

THE RECRUITMENT GAP

Attracting teachers to schools serving
disadvantaged communities

Becky Allen and Laura McInerney
– July 2019





About the Sutton Trust

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About the authors

Becky Allen is Chief Analyst and a co-founder of Teacher Tapp, the largest teacher survey and professional development tool in the UK. She is also an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Oxford. Until 2018, she was Professor of Education at UCL Institute of Education and over her academic career she has written extensively on school accountability, admissions, expenditure and teacher careers. An economist by training and former secondary school teacher, she is an expert in the analysis of large datasets. In 2018 she chaired a government working group to review how data is used in schools. Her book on teacher careers called 'The Teacher Gap' was published last year.

Laura McInerney is CEO and co-founder of Teacher Tapp. As a Citizenship teacher, she taught for six years in challenging east London schools before winning a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship to study education policy in the US for two years. She returned to England to pursue a career in education journalism, becoming Editor for the investigative newspaper Schools Week. She remains a regular columnist for The Guardian and has written for other publications including The Observer, New Statesman, TES and Prospect.

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Foreword

Teachers are a vital national resource. They educate and nurture the young minds of this country and form the spine of Britain's school system. There is nothing more important for giving children the chance of the best start in life than great teaching.

Crucially, excellent teachers have the most positive impact on the children who need it most, those from deprived backgrounds. Such pupils often lack the financial or educational resources at home or in their community that many other children have. So the impact of teaching at school is likely to be much greater.

But too often, those from less well-off homes don't have access to the highest performing schools and the most effective teachers. For more than two decades the Sutton Trust has shed light on the inequities in Britain's school system. High performing schools are more often than not located in the most affluent areas and have intakes very different from the typical comprehensive. Many schools, which are non-selective on paper, even admit intakes that are unrepresentative of the neighbourhoods around them. They are in effect exercising covert selection, with complex admissions criteria and appeals processes contributing to much fewer disadvantaged pupils being admitted than live in the local area – of course also impacting the school down the road.

This social segregation also has a profound impact on Britain's teachers. Naturally, many teachers prefer to teach in schools with good reputations and high attaining pupils, schools which tend to be located in affluent areas. The lack of social mix in schools means that those with the most affluent intakes have their pick of teachers when recruiting. This contributes to the attainment gap between advantaged and disadvantaged pupils, which has knock-on effects on university admissions and jobs.

Teaching in Britain today faces a crisis. Recruiting and keeping teachers in the profession is proving more and more difficult. Today's report demonstrates powerfully that the effects of this crisis do not fall evenly across the population. The most disadvantaged schools face severe challenges in recruiting experienced and qualified teachers. But it is at these very schools where such teachers are needed the most.

The government has recognised this problem with the publication of their new workforce strategy. But now we need to see action. If we are to narrow gaps in attainment and access to university, inequalities in access to teaching must be addressed. Pupil premium funding can be key to this, with this money designated for disadvantaged pupils used to attract and keep high quality teachers in more deprived schools.

Valuing the work of teachers is essential to a healthy education system. Ensuring that effective teaching is available to children of all social backgrounds it is essential to making it a fair one.

Sir Peter Lampl
Founder of the Sutton Trust and Chairman of the Education Endowment Foundation

Executive summary

1. Schools serving disadvantaged communities struggle to recruit suitable teachers

- Schools serving disadvantaged communities experience greater recruitment difficulties, according to survey analysis of over 7,000 teachers in state-funded and independent schools in England, mirroring turnover statistics in administrative data.
- In general, these social inequalities are more pronounced in the secondary sector, and shortages there are worse overall. Teachers in the most disadvantaged secondary schools were twice as likely to report that their department was not well-staffed with suitably qualified teachers (30% compared to 14% in the schools with the most affluent intakes).
- 85% of teachers in disadvantaged schools reported that recruitment was affecting the quality of education their school was providing. 41% agreed strongly this is the case, compared to 18% in independent secondary schools.
- Teachers in schools serving disadvantaged communities are pessimistic about this summer's recruitment round. 58% of teachers in the most disadvantaged schools are uncertain about their school's ability to find suitable teachers to fill vacancies this summer. This compares to 35% of teachers in the most affluent state schools, and just 11% in the independent sector.
- Social inequalities are worst in core subjects of maths and sciences, where one-in-three departments within schools serving the most disadvantaged communities say they are currently not well-staffed.
- This analysis suggests that where a government allows teacher shortages to rise, whether through pay restraint policies, tuition fees on teacher training, or as a consequence of high graduate employment, these shortages will disproportionately pool in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities.

2. Teachers in disadvantaged schools are less attached to teaching as a career

- Teachers in secondary schools serving disadvantaged communities are the most likely to say they will soon leave teaching and seem least attached to the profession. 55% reported they would leave teaching if they could find a job that matched their salary.
- We are not able to disentangle why they feel this way, but it does seem that the deterioration in their enthusiasm for teaching is no greater than it is for those teaching in more affluent schools.

3. Teachers believe schools serving disadvantaged communities are harder to teach in

- Reputation matters: more affluent schools seem to be attractive due to their 'reputation' while teachers in disadvantaged schools are most likely to leave because they are attracted by another school.
- Teachers overwhelmingly agree that teaching in schools serving more disadvantaged communities tends to involve harder work (92%) and requires more skills (87%). Teachers who currently work in disadvantaged schools agree most strongly with this.
- Teachers typically prefer to teach classes with higher attaining pupils and with fewer behaviour problems. This poses problems for recruitment in schools with more disadvantaged intakes.
- Those who have currently chosen to teach in schools with more affluent intakes strongly wish to avoid schools with behaviour problems, even if this means working longer hours. It will likely be difficult to persuade these teachers to apply for jobs at any school where they fear behaviour is not under control. This is why sound whole-school behaviour policies, along with improving the external reputation of a school are important for improving its teacher recruitment.

4. Shortages are best dealt with by pursuing local recruitment strategies

- 80% of teachers are willing to consider a local move to a school in special measures with recruitment challenges, provided the conditions are right.
- Though expensive, the right conditions – pay, promotion, and a reduced timetable – are attractive to many. Pupil premium funding is a potentially vital resource for disadvantaged schools to invest in attracting teachers.
- However there are other low-cost perks that schools could also offer, including lower marking loads, quality training opportunities and mentoring.
- Women outside their twenties are quite unwilling to consider longer commutes, which has implications for the profession given its demographics, especially at primary level.
- Only 1-in-10 teachers is likely to consider moving 100 miles for a dream job and those willing to do so tend to be younger (or male). Experienced teachers are much more attached to the place they live and are less amenable to moving for a job.
- To induce moves across regions would require very high financial incentives, though other perks (a substantial timetable reduction for example) may be attractive under particular circumstances. As a result, focusing on local recruitment, and addressing geographical disparities in initial teacher training are likely to be most effective.

Recommendations

- 1. Social inequalities in teacher recruitment should be monitored by government.** Understanding this is crucial since not all schools are equally affected by teacher shortages. Whilst the School Workforce Census can monitor turnover and experience of teachers, it cannot provide clear and timely signals of serious recruitment difficulties in more disadvantaged schools in an area. Harvesting of job advertisement data or straightforward surveys of headteachers are needed to do this.
- 2. Spending pupil premium money on teacher wages and professional development may help disadvantaged schools to overcome their recruitment struggles.** While this is already allowed under pupil premium spending guidelines, this needs to be emphasised further. The new Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) pupil premium guidance signals this strongly.
- 3. Schools serving more challenging communities need clearer guidance about how to create a working environment that can appeal to teachers who might not otherwise consider them.** Drawing together existing international evidence could be particularly helpful. For many teachers who are not currently choosing to teach in disadvantaged schools, behaviour often trumps other considerations. If they do not believe behaviour at a school is calm and disciplined then no other pay or perks can induce them to apply.
- 4. Since 'reputation' is important in teacher recruitment, schools need help in signalling what it is like to work at their school, and teachers should be helped to make decisions with greater confidence.** As a start, different strategies could be trialled through DfE's Teaching Vacancies website. This could include being more specific in job adverts about workload, behaviour management and training opportunities. Schools could also maintain an open-door policy, so that other local teachers can come and visit at any time. Pre-interview visits help, though are not always possible. In addition, organisations such as a Chartered College of Teaching or the teaching unions could help develop a set of specific questions for teachers to ask about general working conditions, including the nature of, and compliance with, the school's behaviour policy.
- 5. Social segregation in schools should be tackled.** Many of the issues highlighted in this report are as a result of inequalities in school intakes. A more even social mix in schools would help to address disparities in perceived reputation. Oversubscribed schools with high examination results should prioritise applicants eligible for pupil premium, and schools particularly in urban areas should consider implementing admissions ballots to improve socioeconomic diversity across local schools.

6. **The government could consider requiring teachers in receipt of substantial bursaries to teach in more disadvantaged schools or in particular areas as a condition of the bursary.** This would need to be done with care, ensuring that a place at one of these schools was indeed available to the trainee teachers and that the school was able to provide them with the sort of environment where they were able to thrive.

7. **More should be done to ensure the initial allocation of training places reflects local supply needs.** England has an unusually decentralised teacher labour market, and so there are relatively few government levers to help resolve shortages. However, where there are parts of the country with shortages and no existing training provision, long-term resolution of shortages in the local teacher labour market might best be served by the government proactively setting up a new initial teacher training organisation, whether as part of a school, a trust or as a stand-alone entity.

Introduction

It has long been recognised that schools serving disadvantaged communities are more likely to be staffed by teachers without qualified teacher status, with fewer years of experience and by non-specialist science and maths teachers.¹ Inequality in access to suitably qualified, high quality teachers is likely to be an important contributor to the attainment gap that exists between students who come from disadvantaged families and those who do not. Reviews of research consistently show that teacher quality is amongst the most powerful school-based determinants of pupil attainment, with the effects of access to higher quality teachers detectable in adult earnings over a decade after leaving school.² Moreover, because high quality teachers have been shown to have a disproportionately large effect on the progress of disadvantaged pupils this could also narrow gaps within classrooms.³

Inequalities in the teacher labour market are just one manifestation of the social segregation that persists throughout the English education system.⁴ While lowering school segregation through admission reforms would be the ideal solution, in the absence of political will, attempting to resolve some of the inequalities in access to high quality teachers has the potential to ameliorate the worst effects of this segregation.

England's School Workforce Census shows that teacher retention continues to deteriorate, with increasing numbers choosing to leave teaching (in state-funded schools) before the official retirement date. As pupil numbers continue to rise in the secondary sector, shortages are becoming acute in certain subjects and certain parts of the country.⁵ Existing UK research has not been able to quantify how teacher shortages actually affect the functioning of schools, because we are rarely able to measure teacher quality directly. This means, for example, that whilst we can observe a shortage of subject-specialist teachers in some schools, we do not know how (if at all) this is affecting teaching quality and thus student learning.

The Government has trialled innovative approaches to teacher recruitment overall, and has attempted to resolve recruitment difficulties in more disadvantaged schools. Their Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy plans to give increased support and professional development to early career teachers, encourages schools to reduce workload and increase job

¹ Allen, R. and Sims, S. (2018). Do pupils from low-income families get low-quality teachers? Indirect evidence from English schools. *Oxford Review of Education* 44 (4), 441-458.

² Chetty, Raj, John N. Friedman and Jonah E. Rockoff. (2014), Measuring the impacts of teachers II: Teacher value-added and student outcomes in adulthood, *The American Economic Review*, 104:9, 2633-79.

³ Aaronson, D., Barrow, L. and Sander, W. (2007), Teachers and student achievement in the Chicago public high schools, *Journal of Labor Economics*, 25:1, 95-135.

⁴ Cullinane, C., Van den Brande, J. and Hillary, J. (2019). *Selective comprehensives Great Britain*. London: Sutton Trust. Retrieved from: <https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/selective-comprehensives-great-britain/>.

Allen, R. (2016) *Caught out*. London: Sutton Trust. Retrieved from: <https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/caught-out/>.

⁵ Department for Education (2019). *School Workforce Census 2018*, Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>.

flexibility, and makes it easier to try-out teaching.⁶ Some past schemes have struggled to achieve their goals. The National Teaching Service, which offered £10,000 for experienced teachers to move regions, was closed after just 24 teachers accepted places on the programme.⁷ The Return to Teaching pilot was also closed because it failed to recruit significant numbers of former teachers.⁸ These recent policy failures show the huge challenge of trying to lessen teacher shortages for more disadvantaged schools. The Government recognises that new approaches are needed, and has recently published a small-scale qualitative study to explore why teachers are so reluctant to move to schools with shortages.⁹ This highlighted the importance of issues such as commute distance, perceived workload and financial rewards in incentivising job changes.

In this report, we analyse survey responses from over 3,000 teachers in order to expand our understanding of how teachers *feel* that recruitment difficulties and teacher shortages affect their school. All the teachers responding to the survey are using a daily survey app called *Teacher Tapp*. They provide details of the school they teach in, which allows the survey responses given to be analysed alongside publicly available demographic information. In much of the analysis, we divide teachers into categories based on the type of pupils their school educates. Schools in the state-funded sector are split into five groups of equal size (quintiles), according to the percentage of students eligible for free school meals (FSM). Note that, in the case of the secondary phase, the quintile with the most affluent state-funded schools will include a mixture of grammar schools (about one-third of the quintile) and comprehensives. Schools in the fee-paying independent sector are also shown as a point of comparison – in almost all cases the family income profile of these private schools will be higher than the state schools serving the most affluent communities. Throughout the report, where we refer to the ‘most disadvantaged’ schools, we mean the 20% of state-funded schools with the highest free school meals proportion.

⁶ Department for Education (2019). *Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy*, Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-recruitment-and-retention-strategy>.

⁷ Schools Week (2016). *National Teaching Service cancelled after just 24 accept places*, <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/national-teaching-service-cancelled-after-just-24-accept-places/>.

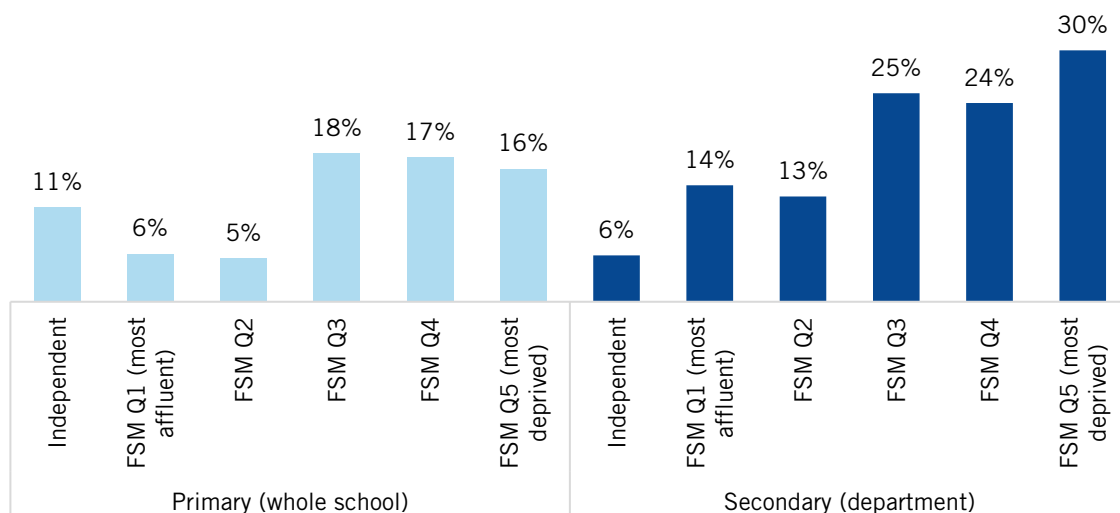
⁸ Buchanan, E., Sharp, C., Worth, J., Martin, K., Bamford, S. and DesClayes, Z., (2018). *Evaluation of the Return to Teaching pilot programme*, London: DfE.

⁹ Harrison, J., Patel, R., Francis, N. and Hicklin, A. (2019). *Teacher mobility in challenging areas*, London: DfE.

1. Schools serving disadvantaged communities struggle to recruit suitable teachers

We start by creating a picture of how recruitment difficulties are distributed across schools in England. We ask teachers whether they felt their school (for primary) or department (for secondary) is currently well-staffed with suitably qualified teachers, leaving the teacher free to interpret the words ‘suitably qualified’ as they please. The chart below shows the proportion of teachers who ‘disagree’ with the statement, thus indicating that recruitment difficulties have affected staffing in their school or department. In secondary schools, the contrast between schools serving different types of communities is very clear. 30% of teachers in the most disadvantaged schools say their department is not suitably staffed, versus 14% of teachers in the most affluent quintile and 6% of teachers in the independent sector. There is a similar pattern for primary schools, though the differences across FSM quintiles is far less: 16% for most disadvantaged schools versus 6% for the most affluent state schools. It is worth noting that independent primaries report they are *less* well-staffed than the most affluent state-funded primaries. This is almost certainly because they make much greater use of subject specialist teachers, and so matching the exact background of the teacher to the role in question is more of an issue.

Figure 1: Proportion of teachers who disagree that their school (primary) or department (secondary) is currently well-staffed with suitably qualified teachers



There are regional differences in the proportions who disagree that their school or department is currently well-staffed, but they are perhaps not as large as some might expect. Greatest reports of recruitment difficulties are in London, where 18% disagree that their school or department is currently well-staffed. This contrasts with 13% in the north of England (North West, North East and Yorkshire/Humber regions).

Looking at responses within major secondary school subject departments, the pattern is largely consistent. Maths and science have the greater perception of shortages, and the impact of these on the most disadvantaged schools is quite stark. Approximately one-in-three maths and science departments in schools serving the most disadvantaged communities report that they are currently not well-staffed.

Table 1: Proportion of teachers who disagree that their school (primary) or department (secondary) is currently well-staffed with suitably qualified teachers

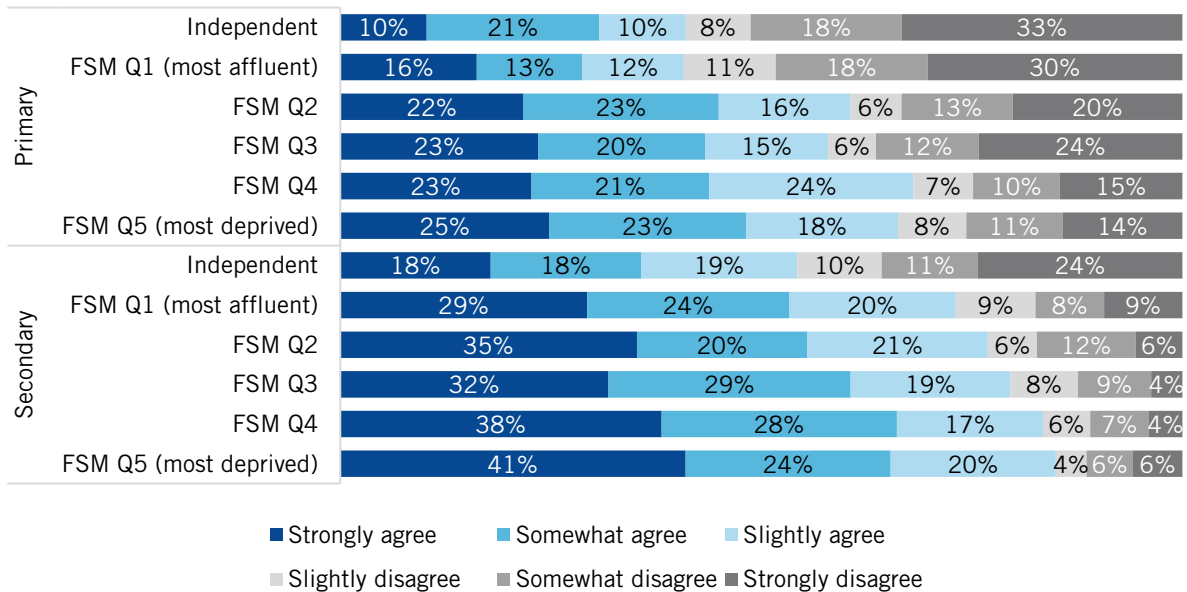
	Independent	FSM Q1 (most affluent)	FSM Q2	FSM Q3	FSM Q4	FSM Q5 (most deprived)
English	5%	11%	15%	32%	13%	20%
Maths	3%	18%	8%	23%	25%	38%
Science	8%	10%	14%	33%	32%	31%
Other EBacc subjects	10%	7%	16%	15%	23%	24%

Note: Other EBacc includes humanities and languages; Sample for non-EBacc subjects was too small

The teachers were asked more directly how inability to recruit suitably qualified staff affects the quality of education schools provide. Here, the differences across schools serving different types of communities are less stark.

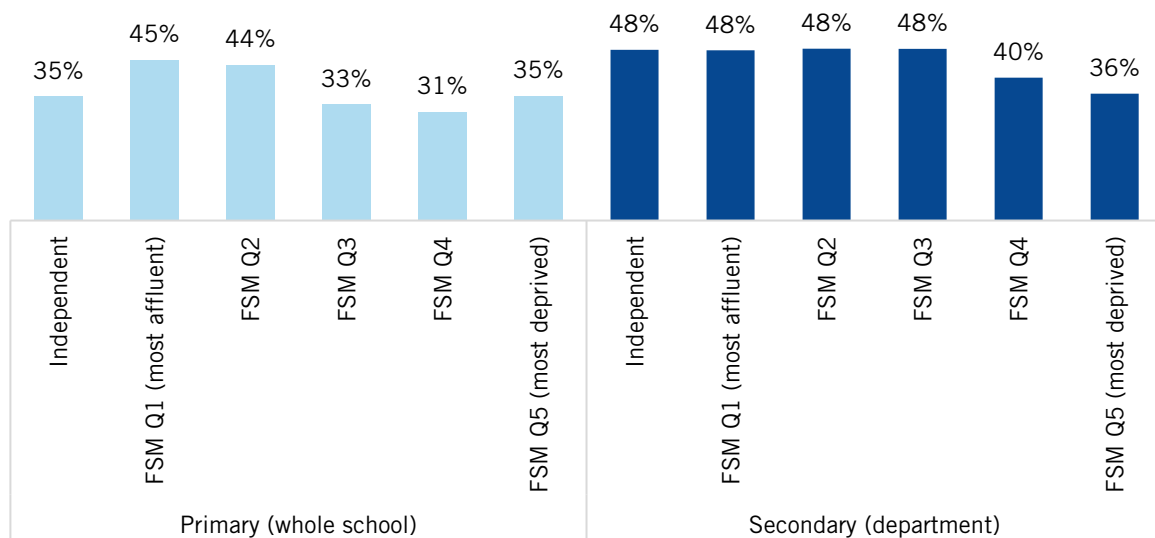
In the primary sector, fee-paying independent schools and those with the lowest FSM proportions in the state-funded sector are more likely to say recruitment does not affect quality of education, with only 41% agreeing that recruitment is even a slight problem. The responses of the remaining four-fifths of primary schools are very similar, with just over half of teachers agreeing that recruitment difficulties affected the quality of education they were able to offer. In the secondary sector, the social gradient in the rising effect of recruitment difficulties across school types (ranked from Independent-FSM Q5) is consistent.

Figure 2: Inability to recruit suitably qualified staff affects the quality of education we can provide at our school



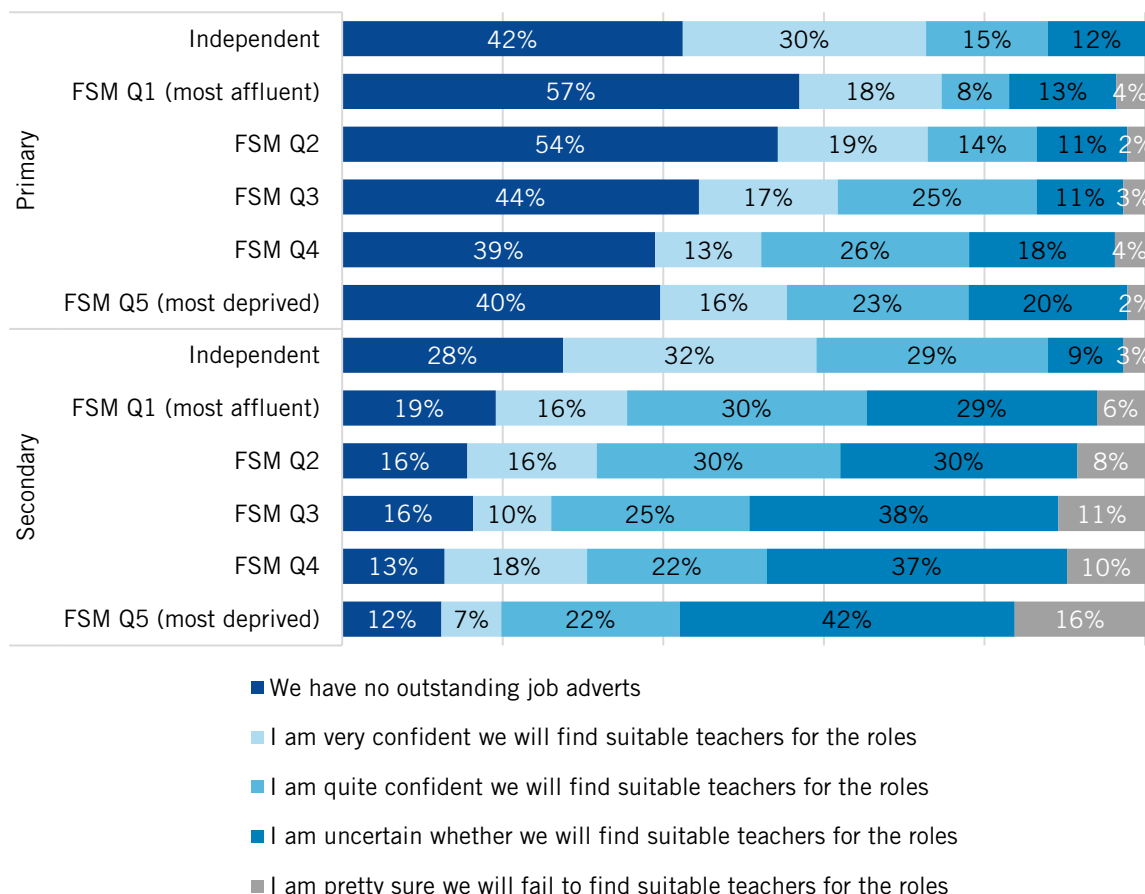
Looking forward to teacher concerns about the current recruitment round, in early May we asked teachers whether anyone in their school (for primary) or department (for secondary) had given notice that they intend to leave in the summer. The chart below shows the proportion of primary schools and secondary departments where teachers reported that they believed everyone was staying. Once again, though there are social inequalities in the stability of the workforce across both the primary and secondary sector, these differences are larger across secondary schools.

Figure 3: Proportion of teachers who report that no member of their school (primary) or department (secondary) is leaving at the end of the year



Teachers who work in the highest FSM schools are far more concerned about their ability to fill posts during the current recruitment round. This is particularly true in the secondary sector where 58% of teachers report they are uncertain about their school's ability to find suitable teachers. This compares to 35% of teachers in the lowest FSM quintile state-funded secondaries and just 11% in the independent sector.

Figure 4: Think of all the teaching job adverts that your school currently has posted. How likely are you to successfully fill them?



We asked a second, closely-related question to check for consistency in response to questions about the current recruitment round. When we asked our sample of teachers to directly pick the statement that best corresponds with the likely position of their school by next September, exactly the same picture emerged. In the primary sector where teacher shortages are clearly less of an issue, the differences between high and low FSM schools are not particularly obvious, though the most affluent state-funded schools do appear to be in a stronger position.

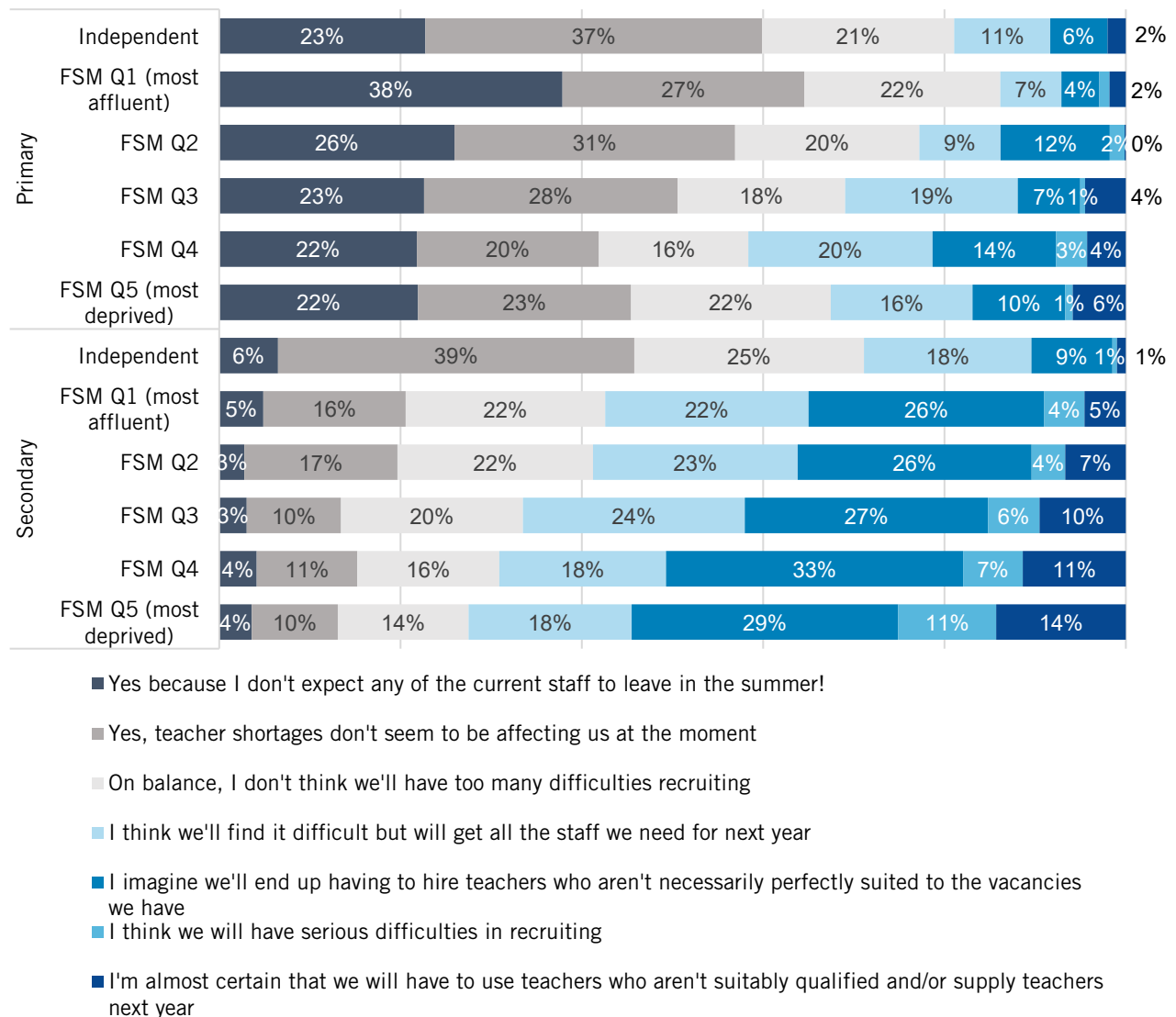
In the secondary sector, recruitment difficulties are more pressing overall. Looking at those schools serving the most disadvantaged communities, teachers feel the recruitment situation here is seriously problematic:

- 14% of teachers in the highest FSM schools feel certain they will end up having to use teachers who are not suitably qualified, or supply teachers

- A further 11% of teachers in the highest FSM schools expect to encounter serious difficulties in recruiting
- A further 29% of teachers in the highest FSM schools expect to appoint teachers who aren't perfectly matched to the vacancies they have.

These findings are definitely a cause for concern, not only for pupil attainment but also for teacher well-being and retention.

Figure 5: Do you think your school is likely to have a full-cadre of suitably qualified teachers for the next academic year?



Overall, this analysis all suggests that where a government allows teacher shortages to rise, whether through pay restraint policies, tuition fees on teacher training or as a consequence of high graduate employment, these shortages will disproportionately pool in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities. We can see that this is most pressing for secondary schools in maths and science departments. As secondary pupil numbers continue to rise, these shortages will continue to exacerbate inequalities in access to suitably qualified staff.

2. Teachers in disadvantaged schools are less attached to teaching as a career

The survey responses presented in the previous section highlight the extent of current recruitment difficulties in schools serving disadvantaged communities, particularly those in the secondary sector. The contrast between primary and secondary phase schools echoes past analysis of the School Workforce Census, where a secondary teacher in the highest deprivation quintile school is, other things being equal, 70% more likely to leave than a secondary teacher at a neighbouring school in the lowest deprivation quintile is. The equivalent social gradient statistic for primary schools is just 20%.¹⁰

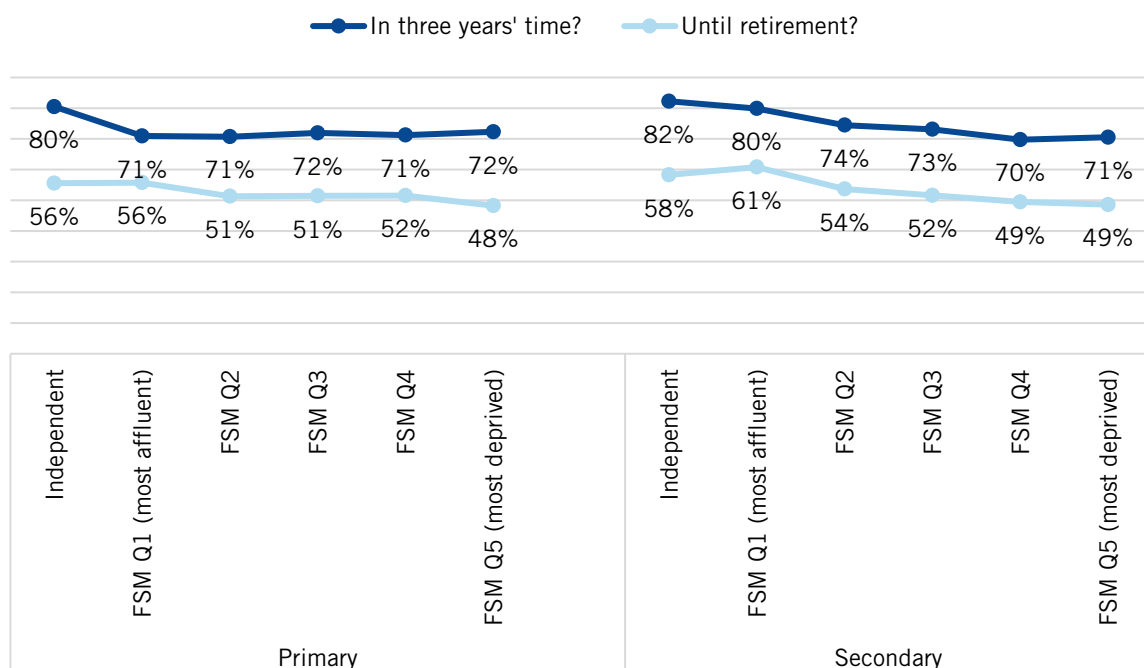
Whereas the earlier section asked the teacher their views on *their school's* recruitment position overall, in this section we ask questions about personal career and job attachment. Where we see relationships between the demographic profile of the school and the teacher's own attachment to the profession, questions of causation are rather difficult to unfold. This is because we cannot be certain what exactly is causing the relationship. We discuss possible causes in the next section.

Teachers in schools serving more disadvantaged communities do seem less sure that they will still be teaching in either three years' time, or indeed until retirement. Once again, the social gradient is more pronounced in the secondary sector. The most affluent state-funded secondaries, alongside the independent sector, do seem to have a workforce who are more attached to teaching as a job. These patterns of attachment to teaching are not explained by variation in staff experience.

There are a number of reasons why a teacher might not expect to continue in teaching until retirement. We try to ascertain the extent to which they might feel trapped in teaching through lack of alternative job opportunities by asking whether they would leave if they could find a job that matches their current salary. About half of primary teachers agree with the statement, if only slightly. This may sound high, but this type of response is likely to be similar across many professions – people like to try out different jobs and it is usually job-specific skills and thus wage differentials that prevent them from doing so. Other than the independent sector (where teachers do seem far more satisfied with their choice of career) there is relatively little social gradient in responses across primary schools.

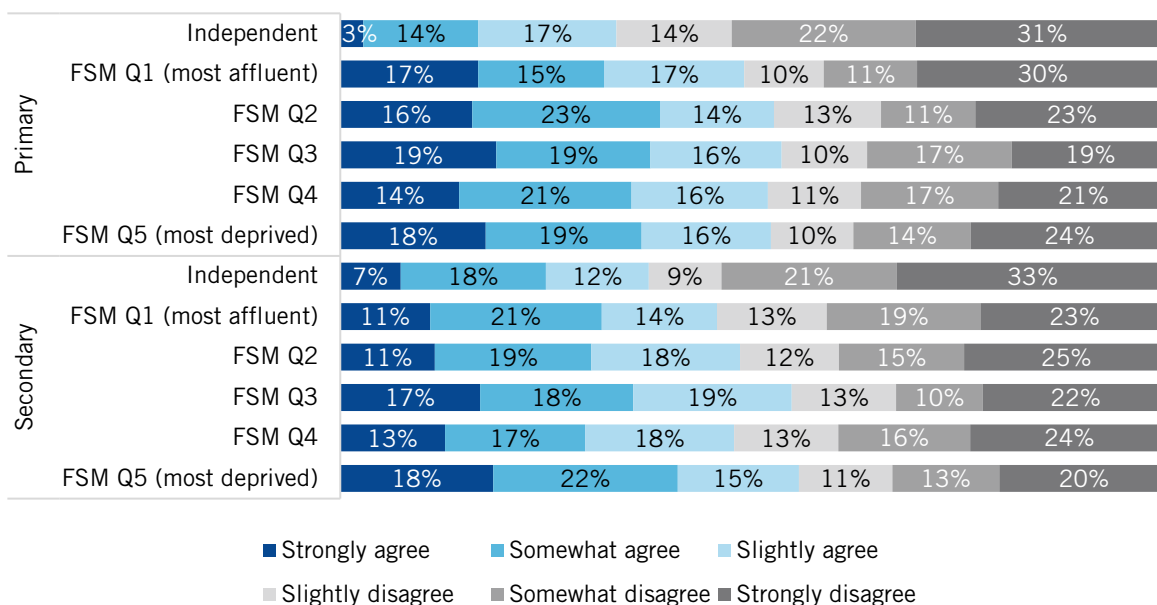
¹⁰ Allen, R. and Sims, S. (2018). Do pupils from low-income families get low-quality teachers? Indirect evidence from English schools. *Oxford Review of Education* 44 (4), 441-458.

Figure 6: Do you expect to be a teacher...?



Across secondary schools, the picture is not entirely consistent. Those who teach in the most affluent state-funded secondaries do seem a little less likely (than the more disadvantaged state-funded secondaries) to agree they would leave teaching if they could match their salary elsewhere (45% versus 55%, respectively).

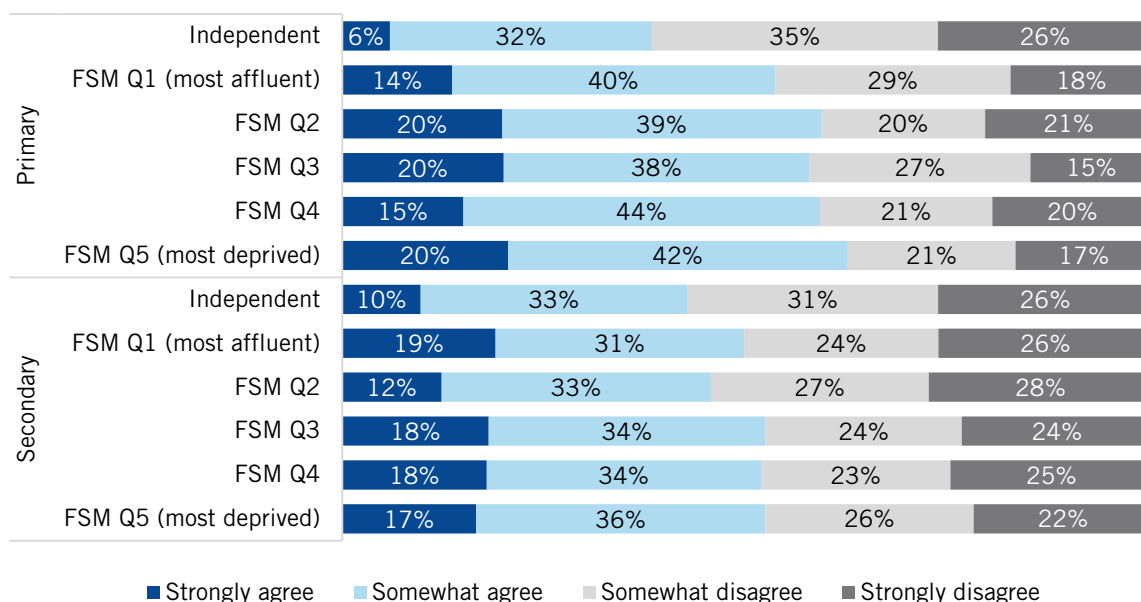
Figure 7: "I would leave teaching if I could find a job that matches my salary"



If teachers in more disadvantaged schools are a little less attached to teaching as a career overall, this raises the question as to whether they were the type of teachers who were a little less enthusiastic even when they started training, or alternatively whether their experience of teaching has reduced their commitment to the profession since.

Figure 8 shows how enthusiasm for teaching has changed for teachers who are now teaching in different types of schools. This is not the ideal proxy for the actual change in commitment to, and enthusiasm for, teaching since our ability to recall our historic attitudes to something can be biased. The pattern in the data is quite mixed and there does not seem to have been larger deteriorations in enthusiasm for teaching amongst those in disadvantaged schools, relative to those in more advantaged schools. One possible explanation is that more disadvantaged schools tend to attract those who are slightly less committed to teaching from the outset, but we cannot be sure this is the case.

Figure 8: “I don't seem to have as much enthusiasm now as I did when I began teacher training”



A further question is whether more affluent schools are able to attract the most committed teachers at the start of their careers, perhaps thanks to more favourable Ofsted ratings, or whether these patterns we observe arise from migration of more experienced teaching staff.

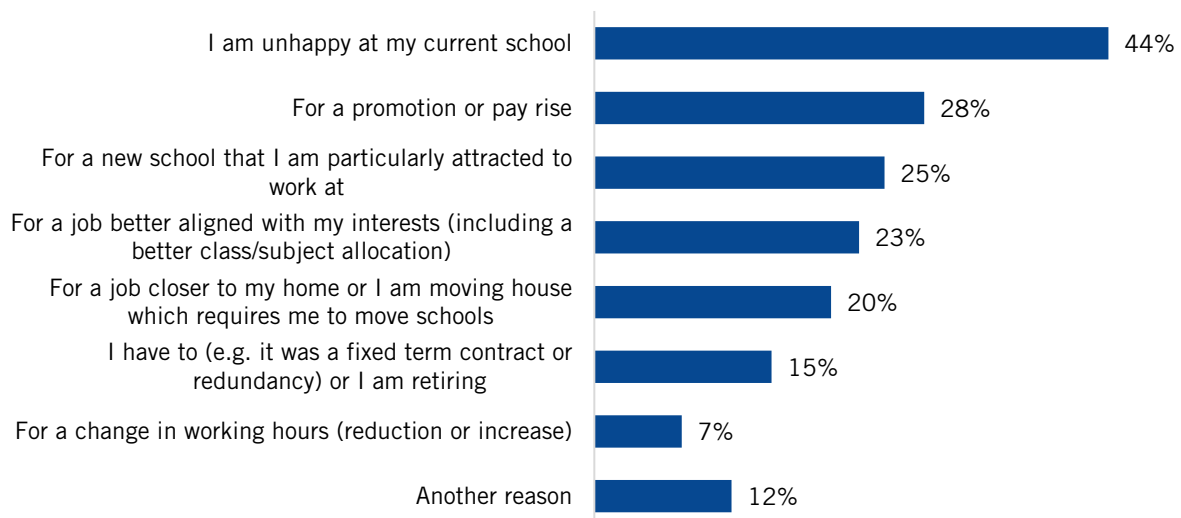
Overall, this analysis highlights a worrying pattern that those currently teaching in more disadvantaged schools seem less committed to remaining in the profession. Understanding the reasons why this might be the case more fully is crucial since it helps us understand how to alleviate these inequalities. In the next section, we explore teacher beliefs about what it is like to teach in different types of schools to try to understand this further.

3. Teachers believe schools serving disadvantaged communities are harder to teach in

In the previous two sections we have seen some evidence that more disadvantaged schools tend to have greater recruitment difficulties and have teachers who feel less attached to the profession. We also saw that this was particularly true in the secondary phase. In this section we try to understand the extent to which teachers perceive teaching in a school serving a disadvantaged community as more challenging or less enjoyable.

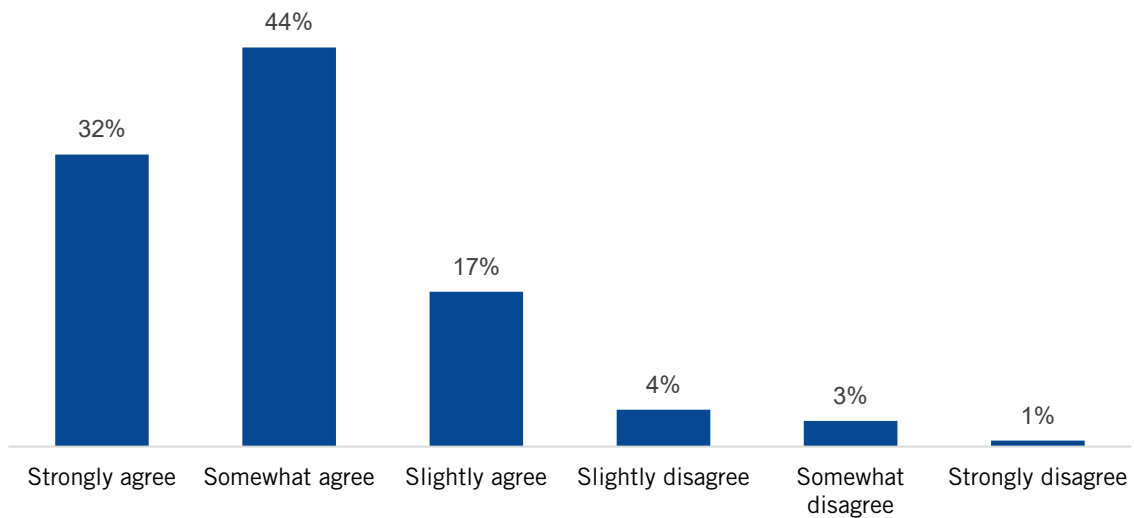
Teachers leave schools for a variety of reasons. We asked the 597 teachers in the survey pool who reported they were leaving their jobs this year for the reasons why, allowing them to select more than one response. For about half of teachers, the reasons for leaving are negative: they declare that they are unhappy at their current school. These reasons do not vary particularly consistently with the free school meals proportion at their current school, though those at affluent schools are more likely to leaving due to retirement or the end of fixed term contracts. By contrast, those at more disadvantaged schools say they are particularly attracted to the new school they applied to work at, which could point toward the need to better understand exactly what it is that attracts them.

Figure 9: Why are you leaving your current job?



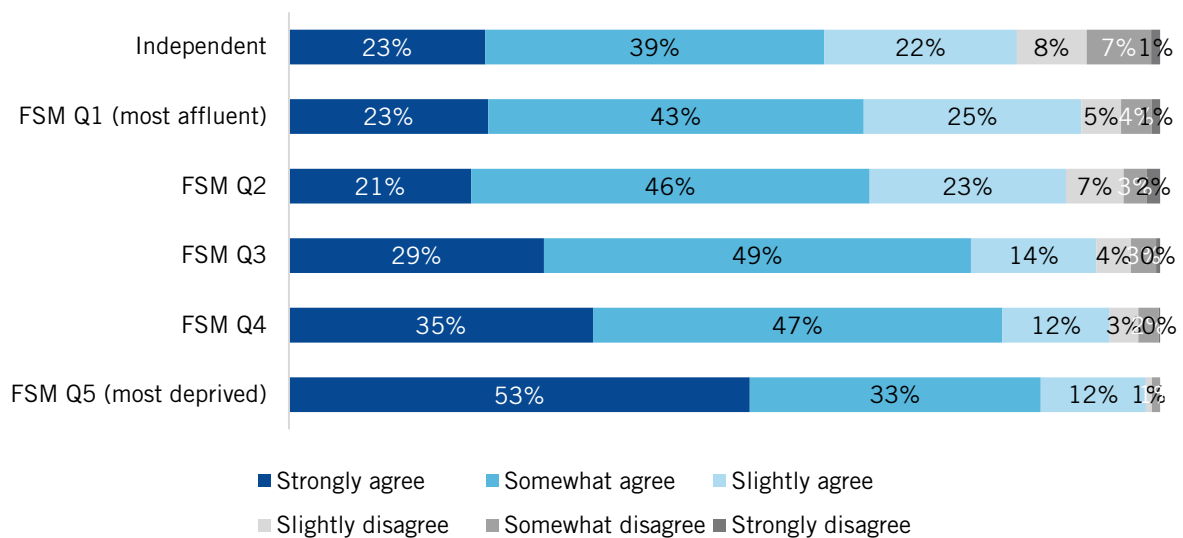
Teachers overwhelmingly agree that teaching in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities tends to be harder work – 92% of teachers agree this is the case (either slightly, somewhat or strongly – see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Teaching in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities is typically harder work



Those who *currently* teach in disadvantaged schools are far more likely to agree that it is harder work – 53% strongly agree that it is, versus 23% in the most affluent state-funded schools and independent schools.

Figure 11: Teaching in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities is typically harder work



Teachers are almost as much in agreement that more skills are required to be able to teach in disadvantaged schools. Overall, 87% of teachers agree that this is the case and, once again, those who actually teach in more disadvantaged schools are much more likely to agree.

Figure 12: Teaching in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities typically requires more skill as a teacher

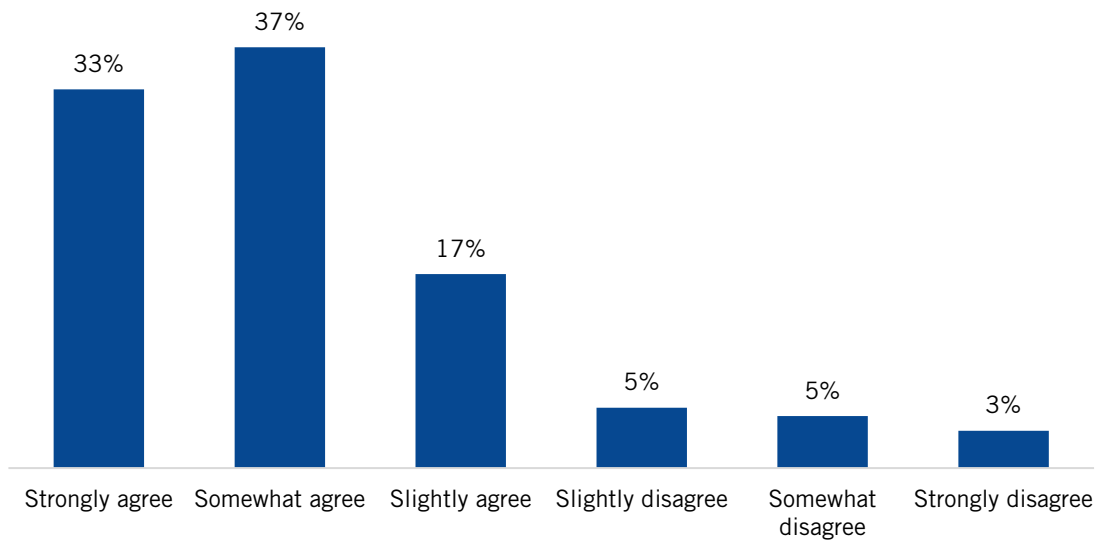
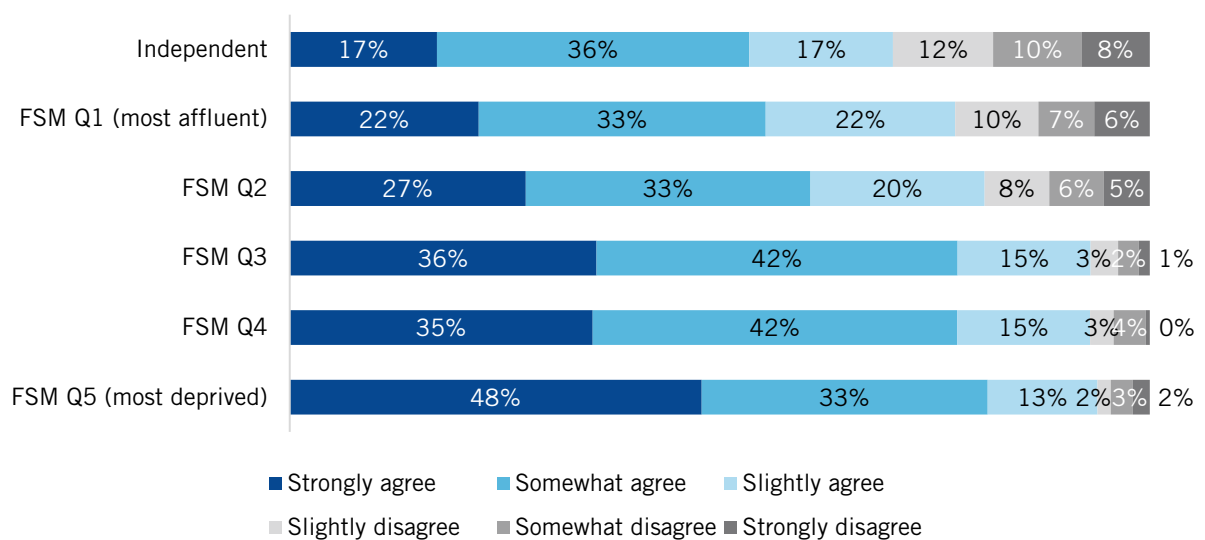
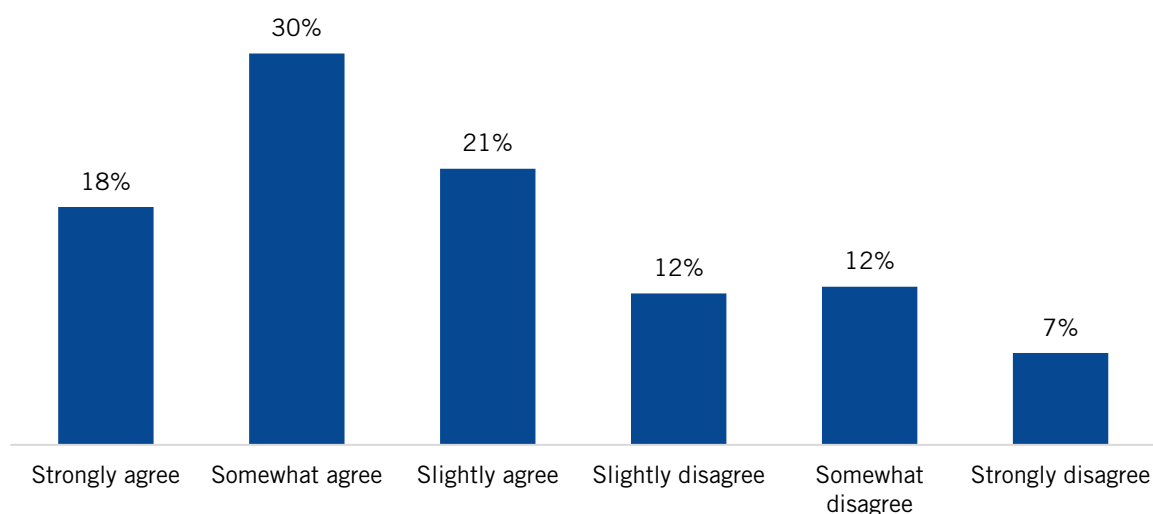


Figure 13: Teaching in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities typically requires more skill as a teacher



Understanding *why* teachers think teaching in disadvantaged schools is harder or requires more skills is quite difficult because there are social norms around how teachers prefer to talk about their students. We try to overcome these by asking teachers to make choices about which of their current classes they prefer. For secondary teachers who teach a wide variety of different types of classes each week, we asked them to think about which they prefer. Figure 14 shows that 69% of them agree that the classes they enjoy teaching most have slightly higher attaining students in them. This presents a challenge for recruitment to more disadvantaged schools, where average attainment tends to be lower.

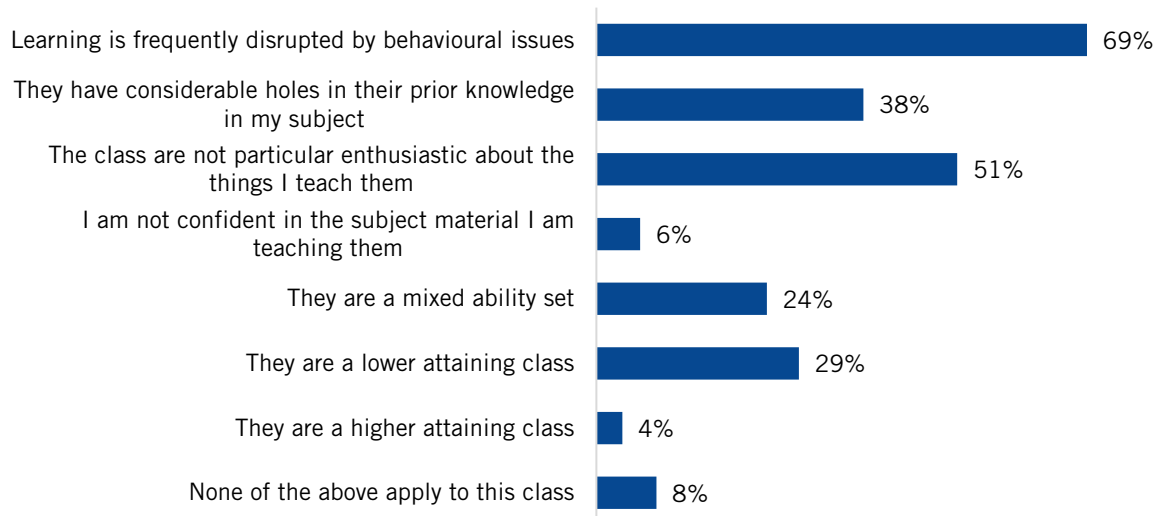
Figure 14: The classes I enjoy teaching the most tend to have slightly higher attaining students in them



We also asked secondary teachers to think of the class they enjoyed teaching least that week, allowing them to select more than one statement about the class. Their responses show why teaching lower attaining students or those who are less engaged with school might be a challenge:

- 69% said behaviour was an issue in the class
- 51% said the class are not enthusiastic about their subject
- 38% said the class has considerable holes in prior knowledge
- They are almost never a higher attaining class (just 4%), are often a mixed ability set (24%) and are frequently a lower attaining class (29%).

Figure 15: Think of the class you enjoyed teaching least this week. Which of the following statements is true about the class?

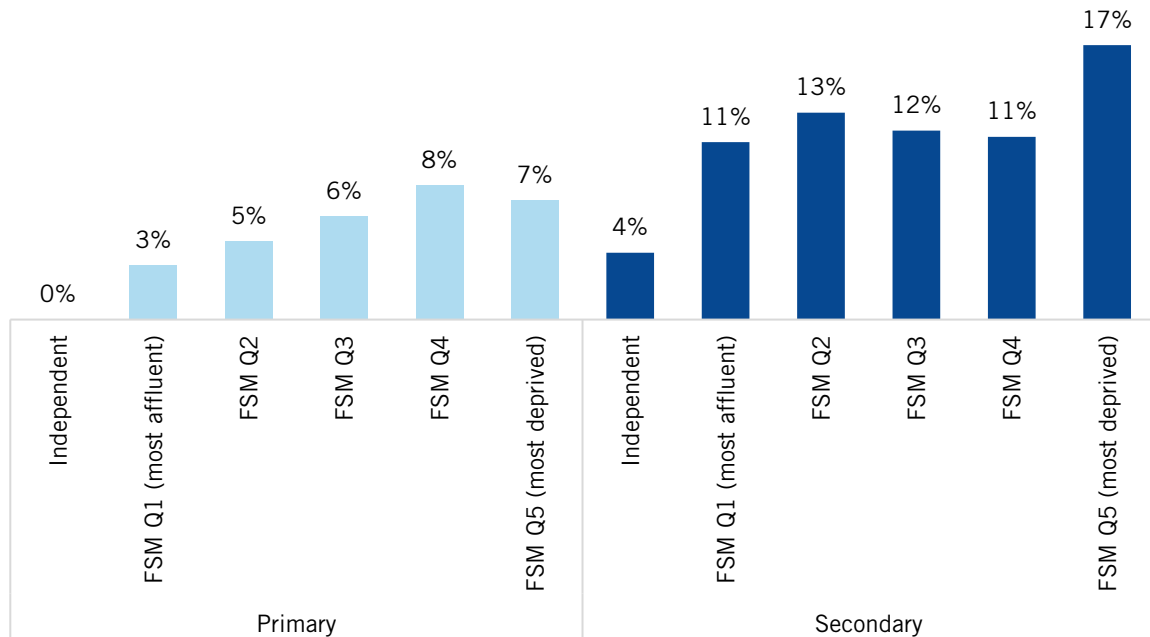


There are many teacher surveys that help us understand the nature of student behaviour overall. However, none of these report how behaviour varies across more affluent and more deprived schools.¹¹ We do know that more deprived schools are less likely to receive favourable Ofsted behaviour judgments, but understanding the interaction between school demographics and school behaviour represents a gap in the research evidence.

When we asked teachers about which one factor has made them think about leaving their job, however fleetingly, 11% in the most affluent secondaries mentioned behaviour versus a higher 17% in the most disadvantaged secondaries. (The other options were workload, leadership, pay, support, culture, wanting to try a new career). That said, these differences are perhaps not as stark as some may expect, as shown in Figure 16. Nonetheless, it is clear that behaviour is less of a concern to primary teachers. This may be due to the age of the children, but primaries also have other strengths in terms of the depth of relationships that are developed with a class.

¹¹ For a summary, see: Williams, J. (2018). *"It Just Grinds You Down" Persistent disruptive behaviour in schools and what can be done about it*. Policy Exchange Report. Retrieved from: <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/It-Just-Grinds-You-Down-Joanna-Williams-Policy-Exchange-December-2018.pdf>

Figure 16: Teachers who declared that poor behaviour has been the most important consideration at those times when they have considered leaving their current job

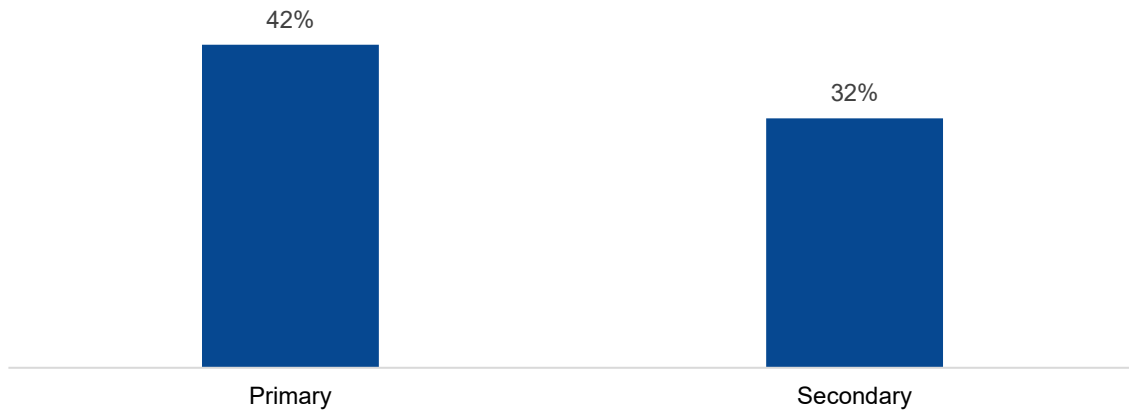


In the above question, it was noteworthy that workload and management practices were *more* likely to be cited than behaviour issues as a reason to think about leaving their job. We wanted to ascertain the relative importance of workload versus student disruption in choice of school to teach at. Both workload and student behaviour are within the gift of school leadership to manage and, as we saw earlier, both are perceived to be more challenging in schools with disadvantaged intakes. The reasons for higher workload in more disadvantaged schools are complex, but are likely to include greater complexity of student needs and pastoral concerns, greater incidence of booster and revision sessions, and closer monitoring of teacher activities.¹² That said, arguably it is behaviour that is more closely tied to the demographic profile of the school.

We present teachers with a hypothetical situation where they are moving to a new area and must choose between a school with a long hours culture versus one with student disruption in class. Figure 17 shows that both primary and secondary teachers both tend to choose the longer working hours with impeccable behaviour; secondary teachers even more so than primary.

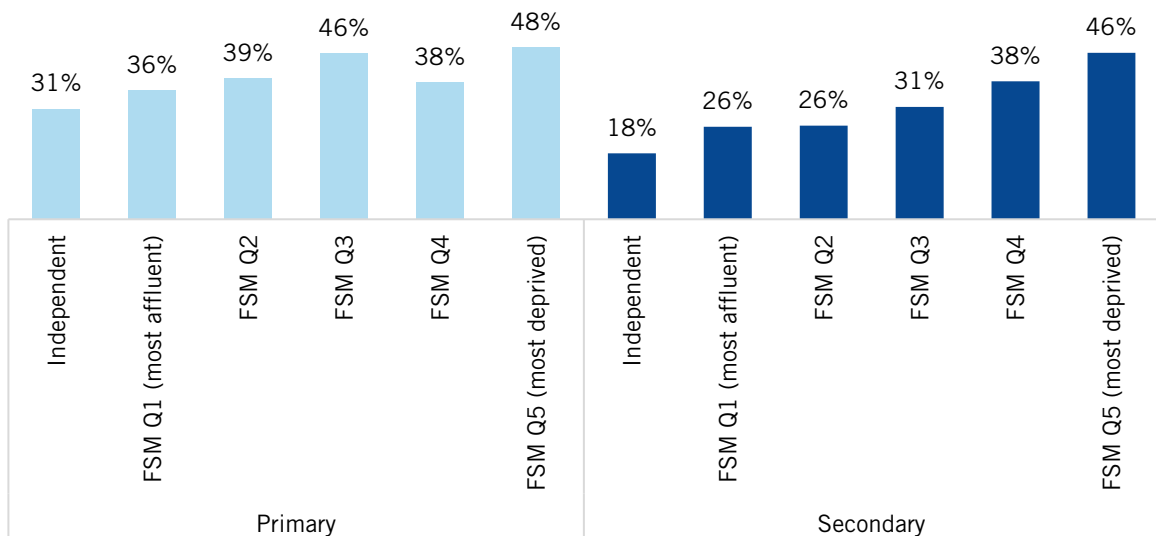
¹² On book scrutiny as an example of monitoring: Allen, R. and McInerney, L. (2019). *Book scrutiny and Ofsted: Will it be a burden?* Teacher Tapp blogpost, retrieved from: <https://teachertapp.co.uk/book-scrutiny-ofsted-will-it-be-a-burden/>
 On SATs booster sessions: Allen, R. and McInerney, L. (2019). *SATs Reform: 50 Shades of Playing The System (And How To Reform It)* Teacher Tapp blogpost, retrieved from: <https://teachertapp.co.uk/sats-reform-change-future-teacher-assessment-reliable/>

Figure 17: Percentage of teachers who said they would choose short work hours (with disruptive behaviour) over long working hours (with impeccable behaviour)



However, when we break down the figures according to the FSM quintile of their current school, a clear pattern emerges. Those who have *currently* chosen to teach in schools with more affluent intakes strongly wish to avoid schools with behaviour problems, even if this means working longer hours. Of course, we don't know why this is – they may genuinely feel their own personality and skillset is poorly suited to working with more challenging behaviour. Alternatively, they may feel uncertain about doing so simply because they are less experienced in schools where behaviour may be challenging. But either way, the implications are that it is likely to be hard to persuade teachers currently teaching at more affluent schools to apply for jobs at any school where they fear behaviour is not under control.

Figure 18: Percentage of teachers who said they would choose short work hours (with disruptive behaviour) over long working hours (with impeccable behaviour)



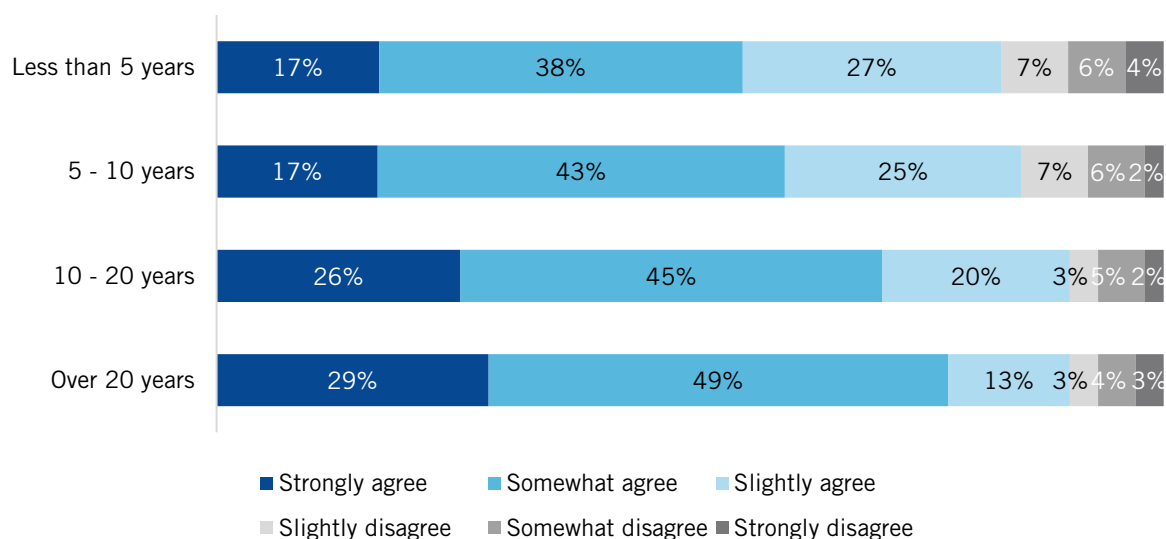
Most of the findings in this section relate to teacher *perceptions* of what it is like to teach in different types of schools. Whilst the reality may or may not be different, perceptions are critical in determining what sort of jobs teachers will seek out in the future. It is clear, at least for secondary teachers, that poor pupil behaviour frequently causes many teachers to consider leaving their own school or disliking a particular class. Most teachers would be willing to trade longer working hours for impeccable behaviour, particularly those who are currently teaching in more affluent schools.

4. Shortages are best dealt with by pursuing local recruitment strategies

This section explores how we might persuade teachers to apply for jobs at schools serving more disadvantaged communities that are currently experiencing shortages. We firstly begin to do so by inquiring what teachers look for, and what they actively avoid, when they are seeking out a new school to teach at.

Teachers tend to know the reputation of other local schools and have thus formed a view as to whether they are good school to teach at. This is particularly true of more experienced teachers, but even relatively inexperienced teachers claim they know which other local schools would be good places to teach. We do not ask them where this view of a school's 'reputation' came from – it could be other teachers, parents and the community, local press and social media, or even Ofsted ratings.

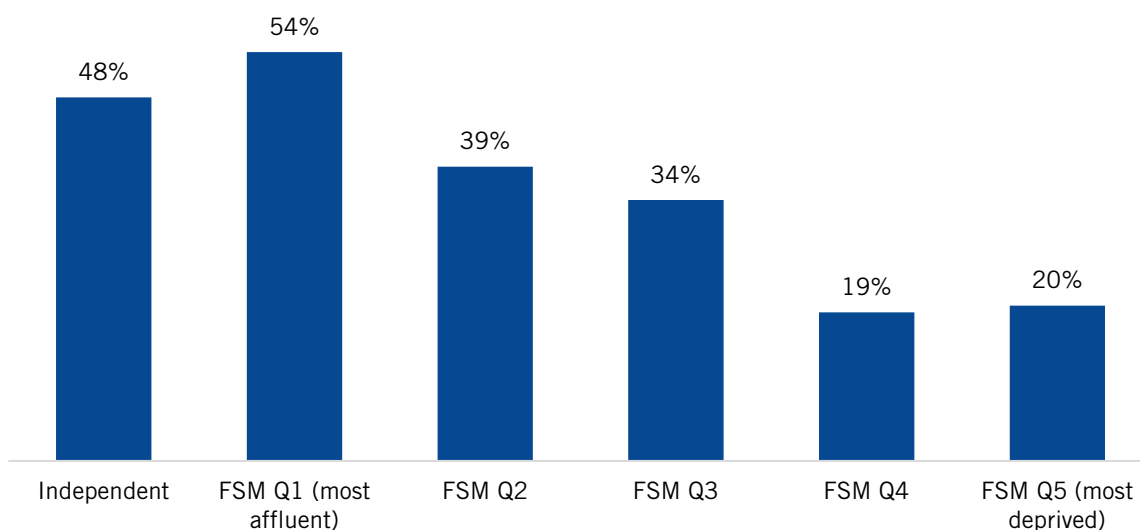
Figure 19: I know which other local schools would be good places to teach



It is clear that some schools have a more positive reputation than others. When we asked teachers why they applied to their current teaching role, 54% of those who now work in the most affluent schools said that they were attracted to the school's reputation versus just 20% for those who applied to the most deprived schools.

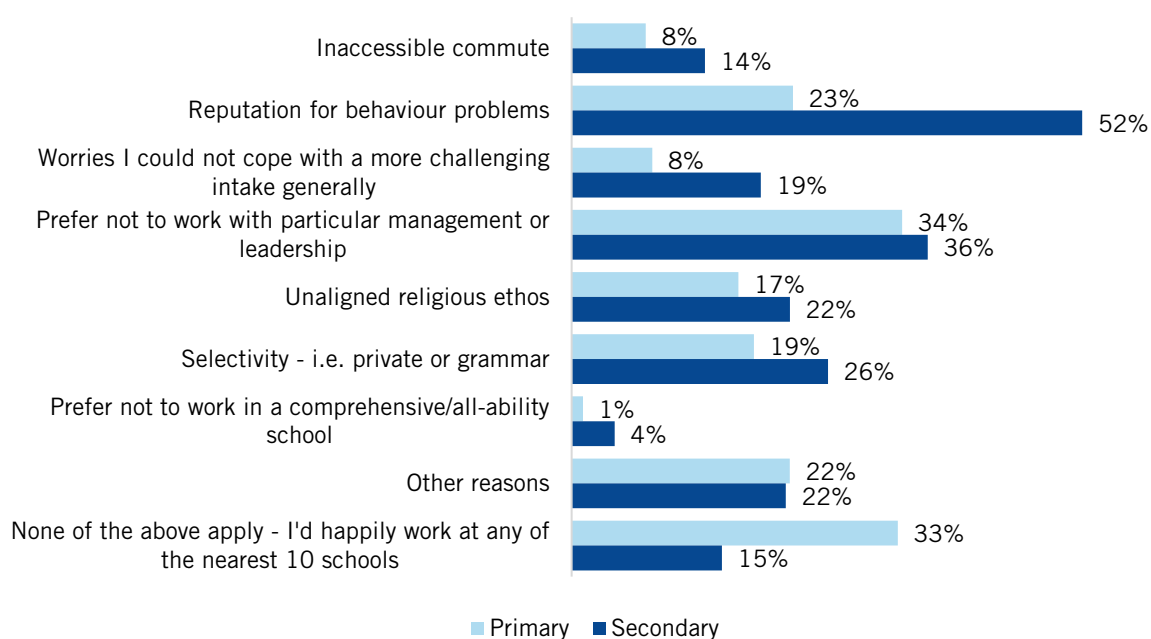
A poor school reputation can be a deterrence factor for recruiting teachers. Often, however, a below par reputation may not be the school's fault – for instance, teachers may have perceptions of the local community and area that are completely unrelated to what the school does (for example as a result of seeing children and parents outside school hours). This means that, in order to develop a strong school 'reputation', senior leadership must work to overcome perceptions of the school by both teachers and the wider community.

Figure 20: Percentage of teachers reporting that the school's 'good reputation' attracted them to their current role



When we asked teachers why they would prefer *not* to work at any of their current local schools, 52% of secondary teachers and 23% of primary teachers said that at least one local school had a reputation for behaviour problems. In secondary schools, behaviour was more frequently mentioned as a reason to not want to work at a local school than poor reputation of management was - though for primary schools the reverse was true. It is noteworthy that one-third of primary teachers would happily work at any local school; for secondary teachers this figure is one-in-six.

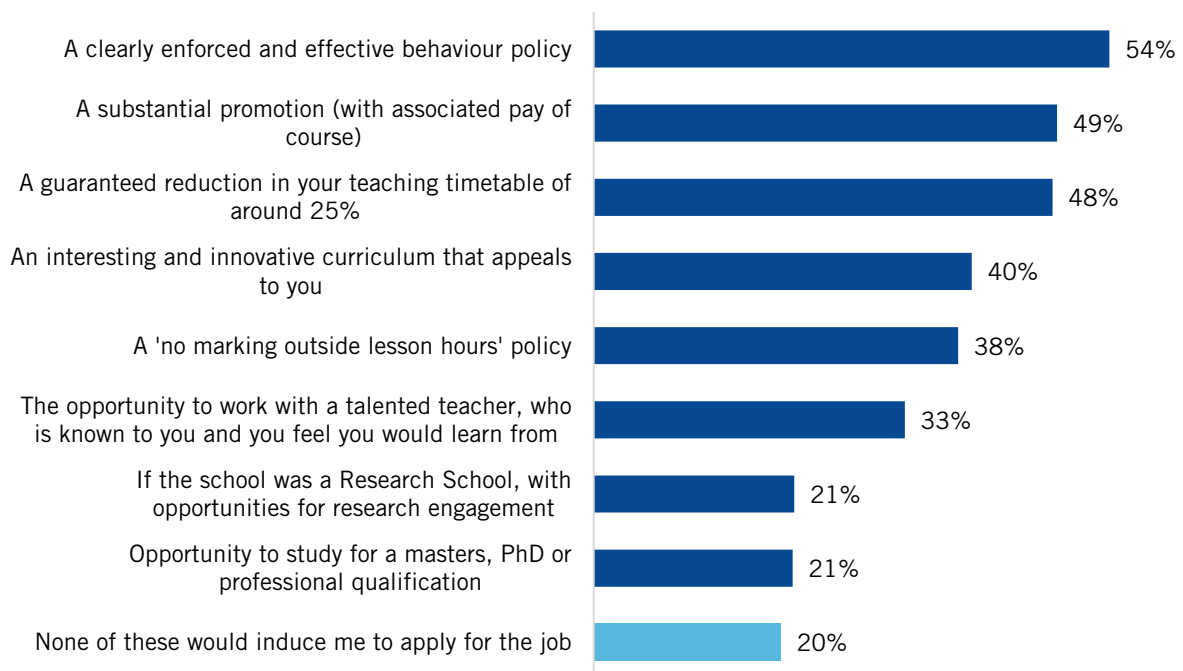
Figure 21: Tick any of the reasons why you might prefer not to work at one of the 10 nearest schools (whether state or private and of relevant phase) to your current house



We asked teachers what would lead them to seriously consider applying to teach at a local school that serves an educationally disengaged community and that has recently gone into special measures. The results are quite positive. Only 1-in-5 say that *nothing* would induce them to apply for the job. Of the key factors likely to attract them to work at the school, many cost relatively little money:

- 54% would want to see a clearly enforced and effective behaviour policy – this is costly only in terms of senior leadership time needed to implement;
- 49% would be attracted by a substantial promotion – this could cost the school anywhere from £5,000 upwards, depending on the starting position of the teacher.
- 48% would be attracted by a guaranteed reduction in teaching timetable of around 25% - for a classroom teacher this is likely to cost around £10,000.

Figure 22: Suppose there is a local school that serves an educationally disengaged community and has recently gone into special measures. Which of the following perks is attractive enough for you to seriously consider applying to work there?



The type of perks that attract a teacher do vary according to the experience of the teacher. In general, the most experienced teachers are less likely to find most perks appealing. Inexperienced teachers are more attracted to perks that may not cost much money, though might be more difficult to create, such as:

- The opportunity to work with a talented teacher
- An interesting and innovative curriculum
- A 'no marking outside lesson hours' policy

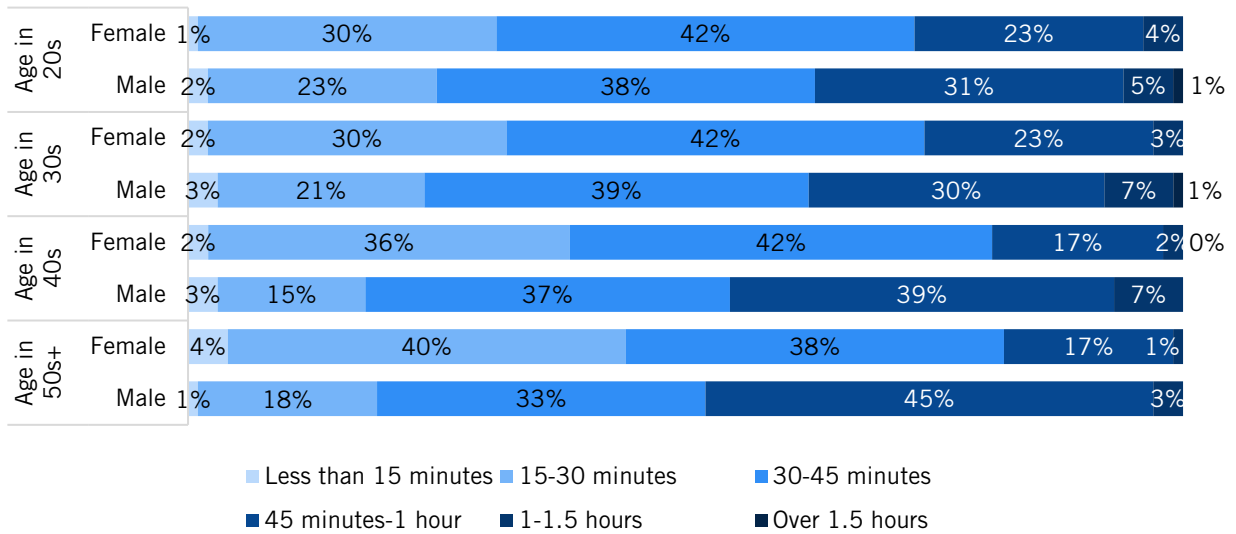
Table 2: Suppose there is a local school that serves an educationally disengaged community and has recently gone into special measures. Which of the following perks is attractive enough for you to seriously consider applying to work there?

	Years of experience			
	Less than 5 years	5 - 10 years	10 - 20 years	Over 20 years
A substantial promotion (with associated pay of course)	51%	56%	47%	38%
Opportunity to study for a masters, PhD or professional qualification	24%	22%	23%	13%
A guaranteed reduction in your teaching timetable of around 25%	45%	53%	53%	40%
The opportunity to work with a talented teacher, who is known to you and who you feel you would learn from	41%	34%	31%	22%
A clearly enforced and effective behaviour policy	59%	61%	53%	41%
An interesting and innovative curriculum that appeals to you	44%	46%	38%	29%
If the school was a Research School, with opportunities for research engagement	22%	25%	22%	14%
A 'no marking outside lesson hours' policy	45%	42%	35%	31%
<i>None of these would induce me to apply for the job</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>32%</i>

When looking at recruiting within the local teacher labour market, it is notable that some teachers are *far* more willing to commute long distances than others. Male teachers are happier to commute longer distances than are female teachers. This is true even for teachers in their twenties, but the differences become more apparent by the time teachers are in their forties and fifties. For women, they are typically quite unwilling to make long commutes for an ideal job by the time they are in their forties. This is presumably because they are combining their work with caring for younger or older relatives. This is important to note because it suggests that attracting new teachers is likely to be more successful if they are relatively young, or if they are older but are the primary breadwinner in the family.¹³

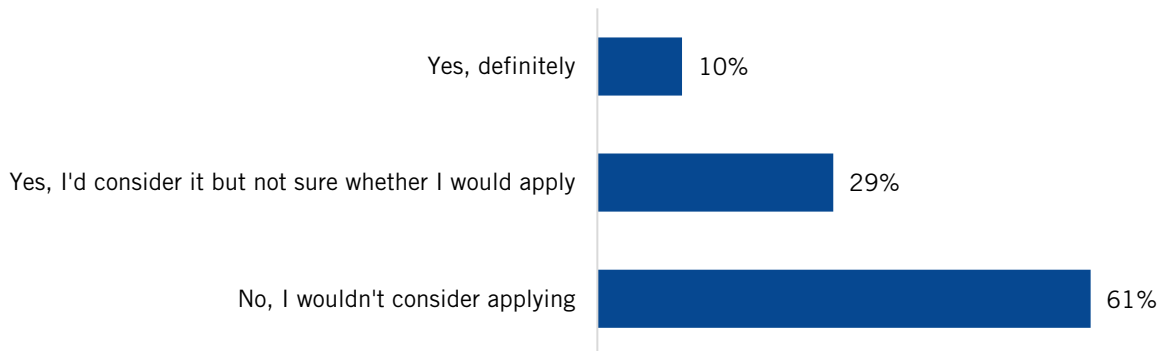
¹³ 2018 survey data from Teacher Tapp showed 47% of teachers as 'trailing spouses' versus 29% who earn more than their partner.

Figure 23: How long would you be prepared to commute to take your ideal job? (Just count your journey time in one direction.)



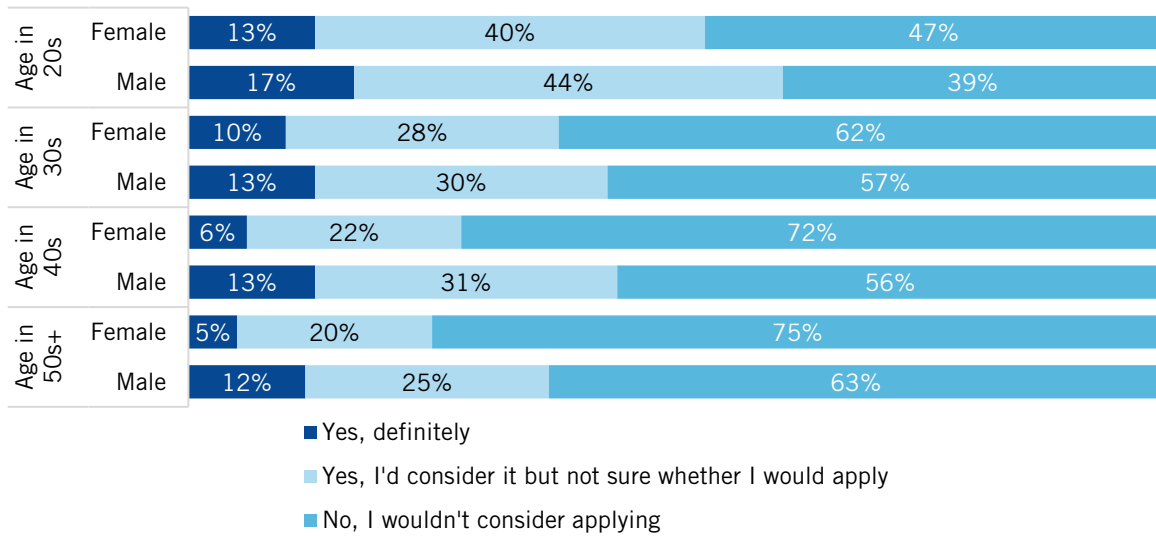
Persuading a teacher to move house in order to take on a new role is clearly more demanding. Just 1-in-10 feel sure that they would apply for their dream job if it was advertised in a school 100 miles away from where they currently live. That said, 1-in-10 does still amount to almost 50,000 teachers who would be willing to move for the right job.

Figure 24: Your dream job comes up in a school that is 100 miles away. Would you consider applying?



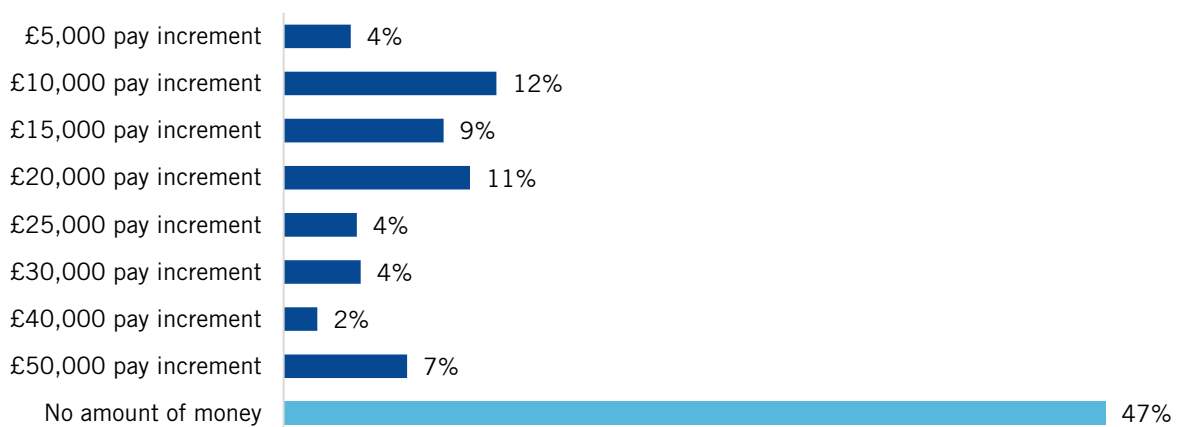
Mirroring the earlier analysis of long commutes, many men and women in their twenties would happily consider moving house for the right job. By their thirties, both sexes are a little more attached to the place they currently live. In their forties and fifties, far fewer women than men would consider moving.

**Figure 25: Your dream job comes up in a school that is 100 miles away.
Would you consider applying?**



It is said that there is a price to everything, including moving across the country to teach in a school that is struggling to recruit. That said, half of all teachers say that even the lure of a £50,000 pay increment wouldn't lead them to consider moving to teach 100 miles away. Presumably these teachers consider themselves absolutely tied by family commitments and/or a partner's place of work. Teachers in London are much more likely to consider moving to another part of country, which reflects the younger demographic teaching in the capital.

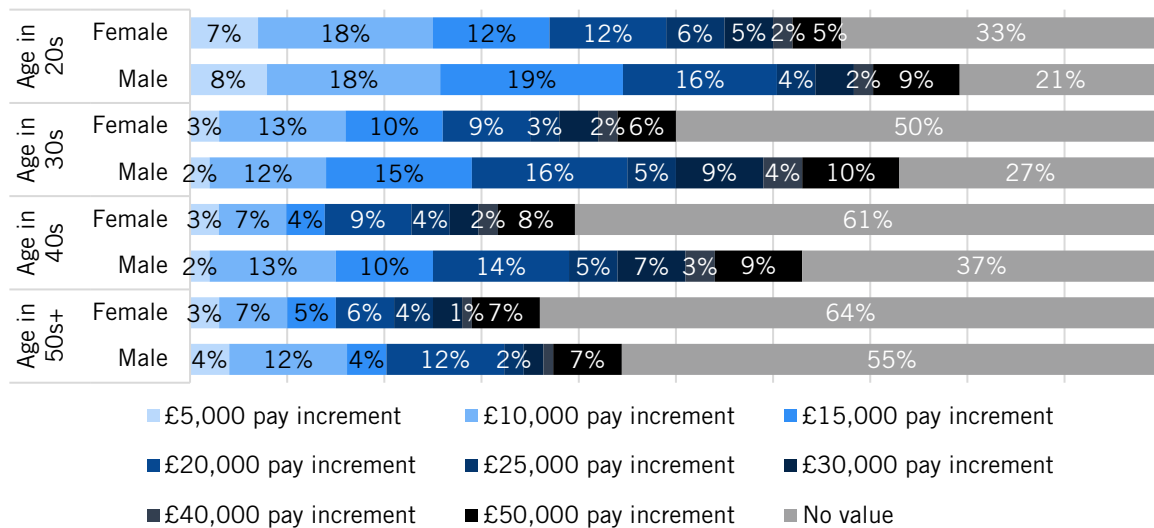
Figure 26: Suppose there is a school 100 miles away that is struggling to recruit. What is the minimum salary increment that would need to be offered (over your current pay) for you to consider applying to work there?



It is no surprise that wage sensitivity is related to age (and thus also existing salary). Relatively few teachers would consider moving for just a £5,000 pay increment (it is likely that most of the first year's wage uplift would be used up in the costs of moving and furnishing new accommodation). 25% of teachers in their twenties would consider moving for a pay increment

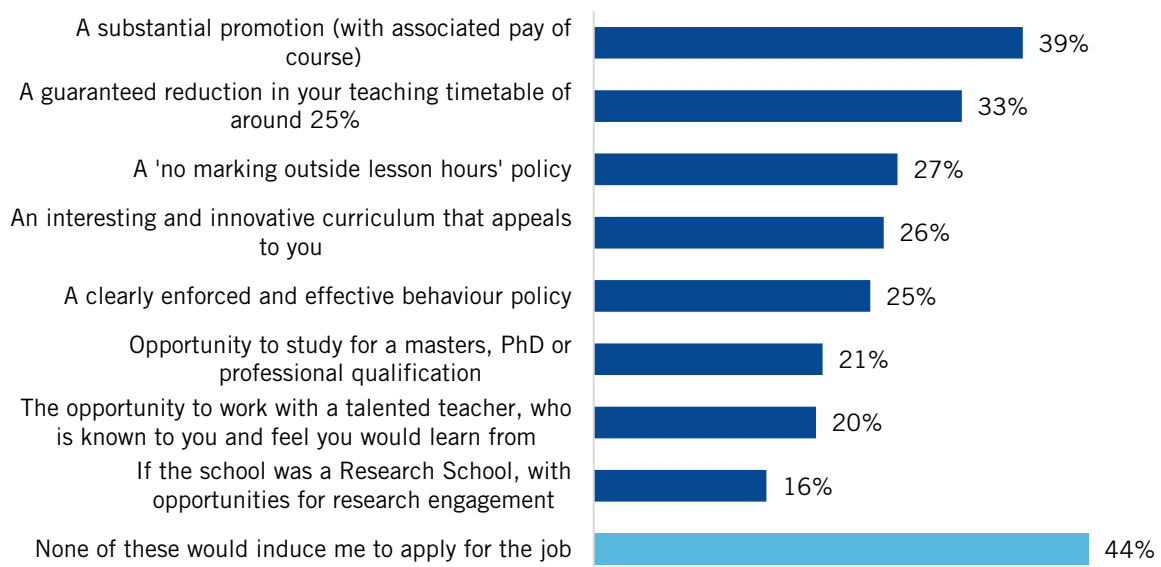
of £10,000 or less. Once teachers are older, women are frequently unwilling to move, regardless of wage uplift. Whilst men are willing to consider a move, few (around 15%) would do so for £10,000 or less.

Figure 27: Suppose there is a school 100 miles away that is struggling to recruit. What is the minimum salary increment that would need to be offered (over your current pay) for you to consider applying to work there?



The type of job perks that would attract teachers to move across the country are a little different to those that would attract teachers to make a less risky local move. Behaviour is now selected less frequently than is the need for a substantial promotion (and pay rise) or a guaranteed reduction in teaching timetable.

Figure 28: Suppose there is a school 100 miles away that is struggling to recruit. Which of the following perks is attractive enough for you to seriously consider applying to work there?



This analysis of willingness to move for jobs shows how teachers become relatively geographically immobile once they are out of their twenties and would most frequently want a significant pay rise to make the move worthwhile. This means that if there are geographical concentrations of teacher shortages, then it is only likely to be worthwhile to concentrate on moving relatively inexperienced teachers across the country.

It also shows how important it is to resolve regional imbalances in the location of initial teacher training, since training somebody in a part of the country where there are fewer jobs is unlikely to result in them moving to a new area.¹⁴ Shortages mean we have now reached the stage where the Government allows initial teacher training providers to recruit as many trainees as they wish in many subjects.¹⁵ There are also bursaries available for certain shortage subjects.¹⁶

Two further policy approaches are worth exploring. Firstly, it is worth identifying whether there are any parts of the country with teacher shortages where there is no substantial initial teacher training provision in place. In these types of areas, long-term resolution of shortages in the local teacher labour market might be best served by setting up a new initial teacher training organisation, whether as part of a school, a trust or as a stand-alone entity. Secondly, the government could consider requiring teachers in receipt of substantial bursaries to teach in more disadvantaged schools or in particular areas as a condition of the bursary. This would need to be done with care, ensuring that a place at one of these schools was indeed available to them and that the school was able to provide them with the sort of environment where they were able to thrive.

For existing teachers, encouraging them to move between schools in a local area to resolve shortages seems more fruitful. Nearly all teachers say they would be willing to consider teaching in a local school that was struggling to recruit and was in special measures, provided the right conditions were in place. Though giving these teachers a promotion or timetable reduction is costly, many of the other conditions they say they desire are not.

The challenge for all of these schools is in how they can signal that they are the kind of place where it is possible to teach, that is, pupil behaviour is good; workload is not too high and management practices are sound. Overcoming teacher general perceptions about the challenges of more disadvantaged schools or specific local reputational issues should not be underestimated. The first stage is clearly to institute a sound behaviour policy that every teacher

¹⁴ Allen, R., Bibby, D., Parameshwaran, M. and Nye, P. (2016). *Linking ITT and workforce data: (Initial Teacher Training Performance Profiles and School Workforce Census)*, DfE research report. Retrieved from: <https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2016/07/linking-itt-and-workforce-data-initial-teacher-training-performance-profiles-and-school-workforce-census/>.

¹⁵ Department for Education (2018). *Initial teacher training allocations methodology Guidance for the 2019 to 2020 academic year*. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-requesting-places-2019-to-2020>.

¹⁶ Department for Education (2019). *Initial teacher training bursaries funding manual: 2019 to 2020 academic year*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-bursary-funding-manual/initial-teacher-training-bursaries-funding-manual-2019-to-2020-academic-year>

is forced to adhere to that minimises teacher workload (by centralising detentions, for example). Recent EEF guidance on behaviour management has emphasised the importance of whole-school approaches.¹⁷ The second stage is to signal that these practices are in place. Clear language on job adverts and websites could help, as could encouraging local teachers to visit the school any time they wish (for example during planning, preparation and assessment time) and promoting applicant visits before interviews take place. While central government could highlight case studies of fruitful approaches, it is ultimately up to schools to work at curating their external reputation.

¹⁷ Education Endowment Foundation (2019) *Improving Behaviour in Schools*. Retrieved from: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_schools_Report.pdf

Discussion

We have known for some time that schools serving disadvantaged communities have higher teacher turnover and make greater use of non-specialist teachers. This report contributes new evidence that affirms that teachers currently teaching at our most disadvantaged schools are concerned about the impact of teacher shortages on the quality of education they can provide. Trying to resolve inequalities in the distribution of teachers without lowering school segregation of pupils is extremely difficult. Ultimately, the characteristics of schools and the nature of the teaching job is intimately related to the social and educational needs of the students they serve. Nonetheless, the will is increasingly there, and this report suggests strategies that could help.

Our survey shows that teachers do have a preference for teaching students who are not disruptive, who do not have gaps in prior learning and who are progressing well educationally. It is perhaps no surprise that disengagement with education expressed by parents who themselves struggled with schooling spills over to the next generation. The challenge for school leaders is to create a school environment where their students can feel engaged and can experience success, without this meaning significant extra work for teachers. If the price of working at a more disadvantaged school is closer scrutiny, substantial administration of behaviour incidences and holidays spent delivering booster sessions and revision days, then it is no surprise that many teachers are reluctant to work at these schools.

The surveys also show that, whilst some teachers at more disadvantaged schools seem quite happy to deal with relatively disruptive behaviour (perhaps because they have considerable experience in doing so), the teachers currently at more affluent schools – that these schools need to attract – have a strong preference to avoid it. To many teachers, behaviour is a hygiene factor – if it isn't good then no other school qualities matter. Schools need to create a working environment that works for those teachers they wish to recruit, and not just those who are already in post.

There are many low-cost characteristics that are so appealing to teachers that they would even consider applying for a job at a disadvantaged local school in special measures, if they could be guaranteed. In theory, behaviour, marking approaches, the quality of curriculum and access to well-matched and talented staff are all within the gift of a skilled leadership team to facilitate. However, even where they *can* successfully, the greater challenge is *signalling* that the school is a desirable place to come and work.

It seems that improving the local reputation of a school as a good place to work is the most important route to improving the supply of teachers who are likely to apply for a job in a disadvantaged school. The amount of money that would be needed to encourage people to move across the country is relatively large, and in any case more experienced teachers tend to become quite geographically immobile. Government should concentrate on market interventions to ensure that new teachers are trained in parts of the country that experience supply difficulties. For the existing stock of teachers, schemes to encourage local teachers to consider schools serving more disadvantaged communities are likely to be most successful.

Appendix: Survey methodology

The survey questions were answered by over 7,000 teachers in state-funded and independent schools in England via the Teacher Tapp survey app. Because not every teacher chooses to answer questions every day, the achieved sample for questions was typically around 3,000 (see Table 4 below). The teachers are distributed across about 2,000 primary schools and 2,000 secondary schools. The fieldwork was conducted over April, May and June 2019 (see dates for particular questions below).

Anybody with access to phone app stores is able to download and use Teacher Tapp every day. The survey respondents are validated and weighted to represent the teaching population using the following procedure:

1. Only teachers with a valid school identifier (Unique Reference Number) are retained. This is derived from free text entry of their school name and postcode;
2. Analysis is conducted on those who have provided valid gender, age and job post information, since they are key characteristics involved in the weighting procedure;
3. English School Workforce Census provides demographic characteristics of the teaching population in England's state-funded schools. This is supplemented by information from the Independent Schools Council survey of privately-funded schools;
4. The first stage of the weighting procedure fixes the proportion of the sample in primary, secondary and special/AP phases against those of the population;
5. The second stage of the weighting procedure fixes the proportion of the sample within each phase who teach in the state-funded and private sectors against those of the population;
6. Finally, for each of these six phase-funding subgroups (e.g. state-funded primary teachers), we carry out a raking procedure to re-balance our sample to ensure it reflects that subgroup's population characteristics in terms of geographical region, age, gender and seniority.

The result of this is that some teachers 'count' more than others in the sample and so are assigned a weight with a value greater than one. For reference, the following groups are under-represented:

- Those teaching in special schools and alternative provision and those in the primary phase
- Teachers age 50 and over
- Classroom teachers without any responsibilities

Table 3 shows how the application of the post-stratification weights adjusts the sample along key demographic lines.

Table 3: Representativeness of the sample before and after applying weights

		% of total respondents	% of total after applying weights
School funding	Independent	7%	7%
	State-funded	93%	93%
School phase	Primary	34%	50%
	Secondary	64%	45%
	Special/AP	2%	5%
School region	East Midlands	8%	8%
	East of England	13%	13%
	London	18%	17%
	North East	4%	4%
	North West	12%	13%
	South East	18%	17%
	South West	9%	9%
	West Midlands	9%	8%
Teacher age	Yorkshire/ Humber	10%	10%
	Age in 20s	23%	24%
	Age in 30s	35%	32%
	Age in 40s	25%	23%
Teacher gender	Age in 50s+	10%	14%
	Female	66%	70%
	Male	30%	24%
Teacher seniority	Classroom teacher	29%	36%
	Middle leader	33%	36%
	SLT excluding head	20%	10%
	Headteacher	7%	4%

Table 4 lists the survey dates and responses for the questions used in this report.

Table 4: Survey questions asked

Question text	Scheduled Date	Responses
Almost every person in every job has a moment when they consider leaving. Which of these has been the most important consideration at those times when you have considered leaving in the past year? Please choose just one.	19/04/2019	3,425
Do you expect to be a teacher in three years' time?	31/01/2019	966
	18/04/2019	3,578
Do you expect to be a teacher until retirement?	02/02/2019	2,801
Do you think your school is likely to have a full-cadre of suitably qualified teachers for next academic year (or are you worried about shortages)? Pick the response that most closely applies.	10/04/2019	1,060
Do you think your school is likely to have a full-cadre of suitably qualified teachers for next academic year (or are you worried about shortages)? Pick the response that most closely applies.	03/05/2019	3,636

Has anyone in your department/faculty given notice that they intend to leave this summer? Tick all the apply.	03/05/2019	2,211
Has anyone in your school given notice that they intend to leave this summer? Tick all the apply.	03/05/2019	1,425
How long would you be prepared to commute to take your ideal job? (Just count your journey time in one direction.)	13/01/2019	2,533
How much do you agree with the following statement: "I would leave teaching if I could find a job that matches my salary."	13/04/2019	3,484
I don't seem to have as much enthusiasm now as I did when I began teacher training	24/04/2019	3,725
I know which other local schools would be good places to teach	15/05/2019	3,524
Inability to recruit suitably qualified staff affects the quality of education we can provide at our school	05/05/2019	3,539
My department or faculty is currently well-staffed with suitably qualified teachers	29/04/2019	2,196
My school is currently well-staffed with suitably qualified teachers	29/04/2019	1,336
Suppose there is a LOCAL school that serves an educationally disengaged community and has recently gone into special measures. Which of the following perks is attractive enough for you to seriously consider applying to work there? You may tick more than one response.	22/05/2019	3,432
Suppose there is a school 100 miles away that is struggling to recruit. Which of the following perks is attractive enough for you to seriously consider applying to work there? You may tick more than one response.	22/05/2019	3,435
Suppose there is a school 100 miles away that is struggling to recruit. What is the minimum salary increment that would need to be offered (over your current pay) for you to consider applying to work there?	17/05/2019	3,587
Teaching in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities is typically harder work	21/05/2019	3,415
Teaching in schools that serve more disadvantaged communities typically requires more skill as a teacher	16/05/2019	3,452
The classes I enjoy teaching the most tend to have slightly higher attaining students in them	17/05/2019	2,464
Think of all the teaching job adverts that your school currently has posted. How likely are you to successfully fill them?	24/05/2019	3,580
Think of the class you enjoyed teaching *LEAST* this week. Which of the following statements is true about the class (tick as many as apply)?	17/05/2019	2,463
Thinking about your current teaching role, what made you apply to the school? Please tick all that apply.	12/05/2019	3,584
Tick any of the reasons why you might prefer not to work at one of the 10 nearest schools (whether state or private and of relevant phase) to your current house	12/05/2019	3,581

Why are you leaving your current job? Tick all the apply	10/06/2019	5
	11/06/2019	650
	12/06/2019	96
	13/06/2019	38
	14/06/2019	19
	15/06/2019	8
You are moving to a new area so must find a new job. There are two options. The first school has a low workload culture where teachers all leave without marking by 4:30pm. However, in your tour of the school you could see quite a bit of student disruption in class. The second school has impeccable behaviour, but teachers you meet admit they tend to have to work very long hours. Which school would you choose?	08/02/2019	3,235
Your dream job comes up in a school that is 100 miles away. Would you consider applying?	16/05/2019	3,469

The Sutton Trust
9th Floor
Millbank Tower
21-24 Millbank
London, SW1P 4QP

T: 020 7802 1660
F: 020 7802 1661
W: www.suttontrust.com

Twitter: [@suttontrust](https://twitter.com/suttontrust)

