

APPG Teaching Profession March 2109 meeting

2019 will be a challenging year for many schools in the secondary sector seeking to recruit teaching staff. On the basis of data from applications for courses starting in autumn 2019, it seems likely that barring an economic downturn, 2020 may also be a challenging recruitment round for schools, especially in those areas where pupil numbers are on the increase.

There is much less of an issue in the primary sector and among schools seeking to fill leadership vacancies where the market may be in better shape than at any point in the last 20 years.

More details about key points are included below:

Teacher recruitment update

Whether it is a sign either of the growing number of secondary pupils for September 2019 or that the funding crisis isn't as bad everywhere as it obviously is in some schools, but advertised vacancies are ahead of this point last year in the TeachVac system www.teachvac.co.uk That's good news for teachers and trainees looking for a job for September, but less good news for some schools trying to recruit a new staff member.

As in the past, the main secondary subjects fall into three groups. Firstly, there are the quasi-vocational subjects of business studies and design and technology where there has already been more vacancies recorded in 2019 than the market can cope with and schools anywhere in England could find recruiting a teacher challenging. Schools seeking a teacher of physics can also face recruitment issues regardless of where the school is located.

The second group of subjects are those where local recruitment challenges may now be apparent, but are most likely to affect schools in London and the Home Counties. These subjects include, mathematics, English, computing, religious education and music. Most of these subjects may well migrate into the first group before the May resignation deadline.

Finally, in the third group are three EBacc subjects, modern languages, geography and history as well as physical education. At present, there is no sign that there won't be enough of these teachers to meet needs. However, as noted in the past, this doesn't address either the issue of the quality of applicants or the possibility that some schools may find attracting candidates a challenge for a variety of reasons.

In the primary sector, vacancies seem to be appearing more slowly than last year, perhaps reflecting the slowdown in the birth rate that is affecting intake numbers quite dramatically in some areas.

The number of leadership posts in the primary sector advertised in the first 10 weeks of 2019 is below the figure for last year. It may be that Multi Academy Trusts are looking to fill these vacancies from within the Trust rather than by external appointments.

It is worth noting that you still wouldn't be able to obtain this information from the DfE's vacancy site. As of last Friday, the DfE site had only around 25% of the live vacancies being carried by TeachVac, I don't know how much money the DfE has spent on their site so far, but, a simple site linking to other vacancy sites would achieve a better outcome for far less expenditure of public money. This takes us back to the issue of school funding and why the DfE chose to compete in a marketplace matching vacancies with those seeking teaching posts already well served by existing providers?

Prof. John Howson, Chair TeachVac and county councillor in Oxfordshire.

