

# The Importance of Teachers



A collection of essays on teacher  
recruitment and retention

Edited by Jonathan Simons



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**Professor Toby Salt** is the Chief Executive at Ormiston Academies Trust. Previously Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director at the National College for School Leadership, he has extensive

experience in the education sector including headships and as chief executive in various posts. He established the first hard federation, as chief executive of a group of schools, which was recognised by Ofsted as outstanding. He has a Masters in Education from University of Birmingham and the National Professional Qualification for Headship from University of Cambridge. He has been appointed as visiting professor at the University of Wolverhampton for education leadership and is a board member of UCAS.

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**John Hardy** is the headteacher of St. John Vianney School & Children's Centre in the north of Hartlepool. It caters for children from birth to 11 years-of-age and their families and provides access to services for the whole community. He was elected Chair of NETS, North East Teaching Schools, which is the name given to the Teaching School Council in the region and is the regional representative on the National TSC. He is also Chair of Trustees of Schools North East. He is involved in the working group tasked with developing National Standards for school-based ITT mentors addressing a recommendation of the Carter Review.

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## Foreword

In 2010, the DfE published a White Paper entitled “The Importance of Teaching”. This set out the overall direction of travel for the Coalition government, including recognising the importance of teaching to improving school standards. The title of this essay collection deliberately reflects and builds on this work. For if teaching (the practice) is important, even more so are the people – the teachers.

This collection of essays follows a half day conference held by Policy Exchange in partnership with the Association of School and College Leaders in October last year on the topic of the future of the teaching workforce – supply, recruitment, retention and deployment. We have asked selected individuals to further develop thoughts on action that both government and individual and groups of schools can take to alleviate the undoubted shortage of teachers that the English state school system currently faces, and is predicted to continue to face for the next few years.

The essays cover a number of themes. The first is a general overview of the labour market for teachers. James Darley from Teach First points out that in a decade of working in teacher graduate recruitment, he has never seen a situation like this before. John Howson, who has studied teacher labour markets for over 20 years, concludes that we have a crisis, and that is a recruitment crisis which can affect all schools to the detriment of our aim to develop a world-class education system.

The second theme is the role played by ITT, an area which has seen significant change in recent years. Chris Husbands, formerly of the Institute of Education, argues that the changes have undermined what was, broadly, a sensible system for manpower planning, in what he calls a “a remarkable, wholly counter-productive policy”.

But Jo Saxton, a Director of Future Academies Trust and an ex academic from Cambridge, counters that the problem is instead that school based providers do not have enough power to design new provision against what she terms the ‘straitjacket’ of universities, NCTL and Ofsted.

The third theme is how to develop and retain the large numbers of teachers we have in the system already. Elaine Wilson from Cambridge University discusses the role universities can play in shaping and developing subject and professional knowledge. Philippa Cordingley talks of the changes that need to take place in schools to make them focussed on professional learning and development. Toby Salt, Chief Executive of the large Ormiston Academies Trust, gives his perspective on developing teachers across a chain of schools. And Jonathan Simons talks of the need for greater flexibility in the teaching profession to bolster the number of returners.

Finally, the fourth theme is the deployment of teachers across the country. Three contributors from PwC draw on their extensive global education work to suggest that technology can provide an answer. And John Hardy, Chairman of Schools North East, talks about how that region is making a school led system a reality with collaborative work across their area.

The conclusions are, on occasion, provocative. They are not all in line with where government policy currently is. They do not all agree with each other! But what they all illustrate powerfully is what Leora Cruddas from ASCL highlights in her essay – “It is time we disrupted the narrative of a beleaguered profession with low morale that constantly needs to be kept in check by government – rather, we as a system need to be at the forefront of designing new approaches to recruitment retention to address the challenges we face.”

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# Introduction

Allan Foulds, President of the Association of School and College Leaders

Welcome to a short collection of essays about the teacher recruitment crisis which is currently affecting schools across the country. I use the word 'crisis' advisedly. No less an authority than John Howson, Director of TeachVac, and one of the country's foremost experts on the subject of teacher supply, describes the situation as such, as you will see in his essay.

ASCL's own research suggests that teacher shortages are indeed widespread and that they are having a direct impact on the education that schools are able to provide to young people. Many school leaders report enormous difficulties in recruiting staff. This is particularly the case in maths, science and English, but many are also reporting problems in other subjects. These include languages which will, of course, become of growing concern in the light of the number of young people the Government wants to see taking English Baccalaureate subjects.

Another concern is that the current teacher shortages are likely to become significantly more serious over the next few years as pupil numbers rise. It is already very clear that a large proportion of schools are having to use supply staff and non-specialists to cover the gaps. Of course, many of these staff do a very good job in difficult circumstances, but the situation is far from ideal. There is no substitute for putting permanent teachers who are experts in their subjects in front of classes. Without this supply of teachers there is a danger that some of the progress which has been made

will be lost. It will certainly be extremely difficult if not impossible to raise standards further. Of particular concern is the impact on schools in areas of high disadvantage where recruitment is often most difficult.

This collection of essays provides some valuable insight into the current problems and solutions are suggested. Here, it is sufficient to say that the reasons for the teacher supply crisis are complex and solving it requires a range of strategies.

In this introduction, I want to focus on just one in which we can all play a part. For too long the discourse around education in this country has been a negative one. Nobody would disagree with the Government's laudable aim of raising standards, but some of the language used has been unfortunate. Eager young graduates are hardly likely to be enthused about a career in teaching when they hear persistent references to 'failure' and 'underperformance' and promises of 'zero-tolerance' to these issues.

The Government is not alone in this respect. There is no shortage of voices in the education debate pointing out shortcomings and weaknesses. It is perfectly reasonable, and indeed important, to discuss the issues which face the education system. However, we must all be aware of the cumulative impact of the language we use on wider public perceptions. The reality is that our education system is a very good one. There are many schools and colleges, in every part of the country, doing an excellent job, and teaching is a rewarding and fulfilling career. This is not said nearly often enough.

The teacher supply crisis requires concerted action in the form of better incentives and more promotion of teaching as a career, but it also requires a collective effort to focus a little more on positives and a little less on negatives. I hope that these essays inspire us all to join together in a purposeful commitment to building confidence in the education system.

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# 1. Let's Talk About Flex

Jonathan Simons, Head of Education, Policy Exchange

As discussions about the teacher supply crisis grow longer, the probability of the politician's fallacy approaches 1. The politician's fallacy, of course, is to conclude that "we must do something [about a particular issue], this is something, so let's do this".

In other words, we really need to understand the details about why there is a supply crunch, before we can decide what best to do about it. And in particular, in my essay, I want to look at the issue of returners. One perhaps underappreciated element of the teacher labour force is quite how flexible it is. Rather than a simple, linear, enter – teach – exit model, what the data shows is a more dynamic picture. For example, of the teachers joining the state sector in any year (around 45,000 to 50,000 people), around a third are actually returners. So simply fixating on new entrants – or indeed, on retaining the stock – misses something of a trick. Below, I want to set out some more details about who is leaving, and where they're going (and hence speculate about why some of them are leaving), and from that draw some conclusions about what might be done about it.

## Who is leaving, and who wants to leave?

The headline figure is that around 45,000 to 50,000 teachers leave the state sector every year. This figure, rather inelegantly called the wastage rate, was 10.4% in 2014 – the highest it has been since 2004, although not by much (the figure fluctuates between 8.5% and 10.5%). Of the 48,000 people who left teaching in 2014, the majority – around 35,000 – left state schools for other jobs, and the remaining 13,000 retired. In policy terms, there's not a lot that can be done about that latter category (though as pension age rises,



those numbers will slowly decline, and there are very marginal gains that could be made perhaps by keeping some of those teachers in the fringes of the profession – but this isn't considered in any more detail here).

So that 35,000 is the figure to focus on here. One issue that has been raised a lot recently is that this number is at a record high – up from 28,000 in 2011. The number of teachers retiring over the same 2011 to 2014 period has actually fallen, so the entire rise in wastage rate is driven by pre-retirement teachers exiting the profession – i.e. an active choice, not a demographic effect. There are also concerns that the 35,000 figure may continue to rise – for example, three recent opinion poll surveys of teachers found that the proportions of serving teachers considering leaving in the next six months to two years is 20%, 53%, and 59%.<sup>1</sup>

Without wishing to be complacent, those figures do not unduly concern me. Firstly, as the NFER point out (whose survey recorded the lower 20% figure for considers to leave), these figures are way in excess of actual wastage rates. As they note “*stated intentions can be an unreliable guide to individuals’ actions and therefore teacher surveys can only tell us so much about the true motivations of the teaching workforce. Care should therefore be taken when reporting such figures, especially given the risk that exaggerating the numbers leaving itself could exacerbate the recruitment challenge*”.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, it is worth comparing some of these questionnaire figures to similar polls of people in other sectors:

- 23% of all staff in the UK are currently ‘actively job hunting’ (a stronger measure than simply ‘considering’);<sup>3</sup>
- 24% of all civil servants actively want to leave the civil service in the next 12 months;<sup>4</sup>
- 1 in 3 of all employed professionals across 29 different developed countries are considering leaving their job;<sup>5</sup>

1 Those findings are from, respectively: NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus, June 2015; YouGov survey for NUT, October 2015; and YouGov survey for LKMCo/Pearson, June 2015

2 NFER, “Should I Stay or Should I Go? NFER Analysis of Teachers Joining and Leaving the Profession”, November 2015

3 CIPD, “Employee outlook”, Spring 2015

4 Civil Service People Survey 2015

5 LinkedIn Talent Trends Report 2015

- 50% of bankers working in areas affected by new financial regulation want to leave their job, according to the British Bankers Association;<sup>6</sup> and
- 65% of all NHS staff are 'seriously considering' leaving their job.<sup>7</sup>

Putting those 'considering' figures for teachers in context therefore, and recognising the difference between stated beliefs and actions, gives some more reassurance.

But if we take the 35,000 who did leave in 2014, what do we know about who they are, and where they went?

In terms of who they are, the best data to use is from the DfE Database of Teacher Records, which sets out basic demographic information about leavers. The most recent data is from 2013, and groups leavers by 4 year clusters – so the most recent data is from all those who left in 2008 to 2012 (frustratingly, before the real increases in wastage started to come through). This shows that there is a pretty consistent pattern across the age groups for male leavers. The big outlier comes when we look at female leavers. In absolute numbers terms, there is a huge bulge in leavers for women aged between 30–39. In fact, around 6,000 teachers a year – 27% of all leavers in total – are women aged 30–39 (who make up around 23% of the profession overall). This is an issue both because of the absolute numbers leaving, but because such women are disproportionately likely to leave compared to their numbers in the teaching force generally. The obvious conclusion to be drawn here is that this is maternity related – something which I'll return to below.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of where our leavers are going, we have some better information, courtesy of a recent research report by the NFER, which studied a sample of teachers who left state schools between 2001 and 2015 (although it doesn't break down trends within this 14 year period, so we have to assume that the trends are consistent over time).<sup>9</sup> This found a wealth of useful information, including that:

6 British Bankers Association and LexisNexis Risk Solutions, November 2015

7 UNISON, "Undervalued, overwhelmed...health members survey" September 2015

8 DfE, "School workforce in England: November 2014", table I1

9 NFER, "Should I Stay or Should I Go? NFER Analysis of Teachers Joining and Leaving the Profession", November 2015

- **of ex state school teachers who remain in the UK labour force, the most popular destination is to stay in education in some field** – 5 in 10 leavers either work in private schools, or, rather depressingly, take a step down in terms of salary and prestige to become a TA or a non teacher within a state school;
- **around 2 in 10 leavers go into another part of the UK labour market** – about half to somewhere else in the public sector, and about half in the private sector;
- **almost 3 in 10 leave the UK labour force altogether** – very small numbers to study and abroad (1% each), and the remainder as economically inactive, either through looking after family, unemployed, sick or disabled, or simply not in employment (inactive). This category will include many of those who leave for maternity reasons;
- **many ex teachers don't move for money and indeed take a pay cut** – some experience drops in salary of more than 20%, especially those who become TAs or move to the wider public sector;
- **but lots of them return.** As noted above, many entrants into the teaching market every year are returners, or ex teachers. This number has increased by 15% between 2011 and 2014 – up from 14,700 returners to 17,350.<sup>10</sup>

So what conclusions can we draw? I think there are six:

- **teachers retain a deep commitment and passion for their profession** – the most common move by far is to stay in education broadly (the NFER note that many of those into UK public sector are taking jobs in HE and FE);
- **it doesn't seem to be money that is making people leave** – given how many either move for statistically similar salaries or indeed take pay cuts. So it is perhaps unlikely that more money would make people stay;

<sup>10</sup> DfE, op cit, table C1

- **this suggests that reasons for leaving the profession are to do with personal circumstances about teaching that outweigh love of job** – for example, workload, or individual school circumstances – supported by the fact that many teachers opt for ostensibly more low status and less time consuming jobs;
- **a decent number of teachers are leaving the labour force altogether** – particularly for family reasons (perhaps as many as 14%, if we cluster together those who leave for caring responsibilities and those who become economically inactive);
- **after a period of time, the love of the job draws people back ...** – hence the high number of returners we see, particularly from related occupations – 29% of all returners are from private schools (who, with limited exceptions, will most likely have been state school teachers originally);
- **... except for some carers and economically inactive people** – as noted above, 14% of all leavers quit for those reasons, but the flow back in over the same period was 7%. Around half of this cohort – predominantly, we assume, mothers – do not come back into teaching.

This then is a curate's egg for government, and indeed for heads. On the one hand, there will likely remain a good counter flow of ex teachers coming back into state schools every year to help balance the leavers. But there remain two distinct issues to address: one is that people are leaving not because they want to change direction completely, but because there is something about state school teaching in particular which is unsustainable – as Elaine Wilson dissects in her essay for this collection. And the second is that for those who leave for family reasons, only around half (on this limited information) will come back. This second element mimics the broader pattern of maternal employment within the UK labour market, where women's participation rate is consistently lower than men's at every age from 23 onwards,

and where mothers' participation rate is lower than childless women at every age up until 49.<sup>11</sup>

My proposal is that the solution to both of these is greater use of flexible working. Flexible working is more commonly associated with patterns within a job at any one point in time – for example, working part time, or compressed hours in some way. But here I want to take the broadest definition – which includes flexible working across a lifecycle, moving in and out of jobs. And it offers potential, to address both male and female teachers 'burning out' and exiting the profession for a period for related but perhaps less stressful and time consuming jobs before returning; and women leaving the labour market for caring responsibilities and then coming back in in some form. If the teaching profession as a whole can encompass more flexible ways of working not just within individual jobs, but across a longer time period, then there is much to be gained by both potentially slowing wastage, but in particular increasing from this pool of returners.

What would that look like? A mixture of things – most of which, as the direct employers, fall upon individual heads rather than government. The one thing government could do is to 'dredge the PIT', or Pool of Inactive Teachers. This is unlikely to be a steady state solution; there are 231k inactive teachers who have left teaching, but only 85k of them are aged 45 and under and have taught in the last 13 years (which we use as a proxy for those most likely to return). There are a further 106k qualified teachers who have never taught in a state school, of whom 45k are aged under 45 and qualified within the last 13 years. Nevertheless, as an interim measure, increasing returner rates from this group could be a quick win.<sup>12</sup>

Many heads will be sympathetic to the more obvious types of flexible working – for example part time working, or managing timetables to fit with caring responsibilities. But there may be other things to consider as a school to boost returner numbers both from

<sup>11</sup> ONS, "Full report – women in the labour market", September 2013

<sup>12</sup> Policy Exchange analysis from DfE figures, op cit, table I2

their ex staff and others, taking this broader definition of flexible working to encompass periods in and out of teaching across a lifetime of working:

- **childcare:** as government continues to press the case for greater school based nurseries, could schools create their own provision or priority within settings for their own staff's children?
- **Keep In Touch Days:** this is standard practice for women on maternity leave. But what about some form of informal arrangement when a teacher leaves the school, especially if it is on good terms and they are moving to a related field (i.e. not another teaching job). Statistically, they will be quite likely to return to teaching at some point, and a school they have a link with would make reintegration easier.
- **subject knowledge enhancement/brush up courses:** again, this is a standard offer by universities to PGCE students whose initial degree is not in their ITT subject. Schools may wish to consider whether, perhaps in conjunction with Keep In Touch Days, they offer ex staff and other ex teachers they know of the chance to keep abreast with development and/or specific short courses to bring them up to speed, to aid one of the common fears about going back into teaching which is a lack of current expertise.
- **mid career entries:** the government is increasingly looking to make teaching attractive for career changers. There also exist small scale national schemes which offer rapid progression towards senior positions which could be particularly of interest career changers. But schools could offer their own form of career entry, tailored to the needs and circumstances of their own school, as an offer to certain individuals.
- **sabbaticals/career breaks:** it is likely that any form of formal sabbatical would be prohibitively expensive either for government or an individual school or group of schools to

offer. But it may be possible, as a more formal version of the Keep In Touch Days, for schools to increasingly employ people on the shared understanding that they may teach for a while, leave for a while, and then come back in. Schools and teachers may wish to design some sort of low stakes ‘retainer’ on both sides, offering a chance of a rapid reintroduction back into the school for that individual if it suited both parties at a point in the future.

- **cross school employment/secondments:** the increasing growth of academy chains offers the possibility of a wider employment offer for teachers. A flexible offer which gives an opportunity to a potentially ‘burned out’ teacher an alternative place of employment within the same group or chain, or alternative place of return on the same employment basis within a MAT, could be an attractive offer.

There still exists, amongst some teachers, sniffiness about some elements of flexible working. If you haven’t served your time in a school, runs the argument, you are somehow not as qualified, less entitled to an opinion, or even less committed and dedicated – even if you subsequently come back. This approach needs to cease. From a national policy perspective, this may mean greater flexibility on things like pay and conditions and also potentially on pension arrangements. From school leaders’ perspective, they also need to start thinking about a broader definition of flexibility, and one that encompasses a more ‘stop-start’ pattern of employment across their school or MAT from the same group of teachers. A more enlightened view of flexibility could boost returner numbers and make a significant contribution to teacher supply.

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## 2. Recruiting and Retaining Teachers – the Art of the Possible

Leora Cruddas, Director of Policy, ASCL

Education is the most powerful weapon and can change the world. In many respects, there is nothing more important. It is the students we teach today that will solve tomorrow's problems. But if that is the case, then we as a system need to recognise our worth and our value. It is time we disrupted the narrative of a beleaguered profession with low morale that constantly needs to be kept in check by government – rather, we as a system need to be at the forefront of designing new approaches to recruitment retention to address the challenges we face.

It is a huge privilege to teach. We need to recapture the sense of public service and the 'why' of teaching – the moral imperative. ASCL's *Blueprint for Self-Improving System* talks of teachers seeing themselves as contributing collectively to excellence in a world-class education system, the creation of a fair society and the common good. This focus on the moral imperative of teaching and the purpose of education will bring renewed energy and collective purpose to the profession. It will also build public confidence in our education system.

ASCL's incoming president, Sian Carr, talked in a recent keynote speech about the art of the possible. I was struck by the strong sense of enablement this created in the audience. We may be facing a crisis in teacher supply, but we must not despair. It is possible to take concerted action as a system to address the issues we face. The Greek root of crisis is 'turning point.' We can use the challenges of teacher supply to create a turning point in our education system.



### So, what can be done?

The first and most important thing is to set out clearly where the responsibilities for government, and for the system, begin and end.

The key role for government is managing the overall supply of teachers. In fact, ASCL's *Blueprint for a Self-Improving System*<sup>1</sup> sees recruitment of sufficient teachers in each sector and region and the promotion of the status and value of teaching as one of only five roles for government. A school led system does not mean responsibility on schools for identifying the staff needed at a system level, agreeing any national elements of pay and conditions, and setting out the ways in which they should be qualified and regulated. But it does mean that the system ought to take the lead on an individual, regional and collective basis for managing the recruitment, development, wellbeing and retention of staff when they are in the system.

In the teeth of the tightest supply of staff that many ASCL members have seen for many years, below are some practical policy suggestions for government and for school leaders.

### Policy solutions for government

#### 1. Build public confidence in the education system

As one of a small number of system goals, government should purposely and deliberately initiate a strategy to restore public confidence in the education system. This would involve not just positive messages about teaching, but convening a coalition of system actors – media, professional associations and policy bodies – to design a consistent approach to messaging.

#### 2. Support the strategic co-ordination of teaching schools and SCITTs

Teaching Schools and SCITTs have established school-led training programmes. SCITTs have led school-based initial teacher

<sup>1</sup> Cruddas, L. 2015, *Leading the Way: Blueprint for a Self-improving System*

education for several years. They have a successful track-record not only in educating beginner teachers but also in retaining them. In addition to the current programme of Teaching Schools and alliances, government could develop leadership of the SCITT sector at national level in order to oversee the development of a pipeline of teaching schools and SCITTs, co-ordinate these nationally and stimulate teaching school and SCITTs in areas of the country where recruitment is most difficult.

### **3. Protect providers in areas of the country where recruitment is most difficult**

With the current drop in applications, providers that cannot fill enough places to make ends meet and cover their costs might pull out. Consider possible safety net arrangements for providers faced with a shortage of applicants but serving parts of the country where their disappearance would cause real supply problems.

### **4. Construct a recruitment and retention offer for teachers in areas where there is difficulty in recruitment**

The government has recently announced the pilot of a National Teaching Service in the North East. This is designed to deploy some of our best teachers and leaders to schools that struggle to attract and retain the professionals they need. It is proposed that the new service will give teachers fast-track development opportunities.

ASCL supports this initiative. However, we believe that the government could go further, funding high-performing multi-academy trusts to recruit good and outstanding teachers and middle leaders on flexible contracts which enable deployment to schools in sub-regions or local areas where there is strong evidence of difficulty in recruiting and/or retaining good teachers and middle leaders. It may be possible to include a 'disruption payment' as a financial incentive for teachers on these contracts and pay accommodation expenses.

**5. Commit to pay off the annual repayment of student loans for as many years as eligible teachers remain in teaching in state schools**

This incentive could be costed and targeted on the most severe shortage areas/subjects – as previously set out by Policy Exchange. It would be a successor to the ‘golden handshake’ acting as an incentive to teach.

**6. Review and modify the Teacher Supply Model and the allocation of places in initial teacher education**

The Teacher Supply Model needs to be able to take account of regional variation in supply and demand, ensuring sufficiency of teachers needed in each sector, subject and region.

**Actions that school leaders can take**

**7. Communicate effectively with prospective staff**

Ensure your website genuinely presents your school in the way you would wish any prospective applicant to receive. Include a readily navigable route through to how you induct new staff, and perhaps particularly your approach to NQTs.

Make it easy to apply for or express interest in a job with your school. Invite interest even if you have no vacancy. Give your time and energy to pre-visits. Address the quality and responsiveness of your advertising and marketing approach.

**8. Collaborate and construct local solutions**

Collaborate locally and advertise for a pool of teachers to reduce costs and limit wasteful competition. Become or join a SCITT or teaching school alliance. Develop links with Teach First, whether eligible or not.

NFER data suggests that primary teacher trainees exceed TSM targets with shortfalls at secondary level. If there is over-supply of primary teachers in your locality, explore greater flexibility between phases. This could have the added benefit that teachers themselves making a transition between primary and secondary schools would be well-placed to support pupils with continuity of learning.

Think outside normal parameters, for example could you work with your local housing authority to provide low price housing or accommodation for new teachers or offer rent supplement?

## 9. Create a pipeline

Develop your alumni network to attract students back to teach with you. Keep in contact with students from your school who have expressed interest in teaching – invite them back at regular intervals.

Form a partnership with a university subject departments and invite undergraduates in for short term placements in school to work alongside teachers. Use this to promote teaching as a career.

Ensure that ITE trainees with you have a great experience. See each as a prospective future employee.

Look actively for returners to teaching, offer a specific training programme to support them, possibly working with a university or as a teaching school alliance.

Run recruitment evening or day events in a school or groups of schools. Include presentation from the head/principal, high profile of senior staff and middle leaders and HR presence to capture information for follow-up.

## 10. Invest in your staff

Create a professional learning curriculum and give it as much energy and attention as the curriculum for students. Restore a

secure focus on pedagogical and subject knowledge. Consider working with a university to ensure teachers entering the profession and those in the profession have strong pedagogical and subject knowledge that is being constantly refreshed. Consider working with your higher education partner to develop a research element of pedagogical theory in your school or group of schools.

Ensure that NQTs are fully integrated, have high quality support, additional time, informal buddy system.

Recycle your own. Retrain those with QTS but in over supply such as PE teachers. Develop flexibility by requiring and supporting teachers to teach a second or third subject. Talent spot and develop your non-teaching staff, particularly teaching assistants.

### Last word

A central premise of ASCL's *Blueprint* is that deep and sustained reform of our education system will not come from outside the profession: it depends on us – the many, not just the few. This essay attempts to mobilise both government and the profession to focus on solutions to creating a supply of high quality teachers. There are certainly policy solutions that we will need from government, but equally important are the profession-led solutions. These will undoubtedly involve acts of imagination, courage and collective action – the art of the possible.

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# SECTION 1: GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE TEACHER SUPPLY MARKET

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## 3. Fitting Together the Jigsaw – What of the Missing Piece?

Professor John Howson, Norham Fellow in Education,  
University of Oxford and Director TeachVac

Ensuring that there are enough teachers to staff all schools across the country is a joint effort on the part of several different agencies and organisations within government as well as 23,000 headteachers. By necessity, the provision of sufficient teachers to meet needs is a complex process that has to end up with a solution. Schools do not send children home for the lack of a teacher: someone takes the lesson. Understanding how different bits of this jigsaw fit together is required to consider how the teacher supply crisis – and I think it fair to suggest we now have a crisis, at least in some parts of the country and some subjects – can be addressed.

The number of training places required each year is determined by the DfE using the Teacher Supply Model or TSM. The TSM is an excellent piece of modelling by the DfE, although by its very nature it is backward looking and as a result frequently takes weighted average data from four years that were at a different stage of the economic cycle to the current state of the economy or the situation going forward. To some extent this is compensated for by the use of the Econometric Wastage Model as part of the calculations, but in reality the model cannot fully take account of information from the most recent recruitment round for teachers. Unlike in most industries, teaching has a well-defined recruitment cycle centred on the start of the school year in September. We need, I believe, to have more accurate and fine grained data to understand the solution.

The changes in the demand for teachers are not necessarily uniform across the country. Older teachers approaching retirement may form a greater proportion of the workforce in some parts

of the country than others; increased pension and NI employer contributions, as witnessed this year, may reduce the amount of its budget a school can spend on staffing, especially when it has teachers on higher salaries because of length of service; on the other hand, pupil numbers are now rising at different rates across the country, with London and the home counties most affected. It is difficult sometimes for the TSM to pick this up. In addition, whilst each year although there are additions to and departures from the existing teacher workforce as a result of retirements, resignations and policy and taxation changes, the key driver in the demand for additional teachers at the present time is the increase in pupil numbers that will see more than 800,000 additional pupils in our schools between 2012 and 2022. On the basis of the 2015 ITT census, conducted by the DfE in November, it is clear that the 2016 recruitment round will be challenging for schools and, unless there a change in either the economic situation or factors within the teacher labour market, 2017 will probably be no easier. That would mark the fourth year of concerns about teacher supply in some parts of the country, notably London and the Home Counties.

Data on current vacancies is perhaps the missing part of the jigsaw on teacher supply as far as the DfE is concerned. Knowledge about vacancy data matters more now that trainees have to pay £9,000 fees, because a serious overestimate of training places will saddle students with 25% more student debt for their professional training with the risk of not being able to secure a teaching post. I would argue this is the case with Physical Education numbers at present, where training numbers seem to significantly exceed demand on the ground for such teachers from schools. Indeed, perhaps a half of the 2015 training cohort didn't find PE teaching jobs in this recruitment round. At the opposite end of the spectrum is business studies, a subject where the raising of the learning leaving age to 18 plus more Studio Schools and UTCs may have increased demand to a level not yet captured by the TSM. Certainly,



our TeachVac data tells us that across England there may have been somewhere more than four times the number of jobs advertised for business studies teachers this year than trainees available to fill these vacancies. This has left many schools struggling to find teachers. Other subjects where recruitment is challenging include the sciences, geography, design and technology, IT and music.

### So as well as this missing piece in the jigsaw, what else might be done?

Between 1997 and 2010, graduates training as teachers had their tuition fees paid directly by the government. That is a much easier proposition to market than the complicated plethora of bursary and salary options currently on offer that can see two trainees in adjacent classrooms on widely different support packages despite being at the same stage of their training. Recently, it has been suggested that schools might offer a fee-repayment scheme for teachers in the early years of their career as a return for staying in the profession and at that school. Unless there was a specific fund schools could draw upon, it is difficult to see where the funds would come from in this time of austerity unless schools could save money on recruitment advertising that currently is estimated to cost somewhere around £25–£50 million a year to schools. However, any debt repayment scheme does have the attraction for the government over abating tuition fees up front of only needing to find funds to repay those teachers that work in the state sector. The independent schools would, presumably, need to set up a similar scheme of their own to remain competitive.

One solution, suggested by some is to employ more unqualified teachers. I am a firm believer in the need for teachers to be taught how to teach. Subject knowledge is no longer enough. Teachers need to know how to teach young people how to learn the subject; not the same thing as knowing the subject yourself. Schooling in

England has always had a strong pastoral element embedded within it and such a culture has to be understood, especially in a less deferential society. As a result, the use of unqualified staff must always be a last resort. Even teachers trained in other countries sometimes find working in England a challenge.

Another solution to a teacher supply crisis is to reduce the loss of teachers from the profession. At present, with just over half the profession below the age of 40 and the other half aged between 40–65, the teaching profession is finely balanced in terms of its age profile. Generally, teachers are more likely to leave the profession if they have a bad experience in their first year of teaching. This is a period when they are juggling the preparation of a whole new set of lessons with at the same time developing their classroom skills. Where they do this in isolation problems can become magnified very quickly, especially during the crucial first term of teaching. This is an area where schools that cooperate can provide programmes for groups of NQTs that reduce the sense of isolation and allow the new teachers to learn from each other and understand that they are not alone. Cutting back on this early professional development is a false economy.

Even after the pressures of the NQT year there are workload pressures that need to be addressed. The shift in recent years to a focus on the maximum achievement for every child rather than the teaching of a class of children has meant additional planning, preparation, marking and assessment for all teachers, sometimes without any compensatory relief in the other aspects of a teacher's workload. The government does need to address the consequences of this laudable aim for our young people on teachers' workloads because it seems to be a major source of discontent among serving teachers.

We also need to appreciate that teaching is now a global career, and teachers trained in the England are in demand in the growing number of private schools around the world that serve not only the

business community, but increasingly a wider market as well. The attraction of earning a tax free salary for a few years in order to save for a deposit on a property in England can take teachers overseas: some find they like the life and don't return.

So far, I have avoided mentioning pay as a solution to the recruitment crisis. However, in every teacher recruitment crisis since the 1970s there has come a time when public sector pay has become so unattractive that a solution has had to be found. Whether through the Houghton and Clegg Reports of the 1970s or the opening to all of the Upper Pay Spine in the early 2000s, catch-up solutions have eventually had to be devised. We may not yet be at that point, but if the figures for wage and salary increases during the remainder of this parliament cited in the small print of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement become a reality it will be a problem that will need addressing sooner rather than later.

Larger classes or changes in the use of technology could well be on the cards if funding remains constrained. Whether either of these options will make teaching more attractive to more graduates is worth market-testing to discover reactions of both new graduates and career changers as well as existing teachers.

The longer-term effects of a teacher supply crisis are not always appreciated, but can be significant. If the cohort of new entrants remains under-strength for several years then eventually there is a risk of a crisis developing in middle and then senior leadership recruitment. For example, in design and technology, an important subject for the health of the economy, the 450 trainees recruited in each of the past two years may mean that only 150 teachers from each cohort are working in state-funded secondary schools after five years, if DfE predications are correct. That would not be a large enough workforce to create an adequate supply of new heads of department. With similar numbers recruited over several years, schools will eventually struggle to appoint new heads of department well into the 2020s. To ensure the health of middle

leadership in schools it is vital that the National College provides a framework for leadership training. Although multi-academy trusts can do this for their schools, the many converter academies need support in this area of professional development. In the primary sector any shortfall in recruitment eventually creates a crisis at headship level as is apparent in some parts of the country at the present time.

What is certain, with the large increase in pupil numbers, is that schools in challenging circumstances are the most likely to experience the effects of teacher shortages first. However, eventually, a recruitment crisis can affect all schools to the detriment of our aim to develop a world-class education system. This is a problem government cannot ignore.

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## 4. Tapping into the Most Competitive Recruitment Market Ever

James Darley, Executive Director –  
Graduate Recruitment, Teach First

There is little more talked about in education circles at the moment than the recruitment of teachers. I've had the privilege of leading the recruitment efforts of Teach First for the last decade, but can honestly say I've not seen a situation like this before. It is clear that it is amongst the schools serving poorer communities challenge is greatest, as fewer people tend to choose to teach in these schools. Research has shown that just 15% of teachers would look for a future role at a school more challenging than their own.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, of surveyed school leaders, 54% said the struggle to attract good teachers was a major barrier to improving pupils' performance, compared with just 33% of those in more affluent areas.<sup>2</sup>

So, what really is going on out there and how can we best tap into the pool of talented individuals to get them to join a life changing profession?

### Surveying the scene – the reality on the ground

There are a range of external factors that need to be understood when we look at the recruitment market.

Firstly, there's a question of supply – not just of jobs, but of graduates. At present, the vast majority of new entrants into teaching come direct from university. Yet due to changes in demographics, there is a steady decline in the population of 21-year-olds. Unfortunately, we know that this demographic blip

<sup>1</sup> Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, *Cracking the Code*, September 2014

<sup>2</sup> National Audit Office Survey, Reported June 2015

will continue with numbers sliding until 2022.<sup>3</sup> On the plus side, whilst the population is shrinking, there are more young people than ever before going to university.

On the flip side, the number of pupils entering and going through early stages of their school life is rising rapidly. Pupil numbers are set to increase by 615,000 over the next five years – from 7.24 million in 2015 to 7.85 million by 2020.<sup>4</sup> More pupils mean we need more teachers.

Meanwhile the wider graduate recruitment market is at its most buoyant and competitive, potentially ever. There are more jobs, which are better paid, with students graduating with higher debt, being more organised and becoming increasingly shrewd, and even ruthless, when considering their career choice.

The number of graduate level vacancies has been steadily increasing, but has seen a further significant jump for 2016. For the first time this takes recruitment levels to those greater than the pre-recession peak of 2007. There are now more graduate vacancies than there ever have been before.<sup>5</sup>

And with the broadest range of choice, the competition for talent has pushed up salaries.

Median starting salaries at the UK's leading graduate employers now sits at a very healthy £30,000 – but in around a fifth of the top graduate programmes starting salaries are now in excess of £35,000. Investment banks are expected to offer a median, and somewhat eye watering, starting salary of £47,000, closely followed by law firms (£41,000) and banking & finance business (£36,000).<sup>6</sup>

In addition, some of these industries have sharper role and pay progression opportunities than others. And there are other non-financial compensations in some jobs, such as the opportunity to gain professional qualifications and development.

And as the competition for talent heats up, employers are seeking to entice and secure their new generation of employees ever earlier. More than 90% of the UK's leading graduate employers

3 ONS Census data, 2011

4 National pupil projections, July 2015

5 The Graduate Market in 2016, High Fliers, January 2016

6 *ibid*

now offer a work experience programme which is paid. And more than one in four offer paid internships to students in their very first year at university.

The importance of this early engagement can't be underestimated. Over a third of graduate jobs at The Times Top 100 graduate recruiters went to students who had done an internship with that employer. This has real implications for teaching – if we don't act early to attract and enthuse students with the prospect of teaching, the pool of potential new teachers will be dramatically reduced.

Meanwhile students and recent graduates, those competing for the majority of these jobs, are becoming increasingly savvy and shrewd. We are now seeing the first cohorts of graduates who paid £9,000 fees from 2012 and research shows changes in their approach and attitude towards post-university employment as a result. They are more focused on securing a well-paid job than ever, with 48% having begun their search for a job during their first year at university.<sup>7</sup>

They are increasingly confident in the ability to secure a job and are organised at ensuring this. They are planning their approach, researching the sectors and employers and considering pay and progression opportunities. And many are now accepting multiple offers, waiting until the last minute to decide which option to take.

Teaching has seen a significant resurgence in its prestige over the last decade. In the annual UK Graduate Careers Survey, Teach First has gone from the 19th top employer in 2005 to the 4th most prestigious by 2015, as voted for by students themselves. But unfortunately teaching's position amongst these top graduates has started to wane slightly. Teaching has now fallen out of the top three sectors graduates are interested in and applications to teaching are down 7%.<sup>8</sup>

And with teaching facing pay restraints over the last Parliament, salaries have not kept pace with other sectors. Across the public sector, which includes teaching, the median starting salary sits at £20,000.

<sup>7</sup> The UK Graduate Careers Survey 2015, High Fliers, June 2015

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

## Teach First's role in graduate recruitment for teachers

Since placing our first cohort in London in 2003, we have recruited nearly 8,700 teachers and now partner with schools serving low-income communities in every region across England and Wales. These teachers have now taught more than 1 million pupils. In 2013 Teach First became the largest graduate recruiter in the UK and last year, despite an increasingly competitive market, we were able to recruit 1,685 new teachers to join our Leadership Development Programme. This marked around a 20% growth on the previous year – but was one which took every effort of all of us across the organisation.

It is important to be clear that even at this scale, we know that Teach First is not the single solution to the challenge in teacher recruitment across the country. We do, however, play an important role for schools in challenging circumstances – providing nearly one in four new teachers at these schools. And the graduates and career changes we are seeking to attract are not necessarily those who would go into teaching anyway. We want those who wouldn't consider teaching if it weren't for Teach First. So we have reason to think that a large proportion of those 1,685 new teachers are genuinely additional to the profession, not just switching across from other routes.

To tap into this increasingly competitive market for new would-be teachers, we have developed a model which balances a personalised focus on graduates and long term investment in relationships with universities and industry partners. Every applicant speaks to one of our dedicated recruitment team on multiple occasions. We ensure a smooth journey, from hearing about us at presentations in lectures and careers fairs, to running employability skills sessions for students, before our dedicated team support applicants through their journey with us. Whilst we can't compete on salary, we can sell a life changing profession, an opportunity to join something bigger – a movement for social change, and a personalised support structure to engage and motivate.



## What more can we do to ensure every child has a great teacher?

Obviously, there are some things that Teach First does, as a central graduate recruiter, which aren't available or sensible for individual schools to do. But having worked in this area for a decade, there are some reflections on the wider market for teachers which I think could transfer more widely.

1. **Making sure teaching remains financially competitive.** Teaching offers great opportunities for progression and with added responsibilities the pay can be rewarding. I don't believe people do, nor should, come into teaching solely for the pay. It's a far more powerful profession than that. There is, however, a growing difference between the starting salary for a new teacher and other top professions that teaching should be seen on a level playing field with. With a newly qualified teacher being paid £22,023–£27,543 we need to make sure we're not losing out on attracting people and that the gap between this salary and a median graduate salary of £30,000 doesn't grow any greater. Where resources are available to them, government and schools should give teachers a pay rise.
2. **Be specific – tackle the issues of greatest need.** With budgets and resources remaining tight, but the challenge being large we need to focus on what matters: shortage subjects, and geographical cold spots. Given the competitiveness of the graduate recruitment market, it's particularly challenging to recruit graduates of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects who are in great demand across industry. But without talented teachers in these subjects, we will not be able to invest in the future of our economy, by teaching the next generation of inventors, analysts and engineers. And it's pupils in low income communities that are suffering the most. We

should consider paying off the student loans of STEM graduates if they commit to teach in low income schools for a number of years – providing a powerful and immediate incentive for our top graduates to inspire the next generation. This could be staggered, with the amount of loan written off, linked to length of teaching service.

In terms of type of school, the most successful schools will often find it easier to attract teachers to join them. For those supporting low income communities, or in more isolated parts of the country, we need to step up our efforts. Schools in coastal and smaller urban areas, such as Blackpool, Bournemouth and Barnsley are finding it increasingly challenging to recruit. Yet these are precisely the communities that most need high quality teachers. For instance, in Tower Hamlets 60% of pupils on Free Schools Meals achieved 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths: almost three times the rate of pupils in Barnsley, where barely 1 in 5 achieved this grade.

- 3. Recognise and respond to today's labour market trends.** We know today's young professional are interested in a portfolio career, where they undertake a number of different types of roles across their career. One in four of our 2007 intake who are currently teaching, left the profession at some point, before later returning to the classroom. At the moment teaching isn't always set up for this – and this is a weakness that needs to be addressed by schools and government. For teachers it's important they don't lose their knowledge of what's happening right now in their subject area. At Teach First we've tried to address these problems by working closely with industry. For example, every new Computer Science teacher we recruit will now get the chance to do a mini internship with Google – keeping their knowledge right up to speed, and ensuring they've got insight into the industry. More broadly, some of the most successful

education systems in the world, and those other professions that are seen as most attractive to today's graduates, each have very clear progression routes for their employees. Singapore's education system, with its three clear pathways for teachers to become experts either as teachers, leaders, or in a specialist role, is often held up in this regard. There are clear steps on each pathway, combined with a comprehensive training package to support progression. This makes it easy for those looking to join the profession to see where they can go and how they can develop, and puts the profession on the same footing as other top jobs such as law or accountancy. We also need to be more sympathetic to career changers. Around one in five of our 2015 intake were not direct from university and we believe there's a significant pool of untapped talent that could be of huge benefit to schools and pupils. We have just launched our first national campaign to attract more young professionals and those considering changing career, recognising that our training enables people to be paid whilst they train and to have an immediate impact. For too much of teacher recruitment across the country, we focus all our efforts and design our training for those coming straight out of university. With today's workforce looking for portfolio careers, we need to make sure our training routes are flexible enough and set up to support those who want to re-train to join the amazing profession that is teaching.

Amongst all the data and the cries of crisis, let's not forget what teaching is. It is an unparalleled opportunity to directly change hundreds of lives. To lead young people on a journey of discovery and development. To help foster their knowledge and understanding of the world, and to enable them to define their place within it. There are few greater professions – it's time we stepped up to work together to ensure every child has the teacher they deserve.

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## SECTION 2: THE ROLE OF INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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## 5. Initial Teacher Training – a Tragedy of the Commons?

Professor Chris Husbands, Vice Chancellor, Sheffield Hallam University and former Director, Institute of Education

The tragedy of the commons is a well-known tenet of public, and especially environmental policy. The ‘commons’ refers to a resource shared by many individuals who can use a portion of it for their own benefit. The tragedy is that in the absence of effective regulation, each individual will tend to exploit the commons to his or her own advantage. Under this state of affairs, the commons are depleted and eventually ruined: everyone acts in their own interests and the outcome is destructive for everyone. But the problem is that if the commons are going to be used up, whoever uses most stands to benefit the most. The application of the ‘tragedy of the commons’ to environmental challenges is obvious, but it has resonances in many other areas of public policy where there is competition over a public good.

Securing the supply of good teachers has some similarities to the tragedy of the commons. There are some underlying theoretical parameters in ensuring the supply of a sufficient number of teachers. We can use demographic (how many pupils are there going to be in schools) and labour market data (how many teachers will retire or leave) to work out how many new teachers are needed. Training too many teachers has always been seen as a waste of resources and talent – although not everywhere: Ontario has been systematically over-supplying the market for years. Training too few teachers is very bad policy for obvious reasons. All this is complicated because the supply of potential teachers is larger in some subjects – English, History, PE – than in others – Mathematics, Physics.

The evidence is clear that the best education systems prioritise the recruitment of the most promising graduates into teaching, train them well and build a culture of lifelong professional learning. So the policy challenge involves lining up demand planning, supply management and training structures, and then ensuring that training providers are incentivized to recruit the most promising potential candidates.

In England, the main policy vehicle for the management of teacher supply to date has been the Teacher Supply Model, which, at national level, draws on these parameters to predict demand levels and to manage supply. It is in many respects a throwback to a different age – an age of (and the very title dates it) ‘manpower planning’. Such approaches are not widely used now, being replaced by rather more marketised mechanisms. However, the teacher supply model by and large worked. It secured a sufficiency of supply – so that schoolchildren could be taught in reasonably sized classes – but did not over-supply – so that there were not large numbers of unemployed qualified teachers (a problem in Ontario, which has allowed Ontario to export teachers to areas with teacher shortage).

However, it was not perfect, and its imperfections were two-fold. First, it was unable to handle those parts of the market where there were simply not enough candidates for teaching. It consistently failed to muster enough Physics or Mathematics or Modern foreign Languages teachers. Ironically, this was partly because higher education more generally had become demand-driven, ‘manpower planning’ having been abandoned with the abolition of the University Grants Committee in 1988. But secondly, it is a national model, and neither predicts or responds to regional imbalances: although there have typically been enough teachers on a national level, there have been perennial recruitment cold spots where schools have found it difficult to recruit.

The operationalisation of the Teacher Supply Model has historically been via a system of institutional allocations for recruitment

to teacher education providers. Essentially, government – through an agency – takes the annual requirement for the number of new teachers in each subject and divides them up between providers. Since the Education Act 1994, the allocation has been made with regard to two factors: to quality, based on Ofsted inspection, and to denominational factors – preserving a role for Church of England and Catholic colleges. The first makes sense in terms of the international evidence on teacher supply and the second recognises the rather eccentric history of publicly funded education in England. By and large the system worked well, and throughout the 2000s the Training and Development Agency for Schools reported as a performance indicator the proportion of trainees trained in Ofsted outstanding providers. Providers rated ‘Outstanding’ received guarantees of future recruitment numbers and were encouraged to grow – exactly what we would want. This was a managed market, in which incentives existed to encourage quality improvement from competing providers within a fixed allocation.

Somewhat bizarrely, the English government has now adopted a policy on new teacher supply which throws out any measure of quality incentive to schools and universities to recruit the best candidates, in favour of a model which prioritises speed. It is, in my opinion, a remarkable, wholly counter-productive policy. There has been a major shift in market management this year. For the 2015/6 recruitment cycle the system was totally de-regulated: there were no allocations for individual providers, although there was a planning total for the whole country. When this national target was reached in each subject or phase, all providers were told to stop offering places through an online recruitment portal – often at incredibly short notice.

There are two reasons for this change. The first makes some sense: given that some providers are better than others in recruiting (good) candidates, liberalizing the market appears to be logical. It makes no sense, for example, for the supply of Mathematics

teachers to be weakened if one provider does not meet its targets but a second provider must stop recruiting when it meets targets even though it has capacity for more trainees.

The second reason makes less sense. Government is now essentially running two teacher training systems: one involving university-led providers and one involving School Direct providers. It has set a minimum proportion of overall training to be undertaken by school-led providers, even though the recent experience has been that higher education led partnerships for initial teacher training have been more effective than schools at recruitment. Moreover, this approach moves away from the use of quality indicators in discriminating between providers. Its allocation methodology assumes that a moderately effective school-led provider is to be preferred to an outstanding university-led partnership. The system of an immediate cut off once the national allocation has been reached allows government to switch off one route whilst protecting the other – although it does all depend on an efficient and responsive IT system (what could possibly go wrong with that?).

In practice, what the new system does is to push providers to the tragedy of the commons. It incentivizes providers to race to recruit – to use up the supply as quickly as possible: not to recruit the best candidates but to recruit the first candidates to apply. Given that the axe will fall on recruitment not based on your own strategy but on what others do, the risks of not recruiting quickly far outweigh the risks of discriminating more carefully. The perverse incentives are more extensive than this. In popular subjects – including English, History and Physical Education – the race to recruit is such that those providers who operate the most rigorous selection procedures are likely to – indeed, have been – beaten by providers who are operating quick selection procedures. In these subjects, the result is that some of the most outstanding subject-based training in the country is now being shut down because less effective providers have been quicker off the mark.



One of the lessons of the tragedy of the commons is that you can achieve one outcome, but achieving that makes it more difficult to achieve other things: you can prioritise individual use of the resource or you can prioritise sharing of the resource but you cannot reliably and effectively do both. I do not believe that government has seriously decided to abandon teacher quality as a policy priority; but essentially that is what it has done by signalling so strongly to providers that they should recruit from the front of the queue rather than on the basis of quality. No other graduate employer would encourage its assessors to recruit the first people to apply.

The root problem here is the way in which government policy chooses to distinguish between what it terms 'school-led' teacher education provision and what it terms 'university-led'. On the ground, however, this distinction makes little sense in practice, and has not in policy terms since reforms introduced by John Major's government in 1992. In 1992, Kenneth Clarke as Secretary of State for Education revamped accreditation arrangements for initial teacher education, which henceforth required formal contracts of partnership between universities and schools. I have an almost affectionate attachment to this: it's more or less where I came in and running partnership-based teacher education was where I cut my teeth in higher education management. Partnerships took a variety of forms – this was an actual market in which universities were competing for students and for relationships with schools. The inspection evidence is that the quality of partnerships was relatively high, and a largely effective system developed. Funding followed quality. There was a strong conceptual base for the policy shift, developed through the work of Donald McIntyre, reader in education at Oxford and then professor at Cambridge. McIntyre analysed with some rigour the nature of knowledge development in novice teachers and provided a lucid analysis of the complementary contributions of schools and universities, teachers and academics. Crucially, responsibility for quality assurance rested

with the universities. The English model attracted attention from around the world – my colleagues in Singapore, China and Korea were sure that we had it mostly correct.

It's this system of partnership based teacher education which is at risk now. In its place comes a more restricted account of what is involved in teaching: in 2011, Michael Gove declared that he believed teaching to be a 'craft'. And that is indeed partly true: there is craft knowledge involved, but, as McIntyre demonstrated there are other sorts of knowledge involved too in becoming an effective teacher. Abandoning those elements – the research base, the knowledge base for practice – leaves at best a semi-profession and at work a craft based cottage industry of localized assumptions. And this is where I worry we appear to be going: over the past three years, more and more schools and school consortia have sought their own accreditation for teacher education and, in a period of relatively constrained resources, seen a slice of teacher education as a budget supplement. It is – by definition – going to be much harder to assure quality across eighty hundred providers than it ever was over eighty.

Around the world, governments seeking to raise the quality of teacher preparation are doing so by abandoning apprenticeship based models and moving teacher education into universities. Having essentially led the way – England is at risk of abandoning that. My proposal would be to restore a version of the managed market which served us reasonably well over the past two decades or more, with a modicum of national planning and the allocation of guidelines places on the basis of quality. To fit with the overall agenda of government policy, with autonomy and responsibility down to the system, this could be done on the basis of stable regional consortia bringing together schools in partnership with research universities. Such an approach would marry together the strengths of the quality first approach, with a recognition of some competitive element between providers, but would avoid the risk of the free fall for all and the tragedy of the commons.

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## 6. The Initial Teacher Education We Need, Why We Don't Have It, and How to Get It

Dr Jo Saxton, Trustee, NSN and Director, Future Academies

Over the course of the last Parliament, the government introduced far-reaching changes to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in line with the various other changes introduced to the system – aiming to de-regulate the content and models of provision of ITE and introduce greater flexibility and innovation into training through increasing new providers, specifically via school-based routes.

Although on the face of it this model has been successful, with more than 50% of training places in school-led routes,<sup>1</sup> my contention is that the overall content of ITE (and so the quality of provision) has hardly changed at all. Unless significant changes are made Initial Teacher Education – in all its forms – will continue to be blocked from delivering the sea-change in both supply required, and quality intended.

In ITE progressive ideas still dominate and, across the sector, the subject or domain knowledge of trainee teachers still does not receive the attention it should. To emphasise this point in particular this short essay borrows its title from E.D. Hirsch's influential book, *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them*.<sup>2</sup> Within its pages Professor Hirsch identified progressive ideologies and the absence of structured knowledge in the curriculum as causes of under-achievement in American schools. It is similarly my contention that without more subject-knowledge specificity in ITE, and without more domain specialists involved in the training of teachers, standards won't be transformed on a national scale. Moreover, teaching itself won't be attractive enough to solve the looming

<sup>1</sup> In the 2015/16 academic year the DfE reports 14,208 trainees pursuing school-led routes compared to 13,561 on HEI-led routes. [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-trainee-number-census-2015-to-2016](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-trainee-number-census-2015-to-2016) (accessed February 23, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> E. D. Hirsch jnr, *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them*, (Anchor) New York 1999.

staffing crisis. The best teachers don't go in to teaching (nor stay in it) because of pedagogies, assessment protocols or behaviour techniques – though each is important and useful. The teachers that our nation's young need are driven to teach because they want to share the subjects they love with a new generation. For this to happen more consistently, sustainably and widely, we need to fix what I see as the Catch-22 of ITE.

### The Catch-22 of ITE

In valiant efforts to improve both the supply and quality of teachers the government has enabled the distribution of teacher training away from traditional universities. Diversifying structures for the provision of teacher training was intended to improve both the supply and the quality of Newly Qualified Teachers because innovative, small and/or school-based providers could implement or develop new approaches, while attracting those not interested in going back to university.

The intention was that new approaches would flourish through these new routes in to teaching resulting in a sea-change whereby progressive orthodoxies would be diluted. This was, in part, motivated by the assumption that conventions in the training of teachers in this country have resulted in several generations of teachers whose practice inadvertently undermines the purpose of schools as places where pupils come together to learn that which they cannot find out for themselves – and to become skilled in ways they could not alone – from adults who are more knowledgeable and skilled than they.

Yet too many trainees continue to be accredited without having been taught that their authority in the classroom is founded, first and foremost, on their subject knowledge, and too many are accredited as teachers when their own subject knowledge (even with Russell Group degrees), is limited; such as historians who

know little pre-1914 other than Tudors and the Norman Conquest, or mathematicians avoiding long division or whose recall of times tables is slower than the one second required for success in national examinations. Why isn't closing these knowledge gaps higher on the ITE agenda? Even in respected university ITE programmes so-called subject knowledge is dominated by subject pedagogy rather than subject depth and breadth; trainees might be taught how to critically evaluate a history text with students, rather than the known historical content behind a text, for example. Even at Cambridge University (to cite an example of a university where I once taught), academic staff from the Faculty of History have no formal nor regular input in the training of teachers of History, and this is replicated across the country.

The teacher training picture has a number of parallels with the introduction and expansion of the Academies programme, but one key – and devastating – difference. Many organisations have accepted the invitation to run new teacher training structures, but (as with Academies) few have innovated beyond the structural and financial.

The key difference is that unlike the Academies programme, new structures in teacher training have not even been given the mandate to be freed from the orthodoxies they were partly conceived to challenge. Specifically, while Academies and Free Schools do not have to teach the National Curriculum, nor comply with STPCD, all providers of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) must still train to the National Curriculum, including covering Phonics (even in Secondary training); they must ensure all trainees meet the Teachers' Standards and comply with the DfE's "Initial teacher training criteria" and satisfy Ofsted's ITE expectations as expressed in the "Initial teacher education inspection handbook". To do the latter two, and be financially viable, providers find themselves using the Teachers' Standards as their training curriculum, and many – from Teach First to SCITTs – end up having to revert to the very universities, whose orthodoxies they were founded to

supplant, for the provision of compliant training and the PGCEs that the graduates they have signed up to train require. It is a system-built Catch-22.

Let's explore the constraints in a little more detail:

**Genericism.** For exactly the same reasons that a generic National Curriculum doesn't work, and that abstracted 'levels' were inconsistent and unreliable, the generic nature of the guidelines controlling what is actually required of a teacher, as expressed in the Teachers' Standards, act as a real constraint to deep, as well as subject specific training. The impact of the review of Teachers' Standards has been rather similar to the effect of the Rose Review of the Primary National Curriculum: in intending to reduce the compliance burden, the now cross-phase and utterly generic standards are the only thing that auditing and inspecting bodies have to structure their duties around. The obvious and predictable result is an environment where a focus on the skills of teaching, as opposed to knowledge and subject specificity within teaching, continues to dominate. In written assignments for PGCEs trainees are encouraged to write about teaching and pedagogy, rather than to evidence development of discipline knowledge. Even subject knowledge audits, which are a step in the right direction, can be self-administered by trainees, and the onus is often on them to read-up on content they are unsure of in their own time. Ofsted's inspection judgement descriptors do refer to 'strong/good... subject and curriculum knowledge' but guidance on how this can be judged is not specific enough. Similarly, subject knowledge enhancement has been added to the wider provision and funding offer, reflecting recognition of its importance, but because in terms of compliance this is an add-on, not requisite, it remains under-valued.

**Compliance.** ITE is dominated by a compliance culture. For example, a new ITE provider, even one training only 10 student teachers, undergoes a two day NCTL audit on compliance alone. These audits typically result in around 10 pages of recommendations, many of which require numerous man-hours to create

further evidence packs and reports. Qualified Ofsted ITE inspectors take part in these audits, and providers encouraging knowledge and subject specialisation – particularly in primary – have, I’m told by colleagues, been asked to think about how to provide evidence that, by emphasising subject specific approaches, neither trainees nor pupils will be harmed. This has echoes of the widespread complaints from schools in previous years that Ofsted had a predetermined agenda and a ‘preferred style of teaching’. Although there have been concrete steps taken to eliminate that bias in school inspections, and emphasise to schools and inspectors that it is outputs, not inputs that matter, the same old-school approach seems to permeate ITE inspection, leading to a sector more motivated to comply with convention than truly innovate.

**Economics.** The school-based providers who are succeeding to do things differently and better than the universities are only able to do so thanks to resources, in particular funding, beyond training grants and salary subsidies. Central funding is simply insufficient to stretch across both the training and mentoring of teachers, the burden of producing compliance evidence, and the associated administration costs in man-hours of managing provision and recruiting. I estimate that to administer the recruitment, funding and compliance of ten student teachers (and recruit new cohorts), a School Direct provider will need to employ one full-time individual simply to handle ITE selection, UCAS requirements and Student Loan arrangements. Providers need to be able to respond to enquiries from prospective trainees quickly to avoid losing them to providers with permanently manned phones. This gives large institutions, particularly universities, a significant advantage in terms of both recruitment and running provision. In terms of school groups that succeed, one large Academy chain I know of depends upon independently generated funds while another’s is heavily subsidised by fundraising. Other groups of schools make it work by accepting a short-term loss, believing that trainees will

serve their schools and pupils in the longer term. This will become impossible in small Trusts as overall funding reduces, and because the EFA is increasingly strict about submitting balanced budgets. An unintended consequence of the economics of ITE is that new and small providers are disincentivised from training for the wider sector; it motivates them to prioritise anticipating their own staffing needs only, rather than those of the region or nation.

**Balance of power.** Advocates of a school-led system have never contended that there should not be partnerships with HEIs to deliver elements of Initial Teacher Education. The policy question, however, is where the balance of power lies – and specifically who takes the lead in a partnership and what that means. The theory of School Direct is that school-based partnerships commission HEIs, in order to have a theoretical underpinning to the practical school-based delivery that suits (in structure, content and timetabling terms) the provision that the school or group of schools has set up. But just as the economics makes managing associated administration unviable for many, so too does it alter the power balance in a partnership. I know of several instances where school-led consortia felt little choice but to accept the conventional programmes or modules that are used in PGCEs; a smaller Academy or MAT is unlikely to have the economic muscle to strike a bespoke Partnership Agreement with a large HEI, and from the university's perspective, rolling out a standard PGCE-style programme both reduces the cost of designing new provision, and also reduces the real risk that NCTL auditors or Ofsted inspectors would not rate the university element of the provision highly if it did not follow ITE conventions and conform to course format and content that regulators recognise.

### What can be done?

My contention is that the current reforms to ITE are insufficient to move us away from the status quo and thereby ensure a greater



supply of the teachers of the quality we need. A more radical set of prescriptions is necessary, which are summarised below.

First, give non-university providers the freedom to truly innovate in training (rather than comply with a straightjacketed precedent), by allowing a grace period of perhaps two years from NCTL audit and Ofsted inspection, as Free Schools now have. Or award all providers the 'Innovation Status' as awarded to Researchers in Schools (RIS) to allow them greater flexibility. Achieving an Outstanding judgement is such an important designation for successful recruitment of trainees (and thus financial viability), that providers of all sizes are motivated to conform to conventional practice so as not to risk a lesser judgement.

Second, the Teachers' Standards must be revised. Although the Government believes that the new standards are much more exacting and specific than previous versions, they are still generic and effect a focus on skill development and execution. A new set should move towards subject specific standards. Without this, the 'Standards' will remain the default generic content of the typical ITE curriculum, rather than serve as the measure of it; and innovative providers will feel constrained in moving away from them. In addition, the generic nature of the Standards enables small providers to offer generic training sessions, and only subject-specific mentoring. While this is 'compliant' practice, it is not desirable in a climate committed to increasing subject specific knowledge.

In designing these new standards, Government should define the purpose of ITE explicitly around the primacy of knowledge. And it would be helpful to make clear that the purpose and nature of studying subjects in schools and universities are related but not the same. Universities focus on research and developing potential researchers (which their funding encourages them to do and which they also do supremely well), whereas schools need to lay firm foundations. In other words, the job of schools should be to share the best that has been thought and known. As Michael Fordham,

the teacher and former Cambridge academic, puts it, “the way researchers research something is not necessarily the same way that novices should learn something”.<sup>3</sup> Until this important distinction permeates schools – and the training of teachers – achieving the English Baccalaureate will not be the preserve of all, and the leveling power of knowledge will not reach widely enough, because school teachers will strive to the university standard of research methodologies, to cite history once again: creating historians rather than delighting in teaching History. Michael Fordham has described this issue as the epistemology of a discipline being confused with the pedagogy of a subject.<sup>4</sup> Revised Standards, which are domain specific, can prevent this; more than this, they can enable.

Third, and building on new standards, Government and Ofsted must take a similar approach to the inspection of ITE that they have done in mainstream education – making explicit in criteria, the handbook and inspector training that there is no preferred model of input for ITE, and that inspectors should only focus on the output when inspecting quality: namely; are a teacher’s pupils making progress, showing knowledge and understanding?<sup>5</sup> Subject specific Standards would help inspectors do this.

Fourth, Government should investigate ways of building capacity amongst non-university providers. Grant funding could be inversely proportionate for small and new providers to meet the staff costs of administering and delivering ITE, and to help address the imbalance of power.

Perhaps most radically, and in the longer term, Government should consider the structure and aim of primary ITE. Specifically, whether it ought to move away from the dominant generalist route, towards (as a start) two separate specialist strands, which we could term STEM and Humanities routes. Generalist teacher training works in the US, where schooling and undergraduate degrees are broad-based. In this country, where students undertake an increasingly limited curriculum from 16, we do not turn out

3 Michael Fordham, in correspondence with the author, November 2015.

4 In conversation with the author, 2015, and based on the work of P.A. Kirschner, J. Sweller and R.E. Clark, “Why Minimal Guidance During Instruction Does Not Work: An Analysis of the Failure of Constructivist, Discovery, Problem-Based, Experimental, and Inquiry-Based Teaching”, *Educational Psychologist*, 41(2) 2006, pp.75–86.

5 There is evidence that some ITE inspectors are looking rigorously at subject knowledge; this is clear from (for example) the 2014 inspection of Canterbury Christ Church University provision, where the reporting team referred to regular monitoring of progress on subject knowledge audits and trainees being made aware of the work of subject associations.

graduates with the subject breadth to then be able to teach across the primary curriculum in a way that both helps underperforming children whilst stretching the most able. By introducing some form of specialisation at primary, providers would have more opportunity to train teachers in greater depth.

The Government is to be congratulated for recognising the importance of ITE reform for both recruiting teachers and ensuring that they are equipped to improve life chances. But the situation at present is not ideal, and there is a real risk that in response to supply shortages, Government may row back on the commendable aim to diversify the provider base for ITE, and reinstate the primacy of universities across all routes. This would be a grave mistake. This essay is an attempt to show how, together with Ofsted, Government can achieve the strengthening of teacher training it has committed to in the Single Departmental plan: 2015–2020. The suggestions herein would help us towards achieving not only the teacher supply we need, but the teacher supply our young deserve.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The opinions expressed in this essay are my own, as are any mistakes.

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## SECTION 3: ONGOING TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

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## 7. Moving from Initial Teacher Education through the Professional Learning Continuum – the Role of Universities

Dr Elaine Wilson, Senior Lecturer in Education and responsible for secondary science PGCE training, University of Cambridge

Becoming a teacher is a time of formation and transformation, which is an identity forming process whereby individuals define themselves and are viewed by others as teachers. The transition is not a linear trajectory from student or career changer to experienced teacher. Instead, the process involves personal transitions which encompass cognitive, emotional (affective) and social change in response to interactions in different and new, complex contexts. We also know that simply focussing on improving 'craft' knowledge through providing scaffolds or encouraging new teachers to mimic the behaviour of more experienced teachers is insufficient preparation. The transition from being a novice to becoming an experienced teacher is a turbulent process for all new teachers. Where this is accentuated by particular challenges within a school environment, it is likely to lead to greater turnover and exit from the profession, or uneven development of teacher quality within that environment. Ongoing relationships between universities and schools offer the potential to act on both effective initial education and ongoing development, which in turn benefits retention.

### Universities' role in ITE

Our experience suggests that rather than privileging school only training routes into the teaching profession, there is a powerful case for placing university – school partnership on a more formal footing to provide a coherent focus on the benefits for of all parties.

First, universities are very well equipped to facilitate the flow of new knowledge into schools. For example, the University of Cambridge – school partnership model has cultivated strong, trusting working relationships between partners' schools and university colleagues. During Initial teacher Education this takes the form of face-to-face meetings for sharing information about novices' progress with school-based mentors, online support and school visits. These meetings develop participants' knowledge about mentoring as well as in updating research and subject knowledge.

Secondly, there is also a reciprocal flow of knowledge from schools back into the faculty through teachers contributing to the faculty programme. The social linkages set up have also extended access of school-based participants to less accessible resources. Over the years we have invited expert researchers to address all participants about the most recent educational research areas.

Thirdly, getting information about recent research and extending research expertise has taken place because of the increased numbers of research trained Masters level new teachers in schools. Research knowledge about practice is now generated in the school departments and is disseminated throughout the network. The university also publishes an online peer reviewed journal to share good examples of research work more widely (Journal of Trainee Teacher Educational Research).

Taken together, one can view all the dimensions required for a well – rounded model of Initial Teacher Education and the complementary roles played by schools and universities thus:

**Table 1: HEA, “Supporting research-informed teacher education in a changing policy environment”**

Across the school–university partnership new teachers are able to:

- access both research and practice knowledge, and receive instruction in effective ways of teaching all learners in all classrooms;
- work within a collegial teacher learner community with support networks among peers, expert teachers and subject lecturers;
- have access to contrasting school experiences during initial teacher education (ITE);
- acquire a recognised Masters level qualification as well as Qualified Teacher Status.

Furthermore the school- and university-based education programme extends social capital through each partner providing unique but complementary structural, pedagogical and social support.

Structural support	Pedagogical support	Social support
<b>University contribution</b>		
The opportunity to work with internationally recognised teacher educators and researchers.	Support to make thoughtful, deliberative judgements, so that new teachers will be able to solve problems in the future in response to unique classrooms.	Sustained pastoral support during the first few, potentially difficult, years of teaching, beyond initial teacher education.
Access to up-to-date recent developments in subject knowledge	Contribution to the generation of practice–research knowledge about learning in classrooms during ITE.	
Access to the most recent relevant educational research.	Continued development of knowledge-building through a second year of MEd degree programme during the early careers stage.	
<b>School contribution</b>		
Provision for novices to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of teaching in a range of classrooms.	Engage in professional conversations about authentic classroom practice.	Support from expert teachers in applying and preparing for interviews and first teaching posts.
Time to think about practice in authentic classrooms.	Support from expert school-based mentors who have been trained by the University and share the common partnership values of constantly striving to improve the learning of students in classrooms.	
	Support to take risks and be innovative in the classroom.	

## Ongoing professional learning – improving teacher quality and boosting retention

Research findings from a UK wide study of the state of CPD nationwide (Pedder et al, 2009) which built on a larger study carried out in the US (Desimone, 2009) recorded the features which increased teachers' professional learning and which subsequently also enhanced students' learning. In essence the findings showed that the conditions necessary for teacher learning to be transformative are the same as those required for effective initial teacher education discussed above.

I believe it is a false dichotomy to separate the two processes; instead, thinking about teacher learning as an on-going process would be a much more useful way of planning for teacher development and universities could play a major part in this. The University of Cambridge 'School-University Partnership for Educational Research' (SUPER) is an example of how ITE and continuing development can be merged.

The active support available from peers, school-based teachers and lecturers within ongoing relationships between a new teacher and a university helps to increase the novices' sense of self-efficacy (Klassen et al, 2013). This valuable reassurance and recognition serves to reinforce individual worth and promotes support through being a member of a social group sharing similar interests and resources. This not only provides emotional support, but is also public acknowledgment of competence.

I also believe that ongoing professional development can play a major role in ameliorating current high levels of teacher wastage. Our research shows that when job demands outweigh job resources, then teachers either move from the school, or in many cases leave the profession (Wilson, & Demetriou, 2006; Fox, Wilson & Deaney, 2011). Job demands can be defined as excessive workload, feelings of incompetence, or believing that colleagues and leaders are unsupportive. On the other hand job resources are associated



with having professional autonomy in how to manage and organise work, having strong social support networks within and beyond the workplace and having positive constructive performance feedback from managers.

Some recent work in this space by Bakker (2007) and Demerouti (2015) shows that job crafting, that is, redesigning a job in ways that can foster increased job satisfaction, can impact on engagement and thriving at work. Such job crafting acts to increase job resources through; promoting professional autonomy in managing and organising work, having strong social support networks within and beyond the workplace and having positive constructive performance feedback. Follow – up work done in Cambridge also shows that job crafting provides teachers with greater resilience to tackle some of the common factors cited as drivers of exit, such as bad behaviour. In schools where a collegial, convivial environment prevails, challenging student behaviour is not perceived as an insurmountable job demand because the challenges are considered to be a collective endeavour. Surprisingly, Demerouti’s team found that boosting job resources through such crafting is far more effective than simply reducing job demands (i.e. reducing workload).

The implications of this for schools are that increasing resources through promoting a collegial, supportive culture, together with school leadership teams who value staff and tell them that, would not only lead to more engagement but would also protect from burn-out. This in turn might stop large numbers of teachers leaving the profession. In summary, from a school management perspective, investing in job resources may provide a bigger payoff than just focussing on the reduction of job demands. This is where a university can help. Working away from the classroom on occasion provides teachers with opportunities to encounter new ideas and the time to reflect on practice. In our experience busy schools rarely make provision or time to reflect and think on-the-job. Therefore working collaboratively with groups of schools, a

university department can provide space and time for new teachers to step away. This additional support could go a long way to helping to retain more new teachers in classrooms and in extending teachers' professional knowledge.

In conclusion, there are a number of advantages to being part of a university-school partnership. For example, university departments can contribute to improving and developing teachers' subject knowledge. Universities can provide access to experts in the field who can work with educators, novices and school-based teachers to make recent ideas accessible and available in school classrooms. Once teachers have qualified, ongoing collaborative relationships between schools and university departments can inform practice about, for example, helping new teachers to engage pupils in learning how to learn. Effective teachers are constantly called upon to make deliberative judgements about practice. This is learned best when experienced in both a school and a university. For example, learning in the university about the latest research about how children learn and then applying this in the school to teach specific students in particular classrooms. Furthermore, developing a critical awareness of what constitutes good evidence and developing both practice and research knowledge are also important attributes of being a professional teacher and these can be developed through undertaking small-scale school-based research, guided and supported by university staff. Strong and effective partnerships, combined with broader work within schools to develop teachers' sense of autonomy and job resources, can also act as a strong signal to increase teacher retention.

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## 8. Should we be Focussing on ITT and Early CPD, or Broader Mid and Late Career Retention?

Philippa Cordingley, Chief Executive, Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE)

This essay addresses one specific question posed by Policy Exchange and ASCL: Should we be focussing on ITT and early CPD, or broader mid and late career retention? It does so not because the other questions are not both important and urgent. They are. But they are also the ones that are most obvious and susceptible to immediate intervention. However any steps we take to recruit more teachers and to retain them in the first few years of practice will be to no avail if we don't simultaneously focus on ensuring that the profession they are entering is self-sustaining.

### The strength of focussing on professional learning

My proposition is that focussing on mid and late career retention through the lens of evidence-based Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL) is a win-win strategy that simultaneously increases teachers' commitment to their role, their profession and their capacity to enhance pupils' learning. Evidence from systematic reviews of the effectiveness of CPDL (EPPI 1–4 and Developing Great Teachers) shows that high quality professional learning experiences are linked with renewed enthusiasm for teaching and for continuing to learn about it and with improvements in pupils learning and attainment. But at present the education system is characterised more by widespread low expectations about what Continuing Professional Development (CPD) *done to* teachers can achieve

than what teachers and schools need to do to contribute to it and to embed the outcomes in sustained and sustainable improvement to classroom practice.

Concentrating too much on how we recruit, employ, manage and teach our teachers and not enough on how they continually learn to enable their pupils to succeed is short-sighted. First because the factor most likely to retain all teachers, and especially the brightest and best, is an ever increasing sense that they are making a difference and being appropriately professionally challenged.

Second, in a world where policies have to cope with extensive diversity, a lens exclusively focussed on beginning teachers risks concentrating on threshold competence and, unintentionally, leaving out of its frame mastery of professional practice. Teaching that genuinely transforms young people's lives combines different kinds of knowledge and understanding in ways that enable precision of application. It depends on deep knowledge and understanding, of not just the curriculum but of the ideas and phenomena that sit beyond its boundaries in order to secure challenge and make it genuinely accessible to all learners. Putting such knowledge to work requires depth in planning *and* flexibility in amending plans in response to pupils' contributions in lessons and accurate recognition of pupils' progress. At its most sophisticated it also involves an ability to identify and build upon the contributions to learning and progress that other teachers and carers are making. This complex web of professional practice is sometimes posited as an obstacle to effective initial teacher education and recruitment. How do successful other countries tackle this?

In the highly effective Singapore education system the broader sense of transformative teaching, and the skills and knowledge underpinning it, is structured and symbolised by a three track career continuum; the teaching track, the specialist track and the leadership track. In the teaching track, teachers are able to specialise in developing transformative curriculum and pedagogic practice.

The pinnacle of this track, which has at least as much status as that of organisational school leadership is the role of Principal Master Teacher. In the specialist track, teachers are able to focus on research and teaching policy, with the highest-level position being Chief Specialist. In the leadership track, teachers focus on organisational leadership of learning and can be promoted from a leadership position within the school all the way up to the position of Director-General of Education. In this context an expanded and demanding sense of teacher expertise is very visible. This expansive trajectory of development is also underpinned by a very substantial commitment to and investment in CPDL through which teachers are expected to take considerable responsibility for their own learning, whatever track they have chosen. For example teachers in Singapore are expected to commit 300 hour to CPDL over a 3 year period but have substantial autonomy over how this is organised, focussed and phased across that period.

In our own system, by contrast, the single track which has organisational leadership at its pinnacle risks leaving talented teachers who are committed professional learners unable to see their own interests reflected in professional teaching and career structures, which encourages many to pursue their interests elsewhere.

### Focussing on learning, not performance

A quick scan of the education press, of policy documents, of annual inspection reports and of the CPD offerings of Teaching Schools and large scale CPD providers, suggests to me that it is leadership and teacher performance rather than in-depth learning about teaching, learning, assessment and curriculum content that has been and remains the focus of CPD investment. Important as teacher performance is, focussing upon it can only help us raise the base level of professional practice; it is teacher learning rather than performance that has the potential to help the profession raise its own ceiling.

It would be a great deal easier to develop a virtuous circle of investment in professional learning linked to better retention of teachers with an ever growing body of professional understanding and skills, if support for professional learning and development was less limited in conception and execution. In effect we have made the same mistakes about teacher learning we were making 10–15 years ago about pupil learning; we have been concentrating too much on the CPD, the support we offer to teachers, and not enough on how to help them sustain and structure the process of learning and test and refine that for their own pupils, subjects and contexts. For teachers, as for pupils, some of the way forwards lies in teachers taking increasing responsibility for their own learning. Interestingly, In our study comparison of Exceptional and Strong schools serving very vulnerable communities for Teach First, one of the key features distinguishing the exceptional schools from their strong peers was the impressive extent to which all teachers in those schools felt that it was their responsibility to take advantage of the many CPDL activities available to them and to thread these together into a coherent whole organised around meeting their aspirations for their pupils. Equally impressive was the retention of teachers in school and the accelerated progress into leadership roles it enabled. Importantly, the relatively small numbers of teachers who did leave went on to senior leadership profession elsewhere.

Practice of this kind obviously depends on both the actions of the teachers and their professional working and learning environment. It calls for teachers to understand that their development depends not on what others do to or for them but on how they develop capacity to shape their own professional learning. It also requires that school leaders develop an understanding of the pedagogy and curriculum of teacher development. Fortunately we now have substantial evidence from research about what this could and should look like.

## Key characteristics of effective professional development and learning

The “Developing Great Teaching” report is a summary of a recent review of all the high quality systematic reviews of evidence about CPDL where there is good evidence about impacts for pupils. The review confirmed many findings from previous reviews about CPDL which had used less demanding inclusion criteria. Broadly these relate to time, especially to timescales, to **participants’ learning experiences** and to **forms of support**. So it emphasized:

- Time – the importance of sustaining professional learning over time, usually two terms or more and of a sustained rhythm of regular bite sized episodes following initial “instruction” rather than intense “hits”. Sustaining professional learning emerges as crucial because it creates multiple, cumulative opportunities for teachers to test, review and refine practices in the light of pupils’ responses.
- Participants’ experiences – including a combination of:
  - explicit identification and recognition of colleagues’ individual starting points;
  - activities that help colleagues develop a collective sense of purpose;
  - a focus on organising and testing their own learning through the lens of their aspirations for their pupils to ensure its relevance;
  - opportunities to explore and challenge their existing theories, beliefs and practices in a supportive environment;
  - being challenged to develop meta-cognitive control of new approaches e.g. by: analysing and evaluating CPD content, along with evidence from observations of one’s own and other people’s practice about interactions between practices and the responses of different groups of pupils;



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- Support – including both:
    - Contributions from experts who are sufficiently external to the day to day working context to be in a position to challenge orthodoxies supportively, and
    - Support from peers, which expands perspectives, sustains momentum and creates an atmosphere of trust. Shared vulnerability seemed to be associated with speeding up the risk taking that inevitably accompanies integrating new approaches into established professional practice.

### The role of effective professional learning in teacher retention

How might key actors behave differently if taking charge of professional learning in the service of pupil learning was seen as a central priority for teachers and those who support and lead them?

In this context school leaders would be focussed on development in a professional learning environment for all teachers at every stage of their careers and on promoting and professional learning by modelling it explicitly, ensuring that colleagues have chance to experience the high quality teaching and learning strategies that leaders hope they will offer to their pupils. Where the learning environments for staff and pupils align they will establish a virtuous circle of development reinforcing the status of planned, purposeful and effortful learning in depth. CUREE has identified 5 key dimensions of effective staff learning environments ([www.skein.org.uk/](http://www.skein.org.uk/)):

- attending to the use of collaboration as a sustained learning strategy at every level;
- enabling the collection and use of evidence about processes as well as outcomes to link staff and pupil learning;
- identifying learning starting points and needs formatively as well as summatively;

- identifying, respecting, evaluating and making accessible specialist expertise from within and beyond the school in a range of forms, to all colleagues; and
- investing in professional learning financially, through modelling it, through the use of tools and by exploring how it connects with and impacts on pupil learning.

So there is a lot that school leaders can and should be doing to promote professional learning both as a motor for improvement and as a way of increasing the likelihood that colleagues will stay at least in the profession if and ideally in their school.

There is less evidence to hand about what colleagues at other locations in the system do that makes a difference to young people. So here are some final, more speculative thoughts about what could be done to harness the potential of an emphasis on teacher professional development and learning on teacher retention and creating a genuinely intellectually and professionally rewarding model of progress:

- For *individuals*, making professional learning a priority means distinguishing between problem solving and the rush for tips and activities that fill an urgent gap and in-depth, serious and sustained experimenting with more challenging curriculum content and teaching and learning approaches and developing an underpinning rationale or practical theory about why things do and don't work in different contexts. Pushing well beyond common sense will be harder – but infinitely more rewarding.
- For the *organisations charged with creating coherence between schools in a fragmented system*, making professional learning a key priority requires them to identify the ways in which they both enable and inhibit professional learning. What might be the effect on retention, for example, of considering whether CPD is organised as something done to a few teachers to remedy deficits or co-constructed with all of them as a demanding aspect of

professional formation? What might be the effect of selecting school leaders for their skills in recognising, participating in and enabling professional learning? Whilst, no doubt many interview panels touch on this, making it a key priority might prompt the development of reliable assessment measures.

- For *professional associations and the College of Teaching*, making professional learning a key priority might prompt the commissioning and promotion of research into its effectiveness, the modelling of state of the art approaches or the use of their formidable press skills to celebrate successes. For example, they could organise and support peer review of teacher research and synthesising the outcomes. Or it might generate informed and constructive challenges to school leaders and the mediating layer about the nature and quality of the school as a learning environment for staff and pupils?
- For *higher education institutions*, making professional learning instead of CPD a key priority might involve attending to the process and outcomes of professional learning as much as to the relatively narrow range of written outputs on which accreditation at masters and PHD level currently concentrates. Perhaps this might also help HE to configure initial teacher education, continuing professional learning and education research as a dynamic continuum brought together under the umbrella of long term partnerships with schools.
- For *national government*, making professional learning a key priority might involve some significant shifts in the focus of accountability measures. It might involve, for example, moving accountability towards evaluating the ability of schools and the organisations who support them (Teaching Schools, MATs, Academy Chains and Local Authorities) to support coherent, high quality professional learning and to contribute to the retention of teachers in the profession as a whole by tracking the trajectories of professional colleagues over longer timescales and beyond individual institutions.

What this essay argues, in effect, is that making professional learning a key priority for the future of the profession has the capacity both to respond to the challenges it faces and to model approaches to learning that we seek for young people. It requires a significant shift in focus but one that is well within the system's zone of proximal development – because it simply requires us to match deeds and words at different levels. There is a well-known saying in English that what is sauce for the goose is also sauce for the gander. Hattie demonstrates convincingly that we should make both pupil and teacher learning 'visible'. By doing this systematically at structural, operational and practical levels we might both ensure we model professional mastery and help to retain and harness the talents of a much wider group of teachers.

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## 9. The Role of Multi Academy Trusts in Developing Teachers; and Why Nick Gibb is Nearly Right

Professor Toby Salt, Chief Executive, Ormiston Academies Trust

Speaking at ResearchED last year, Schools Minister Nick Gibb MP said that there has never been a better time to be a teacher (Nick Gibb MP, 2015). Unsurprisingly, an outcry ensued from unions but I do believe there is truth in the Minister's comments. Recent reforms, I think, mean there have never been more opportunities for teachers to progress their careers, if they have the right support and ambition. But it is up to school leaders, politicians and policy makers to ensure the structures, incentives and basic funding are all in place to enable this to happen.

As Chief Executive of one of the country's biggest academy chains, I have many different responsibilities, but one of the most important is to find and nurture the talented teachers and leaders who will inspire pupils. I see it as my job as a leader to make sure that teachers want to come to my academies, that the right support is in place and that we are empowering staff to deliver. Teachers see their main role as making a difference to the lives of the young people in their classrooms. Therefore, it is the responsibility of leaders to make sure the framework is in place that allows teachers to realise their ambitions and improve the lives and life chances of children.

While I loved teaching, that is simply no longer my role – I cannot be in every classroom of OAT's 32 schools all the time. Instead, I must set parameters that help every single one of our

1,500 plus teachers feel empowered to deliver in the classroom. A healthy environment for teachers to flourish, in my view, is about macro-oversight not micro-interference. With proper structures in place, we know teachers feel happier, understand the boundaries they are working within and the expectations upon them. Clear management structures, targets and development pathways also make teaching more appealing as a profession in the first place, meaning we can attract talented, ambitious graduates who know the opportunities on offer and have a clear route to leadership. That is not to deny that it is a demanding job.

Of course structures alone are not enough to keep the best staff motivated and one of the most important things I have learnt as Chief Executive is the value of Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Whatever profession you work in, there is an ongoing competition to keep the brightest and the best and teaching is no different. The academies programme and pay reforms mean competition has never been fiercer, so it is important a Trust's CPD offering incentivises people to stay. Our staff are committed to our joint vision and they work hard but we ensure that they have as many CPD opportunities as possible and that they feel part of an OAT family.

Every school and indeed Trust should have a clear vision, so everyone involved with a school – from parents and pupils to governors – can work towards the same shared goal. Similarly, it is important that each member of staff feels that they are on their own journey of professional development, working towards a higher aim with the support of their school or Trust.

At OAT, we have developed an online learning portal; we host internal training conferences and events; and we have an accelerated pathway to headship that our ambitious recruits can follow. We identify our 'expert' teachers, we award them with the 'OAT gold standard' and then they have the opportunity to work across the family to share their knowledge, which can be incredibly

rewarding and enables us to grow our own, with experienced staff supporting newcomers' development. Crucially, this also has a positive impact on pupils' learning, as they benefit from strong leadership at each school.

The importance of CPD for teachers has been recognised time and again. The Sutton Trust recently called for the strengthening of professional development for all teachers. In a 2015 report it makes the following policy recommendation, which would go some way in addressing current CPD shortfalls: "A strong entitlement for all teachers and school leaders to professional development backed by a College of Teaching and a revitalised National College for School Leadership" (Sutton Trust, 2015).

Ensuring staff are on their own professional journey is a must if the teaching profession is to boost its stature. Similarly, involving them in the wider strategy of a school, cluster or academy trust will engender loyalty to an organisation, meaning teachers are also working together towards shared goals and feel they are having an impact beyond the boundaries of a single classroom. Bringing staff together is an excellent way of making this offer. I look forward to, and am inspired by, our OAT teachers' conference. These annual gatherings are not without their challenges – in the same way as a listed company's Annual General Meeting would not be, I am rightly scrutinised and held to account by our staff – but I think this is an enormously positive thing. They are a chance for every single member of staff to influence the direction of the Trust. If they feel a sense of shared ownership, and a responsibility beyond their day-to-day activities, teachers are far more likely to show a commitment to an organisation and the wider teaching profession.

The OAT conferences are complemented by staff surveys. The feedback from these leads to real change at the Trust. Initiatives like this are part of a wider ambition to truly professionalise teaching, so we can attract the best talent and keep them working in education throughout their careers. A 2010 Government report into pupil attainment found that "teaching quality was... a significant predictor of

both *Reading and Mathematics progress*”, so every leaders’ priority should be focused on recruiting and retaining the very best.

Yet, more is needed to combat a wider misunderstanding of the modern teaching profession. Let’s be clear – fifteen years ago my job did not even exist. Chief Executives ran companies and headteachers ran single schools. As successive Governments have developed and implemented the academies programme, the role of the education leader has changed dramatically. Headship is no longer the career ceiling for talented leaders. Education trusts are developing Executive Heads, Regional Directors, specialist school improvement and of course Chief Executive roles, keeping the career rewarding and challenging for the most ambitious.

I am certain this development is a force for good, providing scale and stature that was previously impossible. Today, a Newly Qualified Teacher with the right attitude, skill set and ambition could realistically become part of a school’s leadership team within five years; a trust’s within ten and could head an organisation responsible for dozens of schools at the height of their career. Let’s also be a bit controversial here and I’d go as far to say that some of the leaders in education of the future might not have even been teachers at all. As our sector professionalises, so does the opportunity for different professional and business voices to help shape and drive it. As long as there is a core of educational experts at the heart of an organisation, a Trust leader could well be from outside the education sector, bringing together the educational expertise of his or her team, with different professional ideas and experiences.

In the same way as the most ambitious graduates have for years aspired to become a partner in a law firm or an executive at a listed company, I believe becoming the Chief Executive of an academy trust can offer similar rewards, responsibility and job satisfaction. It is the challenge for school leaders now to effectively communicate this opportunity to graduates, so they choose the teaching or education profession. Teach First has done a good job of this,



but education trusts themselves should also play a more proactive role, attending graduate jobs fairs, challenging preconceptions of teaching and outlining exactly what a career in education today can offer.

Of course, in some ways the teaching or education profession may simply not be able to compete with other roles. There are some things that are outside our control, i.e. schools are not just centred on bustling financial hubs or vibrant cities, and we need them everywhere. Location can be problematic and it is in these isolated areas – where OAT often works – that the recruitment challenge is felt most acutely. Unsurprisingly, these areas have historically been some of the worst performing in terms of education in the country too (House of Commons Education Committee, 2014). This is precisely why we are there – to address this challenge and improve the life chances of children in these areas.

While some teachers thrive on this challenge, many – who may have preconceptions of a place for a number of reasons – are put off and teachers commonly say location of a school is very important in convincing them to take and stay in a job. In these harder to reach or rural areas, it is therefore important to take an even more proactive approach and counter these negative forces. To attract staff we know we need to go the extra mile to overcome the challenge of geography. OAT is developing incentives such as subsidised rental schemes to make living more affordable. This scheme also offers shared accommodation, providing NQTs, in particular, with an immediate support network and local roots.

So, with increased autonomy much of the onus is rightly on trusts and schools to lead their recruitment drive. However, Government also has a key role to play and increased local autonomy must come with core central support. Firstly, the basics need to be provided: sufficient funds for teacher training and pay. We haven't got this right yet and all eyes will be on the long awaited National Funding Formula to see if we can achieve a better balance

in schools' fortunes. Additionally, we are yet to see the impact of the newly announced National Teaching Service, to see if targeted interventions like this could support the areas worst hit by recruitment challenges.

So Nick Gibb is almost right. There are, in many ways, better opportunities for teachers than at almost any time in the past. If policymakers, politicians and academy trust chief executives can step up, and provide the right environment, then I believe that teachers can thrive now as almost never before.

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## SECTION 4: DEPLOYMENT AND A REGIONAL APPROACH FOR TEACHERS

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## 10. Managing Teacher Supply – a Strategy for a Digital Age

Chris Kirk (Education and Skills Lead), Alice Cornish (Education and Skills Consultant), and Jude Simpson, (Education and Skills Consultant), PricewaterhouseCoopers

It's two o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon. Abigail Agbodo, like many other 12 year olds around the world, is engaged in a maths lesson. It's not a subject that she finds easy, and today Abigail has several questions about Expanded Addition. Her teacher, Shirley Osuwu Ansah, has been explaining the concept of Place Value, and Abigail is starting to be able to answer questions showing her growing understanding. The scene will be familiar to educators – and indeed anyone with experience of being a student. The difference in Abigail's case, is that she is in a classroom in Abrewankor D/A Basic School, in rural Ghana, whereas her teacher is 218 miles away in a studio in Accra, the capital. Abigail is enabled to access education from a highly qualified specialist teacher, thanks to the combination of a solar powered computer and projector.

The girls have never met these teachers face to face, or indeed the many of the 6,600 other children they share their teacher with. Abigail and her classmates are part of the Making Ghanaian Girls Great (MGCubed) initiative, sub-Saharan Africa's first synchronous distance learning programme and an example of a radically different way of tackling challenges such as teacher shortages and absenteeism. MGCubed is part of the Department for International Development's Girls' Education Challenge (full disclosure: an innovation fund managed by PwC), and is just one of many initiatives around the world which harness technology to address the most significant issues facing education systems. It was set up in June 2013 and now 72 primary schools around the country are

equipped to provide real-time, two-way interactive distance learning in basic Maths and English.

In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the scale of the problem is such that innovative solutions are a requisite if children are to have access to quality teachers. In England, the challenge to recruit and retain teachers is of a vastly lesser scale and nature, but it is a growing one. Could we also do more to harness technology to continue to deliver on our ambition of having a good quality, specialist teacher engaging with every child?

In the UK, digital natives – those born after 1990 in the developed world who have grown up immersed in technology – will make up 60% of consumers by 2020. Less has been made of the fact that in primary and secondary classrooms, this cohort already makes up virtually 100% of pupils. Pupils run their lives digitally, on the move, and in real time. Schools can and do exploit this thirst for communication and interaction. For example, online platforms track rewards and sanctions; the ubiquitous interactive whiteboards supplement traditional pedagogical styles; and homework is increasingly being set online, allowing parents, teachers and pupils to engage outside of the classroom. Many teachers understand that some of the most effective ways of engaging pupils is through the channels that their students are already familiar with. Technology is already being used to address teacher workload, with software that supports tracking, reporting and automated marking becoming increasingly mainstream. But these are quite marginal changes, still on the fringe of the educational process.

The most successful organisations around the world have recognised the need for change and adapted their business models to align with the evolving habits of their consumers. Netflix is one such example. Founded in 1997, Netflix disrupted the video rental industry by setting up a subscription based, video delivery service which eventually put Blockbuster – the prevailing video rental giant – out of business. 10 years later, in 2007, Netflix adapted

once more and embraced the new on-demand culture by introducing video streaming. Netflix now services 69 million subscribers and has disrupted habits around the consumption of video content (content can be ‘binged-on’, on demand and commercial free) and forced the hand of other industries to evolve accordingly.

Our work estimates that the connected education market will grow at around 32% annually over the next 5 years and, by 2020, will be worth almost \$446 billion globally. This raises a number of questions around the preparedness of the sector to respond to technological advancements that are happening beyond education, and what will be the implications of this growth – particularly for the supply of teachers.

### Personalised access to content everywhere

One trend, undisputedly, is the rise in pupils’ access to personal technology, and the skills that these digitally engaged students bring to the classroom. In 2014, 65% of children aged 12–15 had a smartphone, and this access is changing the way they engage with traditional content; according to Ofcom, 45% of young people now regularly watch on demand and catch-up TV on their smartphone. Ambitious Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiatives seek to embrace this technology and harness the power of smart devices for education.

A related trend is the radical shift in ways of accessing education, especially higher education through the rise of the MOOC (Massive Open Online Course). MOOCs have been able to expand the reach of universities, and more-specifically, University lecturers, around the world by channelling educational content through the digital tools and platforms that ‘could be’ learners already use with comfort. These mediums include video content, online chat forums and live streaming. Open access has shifted what it means to be a learner; a university-style education is no longer restricted

on account of the learner's proximity to the physical campus, their previous academic qualifications or ability to pay. The quality of such provision is also high and MOOCs have been able to re-create many of the pedagogical approaches common in face to face learning: low cost video conferencing provides access to world leading lecturers, computer simulations allow students to work together in groups and algorithms enable personalised learning and content.

### A new role for the teacher?

Examples of models that employ similar methods of access to content via the web and distance learning via BYOD are beginning to take off in the UK at the primary and secondary school level. In the UK, Tute allows schools to subscribe to a virtual classroom. The initiative was originally designed to focus on the polar ends of the performance spectrum: underachievers and gifted and talented students. However, increasingly, Tute is working in schools which, for a diverse range of reasons, are struggling to realise the ambition of having a high quality teacher in front of all students, across the full range of ability and attainment. In expanding its model (it now has a reach of 270,000 students in the UK), Tute has uncovered multiple benefits including increased parental engagement, improved behaviour and higher academic performance. Where a teacher no longer needs to be physically present in the classroom with the students, a whole range of new opportunities also come to light. Tute has the functionality to re-distribute the supply of teachers by bringing in specialists where supply is lacking, and providing flexible working options for teachers. One could imagine that such a model could be used to support regions of the UK where recruiting from a dwindling pool of teachers is becoming increasingly challenging, such as coastal areas where more than a quarter of schools struggle to attract applicants to teaching posts. Equally such a model might entice some of those who've left the profession back into 'the classroom'

(albeit virtually), drawn by the prospect of more flexible working hours and working remotely from a non-school environment.

It is remarkable that something that was once the preserve of the wealthy – access to new innovations in technology – is creating an opportunity for affordable access to another previously elitist resource – personalised, high quality teaching. In the same way that online learning allows state school students to access the scarce resource of Latin teachers, could this kind of use of technology pave the way for teenagers to access specialist teaching in core areas of the curriculum such as coding from a software engineer at Google, or persuasive writing from a copywriter at a top advertising firm? What is to stop homework challenges being set by university lecturers or industry specialists, who dedicate an hour to interacting with children on an online live chat to answer questions about the topic?

This is not fanciful. Back to rural Ghana, where MGCubed is opening minds to the contribution non-teachers can have to the education process. Their ‘Wonder Women’ programme supplements the core distance learning offer by satelliting into classrooms female role models, such as pilots, engineers and doctors to inspire, engage and teacher school children. The newly formed Careers and Enterprise Company already recognises the value of linking business and schools so that education can be better informed by career destinations. Businesses have huge amounts of resource (in terms of subject specialists, and even teachers who’ve left the profession) that could be harnessed for purposes far broader than simply careers education. There is here a debate to be had around prioritising subject specialism over pedagogy; however, where the curriculum can be supplemented by access to those with deep, practical expertise, blended learning becomes less about the platform that students access learning through, and more about using these platforms to access learning from a range of sources. Technology has the potential to shift not only who can access learning, but who can deliver it and from where.



### Harnessing technology for the benefit of every student everywhere

So what might all this mean for the UK education system of the future, and the way in which technology will play its part? It seems certain that – despite lingering questions around whether extensive technology in schools is a good idea at all (the OECD published a report in 2015 suggesting that, while limited use of computers in schools is better than no use, using them “more intensively than the current OECD average tends to be associated with significantly poorer performance”) – technology is here to stay. Eventually, technology will create fundamental changes to the way learners learn, the way teachers teach, and therefore the role of schools as we know them. Such fundamental changes needn’t necessarily require heavy investment or complex architecture to operationalise and can sit on top of existing digital networks and platforms. For instance, it is now possible to vastly enhance user experience quickly and relatively cheaply by putting together solutions based on largely existing applications, and by connecting them in the cloud.

In an ideal world many of the positive examples above will come together in a way which allows more students to have an enriched learning experience, to allow experts (from industry, academia and across society) to use their knowledge and skills to support students to learn; and in which, therefore, there is an enhanced, but very different, role for the teacher. In a less ideal world, access to such benefits will be down to a lottery of postcode or income, and meanwhile some students will suffer from teacher shortages – and therefore an impoverished education. The real question for educators and policy makers is not whether this technological change will happen, but whether to guide the patterns of this disruption so it has a positive impact on the sector, or whether to be disrupted, and play catch up.

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# 11. Training New Teachers in the School-led Self-improving System: the Work in the North East

John Hardy, Chairman, SCHOOLS NorthEast

The school-led self-improving system remains ill-defined and because there is no shared definition, it has become 'all things to all people'. This can be a good thing; it can be very responsive to need and re-shaped by practice. It can also make it very fragile. It can seem driven by personalities and dependent upon relationships but this is not systematic and means that it could easily be blown away on a whim or cut-down if an individual changes job, moves on or retires. If the school-led self-improving system is something we want and is to be realised then it needs to be systematised. We need to begin to 'leave a trail' that others can follow.

The way that new entrants to the profession are trained and prepared to teach in our schools may provide some way-markers. New ways of working emerging in and across Teaching School Alliances or Multi-Academy trusts and through work with strategic partners may hint at the future. In particular, the work which we are leading in the North East provides a model worthy of further consideration, and this is what I want to set out below.

## The North East as a region for teachers

The North East is a region which offers many opportunities as well as challenges for the recruitment and retention of teachers. The majority of recruits to ITT programmes in the North East have some

form of connection with the region, be that family or undergraduate study at one of the region's universities. So, it would seem that once they have experienced the North East – its friendly people, its breath-taking landscape and coastline, its passion – then people want to stay.

The wider 'package' is also appealing. The cost of living is incredibly low, particularly thanks to house prices being among the lowest in the country. According to an ONS report published last November, the average house price in England is £299,000, but in the North East it is £158,000. With more money in the pocket of teachers, they can enjoy Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the longest stretch of coastline and the full benefit of urban hotspots such as Newcastle – voted UK Best City by the Guardian in 2014 – within easy reach of rural tranquility. All of which in turn ought to increase quality of life and boost teacher retention.

Despite this, the North East is not a go-to destination for prospective teachers from outside the regions. It is geographically remote and continues to struggle with one of the highest levels of unemployment in the country. With a smaller private sector base and a rapidly shrinking public sector, this can be problematic for families looking to move where employment opportunities for spouses are limited – the famous 'trailing spouse' issue.

Furthermore, within schools it has significant child-poverty and multiple deprivation over generations that cannot be quickly solved, even with pupil premium funds. The ONS Regional Trends report (2010) highlighted the proportion of the North East's working-age population qualified to National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 4 and above was 24 per cent, the lowest proportion of any English region and below the UK average of 30 per cent.

Indeed the challenges facing schools in the North East are formidable. While at a primary level the North East is currently enjoying a boom period with 91% of schools rated Good or Outstanding, the picture for secondaries is more challenging at 68%. While

considerable effort is being invested in narrowing this gap, it presents challenges in attracting, and keeping, teaching talent.

### The work of North East Teaching Schools network

So in order to address the specific challenges and opportunities in the North East, some pioneering work is underway via a network which has been established, led by North East Teaching Schools (NETS). This involves all providers including the four leading universities in the region, all the SCITT providers in the region and all the School Direct Lead Schools as well as Teach First. In total, this Network brings together all 67 providers and lead-schools, from across the region, involved in the recruitment and training of new entrants to teaching.

The largest grouping in the network and the most recent to become involved in ITT are the School Direct Lead Schools, who in partnership with a provider, either an HEI or a SCITT, take responsibility for the selection and school-based training of their students. They arrange their placements across partnerships and alliances of schools and many of the students find their first jobs as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in a local school. This has become a 'grow our own' model of teacher training, where secondary schools can support the training of unqualified teachers with subject specialisms and primary schools can recruit graduates with experience in their own classrooms to train.

However, this is not the only sense in which our work has shown a pioneering school-led system. The network has enabled local groups of providers and lead schools to offer 'train to teach' recruitment events locally and 'Is teaching in your future?' career fairs in schools to attract the recruits of tomorrow. The network shares good-practice in developing training programmes, subject enhancement programmes and it is concerned with the retention of teachers early in their careers. With this in mind the network has

formed links with appropriate bodies in the region with responsibility for supporting NQTs and their schools. The network has also fed into national work on developing standards for mentoring that should help to bring consistency and recognition to the important role that school based mentors play in the training and early years of a teacher's career.

The network also allows the region to manage what can sometimes be the vagaries of the current allocations of training places. By collaborating across the ITT Network providers and schools can ensure that applicants are directed to places and listings of places can be shared with candidates. However, this is not school-led. Allocations and recruitment controls are centrally determined and applied.

In addition, we are fortunate in the North East to have the only regional schools network – SCHOOLS NorthEast – which was created to support all 1,250 schools in the region to 'self-improve'.

In response to concerns from schools about the difficulties in engaging prospective teachers and the costs of recruitment, SCHOOLS NorthEast launched a regional recruitment portal – *Jobs in Schools | North East* – in January which has been developed by schools for schools. Its focus is on providing the most comprehensive jobs board for vacancies across the North East and SCHOOLS NorthEast has the backing of the region's universities who promote it to candidates. While this is obviously aimed at NQTs seeking their first job and teachers seeking new positions and promotion, it also provides a site for lead schools and providers to list the availability of places on ITT especially those like School Direct (Salaried) that come in tandem with employment. The long-term vision is to reinvest surplus from the site to improve services to schools and to market the North East nationally and internationally as a teaching destination. We recognise that we need to grow the talent pool both within and from outside of our geographical boundaries to further deliver greater leadership capacity and sufficient numbers of teachers, particularly in specialist roles.

## Achieving a mature school led system

Taking all of these activities together, this new network has the potential to realise how the school-led system might work. ‘School-led’ does not always mean ‘school done’. And, ‘self-improving’ suggests that there is an appreciation of the current position and an idea that it can be better in the future. To lead this system to maturity, we are conscious of the four aspects of activity that the Teaching School Council has identified and which drives this network towards a systematic approach. These are:

- the use made of a variety of data to accurately forecast numbers of teachers needed for the region;
- recruitment techniques and resources to establish and support a long term recruitment plan and the ability to attract the best quality applicants, particularly to those areas and schools and in those subjects with a history of recruitment difficulties in the region;
- sufficient capacity and robust systems are in place to deliver high quality school-led ITT consistently to all its trainees, including through effective mentoring;
- schools in their alliances and partnerships have a strongly embedded ‘career development’ model that builds a continuum from recruitment through to expertise and leadership for trainees.

One of the challenges for us – and indeed other informal groupings within the school led system – is working out how to achieve these; what role we can play, and what role national government can play.

Our region is unusual in the England context, indeed some people talk of the ‘North East Village’ and in some ways this is true. We still have a strong sense of community and even with the new autonomy given to schools, we want to stay together and ‘look-after’ each other, no matter which way the wind blows. We



are very passionate about the North East. And, yes at times we are suspicious of 'change', but we are very welcoming and aspire to greatness. But we are realistic too, to a point of bluntness at times; we have a tendency to call a spade a shovel! We recognise that greatness lies both in our past and in hope for our future, but in the present we need a pioneering spirit to solve some deep-seated and intractable problems. Problems that can't be solved by individual schools or even by schools alone, but needs the concerted effort of everyone in the educational sphere. We need systemic improvement! And, it might be, that if we work together to solve these problems we may, almost accidently, find we have created the school-led self-improving system. And, is there a better place to start than thinking carefully about who will be teaching our children tomorrow?



In 2010, the DfE published a White Paper entitled 'The Importance of Teaching'. This set out the overall direction of travel for the Coalition government, including recognising the importance of teaching to improving school standards. The title of this essay collection deliberately reflects and builds on this work. For if teaching (the practice) is important, even more so are the people – the teachers.

This collection of essays develops on a half day conference held by Policy Exchange in partnership with the Association of School and College Leaders in October last year on the topic of the future of the teaching workforce – supply, recruitment, retention and deployment. They further develop ideas on action that both government and individual and groups of schools can take to alleviate the undoubted shortage of teachers that the English state school system currently faces, and is predicted to continue to face for the next few years.

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