PPTA

# It's about time 2013

# TOOLKIT

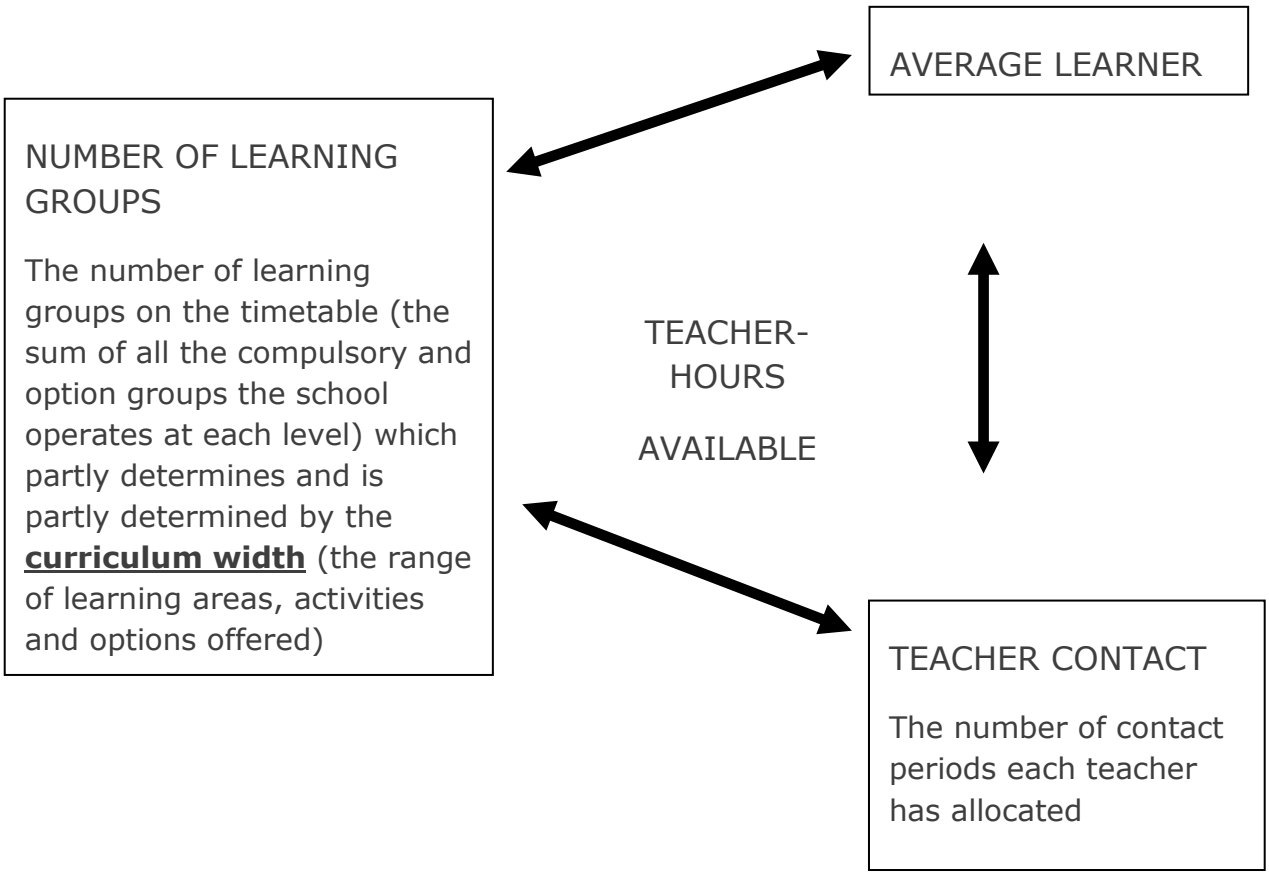
## The resourcing constraints of timetabling (Section 3)

# Section 3: The resourcing constraints of timetabling

Ideally a school's timetable would be driven entirely by students' learning needs but the reality is that it is necessarily limited by the resourcing and facilities available.

The timetable is the result of balancing the use of all the teacher time available to the school with those learning requirements of the students' programmes, and as such is a very technical exercise. However, the overall approach to student learning should be reflected in the timetabling policy which creates the parameters within which the timetablers work.

Basically there are three interlinked factors in a timetable:




Unless more staffing is added it is impossible to alter any corner of the teacher-hours triangle without changing at least one other.

For example, introducing a new course at senior or junior level (extending the curriculum width) may produce a small learning group for one teacher and reduce the overall average learning group size at senior level. However, this will in turn change (increase) some learning group sizes

elsewhere within the timetable, and/or change (reduce) curriculum width in the junior level, and/or the contact load of some other teachers.

Because of this timetable decisions in one area may affect many teachers. Therefore the schools' timetabling policy should establish a clear understanding about what constitutes an acceptable teaching workload for effective teaching and how decisions around the timetable will be impact on individual and collective workloads.

Teaching-related workload can be affected by the maximum number of student-contact hours, maximum numbers of contact periods, the number of different courses taught, the average learning group size taken by individual teachers, the distribution of senior and junior learning groups and the distribution of more difficult learning groups. There is no perfect timetable. The best timetables optimizes these factors and accommodates them against the needs of students within the school's resources.

The reference point for all this is the school's timetabling policy.

NZ Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) It's About Time Toolkit 2013
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