Improving Teacher Recruitment and Retention: The Importance of Workload and Pupil Behaviour

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Abstract

Background
The shortage of teachers in England and Wales continues to be a high profile area of scrutiny. Particular subjects (including mathematics, science and English) are categorised by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) as priority or shortage subjects, and London in particular has experienced particular shortages in teacher numbers over recent years

Purpose
This paper reports on the findings from a telephone survey with teachers, examining the issues of teacher recruitment and retention. The paper highlights the important factors, as perceived by teachers, that impact on why teachers enter the profession, and also why they choose to leave.

Sample
The survey involved 246 teachers in England and Wales, teaching the shortage subjects of English, maths and science. The sample was chosen so that 25% of the teachers taking part in the study would be working in London. Our intention was to have sample numbers for teachers inside and outside London from which meaningful comparisons could be made regarding their views, and so highlight particular issues that were important for teachers in London. The 75% sample not from London was geographically representative of the rest of England and Wales.

Design and Methods
Prior to the survey, a provisional examination of recent research findings was carried out, leading us to categorise relevant issues into three areas: (i) Reasons for wanting to enter teaching, (ii) Reasons for not wanting to enter teaching and (iii) Reasons for wanting to leave teaching. The telephone survey with teachers therefore looked at these three broad areas. A pilot study was carried out with 22 teachers, trialling the survey questions to be used in the telephone interviews. With the agreement of the teachers, the telephone interviews were recorded to aid the data gathering process. Copies of the interview 'script' were sent out beforehand to the teachers being interviewed, in order to try and reassure teachers that no 'unexpected' questions would be asked of them, and to also give teachers the opportunity to provide considered responses during the interviews.

Results
The survey found that although more 'intrinsic' and 'altruistic' reasons were given by teachers for going into teaching, the issues of workload and pupil behaviour were found to be most important in dissuading teachers from entering the profession or possibly causing them to leave teaching.

Conclusions
The study therefore concluded that in order to have an impact on teacher numbers, then these two issues must be seen to be tackled from the perspectives of teachers.

Keywords: *Teacher Recruitment; Teacher Retention, Telephone Survey, Shortage Subjects*

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Introduction

The shortage of teachers in England and Wales continues to be a high profile area of scrutiny. Particular subjects (including mathematics, science and English) are categorised by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) as priority or shortage subjects, and London in particular has experienced particular shortages in teacher numbers over recent years (Hutchings *et al.*, 2000). The fact that the Government Select Committee for Education at the beginning of the 1990s highlighted the "difficulty providing properly qualified teaching in mathematics, physics, design and technology and modern languages", and "the seriousness of the current situation in London" (Grace, 1991), emphasises the long-standing nature of these concerns.

In his examination of teacher training systems in England, Sir Stewart Sutherland (1997), in the Dearing Report on Higher Education, called for "an assessment of the effectiveness of the current arrangements for recruitment and the desirability of introducing a wider range of incentive measures to improve recruitment in priority subject areas". He also suggested that "further work should be undertaken to establish more accurately the reasons for, and responses to, wastage." In recent years, the UK Government has introduced a number of initiatives to tackle teacher recruitment problems (Menter, 2002); these include training salaries or bursaries for those undertaking teacher training, a 'Golden Hello' scheme for those entering shortage subject areas, major advertising campaigns and the provision of alternative routes into teaching. In addition, the Repayment of Teachers' Loans Scheme was introduced as a pilot initiative over the period 2002 to 2004. This was designed to impact on teacher retention as well as recruitment by paying off student loans of teachers over a ten-year period whilst teachers remained in the profession.

Recent government figures do seem to indicate that improvements are now being seen in teacher numbers. In England, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers has seen a steady rise from 399,200 in 1997 to 427,700 in 2004 (DfES, 2004). The number of full-time teacher vacancies in nursery, primary and secondary schools has fallen from a peak of 4,700 in 2001 to 2,410 in 2004. Wales has also seen an increase from 26,352 FTE teachers in 1997/98 to 27,947 in 2003/04 (National Assembly in Wales, 2004). On the basis of their analysis of recent official figures, See, Gorard and White (2004) concluded that "there is no special crisis in teacher supply and demand in Wales (or indeed in England) … There are more teachers in England and Wales now than there has ever been, and pupil numbers are now declining. Over the long-term and for the immediate future, the trend for pupil-teacher ratios is downward." Within these figures however, London was still seen to experience greater shortages than other geographical areas, with vacancy rates (defined as vacancies as a percentage of teachers in post) in 2004 of 1.0% and 1.6% in the nursery/primary and secondary sectors respectively, compared to overall rates in England of 0.5% and 0.9% (DfES, 2004) and 0.3% and 0.5% in 2003/04 for Wales (National Assembly in Wales, 2004). In addition, another issue of concern was the wastage of teachers (defined by Smithers and Robinson, 2004, as "full-time teachers leaving but not moving to a full-time post in another maintained school.") Government figures showed that in 2000/01, 33,710 teachers left full-time teaching in England, a wastage rate of 9.3% (DfES, 2003), and 1,940 full-time teachers left in Wales, a wastage rate of 7.8% (National Assembly of Wales, 2003). Once again, London had a higher wastage rate than the other geographical regions with 11.3% for full-time staff during 2000/01.

The House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, in its recent report into teacher recruitment and retention in secondary education (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004), concluded that "we did not find evidence of endemic problems with retention and recruitment. The number of teachers resigning has fallen, actions taken by the Government to promote teaching as a career have boosted recruitment to initial teacher training, and a fall in the school population which is beginning to affect primary schools rolls will from 2005 start to impact on secondary schools, thus reducing the demand for teachers." However, specific recruitment and retention issues were identified by the report. This

included the issue of shortage subjects once again, recommending that "problems with the designated shortage subjects, and with others, need to be closely monitored to make sure that policies to encourage people to teach in these subjects are effective."

In this paper therefore, we report on the findings of a study which examined the views of teachers of shortage subjects in England and Wales with regards to issues affecting teacher recruitment and retention. As such, the paper focuses on the situation in England and Wales specifically, in particular with regards to the focus of the literature review carried out as part of the study. However, it is recognised that the problem of teacher shortages is not just confined to England and Wales. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has highlighted that "there are serious concerns in many OECD countries about how to maintain an adequate supply of good quality teachers" (OECD, 2004). There are once again specific shortages identified in the subjects of computer science, mathematics, technology, foreign languages and the sciences. The OECD recognises that in addition to salary levels, other factors such as work conditions, job security and job satisfaction contribute to the attractiveness of teaching as a profession in these different countries. It is therefore hoped that the present study, in looking at recruitment and retention issues, can also contribute to this wider examination of teacher supply in other countries.

Literature Review

Prior to the reported survey of teachers in England and Wales, a review of relevant studies in the areas of teacher recruitment and retention was carried out. This review of literature was carried out in January 2004. The method used for the review was based on the one employed by Spear, Gould and Lee (2000) in their review of factors motivating and demotivating teachers. The search was carried out using the electronic database of the British Education Index, using the search terms 'teacher recruitment', 'teacher retention', 'teacher attrition', 'teacher motivation', 'job satisfaction' and 'teacher morale'. As in the search carried out by Spear, Gould and Lee, and because we were examining the views of teachers in England and Wales, those studies that were not carried out wholly or partly in the UK were not considered in this search. In addition, in order not to duplicate the findings of the previous search, those citations that were published before 1999 were also not included (the review by Spear, Gould and Lee covered citations up to 1999).

The total number of citations obtained using this method was 72. Having obtained the citations, a search was carried out for the studies, both in electronic and paper form. During this search, some of the references could not be found. In addition, reading through the obtained papers, other studies not originally identified in the database search were highlighted as important from the references in these papers. These included papers published prior to 1999 that provided background information on teacher recruitment and retention. Other papers obtained from the original sweep were subsequently found to be not relevant to the search. From the 72 citations identified above therefore, the literature search evolved to encompass 41 sources of information. Full details of this literature review are provided in elsewhere (Barmby and Coe, 2004). However, as background to this present study, we can draw on the findings of some of the references from the review, in order to identify some of the relevant issues concerning teacher recruitment and retention.

In examining the issues affecting teacher numbers, recent literature on recruitment can be categorised as looking at three broad areas; reasons why people take up teaching as a career, reasons why people have been deterred from entering teaching and suggestions for improving recruitment into teaching. Looking firstly at the reasons for entering teaching, Kyriacou and Coulthard (2000) categorised these reasons as

> *"(1)   altruistic reasons: these reasons deal with seeing teaching as a socially worthwhile and important job, a desire to help children succeed, and a desire to help society improve;*
>
> *(2)   intrinsic reasons: these reasons cover aspects of the job activity itself, such as the activity of teaching children, and an interest in using their subject matter knowledge and expertise; and*
>
> *(3)   extrinsic reasons: these reasons cover aspects of the job which are not inherent in the work itself, such as long holidays, level of pay, and status."*

The analysis of relevant literature by Moran *et al*. (2001) concluded that "the reasons for choosing the teaching profession as a career have been predominantly altruistic and intrinsic". Carrington and Tomlin (2000), in their survey of 289 PGCE students from ethnic minority backgrounds, also stated that the "trainees tended to stress the importance of intrinsic (rather than extrinsic) considerations when describing their reasons for wanting to teach or, alternatively, emphasised the social dimensions of teaching (e.g. likes working with people, including children)". Indeed, looking at individual reasons for wanting to teach from recent studies, intrinsic or altruistic reasons were most frequently give by teachers, for example wanting to work with children (Johnston, McKeown and McEwen, 1999a, Moran *et al*., 2001, Smithers and Robinson, 2001, Thornton and Reid, 2001, Thornton, Bricheno and Reid, 2002), perceived job satisfaction (Johnston, McKeown and McEwen, 1999b, Thornton and Reid, 2001, Thornton, Bricheno and Reid, 2002), enjoyment of subject (Kyriacou and Benmansour, 1999) and positive experiences of teaching in the past (Hammond, 2002). The only extrinsic reason that emerged from any of the studies as the most cited reason to enter into teaching was 'long holidays' (Kyriacou and Coulthard, 2000, Rawlinson *et al*., 2003).

Financial considerations such as salary were only ranked within the top few reasons for going into teaching in two studies (Johnston, McKeown and McEwen, 1999b, Rawlinson *et al*., 2003). Therefore, when considering the reasons why people entered into teaching, we could conclude that financial considerations, and indeed extrinsic reasons in general, do not play an important part. However, this is only half the story. If we instead look at reasons why people did not choose to go into teaching, we see that external considerations play a more important role. In their interviews of 148 prospective primary teachers, Thornton, Bricheno and Reid (2002) found that pay was the thing that could most discourage people from becoming teachers, followed by workload and then the image and status of teaching. Likewise, Carrington and Tomlin (2000) found that PGCE students "perceive the job as involving considerable stress, long hours, excessive paperwork and relatively low remuneration." Undergraduate students in geography, in the study by Rawlinson *et al*. (2003), identified pay, student behaviour, stress, government attitude, low morale and long hours as deterrents to enter into teaching. Another study of undergraduates, this time at York University by Kyriacou and Coulthard (2000), identified dealing with disruptive pupils, the amount of bureaucratic tasks, school funding, OFSTED inspections, the government's commitment towards education and the media image of teachers as factors that discouraged people from teaching. When considering the recruitment of teachers into the profession therefore, it is important to consider this tension between largely intrinsic or altruistic factors which are attracting people into teaching, and what appear to be largely extrinsic reasons that dissuade people from entering the profession.

Looking now at the reasons put forward in recent studies for leaving teaching, workload, government initiatives and stress were the three most important reasons highlighted by Smithers and Robinson (2003). In the study of mature students entering teaching by Whitehead, Preece and Maughan (1999), heavy workload, classroom management and insecurity due to possible redundancy were highlighted as issues of concern. Hutchins *et al*. (2000) looked specifically at the situation in London. The reasons given in their study of teachers leaving the profession were issues with school management, hours worked and pupil

behaviour, followed by lack of promotion prospects, school resources, too many responsibilities and pay.

In addition to looking at specific reasons why people are choosing to leave the teaching profession, we can also consider the related areas of job satisfaction, morale and motivation amongst teachers. The review by Spear, Gould and Lee (2000) devoted specific chapters on the areas of job satisfaction and teacher morale. Evans (2001) found "morale, job satisfaction and motivation to be influenced much less by externally initiated factors such as salary, educational policy and reforms and conditions of service, than by factors emanating from the more immediate context within which teachers work: school-specific or, more precisely, job-specific factors. As a result, leadership emerged as a key attitudes-influencing factor. Underpinning this, three factors were highlighted as being influential upon morale, job satisfaction and motivation: realistic expectations, realistic perspective and professionality orientation." The expectations that a teacher has, the perspective that they come from and the particular knowledge, skills and procedures that define the professionality of a teacher was used to explain why morale, satisfaction and the motivation of teachers could vary such a lot from case to case (Evans, 2000). For example, issues that could bring about a resignation for one teacher could be minor issues for another teacher. Within this diversity of responses, it was identified that "institutional leadership and management can do much to foster positive job-related attitudes by helping to create and sustain work contexts that are conducive to high morale, job satisfaction and motivation" (Evans, 2001).

Hood (2001) also identified that "leadership, through staff empowerment and human resource development, is the means of encouraging the formation of the necessary collaborative cultures which will facilitate the motivation of staff". Jones (2002) identified "paperwork, over-regulation, planning and testing" as negative issues impacting on teacher morale, while the survey of the quality of working life amongst teachers by NFER (Sturman, 2002) identified the dissatisfaction with salaries for teachers and that job commitment was affected by the levels of job satisfaction and stress amongst teachers.

Background to the present study

In this study, we present the results of a survey carried out with 246 teachers from England and Wales, examining their views on why teachers enter the teaching profession, why they might be deterred from doing so, and the possible reasons for leaving teaching. The research was carried out as part of a DfES-funded evaluation of their Repayment of Teachers' Loans Scheme (see Barmby and Coe, 2004). Although this evaluation specifically concentrated on the impact of this financial incentive on teachers' decisions, general questions regarding recruitment and retention were also asked of teachers. This study focuses on these general questions, presenting both quantitative and qualitative data on teachers' views on teacher recruitment and retention. As highlighted in the introduction to this paper, particular areas of concern within teacher recruitment and retention included particular shortage subjects and also the situation in London. As a result, this study focuses on both of these areas of concern. The survey was carried out with English, Mathematics and Science teachers, with a larger than representative number teaching in London so that comparisons could be made between teachers inside and outside the capital.

Methodology

This study of teachers' views on recruitment and retention was carried out over the period January to July 2004. The views of teachers were obtained through structured interviews carried out by telephone, allowing us to interview teachers spread throughout a wide geographical area (England and Wales) in a relatively short space of time. With the agreement of the teachers, these interviews were recorded to aid the data gathering process.

In carrying out these interviews, copies of the interview 'script' were sent out to the teachers being interviewed as well as being used by those doing the interviewing. This was done in order to try and reassure teachers that no 'unexpected' questions would be asked of them, and to also give teachers the opportunity to provide considered responses during the interviews. The format of the individual questions and the interview as a whole were developed during a pilot phase carried out with 22 teachers at the beginning of the study.

The teachers selected for this study were from those taking part in the Repayment of Teachers' Loans Scheme from the start of the scheme in September 2002 up to just before this study in November 2003. As the scheme was offered to those who had obtained a teaching position within a period of seven months of gaining Qualified Teaching Status (QTS), these teachers were therefore in their first two years of their teaching careers. The study specifically focused on those teaching the shortage subjects of English, mathematics and science. The majority of these teachers were from the secondary sector, although a small minority were from the Further Education and primary sectors as well[1]. Teachers' details, including home addresses and where they were teaching, were provided for the purposes of the study by the DfES from records held by the Student Loans Company[2]. Overall, there were 5,510 teachers in the population of those taking part in the scheme and teaching these specific subjects.

For the pilot study, 100 teachers were selected at random from this database of teachers and contacted by letter. Teachers were asked whether they would be willing to take part in this study, and if so, whether they would provide a contact telephone number. Two weeks after the initial letter, a follow up letter was sent to teachers who had not replied. Overall, 31 teachers agreed to take part in the pilot study. Because we had anticipated a smaller response rate, 7 of these teachers were subsequently used for the main part of the study. Of the remaining 24 teachers, 2 could not be contacted during the period of the pilot study, leaving 22 interviews successfully completed.

For the main study, the aim was to interview 200 teachers, with the sample weighted so that 25% of these were teaching in London. Rather than obtaining a geographically representative sample (the actual percentage of teachers from London in the population of those taking part in the financial incentive was 11.4%), our intention was to have sample numbers for teachers inside and outside London from which meaningful comparisons could be made regarding their views, and so highlight particular issues that were important for teachers in London. Therefore, based on the response rate to the pilot study, 800 letters were sent out to teachers. 200 of these teachers were from London, with the remaining 600 spread over the remaining government regions of England and Wales. 313 teachers subsequently agreed to take part in the study (39% response rate) although 12 of these were discounted as the replies were received only after the main sample had been chosen. Together with the 7 teachers carried over from the pilot study, 308 teachers were therefore available for the main part of the evaluation. From these 308 teachers, 276 teachers were then selected to take part. This additional sampling was carried out because the response of teachers had been greater than expected and a reduction in numbers was required so that interviews could be carried out within the time allocated for the interviews. Subsequently, of the 276 teachers selected, 26 teachers could not be contacted during that period and 4 teachers withdrew from the study. In total therefore, 246 interviews were successfully completed in the main part of the study. This sample was representative of the original population in terms of gender, and also the location of teachers (although including the weighting towards London).

Results of the study

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[1] The resulting sample included 4.1% of teachers from the Further Education sector and 1.6% of who were specialist primary school teachers.
[2] The Student Loan Company was responsible for administering the loan repayments for teachers.

We now present the results of the study based on the responses of the teachers to the interview questions. In examining the past literature on teacher recruitment and retention, we identified three areas to be focused upon; the reasons given for entering teaching, reasons given by people for not entering teaching, and reasons given by teachers for leaving the profession. Therefore, in summarising the results, we present the findings of the study under each of these headings.

Reasons given for entering teaching

Teachers were asked to rate the importance of possible motivations in attracting them into the profession. The teachers were asked to use a four-point scale for the rating, 1 being not important at all, 2 being of some importance, 3 being quite important and 4 being very important. The percentages of teachers responding 'quite important' or 'very important' for each motivation are given in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Teachers' ratings of the importance of possible motivations in attracting them into teaching

Motivation	% responding 'quite important' or 'very important'	Category (from Factor Analysis)
Helping children succeed	97.2	Children-orientated
Mentally stimulating work	95.5	Intrinsic
Job satisfaction	95.5	Intrinsic
Imparting knowledge to pupils	91.9	Altruistic/ Children-orientated
Working with children	85.4	Children-orientated
Variety in teaching	85.4	Intrinsic
Job security	82.9	Extrinsic
Contribution to society	82.9	Altruistic
Working in classroom	80.5	Children-orientated /Intrinsic
Good relationship with colleagues	70.3	Extrinsic
Good holidays	69.9	Flexibility
Easy to get job anywhere	66.7	Flexibility
Promotion prospects	60.2	Extrinsic
Positive image of school	52.8	
Financial incentives	48.4	
Salary	45.9	Extrinsic
Combine with parenthood	45.5	Flexibility
Status	32.1	Altruistic
Family approval	29.7	

Principle components factor analysis was also carried out on this ratings data in order to identify categories of motivation for teacher recruitment. Five categories were identified; what we termed as intrinsic, altruistic, extrinsic, flexibility and children-orientated motivations. The identification of the first three categories was based on the teacher recruitment literature. The last two categories were identified through the component motivations. Although the children-orientated motivations were placed in a category on their own, the factor analysis showed that this category correlated quite highly with the altruistic

and intrinsic categories (correlations of around 0.6). The motivations of 'Positive image of school', 'Financial incentives' and 'Family approval' were not placed in any of the above groups, having loadings of less than 0.4 on each of the categories.

The above results show that altruistic, intrinsic and children-orientated motivations (which itself is quite highly correlated with the first two categories) were identified as more important for entering teaching. This was as opposed to extrinsic reasons such as 'Job security', 'Promotion prospects' and 'Salary'. This was in agreement with the findings from the literature review that identified altruistic and intrinsic reasons as being more important for teachers entering the profession.

Using the above ratings data, comparisons could be made between categories of teachers; firstly between female and male teachers, and secondly between those teaching in London and those teaching outside London. Using Chi-square statistical analysis, comparing the ratings for each of the possible motivations to enter teaching showed that female teachers were significantly more likely to give higher ratings to 'Good relationship with colleagues' and 'Combine with parenthood'. Teachers in London rated 'Status' more highly, but rated 'Salary' significantly lower than their non-London colleagues. Overall however, the pattern of intrinsic/altruistic motivations being more important remained the case for each group of teachers.

In addition to rating possible motivations, teachers were also asked the more open-ended question of 'Why did you go into teaching in the first place?' Teachers' responses to this question were categorised (**Table 2**), and the number of teachers giving each category of reason were counted. Of course, a teacher could give more than one category of reason in their responses to this question.

Table 2: Teachers reasons for entering teaching (response to open-ended question)

Reasons for entering teaching	Number stating reason
Always had it in mind	80
Enjoyed previous experience/had previous experience	47
Use degree/Enjoyment of subject	43
Work with children/young people/people	38
Job satisfaction/rewarding job/interesting job/creative/enjoyment	32
Financial considerations/incentives	30
Dislike previous job/problem with previous job/change of job	27
Fits in with lifestyle/family situation/flexibility	24
Availability of jobs/Access to teaching available/training available	21
Family member/friends a teacher	20
Variety in job/Challenge	20
Contribute to society/benefit others	17
Career progression (including Route to Ed Psych)/wanted a profession	14
Job security	14
Suggestions from other people	14
Thought could do the job	12
Inspired by teachers/experience of school	11
Wanted to pass on subject/experience to others	10
Holidays	8
Work in academic world/school environment/education/not office job/public sector	7
Get qualification/continuation of learning	5
Adverts	3
Not sure of what to do	3

In general, the results from the more open-ended question were in agreement with the previous rating of motivations to enter teaching. We can see from the above table that 'Use degree/Enjoyment of subject', 'Work with children/young people/people' and 'Job satisfaction/rewarding job/interesting job/creative/enjoyment' were the more frequently given reasons in **Table 2**, similar to the three most highly rated reasons in **Table 1**. However, the more open-ended question also revealed two other important reasons for going into teaching. The two most frequently given reasons were that teachers had been considering a career in teaching for some time ('Always had it in mind') and that they had positive previous experiences of teaching.

Reasons for not entering teaching

Teachers in the study were also asked the open-ended question, 'Looking back, what factors might have dissuaded you from entering teaching?' Once again categorising the responses given by teachers and counting the number of responses in each category, the following results were obtained (**Table 3**).

Table 3: Possible factors that might have dissuaded teachers from entering the profession

Factors	Number stating factor
Pupil behaviour	57
Workload/Marking	56
Salary	39
Cost of training	34
Nothing	30
Long hours	21
Stress	21
Bureaucracy/paperwork	19
Image of teaching/media	13
Other people	10
Family of teachers	9
Conditions of work/Lack of resources/Large class sizes	8
Finances generally	8
More study	7
Whether I could do it/difficulty	7
Approach of the government	6
Lack of qualifications	6
Not old enough	6
Lack of support	5
Lack of Status	4
School politics	4
Availability of other jobs	2
Lack of opportunity/choice for training	2

This time, in this open-ended question, teachers identified particular extrinsic factors that could have impacted on their entry into teaching. The most frequently stated factors were the issues of pupil behaviour and workload/marking, followed by the financial considerations of salary and cost of training.

Reasons for leaving teaching

In examining issues related to leaving teaching, teachers were first of all asked whether they were considering leaving teaching within the next 10 years (**Table 4**).

Table 4: Whether teachers are considering leaving the profession in the next 10 years

Considering Leaving?	Number of teachers	% of teachers
Yes	66	26.8
No	175	71.1
Don't know	5	2.0

We found that 66 or 26.8% of the teachers sampled were considering leaving, and a further 5 or 2.0% did not know whether they would or not. We asked this group of 71 teachers the open-ended question of why they were considering leaving teaching. We categorised their responses as shown in **Table 5** below and once again counted the number of response in each category.

Table 5: Reasons given for why teachers were considering leaving teaching

Reasons	Number giving reason
Workload/marking	22
Have a family	18
Stress/exhaustion	17
Pupil behaviour	14
Travelling/gap year/teach abroad	9
Change jobs/do something different	8
Admin/paperwork	8
Government initiatives	6
Long hours	5
Lack of status/respect	4
Salary	4
Further study	3
Lack of resources	2
Had to move to different region	2
School management	2
Lack of support	2
Staff politics	2
Retirement	2

Workload/marking was the most frequently cited reason, followed by having a family, stress and pupil behaviour. Some of the reasons given did not preclude returning to teaching, for example 'Have a family' and 'Travelling/gap year/teach abroad'. In fact when we asked these 71 teachers whether they could envisage returning to teaching later on, 29 replied that they could and a further 23 were uncertain either way as to whether they would (**Table 6**).

Table 6: Whether teachers could envisage returning to teaching after leaving

Envisage returning?	Number of teachers
Yes	29
Possibly/Maybe/Depends	20
Don't know	3
No	15
Not clear from response	2

In addition to the open-ended question summarised in **Table 5**, teachers were also asked to rate the importance of possible suggestions for persuading teachers generally to remain in the profession. Once again, the same four-point scale from the question in **Table 1** was used.

The general phrasing of the question meant that all the teachers in the study were asked this question, not just those who were considering leaving. **Table 7** below summarises the results.

Table 7: Teachers' ratings of the importance of possible suggestions to persuade teachers to remain in the profession

Suggestion	% responding 'quite important' or 'very important'	Category
Support on pupil discipline	94.3	Management
Reduce teacher workload	94.3	Workload
Better salary	91.5	Financial
Reduction in class sizes	89.8	Work conditions
Less admin work for teachers	89.4	Work conditions/Workload
Tackle teacher stress	89.0	Workload
Improve school facilities and resources	88.2	Work conditions
Greater recognition for work done	85.4	Society's view
Financial incentives to remain in teaching	80.1	Financial
Improving the way schools are managed	76.4	Management
Support with housing	75.2	Financial
Improve society's view of teachers	74.0	Society's view
Less government initiatives	70.6	
Greater influence on school policies	64.6	Management
Help with child care	63.8	Flexibility
Improve staff development	63.4	Management/Flexibility
Improve relationships with parents	59.3	Management
Increase in number of classroom assistants	54.9	Work conditions
Better career prospects	53.3	Financial
Introduction of job-share schemes	35.9	Flexibility
Salaries based on performance	28.0	

Once again, principle component factor analysis was used to identify categories of suggestions. Based on the component suggestions, six categories were identified; School Management, Workload, Work conditions, Financial, Society's view and Flexibility. However, the suggestions 'Less government initiatives' and 'Salaries based on performance' had loadings of less than 0.4 on these categories.

     Table 7 shows that the suggestions rated most highly by teachers were support on pupil discipline and reducing teacher workload. Once again, this was in agreement with the issues identified by the literature review as affecting teacher retention. Workload/marking was also the most frequently stated reason given by those considering leaving in **Table 5**. Therefore, these areas of workload and pupil discipline seem to be the areas that need to be tackled in order to impact on teacher wastage from the profession.

Interestingly though, when we examined separately the ratings given to the above suggestions for teachers from London and for those outside London, we found the largest differences in the ratings to be for 'Support with housing' and 'Help with child care' (**Table 8**). This seemed to be an indication of the relative difficulty faced by teachers in London with regards to these issues.

Table 8: Comparison of ratings for suggestions for improving retention given by Teachers in London and outside London

Suggestion	% responding 'quite important' or 'very important'		Difference
	London	Outside London	
Support on pupil discipline	88.3	96.2	-7.9
Reduce teacher workload	93.3	94.6	-1.3
Better salary	95.0	90.3	4.7
Reduction in class sizes	88.3	90.3	-2.0
Less admin work for teachers	91.7	88.7	3.0
Tackle teacher stress	86.4	89.8	-3.3
Improve school facilities and resources	86.7	88.7	-2.0
Greater recognition for work done	91.7	83.3	8.3
Financial incentives to remain in teaching	84.7	78.5	6.3
Improving the way schools are managed	76.7	76.3	0.3
Support with housing	86.7	71.5	15.2
Improve society's view of teachers	81.7	71.5	10.2
Less government initiatives	72.9	69.7	3.2
Greater influence on school policies	68.3	63.4	4.9
Help with child care	73.3	60.8	12.6
Improve staff development	55.0	66.1	-11.1
Improve relationships with parents	60.0	59.1	0.9
Increase in number of classroom assistants	51.7	55.9	-4.2
Better career prospects	51.7	53.8	-2.1
Introduction of job-share schemes	35.0	36.2	-1.2
Salaries based on performance	31.7	26.9	4.8

Also, it can be seen that teachers in London rated 'Better salary' as the most important suggestion with 'Support on pupil discipline' less so. Therefore, for the particular case of London, salary issues also need to be considered if we wish to improve retention.

Discussion of the results

The first part of our survey concentrated on factors that influenced the recruitment of teachers. In examining the reasons given by teachers for entering the profession in the first place, our results were in agreement with previous studies, highlighting altruistic or intrinsic

factors, rather than extrinsic factors, as being the most important reasons. The first six possible reasons that were rated as being the most important motivations to enter teaching (**Table 1**) were identified as children-orientated, intrinsic and altruistic in nature. It is interesting to note that in launching the 'Use your head: teach' advertising campaign in the national media, the TTA identified the focus of the campaign as being job satisfaction, stimulation and interaction with young people to be derived from a career in teaching.

However, in asking teachers the more open-ended question of 'Why did you go into teaching in the first place?', two other important reasons for entering teaching that had not been covered in our previous list of possible motivations were identified. Statements of the sort that they had 'always had it in mind' to enter the profession, and the influence of their 'previous experience' of teaching, were raised most often by teachers.

> *"I probably fancied being a teacher ever since I was at school and always wanted to teach maths because people have always found it difficult and yet I found it easy and was able to explain it to other people."*

> *"It really was just something I wanted to do. I've done quite a lot of voluntary work and working with children and it was just something that I always wanted to do."*

> *"I worked for a year in a further education college as a technician. As my role in the college evolved, I got some teaching responsibilities which whetted my appetite, and I decided to do a PGCE on the back of that."*

> *"I realised that actually the thing I enjoyed most about doing my Ph.D. up until then had been working in the undergraduate lab and helping students there, and I decided to look into teaching a bit more. I worked in a local sixth form centre as a researcher in residence for a while and really enjoyed it, so that really made my mind up. That was definitely what I wanted to do."*

Hammond (2002), in his interviews with trainee teachers of ICT found that "positive experiences of teaching or teacher-like activities in the past" was the most frequently stated influence on trainees' decision to teach. The past experience and perspective of teaching therefore seems to be a significant motivation for people to enter teaching.

The most striking findings emerging from the study however was the importance of workload and pupil discipline on the attitudes of teachers. The open-ended question asking what might dissuade teachers from entering the profession in the first place (**Table 3**) revealed 'Pupil behaviour' and 'Workload/Marking' as the two most frequently raised issues. In addition, when teachers were asked to rate the importance of possible suggestions to improve teacher retention (**Table 7**), 'Support on pupil discipline' and 'Reduce teacher workload' were once again rated the most important.

If we are therefore wanting to impact on teacher numbers, then these two issues must be seen to be tackled from the perspectives of the teachers. We can draw on the comments of the teachers from the study to back up this suggestion;

> *"I think the expectations of classroom teachers are so high and the attitude of children seem to me to be deteriorating really rapidly and that is becoming a very big issue. The stress caused by bad behaviour from children is a big factor and I'm finding the children just don't want to learn."*

> *"I think we're mugs us teachers. I think we're not respected by students and behaviour is getting worse. Something has to be done…"*

> *"Working 60 hours a week. Not getting all my work done. Becoming physically ill as a result of it. Not having any time to spend with my family. Sheer exhaustion."*

This recommendation of tacking workload and pupil behaviour is in agreement with the suggestions from other studies on recruitment and retention. Smithers and Robinson (2001), in their interviews with 102 teachers that had resigned from the profession, found that reduced workload, and improved pupil behaviour, as well as better salary, were most likely to tempt the teachers back into the profession. These inducements were again identified in a later study by Smithers and Robinson (2003), although the way the school is run was also identified as a possible suggestion.

In asking teachers to rate the impact of possible issues on recruitment and retention, we recognise that what we may have done is to not take into account the complex relationships between some of the issues, in particular involving workload and pupil behaviour. With regards to workload, teachers identified bureaucracy, paperwork and administration tasks as exasperating the workload faced by them.

> *"I've worked for the City Council so I know about paperwork and I know about going up the right ladders. But in school, there are times when I feel I daren't breathe without having permission in triplicate."*

> *"The workload I expected but the amount of what I consider to be trivial paperwork and dotting i's and crossing t's that I think is a complete waste of time."*

Therefore, tacking these related issues is one way that the problem of workload could be reduced for teachers. In this way, other issues such as the stress and pressure felt by teachers could be reduced.

> *"At the moment, workload and pupil behaviour are factors and the general stress that goes with these two."*

> *"I've seen a lot of colleagues that I work with who are suffering under the strain of the workload and the pupil behaviour…"*

> *"I'm really down about the fact that I have to go and put myself through certain classes. I'm not prepared to accept that for more than a few years…"*

Other comments from teachers highlighted the importance of the support from Senior Management or from government in tackling these problems. A perceived lack of support in these areas can again exasperate the problems of discipline and workload.

> *"The workload, I don't consider that it's very sociable … Discipline in schools and the lack of support from Senior Management … I am not a very nice person any more. I used to be. I used to laugh a lot but at the moment, I'm just not. I'm constantly tired. After having all day of children saying 'Miss, Miss, Miss', the last thing I want is to come home and have people go 'Mum, Mum, Mum'. I think I'm frazzled."*

> *"They said they've brought in this national workload agreement … It has made no difference to me whatsoever and I think it's just a gimmick, and I think the teaching profession is full of gimmicks and I'm getting fed up of gimmicks really… It hasn't been implemented properly. I'm told by me*

> *Head that they haven't been given the money to implement it so there is an*
> *expectation placed on teachers."*

Pupil behaviour and workload are therefore the two main issues that this study has identified in order to improve the areas of teacher recruitment and retention. However, it also interesting to consider the importance of teachers' salaries on these areas. Other than behaviour and workload, pay was the next important factor identified by teachers as encouraging recruitment (**Table 3**). Also, it was the fifth most important factor (behind class sizes and reducing admin, both of which could be directly related to behaviour and workload) in encouraging the retention of teachers (**Table 7**). Therefore, although pay was not seen to be as important generally as behaviour and workload, it still needs to be considered when trying to impact on recruitment and retention. From some of the teachers' comments, teacher pay may be important because of the difficulties faced by teachers with discipline and workload.

> *"I think I am working 70 hour weeks. I could be earning a lot more in the*
> *city."*

> *"I work harder now for half the money that I used to earn, with more hassle,*
> *more paperwork, more workload than I did when I was in private industry,*
> *and it consumes my evenings, my weekends, my supposed free time…"*

However, another important finding of the study was the fact the salary was seen by teachers in London specifically as being the most important issue in improving retention. This is in agreement with the findings of Hutchings *et al*. (2000) who found pay to be the most important inducement to return to teaching. Therefore, because of the particular difficulties for teacher numbers in London, then pay needs to be considered alongside pupil behaviour and workload as areas that we need to focus upon to improve recruitment and retention.

Conclusion

In this study, we have examined the views of teachers of shortage subjects in England and Wales, with regards to their views on what factors influence teacher recruitment and retention. For the case of teachers in London, salary emerged as an important influence. However, more generally for teachers in England and Wales, the issues that have emerged as important both from our quantitative and qualitative findings are those of pupil behaviour and workload. We have seen that these were perceived to be the most important in possibly dissuading teachers from entering the profession, and also, through tackling these issues, in persuade teachers to remain in the profession. These finding were in agreement with those of other recent studies, providing further support of the importance of these issues with regards to teacher recruitment and retention.

Therefore, from our study, we put forward the recommendation that in order to impact on the numbers of teachers of shortage subjects in England and Wales, then policy makers must tackle these issues in order to improve the recruitment and retention in these subjects. Indeed, from 2005, the UK Government has put in place in English and Welsh schools the Workload Agreement, designed to reduce teachers' overall hours and to cut down on the administrative work carried out by teachers. It is hoped that this agreement is fully implemented so that workload is no longer see as such a problems by teachers. In turn, it is hoped that pupil behaviour is focused upon in the same way. It will be of interest to see whether such improvements do have a direct impact on teacher recruitment and retention figures in the coming years and whether teachers' perceptions change with regards to these particular issues.

Acknowledgements

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