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Supporting the recruitment and retention of teachers in schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils: understanding current practice around managing teacher workload

Practice review

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Educational Research

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- identifying promising educational innovations that address the needs of disadvantaged children in primary and secondary schools in England;

- evaluating these innovations to extend and secure the evidence on what works and can be made to work at scale; and

- encouraging schools, government, charities, and others to apply evidence and adopt innovations found to be effective.

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Executive summary

A current priority for EEF is to further the understanding of the challenges to teacher workload faced by schools in England, especially those serving areas of high disadvantage, and the approaches being used to mitigate them. The aim of this practice review, conducted by NFER, is to make recommendations for future research by providing findings to enable EEF to consider potential workload reduction strategies for impact evaluations.

We adopted a mixed-methods approach to this workload practice review. We collected data via a survey of 1,326 practising classroom teachers[1] and school leaders[2] from 1,137 schools, and carried out 12 interviews with teachers and leaders. We also conducted rapid desk review of 30 sources to inform the development of the survey and interview instruments and to identify any new and emerging strategies to reduce workload since the EEF's commissioned evidence assessment on teacher quality, recruitment and retention (Taylor et al., 2023). The study took place in Summer 2023.

This study shows that most schools appear to be using multiple strategies to manage teacher workload, to the extent that there are few strategies that are not being widely adopted. Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA)[3] time is the most commonly reported strategy, followed by access to existing schemes of work/lesson plans, and collaborative lesson planning.

The key barriers and enablers of workload reduction mirror one another. Some of the main drivers of workload come from outside the school – primarily from the government and Ofsted, but also from parents/carers. Insufficient funding and staff capacity is the top barrier to workload reduction[4]; increased support from other agencies is a key enabler, and reducing the workload associated with behaviour management is the top priority for schools to address in future.

Teachers whose schools have more workload reduction strategies in place are significantly more likely to have positive views on manageability of their workload, autonomy and job satisfaction. We found some aspects of workload (such as lesson planning and communicating with parents/carers) that teachers find time-consuming but would not want to cut back or delegate to others because they consider these to be part of their professional responsibility and integral to the quality of teaching and learning.

Many schools in the study had changed their policies and approaches recently with the intention of reducing teacher workload. However, introducing new strategies often adds to workload, at least in the short term. School leadership is one of the few mediating factors of workload reduction found in this research. Over a quarter (28%) of teachers identified a 'lack of support from the senior leadership team (SLT)' as a barrier to workload reduction in their school. A key theme from the interviews was the

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[1] Where the report refers to a 'teacher', this includes all who specified in the survey that they were one of the following: leading practitioner; qualified teacher (QTS/QTLS); early career teacher (ECT); or unqualified teacher.

[2] Where the report refers to a 'leader', this includes all who specified in the survey that they were one of the following: Multi Academy Trust (MAT) chief executive officer or executive headteacher; headteacher; deputy headteacher; or assistant headteacher.

[3] All teachers who participate in the teaching of pupils are entitled to reasonable periods of PPA time. PPA time must amount to not less than 10% of the teacher's timetabled teaching time.

[4] Increased funding/staffing was also identified as the top enabler.

importance of leaders in determining the culture around workload. This suggests that it is the whole-school approach to reducing workload that is important, in addition to the efficacy of specific strategies.

We identified few sources of workload that disproportionately affect schools with large proportions of disadvantaged pupils. However, teachers and leaders working in schools with high proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (FSM)[5] were more likely to identify a lack of support from parents/carers as a barrier to workload reduction. They were more likely to identify changes to behaviour management and pastoral care as a priority for future action.

This practice review adds to the available evidence base, suggesting that schools' efforts to manage teacher workload have been successful in reducing excessive teacher workload, but have not been sufficient to reduce it to acceptable levels (Adams et al., 2023; Churches & Fitzpatrick, 2023; CooperGibson Research, 2023). As most schools appear to be adopting most of the available workload reduction strategies, the main implication of this practice review is that schools' efforts need to be sustained and attention should now turn to examining the external drivers of teacher workload.

The evidence from this study, and others, suggests that the majority of schools are using multiple strategies to manage workload and they are having a small effect. The key difference in effectiveness appears to be how well schools implement their workload reduction plan. However, EEF may wish to investigate in future the comparative impact of workload strategies; for example, the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) software applications. This would provide guidance to schools on which approaches are more likely to be impactful than others so that leaders can prioritise those approaches and allocate their resources effectively as part of their planning.

This practice review has also identified some other areas of interest which appear relevant to teacher workload and retention and that EEF may wish to explore, if they are not already doing so. These include exploring how school leaders plan and manage workload reduction effectively, how *limited* flexible working practices (such as allowing teachers to do PPA at home and have time off to attend appointments or key events) support teacher retention, and how some schools serving deprived populations are better able to address the challenges than others.[6]

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[5] An indicator for socio-economic deprivation.

[6] We recognise that work may be already underway in relation to some of these issues.

Background and review rationale

Research shows that high-quality teaching is important for pupil outcomes (Hanushek, 2011). However, teacher supply represents a persistent challenge in English education, particularly for schools serving disadvantaged children. Work by NFER (Worth, 2022 & 2023) has found that schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils typically experience higher teacher attrition, turnover and vacancy rates. Teacher supply has become a greater challenge recently, with initial teacher training missing recruitment targets and schools being forced to use non-specialist teachers to fill the gaps (Worth & Faulkner-Ellis, 2022).

To attract high-quality candidates to the profession and reduce attrition, teaching needs to be an attractive and fulfilling career. Work–life balance is a key consideration, and despite the government's commitment to addressing excessive and unnecessary workload, teachers' hours are higher than for similar graduates (McLean et al., 2023).

Workload is a key driver causing teachers to leave the profession (Lynch et al., 2016, DfE, 2017, Adams et al., 2023). Teachers' experiences of autonomy in their work, belief in the relevance of certain tasks (such as administration, data input, marking and lesson planning) and manageability (the volume of tasks that teachers have to do in the time available to do them) are important in driving decisions to leave, as well as the number of hours they work (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020).

It is possible that teachers working with disadvantaged pupils experience additional workload pressures. As Allen & McInerney (2019) have highlighted, the reasons for this are multifaceted but are likely to include: greater complexity of pupil needs; greater incidence of booster and revision sessions; closer monitoring of teacher activities; and increased pastoral concerns (including liaising with parents/carers and external agencies). Together, this could represent an additional emotional burden, contributing to teachers' perceptions of workload.

Recent research commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) has provided some insights into the strategies schools are using to manage teacher workload and their impact in schools. The first wave of the Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders (WLTL) surveys (Adams et al., 2023) took place in Spring 2022. It found that most teachers and leaders disagreed that their workload was acceptable (72%) or that they had sufficient control over it (62%). Most teachers and leaders reported that their schools had at least one strategy in place for managing and planning professional time and that their school had revised its policies and approaches recently with a view to improving workload.

Churches & Fitzpatrick (2023) evaluated an initiative to support schools with teacher-led research into new approaches that schools could take to streamline processes for workload reduction. Overall, schools reported that the number of unnecessary hours worked per week had reduced in the past four years (coinciding with the introduction of the DfE's school workload reduction policy and toolkit[7] in 2018) (DfE, 2018). Increased workload reduction activity was associated with self-reported improved teacher wellbeing and improved pupil attainment. However, some schools reported persistent problems with workload, often related to external pressures such as perceptions of what was required for Ofsted inspections, teachers being required to play multiple roles (such as subject leadership and

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[7] The toolkit, produced by leaders, teachers and other sector experts together with DfE contains practical resources for school leaders and teachers to help reduce workload, see: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workload-reduction-toolkit.

administrative tasks) without adequate time or support, waiting times for health and social care referrals for pupils, and challenges with school resourcing, among other areas.

Qualitative research by CooperGibson Research (2023) focused on the administrative tasks in schools, which teachers estimated took around two hours per day, on average. Teachers reported there had been an increase in such tasks for several reasons, including: a rise in the number of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); increased emails from parents/carers; and less administrative support available from school support staff. Teachers found it difficult to identify solutions because their schools had already implemented a range of workload reduction strategies and many of the tasks (such as safeguarding and SEND responsibilities) were necessary or important to support stronger teaching and learning.

A literature review commissioned by EEF in 2022 (Taylor et al., 2023) identified excessive workload as a considerable challenge for teacher retention in the UK and concluded that relevant approaches to prioritise in future research could include workload reduction interventions. This current study was established to explore current practices on managing workload in English schools and identify those which may be suitable for impact evaluation in future. It adopts a mixed-method approach, triangulating data from a teacher survey, interviews, and analysis of documents with the purpose of making recommendations for promising future areas for research.

Objectives of the review

A current priority for EEF is to further the understanding of the challenges to teacher workload faced by schools in England, especially those serving areas of high disadvantage, and the approaches being used to mitigate them. The aim of this practice review is to make recommendations for research by providing findings to enable EEF to consider potential workload reduction strategies for impact evaluations in future.

Research questions

RQ1   Overarching research question: What practices and strategies exist to manage teacher workload in English schools?

RQ2   Are there sources of workload that disproportionately affect schools with large proportions of disadvantaged pupils?

RQ3   How prevalent are different workload management practices and strategies in English schools?

RQ4   What are the enablers and barriers to implementing workload management practices and strategies?

RQ5   How are different workload practices and strategies perceived by teachers and leaders?

RQ6   Are there technological interventions or software solutions that have potential to reduce teacher workload?

RQ7   To what extent do practices/strategies to manage workload differ by school and teacher characteristics?

RQ8   Which workload practices and strategies are perceived as having the potential to positively impact teacher outcomes related to recruitment and retention?

RQ9   What outcomes are workload reduction strategies trying to achieve?

RQ10 How could the impact of strategies best be evaluated? What are the methodological challenges and enablers?

The report is structured as follows:

- In the *Methodology* section we briefly describe the research methods used for this study

- In the *Workload reduction strategies* section we present findings on what strategies schools are using to reduce workload and their perceived impacts (RQ1, RQ3, RQ5, RQ6, RQ7, RQ9)

- In the *Key barriers and enablers* section, we present findings on the main barriers and enablers to implementing workload management practices and strategies in schools (RQ4, RQ8)

- In the *Schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils* section, we present findings on whether disadvantaged schools are particularly affected by aspects of workload (RQ2)

- In the *Discussion and implications* section, we draw conclusions from the study, reflecting on the implications of the evidence for policy and practice and for future research and evaluation, including the methodological challenges and enablers (RQ10).

Methodology

The workload practice review processes are detailed in Appendices 1-6. A brief summary is provided here. We adopted a mixed-methods approach, triangulating data collected via:

- an online survey of teachers[8] and leaders[9]

- interviews with teachers and leaders

- a rapid desk review.

Table 1: Research questions and data sources

Theme	Research question (RQ)	Data source			
		Rapid desk review	Online survey	Interviews	NFER knowledge of the evidence base
Practice review	**RQ1** Overarching research question: What practices and strategies exist to manage teacher workload in English schools?	✓	✓	✓	✓
	RQ2 Are there sources of workload that disproportionately affect schools with large proportions of disadvantaged pupils?	✓	✓		
	RQ3 How prevalent are different workload management practices and strategies in English schools?		✓		
	RQ4 What are the enablers and barriers to implementing workload management practices and strategies?	✓	✓	✓	
	RQ5 How are different workload practices and strategies perceived by teachers and leaders?	✓	✓	✓	
	RQ6 Are there technological interventions or software solutions that have potential to reduce teacher workload?	✓		✓	
	RQ7 To what extent do practices/strategies to manage workload differ by school and teacher characteristics?		✓		
	RQ8 Which workload practices and strategies are perceived as having the potential to positively impact teacher outcomes related to recruitment and retention?	✓	✓	✓	
	RQ9 What outcomes are workload reduction strategies trying to achieve?	✓		✓	
Scoping future research	**RQ10** How could the impact of strategies best be evaluated? What are the methodological challenges and enablers?				✓

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[8] Where the report refers to a 'teacher', this includes all who specified in the survey that they were one of the following: leading practitioner; QTS/QTLS); ECT; or unqualified teacher.

[9] Where the report refers to a 'leader', this includes all who specified in the survey that they were one of the following: MAT CEO or executive headteacher; headteacher; deputy headteacher; or assistant headteacher.

Rapid desk review

We conducted a rapid desk review of current practice to manage teacher workload, to update and add to the findings since the EEF's commissioned evidence assessment on teacher quality, recruitment and retention (Taylor et al., 2023). Our desk review involved online searches of published reports and other material (e.g., teacher blogs and articles), with a specific focus on workload issues and solutions for teachers working with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils. The review included 30 sources. The purpose of the desk review was to inform the development of the survey and interview schedules and to identify any new and emerging workload reduction strategies, particularly those being advocated by practitioners themselves. Appendix 2 provides further details on the search criteria, the list of sources and an overview of the findings.

Survey of teachers and leaders

The NFER Teacher Voice panel of 1,326 practising teachers and leaders from 1,137 schools (maintained, academies and free schools) in England completed the online survey. Out of the respondents, 920 were teachers and 406 were leaders. 667 were teaching in primary schools and 659 were teaching in secondary schools. Appendix 3 includes additional survey sample information. The survey focused on the prevalence and perceptions of practices and strategies to manage teacher workload. To minimise burden and maximise response, the survey comprised mainly closed questions and took approximately ten minutes to complete. In designing the survey we used tried-and-tested questions from previous research, to enable comparisons. This included items from the inaugural WLTL survey, carried out in Spring 2022 (Adams et al., 2023). Most of the survey questions were similar for both teachers and leaders,[10] but we asked teachers specifically about their current extent of job satisfaction, autonomy and workload manageability to identify how these factors related to workload strategies in their schools (see Appendix 4 for the survey questions). The survey was piloted with a small number of teachers and leaders to test its suitability, and some amendments were made (e.g., to clarify wording and add further response options) before wider administration.

Interviews with teachers and leaders

We conducted 12 semi-structured online/telephone interviews with individual teachers and leaders. Interviewees comprised two leaders and four teachers from each sector (primary/secondary). Two-thirds of interviewees were from schools with high proportions[11] of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (FSM).[12] Appendix 5 includes additional qualitative interviewee sample information. Interviewees were recruited via the survey (over half of the survey respondents volunteered to take part in an interview; n=778). The research team adopted a purposive sampling approach to select potential interviewees. This allowed us to focus on particular characteristics of teachers and schools that are of interest to help us answer the research questions. Using these characteristics, we created a shortlist of

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[10] Leaders were asked questions about strategies to manage the workload of teachers in their school, not about strategies to manage their own/leader workload in both the survey and in the qualitative interviews.

[11] Schools in this group were in top 40% of schools nationally with the highest proportion of pupils eligible for FSM.

[12] An indicator for socio-economic deprivation.

50 teachers and leaders who were approached to participate.[13] To avoid adding unnecessarily to workload burdens, interviews were designed to take up to 30 minutes. Through the interviews we were able to obtain a detailed understanding of current and potential approaches to managing workload, how they are being implemented and their perceived impacts (see Appendix 6 for the interview schedule).

Approach to analysis

Both primary and secondary survey samples had good levels of representation across key school-level factors, including school type, performance and local authority type. However, the primary school, secondary school and combined samples were not nationally representative by FSM eligibility or number of pupils (school size). To address this, weights were calculated using FSM eligibility and pupil number data on the primary school, secondary school and combined samples and then applied where needed to create a more representative sample of all schools. All survey responses were analysed for statistically significant differences by sector (primary/secondary), role (teacher/leader) and FSM quintile.[14] Questions on workload management strategies/practices were analysed by key school and teacher characteristics.

Qualitative interviews were audio recorded, the key points of the discussion were summarised and detailed verbatim quotes were included. The interview summaries were imported into qualitative analysis software (MAXQDA). We built an initial framework based on the research questions; then coded the data according to framework themes. Initial deductive analysis was followed by an inductive approach, adding sub-codes arising from the data.

Qualitative data from the desk review was recorded in a framework based on the research questions and analysed thematically.

Limitations of the methodology

There were some limitations of the methods adopted in the study which mean there are some important caveats to consider when interpreting the findings. The number of responses to the survey was relatively high. However, the sample is substantially reduced in the sub-group analyses. This means that the study potentially risks missing differences between schools and individuals with different characteristics due to the numbers in each category. The survey sample also contained relatively few ECTs, so it should not be considered representative of their views. The interview sample was also small, self-selecting, and did not include the views of teachers and leaders in schools with few workload reduction strategies in place.

Deviations to study from the planned approach

There were few deviations from the initial planned approach to the workload practice review – all changes that were made related to the teacher interviews.

At the outset, we planned to interview teachers from schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils. At the request of EEF, we included a small number of teachers from schools with low/medium

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[13] Respondents were then selected for interview sequentially based on the sample requirements.

[14] Using chi square tests.

proportions of disadvantaged pupils to enable some comparison. We also adapted how interviewees were identified and recruited. We intended that the rapid desk review would provide a source of teachers to interview. However, there were few leads and the survey identified a very large number of potential interviewees. It was therefore agreed that all interviewees would be recruited from those who volunteered via the survey. The final adaptation to the planned approach was a short extension to the proposed timeline for the interviews. The data collection window was extended by one week to allow for increased flexibility in the times available to interviewees.
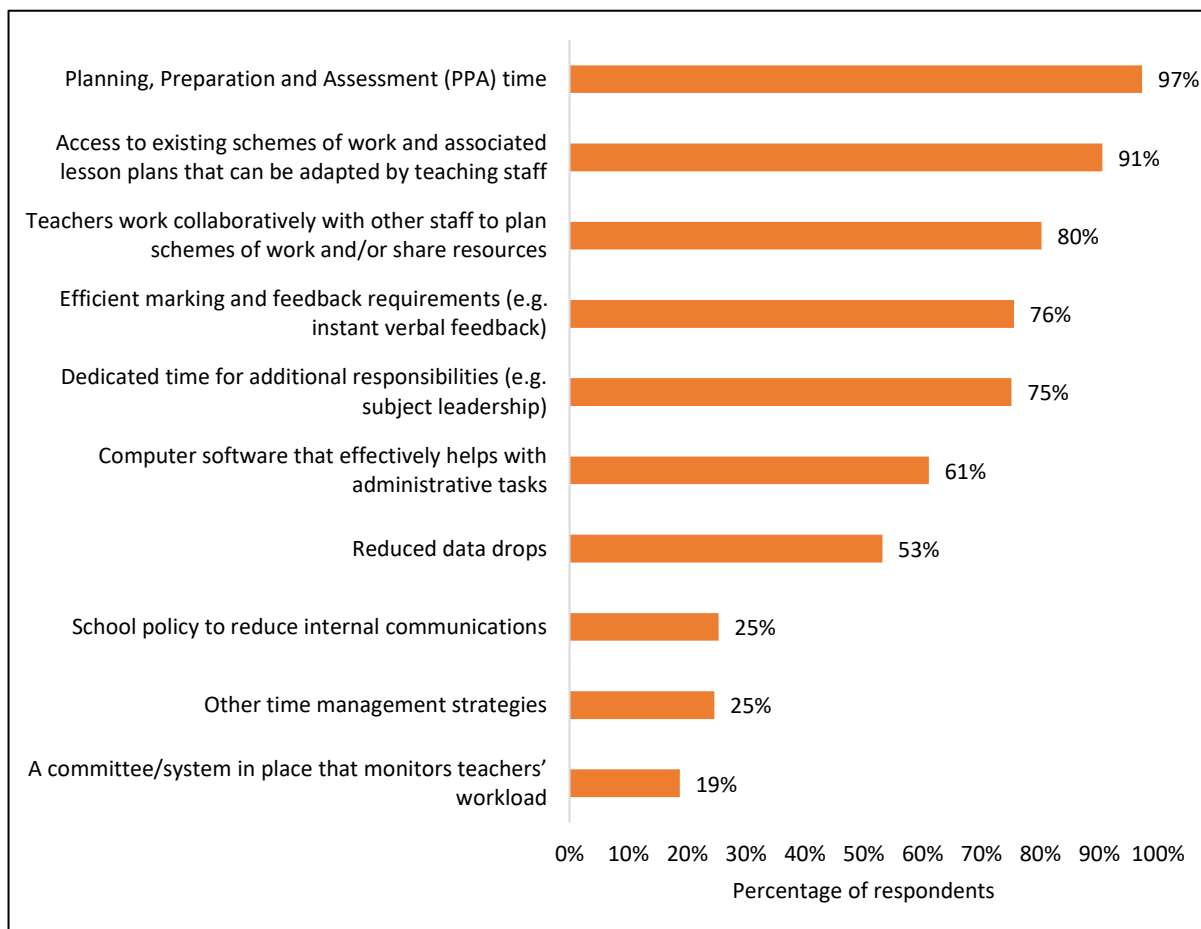
Workload reduction practices and strategies

What workload reduction practices and strategies are schools using, and what are their perceived impacts? (RQ1, RQ3, RQ5, RQ6, RQ7, RQ9)

This section reports the prevalence of different workload management practices and strategies in English schools, highlighting where these differ by a range of school and teacher characteristics. We also report on any recent revisions to management practices implemented by schools and how teachers feel these have affected their workload.

Strategies for managing and planning teachers' time

The DfE's school workload reduction toolkit (DfE, 2018) contains detailed suggestions for strategies schools can use to reduce workload in areas such as data management, feedback and marking, curriculum planning and resources, behaviour management and communications. We carried out a rapid desk review in order to identify any new and emerging strategies, particularly those being advocated by practitioners themselves. The strategies and approaches identified aligned with the key themes in the workload reduction toolkit (see Appendix 2).

Figure 1: School strategies in place for managing and planning teachers' time

Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time — 97%

Access to existing schemes of work and associated lesson plans that can be adapted by teaching staff — 91%

Teachers work collaboratively with other staff to plan schemes of work and/or share resources — 80%

Efficient marking and feedback requirements (e.g. instant verbal feedback) — 76%

Dedicated time for additional responsibilities (e.g. subject leadership) — 75%

Computer software that effectively helps with administrative tasks — 61%

Reduced data drops — 53%

School policy to reduce internal communications — 25%

Other time management strategies — 25%

A committee/system in place that monitors teachers' workload — 19%

Percentage of respondents

Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q1: Does your school have any of the following strategies in place for managing and planning teachers' time? Single response for each strategy: Yes; No; Don't know. Ask all teachers and leaders (n=1,326): the minimum number of responses given to an individual item was 1,166.

In order to explore the prevalence of current strategies for managing and planning teachers' time, our survey included a question adapted from the WLTL survey[15] (Adams et al., 2023) designed to identify school strategies for managing and planning professional time. It listed nine different workload management strategies, together with an 'other strategy' option, and respondents were asked to indicate all the strategies that applied in their schools. Responses are shown in Figure 1.

Most schools had multiple workload management strategies in place

Seven workload management strategies were reported by over half of respondents. In line with the findings of the WLTL survey (Adams et al., 2023), planning, preparation, and assessment (PPA)[16] time was the most commonly reported strategy, followed by access to existing schemes of work/lesson

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[15] The NFER survey included three more response options than the WLTL survey, following feedback from piloting and EEF and the rapid desk review; namely: reduced internal communications, efficient marking/feedback requirements, and dedicated time for additional responsibilities.

[16] All teachers who participate in the teaching of pupils are entitled to reasonable periods of PPA time. PPA time must amount to not less than 10% of the teacher's timetabled teaching time.

plans, and collaborative lesson planning. Between half and three-quarters of schools also had efficient marking and feedback requirements; provided dedicated time for teachers with additional responsibilities; computer software to help with administrative tasks; and reduced data drops.

Two strategies were less common, namely: a school policy to reduce internal communications and a committee/system in place to monitor teachers' workload, although both of these strategies were present in a substantial minority of schools.[17] Interviewees mentioned some examples of strategies schools had used to improve internal communications, including a school calendar shared a year in advance to avoid 'pinch points' and a daily staff bulletin used to replace multiple emails.

Over a fifth of survey respondents said their school had other time management strategies in place. These included: reducing the frequency and/or length of staff meetings or using meeting time for group planning; wellbeing strategies to reduce staff stress; and creating time for professional development.

The main areas of workload mentioned were lesson planning, meetings, marking/feedback and cover arrangements. Some survey respondents also took the opportunity to emphasise the importance of proactive leadership to tackle workload, including leaders' strategies to remove, reduce or make a task more efficient. Some also mentioned that their schools had a focus on 'wellbeing' related to workload by focusing on this during specific wellbeing-focused meetings, days or weeks within the school year.

The results from the survey question as a whole were analysed for differences between several school characteristics, namely: phase; deprivation (percentage of pupils eligible for FSM); academy status; and school size.

There were few significant differences[18] related to school characteristics overall and none related to deprivation

There were three significant differences related to phase of education.

- Teachers and leaders working in secondary schools were significantly more likely than their colleagues working in primary schools to have dedicated time for additional responsibilities and a school policy to reduce internal communications.

- Primary schools were significantly more likely to have efficient marking and feedback requirements, such as instant verbal feedback.

- There were a few other significant differences in workload management strategies related to academy status, school size and Ofsted rating.

- Schools that were part of a multi-academy trust (MAT) were less likely to have three strategies in place[19]: time for additional responsibilities; reduced data drops; and efficient marking and feedback requirements.

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[17] The overall pattern of responses to this question in the NFER survey (June 2023) was very similar to results from the WLTL survey, carried out in Spring 2022 (Adams et al., 2023).

[18] All reported differences are significant at the 5% level ($p<0.05$).

[19] Given that more secondary schools than primary schools are part of a MAT, we carried out further analysis to understand if it was MAT status, rather than school phase, that was driving these differences. The analysis confirmed that school phase was not driving these significant differences.

- A higher proportion of respondents from larger schools[20] reported that teachers worked collaboratively to plan schemes of work or share resources.

- Schools with an Ofsted rating[21] of 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' were more likely to have PPA time than those rated 'outstanding'.

- Schools with an Ofsted rating of 'good' were more likely to have reduced data drops than those rated 'outstanding'.

The main finding from these analyses is that school characteristics appear to have little relationship with workload reduction strategies overall, although there is some evidence to suggest that schools belonging to a MAT have fewer strategies in place.

The results of this question were also analysed for differences related to respondents' characteristics, namely role (teacher or leader), length of service and main teaching subject. There was one significant difference:

- Leaders were significantly more likely than teachers to identify each of the listed strategies as being in place in their schools.[22]

There were no clear relationships between responses to this question and teachers' length of service or main teaching subject.

Having workload reduction strategies in place is related to teachers' job satisfaction, workload manageability and autonomy

Previous studies have found that workload is a key driver causing teachers to leave the profession (Lynch et al., 2016, DfE, 2017, Adams et al., 2023). Teachers' experiences of autonomy in their work, perception of the relevance of certain tasks (such as administration, data input, marking and lesson planning) and manageability (the volume of tasks that teachers have to do in the time available to do them) are important in driving decisions to leave, as well as the number of hours they work (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). To test the relationship between workload reduction strategies and these key indicators, the survey included questions about the manageability of teacher workload, job satisfaction or autonomy (assessed by teachers' agreement with the statement 'My line manager trusts me to work independently'). These questions were only shown to teachers. Figures 2, 3 and 4 show a clear positive relationship between teachers reporting that their schools had workload reduction strategies in place and each of the three measures.[23]

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[20] School size was measured by the number of pupils divided into quintiles relative to phase. This was done to avoid all primary schools being identified as small and all secondary schools as large (for example, it means that a large primary school was categorised as 'large', rather than 'small' in comparison to secondary schools).

[21] The analysis divided schools into three groups for Ofsted rating: outstanding; good; and requires improvement/inadequate. It was necessary to group the two categories of 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate' together, due to the smaller number of schools in each of these two categories.

[22] This difference was also identified in the WLTL survey, administered a year earlier (Adams et al., 2023).

[23] See Appendix 7 for the distribution of the number of strategies in place for reducing teacher workload.

Figure 2: Relationship between the number of strategies in place and the manageability of teachers' workload
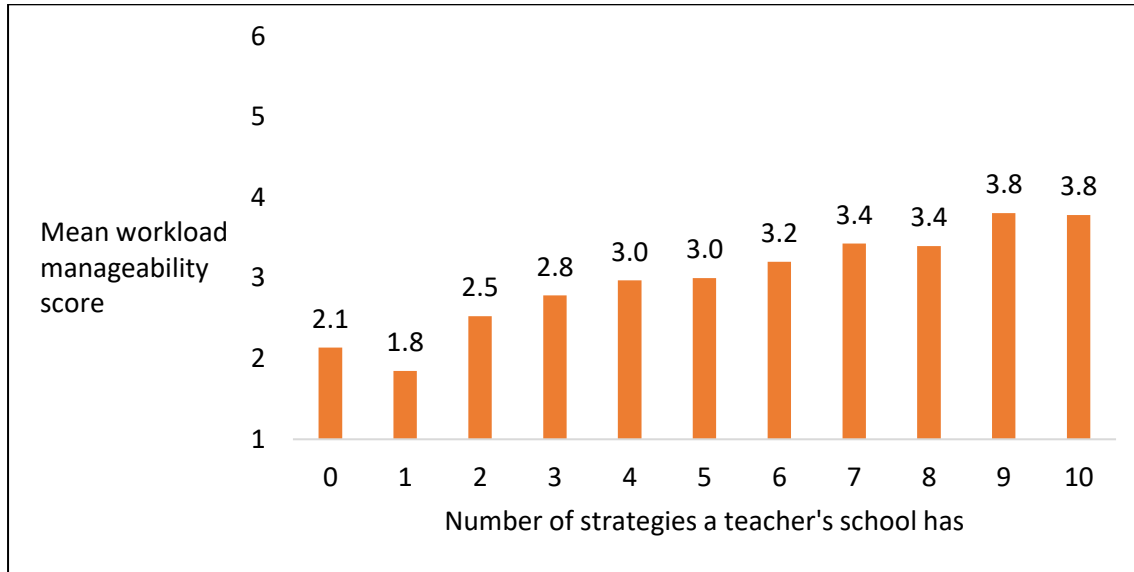
Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q1: Does your school have any of the following strategies in place for managing and planning teachers' time? (Single response for each strategy: Yes; No; Don't know); and Q12: How manageable is your workload? (Single response, 5-point scale: completely manageable; mostly manageable; somewhat manageable; mostly unmanageable, completely unmanageable – scale is reversed so that greater manageability is represented by a higher score). Ask all teachers (n=920), 898 responded to this question.

Figure 3: Relationship between the number of strategies in place and teachers' job satisfaction
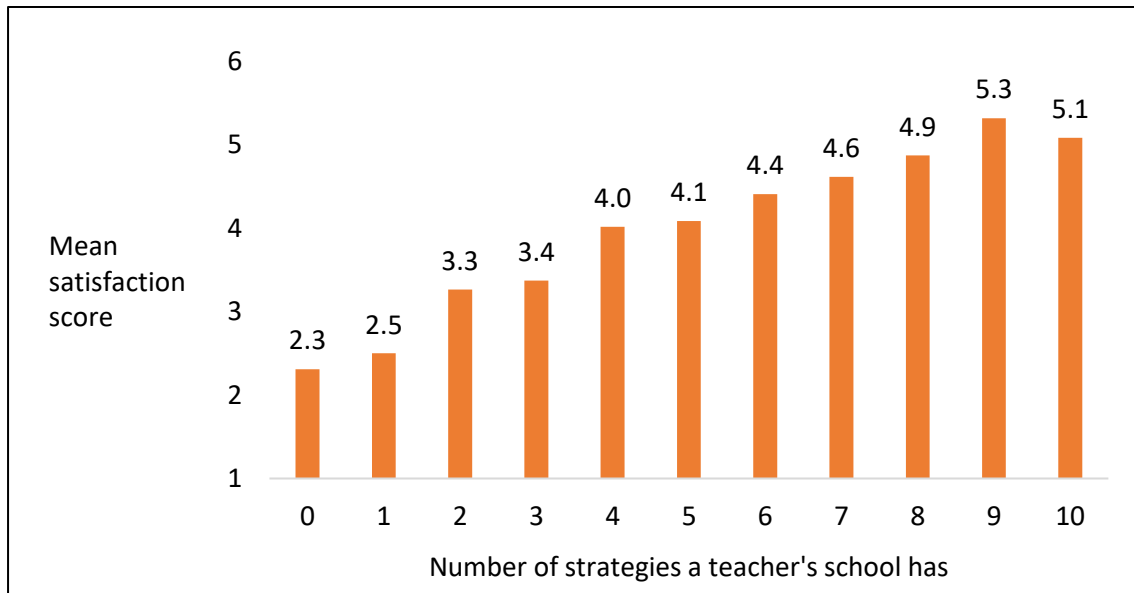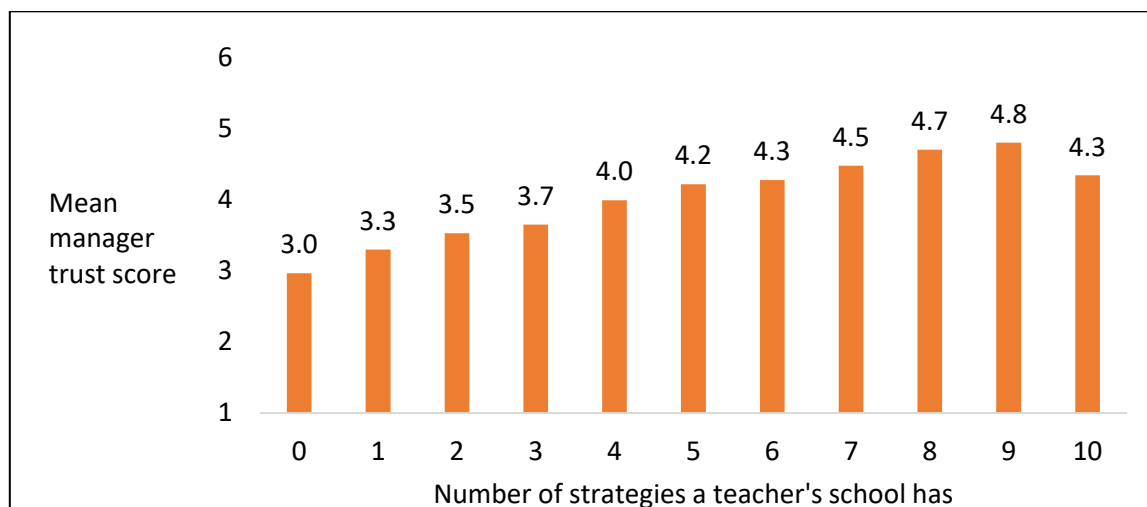

Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q1: Does your school have any of the following strategies in place for managing and planning teachers' time? (Single response for each strategy: Yes; No; Don't know); and Q13: How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with your present job overall? (Single response, 7-point scale: 1=completely dissatisfied; 4=neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 7= completely satisfied). Ask all teachers (n=920), 898 responded to this question.

Figure 4: Relationship between the number of strategies in place and teacher autonomy

Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q1: Does your school have any of the following strategies in place for managing and planning teachers' time? (Single response for each strategy: Yes; No; Don't know); and Q11: To what extent would you agree or disagree that your manager trusts you to work independently? (Single response, 5-point scale: strongly agree, agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree, strongly disagree – scale is reversed so that greater autonomy is represented by a higher score). Ask all teachers (n=920), 898 responded to this question.

As shown in Figures 2, 3 and 4, teachers who reported that their school had multiple workload reduction strategies in place were more likely to report they had a manageable workload, felt satisfied in their job and were more likely to agree that 'my line manager trusts me to work independently'.

Interviewees were also asked if any of their schools' strategies had an impact on their own job satisfaction (or, in the case of school leaders, their teachers' job satisfaction). Generally, interviewees felt that workload reduction strategies had had a positive impact on job satisfaction; staff said they were/perceived to be happier; and there was a positive atmosphere in the school. This also impacted on pupils, as one secondary leader explained: '*When you've got staff who are at the end of their tether, day in day out, those relationships* [with pupils] *are really difficult to maintain'.* Interviewees also commented that leaders play a vital role in creating a positive working environment (this is discussed further in the *Key barriers and enablers* section).

Teachers want to keep certain tasks, despite their contribution to workload

We asked the 12 teachers and leaders we interviewed whether there were any aspects of workload they (or their teachers) would not want to reduce. Interviewees highlighted two aspects of workload in particular: lesson planning and contact with parents/carers.

Interviewees said that lesson planning was a vital part of teachers' work that they would not wish to relinquish because it helped them to prepare for their teaching by thinking through the steps they would take during the lessons. Collaborative planning was also given as an effective workload reduction strategy, which is discussed later in this section.

> *If I plan, it makes me think through how I'm going to teach so that does take time, but I think that's worth me doing it. Making the slides makes me think about how I have to teach it. (Primary teacher)*

I don't mind spending time on planning, not too long, but that's somewhere where if it's done well your lessons should be good. (Primary teacher)

Planning, that does take time but that's something for a teacher that you see back. (Secondary leader)

Communication with parents (such as by phone or in parents' meetings) was mentioned by secondary teachers as something they would not want to lose because they felt it was important for building relationships.

Contact with parents is really valuable. Things that I know are additional workload, but I know in the long run are going to pay off. So positive contact home I think is really important and I wouldn't want to not do that. (Secondary teacher)

There was no standout software solution to workload for schools

As shown previously in Figure 1, 61% of survey respondents reported that their school had computer software to help with administrative tasks. In our interviews, teachers and leaders said their schools used software for a variety of reasons. For example:

- As lesson work or homework (such as SENECA, Satchel One). These were particularly useful if they included automatic marking.

- Tracking and providing evidence (e.g., SIMs, Seesaw, Target Tracker, Integris, Class charts, CPOMS for safeguarding and other software for tracking the progress of SEND pupils).

- Contacting parents/carers (e.g., Class Dojo app). Some leaders had suggested setting 'quiet hours' on this app so that the expectations for teachers to reply was limited. With regards to schools with high number of EAL pupils, Class Dojo was noted as useful as it has a translation function which families can use.

- Other administrative tasks (e.g., Evolve for school trip risk assessments).

However, neither the desk study nor interviews identified any specific type of software solution as having the potential to reduce workload. None of the interviewees' schools had introduced AI solutions specifically to manage teacher workload, although some said they were looking into it. Interviewees mentioned the potential benefit of using AI solutions (such as ChatGTP) with tasks like report writing, but questioned how useful this would really be in practice.

A teacher had trialled AI software to write reports but concluded:

I don't think they're very good. I just think it [the report] reads really coldly. (Primary teacher)

A secondary teacher described their experience of using AI software to generate a list of exam questions in the style of the exam board:

I've put some stuff in and it had generated a question bank but then I thought 'Is that actually a theme? I haven't taught them that! Will that come up on the exam? If I share those questions with them, is that going to unnerve them because we haven't really studied those concepts in depth?' Whereas using the study guide, using the resources that are already out there, then I feel more secure.

Recent revisions to policies and approaches to reduce workload

The NFER survey asked another two-part question adapted from the WLTL survey[24] (Adams et al., 2023), designed to identify recent changes to school policies and approaches to reduce teacher workload. Figure 5 shows how many schools had revised their policies and approaches in the last year. The second part of this question was presented separately to teachers and leaders. Teachers were asked about the impact on their own workload, whereas leaders were asked about the impact on teachers' workload. Because the question wording differed between teacher leaders, their answers are presented separately in Figure 5.

Figure 5: The proportion of teachers and leaders whose schools had revised their policies and approaches to reduce teacher workload in the past year
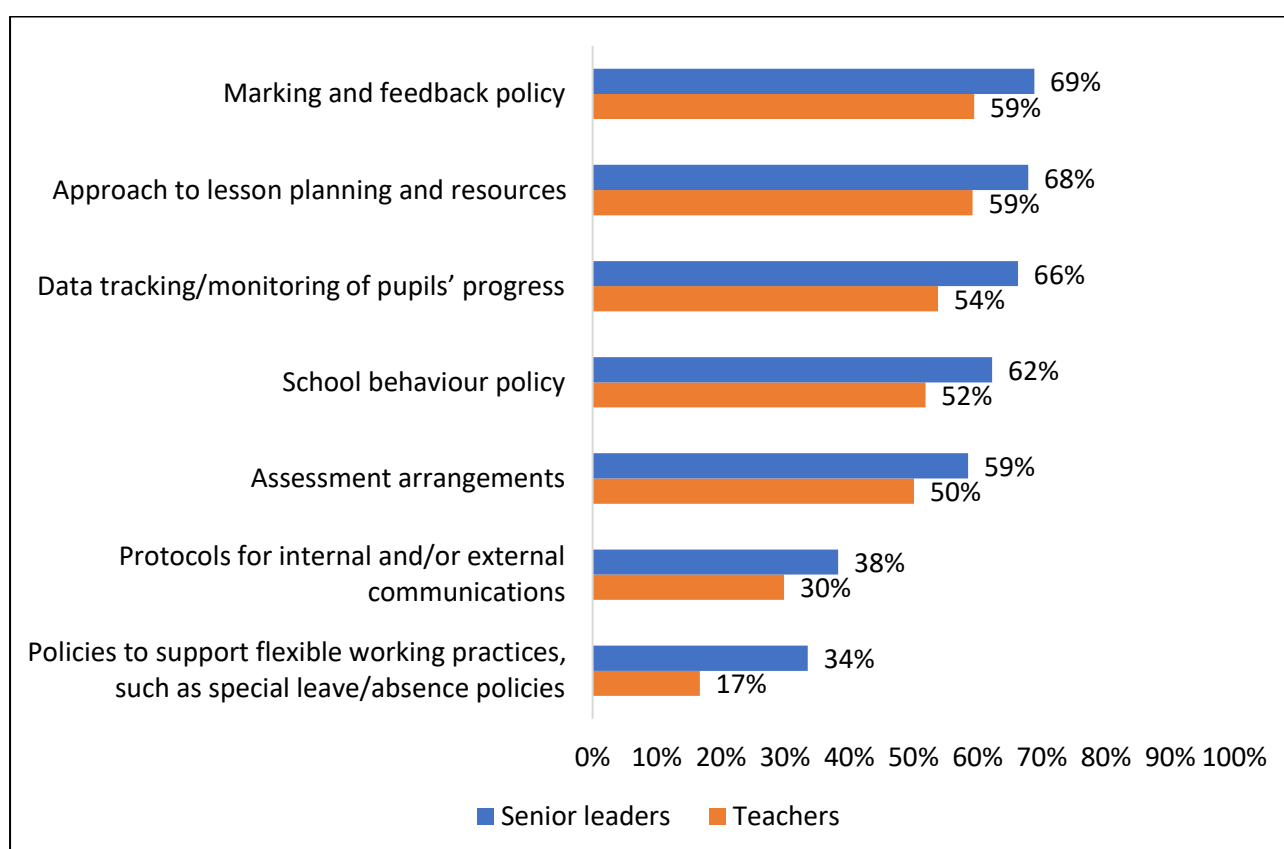
Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q3a and Q3b: In the past year, has your school revised any of the following in an attempt to reduce teacher workload? (Q3a to teachers, Q3b for leaders). Multiple response for each policy/practice. Teachers (n=920) and leaders (n=406): the minimum number of responses given to an individual item was 691 for teachers and 382 for leaders.

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[24] The NFER survey had some additional response options, which were added following feedback from piloting. The additional response options were 'assessment arrangements' and 'other'. Also, the wording of the response option 'Approach to lesson planning' had 'and resources' added.

Most schools have revised their policies/approaches in the past year

Results showed that many schools had revised their policies/approaches in the past year to reduce workload. Over half of teachers and over half of leaders reported that the same five policies/approaches had been revised in their schools recently, namely: marking and feedback; lesson planning; data tracking; school behaviour policy; and assessment arrangements.

The survey responses showed that most schools had made recent changes to their approach to lesson planning to reduce workload, which is interesting given the interview data indicates that teachers did not want to significantly reduce the time they spend on this activity (as mentioned earlier in this section). These changes may reflect the need to revise the curriculum following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on pupil learning as well as the greater availability of lesson planning and curriculum design resources (e.g., from Oak National Academy and other providers, and MATs creating their own schemes of work). Some interviewees also mentioned that their schools were adapting their policies by moving more towards collaborative planning.

The results of this question were analysed for differences between certain school characteristics, namely phase, deprivation (percentage of pupils eligible for FSM), academy status and school size.

There were some significant differences in recent policy changes[25] related to school characteristics, especially Ofsted rating and MAT status

- Schools with an Ofsted rating of 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' were more likely to have recently revised their marking and feedback policy than schools rated as 'good'. There were no significant differences for schools rated as 'outstanding' compared to 'good', 'requires improvement or 'inadequate'.

- Schools with an Ofsted rating of 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' were more likely to have recently changed their approach to lesson planning and resources than schools with a rating of 'outstanding'. There were no significant differences for schools rated as 'good' compared to 'outstanding', 'requires improvement or 'inadequate'.

- Schools in MATs were more likely than those not in MATs to have revised their policies and approaches to reduce teacher workload in the last year. Recent changes to marking and feedback policy, school behaviour policy, and assessment arrangements were all more frequently identified by respondents working in MATs compared to those that were not.[26]

- Secondary schools were more likely to have revised their school behaviour policy recently compared to primary schools.

- There were no significant differences related to FSM and school size.

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[25] Based on teacher responses only.

[26] Our earlier finding (see the *Workload reduction practices and strategies* section) showed that schools that were part of a MAT were less likely to have strategies for efficient marking and feedback in place. This current finding could mean that their policies have been revised recently and that this has made marking and feedback more time consuming, but we do not know whether or not this is the case.

There were few differences in recent policy changes related to teacher characteristics

As shown in Figure 5, leaders were more likely than teachers to say their school had revised every one of the listed policies and practices to reduce teacher workload.

We analysed recent policy changes by other teacher characteristics (i.e. length of service[27] and main teaching subject) and there were no clear patterns within the findings.

But changing workload policies and approaches does not necessarily reduce workload

As Figure 6 shows, of the teachers who reported that their school policies/approaches had been revised recently, a higher proportion reported that this had increased their workload or made no difference, than said it had reduced their workload.[28] Note that Figure 6 represents responses from teachers only.[29]

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[27] EEF was interested to understand whether ECTs would respond differently from teachers who had been teaching for longer. However, only 28 responding teachers had been in teaching for five years or less, which made it unlikely for this research to be able to identify any significant differences in the response of this group.

[28] Leaders were asked about the impact of their schools' workload reduction strategies on teacher workload (rather than on their own workload). Leaders' responses to this question are included in Appendix 8.

[29] Note that the WLTL survey (Adams et al, 2023) asked leaders and teachers about impact of changes on their workload, whereas the NFER survey asked this question of teachers only.

Figure 6: Impact of revised policies and approaches on teacher workload
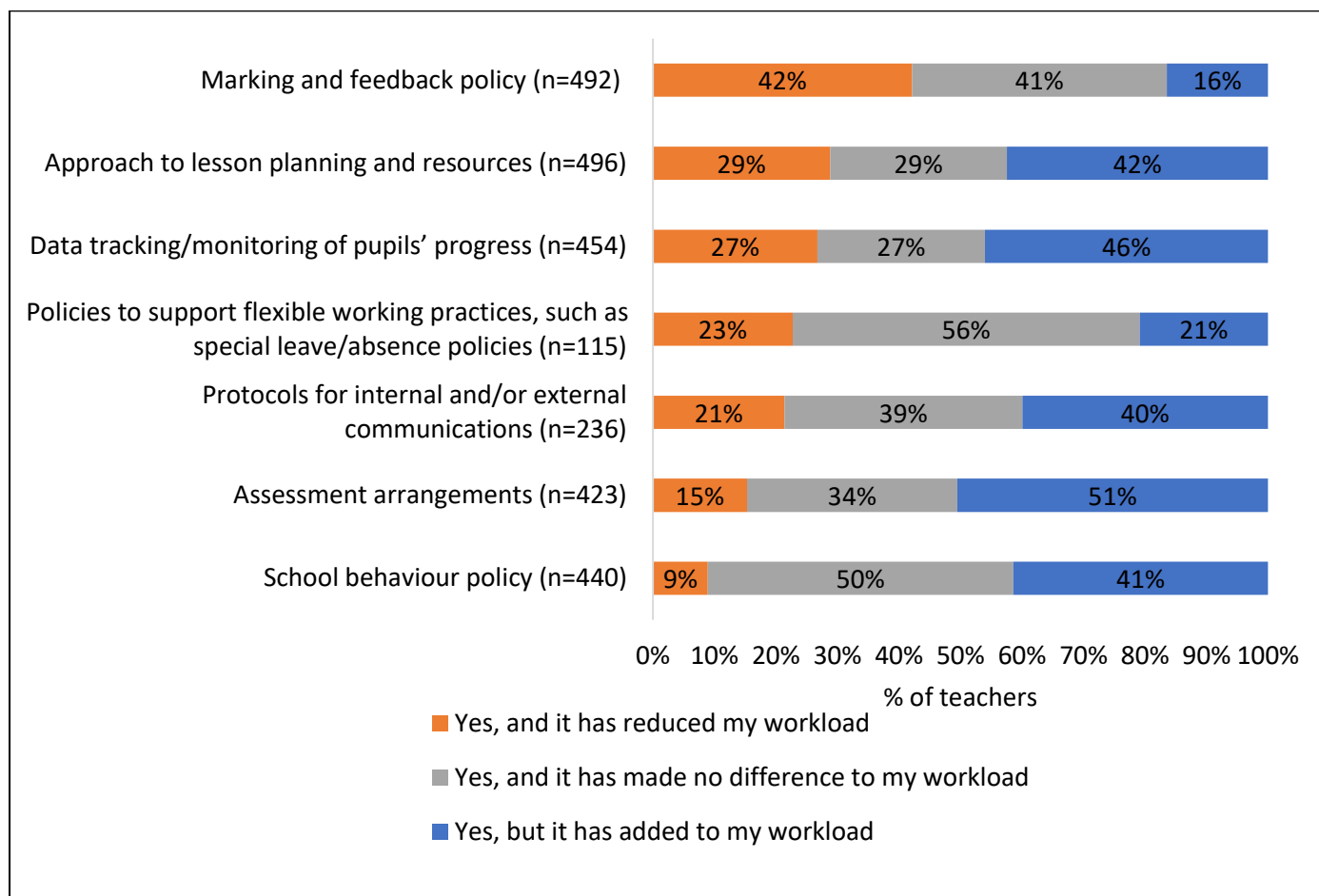
Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q3a: In the past year, has your school revised any of the following in an attempt to reduce teacher workload? Multiple response for each policy/practice. Teachers only. Note, this figure only includes teachers who said their school had implemented the policy/practice, so base numbers are given for each policy/practice

While many teachers said their schools had revised their policies and approaches in the past year, this chart shows that introducing a new workload reduction strategy does not necessarily reduce teachers' workload, at least in the short term. For example, one of the most commonly reported workload reduction approaches was to lesson planning and resources, which was revised in 59% of teachers' schools in the past year).[30] However, of those who reported recent revisions in this approach, 42% said it had added to their workload, 29% felt it had made no difference to their workload and 28% felt this had reduced their workload. A similar pattern can be seen for the other policy/practice changes, with most being judged as making no difference or adding to teachers' workload rather than reducing it. The exception to this pattern is changes to the school's marking and feedback policy, where opinions were more equally divided. In this case, 42% of the teachers whose schools had revised the marking and feedback policy reported a reduction in workload compared to the 41% who felt it made no difference and 16% who felt it had added to their workload.

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[30] See Figure 5.

There are two possible reasons for this overall pattern. First, introducing any change is likely to add to workload in the short term, as teachers learn about and adapt to the new approach. Second, it is possible that some changes create additional workload because they are inherently more time-consuming or duplicate existing systems rather than replacing them. Interviewees tended to mention the first reason (i.e., a temporary increase in workload due to introducing a change) rather than the second (duplication).

Interviewees pointed out that changes to school policies and approaches often increase workload in the short term but can pay off in the longer term

Interviewees said that although some changes increase workload in the short term, they can provide longer term benefits. This was mentioned particularly for certain activities such as lesson planning. As one primary leader said: *I suppose your staff need to trust that you're doing something in the first place that will save them time in the long run.* Other interviewees made similar points.

> *As a school we are really good at our subject leader [work] now. We've put a lot of effort this year and a lot of time. Because we've put the time in, the benefits outweigh the time that's put in, so I think we're in a strong place. (Primary teacher)*

Interviewees provided examples where workload reduction strategies had been effective

Interviewees gave several examples of strategies which were successful at reducing workload. These tended to involve changes to marking (e.g., adopting instant and verbal feedback instead of written comments, asking pupils to mark each other's work (peer marking) or simply indicating whether or not the learning objective had been achieved). They also mentioned reduced data drops and collaborative planning. These areas of workload reduction (marking, data management and curriculum planning) were also found to be common in our rapid desk review conducted as part of this study.[31]

> *The marking – the instant feedback and the way we mark now – is a lot more reduced from where we were. I think it's effective the way we're doing it. I think it benefits the children, benefits us. (Primary teacher)*

> *For data [collection], now we just do it three times a year as opposed to six times a year. Children are children aren't they and they don't keep going up [in attainment] six times a year. (Primary teacher)*

> *As a subject leader I've looked at the planning and resources that are available for [my subject]. This year that's meant that everything has to be done from scratch, and I've done that as a class teacher and as a subject leader. Now, as we're starting to plan for next year, we've got all of [the planning] in place. It's very clear what you're doing when you're doing it. And technically, most of the resources are now in place for that so now it's just about looking through it and tweaking it. (Primary teacher)*

Interviewees also identified wider benefits of changing these strategies, particularly on pupils' learning.

> *[Verbal, on-the-spot-feedback] is beneficial for children as well as for us. It has really reduced workload, not having to write reams in books which didn't mean anything to children really. (Primary leader)*

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[31] This may be influenced by their inclusion in the DfE's school workload reduction toolkit.

Collaborative planning is going to benefit the student's learning, you've got different voices and it's more reflective teaching. (Secondary leader)

Just as a school [our workload reducing strategies] are making everything more consistent. Parents and the children have got that safety net of when they move into the next Key Stage, or the next class; some of it is still quite similar and the children understand what's expected. (Primary teacher)

There were some significant differences in the perceived impact of school changes on teacher workload related to school characteristics

Teachers' responses to the survey question on the impact of changes to schools' policies and approaches on their workload were analysed by school and teacher characteristics.

- Teachers in secondary schools were more likely to say that changes to the marking and feedback policy and the school behaviour policy had increased their workload.

- Teachers in schools with an Ofsted rating of 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' were more likely to say that changes to the marking and feedback policy had increased their workload compared with those in schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding'.

- Teachers in larger schools were more likely to say that changes to assessment arrangements and data tracking/monitoring pupils' progress had added to their workload, compared with smaller schools.

- Teachers in a MAT were more likely to say changes to their schools' approach to lesson planning had made no difference to their workload compared to those not in a MAT, and less likely to say that had reduced their workload.

- Teachers in a MAT were more likely to say changes to the school behaviour policy and protocols for communications had added to their workload, compared with teachers not in a MAT.

- There were no clear differences by FSM, teachers' length of service or main subject taught.

Although revisions to flexible working policies were not commonly reported in the survey, interviewees provided several examples of flexible working

Only 34% leaders and 17% teachers responding to the survey said that their school had changed its flexible working practices recently. Nevertheless, interviewees spoke positively about flexible working practices available in their schools. Examples of flexibility were mainly small-scale opportunities to work off site, to have time off in lieu of additional working hours, and/or to allow staff time off for important personal commitments. These included:

- allowing teachers to work from home during PPA time and whole-school training days

- ad hoc personal days off (e.g., to attend their child's sports day, graduation ceremony or wedding)

- joining meetings, such as staff briefings or parents' evenings remotely online

- meetings or training replacing other meetings (e.g., in place of weekly staff meetings) or schools making time for administrative tasks (e.g., allocating dedicated time for planning during training days).

I am working at home today [on a training day] … Obviously people are available and as a Head of Year, parents have been emailing so I have responded to emails and calls. But I didn't have to get up at 7 o'clock in the morning to get to school for 8. I can have a bit of a lie-in which does make a difference. (Secondary teacher)

SLT, particularly the Head Teacher, reinforce family time. If it's your child's sports day or it's your child's Christmas concert or graduation. It doesn't necessarily fall into the box of your days that you're allowed… [but] 95% of the time it's granted. Or you can accrue some extra hours to get that time off to do that. I think that's a really positive strategy for management, and that helps people to feel valued and then you've got more commitment to the school. (Primary teacher)

If [teachers] wish to take their PPA at home, they can do that. They have to clear that in advance, they can't just walk off site, but they can do those things. Small things, like if you want to go and see your son or daughter's nativity play, sports day, things like that. If you ask in advance and cover is OK, we will support that so that they have that flexibility in the workplace. (Secondary leader)

Both teachers and leaders recognised the positive impact of such small acts of flexibility, as one teacher said: *'If something had to be done… everyone kind of chips in because they understand they receive certain benefits and vice versa' (Secondary teacher)*. This is supported by other research (Adams et al, 2023) which suggests that flexible working is linked with teachers' job satisfaction and feeling valued by their school.

What are the key barriers and enablers to implementing workload management practices and strategies in schools? (RQ4)

This section identifies the main barriers to reducing teacher workload in schools and explores what would help schools to manage workload challenges. We also discuss the extent to which key barriers and enablers to reducing workload differ by school and teacher characteristics.

Barriers to reducing teacher workload

Figure 7: The main barriers to reducing teacher workload
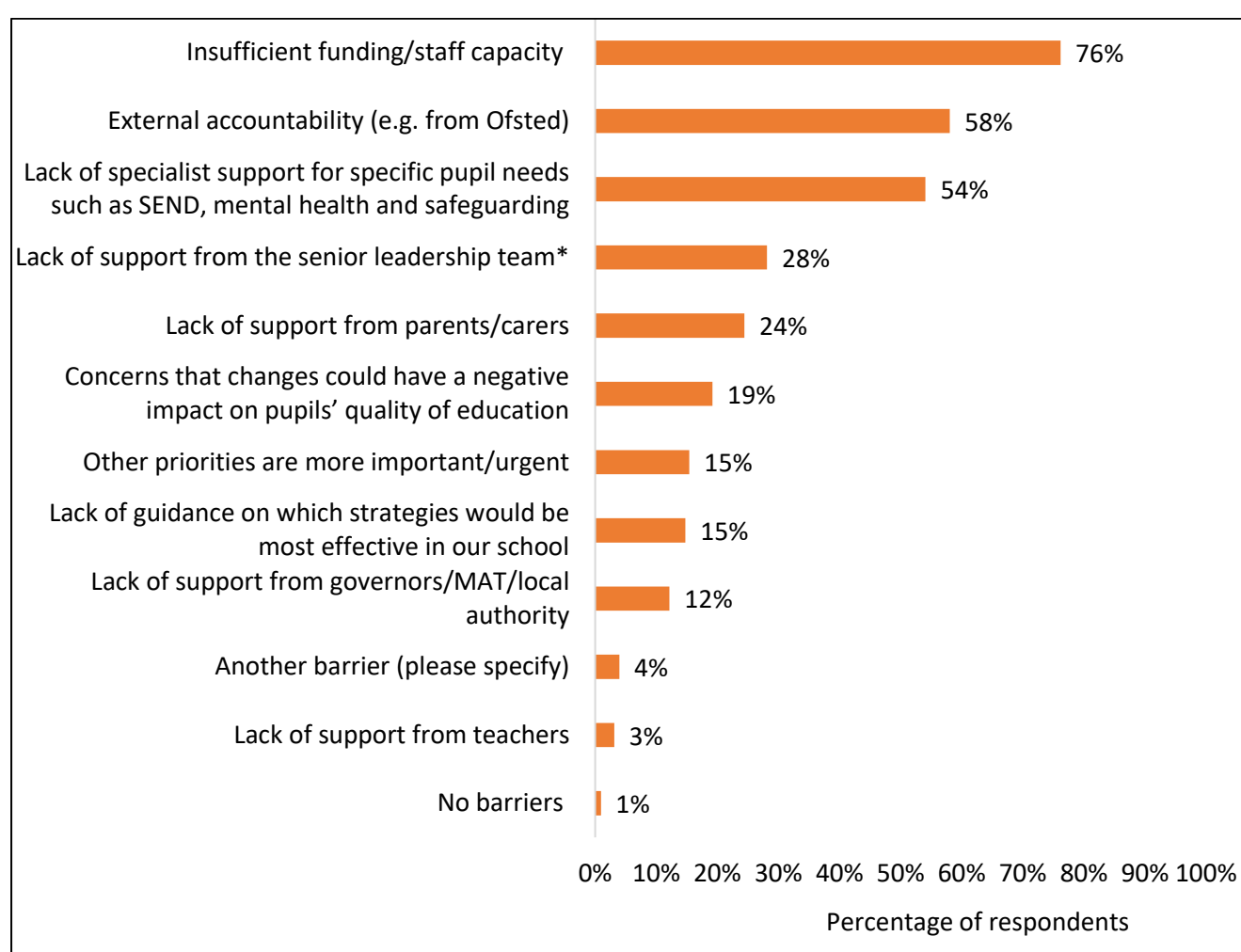
Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q7: Which of the following are the main barriers to reducing teacher workload in your school? Multiple response. Ask all teachers and leaders (n=1,325 for all response options). *This option was exclusive to teachers (n=867).

Insufficient funding was the biggest barrier to reducing teacher workload

As Figure 7 illustrates, almost all survey respondents reported barriers to reducing teacher workload.[32] The three main barriers, identified by over half of respondents, were: insufficient funding/staff capacity; external accountability and a lack of specialist support for specific pupil needs (such as SEND). Just 1% (n=13) of all respondents indicated there were no barriers to reducing teacher workload in their school.

External accountability was identified as a key barrier to reducing workload in our interviews.[33] Interviewees talked about the workload associated with the expectations of Ofsted.

> *Our first priority is providing curriculum and we operate purely for the needs of the children. But a lot of training and staff meetings is all [about] what Ofsted are currently looking for – because it's always changing isn't it, what their agenda is... Two things are going on, you're running a school as you want it to but you're also trying to run like a separate plan that is mindful of what Ofsted are currently looking for. (Primary leader)*

> *There is an awful lot that comes from central government that we have to do that puts barriers in the way of workload [reduction]… We have to kind of shrug our shoulders and say to staff 'This isn't [coming from] us'… The amount of work and effort and time that goes into SATs [standard assessment tests], I don't know what benefit that serves anybody. But what can we do? (Primary leader)*

Interviewees commonly complained that Ofsted's expectations are subject to change. For example, clarifications about Ofsted's expectations for marking had allowed schools to amend their marking policy to manage teacher workload.

Almost one-fifth of all survey respondents said 'concerns about changes having a negative impact on pupils' quality of education' was a barrier to reducing workload

Around one in five (19%) of all survey respondents identified concerns about the potential negative impact on pupils' quality of education as a barrier to reducing workload. Although this is likely to be related to the pressure of external accountability, it suggests that teachers are themselves concerned that education standards might be affected if their workload is reduced. Interestingly, recent research into workload reduction by Churches & Fitzpatrick, 2023 suggests this concern may not be well founded, as teachers reported that pupil attainment had increased after they adopted workload reduction strategies.

As shown in Figure 7, a small minority of survey respondents (4%) identified other workload barriers. These included: government policy-related demands (such as expectations relating to pupil achievement and the introduction of curriculum changes); the number of new education-related initiatives; dealing with pupil behaviour; inadequate school management and the particular challenges faced by small schools with fewer teaching staff to share required tasks.

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[32] The survey asked teachers about their own workload and leaders about teacher workload (as opposed to their own).

[33] Note that interviewees also mentioned lack of staffing as a barrier and the ability to share tasks with other staff as an enabler. Their comments on staffing as an enabler are reported in the *Enablers for reducing teacher workload* section.

There were four significant differences[34] in the workload barriers identified by primary and secondary staff

Primary teachers and leaders were more likely to identify the following barriers:

- external accountability
- a lack of specialist support for specific pupil needs.[35]

Secondary teachers and leaders were more likely to identify the following barriers:

- a lack of support from SLT[36]
- a lack of support from parents/carers.

The reasons for some of these differences are not clear. For example, we do not know why secondary teachers were more likely than primary teachers to identify a lack of support from the SLT as a barrier to workload reduction, but it is possible that this reflects the larger number of staff in secondary schools. It is possible that primary respondents were facing greater difficulties in obtaining specialist support in assessing pupils SEND, given that children are likely to be referred to external services for assessment of SEND before they reach secondary school age. It is also possible that secondary teachers are less able to rely on support from parents and carers because they typically have less contact with parents/carers in this phase; and/or because parents/carers are generally less able to support their children's learning because the content of the secondary curriculum is more demanding.

There were four significant differences in the barriers reported by teachers and leaders

Teachers were more likely to identify the following barriers:

- a lack of guidance on which strategies would be most effective
- other priorities are more important/urgent than workload reduction.

Leaders were more likely to identify the following barriers:

- insufficient funding
- a lack of specialist support for specific pupil needs.

These differences appear to reflect the different requirements of teachers and leaders. Leaders have direct responsibility for managing the school budget and would oversee contact with specialist support services. They are also more likely to be aware of official guidance on workload reduction strategies. Leaders may not wish to say that 'other priorities' are more important or urgent than workload reduction because they know this is not a socially acceptable position, whereas teachers may perceive their leaders to be less focused on workload reduction than other priorities.

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[34] All reported sub-group differences are significant at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$).

[35] There were no significant differences between school size – measured by the number of pupils divided into quintiles relative to phase. This was done to avoid all primary schools being identified as small and all secondary schools as large (for example, it means that a large primary school was categorised as 'large', rather than 'small' in comparison to secondary schools).

[36] Not that this response option was not shown to leaders.

Barriers related to the national curriculum were mentioned by interviewees

Interviewees spoke of curriculum restrictions as an additional barrier (and frustration) to reducing workload. This included querying whether particular aspects of the curriculum are still suitable for pupils in England today (e.g., whether teaching the concept of money/cash was still relevant in an era of making purchases by credit and debit cards and via Apps).
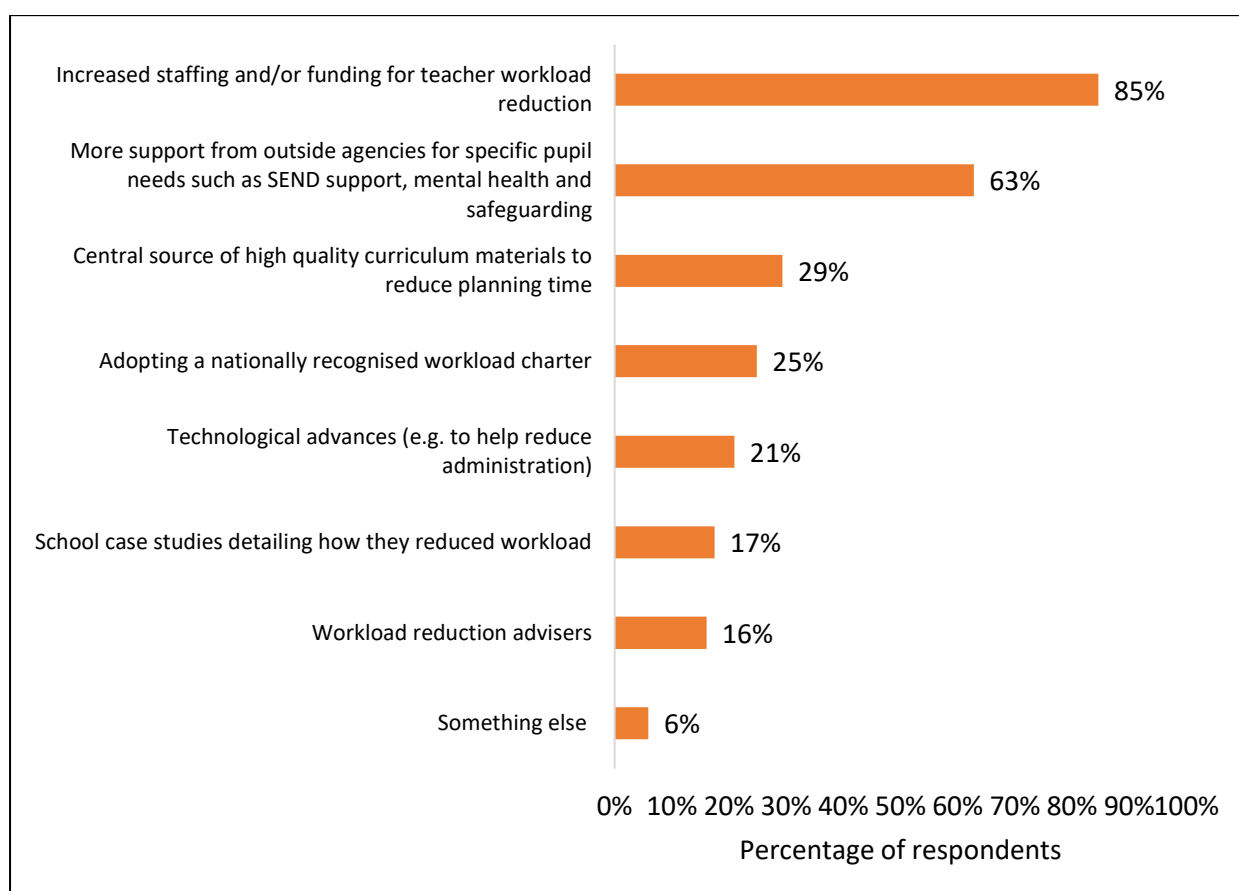
Interviewees also spoke of the rigidity of needing to cover the entire curriculum. This was a particular frustration following the Covid-19 pandemic and periods of home learning, where there was little opportunity for teachers to reduce curriculum content to fill the gaps in pupils' learning.

> *There's so much content to cover that I don't think it's doing the children any good at all, and I think that needs to be looked at. We're not embedding anything properly. What Year 3 have to do now, 20 years ago they didn't have to know that… [After the Covid-19 pandemic] we never stopped, we never gave those children a chance to catch up and I think it's huge. (Primary teacher)*

Enablers for reducing teacher workload

The survey listed seven possible enablers for reducing teacher workload and asked which of these respondents felt would help their schools to reduce workload. Responses are shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: What would help your school to reduce teacher workload?

Enabler	Percentage
Increased staffing and/or funding for teacher workload reduction	85%
More support from outside agencies for specific pupil needs such as SEND support, mental health and safeguarding	63%
Central source of high quality curriculum materials to reduce planning time	29%
Adopting a nationally recognised workload charter	25%
Technological advances (e.g. to help reduce administration)	21%
School case studies detailing how they reduced workload	17%
Workload reduction advisers	16%
Something else	6%

Percentage of respondents

Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q9: What would help your school to reduce teacher workload? Multiple response. Ask all teachers and leaders (n=1,326 for all response options).

Increased staffing and/or funding is the most popular enabler for reducing teacher workload

As Figure 8 shows, more than four out of five (85%) of all respondents reported that increases to staffing and/or funding would help their school to reduce teacher workload. The other common enabler reported by just over three in five (63%) of respondents was support from outside agencies for specific pupil needs. These findings on enabling factors mirror the barriers presented earlier in the report.[37]

Around one in three of all respondents (29%) reported wanting a central source of materials to reduce their planning time, which is interesting given that there is a high prevalence of this practice already.[38] It could perhaps indicate that central resources are not currently perceived to be of high enough quality. This finding was echoed in a recent evaluation of Oak National Academy, which provides free resources and curricula to schools in England (ImpactED, 2023).

The other options for enablers were all reported by less than a quarter of respondents, indicating that there is not a particularly wide range of enablers that teachers and leaders think can help.

A small number of respondents (6%) reported that there was 'something else' (other than the options listed in the survey) that would help their school to reduce teacher workload and they were asked to specify what that was. Responses fell into three main areas:

1   Reducing government/accountability demands (such as 'Abolition or complete overhaul of Ofsted', 'Removal of any data-based targets from performance management based on pupil results in external exams', and 'Get rid of tasks that are seemingly done for senior leadership, the Trust or just because Ofsted might want to see it')

2   Improved school leadership (such as 'Better co-ordination between SLT which would result in less extra work being expected from classroom teachers')

3   Reducing unnecessary administration (such as 'Admin tasks being carried out by the office instead of teachers').

Staff capacity and funding were highlighted as important in the qualitative interviews.

Those interviewees who did not have support from teaching assistants said this was a particular barrier because they were unable to delegate administrative tasks and were unable to leave their class for lesson planning or training.

> *Not having a TA has had a huge detrimental impact on me because I'm the one that's having to do all the photocopying, all the trimming and… that's adding to my workload... I can't do it all. [My school leaders know] but there is just no money at all for additional support staff. (Primary teacher)*

On the other hand, having sufficient support staff and/or flexible teachers (such as cover teachers) avoids teachers becoming overloaded.

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[37] See Figure 7.

[38] See Figure 1.

We've invested in our workforce, so we've tried to increase our non-teaching workforce to provide capacity in that space and that's quite important. (Secondary leader)

We also have quite a few staff who cover in school, like TAs and HLTAs and we do have a few teaching staff who are employed to take intervention groups out or cover staff. We're not reliant on agency staff, which I think is a massive impact because you haven't got agency staff [working in the school and] not knowing the children. (Primary teacher)

The enablers for workload reduction differed significantly by phase

- Although increased staffing and/or funding was a key enabler for most respondents, it was more likely to be reported by those in working in secondary schools. Secondary teachers and leaders were also more likely to say that adopting a nationally recognised workload charter would help their schools to reduce teacher workload than their primary counterparts.

- Teachers and leaders working in primary schools were more likely to say that two sources of support would help to reduce teacher workload: more support from outside agencies; and a central source of high-quality curriculum materials.

There were contrasting views between teachers and leaders about what would best help teacher workload reduction

Teachers were significantly more likely to identify the following enablers:

- a nationally recognised workload charter

- workload reduction advisers

- a central source of curriculum materials as enablers

- school case studies.

Leaders were significantly more likely to identify the following enablers:

- more support from outside agencies

- staffing and/or funding.

These findings suggest that teachers were generally more positive about the listed enablers, and leaders felt that fewer strategies had the potential to reduce workload.

Leaders can make a big difference to the culture around workload within a school

A key theme from the interviews was the importance of leaders in creating a positive working environment and seeking every opportunity to reduce teacher workload. Interviewees explained how a supportive culture can affect job satisfaction. Interviewees were generally working in schools where the SLT were actively trying to reduce workload and support staff wellbeing, encouraged questioning/reduction of work that was perceived to be unnecessary, arranged cover for additional non-contact time, and listened to staff workload-related concerns. This suggests that it is the whole-school approach to reducing workload that is important in addition to the efficacy of specific strategies.

I have a mantra that we shouldn't do something we don't need to… If it's not adding value, then let's not do it because it's taking away from what I call 'frontline services' [i.e. tasks related directly to teaching]. (Secondary leader)

Our school is good at taking the teachers' professional judgements and listening to them and recognising that person wouldn't be asking for that time [out of class to do a particular task or plan for a club] if they didn't need it. (Primary teacher)

Because [changes are] done in consultation with us, it makes you feel valued. It makes you feel that actually SLT are listening to us. They want to hear our views as well which is always quite good. (Primary teacher)

In contrast, some interviewees from both primary and secondary schools did not feel (or previously had not felt) supported by their school's senior management. This had an adverse effect on their job satisfaction.

One interviewee who said they did not feel their school trusted teachers spoke of inconsistent messaging from leaders and academy executives:

So what happens is that you constantly over-work because you're constantly worried that you're going to get challenged or questioned. (Secondary teacher)

We've had some changes in leadership and sometimes it feels like everybody has got their own agenda... They don't understand that they're all wanting a part of us. Sometimes there's not joined up thinking. (Secondary teacher)

As noted previously, external accountability and a lack of external support for pupils with additional needs are factors driving teacher workload issues. Our interviewees highlighted that, although leaders have little influence over external matters, they can make a situation better or worse by protecting staff and communicating clearly on these matters.

Priorities for reducing teacher workload

Figure 9: Approaches identified as priorities to reduce workload in schools
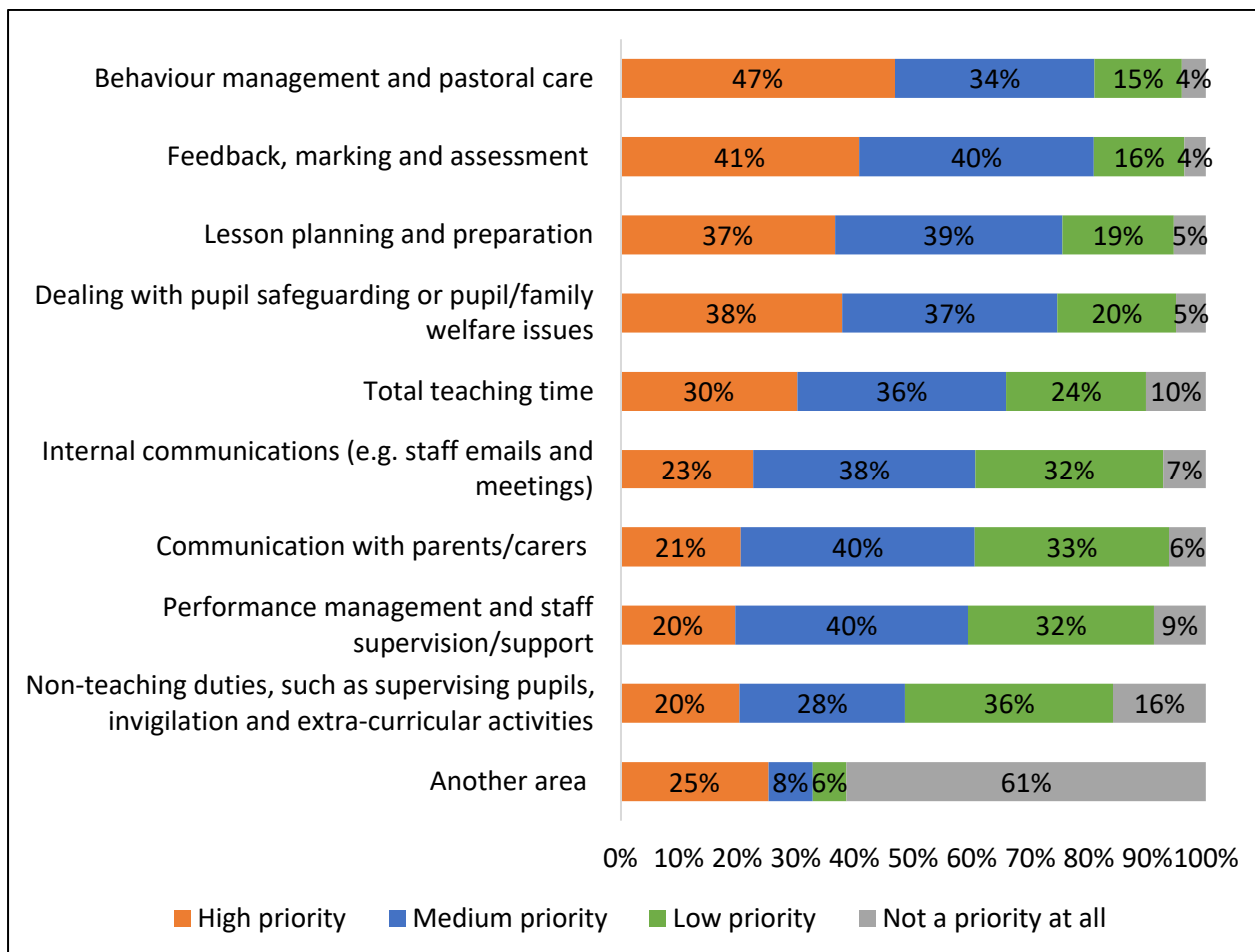
Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q4: Thinking about potential areas to reduce teacher workload, which would you most like to see prioritised in your school? Single response for each approach. Ask all teachers and leaders (n=1,326): the minimum number of responses given to an individual item was 1,289 (and n=305 for 'another area')

Most teachers and leaders identified marking/feedback and behaviour management and pastoral care as high priorities for reducing teacher workload

The survey presented a list of areas for reducing teacher workload and asked respondents to select the level of priority they would like to see given to each. Responses are shown in Figure 9.

As Figure 9 shows, a wide range of approaches were identified as high/medium priorities for reducing teacher workload. The four most common priorities overall were:

- behaviour management and pastoral care (81% respondents identified this as a high or medium priority)

- feedback, marking and assessment (81%)

- lesson planning and preparation (76%)

34

- dealing with pupil safeguarding and welfare issues (74%).

Interestingly, lesson planning and preparation and pastoral care were mentioned by interviewees (see the *Recent revisions* section) as drivers of workload that teachers would not want to significantly reduce or delegate to others, so there are mixed findings in this respect.

A third of all respondents (33%) said there was another potential area that was not listed in the question as a high/medium priority for reducing workload. The most common areas identified by survey respondents who provided additional comments were: reducing class size, dealing with particular pupil needs (such as behaviour, SEND and mental health); increasing support staff (especially TAs and cover staff); reducing accountability demands (such as data entry); reducing the burden of role demands (such as subject leadership); and reducing/removing administrative tasks.

Interviewees said that there was room for further improvement in reducing paperwork and removing duplication

As mentioned above, the teachers and leaders who participated in the interviews were selected because their survey response showed they had one or more workload reduction strategies in their school. Despite this, interviewees identified two remaining sources of high workload: the amount/range of documentation they were required to complete and the level of duplication. Interviewees talked about their frustrations with work that they deemed unnecessary.

> *Ultimately it [teaching] should be about what's in the classroom and what's happening with the children and it's not. It's all the paperwork and the thousand policies and you've got the curriculum plans and the curriculum maps and all that stuff… you're not actually with the children. (Primary teacher)*

> *For me, personally, a lot of it is the paper work and the duplication of paperwork which is in a slightly different format for a slightly different person. We've got one transition document which follows the class. We've got another set of transition documents which follow the children and then the children with SEND have a different document as well. So for some of those children I'm producing practically the same thing – just in different ways for three different audiences. (Primary teacher)*

There were four significant differences in the priority areas for workload reduction reported by survey respondents from primary and secondary schools

Secondary teachers and leaders responding to the survey were more likely to identify the following as high or medium priorities for workload reduction:

- total teaching time
- non-teaching duties
- behaviour management and pastoral care.

Primary teachers and leaders were more likely to identify lesson planning and preparation as a high/medium priority area.

There were contrasting views between teachers and leaders on priority areas for teacher workload

As might be expected, teachers were more likely to select several of the teaching-related areas as a high/medium priority for teacher workload reduction. This included:

- lesson planning and preparation

- total teaching time

- feedback, marking and assessment

- behaviour management and pastoral care.

The only priority area for workload reduction rated more highly by leaders than teachers was dealing with pupil safeguarding or pupil/family welfare issues.

Which workload practices and strategies are perceived as having the potential to positively impact teacher outcomes related to recruitment and retention? (RQ8)

The highest priority strategies for workload reduction were also identified as having the greatest potential to impact teacher recruitment and retention

The survey asked teachers and leaders which of the strategies they had selected as a priority for teacher workload reduction they thought would have the greatest positive impact on teacher retention. Responses to this question mirrored the answers respondents gave to the previous question asking about their own priorities for workload reduction in their schools. Reducing workload in the same four areas (namely: feedback, marking and assessment; behaviour management and pastoral care; lesson planning; and dealing with pupil safeguarding and welfare issues) were identified as having the greatest potential to impact positively on teacher recruitment and retention.

Leaders gave examples of how their schools' workload reduction strategies had had a positive impact on teacher recruitment and retention

Leaders had included details of their workload reduction strategies in their recruitment and general promotion materials.

> *We always use them as part of our adverts. We talk about planning, and we talk about marking. We talk about the wellbeing stuff we do in our adverts. (Primary leader)*

Interviewees and survey respondents also mentioned the importance of wellbeing activities as important for retention

Research participants highlighted the potential of wellbeing activities to help teachers cope with pressures of work. For example, one primary teacher described stress reduction as: '*vital in keeping teachers as stress-free as they can, as it's not a stress-free job'*.

Examples of wellbeing activities mentioned in the interviews and survey responses included:

- staff wellbeing days/weeks

- staff meetings involving a social or wellbeing activity (such as a BBQ, quiz or yoga)

- investing in external support services for staff (e.g., counselling)

- a senior member of staff and/or a group dedicated to improving staff wellbeing.

Interviewees thought that their school's wellbeing focus was contributing to the overall positive working culture and helping to retain teachers in their schools. However, as one leader pointed out, scheduled wellbeing activity needs to be carefully considered because it can risk creating additional work.

Therefore, it is important that such activities are purposeful, and carefully timed (e.g., to avoid exam periods).

Schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils

Are there sources of workload that disproportionately affect schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils? (RQ2)

This section reports the sources of workload which appear to disproportionately affect schools with a large proportion of disadvantaged pupils, drawing on the survey and interviews. We also report on any differences observed across the survey between schools that are the most and the least disadvantaged, based on their proportion of pupils known to be eligible for FSM (referred to here as 'disadvantaged' and 'non-disadvantaged' schools).

Overall, this study found relatively few differences between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools

Our findings highlighted some workload challenges which are different or more pronounced in schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils. However, generally across the survey there were very few significant differences between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools. Our findings could suggest that tackling priority areas of workload for all schools would be just as beneficial for disadvantaged schools as it would be for non-disadvantaged schools. However, it is possible that there may be genuine, but more subtle differences between the workload challenges in disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools than we have been able to detect because of the numbers in each FSM quintile.[39]

Sources of workload affecting disadvantaged schools

The *Key barriers and enablers* section presented the main barriers to reducing teacher workload, as reported by all teachers and leaders. This question was analysed further to determine if there were barriers which disproportionately affected those in disadvantaged schools. There was a general trend for those working in the most disadvantaged schools to be more likely to report each workload barrier compared with the least disadvantaged schools. However, a lack of support from parents/carers was the only source of workload that was identified significantly more by those working in the most disadvantaged schools, compared to those in the least disadvantaged schools.

Teachers in schools with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils were significantly more likely to report a lack of support from parents/carers as a main barrier to reducing their workload

As shown in Figure 10, just over a third of teachers and leaders in the most disadvantaged schools (i.e., those in the highest quintile nationally for pupils eligible for FSM) reported that a lack of support from parents/carers was a barrier to reducing their workload. This compared to just under one-fifth in the least disadvantaged schools.

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[39] There were around 200–300 respondents in each quintile.

Figure 10: A lack of support from parents/carers as a barrier to reducing workload, by school FSM proportions
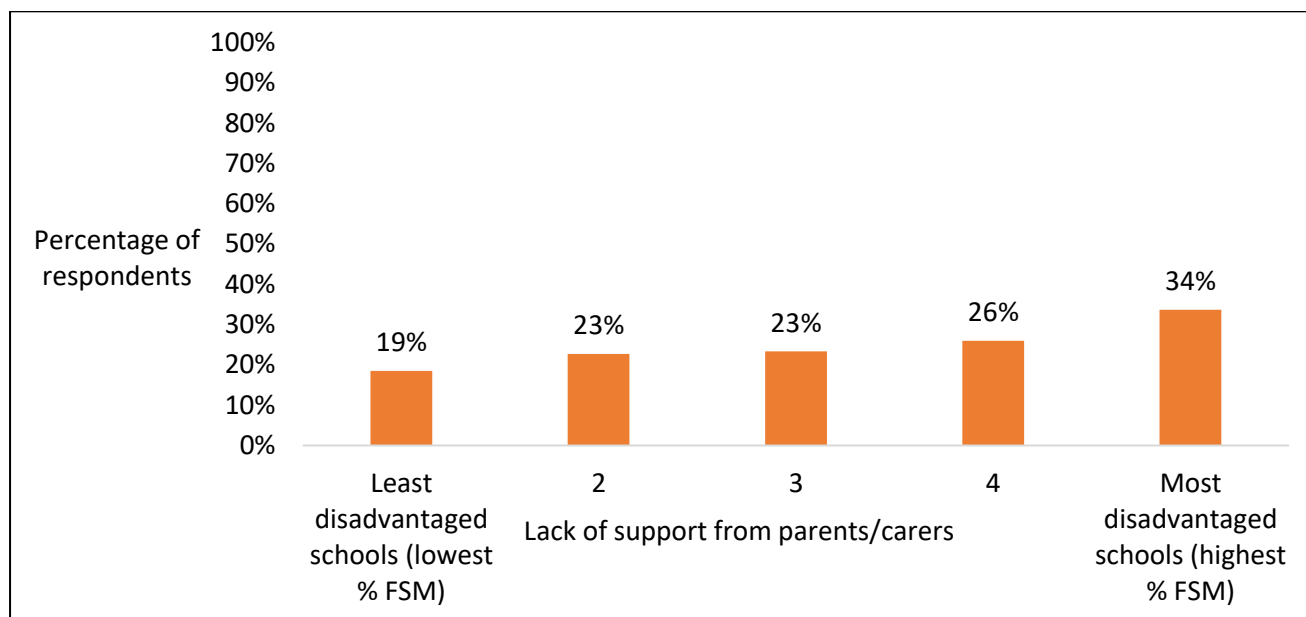
Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q7: Which of the following are the main barriers to reducing teacher workload in your school? Single response, n=343.

A key workload barrier for interviewees in highly disadvantaged schools was parental attitudes, engagement and support

Interviewees noted issues with parents/carers at their school which result in increased workloads. This included challenges around parental attitudes to education and the influence of parents' own negative experiences of schools, both of which impacted how much they were involved with their child's learning.

> *[A key barrier is] parental engagement, aspiration of parents or aspiration of students… They [parents] don't mind [their children] leaving school to go on holiday in term time because obviously it's cheaper. (Secondary teacher in a high FSM school)*

Interviewees in high FSM schools talked of the need to make their school '*a safe place*' for pupils. The cost-of-living increases have impacted on pupils, their readiness to learn, and the number of families asking to be referred to foodbanks, particularly in schools serving large proportions of disadvantaged pupils (The Sutton Trust, 2022). Teachers are often a first point of contact for families seeking help, as they provide a key point of contact and have the potential to refer them on to other sources of support, as interviewees pointed out.

> *I am finding now I'm having to be a lot more than the teacher. I'm doing a lot of signposting parents to places where they can get support. [Parents] ask me questions which is often things like 'I can't get a school uniform'... I'm having to respond to that message and then signpost them to the person with the [uniform] bank [in our school]. Which is a very small thing but when that then adds up, that's becoming quite big… There's an aspect of 'it's not our job to be signposting' and [the school] telling us that we don't need to do that. But as a human being who's in a caring profession, it's very hard to say no. (Primary teacher in a high FSM school)*

As mentioned in the *Workload reduction practices and strategies* section, some interviewees were using apps to communicate with parents/carers. Interviewees spoke of setting boundaries, making it clear

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they will only respond to messages between certain hours as a way of managing this increased demand and protecting their non-work time.

Teachers in disadvantaged schools also reported the number of pupils with additional needs as a barrier to workload reduction

Interviewees mentioned the workload associated with a high number of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). Teachers talked about the need to create extra resources and provide support so EAL pupils can access learning.

Interviewees also spoke about the increased workload associated with having high numbers of pupils requiring additional support, such as pupils with SEND, low-attaining children and those eligible for the pupil premium.[40] The high level of pupils' need coupled with a lack of support staff (as discussed in the *Key barriers and enablers*) puts greater pressure on teachers, particularly in high FSM schools.

> *A school that's got 5%, 10% disadvantage will have some very small and discrete interventions in place. Whereas we run some very wide interventions for practically all pupils which places an additional demand on us. (Secondary leader in a high FSM school)*

Other things mentioned by interviewees as particular barriers in disadvantaged schools included:

- large gaps in pupils' knowledge because of the disparity in the home support pupils received during the Covid-19 pandemic

- challenging behaviour, particularly in relation to pupils not being able to access learning/the curriculum and so teachers having to do more to ensure their lessons are differentiated appropriately

- high levels of pupil absence

- increased accountability associated with different funding streams (such as pupil premium) because schools have to report in detail on how the money has been spent.

All of the challenges mentioned facing disadvantaged schools can also be workload challenges in non-disadvantaged schools. However, the amount, intensity and combination of these barriers make them particularly challenging for schools serving high proportions of disadvantaged pupils.

Behaviour management and pastoral care was a significantly higher priority for change in the most disadvantaged schools compared to the least disadvantaged schools
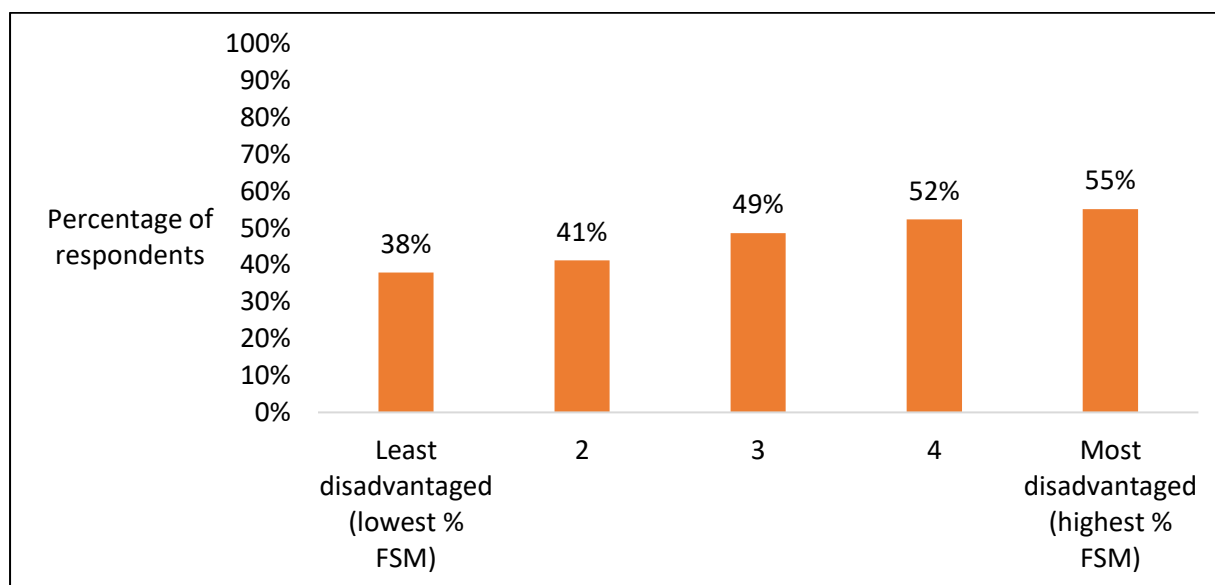
As shown in Figure 11, teachers and leaders working in the most disadvantaged schools were significantly more likely than those in the least disadvantaged schools to identify changes in behaviour management and pastoral care as a high priority for change in order to reduce teacher workload. Respondents from disadvantaged schools were also significantly more likely to say this would have the greatest positive impact on teacher retention, compared to those in the least disadvantaged schools.

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[40] Pupil premium is a grant funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils of all abilities in state-funded schools in England.

In contrast to the trends identified above, those in the least disadvantaged schools were significantly more likely to identify two areas of high priority for change, namely: communication with parents/carers and non-teaching duties (e.g., supervising pupils, invigilation and extra-curricular activities).

Figure 11: Behaviour management and pastoral care identified as a high priority area to reduce workload by school deprivation level

Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q4: Thinking about potential areas to reduce teacher workload, which would you most like to see prioritised in your school? Single response, n=648.

Disadvantaged schools were significantly more likely to say that technology advances (e.g., to help reduce administration) would help schools to reduce their workload

Over one-quarter (26%) of respondents in the most disadvantaged schools said that technology advances would help schools to reduce their workload. This was significantly higher than those in the least disadvantaged schools (16%).

Discussion and implications (RQ9, RQ10)

Discussion

The government has made workload reduction a priority in the last few years, as part of their Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy (DfE, 2019). Recently, they have introduced a Workload Reduction Taskforce, made up of education experts with the aim of supporting teachers and leaders to tackle unnecessary workload. The role of the taskforce is to also help support the government's wider ambition to reduce working hours for teachers and leaders by five hours per week within three years (DfE, 2023).[41] Whilst teachers' working hours and perceived workload have fallen over time, in the 2023 teacher labour market report (McLean et al., 2023), teachers' working hours and perceived workload were still significantly higher than for similar graduates in other occupations. This is not for want of effort from schools. As this present study shows, most schools appear to be using multiple strategies to manage teacher workload, to the extent that there are few strategies that are not being widely adopted.

The key barriers and enablers of workload reduction mirror one another. As teachers and leaders point out, some of the main drivers of workload come from outside the school – primarily from the government and Ofsted, but also from parents/carers. Despite schools' attempts to reduce teacher workload,[42] other pressures on schools are increasing. These include: a reduction in school funding leading to fewer support staff being available for administrative tasks; the challenges of teaching pupils who lost learning time due to the Covid-19 pandemic; an increase in the number of pupils with SEND; increased behaviour incidents and truancy; and a reduction in support services (such as SEND support, mental health and safeguarding). These themes can be seen in our findings, with insufficient funding and staff capacity identified as the top barrier to workload reduction[43]; increased support from other agencies highlighted as a key enabler; and reducing the workload associated with behaviour management identified as the top priority for schools to address in future.

Workload is a complex area, because it is not just the amount of work that matters but also its nature and whether teachers consider it worthwhile. Teachers want to spend most of their time teaching, but in 2022, two-thirds of teachers (66%) reported that they spent over half of their working time on tasks other than teaching (Adams et al., 2023). There are also some aspects of teachers' work (such as lesson planning and communicating with parents/carers) that the teachers we interviewed find time-consuming but would not want to significantly reduce or delegate to others because they consider these to be part of their professional responsibility and integral to the quality of teaching and learning.

We found evidence to suggest that implementing workload reduction strategies is worthwhile. Teachers whose schools have more workload reduction strategies in place are significantly more likely to have positive views on manageability of their workload, autonomy and job satisfaction. These factors are important in themselves and as indicators of staff morale and retention.

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[41] The Workload Reduction Taskforce was launched towards later stages of this practice review and therefore is only referred to briefly in this report.

[42] Churches & Fitzpatrick found evidence of a reduction in weekly 'unnecessary hours' of one and a half hours per week between the adoption of workload reduction activities in 2018 and a survey conducted in 2022.

[43] Note that 'increased funding/staffing' was also identified as the top enabler.

Many schools have changed their policies recently with the intention of reducing teacher workload. However, as this study shows, introducing new strategies often adds to workload, at least in the short term. This means that school leaders must weigh up the costs and benefits of introducing new strategies carefully.

School leadership is one of the few mediating factors of workload reduction found in this research. Over a quarter (28%) of teachers identified a 'lack of support from the senior leadership team' as a barrier to workload reduction in their school. Teachers gave examples of how school leadership could serve to help or hinder workload reduction. Some leaders clearly seek every opportunity to remove unnecessary tasks and prevent or minimise any additional drains on teachers' time; others appear to be exacerbating the problem – through inaction, inconsistency or taking decisions that lead to additional work for their staff.

Our survey identified few sources of workload that disproportionately affect schools with large proportions of disadvantaged pupils. However, teachers and leaders working in the most disadvantaged schools were more likely to identify a lack of support from parents/carers as a barrier to workload reduction. They were also more likely to identify changes in behaviour management and pastoral care as a priority for future workload reduction. And although the type of additional tasks may be similar for teachers working in more deprived areas, the interviews suggest that the extent and intensity of the additional workload may be qualitatively different (including through a higher emotional workload) for teachers working in more deprived schools.

We also found little evidence of practices and strategies differing by school and teacher characteristics, although there was some evidence to suggest that schools that were part of a MAT had fewer strategies in place.

Most schools (61%) are using technology and software solutions for a range of administrative functions, although there is clearly room for more uptake among the remaining 39% of schools which are not currently doing so, particularly perhaps in disadvantaged schools. Interviewees using these solutions largely found them helpful, as long as they are carefully selected and used well. We found very little evidence of AI being used to help with teachers' administrative tasks and suggest that it may be too soon in the development of this technology.

Implications

Limitations and their implications

The main limitations of this practice review concern the sample size and the design. The number of responses to the survey (1,326) was relatively high and weighting the results by school FSM should help to provide a nationally representative picture. However, the sample contained relatively few ECTs, so it should not be considered representative of their views. The sample size is reduced in the sub-group analyses (particularly where responses are grouped into quintiles based on their school size and percentage of pupils eligible for FSM). This means that the study potentially risks missing differences between schools and individuals with different characteristics due to the numbers in each category. Statistically significant findings represent associations between two variables (one in 20 of which are likely to have occurred by chance) and should not be interpreted as causal. The interview sample (12) was small and did not include the views of teachers and leaders in schools with few workload reduction strategies in place.

Implications for future research (RQ10)

This practice review adds to the available evidence base, suggesting that schools' efforts to reduce teacher workload have been successful in reducing excessive teacher workload, but have not been sufficient to reduce it to acceptable levels (Adams et al., 2023; Churches & Fitzpatrick, 2023; CooperGibson Research, 2023). As most schools appear to be adopting most of the available workload reduction strategies, the main implication of this practice review is that schools' efforts need to be sustained and attention should now turn to examining the external drivers of teacher workload.

The evidence from this study, and others, suggests that the majority of schools are using multiple strategies to manage workload and they are having a small effect. The key difference in effectiveness appears to be how well schools implement their workload reduction plan. However, EEF may wish to investigate in future the comparative impact of workload strategies; for example, the impact of AI software applications. This would provide guidance to schools on which approaches are likely to be more impactful than others, so that leaders can prioritise those approaches and allocate their resources effectively as part of their planning.

This practice review has also identified some other areas of interest which appear relevant to teacher retention and that EEF may wish to consider investigating in future.

- How do school leaders plan and manage workload reduction effectively in their schools? Are there particular leadership behaviours and strategies that are associated with workload reduction and could be adopted in other schools?

- Does adopting limited flexible working practices (such as allowing teachers to do PPA at home and time off to attend appointments or key events) support teacher retention?

- Are some schools serving deprived populations better able to address the challenges of low parental support, behaviour management and pastoral care, thereby improving teacher retention? If so, do their strategies have the potential to be successful in other schools?[44]

To address these questions, choices-style studies would appear to be the most suitable (e.g., schools implementing off-site PPA compared to schools that do not), although these studies can be time-consuming.[45] Choices style studies perhaps also risk identifying strategies that are in place, while actually it is the quality of the systemic leadership/implementation factors (correlated with strategies) that are driving differences in outcomes, rather than the strategies themselves. Alternatively, secondary analysis of existing data (such as the WLTL survey which includes measures of forms of workload, school measures to reduce workload and intentions to leave the profession) could be considered if it is possible to identify suitable variables.

The main methodological challenge to consider when investigating teacher workload is the time required for teachers to take part in research. Any further study would need to be as light touch as possible to avoid placing further burdens on overworked school staff. It should therefore consider how

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[44] We recognise that work may be already underway in relation to some of these issues.

[45] Note that this was a key reason for schools declining to take part in small-scale trails on workload reduction reported by Churches & Fitzpatrick (2023).

best to compensate for research-related work; for example, by paying for someone else to cover teaching duties while teachers take part in research activities and/or providing financial incentives.

The key enabling condition for successful primary research on workload is the salience of the topic to teachers and leaders, as demonstrated by the high response to the NFER survey and the interest in taking part in interviews among Teacher Voice panellists. Schools and teachers may also be motivated to participate in further research focusing on the external drivers for workload reduction, particularly if it were to provide an opportunity for positive engagement with key decision makers/influencers in central government, Ofsted, local authorities and/or MATs.

Team

This practice review was conducted by a team from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER).

Kerry Martin, Research Manager, led the workload practice review.

Caroline Sharp, Research Director, advised on the workload practice review design, data analysis and reporting.

Rachel Classick, Research Manager, carried out qualitative interviews and contributed to data analysis and reporting.

Henry Faulkner-Ellis, Economist, led the quantitative analysis.

Conflicts of interest

The authors of this report are not aware of any conflict of interest in relation to this study.

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Appendix 1: Timeline of activities

Table A.1   Timeline of workload practice review activities and associated lead staff

Dates	Activity	Staff responsible/ leading
May–June 23	Rapid desk review	Kerry Martin
May–June 23	Instrument design and survey piloting	Kerry Martin
May–June 23	Online survey programming	Survey Operations Team
June 23	Survey in field (16 to 21 June)	Survey Operations Team
June 23	Identify and recruit teacher interviewees	Kerry Martin
June–July 23	Conduct and write up interviews	Rachel Classick
July–August 23	Qualitative data analysis	Rachel Classick
July–August 23	Survey data analysis	Henry Faulkner-Ellis
August 23	Reporting	Kerry Martin

Survey of teachers and leaders

The survey was piloted with a small number of teachers and leaders to test its suitability and some amendments were made (e.g., to clarify wording and add further response options) before wider administration. All survey respondents were offered a small incentive (£5 voucher or contribution to charity) for their participation in the survey. Teachers completed the survey online during the period 16 to 21 June 2023. We aimed to achieve a response from 350 teachers and 150 leaders in primary schools and the same number in secondary schools (total 1,000 respondents) within a week. In total, we received responses from 1,326 practising teachers from 1,137 schools in the publicly funded sector in England – a higher number of respondents that initially anticipated.

Interviews with teachers and leaders

We conducted 12 semi-structured online/telephone interviews with individual teachers and leaders. This included six practitioners (two leaders and four teachers) from each sector (primary/secondary). To avoid adding unnecessarily to workload burdens these were designed to take up to 30 minutes. To incentivise participation, we offered participants a voucher worth £30 and flexibility around timings to ensure interviews took place at the most convenient time.

Appendix 2: Rapid desk review

Approach

The desk review involved online searches of recently published[46] reports and other material (e.g., teacher blogs and articles) with a specific focus on workload issues and solutions for teachers working with high proportions of disadvantaged pupils in England. Targeted web searching took place from May to June 2023. It involved keyword searches (e.g., 'workload reduction strategies' and 'disadvantaged schools') using internet search engines and snowballing searching techniques to find relevant documents.

For each source identified we logged the following key descriptors: source type; phase of education (primary/secondary); workload reduction strategy level (school/MAT/departmental/individual); focus on high numbers of disadvantaged pupils; and the research questions to which the findings related.

Selected sources

We included the following 30 sources[47]:

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[46] In the last 6 years. However, it can be difficult to identify when information was first published on online.

[47] These sources are presented separately from the *References* section.

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Overview of findings from the desk review

The strategies and approaches to reducing teacher workload identified aligned with those in the DfE's workload reduction toolkit (DfE, 2018) and the evidence assessment on teacher quality, recruitment and retention (Taylor et al., 2023). Key findings are presented thematically below.

Marking and feedback

There is wide agreement that marking and feedback is a significant burden for teachers and takes up a large amount of their time. There is also agreement that these tasks could be done differently to reduce this burden without compromising quality.

A key change under consideration in this area is providing in-person verbal feedback in place of written feedback. The idea is that less written feedback reduces workload while direct, 'real time' dialogue with the pupils communicates feedback more effectively and quickly. Schools have trialled different ways of doing this. One approach, for example, is for the class teacher to provide ongoing feedback to pupils as a concept is taught and put into practice in the classroom. There is then less emphasis on after-teaching written feedback, which is reduced from what would normally be provided. Another approach involves only providing grades as written feedback for essays. Instead of providing detailed feedback on each essay, teachers take notes on issues they identify and focus on these key points in the next class. The idea is

that this method is a more efficient and timely way of supporting improvement that takes up much less teacher time. Other approaches trialled by schools included the following:

- self-assessment

- using pupils to mark their own work

- marking conferences

- in-person teacher–pupil meetings that provide an opportunity for teachers to have a dialogue with pupils about their work

- Standardise feedback by marking against clear criteria.

Curriculum planning

Lesson planning is widely acknowledged as a time-consuming activity for teachers and a number of schools have trialled ways of reducing the effort involved for individual teachers. A common approach used by schools is to conduct collaborative planning, whereby a group of teachers work collectively to create lesson plans and teaching resources. This process has worked best when it has SLT 'buy-in' and teachers are given dedicated time to participate in the planning session. It is also valuable to use staff with subject expertise to lead sessions.

Data management

There is widespread perception that data management imposes considerable burden on teachers and could be redesigned to reduce workload. Data management should be critically assessed to reduce unnecessary tasks, considering whether systems are clear on purpose, efficient and producing valid data. Approaches trialled by schools included the following:

- regular audit of data systems and use of data

- streamline reporting cycles to allow time to review and take actions in response to findings

- transfer admin/clerical tasks from teachers to admin staff/data managers.

Communications

The burden of communications within school can be a source of dissatisfaction for teachers. In particular, teachers report feeling overwhelmed with communications sent out of work hours (i.e., in evenings or at weekends). To encourage a healthy work–life balance, some headteachers have introduced a 'no communications after 5pm' policy.

Technology

There is significant interest in the potential for technological innovation to reduce teacher workload. Initiatives in this area focus on the following:

- reducing marking time by automatically marking and analysing student homework

- support with lesson planning by giving curriculum-linked content for a range of subjects

- helping teachers keep track of student data and give them insights into progress and achievement.

Other themes – wellbeing

Some authors pointed out that while desirable, work reduction will not necessarily lead to improved teacher wellbeing. Teachers want their work to be purposeful and linked to pupil learning. Therefore, for work reduction efforts to lead to improved teacher wellbeing, it is important that these efforts do not negatively impact learning. For example, teachers

are likely to welcome a reduction in clerical tasks and more efficient systems and processes. However, changes to activities that are directly linked to student progress (e.g., marking and feedback) need to maintain or improve learning to have a positive impact on teacher wellbeing. It is therefore crucial to monitor the wider impact of changes to ensure that learning is protected when workload is reduced.

Appendix 3: Survey sample information

How was the survey conducted?

A panel of 1,326 practising teachers from 1,137 schools in the publicly funded sector in England completed the survey. Teachers completed the survey online during the period 16 to 21 June 2023.

What was the composition of the respondents on the panel?

The panel included teachers from the full range of roles in primary and secondary schools, from headteachers to class teachers. Out of the respondents, 920 were teachers and 406 were leaders. 667 were teaching in primary schools and 659 were teaching in secondary schools.

How representative of schools nationally were the schools corresponding to the teachers' panel?

Table A.2   Representation of primary schools (weighted) compared to primary schools nationally

		Sample		Population	
		Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
School type	Academies	259	39%	6,703	40%
	Free Schools	3	0%	301	2%
	Local Authority Maintained	405	61%	9,952	59%
Region	North	157	24%	5,118	30%
	Midlands	243	36%	5,457	32%
	South	267	40%	6,381	38%
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)	Lowest band	132	20%	3,343	20%
	2nd lowest band	130	20%	3,314	20%
	Middle band	129	19%	3,269	19%
	2nd highest band	130	20%	3,308	20%
	Highest band	130	19%	3,305	19%
	Missing	16	2%	417	2%
Achievement Band (Overall performance)	Lowest band	126	19%	3,007	18%
	2nd lowest Band	124	19%	3,169	19%
	Middle band	117	17%	2,888	17%
	2nd highest Band	132	20%	2,730	16%
	Highest band	101	15%	2,792	16%
	Missing	67	10%	2,370	14%
Total respondents		**667**			
Total schools in population		**16,956**			

Notes: Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent. Source: NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey June 2023.

Both primary and secondary samples presented good levels of representation across key school-level factors, including school type, performance and local authority type. However, the primary school, secondary school and combined samples were not nationally representative by FSM eligibility. To address this, weights were calculated using FSM eligibility data on the primary school, secondary school and combined samples and then applied to create a more representative sample of all schools. Tables A.2, A.3 and A.4 show the representation of the achieved sample against the population (weighted for primary, secondary and combined).

Table A.3   Representation of secondary schools (weighted) compared to secondary schools nationally

		Sample		Population	
		Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
School type	Academies	451	68%	2,462	72%
	Free schools	18	3%	294	9%
	Local authority maintained	190	29%	657	19%
Region	North	193	29%	959	28%
	Midlands	183	28%	1,101	32%
	South	283	43%	1,353	40%
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)	Lowest band	130	20%	675	20%
	2nd lowest band	129	20%	669	20%
	Middle band	129	20%	670	20%
	2nd highest band	128	19%	662	19%
	Highest band	128	19%	663	19%
	Missing	14	2%	74	2%
Achievement Band (Overall performance)	Lowest band	115	17%	646	19%
	2nd lowest band	114	17%	639	19%
	Middle band	147	22%	650	19%
	2nd highest band	119	18%	637	19%
	Highest band	151	23%	626	18%
	Missing	14	2%	215	6%
Total respondents		**659**			
Total schools in population		**3,413**			

Notes: Due to weighting, the number of schools in each category may not always match the overall total number of schools. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent. Source: NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey June 2023.

Table A.4   Representation of all schools (weighted) compared to all schools nationally

		Sample		Population	
		Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
School type	Academies	580	44%	9,073	45%
	Free schools	10	1%	551	3%
	Local authority maintained	737	56%	10,586	52%
Region	North	323	24%	6,042	30%
	Midlands	465	35%	6,519	32%
	South	537	41%	7,649	38%
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) by phase	Lowest band and primary	230	17%	3,501	17%
	2nd lowest band and primary	214	16%	3,263	16%
	Middle band and primary	206	16%	3,135	16%
	2nd highest band and primary	205	15%	3,121	15%
	Highest band and primary	221	17%	3,364	17%
	Missing and primary	27	2%	413	2%
	Lowest band and secondary	30	2%	450	2%
	2nd lowest band and secondary	46	3%	698	3%
	Middle band and secondary	53	4%	807	4%
	2nd highest band and secondary	54	4%	818	4%
	Highest band and secondary	37	3%	566	3%
	Missing and secondary	5	0%	74	0%
Achievement Band (Overall performance)	Lowest band	244	18%	3,615	18%
	2nd lowest band	246	19%	3,779	19%
	Middle band	241	18%	3,527	17%
	2nd highest band	259	20%	3,353	17%
	Highest band	221	17%	3,415	17%
	Missing	114	9%	2,521	12%
Total respondents		**1,326**			
Total schools in population		**20,210**			

Notes: Due to weighting, the number of schools in each category may not always match the overall total number of schools. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than

one respondent. For FSM the weighting was calculated separately for primary and secondary schools. Source: NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey June 2023.

How accurately do the results represent the national position?

Assuming that our data is representative of the population we can calculate the precision of results from each of our samples based on the number of respondents. We are 95% certain that any percentage we quote is within approximately 3.5 percentage points of the population value.

Certain questions within the survey were filtered and in these cases the number of respondents to questions may be much smaller. In these cases, we may need to be more cautious about the precision of the percentages presented within the report. Table A.5 gives a rough guide to the level of precision that can be attributed to each table based upon the total number of respondents. For example, if a table is based upon just 40 respondents, we can only be sure that the percentages within that table are correct to within plus or minus 15 percentage points.

Table A.5.   Precision of estimates in percentage point terms

Number of respondents	Precision of estimates in percentage point terms
30	17.89
40	15.49
50	13.86
75	11.32
100	9.80
150	8.00
200	6.93
300	5.66
400	4.90
500	4.38
600	4.00
700	3.70
800	3.46
900	3.27
1000	3.10
1100	2.95
1200	2.83
1300	2.72
1400	2.62
1500	2.53
1600	2.45
1700	2.38

1800	2.31
1900	2.25
2000	2.19

Appendix 4: Survey instrument

Online survey instrument

Ask all				
1	Does your school have any of the following strategies in place for managing and planning teachers' time? (please select one answer per row)			
		[1] Yes	[2] No	[3] Don't know
1.1	Planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time			
1.2	Teachers work collaboratively with other staff to plan schemes of work and/or share resources			
1.3	Access to existing schemes of work and associated lesson plans that can be adapted by teaching staff			
1.4	Computer software that effectively helps with administrative tasks			
1.5	A committee/system in place that monitors teachers' workload			
1.6	School policy to reduce internal communications			
1.7	Efficient marking and feedback requirements (e.g. instant verbal feedback)			
1.8	Reduced data drops			
1.9	Dedicated time for additional responsibilities (e.g. subject leadership)			
1.10	Other time management strategies (please specify)			

Ask TEACHERS only						
3a	In the past year, has your school revised any of the following in an attempt to reduce teacher workload? (please select one answer per row)					
		[1] Yes, but it has added to my workload	[2] Yes, and it has reduced my workload	[3] Yes, and it has made no difference to my workload	[4] No revisions made	[5] Not sure if revisions have been made
3.1	Marking and feedback policy					
3.2	Approach to lesson planning and resources					
3.3	School behaviour policy					
3.4	Protocols for internal and/or external communications					
3.5	Data tracking/monitoring of pupils' progress					
3.6	Assessment arrangements					
3.7	Policies to support flexible working practices, such as special leave/absence policies					

Ask LEADERS only						
3b	In the past year, has your school revised any of the following in an attempt to reduce teacher workload? (please select one answer per row)					
		[1] Yes, but it has added to teacher workload	[2] Yes, and it has reduced teacher workload	[3] Yes, and it has made no difference to teacher workload	[4] No revisions made	[5] Not sure if revisions have been made
3.1	Marking and feedback policy					
3.2	Approach to lesson planning and resources					
3.3	School behaviour policy					
3.4	Protocols for internal and/or external communications					
3.5	Data tracking/monitoring of pupils' progress					
3.6	Assessment arrangements					
3.7	Policies to support flexible working practices, such as special leave/absence policies					

Ask all					
4	Thinking about potential areas to reduce teacher workload, which would you most like to see prioritised in your school? (please select one answer per row)				
		[1] High priority	[2] Medium priority	[3] Low priority	[4] Not a priority at all
4.1	Lesson planning and preparation				
4.2	Total teaching time				
4.3	Feedback, marking and assessment				
4.4	Performance management and staff supervision/support				
4.5	Behaviour management and pastoral care				
4.6	Internal communications (e.g. staff emails and meetings)				
4.7	Communication with parents/carers				
4.8	Non-teaching duties, such as supervising pupils, invigilation and extra-curricular activities				
4.9	Dealing with pupil safeguarding or pupil/family welfare issues				
4.10	Another area (please specify)				

	[RE-PRESENT ALL OPTIONS TICKED AS HIGH OR MEDIUM PRIORITY IN Q4] Ask all		
6	Which of the areas you selected as a priority for teacher workload reduction do you think would have the greatest positive impact on teacher retention?	(please select any that apply)	
6.1	Lesson planning and preparation		
6.2	Total teaching time		
6.3	Feedback, marking and assessment		
6.4	Performance management and staff supervision/support		
6.5	Behaviour management and pastoral care		
6.6	Internal communications (e.g. staff emails and meetings)		
6.7	Communication with parents/carers		
6.8	Non-teaching duties, such as supervising pupils, invigilation and extra-curricular activities		
6.9	Dealing with pupil safeguarding or pupil/family welfare issues		

Ask all				
7	Which of the following are the main barriers to reducing teacher workload in your school?	(please select all that apply)	7.1	Insufficient funding/staff capacity
			7.2	External accountability (e.g. from Ofsted)
			7.3	Lack of support from the senior leadership team [THIS OPTION FOR TEACHERS ONLY]
			7.4	Lack of support from teachers
			7.5	Lack of support from parents/carers
			7.6	Lack of support from governors/MAT/local authority
			7.7	Lack of specialist support for specific pupil needs such as SEND, mental health and safeguarding
			7.8	Other priorities are more important/urgent
			7.9	Concerns that changes could have a negative impact on pupils' quality of education
			7.10	Lack of guidance on which strategies would be most effective in our school
			7.11	Another barrier (please specify)
			7.12	No barriers

Ask all				
9	What would help your school to reduce teacher workload?	(please select all that apply)	9.1	Increased staffing and/or funding for teacher workload reduction
			9.2	School case studies detailing how they reduced workload

				9.3	Workload reduction advisers
				9.4	Technological advances (e.g. to help reduce administration)
				9.5	Adopting a nationally recognised workload charter
				9.6	Central source of high quality curriculum materials to reduce planning time
				9.7	More support from outside agencies for specific pupil needs such as SEND support, mental health and safeguarding
				9.8	Something else (please specify)

Ask TEACHERS only				
11	To what extent would you agree or disagree that your manager trusts you to work independently?	(please select one only)	11.1	Strongly agree
			11.2	Agree
			11.3	Neither agree nor disagree
			11.4	Disagree
			11.5	Strongly disagree

Ask TEACHERS only				
12	How manageable is your workload?	(please select one only)	12.1	Entirely manageable
			12.2	Mostly manageable
			12.3	Somewhat manageable
			12.4	Mostly unmanageable
			12.5	Completely unmanageable

Ask TEACHERS only				
13	How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with your present job overall?	Using the slider, please indicate your job satisfaction on the scale where 1 means 'Completely dissatisfied' and 7 means 'Completely satisfied'	13.1	Completely dissatisfied
			13.2	
			13.3	
			13.4	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
			13.5	
			13.6	
			13.7	Completely satisfied

Ask all				
14	We are planning to interview some teachers and leaders about workload reduction strategies. Interviews will take place in June and early July and last about half an hour. Participants will receive a voucher worth £30. Would you be willing for us to contact you about this?	(please select one only)	1	Yes
			2	No

Ask if Q14=1	
15	What email address should we use to contact you about an interview? Note that we will only use this information to contact you in relation to this research.	(please enter your email address in the box below) Email address: Confirm email address:

Appendix 5: Qualitative interviewee sample

Table A.6   Qualitative interviewee sample

Interviewee ID	Role	School phase	School type	School percentage FSM
1	MAT CEO or Executive Headteacher	Primary	Academy Part of a multi-academy trust (MAT)	Middle
2	Qualified teacher	Primary	LA maintained school	High
3	Qualified teacher	Secondary	Academy Part of a single academy trust (SAT)	Low
4	Qualified teacher	Secondary	Academy Part of a MAT	High
5	Qualified teacher	Secondary	Academy Part of a SAT	High
6	Qualified teacher	Secondary	LA maintained school	High
7	Qualified teacher	Primary	LA maintained school	High
8	Qualified teacher	Primary	Academy Part of a SAT	Low
9	Assistant Headteacher	Secondary	Academy Part of a MAT	Low
10	Assistant Headteacher	Primary	LA maintained school	High
11	MAT CEO or Executive Headteacher	All-through school	Foundation trust school	High
12	Qualified teacher	Primary	Academy Part of a MAT	High

Appendix 6: Interview schedule

Interview schedule

Background

Ask ALL – Confirm interviewee works in primary/secondary school. Confirm interviewees current job role.

- How long have you been at your current school?
- How many pupils are on the roll – approximately?
- Confirm percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals – high/medium/low

Barriers to reducing teacher workload

For interviewees from high FSM schools only – We are particularly interested in barriers/workload drivers for schools with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils. Is there anything you can tell us about any related barriers you have faced in relation to this in your school (both internal/external)?

Probe: How has your school addressed/overcome these barriers?

Ask ALL – What aspects of reducing teacher workload are most necessary/valuable? (what could be changed?)

Probe: Barriers/workload drivers related to school size?

Barriers/workload drivers related to school phase primary/secondary?

Ask ALL – Are there particular aspects of your/teacher workload that you recognise take time and effort but that you/teachers would not want to reduce?

Strategies and practice for reducing teacher workload

Ask ALL – You told us in the survey that your school has the following practices and strategies in place to reduce teacher workload: Which of these have been the most successful in reducing teacher workload and why?

Probe:

- What did the strategy/practice involve exactly – what did you do/why were they implemented/what aspect(s) of workload were they seeking to address? Why were they successful/what were the enablers?
- What are the benefits of these strategies? (to what extent have they reduced your/teachers' workload – by how much? Any other benefits – e.g., for teachers, pupils or parents?)
- (If not covered) Has your school introduced any workload reduction strategies that involve technological interventions or software solutions including artificial intelligence (AI)? (Please provide examples of the approaches used, what was used, and why, did it reduce your/teachers' workload – by how much?)

Ask ALL – Have there been any barriers/challenges to these strategies or any unintended consequences? (e.g., creates workload, impacts on teacher autonomy, quality of teaching?)

- (If teachers) Has your school tried to address the barriers and if so, how/with what success?
- (If Leader interviewee) were you able to address these barriers and if so how?

Ask ALL – Have any of these strategies had an impact on your/teachers' job satisfaction? (If so how and why/in what way? If not, what is the reason for this?

- (If Leader interviewee) Have any of these strategies had an impact on the recruitment of teachers to your school? (e.g., have you used them to promote your school as a good place to work?) – which strategies in particular?

- (If Leader interviewee) Have any of these strategies had an impact on the retention of teachers in your school? – which strategies in particular?

- (For interviewees from high FSM schools only) Of the strategies you mentioned, which do you think would be the most suitable for [other] schools serving large proportions of disadvantaged pupils?

Ask ALL – Is there anything else schools could do or that could be done to reduce teacher workload? (what do teachers really want?)

- (For interviewees from high FSM schools only) Probe: Anything else schools could do specifically related to reducing workload in schools serving areas of high disadvantage?

Appendix 7: Distribution of the number of strategies in place for managing and planning teachers' time

Table A.7.   Number of strategies by workload manageability

Number of strategies	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error	95% Confidence interval for mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower bound	Upper bound		
0	12	2.1374	0.91806	0.26259	1.5609	2.7139	1.00	4.00
1	14	1.8466	0.68599	0.18321	1.4508	2.2423	1.00	3.00
2	70	2.5282	0.93301	0.11182	2.3051	2.7513	1.00	4.00
3	93	2.7839	0.89235	0.09248	2.6003	2.9676	1.00	4.00
4	172	2.9714	0.89495	0.06823	2.8367	3.1061	1.00	5.00
5	193	2.9978	0.73203	0.05273	2.8938	3.1018	1.00	5.00
6	179	3.2031	0.80644	0.06026	3.0842	3.3220	1.00	5.00
7	89	3.4292	0.82678	0.08751	3.2553	3.6031	1.00	5.00
8	41	3.3955	0.82300	0.12794	3.1370	3.6540	1.00	5.00
9	27	3.8044	0.74618	0.14471	3.5067	4.1020	2.00	5.00
10	8	3.7830	1.06056	0.37026	2.9125	4.6535	2.00	5.00
Total	**898**	**3.0377**	**0.89158**	**0.02975**	**2.9793**	**3.0961**	**1.00**	**5.00**

Table A.8.   *Number of strategies by job satisfaction*

Number of strategies	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error	95% Confidence interval for mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower bound	Upper bound		
0	12	2.31	1.147	0.328	1.59	3.03	1	4
1	14	2.50	1.148	0.307	1.84	3.16	1	4
2	70	3.26	1.505	0.180	2.90	3.62	1	6
3	93	3.37	1.517	0.157	3.06	3.68	1	7
4	172	4.02	1.304	0.099	3.82	4.21	1	6
5	193	4.09	1.386	0.100	3.89	4.28	1	7
6	179	4.41	1.379	0.103	4.20	4.61	1	7
7	89	4.61	1.308	0.138	4.34	4.89	2	6
8	41	4.87	1.383	0.215	4.44	5.31	1	7
9	27	5.32	1.156	0.224	4.86	5.78	3	7
10	8	5.08	1.040	0.363	4.23	5.94	3	6
Total	**898**	**4.08**	**1.475**	**0.049**	**3.99**	**4.18**	**1**	**7**

Table A.9.   *Number of strategies by teacher autonomy*

Number of strategies	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error	95% Confidence interval for mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower bound	Upper bound		
0	12	2.9687	1.31746	0.37682	2.1413	3.7961	1.00	5.00
1	14	3.3012	1.36475	0.36448	2.5139	4.0885	1.00	5.00
2	70	3.5288	1.32294	0.15855	3.2125	3.8452	1.00	5.00
3	93	3.6502	1.19505	0.12385	3.4043	3.8962	1.00	5.00
4	172	3.9946	1.01799	0.07761	3.8414	4.1478	1.00	5.00
5	193	4.2184	0.86657	0.06242	4.0953	4.3415	1.00	5.00
6	179	4.2794	0.86433	0.06459	4.1519	4.4068	1.00	5.00
7	89	4.4804	0.87207	0.09231	4.2970	4.6638	1.00	5.00
8	41	4.7038	0.59158	0.09196	4.5180	4.8897	1.00	5.00
9	27	4.8039	0.40473	0.07849	4.6424	4.9654	4.00	5.00
10	8	4.3435	0.63703	0.22240	3.8206	4.8663	3.00	5.00
Total	**898**	**4.1109**	**1.03226**	**0.03444**	**4.0433**	**4.1785**	**1.00**	**5.00**

Appendix 8: Leader responses to the impact of new policies/practices on teacher workload

Figure A:1 Leader responses to the impact of new policies/practices on teacher workload
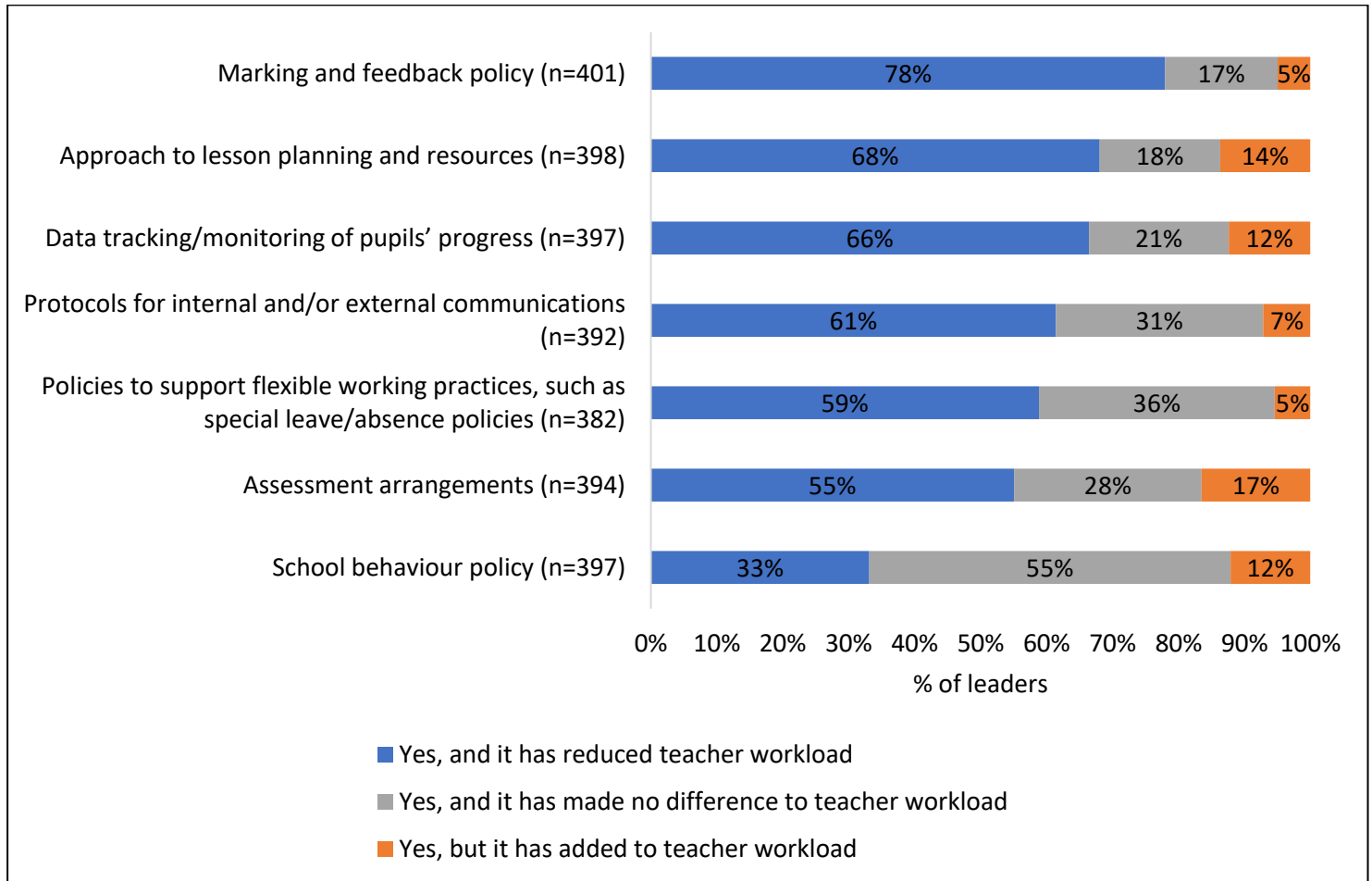
Source: NFER's Teacher Voice panel survey June 2023. Q3b: In the past year, has your school revised any of the following in an attempt to reduce teacher workload? (Q3a to teachers). Multiple response. Leaders only. Note, this figure *only* includes leaders who said their school had implemented the policy/practice so base numbers are given for each policy/practice.

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