

All Party Parliamentary Group for the Teaching Profession



Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21 May 2018 at 4.00-6.00pm in Committee Room 6, Palace of Westminster

1. Welcome

Ian Mearns MP welcomed attendees to the meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Teaching Profession to the meeting.

2. Introductions

Ian Mearns MP introduced members and attendees and welcomed representatives from the National Audit Office and Ofsted.

3. Teacher Recruitment and Retention: reality bites (John Howson)

John reported

That it was a difficult time of year as we are approaching the end of the recruitment cycle for September and that there were pressures from funding and pupil numbers.

That for the present recruitment round the number of trainees on a 1yr programme was presenting serious concerns in regards to English, Business Studies, Design & Technology, Computer Science and Music.

That it was expected there would be a 50% vacancy level and the only subjects where there were no concerns was in PE, Geography and History.

That there was wide regional variations with high volumes of vacancies advertised within London and the Home counties.

That there had been a significant increase at intake end and these areas had the highest number of independent schools.

Of particular concern is the number of NQTs available to the "pool" at the end of the training year i.e. not recruited in their placement school and therefore available to supply the national teacher market.

That the within the North East there was more indications of funding pressures however there were fewer vacancies than last year. Is this indicative of a weakening economy?

That it was difficult to establish what was causing these issues and there were a number of devices on the market for schools to access talent pool – e.g. schools inviting speculative applications and jobs being posted with extendable deadlines.

That Leadership vacancies were difficult to track within the Secondary sector due to Multi-Academy trusts (MATs).

That leadership vacancies within the Primary sector had seen a similar number to those seen within the last few years.

That across the country a third of Primary sector headships had had to be re-advertised.

(by Ian Power)

That the difficulties experienced in Hampshire were likely to be due to the cost of living and small number of primary schools which appeared to affect the spike in the area

That if the present recruitment trend continued it would mean there would be fewer people in training in Secondary and Primary PGCE level which presented an alarming trend.

That through data shared PE, English and Biology were the only subjects showing an increase in offers.

That if it was assumed that trends would remain the same the view was that TSM would only be met in PE, with a possibility for Geography and History.

That there was a possibility the TSM could also be met in Biology however there was uncertainty that this would be the case.

That this year was a difficult recruitment round specifically for where there was most demand present in the country and therefore the implications were that it was the worse recruitment round since the millennium, when training grants had been introduced and the economic downturn aided the teaching labour market.

That the overall deficit of teachers ready for NQT in 2018 will be ca. 1600, presuming that all choose to go into teaching jobs. If NQTs quit, there will be nobody to pick up their jobs.

That there was a small number of graduates expected to enter the labour market and Brexit was expected to have an impact alongside the number of Tier 2 visas turned down since January which had increased significantly and impacted recruitment in schools.

(by Tony Gardner)

Were fee waivers a controllable option? –

That fee waivers were not desirable as training grants placed people on an equal footing.

Do you expect them to come back on agenda?

That it was unlikely unless the Secretary of State made significant changes.

That there was a requirement for something that is easily marketable to prospective trainees.

That the treasury were not supportive of removal of fees for Postgraduate training programmes as there were currently 34k trainees in teaching.

(By Georgina Newton) *Is there scope to tweak bursaries to attract trainees? What is being done to address the subject areas where there is a big shortfall?*

That there was recognition that upskilling post-entry may be the only way forward if there were not enough teachers coming from training routes.

That the percentage of children taught by sub specialists had gone down however it was suspected this would start to increase again in certain subjects within certain areas of the country.

(By Mark Parrott, National Audit Office)

That research challenged the £10's of millions spent on retaining and £BILLIONS on training and whether the current balance was correct.

(by Sam Butters, Fairer Education Alliance) *Were issues more acute in certain areas with higher proportions of Pupil Premium students?*

That we were not at the end of the recruitment round yet therefore it was difficult to say, however free school meals were indicator that there was a higher turnover of staff.

(by Steve Pinches, TES)

That there were higher numbers and schools were appearing to struggle to recruit subject specialists with applicants being seen to accept offers later than in previous years.

That SKE providers were seeing a larger number of applicants with non-relevant degrees.

(Anonymous contributor)

That 4-5 years ago providers had a greater choice of applicants to select from however numbers were now reduced and therefore there were concerns that providers were accepting applicants they wouldn't have previously accepted thus quality was reducing year on year.

That the demise of bursaries would mean applicants numbers would continue to go down

(by Jackie Moses, UCET)

That there was a significant focus on recruitment however there was not enough focus on retention with issues linked to teaching workload, lack of accountability, and teachers discovering the career they have entered is not what they thought it would be. UCET will welcome the DfE's findings on this later this year.

(by Chris Waterman)

That Damian Hinds was fast approaching the point where he needed to admit teaching recruitment and retention was the biggest issue.

That a recent manifesto had provided no data to inform the need for a national plan to address the national picture.

(by Mark Parrett, National Audit Office)

That the National Audit Office had looked at regional angles and asked for a strategy or plan to address concerns.

That the government response, seen within the treasury minutes, provided clear commitments to demonstrate how they plan to respond.

(by Jackie Moses)

That there was an opportunity to commit to clear CPD within the profession however no commitment had been provided by the government.

(by Ian Mearns MP)

That an NFER study was looking at where teachers were going to when they leave teaching.

(by John Howson)

That there was bound to be an increase due to the increasing age of the workforce and feminisation of the workforce.

That the post-60yrs workforce was now bigger than it had been for some time. Of the contributory factors: morale, pay and workload, morale is the cheapest to address.

That international schools also recruit large numbers of teachers from UK schools and training courses.

That small C of E primary schools are scarcely represented in the responses given to government.

(by Peter Siggers, TES)

That the TES was conducting a regional breakdown of where the teaching shortages are and would be publishing findings.

That work has been carried out regarding where teachers were moving to and that it was clear that when people leave a job, it is often their manager they want to get away from.

That there was a need to better understand what was missing in terms of support, the culture which did not allow the sector to respond.

That an online exit interview would allow the whole profession to benefit from insight as to what motivates teachers to leave the profession.

(by Jackie Moses)

That the British Council was in discussion about allowing international schools to award QTS.

(by Ian Hartwright, NAHT)

That the NAHT had conducted a longitudinal study which had identified that the work-life balance was a higher concern than pay for its members.

That teaching didn't look attractive longer term as there was potential for only limited career progression combined with workload/constant change which was not offset with attractive pay

(by Lucy Rycroft-Smith)

That morale of teachers is eroded by stress, driven by rigid accountability structures.

That priorities for good leaders should be to give teachers a sense of trust and agency.

(by Ian Mearns MP)

That Nick Gibb would appear before the education select committee on Tuesday 22 May 2018 and questions would be considered and raised on behalf of the APPG at the meeting.

4. QTS and Regulating the Profession (Alison Ryan, NEU)

That the QTS delay was a risky course of action and the Department for Education had admitted there was a crisis and was open to listening to concerns.

That the Early Career Framework was considered a good idea however there were questions about how the DfES were going to fund it and what the cost of a 10% timetable reduction was going to be for schools.

That if the 10% timetable reduction was to cover the 2 years there would not be sufficient funding.

That there were also concerns about the quality of provision.

That the extension of induction to 2yrs and the reality of being scrutinised in NQT year and beyond had been viewed as demotivating unless it was offering something which is of recognised value.

That the issues with retention related to workload and pay were identified as the biggest issue, with the importance of pay increasing over the last few years.

That it was not just the number of hours worked but also what teachers were spending their time on and whether it was considered valuable to the young people they teach.

That often the tasks teachers had to undertake were not about not making a difference to young people and therefore, workload becomes an issue.

That there was a need to engage with the motivation that made trainees enter the profession.

(by Celica Hoyles)

That workload was important issue and whilst data was important the current balance was wrong.

(by Jackie Moses)

That the profession welcomed the Early Career Framework and there need to be consideration given to ensure it did not become too prescriptive.

That differentiation needed to be built in for the NQT year as all teachers have different needs and strengths which must be addressed to suit the needs of the school and the teacher

(by Ian Power)

That the wider career development was also important and therefore consideration needed to be given to the requirement to teach for longer with options for teachers to step into different roles,

That whilst data important was important teachers were spending too much time over spreadsheets when they should actually be leaders of learning not data.

That there needed to be recognition of where progress had been made in different types of schools.

That sufficient funding was required to support this work.

(by Lucy Rycroft-Smith)

That all work undertaken would be undermined if it was linked to performance and related pay where data is unfair and teachers are unfairly held to account for factors they have no control over

(by Chris Waterman)

That the Public Accounts Committee had heard evidence of international research where more autonomy supported better systems, however the UK system is moving towards a system of large MATs which was removing school autonomy e.g.; very prescriptive in lesson plans.

(by Ian Mearns MP)

That the Education Select Committee have already considered the factor of academisation, which showed an increase in teacher burnout in career years 5-7.

(by Celica Hoyles)

That Japanese teachers were seen to remain in the profession for 30-40yrs, and were supported with extensive CPD therefore there was a need to learn from international examples.

(by Alison Ryan)

That there was an need to consider what happens after ITE, as there was a lack of structure after this point which is clearly laid out and therefor prevents teachers gaining access to CPD that are specific to long term goals.

That the profession needed to maintain expectations of teacher learning throughout their career.

(by John Howson)

That MATs which take a geographical focus have a better chance of meeting the teacher supply needs in their area than those which work nationwide.

That the percentage of teacher attrition in years 5-7 was particularly worrying.

That teachers needed to take control of their own career path because there are no systematic career paths provided in schools.

(by Mark Parrett, NAO)

That the National Audit Office had surveyed Head teachers and looked at CPD alongside expectation of teachers whilst considering the pressures of funding.

That Head teachers had reported that CPD took the form of learning on the job, learning from others/mentors and more formal training courses.

(by Mark Parrett, NAO)

That the number of trained teachers returning to the state sector had been increasing.

(Brian Lightman) That there was a lack of strategy and there was a requirement for a strategic approach with induction for returners which was either free of charge or reduced,,

That this went back to the requirement for a career structure that prepared people returning to the profession.

That the award of QTS should be concerned with learning, not just being assessed.

(by Georgina Newton)

That a pilot with schools in partnership with Warwick had been conducted speaking to groups of teachers to identify those who were positive about the career.

That a large numbers had been identified who wanted to work as teacher retention advocates through an e-portal system to support NQTs.

5. The Grammar school question: implications for teacher supply (Mr Chris Waterman)

That an article would be published on Monday 21 May 2018 discussing the £50 million funding proposed for Grammar Schools.

That the government had marketed the funding of the expansion of grammar schools as £50 million for 1yr however there was uncertainty as to the number of grammar schools that would be created

That the government had stipulated grammar schools would be required to accept more vulnerable pupils however there were no sanctions stated if they failed to do so.

That the infographic shared showed a typical small market town and assumed an increase by 1F.E. would gain an additional £5.04m in comparison to those schools which would encounter a £1.68m loss in revenue

That this could result in the stripping of the best teachers from comprehensive and the need to the lower entry requirements.

6. Role of Supply Agency (TES)

That there was concern regarding the lack of scrutiny and regulation within the sector.

That this was having a knock-on effect upon to the traditional recruitment of teachers with fewer from ITT moving to supply agencies due to the increase in SCITTs.

(by Jackie Moses)

That there were a number of complaints from HEI providers as supply agencies were using unfair practices to recruit trainees.

(by Emma Hollis)

That trainees were becoming savvy to this and recognising that they needed to gain entry on training programme and therefore agencies were getting into training roadshows and charging SCITTs to access the details of these applicants.

That there were safeguarding issues within the unregulated and poor practice by some agencies however costs were the biggest issue particularly for schools

(by John Howson)

That agencies had an important function to carry out within the supply of teachers, as they supported the discontinuity of the market and replacing of local authority pooling system.

(by Chris Waterman)

That a case-study of supply agencies activities was required to raise the profile of concerns regarding the lack of scrutiny and regulation with the increased use of supply agency fees.

7. Primary Education: teacher supply

That the recruitment of Primary teachers was becoming an issue that had not been envisioned.

(by Jackie Moses)

That this was the first year ITT providers were struggling to recruit and the lack of bursaries was questioned as being linked or correlated to the fall in numbers.

8. AOB