Operation Ord focused on corrupt practices involving senior officers within the Department of Education, exposing how funds meant for schools were diverted for personal use through fraudulent procurement practices. This investigation highlighted systemic failures in internal controls and a lack of oversight, resulting in a major overhaul of financial and procurement governance within the department.

Operation Dunham followed similar patterns, uncovering more cases of improper procurement and misuse of department resources. It found that senior officials had manipulated processes to award contracts to preferred suppliers without proper tendering, violating procurement regulations.

These investigations have driven significant reforms in how schools manage finances, procurement, and compliance reporting. Schools now face stricter financial controls and auditing processes, alongside enhanced procurement guidelines to ensure transparency. Reporting requirements have become more stringent, with school leaders needing to maintain detailed records of transactions and adhere to complex procurement processes to prevent any future misconduct.

The eduPay system now requires more comprehensive input on financial matters, and schools have to complete extensive risk assessments and justifications for procurement decisions. Additionally, principals and business managers have undergone targeted training to improve their understanding of finance and procurement regulations to mitigate future risks of corruption.

Child Abuse Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2013-2017) was established to investigate how institutions across Australia, including schools, responded to allegations and instances of child sexual abuse. It revealed extensive failings in the protection of children, leading to recommendations aimed at improving child safety practices across all institutions, including schools.

The Royal Commission found that institutions, including schools, often failed to prioritise child safety and properly respond to allegations of abuse. In many cases, they prioritised protecting the reputation of the institution over the welfare of children, leading to systemic abuse over long periods. The Royal Commission recommended wide-ranging reforms, focusing on improving child safety practices, mandatory reporting requirements, and ensuring institutions are held accountable for safeguarding children.

As a result of these findings, Victorian government schools are required to adhere to the Child Safe Standards, introduced to ensure a consistent approach to child safety across all schools. The Standards require schools to implement policies and procedures that actively prevent abuse, respond appropriately to incidents, and create an environment that promotes the physical and emotional safety of all students.

Schools are now required to complete extensive compliance activities relating to child safety, such as conducting risk assessments, engaging with child protection services, training staff on child protection policies, and regularly reviewing and updating child safety protocols. These requirements have introduced additional administrative and reporting responsibilities to school operations, ensuring the safety of children is prioritised.

Appendix F: Glossary of terms and acronyms

Term or acronym	Definition
AEU	Australian Education Union
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIMS	Asset Information Management System is a web-based centralised portal for school asset management
AIP	Annual Implementation Plan
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
AP	Assistant Principal
APF	Australian Principal Federation
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
BSP	Behaviour Support Plan
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CAR	Condition Assessment Report
CASE21	Computerised Administrative Systems Environment in Schools is the software package provided to Victorian Government schools to support school administration, finance and central reporting
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEP	Country Education Partnership
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CRT	Casual Relief Teacher
CCYP	Commission for Children and Young People
DE	Department of Education
DFFH	Department of Family Fairness and Housing
DH	Department of Health
DI	Disability Inclusion
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
DIP	Disability Inclusion Profile
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
EAL	English as an Additional Language
eduPay	The department's human resources and payroll system for the management of employee information, records and pay
eduSafe or eduSafe Plus	The department's online system for reporting and managing employing incidents/injuries, hazards and near misses
ESM	A centralised Essential Safety Measures model in place to support schools in meeting testing, inspection, and annual ESM reporting requirements

ENA	Education Needs Analysis
ES	Education Support staff
FBP	Financial Business Partner
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IBAC	The Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission is responsible for preventing and exposing public sector corruption in Victoria
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IMTD	Information Management and Technology Division
IT	Information Technology
KESO	Koorie Education Support Officer
KSC	Key Selection Criteria
MACS	Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools
MCH	Maternal Child Health Service
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Service
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OHSMS	Occupational Health and Safety Management System
OoHC	Out of Home Care
OPSEC	Operational Policy, School Engagement and Compliance
OVIC	Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner
PAL	Policy and Advisory Library
Parents	The term used in the Report for parents, caregivers and carers of students in Victorian Government schools
PASS	Principal Association of Specialist Schools
PDP	Professional Development Plan
Peak bodies	Peak bodies who provided input, including unions, professional associations, and other representative bodies.
PL	Professional Learning
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PSD	Program for Students with Disabilities
PTV	Public Transport Victoria
RFE	Rolling Facilities Evaluation
ROL	Recruitment Online
SAL	Student Activity Locator
SASH	School Administration Support Hub

SBP	School Bus Program
SEIL	Senior Education Improvement Leader
SOCS	Student Online Case System
SOE	Statement of Expectations
SPOT	Strategic Planning Online Tool is a digital portal used for school accountability and is used for planning the AIP and SSP
SRP	Student Resource Package
SSG	Student Support Group
SSP	School Strategic Plan
SSS	Student Support Services
STFP	School Targeted Funding Portal
SWPBS	School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
VAGO	Victorian Auditor General's Office
VASS	Victorian Assessment Software System is an online service for the enrolment of students in VCE and VET
VCE	Victorian Certificate Education
VCEC	Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VCAA	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VGSA	Victorian Government Schools Agreement
VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching
VRQA	Victorian Registration and Quality Assurance
VSBA	Victorian School Building Authority